1-1-1995

George Eliot: Beyond feminism

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GEORGE ELIOT:
BEYOND FEMINISM

by

Mary J. Dengler

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctorate of Philosophy

in

English

Department of English
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
August 1995
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August 1995
ABSTRACT

The three central conflicts of George Eliot's life—an emotional conflict with male rejection, an intellectual conflict with orthodox Christianity, and a gender conflict with the limitations imposed on women—can be attributed largely to the nineteenth-century feminine ideologies. While Eliot used her nonfiction to criticize the ideas responsible for her conflicts, she used her poetry and fiction to dramatize the conflicts and develop an ideal of humanity. Eliot considered feminism, in Romola, as a resolution to these conflicts, then moved beyond feminism to develop her human ideal. This ideal, which transcends gender ideologies in response to natural and moral law, posits a whole of androgynous female and male, in which each completes and frees the other for development through self-giving love and duty, for a reciprocity of temporal salvation. For Eliot, this whole comprises the human Christ, or divinity, capable of effecting moral and political reform for humanity's greater self-consciousness and unity.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my thanks to my advisor, James Hazen, for his interest, unobtrusive guidance, and sense of humor. He insisted I read Adam Bede in the first place. I also want to thank my committee members, Joseph McCullough, Mark Weinstein, and Lawrence Klein, for their confidence in me, their helpful criticism, and their time. Special thanks goes to Mary Soltau Johnston, my mother, and Edward Vincent Dengler, my husband, for making my Ph.D. a priority and being my friends in the process.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In her article, "Woman in France, Madam de Sable" (October 1854), George Eliot wrote that "in art and literature, which imply the action of the entire being, in which every fibre of the nature is engaged,...woman has something specific to contribute" (53). As "every fibre" of Eliot's nature is engaged in her writings, and as she believes that she contributes "the sensations and emotions--the maternal ones--which must remain unknown to man" (53), her works reflect and dramatize the three central conflicts of her life--an emotional conflict with male rejection (beginning with her brother), an intellectual conflict with the doctrines and views of orthodox Christians, and a gender conflict with the limits imposed on women in a patriarchal culture. These three conflicts, acting in a dialectic (as evidenced in her letters and in biographical material), can be attributed to the nineteenth-century gender ideologies, whose distinctions and roles Eliot transcended and whose effects she critically analyzed in her writing. While Eliot used her non-fiction to criticize the ideas responsible for her conflicts, she used her poetry and fiction to dramatize the conflicts themselves and to develop an ideal of humanity in which her conflicts could be resolved. While Eliot considered feminism, in Romola, as a resolution to these conflicts, she moved beyond feminism in her subsequent novels to develop her human ideal. This ideal, which transcends gender ideologies in response to natural law and moral law, posits a whole, or partnership, of androgynous female and male, in which each finds completion in the other and each evokes the full development of the other through self-giving love and duty, for a reciprocity of temporal salvation. For Eliot, the
whole of male and female comprises the human Christ, or divinity, capable of effecting moral and political reform and moving history to fruition in humanity's greater self-consciousness and unity.

This dissertation will follow Eliot's progress toward a human ideal, first, through her emotional and intellectual development, then, through her negotiations with gender ideologies, and finally, through her attempts to dramatize and resolve her conflicts through her art. After a general introduction to Eliot's life and ideas and a response to feminist critics, in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 traces the dialectic of Eliot's emotional and intellectual conflicts and developments, a dialectic which began when her emotional pain, in being separated from her brother Isaac, forced her to read for consolation. As Eliot's intellectual growth forced her to change emotional loyalties, her emotional loyalties forced her to move continually to higher levels of consciousness, from which she critically examined her previous friendships and stages of thought. Her intellectual movement from a girls' boarding-school education, filtered through Evangelical teachers, to self-education, filtered through higher criticism, scientific theories, and radical thinkers, effected her break with orthodox Christianity for more heterodox views and a subsequent emotional rift with her father, which she attempted to heal without compromising her intellectual freedom. When Eliot left the domestic sphere to pursue a professional career in London as an editor, her emotional and intellectual conflicts reached a synthesis in a gender conflict, i.e., a conflict with the expectations of the nineteenth-century gender ideologies, with which she had always struggled and would have to negotiate.

Chapter 3, which traces Eliot's gender conflicts, suggests that the ideologies of masculinity and femininity, with their artificial distinctions and roles and their origins in various orthodox religious beliefs, were responsible for the emotional and intellectual struggles that led to Eliot's alienation from her own gender. While Eliot's failure to
conform to feminine stereotypes led to emotional and intellectual isolation as a girl, her isolation allowed her to transcend gender ideologies in her intellectual achievement, her profession, and her living habits as an adult, resulting in further emotional and intellectual isolation and in criticism and resentment of her own gender. Eliot's critical responses to popular literary works, whose authors either accepted or transcended cultural ideologies, produced a body of strident and scholarly non-fiction, as well as poetry, discussed in Chapter 3. Her union with George Henry Lewes, which effected a reciprocity of emotional salvation and scholarly achievement, moved Eliot into fiction, in which she exorcised, by dramatizing, her conflicts.

Chapters 4 through 7 examine Eliot's efforts to dramatize and resolve her conflicts, moving from the manipulation and exploitation of women encouraged by gender ideologies, with woman's subsequent need of a savior (Chapter 4), to the dismantling of destructive gender stereotypes (Chapter 5), to Eliot's focus on the androgynous male and the feminist (Chapter 6), to Eliot's development of the human ideal (Chapter 7). Chapter 4, which focuses on Scenes of Clerical Life, exposes the victimization of women by unsuitable lovers and husbands, leading to women's subsequent debilitation, despair, and need of a savior. Here Eliot distinguishes religious from irreligious clergymen (Haight, GEL 2.347), among both Anglicans and Dissenters. For Eliot, religious clergy have the capacity to transcend gender ideologies, in response to a higher law, to demonstrate a tolerant, humane involvement with ordinary humanity as well as a fellowship of suffering, capable of redeeming despairing women from destruction.

Chapter 5, which focuses on Adam Bede, The Mill on the Floss, and Middlemarch, discusses Eliot's dismantling and displacing gender stereotypes, as individuals transcend gender ideologies in response to a higher consciousness and attempt to guide others to a new birth. In The Mill on the Floss, Eliot suggests, through Maggie, the tragedy of adherence to principle over love, demonstrating Feuerbach's distinction between the
doctrines ("faith") and the essence ("love") of Christianity (247). Middlemarch is included in this chapter, though chronologically it follows Felix Holt, because in it, Eliot completes, in marriage, the union of the androgynous female and male (Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislaw), whom she had united only in friendship in Bede and Mill.

Chapter 6, which focuses on Silas Marner and Romola, examines Eliot's further subversion of gender stereotypes in her experiments with androgyny and feminism. While Silas develops female emotions through his association with women and through suffering, and while Romola attains masculine knowledge, experience, and rhetorical skill, both fall victim to masculine manipulation and false rhetoric, both discover the lack of moral substance concealed in culturally masculine rhetoric, and both successfully fill the roles abdicated by the opposite sex. That both receive redemption in response to human need suggests Eliot's belief in the reciprocity of salvation and the possibility of a human divinity.

Chapter 7, which focuses on Felix Holt and Daniel Deronda, traces Eliot's completion of the human ideal, an androgynous whole of male and female, which invests a biblical concept of "one flesh" with new meaning. Eliot suggests that a union of male and female completes the whole person, artificially severed in gender ideologies, and represents the androgynous nature of Christ. Together, male and female become the human divine of Feuerbach's Essence of Christianity, capable of moving society to greater awareness and perfection. This human divinity, composed of female and male, represents Eliot's attempt, through art, to find emotional fulfillment, to forge a new belief, and to solve her gender dilemma.

After an initial turn to books for emotional consolation, a turn which led to years of studying theology, philosophy, science, and higher criticism, Eliot experienced a conflict with orthodox Christianity, which led to a spiritual or intellectual search similar to that of other nineteenth-century intellectuals, including Fichte, Coleridge, Carlyle, and J. S. Mill.
(Chapter 2). Her subsequent eclectic heterodoxy consisted of elements of Carlyle’s Hegelian idealism, Bray’s philosophy of necessity, Hennel’s and Strauss’ higher criticism, Comte’s positivism, and Feuerbach’s religious humanism. Though Eliot rejected the orthodox Christian faith, in a letter to her father in February 1842, (Haight, The George Eliot Letters 1.128-30), and attacked her former beliefs in “Evangelical Preaching: Dr. Cumming” in 1854, for the Westminster Review, she eventually moderated her strident antagonism toward Evangelical preachers and Anglican clergy alike in a religion of humanity, that tolerated all religious faith. This toleration reflected her belief that the people around her were "good" (Haight, GE: A Biography 256) and that religious faith expresses commitment to moral duty.

Eliot’s adherence to moral duty became even more essential in the absence of orthodox religious faith, according to Gertrude Himmelfarb, in order to prevent the "perils of nihilism" (22). Eliot’s novels suggest that in spite, or because, of her rejection of the Christian faith (with its emphasis on sin, the need for confession, and the need of atonement through belief in the supernatural work of Christ for salvation from damnation), she sensed humanity’s, particularly women’s, need of a savior to rescue them from the materialistic egocentrism and exploitation encouraged in gender ideologies and to take them to a higher lever of consciousness. At this higher level, they would recognize the irrevocable laws of consequence, the need to obey natural and moral laws for contentment, and the sense of freedom derived from self-sacrifice. Here, Eliot combines the necessity of Bray, the rationalism of Hennel and Strauss, and the positivism of Comte with the "Everlasting Yes" of Carlyle, which asserts the will and moral reason in choosing moral duty over happiness (Carlyle 196). The need of a sympathetic, self-giving savior, as a guide from the prison of self-centeredness to the freedom of moral responsibility and self-sacrifice, reflects Eliot’s acquaintance with nineteenth-century philosophy and her displacement of orthodox Christianity while retaining its rhetoric.
Though Eliot experienced temporary rejection by her father, in the wake of her intellectual conflict with Christianity, this rejection did not seem to trouble her as much as her earlier rejection by her brother Isaac, for whom she felt a strong admiration and emotional attachment (Cross 1.10,12,15), feelings that were repeated in her future relationships with men (Chapters 2 and 3). Her intellectual and emotional hero-worship of Robert Herbert Brabant, John Chapman, and Herbert Spencer ended in similar rejection. Though the phrenologist Combe concluded, from his assessment of Eliot, that she would always need "someone to lean on, preferring...the stronger sex to the other and more impressible [,as she] was not fitted to stand alone" (Haight, GE: A Biography 57), Combe's assessment appears ironic in light of the apparent emotional, professional, or intellectual dependence of these men on Eliot. A more valid explanation of her emotional dependency might be a dearth of affection between Eliot and her mother (of whom she makes few comments in her letters) and the dearth of intellectual camaraderie with her female school companions. Her need of completion in a partnership with the opposite sex and her unorthodox and incomplete theory of the masculine and feminine nature would lead to her own ideal of the two sexes complementing each other in marriage. Eliot's ideal expresses a radical modification of Ruskin's marriage ideal, as expressed in "Of Queens' Gardens" (81), which adheres to the nineteenth-century gender ideologies of the aggressive, inventive male and the passive, domestic female, and would explain her resistance to certain elements of the woman's movement, which encouraged independence over duty.

George Eliot's exceptional intelligence and education, her profession as a scholarly journalist and fiction writer, and her experiences with men conflicted with the prevailing feminine ideologies (Chapter 3). Gilbert and Gubar insist that the "ideal woman that male authors dream of generating is always an angel" (21). They believe that this ideal originated in the Medieval belief in the Virgin Mary as the compassionate "dispenser of
salvation" to man, continued through the writings of Dante (on Beatrice), Milton (on his recently deceased wife) and Goethe (on the "Eternal Feminine" as the "intermediary between God man"), and evolved in the nineteenth century to the more secular ideal of the "domestic angel (21-22), epitomized in Coventry Patmore's poem, The Angel in the House.

Further distinctions need to be made between the traditionally descriptive and prescriptive feminine ideologies. The descriptive ideal of woman, as innately gentle, sensitive, passive, and inferior (to man) in reasoning as well as in strength, suited her for the theologically and biologically intended, domestic role, a role dubiously inferred from woman's position in the Genesis creation order, the Fall, the Pauline epistles, and the Chain-of-Being, so that any deviation was considered exceptional, abnormal, or destructive of woman or the social order. The prescriptive ideal of what a woman should be (i.e., passive, sensitive, decorative), as the "other to man" (Straub 21), was rooted in the same dubious theological inferences, which attributed any innately opposing strengths to rebellion or an anomaly in woman's nature and in need of male supervision or containment within the domestic sphere to preserve the prevailing social order.

During the nineteenth century, the feminine ideal evolved from that of the "perfect wife" to that of the "perfect lady" (Vicinus ix-x) and finally to that of the "new lady" of "social good" (Hunt 140). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the feminine ideal fit Patmore's image of the domestic angel, since the "perfect wife" was expected to manage the home, care for the children, and even participate in clothes-making and food-preparing, in the middle classes; in the lower classes, she was expected to contribute directly "to the family income" in addition to managing the home (Vicinus ix). During the nineteenth century, the feminine ideal evolved, according to Vicinus, to that of the "perfect lady," an idle drawingroom lady, who "did not work"; whose children were
reared by "nannies and governesses"; who was characterized by her "sexual innocence, conspicuous consumption and the worship of the family hearth" (ix), and who served as the symbol of her husband's membership in the leisure class (Hunt 140). This ideal eventually gave way to the "new lady" of "social good," who may have attended Girton or Queens College, cultivated her intellect to educate her children, and moved beyond the domestic sphere to benefit the "public sphere" through various kinds of social reform (140). Vicinus refers to this ideal as that of the "perfect woman" or "the new woman," who "worked, sought education and fought for legal and political rights"(ix). Vicinus contends, nonetheless, that "[t]hroughout the Victorian period," the ideal of the "perfect lady" was "tenacious and all-pervasive" (x).

Whether Eliot contended with the ideal of the "perfect wife," as a house-keeper after her mother's death, or the "perfect lady," as a professional writer and wife of Lewes, or even the "perfect woman," as a mentor of upper-class younger women, each of these ideals proved constrictive and unnatural to Eliot's intellectual and professional capacity. Eliot's gender conflict reached a crisis, first, when she rejected her father's Anglican beliefs and patriarchal authority (i.e., in refusing to conform to his beliefs in order to secure a husband), then again, when she left the domestic sphere to live at Chapman House as a professional editor and writer, next, when she violated society's conventions in joining Lewes in a marriage that could not be legitimized, and finally when, according to Gillian Beer, she insisted on being recognized as Mrs. Lewes despite a union that "transgressed the assumptions" accompanying that title (9). While Beer insists that Eliot "challenged the name given to relationship" (9), Himmelfarb explains that Eliot was simply upholding the morality of her relationship and, through that moral relationship, of society (16,22). Further gender conflict is evident in her refusal to become involved in the various women's movements, or the "women question," since she lacked "sympathy" with women's "putting themselves forward" to force change (Haight, GEL 5.58) and felt a
disgrace in women's demanding positions for which they were not qualified (4.425).

Eliot's gender crises led her to question the characteristics that the culture considered natural for each gender (Chapter 3) and to develop her own feminine ideal and human ideal (Chapters 4-7). Her theory of gender dismantles cultural stereotypes of masculinity and femininity and calls for a general partnership between the sexes for mutual benefits, i.e., the sensitizing of men through the influence of the female capacity for affection, sympathy and self-abnegation (Hunt 140), and the intellectual broadening of women through access to male knowledge and interests (Eliot, "Woman in France" 80-81). Uglow describes the "mission of the woman artist as Eliot saw it" as showing the "necessity of the impact on men of the female influence" in order to promote their growth "towards a...more flexible ethical vision" (5). Eliot describes the effect on women of their gaining access "to a common fund of ideas [and] to common objects of interest in men" as the production of "truly womanly culture [in place of trivial conversation and mere accomplishments] and...true social harmony" as women gain the capacity to be a "friend, confident and counselor" to men (Eliot, "Woman in France" 80).

Eliot's suggestion of an innate feminine nature, when she speaks of a "distinctively feminine condition" and a "feminine character" of mind (53-54), conflates Toril Moi's definitions of "female," as referring to a biological nature, and "feminine," as referring to a cultural construct (Moi 117). According to Eliot, woman's physiological make-up for "maternity" equips her with certain innate "sensations and emotions" (Eliot, "Woman in France" 53), which she describes as a capacity for "affectionateness, gentleness, and tenderness" (Haight, GEL 4.468). Under pressure from rising "commercial classes," those innate capacities could be thwarted by an emphasis on delicacy, refinement, and frailty to produce the leisured, accomplished, and decorative consumer, symbol of her husband's "gentle status" (Hunt 140). In the commercial sectors' efforts to redefine their status, these manners and affectations became cultural stereotypes for the feminine...
nature and became part of the feminine ideology.

George Eliot subtly subverted and dismantled the cultural stereotypes of masculinity and femininity by demonstrating their pernicious effects on the individual and the society that upheld them and by developing her own theory of the true feminine nature (i.e., a conflation of Moi's "female" and "feminine"). Uglow accurately describes Eliot's theory of the feminine nature as that of a behavioral goal and "social mission" (4) since it might entail resisting and transcending the feminine stereotypes for the good of society. Eliot suggested that what is natural for one woman is not natural for another, a theory held as well as by Mary Wollstonecraft and Margaret Fuller and discussed in Eliot's article, "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft," for the Leader (13 October 1855). Referring to Margaret Fuller's essay in her own article, Eliot wrote that "some of the best things [Fuller] says are on the folly of absolute definitions of woman's nature" (204). Eliot dismantled the binary opposition of masculine/feminine, except for woman's predisposition to feelings connected with maternity. She demonstrated, according to Uglow, that if, through a moral struggle against cultural stereotyping and social or marital pressure, woman develops her innate capacity for self-abnegation and tenderness, she can influence man's ethical nature (otherwise developed only through suffering) toward expansion (4).

Eliot expanded the ideal of womanhood to an ideal for humanity in her novels (Chapters 4-7). She demonstrated, using theological terms in Scenes of Clerical Life, Adam Bede, The Mill of the Floss, Silas Marner and Romola and using humanistic or moral terms in her subsequent novels, the struggle of both women and men to resist gender stereotypes and ideologies, in their recognition of the natural law (i.e., of consequences) and moral law (i.e., based on natural law, in Comte's positivism), for more meaningful and satisfying lives. Eventually, only a partnership between the two sexes, based on the "free bond of love" (Feuerbach 47), would compose, for Eliot, a
whole person, imaging Christ, who exemplified a perfect blending of strength, gentleness, judgment, and mercy, i.e., culturally assigned gender traits. Through the marriage partnership, male and female could complete each other, though not necessarily in the culturally stereotyped way (envisioned by Ruskin) of masculine intellect, inventiveness, and strength completing feminine emotion, domestic care, and weakness. Rather, each partner's uniquely individual traits of strength and weakness could complete, and could be completed in, the strengths and weaknesses of the partner. Together they could become one person, with the capacity to effect salvation for each other and for society.

After years of studying philosophy and higher criticism, writing scholarly articles for the *Westminster Review*, and finding her own completion and liberation in a union with George Henry Lewes, Eliot turned to the novel as a more effective means of expressing her criticisms and ideals of humanity, for society's benefit (Chapter 2 and 3). Valerie Dodd attributes this turn from scholarly articles to novels to Eliot's belief in the novel's greater capacity to benefit society, as a means of confronting "social and political issues" (6). Haight, in a similar vein, attributes Eliot's decision to write novels to her "peremptory and absolute" sense of "duty" to raise society's moral consciousness (*GE: A Biography* 464), especially with the growing skepticism regarding immortality and the God of Christianity. Eliot's recollection of Lewes' encouraging her desire to write a novel, not only because of her descriptive power but because of her sufficient "wit and philosophy" (Haight, *GE*, 2.407), seems to verify the conjectures of Dodd and Haight, i.e., that Eliot could more effectively dramatize her ideals in her effort to raise the moral consciousness of society. Her union with Lewes, which gave her greater confidence to develop her novel and gave him needed assistance in his psychological and biographical research, apparently became the model for her own ideal of humanity, expressed especially in her last three novels.
Eliot's attempt to forge a new ideal, a solution for her emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts, calls into question the views of feminist critics in evaluating her works, views to which subsequent chapters will refer. Showalter, Gilbert and Gubar, Uglow, Basch, and Beer tend to reduce Eliot's focus to women, i.e., women's suffering, women's destruction or destructiveness, women's sense of secondness, women's self-renunciation, women's incompleteness. This paper suggests a broader view, a view that applies to women and men, a view of the human condition.

While for Showalter, Eliot analyzes the "unfulfilled longings of an intelligent young woman in a narrow and oppressive society" and "elevates suffering into a female career" (124), events involving Maggie Tulliver and Philip Wakem suggest a more comprehensive perspective. Eliot analyzes the unfulfilled longings of a young woman of traditionally masculine attributes (i.e., intellectual power and curiosity) and of a young man of traditionally feminine attributes (i.e., delicacy and artistic refinement). She does not elevate suffering into a female career as much as she reveals each person's sense of incompleteness and the suffering that results when natural laws and moral responsibility are violated in adherence to gender ideologies and self-aggrandizement.

While Gilbert and Gubar claim that Eliot preferred Harriet B. Stowe's emphasis on man's need to develop a feminine "receptivity" and "nurturance" over Margaret Fuller's emphasis on woman's need to develop "masculine powers of intellect" (482), Eliot's works suggest that she believed in the necessity of both developments. Since Dinah Morris, Maggie Tulliver, Romola Bardi, Esther Lyon, Dorothea Brooke, Mary Garth, Alcharisi, Gwendolen Harleth, and Mirah Lapidoth were women of capable intellect, since nearly all lacked an adequate education as well as opportunities to develop their abilities, or have them adequately appraised, and suffered frustration, exploitation, or delusion as a result; and since only Dinah, Mary, and Mirah had gained a sense of self-possession and effected a positive change in people, Eliot suggests that both men and
women need access to stores of knowledge and sensitizing of emotions.

Also, while Gilbert and Gubar make a case for Eliot's resolving the tensions "between masculine and feminine roles" and the tensions of her own life as "an Angel of Destruction," i.e., "through acts of vengeance against her own characters" (479) or their oppressors (490), evidence will point equally to Eliot's tracing the effects of natural law, in that characters bring their own destruction through ignorance or maliciousness, and to Eliot's resolving gender tensions through the ideal of a savior--one who chooses or assists another in choosing duty to higher laws over self-gratification, i.e., "blessedness" over "happiness" (Carlyle 192). In *Scenes of Clerical Life* (Chapter 4), the savior appears not only in Milly Barton's misdirected capacity to model a life of loving duty that carries her family but in Mr. Cleves', Mr. Gilfil's, and Mr. Tryan's capacity to prevent destruction, either through self-renunciation and compassionate care or through teaching those qualities to others. In *Adam Bede*, Dinah gives new life to Hetty by teaching her confession and self-renunciation, and in *Daniel Deronda*, Daniel is the "Deliverer" (Eliot 726) of Mirah Lapidoth, Gwendolen Harleth.

While for Gilbert and Gubar, Eliot sensed that woman's "secret wound" is a sense of secondness and "self-loathing" (466), evidence points to humanity's secret wound in its sense of failure to meet cultural ideals and expectations and in its tendency toward self-destruction in attempting to find satisfaction (i.e., in Hetty and Adam, Maggie and Tom, Rosamond and Lydgate, Harold and Mrs. Transome). *Eliot focuses on the incompleteness and yearning of the individual, on the destructiveness of cultural gender roles, and on the possibility of fulfillment in the admission of need and in the helping of another.* Also, while Gubar describes the sense of physical and intellectual "lack" inherited by women and attributed to male rhetoric and exploitation (306), Eliot ingeniously uses sexual imagery to suggest the sense of moral lack concealed in male rhetoric and discovered by a penetrating mind (Chapter 6).
While Uglow asserts that for Eliot, the "vital thing is not to launch women into a masculine sphere but to 'feminize' men, because the feminine strengths have for so long been...undervalued" (4), evidence suggests that Eliot questions the whole idea of masculine and feminine roles and spheres, especially in Silas Marner and Romola (Chapter 6). She suggests, instead, the response to natural and moral law through a sense of duty, motivated by an impulse of self-giving love. While Uglow contends that "the mission of the woman artist as Eliot saw it was to show the necessity of the impact on men and women of the female influence, an impact which she symbolized in a man's being "spiritually renewed by the sacrifice of a woman's life or happiness" (5), evidence suggests Eliot's intention to show the impact of woman's and man's submission to a moral imperative, i.e., the Christian ethic without the Christian doctrines. She demonstrated this impact in both men's and women's renewal in their self-sacrificing love for another (i.e., Silas, Romola, Daniel), in their receiving guidance or the fellowship of another's suffering (i.e., Janet Dempster, Maggie Tulliver, Esther Lyon, Tertius Lydgate, Gwendolen Harleth), or in their union with another (Adam Bede with Dinah Morris, Felix Holt with Esther Lyon, Dorothea Brooke with Will Ladislaw, Daniel Deronda with Mirah Lapidoth).

Basch's contention, that for Eliot "renunciation" is the "essence of virtue" (97), inadequately evaluates the life of Eliot's characters. The essence of virtue includes not simply renunciation but work in developing a higher consciousness and sense of purpose in others (Felix Holt with Esther Lyon, Daniel Deronda with Gwendolen Harleth) and in admitting one's need of another (i.e., Felix Holt and Esther Lyon, Daniel Deronda and Mirah Lapidoth).

Though Beer correctly hypothesizes that Eliot was able to write novels only after she started living with Lewes because of the confidence she gained from his "sustained encouragement" (9), she takes a limited view of the implications of that union. The
evidence of their intellectual and literary output suggests the proof of Eliot's ideal of humanity. Sensing her own (and Lewes') incompleteness before their union, she accepted marriage as the natural and empowering situation for both. She then found in marriage her full power as an artist. Each compensated for the deficiencies of the other or encouraged the other's strengths.

Eliot's work suggests what most of the feminist criticism overlooks—a verification of biblical precepts in the guise, or language, of heterodoxy as well as a use of Christian language to clothe heterodox ideas. Her recognition of humanity's need of a savior suggests humanity's moral and religious dimension; her recognition of the artificiality and exploitation of gender ideologies suggests humanity's destructive element; and her suggestion of the need of completion in another suggests the image of God in the concept of "one flesh," idealized in the person of Christ, both serving and leading, both comforting and judging. Eliot's experiences of being rejected because of her lack of beauty and her depiction of striking heroines (attracting striking men) verifies her belief in an aesthetic dimension as well. Her revelation of a religious/moral, psychological, and aesthetic dimension suggests that even though she agreed with the philosophy of necessity, aspects of positivism, and a religion of humanity, she betrays an alignment with idealism, or an intuitive or spiritual understanding of humanity, not limited to empirical or rational proof, and history's progress toward some end. Her use of the Christian terminology of confession, submission to God's will, and baptism to a new life to refer to confession of egocentrism, submission to natural and moral laws, and release into a sense of freedom and harmony with nature also reveals her awareness of the human need of a spiritual dimension.
CHAPTER 2

EMOTIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONFLICT

George Eliot's life-long emotional and intellectual conflicts, attributable to the constricting expectations and stereotypes of the nineteenth-century feminine ideologies, began in her early relationship with her brother Isaac and reached a synthesis in her intermittent conflicts with the female gender (Chapter 3), from which she felt alienated in her interests and capacities. This chapter traces the dialectic of Eliot's emotional and intellectual development, examines the theological and philosophical traditions that affected her development, and analyzes a number of her subsequent critical essays and her approach to art. This chapter sets the foundation of Eliot's development in her first emotional loyalty and intellectual response (i.e., her devotion to Isaac and his world), then moves from her emotional conflict with his rejection, to her consolation in books, and from her interest in books, to her subsequent intellectual growth and changing loyalties. As each emotional conflict resulted in further intellectual development, each stage of intellectual development effected a change in Eliot's emotional loyalties and a criticism of her previous loyalties, especially evident in her critical essays. Eliot's criticisms of Evangelical Christianity, sentimental and unrealistic fiction, and the writing produced by most lady novelists will reveal Eliot's antagonism with her former loyalties as well as her belief in the duty of artists and writers to guide society.

This study begins with an analysis of Eliot's sonnet sequence, Brother and Sister (1860), which reflects Eliot's early devotion to Isaac Evans as the source of each subsequent stage of her emotional and intellectual development, including her interest in
the public and professional sphere, her culturally androgynous union with George Henry Lewes, her interest in science and higher criticism, her writing novels of romantic realism, and her forging an ideal of humanity. The sonnets in Brother and Sister, which describe a young girl's attachment to her older brother, the power of this attachment to shape her future perceptions, the influence of each child on the other, and the effects of their separation, seen in retrospect from a woman's perspective, reflect George Eliot's devotion to Isaac (Cross 1.10) and suggest the power of this devotion to shape her life. Eliot's attachment to her brother, instead of her mother, and her sense of reverence for his knowledge and his surrounding natural world, would evoke Eliot's future emotional, intellectual, and gender struggles, resolved partially in scholarship, in intense female and feminist friendships, in a series of relationships with exceptional men, and eventually in a relationship that transcended gender stereotypes and allowed Eliot to develop her art.

In Sonnets I and II of Brother and Sister, the narrator describes her dependency and near worship of her brother, attributing her early belief in his superior wisdom to his age and gender. Though she acknowledges their closeness as that of two kissing "buds," she describes him as the fearless "little man" whose "larger tread" she followed "puppy-like" (1.2-8). At the time, she also thought him nearly as "wise" as the angels and would obey him "in faith" (13-14). As he was the "elder and a boy," knowing and doing so much more than she, she even felt him to be entitled to more of the lunch they shared (2.6-7). Clearly her awe of the older, wiser male was established early.

In Sonnets IV, V and VI, alluding to Wordsworth's "seed time of [the] soul," from The Prelude, (1.301), the narrator describes the roots of her natural piety, not in any instruction at her mother's knee or memorization of scripture or catechism but in romps with her brother after moving beyond the "benediction of [their mother's] gaze" (4.11-12). In their "ramblings" through the meadow, they were "schooled in deepest lore" and learned the spiritual "meanings" of words (5.1-2). She ascribes the good in her life and
her capacity to love to those ramblings on the farm with her brother, as "those hours were seed to all [her] after good" and nourished the ability of "loving much" (5-8). She even gained her first sense of the "Unknown" while sitting contentedly on the canal's banks (6.7,1), a sense which would determine her future allegiance to transcendental idealism even after she rejected Christianity and embraced scientific determinism.

The seeds of Eliot's desire to please, her fear of disappointing another, and her philosophical speculation were also sown in early experiences with her brother, evident in Sonnets VII and VIII, which foreshadow a disparity in their imaginative power. When her brother left her alone with instructions to protect the fish line from approaching barges, the narrator obediently watched but allowed an approaching barge to become part of her "dream world," in which it carried her "onward through the vast unknown" (7.4). Her brother's limited imagination, evident in his becoming angry over the neglected fish line, was superseded only by his pragmatism; for when he saw the perch on her line, his anger turned to praise. Secretly wondering why "this happiness befell," she was introduced to the idea of favorable determinism or chance, i.e., that "luck was with glory wed" (8.11-14). The seeds of her future homage to lesser intellectual lights, her desire to please and her pain over their displeasure, her lack of confidence in success, and her tendency toward speculation were planted early.

Sonnets IX and X suggest that the effects of sharing Isaac's world prepared Eliot for continued interest in the culturally masculine sphere and for an intellectual partnership with the opposite sex. The narrator remembers that the "difference of boy and girl" made the world "larger for each" (9.1,2). That he "plucked" for her the fruit beyond her reach (though Isaac would resent her plucking intellectual and emotional fruit for herself), guided her foot with his eye, and denied himself pleasures that she could not share taught the narrator to appreciate his efforts, to experience his sorrow and joy, and to find no pleasure in her doll or other "girlish toy" (10.1-4). His male world of physical skills
and empirical knowledge would prevent her from fulfilling "dream wishes" with "dream fruit" (10) by teaching her to subject "fantasy" to skill (11-12), and to base conclusions on a *posteriori* knowledge, i.e., to define "what will be" by "what is" (12,14).

Though the narrator acknowledges, in Sonnet XI, their parting and distance, she still yearns for a reunion that would re-establish their early footing. Though she attributes their parting and permanent separation to school (11.1,2), which apparently encouraged a greater intellectual and gender disparity, she suggests that they still both long for their former innocent married state in that their "souls" still yearned "in divorce" (10). She also states that she would again be the "little sister there" (14), or the smaller and the girl.

This longing for a pre-fallen world of perfect unity, or marriage, enhanced by distinctions, free of envy, and characterized by curiosity, learning, and eagerness to please the other, would remain with Eliot through the years of conflict and change and would form her ideal for humanity. Because of Eliot's emotional attachment to her brother, she suffered conflict when he detached himself from her; her subsequent interest in reading for amusement caused a greater rift between them but evoked the desired admiration of her teachers. This emotional pattern (conflict, intellectual growth, and a change of loyalties) was eventually repeated with her father Robert Evans, Charles Bray, Dr. Robert Herbert Brabant, D'Albert Durade, John Chapman, Herbert Spencer, and George Henry Lewes. Her interest in her brother's empirical and rational world prompted her to claim a share in masculine skills and knowledge. It eventually prompted her to consider Charles Bray's philosophy of necessity (based in natural law), Charles Hennell's rational approach to Christianity, Strauss' higher criticism, Comte's positivism, Feuerbach's humanism, Lewes' anti-dogmatic views, and Ruskin's realism. At the same time, Eliot's early reverence of nature, which included a sense of the "Unknown," maintained her interest in the romantic realism of Sir Walter Scott and the idealism of Carlyle, Coleridge, and Hegel. It also maintained her conflict between rationalism and idealism.
Eliot's emotional conflict began when, after an infancy of playing together and attending Miss Moore's nearby dame school in Griff, she and Isaac were sent to different boarding schools. Detached from Isaac, she accompanied her father, according to Haight, on his rounds as estate manager for the Anglican Newdigates of Arbury Hall, as he collected rents and inspected buildings, sometimes leaving her to talk with the servants (QE 4). In that way, her interests stayed in the culturally masculine sphere, gravitating from fishing and marbles to business, land, and buildings. At Miss Latham's school, where Eliot was sent at age five with her older sister Chrissey, she fought against "fear" and loneliness, relieved by her father's coming to take her on his drives and her reunions with Isaac (Cross! 12). As her world focused on older, wiser people, she became a "serious child," preferring adults to other children (Haight, QE 8) and trying to please them.

Feeling pain over her separation from Isaac, Eliot learned to console herself by reading, a habit which determined her future. According to her step-sister Fanny, "because she liked playing with Isaac so much better [, she] ... learned to read with some difficulty" (7). Reading for "amusement" (7) and consolation not only caused a greater rift between Eliot and Isaac but led to her intellectual and literary pursuits. Those pursuits won the admiration of her teachers and the eventual acquaintance of a heterodox avant-garde. Their acceptance increased her intellectual conflict, evoked her renunciation of Christianity and led to her involvement in a series of difficult relationships with men.

Eliot herself attributed the groundwork for her future intellectual conflict and literary pursuits to her early reading of novels. Entranced by Scott's Waverley at eight years of age, she wrote her own ending when she had to return the book unfinished to the owner. This early attempt at writing would be followed by her second, Edward Neville, the beginning of a romantic novel (7). Eliot continued to read Scott at Miss Wallington's school and throughout her life. According to Valerie Dodd, Scott's blend of skeptical
realism and romanticism evoked Eliot's "skeptical inquiry" (12). Eliot herself attributed her beginning heterodoxy to Scott, since his "healthy and historical" perspective did "not fit ... her creed" (Haight, GE 39). Her reading of Bulwer Lytton's Devereux at thirteen introduced her to the idea that morality does not depend on religion (Haight, GEL 1.45).

At Miss Wallington's school at Nuneaton, Eliot, from age nine to thirteen, found her emotional fulfillment in a friendship with her admiring governess, Miss Maria Lewis, who influenced Eliot academically and theologically (Haight, GE, 10). Encouraged by Maria Lewis' interest, Eliot tried to please her through improved diction, academic excellence and Evangelical fervor. While Haight suggests that Miss Lewis gave Eliot the affection that she was denied by her own mother, Eliot's poem and her letters at the time of her mother's death suggest that Mrs. Evans was "dear" to Eliot (Haight, GEL 1.3). Perhaps her mother was too busy to form a closer tie with Eliot, leaving her to follow Isaac and Robert Evans for emotional support. Through the encouragement of Maria Lewis' interest, Eliot thrived academically, moving, at Miss Lewis' suggestion, to the Miss Franklins' school at Foleshill at age thirteen (Haight, GE 10). At these two schools, Eliot studied academic disciplines in an age when "accomplishments" and "rote" learning made up the usual female fare (Dodd 70-76), though Eliot would eventually criticize the intellectual constriction in girls' schools.

While these two schools encouraged Eliot's scholarly bent through emotional support, they sowed the seeds of eventual intellectual conflict through their anti-intellectual stance. While Mrs. Wallington's school, representing the Evangelical Anglicans, encouraged Bible-reading, introspection, "church-building, abolition of slavery, and prison reform," it emphasized "scriptural authority " over "Biblical Scholarship" (71). To this influence, Eliot responded by "copying pious verses into her notebook" and organizing prayer groups (71). Her letters to Miss Lewis abounded with Evangelical and scriptural allusions and axioms, especially the idea that life is "merely a pilgrimage...calling for
diligence and watchfulness, not for repose and amusement" (Haight, GEL 1.6). In later years, the pietism and anti-intellectualism of this Evangelical phase haunted her with resentment against Evangelical preachers and Anglican clergy, until she accepted piety as a necessary stage in a child's development (1.230-231).

The Miss Franklins' school, representing the Evangelical Baptists, emphasized a more stridently spiritual Christianity while fostering Eliot's love of serious reading and offering her new models of behavior. The combination of Evangelicalism and academics led to a conflict between her allegiance to orthodoxy and her intellectual curiosity, each depending for supremacy on her emotional state. Since Mr. Franklin's preaching at Cow Lane Chapel emphasized sin and the need of Christ's atoning death for salvation (Haight, GE 19), Eliot apparently felt the need of "conversion" to Evangelical Christianity at age fifteen, evident in her self-denial of "innocent pleasures" and her emphasis on charity (9), though Haight attributes her piety and fervor to attempts to impress her teachers (23).

In this spiritual and academic environment, Eliot looked to the two Miss Franklins for emotional support and standards of behavior. Rebecca influenced Eliot's etiquette, correct English, "low musical voice" and spelling of her name (Marianne instead of Mary Ann) from her own Paris education (10); apparently Eliot tried to win her admiration by imitating her and adhering to her standards. Eliot also used her as a model for Esther Lyon in Felix Holt. Mary provided the mothering, "businesslike, self-sacrificing" influence (11) that was to serve as a model for Milly Barton and Mrs. Garth. Both Miss Franklins encouraged Eliot's reading, from Shakespeare and Milton to the Romantics and Edward Young (13,15). Eliot also continued reading Scott, who introduced her to the "influence of historical context" on character, to "compassionate sympathy and dispassionate analysis," to the "intolerance and narrowness of vision" in "party bias" (Dodd 72), and to a blending of reality and romance (73). Eliot's delight with Edward Young's "Night Thoughts" would eventually turn to scorn in her re-evaluation from the hetero-
dox perspective, where her intellectual curiosity and emotional need would take her.

Just as emotional conflict over her separation from Isaac forced her to read and sharpened her ambition to win admiration from others, the conflict experienced in her separation from her friends and teachers at the Miss Franklins' school forced Eliot to pursue scholarship on her own and to attempt to keep the admiration of her school friends and former teacher through correspondence. When Eliot's academic and emotional progress was interrupted at the Miss Franklins' school by her mother's death, forcing Eliot to return to Griff at age sixteen to manage her father's home and dairy for four years before their move to Foleshill, Eliot was driven into intellectual and emotional isolation, causing conflict and change. At Griff, she continued to study three days a week (Dodd 74), with the benefit of the Newdigate library, books purchased for her by her father, and tutors in German and Italian. At first she wrote letters full of Evangelical rhetoric about the "suffering" of Christians and her disapproval of worldliness (Haight, GEL 1.16), as well as a running commentary on her intellectual pursuits, calculated to impress her friend, Martha Jackson, and her former teacher, Miss Lewis.

Eliot's concern with outward conformity to Christianity suggests her emotional and intellectual conflict. To her friend Martha Jackson, she complained of an oratorio at St. Michael's, which she attended with Miss Rebecca, as "inconsistent with millennial holiness" (Haight, GEL 1.9). To Miss Lewis, she complained of an oratorio which she attended in Coventry as blasphemous (1.13). She also complained to Miss Lewis of the "mental diseases" with which novels had "contaminated" her and explained that "the weapons of Christian warfare were never sharpened at the forge of romance" (1.23). At age twenty, Eliot described, to Miss Lewis, her fit of hysteria at Mrs. T. Bull's party, where she felt convicted that she "was not in a situation to maintain the Protestant character of the true Christian" (1.41). Contradicting her fear of worldly contamination, Eliot continued her reading of literature, history, and theology, especially as she had begun
work on a chart of a "Chronological View of Ecclesiastical History" (1.38), to be completed by November 1840. Meanwhile the condition of her "soul" showed signs of conflict between loyalties; i.e., in her decision to relinquish her love of a young man on Miss Lewis' suggestion, Eliot confessed her "rebellion" against God in caring for the man (1.46), though she was probably feeling rebellion against Miss Lewis. This desire to please Miss Lewis by separating herself from the world led to further conflict between admitted "Ambition to win the esteem of [her] fellow creatures" (1.19) and intellectual hunger, particularly after her move to Birdgrove in Foleshill in 1841, at age twenty-one.

Eliot's movement away from Christian orthodoxy, in spite of (or concealed by) her religious rhetoric and concern with outward allegiance to Evangelical purity, had already begun at Griff. According to Haight, Eliot shifted from her aunt's Arminianism to Calvinism (a more intellectual and deterministic, less emotional, approach to Christianity) and argued in favor of predestination with her Methodist-preaching aunt (GE 28).

She reported to her aunt (Mrs. Samuel Evans), 5 March 1839 from Griff, of her soul's benumbment, her "ambition" for approval that acts as a "stumbling block in [her] path Zion-ward," and of her tendency not to "attach much value to a disclosure of religious feelings" (Haight, GEL 1.19), implying a Calvinistic adherence to the doctrine of Election. As Eliot pursued her study of Church history, she wrote of devouring Isaac Taylor's Ancient Christianity and the Oxford Tracts, which discusses the corruption of superstition in the early Church (1.64). Walter Cross attributed the "unsettling [of] her views of Christianity" to Taylor's books, reporting that she carried "speculation further than [Taylor] would have desired" after reading his Physical Theory of Another Life (Cross 1.71-72). Though she decided to discontinue work on her own chart of Church history because of a more "compendious" chart just published, she apparently scrutinized the new chart; at the same time, she praised Wordsworth's work as expressing her own ideas "just as [she] could <wish> ...them " (Haight, GEL 1.34), suggesting a move toward
idealism or pantheism.

After Eliot moved with her father to Foleshill, her drift away from orthodoxy continued in her reading theological attempts to reconcile scripture with geological evidence, works of Coleridge's and Carlyle's spiritual crisis and development, and works of higher criticism, all evidence of Eliot's intellectual hunger. She wrote to Maria Lewis, 3-4 September 1841, of "revelling in [John Pringle] Nichols' Architecture of the Heavens and Phenomena of the Solar System," in which Nichols speaks of "Hospitable Infinitude!" (1.107). Also in September 1841, she recommended to Martha Jackson "Dr. Pie Smith's work on the connection between Scripture and Geology" (1.110) in his Relations Between the Holy Scriptures and Some Parts of Geological Science (1.110.3n). Eliot's drift through science toward more heterodox views was also stimulated by her growing friendship with Mrs. (Bray) Pears, whose husband was an "ultra-liberal,...a lecturer for the Mechanics' Institute, an ardent lover of science, an amiable being," and one known for his beliefs in the "deficiencies of the Bible" (1.90).

By the time Eliot was welcomed by the heterodox group at Rosehill, the home of Charles and Cara Bray near Coventry, she had read or was reading works of Coleridge (Dodd 81), Carlyle's Sartor Resartus, and works of Charles Hennell, Charles Bray, and Strauss. Eliot's reading of Coleridge is evident, according to Dodd (77), in her suggestion of 3-4 September 1841 that Miss Lewis have her students analyze scripture by writing its "general truths" in their own words (Haight, GEL1.106). Because of Coleridge, Eliot would begin to value the moral truths of the scripture over the importance of its historical accuracy or inaccuracy (Dodd 81). In an obvious shift from fear of worldliness to fearlessness of inquiry, she recommended Sartor Resartus in a letter to Martha Jackson, 8 December 1841, in which she describes Carlyle's soul as a "shrine of the brightest and purest philanthropy, kindled by the live coal of gratitude and devotion to the Author of all things," though she observes that "he is not 'orthodox'" (1.123). In Hennell's Inquiry into
the History of Christianity, she found the assumption that the scriptures are not infallible, the comparison of the miracles to the "legendary wonders seen in all mythology," and the argument that Christ's life and the spread of religion do not depart from the laws of nature (Haight, GE 38). Hennell argued that Christianity was consistent with "natural religion[s]" (38), in his empirical and rationalistic approach. Eliot's reading of Bray's Philosophy of Necessity, a deterministic theory that the "mind [is] subject to the same invariable rules as matter" and that happiness depends on discovering and following those rules (37), is suggested in her closing her letter to Maria Lewis, 1 January 1842, with the expression, "Goodbye and may heaven bless you as it does by the sure laws of consequence...bless every one who does his work faithfully and lives in loving activity" (Haight, GE 1.125.9n). Dodd conjectures that Eliot may also have already read Strauss' Das Leben Jesu and works of other higher critics in her study for her Ecclesiastical Chart (88). Bray attributed Eliot's growing freedom of thought in religious opinion to her reading (Haight, GE 39), a conjecture confirmed by John Chapman's description of her "slow erosion of beliefs" (Dodd 18).

This erosion began with her acceptance of an unintellectual Christianity to win the admiration of her teachers and peers, then accelerated when, in her isolation, reading replaced emotional attachments and became a reward in itself, then continued at Foleshill in the admiration of her new heterodox acquaintances. At Griff, Eliot must have sensed a dichotomy between her own intellectual activity and the intellectual quiescence of her Evangelical friends, who interpreted science and experience in light of scriptural revelation. Then, when she moved to Foleshill and found herself admired and accepted for her learning, she believed that she could be emotionally fulfilled and intellectually stimulated among the Unitarians, whose religion she described as a "beautiful refined Christianity." (Dodd 86). Eliot preferred the intellectual honesty in her attachment to Cara Bray. Charles Bray, and Sara Hennell to what had become intellectual hypocrisy in
her attachment to Miss Lewis. Writing to Sara Hennell, Eliot deprecated the "dear Orthodox people," whose "simple" truth sounded as if they were satirizing their own beliefs (Haight, GEL 1.216). As emotional and intellectual need had led to her pursuit of theology, Church history, and science, it now led to her embrace of heterodoxy.

Eliot described her meeting of the Brays and Hennells, of November 1841, as dying "to one stage of existence" (Haight, GE 18). Her renunciation of Christian doctrines and consideration of different heterodox beliefs and philosophies followed a pattern of spiritual crisis, search, and conversion, common among nineteenth-century intellectuals, including Coleridge, Carlyle, Mill, and even Bray, all of whose works Eliot had studied. The signs of her emotional and intellectual conflict appear in her letters to Maria Lewis, written after she and her father had been living in Foleshill for several months. On 12 August 1851, she writes of being "alone in the world," of having "no one with whom [she] can pour out [her] soul" (Haight, GEL 1.102) but of still believing in God as the "final cause" (1.103). Her correction of "final cause" to "first cause," in her 20 August letter to Miss Lewis, suggests her reading of Coleridge's Biographia Literaria (Coleridge 1.131), especially as she offers to send Maria Lewis extracts from Coleridge's works. Apparently Eliot was considering Coleridge's transcendental idealism (based on moral reason or intuition), with God as noumena, absolute self-consciousness ("I AM"), ground of all being (while remaining distinct from the creation) and "first cause" of man (while maintaining a separate consciousness from man). Eliot had already proved her analytical approach to scripture in her 3-4 September letter to Miss Lewis (above) and began to assume a more independent tone in her 16 October 1841 letter by returning to her own name, Mary Ann, from "Clematis" (i.e., "mental beauty"), the name given to her by her school friend, Martha Jackson (Haight, GEL 1.60).

Eliot's conversion to heterodoxy began 13 November 1841, when she wrote to Maria Lewis. "My whole soul has been engrossed in the most interesting of all inquiries for the
last few days, and to what result my thoughts may lead I know not..., but my only desire is to know the truth, my only fear to cling to error..." (1.120-21). By this time, she had probably read and discussed, with the Rosehill group, the books of Hennell and Bray.

Eliot's intellectual crisis surfaced in her refusal to attend church and take the sacrament with her father, January 1842, as noted in Robert Evans' journal (1.124): Eliot subsequently renounced her belief in orthodox Christianity in her 28 January letter to Mrs. Pears and in her 28 February letter to her father. Her movement to a more abstract or transcendental belief is apparent in her letter to Mrs. Pears, for in it, she insists that she cannot accept, as a principle of action, a "fear of vengeance eternal, gratitude for pre­destined salvation, or a revelation of future glories as a reward" but believes heaven ...is to be found in conformity with the will of the Supreme" and in "aiming at the attainment of that perfect ideal, the true Logos" (1.125-26).

In terms of Comte's positivism, Eliot had progressed from the theological stage to the metaphysical or abstract stage of intellectual development, on the way to the positive or scientific stage, and would continue to wrestle between the metaphysical and the positive. In her letter to her father, Robert Evans, she renounces her belief in the Scriptures, calling them "histories consisting of mingled truth and fiction," and states that while she admires the "moral teachings of Jesus," she considers the "systems of doctrines built upon the facts of his life...dishonorable to God" and of "pernicious...influence on individual and social happiness" (1.128). In her mildly heterodox or metaphysical view, Eliot still insists on a moral imperative, claiming that she intends to "obey the laws of [her] creator and to follow duty wherever it may lead [her]" (1.130). Though she claims this belief as her support, not caring what people may think of her as a result, she was writing in the context of new emotional loyalties, i.e., the admiring Rosehill group.

Through the intervention of Mrs. Pears, Miss Rebecca Franklin, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Isaac Evans, Eliot was allowed to return to Foleshill from her brother Isaac's
home, where her father had sent her in rebuke, and to keep her friendship with the Brays and Sara Hennell, to whom she had formed her new emotional and intellectual attachment (1.132). Unlike her attachments to her brother, her father, her school friends, and her teachers, this attachment would provide temporary intellectual camaraderie. The impressions of "liberal Christianity," gained from reading Carlyle and Mill, were to be "fostered" by Bray (Dodd 86).

Repeating her earlier hypocrisy, this time to maintain peace at home, by attending church with her father in spite of her heterodox beliefs, Eliot expressed her new sense of philosophical freedom, confident in the affection of her new friends. To clergyman Francis Watts, she writes of the "inexpressible relief" in being "freed from the apprehension...that at each moment [she treads] on chords that will vibrate for weal or woe to all eternity..."; she also writes that her "ideal" of choosing moral "good or bad for its own sake" was disturbed by the motives "entailed" in New Testament dogmas (Haight, GEL 1.144). That she felt freed from the fear of damnation after rejecting Christian doctrines, freed from the necessity of doing good simply for the glory of God, and free to choose good for its own sake, suggests an emotional and intellectual dichotomy in her former Evangelical rhetoric, i.e., that she had not intellectually espoused what she professed.

Eliot's intellectually honest move to heterodoxy confirmed her membership in the Rosehill avant-garde of intellectuals, progressives, and radicals. With Charles Bray, author (of The Philosophy of Necessity), reformer, and philanderer, who had purchased the Coventry Herald to make known his liberal views in politics and his non-sectarian views in religion (Dodd 82), Eliot formed an attachment and was able to publish her early articles. With Cara (Hennell) Bray, an "independent thinker," who taught in her husband's infant schools for the poor," wrote children's books, and tolerantly reared one of her husband's six illegitimate children (83), Eliot also formed a close friendship and was able to teach. To Sara Hennell, governess and author of Thoughts in the Aid of
Faith. Eliot would refer to herself both as "Your loving wife" (Haight, GEL 1.187) and as "husband" (1.238) in an intimate friendship and long correspondence. It was Sara who changed Eliot's nickname "Polly" (Polly Ann) to "Pollian" in a "pedantic pun on Apollyon, the Angel of Destruction in Revelation" (Haight, GE 79), when Eliot was translating Strauss' Das Leben Jesu, as it was considered destructive to Christian orthodoxy. At Rosehill gatherings, Eliot also met phrenologist Combe, who would read the cast of her head (51); the American transcendentalist Emerson, to whom Eliot referred as "the first man I have ever seen" (Haight, GEL 1.270); historian J. A. Froude, who wrote the morally and theologically scandalous (at Oxford) Nemesis of Faith and who, after meeting Eliot, decided to proceed with his marriage instead of traveling with her and the Brays (Haight, GE 69); the liberal Christian, W. J. Fox (Dodd 84), and Miss Rufa Brabant, who began the translation (which Eliot was to finish) of Strauss' Das Leben Jesu before marrying Charles Hennell (Haight, GE 53).

Eliot's conversion to heterodoxy, encouraged by the emotional support of the Rosehill group, with whom she had formed close ties expressed in the freedom of witty rhetoric, relieved her of allegiance to an anti-intellectual religious stance (and its adherents) but left her in a search for "Truth's Holy Sepulchre" (Haight, GEL 1.125). This search would move eclectically among intuitionist (or idealist) and empiricist (or rationalist) views (Dodd 9) until Eliot could form her own religious ideal.

Eliot's religious and philosophical search resembled, and was influenced by, the spiritual development of Coleridge, Carlyle, and Mill. As each had rejected orthodox Christianity, each moved (like Fichte before them) from empiricism to a deterministic and materialistic world view that pre-empted moral responsibility. This condition resulted in spiritual crisis: for Coleridge, "doubts rushed in...from the fountains of the deep" (Coleridge 1.132-133); for Carlyle, this belief was the "Everlasting No!" (Carlyle 157); for Mill, utilitarianism brought only a "cloud of despair" (Mill, Autobiography 94).
From empiricism, Coleridge and Carlyle had proceeded through speculation to pure subjectivism, which made moral responsibility irrelevant. For Coleridge subjectivism led to a doubt of the "outward existence of anything" (Coleridge, 1.133); for Carlyle, subjectivism still produced the "Everlasting No" when he plunged into the self-centered "satanic school" of Byronic poetry (Carlyle 146); and for Mill, who avoided both German philosophy and speculation, the poetry of Wordsworth provided a rescue from utilitarianism by developing his "inner culture" (Mill, Autobiography 100-101). The turn from subjectivism to transcendental idealism came, for Coleridge and Carlyle, in the recognition of moral reason, or intuition, and the subsequent choice to exercise moral freedom in performing moral duty, thereby positing themselves above either a mechanistic or a subjectivistic existence.

Eliot's intellectual struggle, after her renunciation of Christian orthodoxy, continued to be influenced by her previous reading of Coleridge, as she moved back and forth between rationalism and transcendentalism. Through moral or a priori reason, Coleridge asserted faith in the existence of God as "first cause," "ground of all being," and "moral judge" (Coleridge 1.134), a belief to which she alluded in her letter to Miss Lewis, 20 August 1841. Coleridge proceeded to posit, as first principle, the imperative to "know thyself" in order to act (1.173); to posit, as "Truth" or the thing-in-itself, a coincidence and antithesis of subject and object, the representation with the thing represented (1.180); and to posit, as noumena, Infinity, Spirit, "I AM" (God), absolute self-consciousness, who becomes object only to Himself and for whom everything else is object (1.185). Coleridge accepted the paradox that while human self-consciousness (I am) participates in infinite self-consciousness (I AM), God remains separate from man; otherwise, God would be amorphous and indifferent (Shawcross lxix), objectifying Himself in man and nature and precluding the possibility of man's moral responsibility and His own moral judgment. Eliot apparently did not accept the paradox, as she considered herself to be
"a revelation of the mind of the Deity" (Haight, GEL 1.162.In) in March 1843.

Eliot would also be influenced by Coleridge's poetic theory, which involved duty in response to a moral imperative. While his "Primary Imagination," like Kant's a priori reason, refers to the "living power and prime agent of all human perception," by which the finite mind reflects the Infinite in its creative act (Coleridge 1.202), his "Secondary Imagination," which exists only by "conscious will" and thus implies a moral choice or response to a sense of duty, refers to the poetic imagination (Shawcross lxvii), which "dissolves...in order to create" or to "idealize and unify" (Coleridge 1.202). Coleridge's subsequent move from transcendental to Christian idealism, in believing that man attains faith through intuition, will and action, not through logical reasoning (2. 215-16), would have appealed to Eliot in her allegiance to the "truth of feeling" (Haight, GEL 1.162), a year after her declared independence from orthodoxy. Thirty-three years later, in a letter to Mrs. Ponsonby, Eliot wrote of each new morning as an "opportunity ...for exerting one's will" and of "intuition...as [a] necessary starting [point] for thought" (7.167,166).

While the writing of the Biographia Literaria allowed Coleridge to wrestle with problems of philosophy and to conclude with faith in the Christian doctrines as necessary symbols of the Infinite (Coleridge 2.216), the writing of his poetry allowed him to fulfill his duty by exercising his primary imagination as well as his secondary imagination as a poet. Coleridge, like Carlyle, would influence Eliot toward a sense of duty in using literature to work out her beliefs and to guide society.

Eliot's intellectual struggle would continue to be influenced, as well, by her previous reading of Carlyle, particularly his Sartor Resartus, which she recommended in a letter to Martha Jackson, 8 December 1841. Carlyle's conversion to transcendental idealism was depicted in Diogenes Teufelsdrockh's denial of the "Everlasting No" (the belief that man is part of a mechanistic or a subjectivistic universe to which he is a slave) and a positing of his moral freedom. His conversion from logical and speculative reason...
to moral reason, through which he proclaimed his superiority over nature, marked his "spiritual Newbirth" to manhood (Carlyle 168). In a second crisis, Carlyle, in Teufelsdrockh, resisted the suggestion to "Eat and be filled" (184), i.e., to accept life in materialistic terms and to accept as a delusion the human superiority of moral freedom. In a moral act of self-renunciation, he renounced "happiness," or self-love, for "blessedness" (192), achieved in doing one's duty. He responded to the moral imperative of duty in becoming a writer. Carlyle, in Teufelsdrockh, would serve as the priest of the new mythus of literature for an unchanging religious principle. He began as a priest of transcendental idealism, or "natural supernaturalism" (254), in which the universe is "one vast symbol of God" (220) and in which nature, as the "Time-vesture of God...[.,]reveals Him to the wise..." (264). His religion evolved to Hegel's absolute idealism, in his belief that "all things wax and role onwards...ever completing," moving in a dialectic of creation, destruction and re-creation from the "filaments" of the old, towards the divine "Idea" (247). Carlyle, as the editor-narrator of Sartor Resartus and as Teufelsdrockh, suggests his office of priest of the religion of absolute idealism in the new mythus of literature. In the office of priest, he fulfills his moral duty. Eliot, influenced by Carlyle, would allude to the universe as one vast "utterance" of God (Haight, Gel, 1.279). She would also follow "duty" (1.30), as she explained to her father. To Trinity fellow, Fred Myers, writing for Century, November 1881, Eliot said that she clung to "duty" since "God" and "immortality" were "inconceivable" (Haight, Ge 464). She fulfilled that duty, as she wrote in her journal, 13 January 1875, by making a "contribution to Literature" (476). Like Carlyle, she served as priestess of a new literary mythus of the religious principle; she eventually saw writing as a "high and holy" calling (Dodd 271).

Eliot was also influenced by Mill, but only as he interpreted Comte's philosophy and looked forward to a positive stage of human knowledge. Like Eliot after him, Mill had studied Saint Simon's theory of the "natural order of human progress," which posited...
"organic periods" of service to a "positive creed," followed by "critical periods" of "criticism and negation" (Mill, Autobiography 115). Mill was also influenced by Comte's theory of the three stages of human knowledge, i.e., "the theological," "the metaphysical," and "the positive" or scientific (116), which he explained, and Eliot read, in his Logic. Mill hoped that a coming positive stage of "unchecked liberty of thought" and "unbounded freedom of action in all modes not hurtful to others" might harmonize the best aspects of the organic and critical stages of the Saint-Simonian theory (116). Mill accommodated his utilitarianism to idealism when he defended the validity of imaginative emotions, when he testified that man proves his superiority to nature through independent moral acts, and when he posited the "standard of morality" as the "end of human action" (Mill, "Utilitarianism" (238), implying a moral imperative. Though Eliot wrote, 13 August 1875, that Mill's works had made no "marked epoch in [her] life," in spite of their benefit (Haight, GEL 6.163) of elucidating Comte, she was influenced by Coleridge, Carlyle, and Mill in her allegiance to idealism, especially in the idea of a moral imperative, a belief which conflicted with Comte's positivism.

Eliot's consideration of different approaches to reality (i.e., the transcendental views of Coleridge and Carlyle, the Unitarian views of Hennell, the deterministic views of Bray, the higher criticism of Spinoza and Strauss, the positivist views of Comte, the idealism of Hegel, and the humanistic religion of Feuerbach) and her attempts to synthesize these views proves her search for a satisfying philosophical stance to fill the vacuum left by her renunciation of Christian doctrine. Hennell's Unitarianism, which held an "underlying reverence for reason," asserted that the Bible "must be interpreted rationally...because it came from God [who]...was rational (Dodd 90). Eliot proceeded from Hennell, who argued that "denial of the historical truth and supernatural inspiration of the Bible could exist alongside affirmation of the essential truths of Christianity" (91), to Bray, who argued for the recognition and obedience of the laws of consequence, to
Strauss, who argued against the "historical veracity of God-given truth in the gospel": while stressing the "positive [moral] aspects of {Christ's] teaching" (91). Strauss also agreed with the recognition of universal and moral laws of consequence that formed the basis of Comte's positivistic religion.

Through her acquaintance with the Brays and Hennells, Eliot met Rufa Brabant, and at Rufa's wedding to Charles Hennell, formed an attachment to Doctor Brabant, who exploited the naive and adoring Eliot. Brabant's irresponsibility toward Eliot, whom he called "Deutera" (Haight, GE 49), first in encouraging her devotion to him, then in passively allowing his jealous wife to send her away, forced her back to studying in isolation at her home, Birdgrove, in Foleshill. There she again plunged into intellectual work and, at Rufa Brabant's request, continued the translation of Strauss' work in higher criticism, Das Leben Jesu.

Eliot had prepared for the Strauss translation by translating Spinoza's Tractatus Theologicus Politicus and rereading Coleridge and Carlyle (Dodd 95). A pioneer in higher criticism, Spinoza had studied scripture with "scientific impartiality" to prove that "God could not intervene in Nature, for, according to the doctrine of Substance, God and Nature were one..." (95). Spinoza contrasted the religious laws, made by man, to God's eternal laws, ascertained by science, to argue that man need only obey the scientifically proved laws of God (96). Eliot struggled between the rationalistic and scientific determinism of Strauss and Spinoza, on the one hand, and the idealism of Coleridge and Carlyle, on the other, while recovering from a passive betrayal by Dr. Brabant.

While Eliot was admired and accepted by the Rosehill group, including the Brays and the Hennells, her emotional attachment to men evoked jealousy from her female acquaintances and eventually caused emotional conflict and isolation. Maria Lewis objected to her walking with Charles Bray "like lovers" (Haight, GE 52), and Sara
Hennell, whom Eliot endearingly called "spouse" (1.223), complained of Eliot's dependence on "the arm of a man" (52). When Eliot was ready to devote her life to Dr. Brabant, in an emotional and intellectual attachment reminiscent of her attachment to Isaac, Cara Bray saw Brabant only as a "vain little man of sixty-two" with a "pretense to learning" (49). After he proved his moral cowardice to Eliot, in tacitly blaming her when the jealous Mrs. Brabant's demanded Eliot's return to Foleshill (50), Eliot explained that her devotion to Brabant was simply an attempt to replace her lost "deity" (Haight, GEL 1.225). At home, where she again took refuge in her studies and continued Rufa's translation of Das Leben Jesu, from 1843-1846, as a "labor of love" (Dodd 84), she again won the admiration that soothed her wounded pride.

The course of Eliot's brief romance, while she translated Strauss' work and cared for her ailing father, suggested her need not only for an emotional attachment to the opposite sex but for admiration and intellectual fulfillment. When a young picture-restorer, whose company she enjoyed for two days at Bagington, found her "the most fascinating creature he had ever beheld" and "begged permission" from her brother to write to her, Eliot reacted at first with pleasure and excitement (Haight, GEL 1.183-84). However, when he visited her at Rosehill, she found him less interesting and decided that she could not "sacrifice...her mind" in marrying a man whom she could not sufficiently love or respect (Haight, GE 57). Though "wretched" with guilt over breaking off their correspondence, she assured Sara Hennell, as she had once tacitly assured Maria Lewis, that she had "no loves but those you can share with me--intellectual and religious ones" (Haight, GEL 1.185-86). Sara Hennell, whom Eliot called her "Gemahl" or husband (165), referring to their intellectual and spiritual unity, corrected the proofs as Eliot translated Strauss and was obviously essential to Eliot's self-assurance.

Eliot's reaction to Strauss' Das Leben Jesu proved her involvement with the translation and her continuing conflict between scientific rationalism and idealism. As
Strauss "dissected" the crucifixion account with his demythologizing empiricism and rationalism, Eliot complained of being "Strauss-sick" (1.206) and responded, not only in briefly loving the picture-restorer but in keeping beside her an image and a picture of the crucifixion (1.206). After she finished the translation, which was published by Chapman, sponsored by radical MP Joseph Parkes and Dr. Brabant, and paid her only twenty pounds without mentioning her name (Dodd 82), Eliot recovered from her revulsion toward Strauss' work by reading novels and religious and utopian works, before turning to Comte. Eliot's turn from higher criticism to the romantic realism of Dickens, Thackeray, and Sand, the transcendental idealism of Carlyle, the romanticism of Rousseau, the historical process of Saint Simon, and the religious biographies of Bianca White and John Foster (who both moved from Christian orthodoxy to heterodoxy in the "love of truth," Dodd 100), suggests her desire for belief at least in a moral imperative, similar to the desire of Coleridge, Carlyle, and Mill.

Eliot's interest in Comte suggests her attempt to synthesize scientific rationalism and idealism. Comte's positivism, explained in his Cours de Philosophie Positive and interpreted and introduced to Eliot in Mill's System of Logic, attempted to fuse empiricism and intuition, according to Dodd (115). His view, for which Eliot had been prepared in Bray's Philosophy of Necessity, held that since "laws governed the physical world and the inner life..." (115), personal freedom was founded upon insight into [and "submission to"] the laws of the universe, which science provided "..." (116). Comte's religion, based on his theory of universal laws, attempted to cultivate "the belief that 'true unity consists...in living for others" (117). Similarly, Comte's political system emphasized obligations or duties over rights (117-120), and would achieve harmony through the rule of a positivist elite, cultivating dutiful feelings in the public (117). Comte's interest in the cultivation of a sense of duty and obligation for harmony, based on obedience to scientific laws instead of scriptural imperatives, apparently interested Eliot. She was
content with neither scientific rationalism nor idealism but refused to reconsider Christianity. Content with her heterodox Rosehill friendships, she ended her friendship with Evangelical Christian, Maria Lewis.

Eliot would struggle between positivism and Hegelian idealism before combining both ideas with those of Feuerbach in her ideal for humanity. Dodd traces Eliot's interest in Hegel to her 1848 friendship with John Sibree of Coventry, who, after making Hegel "readable" to Eliot (121), forsook his preparation for the ministry (Haight, GE 64) when she challenged him to write and defend his "Confession of Faith" (Haight, GEL 1.255). In Carlyle and Comte, Eliot had already encountered the idea of history as process: for Carlyle, history moved toward the completion of the divine "Idea"; while for Comte, reworking the Saint-Simonian organic and critical stages, history and knowledge moved from the religious phase to the metaphysical or abstract phase to the positive or scientific phase. For Carlyle and Comte, as for Hegel, reality included a "non-material dimension" (Dodd 122).

Unlike Comte, Hegel associated reason and the "historical process" with "divine providence," since "what was intended by eternal wisdom is...accomplished in the domain of...active spirit" and in "nature"(123). Hegel's "Geist," or "absolute Spirit," or self-consciousness, was "concerned to know and realize its own nature" (124), a theory Eliot had encountered in both Coleridge's "I AM" and Carlyle's divine "Idea." In his dialectical process of history, Hegel included both "human progress, wherein the mind constantly moved toward perfect self-consciousness," and societal and religious progress, wherein society and religion struggled towards "perfection and freedom," as manifestations of the "Divine Essence" (125). Eliot discovered that for Hegel, as for Carlyle, the "quest for truth was endless," all truths were "incomplete" but "historically necessary" for their time of formulation (125), and human reason and progress were manifestations of
the divine.

Eliot was to struggle between Hegel's idea of truth as progress toward perfect self-consciousness and Comte's idea of moral duty based on scientific laws, and combine the two with Feuerbach's ideal of self-sacrificing love as the essence of divinity, in her human ideal. In her novels, she progressed toward an ideal for humanity, which she demonstrated in *Felix Holt*, *Middlemarch*, and *Daniel Deronda*. In these three novels, as male and female move toward more perfect self-consciousness, in their understanding of natural and moral law, they are able to transcend gender stereotypes to respond to a sense of duty, motivated by an impulse of love. As they form a whole person, completing each other's needs as well as their own, they find more perfect freedom to reach their full potential. As an image of divine love and duty, they have the potential to guide society toward greater self-consciousness and freedom, by awakening it to the workings of natural and moral law and encouraging its response in duty, motivated by self-giving love. Eliot completes her ideal in *Daniel Deronda*, in the union of Mirah and Daniel. For her human ideal, she combines positivism (i.e., contentment found in duty to moral law, based on the irrevocable workings of universal laws) and Feuerbach's humanism (i.e., self-sacrificing love as the essence of divinity) and envelopes them in a Hegelian dialectic of history (duty to moral law, based on an understanding of natural law and motivated by an impulse of self-giving love, as a response and means to greater self-consciousness and freedom for the gradual awakening of society).

While Eliot moved between Hegel's idea of truth as progress toward perfect self-consciousness and freedom and Comte's idea of moral duty based on scientific laws, she cared for her dying father and found temporary solace in Thomas a' Kempis. In losing her father, Eliot felt that she was losing not only "the one deep strong love [she had] ever known" (Haight, *GEL* 1.283) but "part of [her] moral nature" (284), especially as she lacked any religious belief. Her reading of Thomas a' Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, which...
postulated "true peace...in resignation, in renunciation of self" (Haight, GE 67), suggests her alignment with Comte's religion of positivism, which based duty and feeling on resignation to universal laws, as she resigned herself to her father's death. In the same way, Maggie Tulliver found, through the aid of Thomas a' Kempis' book, temporary peace in resignation to a joyless life.

In a sense of emotional isolation, Eliot formed a strong attachment to artist D'Albert Durade, at whose home she lived in Geneva during the winter of 1849-1850, where she had traveled with the Brays after her father's death (31 May 1849). Eliot's attachment to Durade, reminiscent of her attachment to Isaac Evans and Dr. Brabant, formed part of a continuing pattern as she searched for both emotional and intellectual completion with one whose wisdom she could respect as she had Isaac's, in her infant years. While Haight explains her pattern with men as beginning with intellectual friendship that expanded into misunderstood feelings (Haight, GE 52), she seemed rather to have responded with her whole being to the sympathetic and intellectually compatible male, to whom she was often unwittingly superior. While the phrenologist Combe, assessing the cast of her head, in 1843, attributed Eliot's dependence on men to the lack of spontaneity in the moral region of her brain to control the animal region (51), a more plausible explanation is found in Eliot's early attachment to Isaac for companionship and approval, which created an emotional and intellectual need or expectation.

Eliot's immediate "love" of Durade, "as if he were father and brother both" (Haight, GE 1.316), verifies the sense of need created in her early attachment to both Isaac and her father. She describes Durade as "not more than four feet high, with a deformed spine." and a "finely formed head." which, with the lines of his face, suggests "the temperament of an artist," and as having "excellent moral refinement" (1.316-17). Intellectually compatible with Eliot, he had been "educated for theology" but became an artist at twenty-one and, despite his conservative Evangelical beliefs, showed more
"culture" than did his English counterparts (1.314-15). Important for Eliot, Durade listened sympathetically to her vituperative reactions against Evangelical Christianity without judging her, and his wife displayed affection without jealousy. Eliot's long correspondence with Durade, which used the "familiar form" of French, through his wife's permission (Haight, GE 79), suggests an emotional and intellectual attachment between them, such as the attachment of Maggie Tulliver and Philip Wakem, when Maggie could no longer find companionship with her brother Tom. Ten years later, when Eliot wrote to Durade of her happiness with Lewes, that had enabled her to become an artist, she explained that her former antagonism to Evangelical Christianity had now been modified by her sympathy with any faith that showed a "longing for purity" (Haight, GEL 3.230-31). Her relationship with Durade had helped ease her emotional and religious conflict from the time of her father's death until her involvement with John Chapman, especially as Isaac had again made her feel unwanted (Haight, GEL 1.335).

Eliot's emotional and intellectual dependence on John Chapman was to make her vulnerable to the kind of gallantry, false rhetoric and exploitation encouraged in the gender ideologies, which she exposed and criticised in her novels. Their relationship began in October 1850, when Chapman visited Rosehill (where Eliot lived with the Brays) to ask Eliot to write a review of a book which he was about to publish, Robert Mackay's The Progress of the Intellect as Exemplified in the Religious Development of the Greeks and Hebrews. Eliot's review, which Chapman sent to the Westminster Review, proved her understanding of the philosophy of necessity and higher criticism and launched her career as a journalist and invisible partner of Chapman.

In her article, "The Progress of the intellect," Eliot suggests her sympathy with both positivism and Hegelian idealism in her statement, "the [process of] teaching...positive truth [as] the grand means of expelling error...will be...quickened if, by a survey of the past, it can be shown how each age and each race has had a symbolism suited to...
stage of development..." (Eliot 29). She explains Mackay's faith in "divine revelation" as "co-extensive with the history of human development," a Hegelian idea, and as operating according to "undeviating law in the material and moral world," a law of the invariability of sequence which is...the basis of physical science" and "which alone can give value to experience" (31), a Comtean idea. Like Bray and Comte, Mackay saw "human duty ...comprised" in studying and obeying this law, which made "religion and science inseparable" (31,32). Like the Higher Critics, he attributed mythology and religious symbolism to a"deification of the elements" or natural laws (37). Like Eliot, Mackay had found in Comte's religion of duty, based on scientific law, and in Hegel's historical process, as divine revelation, a temporary if conflicting answer in the search for truth. From a positivist and Hegelian slant, Eliot affirmed (by demonstrating) the suitability of each age's faith to its stage of development. Eager for her own next stage of development, Eliot took her article to London a month later for a trial stay at the Chapman House, where John Chapman and his family and boarders lived, where he carried on his bookpublishing business, and where he was soon to purchase and begin publishing and editing the Westminster Review.

While Eliot's philosophical stance and journalistic ability had won her the admiration and situation she coveted, Chapman, like Dr. Brabant, was to exploit her emotional and intellectual attachment. As assistant editor (without pay) and freelance writer for quarterly reviews, Eliot became Chapman's intellectual and emotional companion, in a repetition of her early attachment to Isaac. Besides editing for Chapman, writing articles, attending science lectures at the Royal Society and studying geometry at the women's college (Haight, GE 83), Eliot played Mozart for Chapman, tutored him in German and Latin, and conferred with him in her room. After three months, Susanna Chapman (John Chapman's wife) and Elizabeth Tilley (his mistress and his children's governess) insisted, in jealousy over one "indiscretion" (hand-holding) followed by
another (probably kissing), that Eliot leave. Since Chapman did not try to stop her, Eliot returned to Rosehill, the Brays' home, 24 March 1851.

The disparity between Eliot's and Chapman's emotional involvement was obvious in Chapman's willingness to let her depart and in his explanation that his feelings for her differed from his feelings for Susanna and Elizabeth, a revelation that caused Eliot to "burst into tears," as he recorded in his diary (Haight, GE&JC 22). Chapman's duplicitous and egotistical nature is exposed in his sketchy education, his escape from his apprenticeship as a watchmaker, his marriage to a woman fourteen years older than he and with a fortune large enough to buy him a publishing business, his subsequent criticism of her age and household management, his uncontrollable debts, his keeping a series of mistresses in his house, his manipulation of Eliot, and his diary detailing his feelings for the various women in his house and the torment he caused them. He admits his shame over his "life and deeds" in his Diary, 3 May 1851 (Haight, GE&JC 163).

Chapman's ineptitude in business brought about his self-defeating victory over the Booksellers Association. His ineptitude as a writer evoked Eliot's urgent suggestion that he maintain his "dignified relation" with contributors by editing instead of writing (213). His quackery in medicine produced his unscientific and bogus cures for cholera and women's diseases (in "spinal icebags") 114. His moral duplicity led to his series of mistresses and his dubious second marriage without ending his first (118).

Drawn to the intellectual enterprise of the Westminster Review, Chapman's progressive ideas (13), and his camaraderie and gallantry, Eliot failed to recognize the emotional and intellectual manipulation of this "handsome, confident, magnetic" man (10) and gratefully responded to his summons when he again solicited her help. Recognizing his professional dependence on Eliot, at the prospect of purchasing the Westminster Review in the fall of 1851, and needing an editor and writer who would work for the love of her labor, the love of her partner, and the price of her articles and
lodging, Chapman pursued Eliot in several visits to Rosehill, beginning in May 1851, in order to secure her services on a more professional footing. Intellectually superior and emotionally dependent in her desire to be accepted and admired, Eliot agreed to work with Chapman, i.e., to write his Analytical Catalogue of publications, to write articles on foreign literature, to choose and edit the other articles, and to write the "Prospectus" (31).

In writing the "Prospectus," Eliot proved her philosophical alignment with Bray and Comte, in necessity and positivism, as well as Carlyle and Hegel, in the progress of history. She explained that the WR would ""exhibit...that fearlessness of investigation and criticism which are the results of a considerable faith in the ultimate prevalence of truth"" (32-33). In her eagerness to prove her competence (and to please Chapman), Eliot skipped dinner to finish her prospectus the same evening he requested it (32).

Because of her honest devotion to Chapman, who adhered to the gender ideologies of the gallant, manipulative male and the beautiful, intellectually inferior female, Eliot again suffered the pain of rejection and again responded by devoting her energies to her work. At Leamington, where Chapman had taken her during his visit to solicit her work for the WR, he caused her to "weep bitterly" by speaking to her of the "incomprehensible mystery and witchery of beauty," then assumed in his diary that she wept "from a consciousness of her own lack of beauty" (172). Except for occasional loving notes to Chapman, Eliot resigned herself, in Comtean fashion, to his "beneficent affection," (38), visited London to make peace with Susanna Chapman and Elizabeth Tilley, and returned in September to live at Chapman House, 142 Strand, for two more years as editor (at the price of lodgings) and as journalist (137-40). Thrown into her work by the rejection of Chapman and the jealousy of his wife and mistress, Eliot gained the admiration of the London avant-garde and began to develop a new emotional attachment to Herbert Spencer, whom she had met at the Great Exhibition during her previous conciliatory visit to London (Haight, GE 112) and to whom she turned her devotion during Chapman
and Spencer’s war with the Booksellers Association.

To Herbert Spencer, editor of the Economist and author of books and articles on science, particularly on the theory of evolution, Eliot would again respond with emotional and intellectual devotion and would again be rejected because she failed to meet society's standards of the feminine ideal, i.e., beauty and intellectual inferiority. Despite their constant companionship in attending the theater and opera and discussing theories and articles (he had agreed to contribute his "A Theory of Population" to the WR, GE&IC 48), and despite their intellectual compatibility and her "womanly qualities and manner" (Haight, GE 113), Spencer attributed his inability to love and marry Eliot to her lack of beauty (Haight, GE&IC 49).

Spencer betrayed his dishonesty or lack of moral substance, setting, with Chapman, a pattern for Captain Wybrow (of "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story"), Tito Melema (of Romola), Mr. Jermyn and Harold Transome (of Felix Holt). In his "Personal Beauty" essays, Spencer illustrated ugliness by describing features from Eliot's face, then dishonestly argued "a necessary relationship between ugly features and inferiority of intellect and character." while keeping Eliot's photograph in his bedroom until he died (Haight, GE 115). Though to Eliot he blamed his resistance to marriage on a lack of money, he remained single even after inheriting his father's estate and asserting the unnaturalness and injuriousness of bachelorhood (119). Dodd suggests his intellectual and emotional insecurity by noting his "intellectual isolation," his "seizing cardinal truths rather than... accumulating detailed information"(137), his continuing to ask for Eliot's assistance with his Psychology, and his contradicting his companionship with Eliot in his writing (in his 1861 Education) that "men cared little for the erudition in women but very much for beauty" (178). Apparently unsure of his feelings in regards to women or Eliot, he contradicted his 1852 Social Statics position that woman is an "independent being who ought to be treated in every respect as the equal to man" (Haight, GE&IC 48) when, in
his 1873 *Principles of Ethics*, he insisted on women's "duty to marry to perpetuate the race and [prevent] the evils associated with celibacy" (Dodd 172-73). His own resistance to marriage and accompanying ailments (i.e., heart palpitations 119) betrayed his conflicts.

Even in rejection, Eliot transcended the feminine ideology by continuing her friendship and work with Spencer, as she had with Chapman, but suffered visibly. Though rejected by Chapman and Spencer, she deprecated herself in a letter to Chapman from Broadstairs, calling herself his "wretched helpmate" because of her inability to do more for him as an editor. She wished that he could afford to hire an editor that followed her beliefs, i.e., the "necessity that a nobler presentation of humanity [than J. Martineau's idea of Free Will, Theism, "manhood as a type of god head," and "Christ as the Ideal Man"] was yet to be given in resignation to individual nothingness..." (Haight, *GE&JC* 59). Eliot resigned herself to nothingness in her letter to the Brays, 27 April 1852, saying that "we [she and Spencer] have agreed that we are not in love with each other and that there is no reason why we should not have as much of each other's society as we like" (Haight, *GEL* 2.22). By May, she wrote of her "calm new relationship" with Spencer and of their "delightful camaraderie in everything" (2.29), a camaraderie that she would give to Dorothea and Chettam (Haight, *GE* 117), in *Middlemarch*, but at Dorothea's insistence. In June 1852, Eliot inferred Spencer's reluctance to be thought engaged to her, as he would only accept an invitation to the Brays at Broadstairs if she was already with them, not traveling with him. She refers to the world's idea of their engagement as a "most disagreeable thing" (Haight, *GEL* 2.35). Spencer's apparent revelation to Eliot at Broadstairs, of the "importance of physical beauty" (Haight, *GE&JC* 68), similar to Chapman's Leamington revelation of the "witchery of beauty," evoked depression when Eliot returned from the coast of Kent to Chapman House. Though she described her living conditions as oppressive, expressed her desire to leave, and complained of "violent headaches and sickness" (Haight, *GE* 123), she continued in her self-resignation to duty.
Instead of leaving, she moved to Chapman's "light and pleasant" room (Haight, GE&JC 68) from her own dark room.

Eliot's emotional conflict between her devotion to Spencer and the pain of his rejection was complicated by anxiety over her family and appeared in her emotional symptoms and in her frequent trips. She had complained to Sara Hennell, 2 September 1852, of a "croaking mood" that prevented her writing (Haight, GEL 2.53) and of a "feeling like the madness which imagines that the four walls are contracting and are going to crush one" (2.54). After completing the October WR, Eliot took frequent trips--to visit the Combes and Harriet Martineau in Scotland, the Brays at Foleshill, her sister Chrissy in Meriden, with repeated visits in February, as Chrissey, a widow with six children and a model for Maggie's sister in The Mill on the Floss, depended on Isaac's chary mercy. Though she longed to leave the WR and the jealousy at the Chapman House, Eliot stayed on, believing that "it would be a great deal worse if [she] were not there" (2.88).

By March 1853, Eliot began to find the resolution of her emotional and intellectual conflicts in her friendship with G. H. Lewes. On 20 March she wrote of feeling "better than I was" (2.95), and by 28 March, she wrote to Sara Hennell, "Lewes, as always, genial and amusing....has quite won my liking in spite of myself" (2.94). Eliot's rejection by Spencer, which plunged her into her work, allowed her to respond to the wit and brilliance of G. H. Lewes, writer for the Leader and contributor to the WR.

With George Henry Lewes, Eliot would experience the emotional and intellectual camaraderie that she needed, regardless of cultural gender stereotypes and expectations, and would eventually find a solution to her intellectual conflict. After frequent allusions to Lewes in letters from April to December, Eliot asked Mr. Chapman why he had told Miss Martineau of seeing the proofs of Mr. Lewes' book in her [Eliot's] room, an incident that she found "gratuitous" and "naughty" (2.133) but which suggested their closeness and
their work together as well as Lewes' replacement of Spencer in her admiration.

Eliot's first impression of Lewes, when she was introduced to him in Jeff's Bookshop, October 1851, resembled the impressions of most Londoners who knew him, and responded to cultural stereotyping. She described him as "a sort of miniature Mirabeau in appearance" (1.367), and found him "very unattractive-looking, short, slightly built" with hands "full of nervous expression,...in constant motion" (Haight, GE 127). Known for his "immense ugliness." Lewes was referred to as "Ape" because of his narrow jaw and wide cheekbones and brow" (129). With his "pale...deeply pocked face," "straight nose with large nostrils, full red lips, struggling mustaches," long "light brown curly hair," and large expressive eyes (129), Lewes was considered vulgar by some and amusing by others, like Mrs. Carlyle, who attributed his "impudence" to "man-of-genius bonhomie" (129). Many of Lewes' characteristics found their way into Eliot's androgynous males, including Tryan, Seth Bede, Tito Melema, and Will Ladislaw.

Lewes' education, intellectual versatility, and interest in philosophical and gender issues would make him not only "genial and amusing" to the despondent Eliot but sensitive to her emotional, intellectual and gender conflicts and capable of assisting her in her poetry and fiction. Born in London of a theater family, he had attended school in "Boulogne, Brittany and St. Helier" (Dodd 201), learned Greek and Latin in the Greenwich seminary, worked in a notary's office and a counting house, studied medicine, and turned to literature in London (Haight, GE 127). Lewes had discussed philosophy with William Scott Bell, had made Carlyle his unofficial teacher, and had acquired a "political...and intellectual radicalism" among the "educated artisans" at a Holborn club, particularly from the Jewish watchmaker Cohen, who had introduced him to Spinoza's works (Dodd 201-202). Like Eliot, Lewes had translated Spinoza's works and had accepted an "ethical heterodoxy" (202). Acquiring Leigh Hunt, Carlyle, and J. S. Mill as mentors, Lewes, like Eliot, had read Coleridge, Carlyle, and Mill: he had also studied Hegel in
Germany and had written of the "Aristocracy of the intellect" as a replacement for the "aristocracy of birth" (263-64). By the time Lewes met Eliot, he had written *A Biographical History of Philosophy* in four volumes (204); the novels *Ranthorpe*, defining "the imaginative writer's role" (211), and *Rosc, Blanch, and Violet*, distinguishing "between women as they really were and the idealized picture of women which appeared in novels" (210); the *Life of Robespierre*, examining the distance between "mental notions" of reality and the "complex nature of reality itself" (217); the *Spanish Drama*, a tragedy in blank verse (Haight, GE, 127), proving Lewes' ability to assist Eliot in her composition of *Spanish Gypsy*, and a number of articles on different subjects (127), including the art of the novel. Lewes wrote the literary section of the *Leader*, a weekly newspaper which he had founded with Thornton Hunt (son of Leigh Hunt, who had encouraged Lewes' writing career), and contributed articles to the *WR*, including summaries of French books for the "Contemporary Literature" section, during Eliot's editorship (128).

A few people, besides Eliot, detected Lewes' intellect, wit, and sensibility. According to Mrs. Linton, Lewes "produced an aura of 'intellectual sunshine' and was 'well-informed upon...a wide variety of subjects, full of various anecdote; and an admirable mimic; it was impossible to be dull in his company'" (Dodd 219). Commenting on Lewes' character, Spencer found him to be a "most kindly, genial, guileless person and with versatility and accomplishment that made him a miracle" (219). These intellectual characteristics would also figure into a number of Eliot's male characters, especially Felix Holt and Will Ladislaw.

Despite Lewes' versatile career as a journalist, novelist, playwright-actor, and lecturer, his resistance to the gender ideology of the aggressive, manipulative male had resulted in his exploitation, with subsequent depression equal to Eliot's, at the time of their growing friendship. Because Lewes had legally adopted Agnes' (his wife's) first
illigitimate child by his friend and partner Thornton Hunt, he could not divorce Agnes when she gave birth to three more of Hunt's children. Rather, he found himself financially responsible not only for Agnes and for his own four children but for Hunt's four as well. Because he and Agnes had believed in "free love," in the idea that "love could not be constrained" (Haight, GE 130), he "did not blame Agnes" for following "her feelings" (131). By the time he met Eliot, Lewes was living through a "dreary wasted period of...life," void of ambition (Dodd 221). He would encourage Eliot's writing because even though he wrote that "maternity" is a woman's "distinctive characteristic, ...a high and holy office," he defended "woman's intellectual powers" and felt that society had "never given 'fair play to [women's] capabilities" (221-22).

As Eliot and Lewes grew closer through their mutual acquaintance, Spencer, and their involvement at the WR and the Chapman House, they found emotional and intellectual completion in each other, as they transcended gender ideologies and stereotypes. Since Lewes' office was "just around the corner" from Chapman House, Lewes often accompanied Spencer to visit Eliot, and on one of these occasions he stayed when Spencer left (Haight, GE 128). Lewes began to attend the evening parties at Chapman House, where the avant-garde thinkers and writers gathered, and Eliot wrote of his visiting her for two hours on 20 November 1852, her thirty-third birthday (Haight, GEL 2.68). By September 1853, Eliot had decided to leave Chapman House (2.116) in order to spend more time with Lewes, as he had told her of his unhappy marriage, according to Haight's conjecture (GE 134). Her move to 21 Cambridge Street, Hyde Park, 11 October 1853, began her union with Lewes, according to the Eliot biographer Oscar Browning, as recorded by Haight (134). This change would explain her improved physical and emotional health, mentioned in her 3 November 1853 letter to the Brays (Haight, GEL 1.153), as well as her rapprochement with religion, evident in her letter to Sara Hennell on 22 October 1853 and her letter to Charles Bray 29 October 1853. In her letter to Sara
Hennell, she praises Leigh Hunt's "The Religion of the Heart," which discusses, among other works, Hennell's Christian Theism in its reconciliation of "Pagan and Christian philosophy" (2.120). In her letter to Bray, she praises the Dean of Hereford, a clergyman who mingled the "middle and lower classes in school" and had "so intelligent and benignant" a face that "children might grow good by looking at it" (2.121). Her attachment to Lewes resolved her emotional conflict (with the fear of male rejection), intellectual conflict (with Christianity), and gender conflict (with gender ideologies).

Eliot's union with Lewes and her consideration of a more human-centered religion were influenced by her re-reading of Ludwig Feuerbach's The Essence of Christianity in 1853, which she would translate from January to June of 1854 for publication by Chapman and with whose ideas she said, "I everywhere agree" (2.153). From Feuerbach, Eliot learned that in loving and serving man, one loves and serves God, since, for Feuerbach, God is nothing more than man's ideals of perfection objectified and personified. Feuerbach proposes that since the "object of any subject is...the subject's own nature taken objectively," the "consciousness of God is self-consciousness" and the "knowledge of God is self-knowledge" (Feuerbach 12). From this proposition, Feuerbach explains the Christian religion as the "relation of man to himself, or...to his own [subjective] nature...viewed as a nature apart from himself" (14). Within that religion, "the divine nature is nothing else than the human being, or...the human nature purified, freed from the limits of the individual man, made objective" (14). Since [a]ll the attributes of the divine nature are...attributes of the human nature" (14), the "fullness of the divine predicates" can be attributed to the "infinite variety of human nature" (23). Feuerbach's religion would have appealed to Eliot in his distinguishing "The True or Anthropological Essence of Religion" from "The False or Theological Essence of Religion" and in his explaining the "vital elements of religion," as "those which make man [not God] an object to man" (44). In the true essence of religion, "Love is God...and apart from it there is no God";
therefore, "Love is the true unity of God and man" (48). Since the attributes of the divine nature are those of the human nature objectified, the study of religion becomes the study of "psychology" (Dodd 184). The image of the suffering Christ, then, proves man's recognition that suffering for others is good, is "divine" (Feuerbach 60).

Feuerbach's position on love influenced Eliot's decision to live with Lewes as his wife. Having rejected Christianity, Eliot agreed with Feuerbach that "If human nature is the highest nature to man then ...the highest and first law must be the love of man to man" (271). Having accepted Comte's idea of resignation to natural law in duty, Eliot agreed with Feuerbach that "true human love...impels the sacrifice of the self to another" (53) and (according to Haight's interpretation) "finds its expression in the sexual relation, the frankest recognition of the divine in nature" (Haight, GE 137). Eliot also agreed with Feuerbach that only marriage held together by a "free bond of love," rather than "a merely external restriction," was a "truly moral marriage" and that it was made sacred by the "nature of the union...therein affected" (Feuerbach 271). Recognizing their emotional and intellectual need and completion of each other and agreeing with Feuerbach that "man" is the end of religion" (184), that self-sacrifice is impelled by human love, that love demonstrates itself in physical union, and that a moral and true marriage is bound by the self-restriction of love, Eliot and Lewes felt free to live in a true marriage without violating their sense of morality.

Eliot demonstrated her self-sacrificing love to Lewes in her commitment to his work and well-being at the expense of her own reputation. She wrote his literary reviews for the Leader (Haight, GE 141), as he was neurologically ill, suffering from headaches (Haight GE 2.157-59). Eliot also sacrificed her name and place in conventional society by traveling with Lewes, as his wife, to Germany, where they remained from July 1854 until March 1855 (Haight, GE 147) and then by living with him in England. As partners, they supported each other emotionally and intellectually; i.e., she assisted him in
translating German, doing scientific research, proofing texts, and supporting his family, while he assisted her with research for novels and encouragement in novel-writing.

Though Haight attributes their union to "love and pity" and a rejection of the religious doctrine that forbade their union (145), one could equally attribute their union to love and respect, recognition of their perfect fit, common labor, and belief in the morality and sacredness of their union. Anticipating the shock that their elopement would cause her friends, Eliot told only Charles Bray of their intentions (147) and wrote a good-by note, with their destination, to the Brays and Sara Hennell on 19 July 1854, the eve of their departure from England to Germany (Haight, GEL. 2.166).

That their departure together created scandal among their enlightened and progressive friends seems especially ironic in light of the indiscretions or double lives of Charles Bray, John Chapman, and Thornton Hunt and confirms Himmelfarb's theory that morality, at least outward conformity to moral standards, increased in importance with the decline of Christianity, as an assurance against social chaos (Himmelfarb 21).

Though Sara Hennell resumed correspondence after receiving Eliot's explanatory letter, Cara Bray broke off their correspondence after a letter of "protest" (Haight, GE 155), trying hard to make her own marriage conform, outwardly at least, to traditional standards of morality.

In spite of the emotional conflict evoked by her departure with Lewes (they "paced" the deck of their ship all night, as Maggie and Stephen Guest were to do in The Mill on the Floss, 148), their union benefitted, by completing, each. Gillian Beer explains the advantage of their illegitimate marriage in their "constant and sustained commitment of themselves at a level less quiescent than that without marriage..." (7). Lewes likened his life, after meeting Eliot, to a "'new birth,'" saying "'To her I owe all my prosperity and all my happiness'" (Dodd 229). Adam Bede was to have the same experience after learning of Dinah's love for him. Eliot, similarly, wrote to Bray from Weimar, 16 August 1854,
"I have had a month of exquisite enjoyment, and seem to have begun life afresh. I am really strong and well and have recovered the power of learning in spite of age and grey hairs" (Haight, GEL 2.171). Her sense of completion in Lewes is evident in her letter to Chapman, 30 August 1854: "I am happier every day and find my domesticity more and more delightful and beneficial to me. Affection, respect, and intellectual sympathy deepen..." (2.173). Eliot proves her respect for Lewes in her letter to Charles Bray, in which she defends Lewes' responsibility to his wife Agnes and the children. She calls his "conduct as a husband not only irreproachable, but [immeasurably] generous and self-sacrificing" (2.179), and she explains that even though he has determined to separate from his wife because of "circumstances...not involving [her, Eliot]," he will continue his responsibilities to his wife (2.178).

The "parallel...experiences and interests" (Dodd 230), that allowed for the growth of emotional and intellectual sympathy between Eliot and Lewes, liberated them from the fear of losing their social position, and allowed them to criticize each other's work, in freedom from the roles of the gender ideology. Because of Robert Evans' work as a land agent and the Lewes family's life in the theater, both Eliot and Lewes were "de classe," both had received an unusual education, both embraced causes of "political radicalism and freedom of inquiry," both had written on Strauss, and both were interested in German idealism and Comte's positivism (230). Lewes had also"defended the right of women to citizenship in the Republic of Letters" (230) and submitted his articles to Eliot's editing.

In their partnership, each felt emotionally secure enough to disagree with the other and intellectually encouraged enough to develop as a writer. Since Eliot had written her "Progress of the Intellect" on Mackay's book, she could help Lewes revise his proofs of August Comte's Philosophy of Science, in which Lewes proved his philosophical disagreement with Comte and Eliot. While Lewes suggested the "value of a non-sectarian religion" to "satisfy man's intellectual and moral being," he "disagreed with
Comte's [and Eliot's] 'Religion of Humanity,' since he believed "there must still remain...the other sphere named Infinite, into which our...aspiring thoughts will wander" (Dodd 236). While Eliot would have agreed with Lewes and Comte in the "possibility of establishing a new faith once orthodox belief had been relinquished" (237), and while she would have agreed with Lewes that Comte "underestimated the complexity of the human personality and the power of the imagination" (238-39), she would have agreed with Feuerbach that the Infinite was simply a reflection of man's desire for perfection. Eliot began to contribute articles to the WR, at Chapman's request (Haight, GEL 2.172), beginning with "Woman of France: Madam de Sable,'" which explained her beliefs about the special capacities of women. She also translated Goethe, for Lewes (Haight, QE 170), and Spinoza's Ethics, never published because Lewes disagreed with the publisher (200).

Even after their return to England, Eliot's emotional conflict over rejection by her friends and conventional society, for her scandalous union with Lewes, had dissipated in her contentment with Lewes and in her continued work for Chapman. Staying alone at Dover for five weeks, while Lewes tended to family and financial responsibilities, she felt a sense of calm and contentment over her situation in spite of her "anxieties" over Lewes' affairs (Haight, GEL 2.196), i.e., his finding a school for his sons' continued education and borrowing money to pay Agnes' debts (Haight, QE 177). Eliot was also content with her "unsensual" intimacy with Lewes, his "delightful manner" with her, and their practice of birth control, as she explained to her visiting feminist friend, Barbara Leigh Smith, July 1856 (205). Such an intimate relationship, free from the fear of pregnancy, allowed Eliot to continue her own androgynous life as an admired intellectual and writer (responsible for the "Belles Lettres" section of the WR for fifty pounds a year 179), secure in an emotional attachment reminiscent of her Edenic union with Isaac. Haight describes their move to Bayswater lodgings as the "formal beginning of their marriage," since Eliot would return to London as Lewes' wife only after Agnes' declared...
intention never to reunite with Lewes (179). They soon moved to East Sheen for five months, then to Richmond for three and a half years. (179).

Eliot's critical articles for the WR, after returning to England from Germany with Lewes, proves her continuing animosity toward Evangelical Christians and the established Church. In her letter to Cara Bray, 12 January 1852, three years earlier, she had satirized a clergyman as a "coated animal" whose "white neckcloth and mincing voice" convinced her that he was "one of those exceedingly tame brutes, the clergy" (Haight, GEL 2.3). In her article of 24 August 1855, three years later, entitled "Evangelical Teaching" Dr. Cumming," she claims to write in the belief that "Criticism of clerical teaching [is] desirable for the public good" (Eliot 162).

The article suggests a relation between Eliot's ongoing antagonism with Christianity and her resentment over her previous intellectual naivety, even an attempt to exorcise her guilt over associating with Evangelicals. She begins "Evangelical Teaching: Dr. Cumming," (i.e., "minister of the Scottish National Church, Crown Court, Covent Garden, from 1832 to 1879" and "interpreter of Bible prophecy," Pinney 158), by describing the potential "evangelical preacher" as a "Goshen of mediocrity in which a smattering of science and learning will pass for profound instruction, where platitudes will be accepted as wisdom, bigoted narrowness as holy zeal, unctuous egotism as God-given piety" (Eliot 160). Her description seems to criticise her own non-intellectual bent at the Nuneaton and Miss Franklins' schools and at Griff. She suggests that materialism taints the Evangelical minister's dogmatic piety when she describes him as being "stringent for predestination but latitudinarian on fasting; unflinching on the Eternity of punishment, but diffident on curtailing the comforts of time..." (160). Eliot's aversion to dogma and her belief in the spontaneity of self-sacrificing love led her to insist that he shows "no delight in God" but in the "forensic view of Justification" and that he insists on "good works as a sign of justifying faith" and "as labours to be achieved to the glory of
God" rather than as "the spontaneous...outflow of...Divine love" (162). This criticism perhaps judges her own former motives for charity.

From the position of higher critic, Eliot especially attacks the Evangelical's tendency to trust dogma over scientific investigation. She attributes Cumming's lack of veracity to the "intellectual and moral distortion" produced by giving to "dogmas" the authority of "first truth" (167). She blames the doctrine of "verbal inspiration" for the "arrest of scientific investigation and truth" (167). Eliot proves her alignment with higher criticism and the philosophies of necessity, positivism, and humanistic materialism in seeing the "end of the Gospel" as "not merely the saving but the education of men's souls, the creating within them of holy dispositions, the subduing of egoistical dispositions" (181). As a substitute for the dogma which, she believes, perverts moral judgment in "all evangelical believers," Eliot calls for "faith in the result of the...honest...use of all [the] faculties": she calls that result the "process of truth-finding" (187), a Hegelian idea. Fearing that the impact of this article would be weakened if its author were known to be a "woman," Eliot asked Bray not to reveal her authorship (Haight, GEL 2.218).

Eliot's authorship remained anonymous for other articles criticizing Christian orthodoxy, including "German Wit: Henrich Heine," January 1856. In this article, Eliot deprecates the belief that Heine "recanted all his heresies" and converted to Catholicism or Protestantism, each "by turns claiming him as a convert" (Eliot 243). She attributes the "varying impressions" of his Christian beliefs to his "love of mystification" (243), and she attributes his "irreverence" to the "pressure of pain and mental deprivation" (245) from his "terrible spinal disease" (241). She refuses to concede to the idea of his conversion to Christianity.

Three more of Eliot's articles--"Thomas Carlyle" (a review of Thomas Ballantyne's Passages Selected from the writings of Thomas Carlyle), 27 October 1855, for the Leader: "Introduction to Genesis" (a review of James Heywood's Introduction to the
Book of Genesis), 12 January 1856 for the Leader; and "Worldliness and Other-Worldliness: The Poet Young" (a critique of the works of the eighteenth-century Evangelical clergyman-poet Edward Young), 1857 for the WR--suggest Eliot's antagonism toward her old beliefs and her desire to replace them with a more intellectually palatable belief. In "Thomas Carlyle," Eliot proves her belief in truth as process rather than dogma and her renewed sympathy with Carlyle's idealism. She posits the "most effective writer," like the most effective educator, not as the one who "convinces men of a particular conclusion" but the one who "rouses in others the activities that...issue in discovering" and "nerves their energies to seek for the truth..." (Eliot 213). She posits Carlyle as "such a writer" (213). In writing of Carlyle, she may have been considering her own aims as a writer. Her recognition of a moral imperative toward duty and of truth's revelation as a process suggests her continued movement between the positivism of Comte and the absolute idealism of Hegel.

In Eliot's "Introduction to Genesis," Eliot distinguishes among "[e]xtreme orthodoxy, ...mitigated orthodoxy, [and]...[e]xtreme heterodoxy" (Eliot 255-57). Since she had already renounced "extreme orthodoxy," whose adherent "in explaining everything so as to make it accord with his premis [of divine inspiration] is not an inquirer but an advocate" (256), she would continue to wrestle between "mitigated orthodoxy" and "extreme heterodoxy." The adherent of "mitigated orthodoxy" (or "mild heterodoxy"), believes that the Deity accommodates his revelation to the "degree of culture that belongs to men at the time his revelations are made," the view expounded in Dr. Pye Smith's Relation Between the Holy Scriptures and Some Parts of Geological Science (256), which Eliot read when she and her father first moved to Foleshill from Griff. This stance, which views the scriptures as fallible but as "a medium of special revelation," necessary "to preserve monotheism and prepare the way for the Christian dispensation" (257), had helped move Eliot toward a more extreme heterodoxy. "Extreme heterodoxy," at the
basis of higher criticism and the theory of Feuerbach, places Hebrew scriptures in "the common category of early national records," which combine myth and legend, and gradually clarifies them into history (257). It examines the Old Testament with a "a freedom from presuppositions," submitting them unreservedly to "historical criticism" (257), and finds in them "a mythical cosmogony, an impossible chronology, and extravagant marvels tending to flatter national vanity or to aggrandize a priesthood..." (258). Eliot's antagonism toward Evangelicals suggests her resentment toward her former naiveté in extreme orthodoxy, characteristic of "girlish miseducation" in general (Haight, GEL 1.123). In her heterodoxy, however, she had not resolved a conflict between the mild heterodoxy in the idealism of Hegel and Carlyle and the extreme heterodoxy in positivism and in Feuerbach's materialistic humanism.

Eliot's most vituperative article, "Worldliness and Other-Worldliness: The Poet Young," whose "Night Thoughts" had enthralled her as a student at the Miss Franklins' school and at Griff, proves her attempt to exonerate herself from a religiously orthodox and unintellectual past, associated with the education of women. She describes Young as a "cross between a sycophant and a psalmist" who, "after spending 'a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets,'...after being a hanger-on of the profligate Duke of Wharton, after aiming in vain at a parliamentary career, and angling for pensions and preferments with fulsome dedications and fustian odes," decided to "retire from the general mendicancy business to a particular branch" in "taking orders" (Eliot 337). Eliot hints at Young's moral duplicity in his languishing "at once for immortal life and for livings" (337) and in his thinking that "If it were not for the prospect of immortality, it would be wise and agreeable to be indecent or to murder one's father" (337-38). She finds an indication of his "moral personality" in the way he opposes the sinners' "groans of hell" with the believers' "shouts of joy" at the "last judgment" (377) and believes he "enjoys turning the key" on those condemned to the "sulphureous abode" (377). She concludes by
finding in Young a deficiency of "human sympathy," an "impiety towards the present and visible, which flies for its motives,...and its religion, to the remote...and the unknown..." (385). While Eliot's criticism of Young's "religion, which exhausts itself in ejaculations and rebukes" (337), applies to her own former pietistic rhetoric, her criticism of Young's "impiety towards the present and visible" suggests her conflict between beliefs in "natural supernaturalism" and naturalism.

Eliot's philosophical position had been influenced, after Feuerbach, by her translation of Spinoza's Ethics and her translation of Goethe for Lewes' biography of Goethe, before she returned to London in 1855. For Spinoza, "spiritual perfection" was reached through efforts to "know God" by understanding universal laws, and "ethical perfection was expressed in ...acts which...obeyed the laws and labored for the good of others out of a reverence for life" (Dodd 252). For Goethe, Christ was "a symbol of moral excellence," and Christianity was a synthesis of "feeling and action" (259). Reading Spinoza and Goethe, Eliot was still struggling between the idea that natural and moral laws were the reflection of the Infinite (the view of Hegel, Coleridge, and Carlyle) and the idea that natural and moral laws were the same as the Infinite (the view of Spinoza, Strauss, Comte and Feuerbach), between Christ as the ideal for mankind and Christ as a symbol of humanity's desire for perfection. Combining both ideas, Eliot maintained her belief in the inexorable laws of consequence as a basis of moral duty, in moral duty motivated by self-giving love, in the union of male and female in self-giving love and duty as the highest ideal, and in their power to move society toward perfection through self-awareness.

Eliot decided to turn from writing translations and scholarly articles to writing novels as a result of reading Carlyle, Goethe, and the romantic realists: the influence of Lewes, Chapman and Spencer; her own fictional bent; and her desire to forge a new belief for society that would, at the same time, exorcize her own emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts. Carlyle, in Eliot's beloved Sartor Resartus, had posited the novelist...
as the priest of the "new [literary] mythus" of the "religious principle" (Carlyle 194) in a new society that was rising Phoenix-like from the ashes of the old society, destroyed by the Utilitarians (233-34). Similarly, Goethe (in Lewes' biography of Goethe) had "granted art a high status, seeing it as a means of interpreting the world, as a discipline as stringent as science and as one productive of important knowledge" (Dodd 261). Blending "Goethe's views with his own," Lewes refused to classify writers "as either realist or idealist" since "material reality" was "infused with the divine": he insisted that art express "real experience" (265). Using the novel to synthesize her own conflicting philosophical views, Eliot would prove Lewes' contention that art performs "the functions of philosophy better than philosophy itself" in its ability "to express an eclectic mode of perception ...and to reflect life's complexity" (Dodd 267).

From her earliest reading of Scott's Waverley, followed later by the reading of other Scott novels, Eliot had developed a bent for romantic realism. After beginning her own romance at the Miss Franklins' school (Haight, GE 15), she later expressed a desire to write a novel, a desire to which Sara Hennell referred (Haight, GEL 1.61) and Eliot called a "vague dream" (Haight, GEL 2.406).

Dodd attributes Eliot's decision to write fiction to her happiness with Lewes (271), as does Beer (9), and to the influence of Chapman, Spencer, and Lewes, who believed in the novel's "potentially important form" (Dodd 271). Each believed with Comte that "speculation should culminate in a contemplation of humanity," which, Dodd explains, is the "traditional concern of the novel" (271). In that belief, Chapman asked Lewes to write an article erecting a standard of criticism by which to judge novels as works of art with "refining and moral influences" (272). From 1852-1853, under the editorship of Eliot and Chapman, the WR "consistently argued for the reform of fiction" (272).

Lewes' efforts, with which Eliot must have collaborated as editor and which influenced Eliot's decision to write fiction, appeared in the October 1853 article, "The
Progress of Fiction as an Art," analyzed here by Valerie Dodd. The article blames the "chaos in the art of fiction" on the "intellectual atmosphere" of society (272). Believing that "positivist tendencies" will bring progress in fiction, the article praises the "analytical method" in novel-writing and argues the novelist's "duty to present an unbiased, comprehensive...view of reality" not narrowed to a "sordid" vision (272). The article makes "deep study and long preparation," combined with efforts to "enlarge the domain of thought" and the "imaginative and moral sympathies," the prerequisite for perfection in novel-writing (272). Such efforts insure a "didactic" purpose in the "aesthetic arrangement" of the work (272). Since the "highest type" of novelists would use elevating and improving "models," their mission becomes "high and holy" (273).

Eliot would carry forward this theory of the novel, as a serious work of art capable of moral influence, and of the artist, as a type of priest or prophet, in three articles of her own: her April 1856 review of Ruskin's Modern Painters Volume III; her July 1856 article, "The Natural History of German Life," and her October 1856 article, "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists." In her review of Ruskin's work, which also appears in her notebook (GE: A Writer's Notebook), Eliot speaks of "realism" as the "truth" of Ruskin's teaching that has "infinite value," and defines it as "that doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature..." (Eliot 273).

Eliot's "The Natural History of German Life," in which she reviews two books by Wilhelm Heinrich von Riehl, was written during a summer at Ilfracombe and Tenby, where she assisted Lewes with his scientific investigation for his Sea-Side Studies; it suggests her increasing "respect for the value of scientific investigation and the weight of fact" (Pinney 266), a respect she had learned as a child in her natural world with Isaac. Her article criticizes the unrealistic and sentimental picture of the peasantry and working class presented by artists and social political theorists. She attributes the "prejudice" of the "artistic mind" to its looking "for its subjects into literature instead of life" (Eliot
269), and she criticizes the "transcendent...unreality" of even Dickens' characters (271). She calls the false view of the laborer pernicious and explains that "we want to be taught to feel, not for the heroic artisan or the sentimental peasant, but for the peasant in all his coarse apathy, and the artisan in all his suspicious selfishness" (271). In pointing to the work of Riehl, she considers the invaluable aid, to the English "social and political reformer," of such a book, one that would give the result of "observations...well nourished with specific facts" on "the natural history of our social classes, especially of the small shopkeepers, artisans, and peasantry" (273). Such a "[t]rue conception of the popular character" would "guide...sympathies rightly" and "check...theories and direct...their application" (272). Her insistence that study precede fiction-writing if it is to be serious art, capable of guiding the imaginative and moral sympathies, suggests the high office of novelists, placing them among Comte's elite or Carlyle's priests of literature. Such a view she would apply to her own works.

Eliot's article "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" also suggests the "high and holy" position of artists, or novelists, in their capacity to depict and guide society. Eliot deprecates the "mind and millinery species" of novels, a "composite order of feminine fatuity" (Eliot 301), for their "want of verisimilitude" (304); the "oracular species," for their evidence of opinion based on "ignorance...of science and...life" (311); and the "white neck-cloth species," which is an "evangelical substitute for the fashionable novel." when the "real drama of Evangelicalism...lies among the middle and lower classes" (318). She blames the "deficiencies" of women novelists on their "want" not only of "patient diligence" but of "the responsibility involved in publication, and of "an appreciation of the sacredness of the writer's art" (323), i.e., the representing of life accurately with models for living. Distinguishing herself from the novelists in her article, Eliot intended to use the novel, sometimes in a didactic way, to voice her own perception of life as it is and as it should be, resolving her conflicts in a religion of humanity.
Through Eliot's involvement with Lewes' work and her reading for her articles on art, novels, and novelists, she developed a romantic realism capable of expressing her ideal for humanity. Her work with Lewes in biology, beginning with the seven-week trip to Ilfracombe in 1856 to pursue marine animals, influenced Eliot toward a more scientific study of "provincial life" (Haight GE 201) and a serious approach to the facts behind her novels, including weeks of searching for a river capable of flooding for the setting of The Mill on the Floss (302.305), two trips to Florence to research the context of Romola, and research in history and law for Felix Holt (381-83) and Daniel Deronda (469).

Inspired by Ruskin and Wordsworth, Eliot developed a theory of the interdependence of the "real" and the "imaginative" (Haight, GEL 3.427). Ruskin, in Modern Painters III, wrote that "senses alone could not grasp the nature of reality" but needed the imagination's capacity to fuse a "variety of mental processes" (Dodd 294). Wordsworth wrote of the imagination's power to work with "spots of time," those earliest memorable perceptions that possess a "renovating virtue" (Wordsworth 13.208,210). Eliot developed her own theory of the real and the imaginative, believing that "you could not have the former without the latter and greater quality" and that since "observation of life...must be limited,...the imagination must fill in and give life to the picture" (Haight, GEL 3.427). Eliot's idea for the character of Silas Marner, for example, sprang from a "childish recollection of a man with a stoop and expression of face that led her to think that he was an alien from his fellows" (3.427). Similarly her idea for Gwendolen Harleth grew from her perception of a young woman at a roulette table, her fresh face surrounded by the haggard feverish faces of older addicted gamblers (5.314).

Eliot moved to the novel to depict life more accurately and to express her ideals more fully, as a result of her reading, the influence of her associates, and her attempt to synthesize different theories in what Dodd calls the "eclectic philosophical tradition" (6). In the wake of rejecting orthodox Christianity and the attempt to fill her "emptiness"
Eliot's consideration of Coleridge's "first cause," Carlyle's universe as "one great utterance" (1.279), Strauss' higher criticism, Comte's resignation to universal laws and duty, Hegel's dialectic of history towards perfection as a manifestation of the "Divine Essence," and Feuerbach's view of divinity as an expression of humanity's desire for perfection, led to her own religious ideal. Eliot would posit temporal salvation in the androgynous whole of male and female, who transcend gender ideologies in response to natural and moral laws and who feel a duty, motivated by self-giving love, to guide society. Eliot's desire to make a "contribution to literature and not a mere addition to the heap of books," expressed in her Journal, 13 January 1875 (Haight, GEL 7.116), suggests her sense of duty to society.

The emotional conflicts that initially led Eliot to books, and eventually operated in a dialectic with her intellectual and gender conflicts, were alleviated, first, by her union with Lewes, then, by her marriage with the socially acceptable John Walter Cross, which finally gained her the cold approval of Isaac Evans. By that time, at age sixty-one, Eliot's heterodox position tolerated all expressions of religious faith but only in their sense of moral duty. Thus, while she consented to a church wedding, she expressed a desire for the "Unitarian omissions" (i.e., the articles of faith) from her funeral (Haight, GE 550). While Eliot's intellectual conflicts were alleviated in her synthesis of theology and philosophy, her gender conflicts would be alleviated in her female friendships, her union with Lewes, her different names and career as a writer, and her human ideal.
CHAPTER 3

GENDER CONFLICT

Following her renunciation of orthodox Christianity, her interest in both trans­scendental idealism and positivism (i.e., particularly in both Hegel's historical process toward the Absolute and Comte's historical stages toward the positive, in which man understands the inevitability of natural and moral laws and obeys them), and her near repose in Feuerbach's ideas (that love expresses divinity, self-sacrificing love is best expressed in marriage, and Christ personifies the human desire for perfection), Eliot united with George Henry Lewes in a partnership that fulfilled Feuerbach's ideals, though it violated cultural mores and stereotypes. In that partnership, bound voluntarily by love instead of legal or church documents, Eliot wrote scholarly articles, fiction and poetry, and through these, forged a human and religious ideal that resolved her emotional, religious, and gender conflicts. Eliot's progress toward that ideal took her from patriarchalism to feminism and from feminism to a perspective capable of displacing and transcending cultural stereotypes of men and women. This chapter examines Eliot's gender conflict and her progress toward her ideal of humanity.

Eliot's gender conflict, actually a conflict with the nineteenth-century feminine ideologies, synthesized emotional and intellectual conflicts, since males had rejected her for lack of beauty and her limited education in religious girls schools had evoked resentment. Eliot's early involvement in the masculine sphere of empirical knowledge, rational thought, and worldly concerns, in her companionship with Isaac and Robert Evans, fascinated her analytical mind and led to her frustration with the feminine sphere of
domesticity and an education that encouraged accomplishments over academic disciplines and allowed for fantasy and sentimentalism over knowledge. Her religious conflict, which moved her from Christian orthodoxy to heterodoxy, left her with resentment toward the anti-intellectualism of the girls' school Evangelicals and their resistance to freedom of scientific inquiry. Eliot's conflict with the female gender was thus evoked by a cultural milieu of feminine educational expectations that were unequal to her intellectual capacity; stereotypes of feminine appearance and interests that barred her strong features and critical-literary bent; and a belief in motherhood, domestic management and decorativeness as woman's major contributions to society, that conflicted with her sense of duty to raise the consciousness of humanity through writing.

Eliot's conflict with the expectations and prescriptions for the female gender, i.e., with feminine ideologies, colored all her concerns. She demonstrated ambivalence in her relationships as a child; in her efforts in scholarship; in her attitude toward other women and their writing; in her life as a professional writer and editor; in her attitudes toward men, marriage, and morality; in her feelings about maternity; in her appearance, work, and names; and in her reactions to the woman's movement. Even though Eliot's gender conflict would be mitigated in her relationships with other women and in her union with Lewes, it would be resolved only with the ideal for humanity forged in her literary works.

Eliot's ambivalence toward the feminine ideology began in expectations created in childhood. When Eliot was a child, her analytical power responded to the masculine over the feminine sphere and to the adult world over the world of children. She admits in her sonnet sequence, Brother and Sister, that when she was with her brother, she lost interest in girls' toys and subjected her imagination to the "harder truer skill" of logic (10. 12). At the Miss Latham's school for girls, her aloofness and "gravity" caused even the older girls to call her "'little Mamma'" and determined her response to a child's party: "I don't like to play with children. I like to talk to grown up people" (Haight, GE 8).
A gender conflict, i.e., between her own interests and the interests expected of girls, would draw Eliot toward her teachers but cause subsequent resentment toward their limited vision. Eliot responded to the academic atmosphere and the encouragement of Miss Maria Lewis, at Miss Wallington's school, and Miss Rebecca Franklin, at the Miss Franklins' school, by mastering everything that was offered, improving her diction and voice, and distinguishing herself in composition. Fellow pupils recognized her academic superiority; i.e., Miss Bradley Jenkins, who had studied accelerated French with Eliot, remembered revering her as a "mountain" for her "remarkable ability" (Haight, GEL 1.212.1n). When Eliot was forced to return to Griff (Chapter 2), her lonely pursuit of education amid household duties led her to re-evaluate her progress at school and to express frustration with the domestic expectations of girls as well as the education allotted them. In a letter to Maria Lewis, 6-8 November 1838, Eliot complained of the "onerous [housekeeping] duties and anxieties" that left little time for reading and compared herself, with her books, to "a glutton with his feast," who hurries from one course to the next without "relishing or digesting either" (Haight, GEL 1.10-11). From reading the Life of Wilberforce, she perceived herself now as an "intellectual pygmy" and longed to be "made as useful in [her] lowly and obscure station as he was in [his] exalted one..." (1.16).

Recognizing the time wasted in girls' boarding schools, she entreated former schoolmate Martha (Patty) Jackson to study the classics and Latin with her. To prepare Martha for the struggle, Eliot admitted in her letter that "the word classics has a very soaring air" and that they "must crawl for some time up a rugged steep before [they] can catch a glimpse of a desired summit" (1.38). Eliot's resentment of housekeeping duties and her recognition of the waste of a girl's school time prompted her to write to Martha, 6 April 1840, "Pity the sorrows of a poor young housekeeper and determine to make the best use
of your present freedom therefrom" (1.48). Even though Eliot showed sympathy towards Martha's resistance to studying Latin, she still proposed that they write on assigned topics in their letters (1.48) and complained of the "wracklike process" that had "stunted" her (1.60), referring to the limited education that prohibited her intellectual growth. Eliot apparently modified her attempts to maintain a scholarly correspondence when Martha responded by writing of a book called The Language of Flowers (1.68.8n), as explained by Haight (GE 25).

Frustrated by Martha Jackson's intellectual limitations, Eliot turned to Maria Lewis, her former teacher and mentor, for academic support, flattering her as "the one" who had understood her "weakness" and had sympathized with her "easily fastened affections" (Haight, GE 1.65). Eliot attempted to begin a scholarly dialogue by recommending "Woman's Mission," an anonymous work adopted from Aime-Martin's book (1.66.3n). She also intimated to Maria Lewis her growing interest in transcendent idealism and her spiritual-philosophical struggles (Chapter 2). After indicating her move toward heterodoxy, 13 November 1841, Eliot began to wean herself from Maria Lewis' influence.

After turning to heterodox beliefs, Eliot's frustration over the time wasted in school turned to resentment of the intellectual shallowness of girls' education, as expressed in her letter to Martha Jackson, 16 December 1841. In the context of talking about the chemistry lectures which she had been attending, Eliot assured Martha, who had questioned the wisdom of academic pursuits, that academic labor is "its own reward" and asked if Martha "would not like a little more intuition [a priori knowledge]" just to be able to take a "seven-leagued-boot stride" to "make up for the girlish miseducation and girlish idleness..." (1.123). She suggested their wasted years in asserting that they must compensate for their past truancy with "determination" instead of "wishing" (1.123).

Turning to Sara Hennell as her new mentor, Eliot expressed her philosophical freedom and her disgust with what she perceived as intellectual shallowness in her
life, then began to modify her views. To Sara, 16 September 1842, she explained her new belief that "bliss and beauty," instead of suffering and preparing for eternity, are the "end, the tendency of creation" (1.151). By the next October (1843), Eliot realized that even though she had moved from religious dogma to intellectual independence, she could not effect change in the culture's religious superstitions, except by "sowing good seed" i.e., struggling for "freedom of inquiry" and "writing boldly" of her "full confession" (1.163). By June 1848, Eliot looked "back on her past as something incredibly poor and contemptible" (1.269), a reference to her education in the Evangelical schools, her religious beliefs, her attempts at self-education, even her attempts to effect change. Forgetting that the academic atmosphere at those schools had encouraged her ascent to intellectual freedom, Eliot was to spend ten years mulling over her perceptions of the past, until she could exorcise them in her articles for the WR. From 1855-1856, Eliot accused the Evangelicals of resistance to freedom of inquiry, in "Evangelical Teaching: Dr. Cumming"; of aesthetic dishonesty, in "Worldliness and Other Worldliness: The Poet Young"; and of responsibility for the intellectual shallowness and aesthetic dishonesty in a number of women novelists, in "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" (Chapter 2). From then on, Eliot would pour her energy into an ideal of her own.

Eliot's conflict with the feminine ideology revealed itself, as well, in her ambivalence towards women, especially those who limited themselves intellectually, and in her feminist and ostensibly Lesbian attachments. Even though Eliot had sought a correspondence with Maria Lewis and Martha Jackson, in order to keep their admiration and encourage her own intellectual growth, she changed alliances when she realized her philosophical and intellectual incompatibility with their conservatism. She broke with Maria Lewis completely after 1846 and wrote less frequently to Martha Jackson, partly in deference to Mrs. Jackson, who expressed alarmed over Eliot's possibly pernicious influence (1.152.3n). Attracted to the freedom of the Rosehill group, Eliot wrote a fervid
letter to Mrs. Pears, thanking her for a dialogue that had interested her more than anything else (1.125), then wrote to Mrs. Charles (Cara) Bray, addressing her as "dearest love" (1.131), then focused her affection on Cara's sister, Sara Sophia Hennell, "Sara mine" (1.145), in a more compatible meeting of intellects and souls.

While Eliot's addresses to Sara Hennell suggest Lesbian intimacy, they indicate, in context, a marriage of minds and spirits as well as a playful satire of conventional marriage roles. Though Eliot addresses Sara as "Lieber Gemahl" ("Beloved Husband"), October 1843, she writes only of the evolution of her beliefs, from rebellion against dogma to acceptance of her mission to sow "good seed" (1.162-3). After her brief interest in the picture-restorer (Chapter 2), she calls herself "your true Gemahlinn," meaning that her only love now was the spiritual love (intellectual and religious) that she shared with Sara (1.187). The suggestion of a spiritual union is reiterated in an 1846 letter, in which Eliot writes of her "soul" kissing Sara for the thoughts expressed in Sara's note (2.210). She also suggests their spiritual marriage when she claims to know "all" of Sara's thoughts "without the trouble of communication," 20 May 1846 (1.217) and when she expresses the "satisfaction" in knowing that Sara's mind knows "precisely...the difficulty" in their translation of Spinoza and how it is "overcome" (1.280-81). Though she addresses Sara also as "Beloved Achates" and signs herself "Thine entirely," 12 April 1846 (1.212), her letter merely discusses the proofs and problems of the Strauss translation (Das Leben Jesu). When she addresses Sara as "Dearly beloved spouse," she talks of Sara's brother-in-law, "that dear unmanageable male" (1.223). When she calls herself Sara's "loving wife" (1.187) in a letter discussing Strauss translation, "wife" suggests Eliot's dependence on Sara's superior knowledge of German.

Eliot used her role of spiritual husband to Sara to satirize traditional marriage roles. After her brief correspondence with J. A. Froude, a correspondence which she called a "flirtation," Eliot wrote her "excuse" to Sara, adding satirically, "I come back to you with
all a husband's privileges and command you to love me whether I show you any love or not, and to be faithful to me though I play you false every day of my life" (1.279). In another satire of marriage roles, she writes to Sara, 5 June 1849, "So far as I know, husbands are not bound to stand on their heads when their wives tell them--therefore I do not fly to Roschill...this morning" (1.285), though she was leaving for Europe with the Brays.

Eliot's unconventional intellectual and spiritual union with Sara never prohibited her from forming more comprehensive and worshipful love attachments to men, including Dr. Brabant, D'Albert Durade, John Chapman, Herbert Spencer, and George Henry Lewes. In fact, it was Sara, whom Eliot asked to send a list of prices for lodgings at Chapman House (1.335). Less dependent on Sara after her move to Chapman House, January 1841, where she fell in love, first with John Chapman, then with Herbert Spencer, both of whom rejected her affection for her lack of beauty (Chapter 2), Eliot seems to have written more letters to Cara and Charles Bray than to Sara, perhaps to put distance between herself and Sara. Before eloping with Lewes, Eliot wrote to thank Sara for ten years of "helpful love" (2.127); after her elopement, she wrote to deny her indifference to Sara and to assure her and Cara of her love (2.181-82).

Eliot's ambivalence toward Sara Hennell appeared in her displacing Sara with more intellectually and spiritually liberating friends while continuing to write assurances of love to Sara. Her new friends included Bessie Parkes (Bello), who became an outspoken feminist, a writer for the Waverley Journal for women, and a co-editor of the English Woman's Journal; Barbara Leigh Smith (Bodichon), Bessie's nonconformist friend, editor of the English Woman's Journal and a tireless worker for the advancement of women; as well as a series of other intellectuals, reformers, and writers, including Mrs. Richard Congreve, Mrs. Gaskell, Mrs. Robert Lytton, Mrs. Frederick Lehman, Mrs. Nassau John Senior, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mrs. Mark Pattison, Mrs. Elma Stuart,
Lady Burne-Jones ("Georgie"), Mrs. Frederick Ponsonby, Mrs. Peter Alfred Taylor, and Edith Simcox.

After Sara published *Thoughts in the Aid of Faith*, Eliot proved her intellectual and philosophical distance from Sara. She reassured Sara of her love, then criticized Sara's book for its lack of logical coherence (3.338). In reply to Sara's pained response, she suggested that they "not write on difficult subjects in hasty letters" (4.201). In subsequent letters, she scolded Sara for becoming involved in the woman's suffrage movement, doubting its "good" (4.390); asked Sara not to stay "more than one night in her home, as a visitor would be an unbearable disturbance in their [her and Lewes'] lives" (5.9,10); and pointed out the false impression which Sara had received by listening to others' interpretations instead of reading R. Browning for herself (5.14). Over a ten-year period (1846-1856), Eliot had moved beyond Sara and refused to allow Sara (as she had refused to allow Maria Lewes) to inhibit her intellectual growth. She did write occasional assurances of love to Sara Hennell and financially assisted Maria Lewis, apparently from a sense of gratitude for their early guidance. Eliot had moved her affections from Sara Hennell to Barbara Smith (Bodichon).

Eliot's ambivalence toward other women was especially evident in her critical, sometimes resentful, reaction to even independent, outspoken intellectual and literary women, as if she feared their easy ascent to the pinnacle that she had claimed through a difficult, solitary struggle. She neither patronized them as a patriarchalist nor supported them as a feminist but placed them in a separate and inferior category from herself. Eliot had sensed early the culturally suspect and difficult position of the female intellectual. In June 1844, when she was translating Strauss' work, she felt it unkind of Cara Bray to tell Strauss "that a young lady was translating his book"; she anticipated his alarm in thinking that he must depend on "that most contemptible specimen of the human being for his English reputation" (1.177).
Having proved her competence in a historically male sphere, she feared that less capable women might depreciate female achievement. To protect the hierarchy of female achievement, Eliot discouraged former classmate, Miss Bradley Jenkins, from attempting to support herself by translating. Eliot wrote of Miss Jenkins to Sara, "She is clever, but whether clever enough to trust to her brains for a living I dare not venture to say" (1.214); Eliot subsequently described her as a "poor girl...good and conscientious, but...utopian and freakish" (1.215). Writing from Geneva, where she spent the winter after her father's death, Eliot described fellow boarder, Mademoiselle Rosa, as "rather a nice creature but with a mere woman's head and mind" (1.293), distinguishing it from her own mind, which fulfilled the masculine stereotype of rational and moral reasoning. Feeling her capacity in both areas, Eliot seemed pleased when Mde. de Ludwigsdorf, like many women after her, made Eliot a confidante and told Eliot "her troubles and...feelings ...in spite of herself" (1.308). Eliot would begin to revel in her role as mentor to exceptional women, a role which assured her intellectual and moral supremacy.

At times, Eliot appeared caught between her admiration for strong, talented women and her fear lest they encroach too easily on her dearly attained territory or keep her from male society. After being sent back to Rosehill from Chapman's for her indiscretions (Chapter 2), Eliot continued to advise Chapman (at his request), warning him that while she commended Harriet Martineau's "clear...spirited" style as a writer, she doubted Martineau's "calibre of mind" as being fit for "rendering a trustworty account of Comte's work" and expressed more confidence in the "depth" of mind in Cambridge-graduate Call (1.361). When Eliot met Bessie Parkes (Belloc), daughter of radical MP Joseph Parkes (who sponsored the Strauss translation with Brabant), she repulsed Bessie Parkes, at first, for "putting forth [her] own opinions" with a "great deal of self-esteem" but gradually "lost that impression" (2.87) through Bessie's efforts to win her love.

Though Eliot was to form close friendships with several society women, including...
Mrs. Congreve, Mrs. Burne-Jones, and Mrs. Lehman, her general impression remained gratuitously deprecatory, perhaps because of her own social ostracism. Writing to Sara Hennell from Munich, 10-13 May 1857, Eliot admits that she would "shudder at the sight of a woman in society," knowing she would "have to sit on the sofa all night listening to her stupidities, while the men on the other side of the table are discussing all the subjects [she cared] to hear about" (2.454). When Eliot was assured that Lewes could not obtain a divorce from Agnes (Chapter 2), she wrote to the barrister that she was "not sorry" since her isolation had protected her from "much contact with frivolous women" (3.376). The women (Sara Hennell and Bessie Parkes) who did visit Eliot, when she returned with Lewes from their elopement, risked their reputations to do so (Haight QE 180), though eventually invitations to the Priory, as well as the Heights (i.e., the homes of Eliot and Lewes), were coveted (461). The feminists and the socialites who won Eliot's love did not encroach on her territory as a scholarly writer or novelist and expressed only love and deference (i.e., Lady Burne-Jones' letter after meeting Eliot, 429).

Even though Eliot allowed exceptional younger women to idolize her, she maintained that her motives were maternal, both in giving affection and in allowing herself to be petted; for as she explained and had clearly demonstrated, she preferred the company of men. Though Eliot allowed the widowed Elma Stuart to send her countless gifts, to visit her, and to "spoil" her (Haight, GE 6.260), she expressed "motherly interest" in Elma, counseled her, and regarded her as "part of the furniture of our souls" (7.5). She even allowed Elma to worship her, believing "It is good for you to worship as long as you believe that what you worship is good" (6.29).

Though Eliot allowed Edith Simcox—journalist, author of three books, and activist for women's causes—to adore her with "idolatrous love," as Simcox revealed in her Autobiography of a Shirtmaker (Haight, GE 495), she usually maintained an aloofness from Simcox. In fact, as Simcox herself remarked, Lewes seemed to prefer her attentions to
Eliot more than did Eliot herself (494). After Simcox’ initial visit to the Lewes’ home, the Priory, in order to do a review of Middlemarch for the Academy, she was encouraged by Lewes to visit Eliot, whom he called "Madonna" in Simcox’ presence (493); however, Eliot invited Simcox at the Heights only once (512). Recognizing Simcox’ inordinate love, Eliot had advised her "that the love of men and women for each other must always be more and better than any other and bade [Edith] not wish to be wiser than 'God who made [her]...'" (McKenzie 97). Eliot also admitted to Edith that she "had never ... cared very much for women" and that while she "sympathized with women and liked for them to come to her in their troubles," she felt "far off" from women in a way and preferred the "friendship and intimacy of men" (McKenzie 97). This preference was apparent in her attachments to Brabant and D'Albert Durade, while loving Sara; to Chapman and Spencer, while loving Barbara Smith; to Lewes, while being loved and idolized by countless women; and to Cross, while being worshipped by Mrs. Congreve, Elma Stuart, and Edith Simcox.

In sum, Eliot felt revulsion for culturally stereotypical ladies and resentment toward independent, outspoken women, but her feelings changed when females of either category deferred to her and honored her as mentor. In so doing, they allowed her to maintain her position of authority (perceived culturally as the position of either males or "sybils," Beer 26), and to express feelings of tenderness (perceived culturally as the position of females), as both elements composed Eliot's androgynous character.

Eliot's gender conflict was especially evident in her ambivalence toward women's writing; this ambivalence proved that she was neither a patriarchalist nor a feminist but an elitist, i.e., an intellectual and an artist of the highest standards, who, having made a place for women in the previously male intellectual-professional sphere, feared the depreciating of that place by opening it to women of lesser capability. As she explained in "Silly Novels," as soon as women are recognized as having "genius or affective talent,"
they will receive the "tribute of being moderately praised and severely criticized" (Eliot 322). Only this "rigid requirement" would limit the profession to competent women (324). Having arrived at the position of editor-journalist at Chapman House, Eliot felt free to criticize Hannah More, whom she had revered as a girl, now calling her a "bluestocking—a monster that can only exist in a miserably false state of society in which a woman with but a smattering of learning of philosophy is classed along with singing mice and card-playing pigs" (Haight, GEL 1.245). Eliot criticized Harriet Beecher Stowe, who would become her friend and correspondent, for idealizing the "Negro" as good, in her novel Dred. To Eliot, this idealization suggested that "slavery has answered as moral discipline" and missed the tragedy in race relations: "the Nemesis lurking in the vices of the oppressed" (Haight, GE 185,184).

Eliot was even chary in her praise of Charlotte Bronte. Writing to Charles Bray, she asked what he admired about Jane Eyre, suggesting that Jane wasted her self-sacrifice in respecting a "diabolical law which chains a man...to a putrifying carcase" (Haight, GEL 1.268). In believing that Jane should have been willing to "accept Rochester's pledge of faith and live as his wife without marriage" (Haight, GE 145-46), Eliot failed to recognize the difference between Eyre's and her own circumstances, i.e., those of a poor governess, without friends, family, or career, who would have become object rather than subject of Rochester's affections if she had not struggled for independence, as opposed to her (Eliot's) position of equality with Lewes. While she found the novel "interesting," she also criticized the characters for talking like "the heroes and heroines of police reports" (Haight, GEL 1.268), a foreshadow of her own concern over the Romola characters' speaking in English.

That Eliot was equally harsh in criticizing the writing of even her closest friends suggests either her disinterestedness as a critic or her ambivalence toward other female writers. When Bessie Parkes sent Eliot copies of the Waverley Journal (of which Bessie
was editor), Eliot suggested that Bessie get "more business," i.e., more articles on social facts, and "less literature," because she preferred reading about philanthropy to reading "second-rate literature" (2.379). She eventually suggested that Barbara Smith (Bodichon) correct Bessie's writing (3.64). Eliot gave limited praise to Mrs. Gaskell, expressing an "affinity" with Gaskell's "feelings toward Life and Art" that had inspired ...the earlier chapters of Mary Barton" (3.198). Ambiguously kind in her appraisal of articles in Barbara Smith Bodichon's The English Woman's Journal, she wrote that it "must be doing good substantially--stimulating women to useful work and rousing people to some consideration of women's needs" in spite of "a few mistakes" and "rather a feeble presentation of useful matter" and an "ignorant and unconscientious writer" who reviews books (3.225-26). Though Eliot agreed with Sara Hennell that Romola was an "ideal" (3.302) and admitted, "my own books scourge me" (4.104), she would not allow herself to be categorized with novelist Mrs. Mullock, whom she considered a second-rate novelist, i.e. one whose works were never read "by people of high culture" (3.302). Eliot tried to soften her own, and especially Lewes', criticism of Sara Hennell's Thoughts in the Aid of Faith, for its logical inconstance, by praising its "largeness and insight" (3.364). 

However, when she read Harriet Martineau's Autobiography, she expressed disgust in its detailing the "demerits" of all Martineau's acquaintances (6.353).

Though Eliot believed that women should be educated equally with men (4.366), she showed a lack of enthusiasm for young women novelists seeking her critical aid. When Marie Howland sent Eliot a copy of her novel, Eliot wrote to Mrs. William Cross, 16 June 1874, asking sarcastically if "anyone around Weybridge" had heard of the "Author-ess," who had written for her opinion in the assumption that Eliot would want to devour it "immediately on its arrival"; Eliot did not want to read it if it was "trash" (6.56). When Elizabeth Stuart Phelps asked for Eliot's opinion of her "partly autobiographical novel of a strong-minded woman." The Story of Avis, Eliot responded dishonestly, in light of her
years as literary critic, in saying "Do not expect 'criticism' from me. I hate sitting in the seat of judgment" (6.418). Because of her struggle in securing an education and a profession usually denied women, Eliot refused to make the way easier for less competent women. Contradicting her earlier position as literary critic and her subsequent role as society's "teacher" (McKenzie 61), in writing novels, and as mentor, in advising younger women, Eliot redefined herself to Mrs. Frederick Ponsonby, 11 February 1875, "not as a teacher but a companion in the struggle for thought" (6.124).

Eliot's ambivalence toward her own profession, first as an editor and journalist, then as a novelist, suggests a conflict between duty to the domestic sphere and duty to the professional sphere in carrying out her mission as a writer. Even though Eliot had seen "ambition" as her "besetting sin" at age 21 (1.73), she saw the sowing of "good seed" in writing as her "mission" at age 23, after her conversion to heterodoxy. With a sense of duty, she eagerly undertook the translation of Strauss' Das Leben Jesu, at Rufu Brabant's invitation, and seemed gratified by Sara Hennell's naming her "Pollian," apparently in the belief that she was helping destroy superstition. When she returned to England from Geneva, in the spring of 1850, and had to choose between living independently through translating or living as a dependent in her brother's home at Griff, she wrote to Sara for the price of lodgings at Chapman House and stayed temporarily at Rosehill with the Brays. Eliot was "only too glad of the opportunity" to write a review of Mackay's The Progress of the intellect for the WR, at Chapman's invitation (Haight, GE 80), as the article would begin her career as a journalist, editor, and boarder, i.e., an independent woman. Even after being sent back to Rosehill for indiscretions, she eagerly returned to edit the WR and write anonymous articles. Her pride in being referred to "as a man" by Chapman, in his recommending her work to Empson of the Edinburgh, suggests her sense of having been accepted into the professional sphere of males on her own merit.

In spite of her delight with her professional status and her high ideals, Eliot felt
pulled back to the domestic sphere when she visited her widowed sister Chrissey and her six children, especially as she had once defined a woman's "duty" as "devoting" herself wherever she could effect "pure calm blessedness in the life of another" (Haight, GEL 322). Now, the thought of living with Chrissey in "that hideous neighborhood among ignorant bigots" filled her with dread of "moral asphyxia" (2.97). Though she saw her hypocrisy in preaching "self-devotion" while allowing Chrissey's family to live in want, she decided that anything she could do in the domestic sphere would be "trivial" and might risk their loss of Isaac's house (97). Fearing for her own health as well, she remained in London in the professional sphere and suffered guilt and worry over Chrissey.

By 1860, Eliot still felt ambivalence over the usefulness of her career and her life. Even though she believed that the "business of life" was to "reduce the sum of ignorance and degradation and misery on the...earth" (3.293) and that she could influence the world through her novels, and even though Barbara Smith Bodichon told Eliot that she should be "happy" with her "power to sway the world" (3.107), Eliot felt no happiness in her fame after the success of Adam Bede. Her inability to find a reason to be glad that "such an unpromising womanchild had been born into the world" (3.170) proves the power of a feminine ideology, i.e., the belief that women's primary mission is motherhood and domestic care.

Eliot's conflict with this ideology evoked ambivalence over her ability as a novelist. Despite her careful research, planning, and protection from criticism, Eliot suffered physical and emotional trauma during the process of writing each novel; then, after a brief period of celebration when she had finished, she would doubt her ability to write another. While she felt "oppressed by the task before [her]," in writing Romola (4.15), she felt "despair" as she began Felix Holt, writing with "dogged determination" (4.197). After starting Middlemarch for the second time, after the death of Lewes' son Thornie, she records that she interrupted the work to write the play Arm-
"headache and depression, with almost total despair of future work" (5.120). By December 1870, she had begun to experiment with the story of "Miss Brook" (5.124). After writing the first three books of *Middlemarch* in continuously ill health, she felt relief at their reception, comfort in having completed them, but terror at the prospect of the remaining five books (5.237). As she approached the end of the novel, her health and color improved, according to Lewes (5.282), who despaired of "any permanent good until the novel [was] finally out" (5.302). To Mrs. William Cross, Eliot described the two years of writing *Middlemarch* as a "nightmare in which [she had] been scrambling on the slippery bank of a pool, just keeping [her] head above water" (5.300). Eliot recorded a "sense of failure" in writing *Daniel Deronda* until she reminded herself of having suffered "equal depression about *Romola*" (6.201). A year after *Daniel Deronda* was published, Eliot feared that she had already done her "best work" (6.440). Her only pleasure came at a novel's end, in her brief celebration of traveling or going to the theatre or a concert.

That Eliot described the ordeal of novel-writing in the language of conception and child-bearing suggests her conflict with the feminine ideology, i.e., between the cultural emphasis on motherhood as woman's supreme mission in life and Eliot's belief that a woman can fulfill her mission in ways other than motherhood. That she speaks of suffering terribly "when a subject has begun to grow in [her] ... until it has wrought itself out--become a complete organism" (5.392), suggests a mysterious conception and an inhuman progeny. The idea that the novel "seems to take wing and go away from [her]" and is "not to be done again" (5.329) confirms an origin both human and superhuman (rational/intuitive), the originality of each work, and the independence of the novel from the author's intention after its publication. That Eliot suffered pains in producing each novel, hid from the criticism until the novels were acclaimed, and lived in fear of never writing another successful work, recalls her early days with Isaac: her pains to please him, her fears of disappointing him, and her belief that chance determined success
(Chapter 2). Each novel, then, was colored by Eliot's past emotional conflict with Isaac, her religious conflict, as fulfilling her sense of mission to remove superstition and misery, and her gender conflict, in proving an alternative to motherhood as her mission.

Eliot's gender conflict effected an ambivalence toward men and morality that only her union with Lewes would mitigate. Though Eliot was strongly attracted to "superior" men and wanted a permanent union, she rejected any tie that would frustrate her intellectual or professional progress. Though she sought an independent life for herself, she responded to superior men with utter devotion and wanted a permanent union. Though she blinked at conventional codes of behavior, she believed in a marriage of only the highest morality for herself.

Eliot's conflict between a strong attraction to men and a desire for intellectual and professional growth surfaced in two early brief relationships and in her comments to her friends. Her conflict appeared first in a religious guise when she was nineteen, living at Griff as her father's housekeeper. In her letter to Maria Lewis, in the spring of 1840, she confesses that the "sight" of a certain person "would probably upset all," (i.e., her resolution to sacrifice her love to her Christian commitment); and that even though she prays to be "free" from her rebellion against God, to whom she belongs, she still prays for her "beloved" (1.46-47). She struggled with a similar conflict in March 1845, after she turned to heterodoxy. This time she was more adamant about rejecting her suitor, the picture-restorer, whom she saw as an intellectually and professionally unsuitable partner for her "mind and pursuits" (1.183-84), which belonged now to her, rather than to God. Eliot had once written to Maria Lewis of the misery of unsuitable marriages: "the poor clown's distress that his Audrey was not poetical is a type that is reacted daily under a thousand circumstances" (1.71). To her student in German, Mary Sibree, Eliot had similarly remarked, "How terrible it must be to find one self tied to a being whose limitations you could see, and must know were such as to prevent your ever being
understood!” (Haight, QE 55-56); she explained that even in England, "practically arranged" marriages demanded that couples show an interest in each other but were "not strong enough for the wear and tear of life" (56). In that belief, Eliot tried to "hinder" the widow Elma Stuart from marrying a fortune-hunting widower with children to support. She expresses impatience with these widowers, who expect "women to take compassion on them and never themselves take compassion on ["really forlorn"] women" (Haight, GEL 6.85). Eliot's desire for marriage with an intellectual and professional equal, with whom mutual development would be possible, was to be fulfilled in her union with Lewes. Her awareness of unsuitable unions as the norm would provide a prevalent theme in her novels and effect her characters' need of salvation from subsequent lives of misery.

Eliot's decision to forge an intellectually and financially independent life did not prohibit her from forming attachments to a series of exceptional men, to whom she devoted herself in worshipful adoration, or from expressing a desire for marriage. Though Isaac Evans feared Eliot's forfeit of a husband if she associated with radicals instead of Anglican conservatives (Haight, GE 40), Eliot maintained her heterodox beliefs. Even before her independent stand, Eliot had expressed doubts that she would ever marry. To Maria Lewis, she had written wistfully of the "bliss of reciprocal affection" which, she feared, would not be "allotted her" (Haight, GEL 1.70). In spite of her desire for independence, she agreed with Martha Jackson that a wife should be "faithful, devoted, clinging to the last" (1.60).

Ironically, Eliot's overt devotion to various men often cost her the very social or professional standing she had achieved by her independence. Her immediate captivation by Dr. Brabant, i.e., her monopolizing his time and allowing him to monopolize hers, and her decision to extend her visit at Devizes, led to her expulsion with full blame for what Brabant had encouraged (Chapter 2). Eliot's falling in love with Chapman and monopolizing his time, at his encouragement, again led to expulsion by jealous women.
and to less favorable (because more emotionally detached) working conditions at her
return. Her falling in love with Spencer led to emotional pain and difficulty in working,
because of headaches and claustrophobia (Chapter 2) when he rejected her. Eliot's union
with Lewes, though intellectually, emotionally, and physically satisfying, would effect
her rejection by her family, Cara Bray, and Harriet Martineau; would result in her
permanent alienation from polite society; and would (along with her heterodox views)
bar her from burial at Westminster Abbey (Haight, GE 549).

Eliot seemed ambivalent about conventional moral codes in her attraction to men
yet defended her union with the already married Lewes as a truly moral marriage. Her
attachment to the married Dr. Brabant was repeated with other married men. She did not
consider the impropriety of traveling with Charles Bray or D'Albert Durade. At Chap­
man House, she did not consider the impropriety of allowing Chapman to spend his
evenings in her room, wept when he expressed his love for his wife and mistress as
different from his affection for her, and wrote private notes of affection to Chapman.
Only at her return to Chapman House did she learn to treat the women of his family with
sympathy (94). Eliot would write a note to Barbara Smith (Bodichon) , expressing her
sympathetic understanding of Barbara's love affair with Chapman and of what she must
"do and bear" as a result (Haight, GE 2.255). After meeting Lewes, who accompanied
Spencer to Eliot's room at Chapman House on several occasions, she saw no impropriety
in allowing him to remain when Spencer left, and eventually moved to different lodgings
in order to spend more time with Lewes. After she eloped to Germany with Lewes, 20
July 1854, Eliot justified her union with Lewes as a moral and sacred marriage on the
basis of her reading of Feuerbach (Chapter 2). From that point on, she would call herself
"Marian Lewes" and insist that her friends address her as "Mrs. Lewes" (2.232). Eliot's
contradictions regarding men (independence vs. attachment) and morality (impropriety
vs. high standards) suggest conflict with the cultural bounds for the female gender.
would respect her independent (culturally masculine) stance by encouraging her career as
a serious writer and by freeing her from domestic duties (in assuming them himself) and
child-bearing (in practicing birth-control, Haight, GE 205).

Eliot's ambivalence toward maternity appeared in her uses of maternal language and
her belief in the special maternal nature of women, in spite of her decision not to have
children or devote herself to the domestic sphere. To Mrs. Peter Taylor, Eliot wrote, in
response to being addressed as "Miss Evans," that "for the last six years" she had "ceased
to be 'Miss Evans,'" since she had assumed "all the responsibilities of a married woman"
and had three boys, one living at home, who called her "'Mother" (Haight, GE 3.336).
Also, in her correspondence and thinking, she called herself "Mutter" (5.75) to Lewes' three boys, for whom she became a second mother. She coached Charles Lewes for his
civil service exam and made a home for him at Harewood Square and Blandford Square
in London (Haight, GE 334). She also coached Thomie for the civil service exam, while
trying to write Romola (364), then helped Bertie (who named his first child "Marian,"
431), prepare to join Thomie as a farmer in Natal (365). Relieved only by Lewes and
Barbara Smith Bodichon, Eliot nursed Thomie through six months of suffering before he
died. She also arranged for a permanent allowance for Bertie's family after Bertie's death.

In spite of her decision not to have children, Eliot expressed either a "motherly" or a
mentor's interest (Haight, GE 5.448) in a number of younger women. To Oscar Browning,
she admitted "the growth of maternal feelings" toward younger men and women
(5.5). To Mrs. Mark Pattison, 10 August 1869, Eliot explained that even though she had
"never brought a child into the world, she was "conscious of having an unused stock of
motherly kindness" (5.32). She thought of her interest as "motherly" toward Elma Stuart,
a widow whom she called "Daughter" and to whom she expressed affectionate gratitude
for numerous gifts, gave a lock of hair, and gave advice on marriage (Haight, GE 1.
Lxvii).
She expressed concern, as well, for the writer, journalist, London school board member, and champion of women's causes, Edith Simcox. Simcox admitted loving Eliot "with a child's fondness for [her] mother," as well as "idolatrously" and "romance wise" (McKenzie 108), and after meeting Eliot at the Priory, started idolizing her, even falling to the floor to kiss her feet (Haight, GE 494). During their few visits together, Eliot allowed Simcox, who was "short and slight," admittedly "unprepossessing" in appearance, allegedly masculine and bespectacled, and of a rebellious nature, to caress and kiss her and murmer "broken words of love," to which Eliot responded by proposing that Simcox save her love for some "'imaginary he'" (97). More importantly, Eliot advised Simcox to "make people feel" that authorship was as important "as other professions" and that "every author was ipso facto a teacher" (60-61), a pronouncement Eliot contradicted in her letter to Mrs. Ponsonby (Haight, GEL 6.124). In the face of such impassioned demonstrations of love, it is no wonder that Eliot did not always feel like "Mother" to Simcox (7.234-35). Eliot's motherly affection included Mrs. Richard Congreve; Mrs. Ponsonby; Mrs. Burne-Jones, whom Eliot called "'Dearest Georgie'" or "'Mignon'" (McKenzie 15); Mrs. Mark Pattison, to whom Eliot was "'Your affectionate Madre'" (15); and Mrs. Nassau John Senior.

Eliot revealed her ambivalence toward motherhood in using the metaphor of maternity to describe the pain involved in the conception and growth of her novels (Haight, GEL. 5.329). She asked Sara Hennell, before all the books of Middlemarch had been published, not to write about the book until it had "gone away from [her] and become entirely of the non-ego" (5.125), as if it were her child.

In using the language of maternity, Eliot suggested that women have more than one mission or duty, a point made clear in the play Armgart. In Eliot's play, the heroine Armgart refuses a socially advantageous marriage proposal by a gentleman (nobleman Graf) because he does not "honor and cherish" her art (Eliot 275), i.e., her singing, and
because he believes instead that "a woman's rank /Lies in the fullness of her womanhood" (270); or as Armgartmocks, a woman's only superlative is in being "a mother" (271). When Armgart loses her voice from the medicine that cures her illness, the gentleman Graf does not repeat his proposal, knowing that he would gain her by default or, according to Armgart, that she is now just a "plain brown girl" (283). Dissuaded from suicide by her crippled cousin, who shames her into a "new birth...from that monstrous Self" (290) to take her place among humanity, and influenced by her instructor Leo, an unrecognized composer who had lived to perfect Armgart, she decides to teach music for the benefit of humanity. In Armgart, Eliot suggests both art and teaching as alternatives to maternity for fulfilling a woman's mission or duty to society.

Eliot's interest in maternity was expressed, as well, in her article "Woman in France" (written for the WR, 1854) and became the source of a significant theme in her novels. While Eliot believed that women have, by nature of their physiological make-up, a "class of sensations and emotions—the maternal ones—which must remain unknown to man" (Eliot 53), she also believed that men could become more sympathetic through suffering (Haight, GEL 1.140). Eliot's ambivalence about maternity—her expression of maternal feelings toward younger men and women, her use of maternal rhetoric, and her belief in women's sympathetic nature because of a capacity to bear children, in spite of her decision to avoid motherhood—suggests her response and her resistance to the feminine ideology, i.e., her countering the idea that woman's superlative lies in motherhood with the idea that woman's superlative may be expressed in alternative ways.

Eliot's ambivalence concerning her image—her appearance, abilities, name—also proves her conflict with the feminine ideology. Eliot sensed early that her appearance and intellect would probably make her ineligible for love and marriage. At twenty-nine, she wrote to Maria Lewis of her consciousness of being a "negation of all that finds love and esteem" (Haight, GEL 1.51). That same fall, of 1840, she wrote to Martha Jackson...
of her foreboding of never being "allotted...reciprocated affection...in any form" (1.70). Her belief that her "two points of attraction" were her "obloquy and celebrity" (1.80) suggests a sense of pride in alienation, as if she felt destined for greatness. Even though Eliot felt ineligible for marriage because of her singular appearance, abilities, and behavior, she did not think marriage worth the sacrifice of her superior abilities and rejected an idolatrous suitor, the picture restorer. Eliot's ten-year adoration of the Rosehill group—the Brays, Sara Hennell, Mrs. Pears, Rufa Brabant—as well as Dr. Brabant and D'Albert Durade, proved her vulnerability to admiration by intellectual equals.

Eliot's inclusion in the Rosehill group, however, never ameliorated a personal sense of ugliness, which she treated with ostensible jocularity, and it may have even encouraged the belief that she could be loved for qualities other than physical beauty. Eliot described the people of Devizes as being "as ugly" as she (1.165). When the Marquise de St. Germain, staying at the same pension in Geneva, rearranged Eliot's hair, Eliot believed that she looked "uglier than ever—if possible," despite everyone else's belief that she looked "infinitely better" (1.298). Eliot described the Baronne de Ludwigsdorf as being "tall and handsome—a striking-looking person but with a sweet feminine expression," as "dressing exquisitely," and as being "in fine...all that I am not" (1.308). Eliot even believed that her "odd appearance" would allow her to roam about by herself without impropriety, though the others disagreed (1.301-2). Her heartbreak and physical maladies, in the wake of Chapman's and Spencer's rejections because of her lack of physical beauty (Chapter 2), suggest her disappointed belief that her exceptional mental capacity and rare companionship could compensate for her lack of beauty.

Despite her disappointments over men, Eliot made no efforts to change her appearance, apparently finding the effort senseless and bothersome. She did seem to emphasize her petite body size, comparing her thinness, after an illness, to that of a "medieval Christ" (5.197) and saying, after mourning Lewes' death, that she was
"incredibly thin" (7.113). Her heroines, too, were often slender (i.e., Lisa, in How Lisa loved the King, was "slight," Eliot 86). Even after her union with Lewes, Eliot expressed no concern over her appearance or her desire to change until she and Lewes moved into the Priory, in 1863. At this time, Eliot responded to the criticism of Owen Jones (house-decorator), of her "general neglect of personal adornment," by buying more attractive apparel (4.116). She admitted to Mrs. Mark Pattison that she "would rather put up with "imperfections" in her clothing and house than "go through transactions with trades people in the effort after more (or less) perfection" (6.343). Only in her marriage with the much younger John Cross did Eliot try to emphasize her slenderness with attractive clothing (6.545).

Despite success with her articles and the acclaim of Scenes of Clerical Life and Adam Bede, Eliot evidenced a sense of ambivalence over her ability and purpose. While she implied a sense of superiority in her criticism of other writers, including Charlotte Bronte, Harriet Beecher Stowe, the novelists named in her article "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists," and the various writers whose works she appraised in the "Belles Lettres" section of the WR in 1855 (Haight, GE 181-86), Eliot betrayed her own sense of self-doubt in the depression and sickness she endured (Haight, GEL 4.197) during the composing of each novel, the "dread of falling" when she considered the work to be done (6.75), and her unwillingness to listen to any criticism. She also felt the need to justify her painful alienation and exceptional ability, writing in her Journal, 2 January 1858, that she valued her Scenes of Clerical Life as "grounds for hoping [her] writing [might]... give value to [her] life" (2.416). In teaching the hearts of her "fellow men," she felt that she was justifying her "long years" of inertia and "suffering" (2.416).

Eliot's physical appearance and manner, which were never a matter of public consensus, may have led to a desire to reign supreme as a "prophetess," a term that Eliot planned to use in a proposed article, "Women of Germany," to refer to Scandinavian-
German women in the "earliest historic twilight" of the German race (2.190). While Charles Eliot Norton, visiting the Leweses, 29 January 1869, noted that the lines in Eliot's face (in her portrait) were almost as "strongly masculine" as those in George Sands' and that George Eliot was the plainest of women with "nothing memorable to say" (5.9), John Fiske, another American visiting the Leweses, 27 November 1873, thought that there was "nothing masculine about her," that she was "thoroughly feminine" but that she had "a power of stating an argument...better than any man except Herbert Spencer..." (5.464).

Women, too, differed in their impressions of Eliot. Mrs. S. M. Downes, writer for the New York Tribune, described Eliot as "a slender tallish woman, with an oval face, abundant hair...almost gray, and questioning light eyes" (Haight, GE 461), and Mrs. Frederick Lehman described her as a "noble creature" with "modesty and humility" (Haight, GE 4.336). By contrast, Mary Gladstone, visiting 5 April 1878, described Eliot as having "a great strong face (a mixture of Savonarola and Dante)," a "gentleness and earnestness" of manner in speaking and listening, but with an "affectation" sometime (Haight, GE 509-10), and Lady Jebb saw her as "old...and ugly" though looking "sweet and winning" and as being "irritated and snappish" because John Cross was paying attention to her, Lady Jebb (545). Though Henry James described Eliot as "deliciously hideous," with her "low forehead,...vast, pendulous nose,...huge mouth, full of uneven teeth, and a chin and jaw-bone qui n'en finissent pas...," he found in that "vast ugliness" a "most powerful beauty which...charms the mind, so that you end...falling in love with...this great horse-faced blue stocking" (417). Her publisher, John Blackwood, described her as simply a "most intelligent, pleasing woman, with a face like a man but a good expression" (Haight, GE 2.435). Charles Norton's recollection of Eliot's talk as that "of a person with a strong mind who had thought much and felt deeply," so that even though it was "by no means brilliant," it was "uncommonly interesting" and delivered in a manner of intensity, as if she expected to be listened to as a person of "mark" (5.9), suggests her
self-concept as that of a "prophetess."

Eliot's ambivalence about her name, i.e., her move from "Mary Ann Evans" and "Polly" (her names at Griff) to "Marianne Evans" (under Rebecca Franlkin's influence) to "Marian Evans" (in London) to "Pollian" (under Sara Hennell's influence) to "Marian Lewes" (as companion to G.H. Lewes) to "George Eliot" (as novelist) to "Mrs. Cross" (as wife of John Walter Cross) suggests her changing and ambivalent sense of identity. Her use of "Marian Lewes" (or "Mrs. Lewes"), from 1854-1880, and "George Eliot," as a novelist, proves her attempt to satisfy different elements of her nature as well as her need to negotiate with a culture that upheld the feminine ideology. Her use of "Mrs. Lewes," or "Marian Lewes," suggests that she saw herself as part of a larger whole, described satirically by Lewes as "Lewesian magnificence" (3.652). While Michael Ginsburg suggests that the name "George Eliot" gave Marian Evans a sense of power, i.e., she "chooses her own patronymic" and "becomes a man" (Beer 22), her writing of scholarly and critical articles proves that she already possessed a sense of power. However, in order to sell her novels and be recognized as a serious novelist, she had to mask her identity in the cultural stereotype of creative or artistic power. In using a male identity to sell her novel, she was also parodying the cultural stereotype.

Eliot's use of different names suggests her sense of power, wit, and freedom with words as well as her ambiguity about her own identity, too vast, too androgynous to be limited to one name. With "Marian Evans," she identified her autonomy as an independent editor, journalist, and translator; with "Pollian," she identified her power as an iconoclast; with "Marian Lewes," she proved her partnership in a larger empowering whole; and with "George Eliot," she identified both her sense of androgyny and her sense of play in parodying and undermining the feminine ideology, in order to sell her books to an audience of "high culture."

Eliot's ambivalence, especially toward the women's movement, or the "women
question" (Haight, GEL 5.58), proves her conflict with the feminine ideology and her concern with the advancement of humanity in general. While unwilling to limit herself to either a prescriptive or a descriptive ideal of womanhood, she also did not fit the stereotype of either the feminist or the bluestocking, though women tried to enlist her help in feminist causes (Haight, QE 396) and William Cullen Bryant called her a "bluestocking" (100). Eliot defied the "angel-in-the-house" ideology (Gilbert and Gubar 22-29), in refusing to limit herself to a girls' boarding school education, in renouncing orthodox Christianity, in refusing to change her beliefs to suit her father and brother, in refusing to remain in the domestic sphere of Isaac's or Chrissey's home, in supporting herself in London as an editor and journalist, in forming liaisons with married men, in forming a union with a married man, in criticising Churchmen and published writers in her scholarly articles, in choosing the career of a novelist instead of a mother, and in using a male pseudonym. Though Eliot never identified herself with the women's movement or with political radicals, she expressed a liking for Mrs. S. Smith, aunt and supporter of Florence Nightingale, for her "freedom and simplicity," i.e., her "non-subjection to formulas" of behavior (Haight GEL 2.45) and admitting loving the unconventional Bessie Parkes Belloc and Barbara Smith Bodichon.

Eliot limited her involvement in the "women's movement" (a "misleading" term, according to McKenzie, since the "true picture" in Victorian England was that of individual efforts to "change conditions for women" rather than a "coordinated advance under a single leader," 17) to the support of equal access to education, married women's right to own property, the availability of housing for unmarried women and employment possibilities, though she believed that only the most qualified people should hold the highest positions. In her own writing, she listened to suggestions from Lewes and her publisher, John Blackwood, unfortunately changing her own more accurate description of Mrs. Moss in The Mill on the Floss, as "a patient, loosely-hung, child-producing
woman," to Blackwood's suggestion of Mrs. Moss as a "patient, prolific, loving-hearted woman" (Haight, GEL 3.259.3n). Eliot signed a petition to Parliament, January 1856, "urging the enactment of law to permit married women to own property" (Haight, GE 204). She wrote to John Morley in favor of "any plan" that would establish the "equivalence of advantages for the sexes as to education and the possibilities of development" (Haight, GEL 4.364) and sympathized with Mrs. Peter Taylor's desire to see women socially elevated--educated equally with men and secured...from suffering (4.366). She hoped for "much good from the serious presentation of women's claims before Parliament" and praised J. S. Mill's "judicious" speech on women's suffrage (4.366-67), though she refused to support the cause (Haight, GE 396).

While Eliot verbally supported different efforts in behalf of women, she also feared the consequences, i.e., unsuitable demands by women. In a letter to Barbara Smith Bodichon, she writes of Ruskin's discouragement over women in his "efforts to teach them," as he found them "wanting in real scientific interest--bent on sentimentalizing everything" (4.425). Influenced by Ruskin and her own experiences at school and at Griff, Eliot explains her hope that higher education will teach women of the "great amount of socially unproductive labour which needs to be done by women" (4.425), her fear that "no good can come to women" when "each aims at doing the highest kind of work" that only the "few" can do well (425), and her hope that education will "propogate" the "true gospel" that the "deepest disgrace is to insist on doing work for which we are unfit..." (425). While Eliot admits her need to learn more about the "women question," to Mrs. Nassau John Senior, and her lack of sympathy with leaders of the women's cause, she maintains her belief in women's equal access with men to the "fund of truth" and her Comtean belief that women, as well as men, learn "their duty and its basis" (5.58). Eliot refused to recognize women's distinct need of special license or privileges, insisting that while she knew "very little about what is especially good for women," she knew and
wrote about the "few things...good for human nature generally" (5.58).

Since Eliot disapproved of women canvassing for positions and freedoms for which she believed they were unqualified, she limited her work for the advance of women to an advisory and a financial capacity and to rejoicing in the "labors of others" (6.65). Eliot agreed to make curriculum suggestions for Girton College for women and regularly contributed to the college (5.58), she approved of Mrs. Peter Taylor's interest in Jessie Parkes Belloc's work with "poor workhouse girls" (6.65), she agreed on the necessity of "homes for girls ["for unmarried women of all ages"] in various employments" (6.119), and she applauded the beginning of a union for book-binding women (6.119). True to her convictions, she considered it her "duty" to be silent when Mrs. Taylor invited her to speak on "certain public topics," since her function was "that of the aesthetic, not the doctrinal teacher..." (7.44). As to women being allowed an education at Cambridge, again Eliot believed that only women of a suitably capacious mind should undertake such an education, i.e., "young women whose natures are large...enough not to be used up in their efforts after knowledge" (5.406).

While Eliot discouraged canvassing for women's suffrage (4.366), in disgust with unqualified women "putting themselves forward" (5.50) and in apprehension of causing greater difficulty for working women (4.366) and encouraging women to demand work for which they lacked qualifications (4.425), she sympathized with women in abusive situations, especially as their girlhood experiences and education had made them vulnerable to such a fate. To Mrs. Robert Lytton, she expressed pity for women "whose affections are disappointed," since they have been taught "to delight in study" only "for the sake of a personal love" (5.107). Also, though she believed that an "unspoken...undivined residue" existed in even the most harmonious marriages (4.118-19), she insisted on "constancy in marriage," believing in the power of a woman's constancy to evoke the reform of a morally corrupt man (5.132). On the other hand, Eliot lacked...
sympathy for women who proceeded to marry men after discovering their moral corruption (5.132), a distinction between the situations of Romola and Gwendolyn Harleth.

Though Eliot believed in women's equal access to education, property rights, work, and housing and ostensibly defied convention by living with Lewes as his wife, she resisted the efforts of feminists to see her union with Lewes as rebellion against conventional morality and marriage ties. She believed that "complete union and sympathy" between marriage partners is possible only if women are given access to the "same store of... truth...as men have, so that their grounds of judgment may be as far as possible the same" (4.468). Upholding the conventional rhetoric for the complete union of wife and husband, Eliot admonished Bessie Parkes (Belloc), and any other offenders, who addressed her as "Miss Evans," insisting that she had "renounced that name" (i.e., that identity) in her union with Lewes (2.384). Eliot defended the "constantly growing blessedness in marriage" as the "very basis of good in our mortal life" (6.117) and spoke to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe of the "pleasure" of "interchange" between husband and wife, "each keeping to their own work, but loving to have cognizance of each other's course" (6.247). Eliot, then, saw equality of access to education as a prerequisite for a satisfying marital union and the advancement of mankind; at the same time, she hoped that through education, women (as well as men) would learn to recognize a hierarchy in ability instead of using gender as a means of advancement. She also defended marriage as the source of highest good for mankind, since the marriage union could evoke the greatest contributions to humanity from each partner.

As for her expectations for women in the future, Eliot echoed the wish of Ben Jonson in a vision of her own. Just as Jonson envisioned "his perfect woman" as having "Besides 'each softest virtue'...a 'manly soul,'" Eliot looked forward to "that grander feminine type--at once sweet, strong, larger-thoughted" (6.360), a vision that she would apply to
humanity in general in her androgynous characters.

Eliot's idea of the "grander feminine," as well as her own pursuit of intellectual and literary independence, did not fit the feminine ideology and resulted in Eliot's conflict with her own gender. As a descriptive ideal, the doctrine of femininity rested on the belief in woman's innate sensibility, passivity, virtue, self-abnegation (Hunt 1-3) and inferior reasoning (to men), as being necessary for her theologically and biologically intended role, a role inferred from the creation order, doctrine of the Fall, and Pauline epistles. Any deviation was considered abnormal. As a prescriptive ideal, its doctrine rested on the belief that women ought to be sensitive, passive, self-abnegating and decorative, as the "other to man" (Straub 21), in spite of her innate, opposing traits, which were attributed to sin or an inferior mental or physical capacity and in need of containment within the domestic sphere, according to a theological or political agenda for social order. Any acceptance of violations of the ideology would have implied tacit approval, endangering the social structure or the reputation of the person approving (by accepting) that violation.

Eliot's violation of the feminine ideology resulted from her refusal to believe that women's physiology, which gives women a capacity for affections and tenderness not known to man, in any way limits their intellectual capacity or guarantees their virtue or self-abnegation. In order to acquire the knowledge that would allow her to do her duty to society, Eliot was forced into conflict with the patriarchal hegemony. Charles Eliot Norton, writing of the Leweses, noted that even though people spoke of George Eliot in "terms of respect[,]...the common feeling [was]that it [would]not do for society to condone so flagrant a violation as hers of a convention and a sentiment...on which morality greatly [relied] for support..." (Haight, GE 404).

Eliot's alienation from conventional society forced her to negotiate with the feminine ideology that she had violated, in relation to her family, her career, and her union with
Lewes. To regain entrance to her family, Eliot agreed to attend church, in outward conformity to conventional beliefs, since her brother Isaac feared that in her refusal to conform to Anglicanism and patriarchal authority, she risked spinsterhood. After Eliot left the domestic sphere to board at Chapman House, Bessie Parkes' parents disapproved of Bessie's going to visit Eliot at a place considered inappropriate for young women to visit alone, until Bessie explained her need of Eliot's knowledge of poetry (103). As a journalist for the *WR*, before and after her union with Lewes, Eliot negotiated with the feminine ideology through anonymity, fearing a rejection by her audience or a loss of impact of her articles if her identity as a woman were to become known (Haight, *GEL* 2.218). In her union with Lewes, Eliot again negotiated with the feminine ideology in defending the sacredness of her bond with Lewes, in insisting that she be called "Mrs. Lewes," and in deferring to his desire that she attend public gatherings only in his company (Haight, *GE* 3.369). As a novelist, she would negotiate with the feminine ideology in assuming a pseudonym of "George Eliot" and in maintaining her "incognito" until her works were applauded by the "whole town" (Haight, *GEL* 3.36), until *Silas Marner* had received the critics' praise as being rated above the work of Scott, Lytton, and Dickens (Haight, *GE* 342), and until Eliot's identity had been "ferreted out by John Chapman" and spread among literary circles (287).

Eliot was able to alleviate her conflicts with the feminine ideology in her feminist friendships with like-minded intellectuals and writers. Correspondence with these women provided a forum for discussing political, religious, and social concerns, limited previously in her experience to men (Haight, *GEL* 2.452). Eliot's spiritual marriage with Sara Hennell, beginning in January 1842, allowed her to discuss her way through religious rebellion to a more moderate and tolerant view (1.163), to find support during her alienation from her family, to discuss her Strauss translation, to consider the inspiration of George Sand (whose views Eliot did not espouse but in whom she recognized the
"great power of God" (1.278), and to find stability during her brief infatuations with Dr. Brabant, the picture-restorer, and Froude. After moving to Chapman House, Eliot realized she "could never have any friend--not even a husband--who would supply the loss of those associations with the past which belong[ed] to [Sara]" (2.19).

From the time of her involvement with Chapman House, beginning January 1850, until the end of her life, Eliot would receive affirmation from feminists Bessie Parkes (Belloc) and Barbara Smith (Bodichon). Bessie Parkes, whom Eliot would grow to love as a "dear, ardent honest creature" (2.4-5), visited Eliot with Mrs. Parkes at Chapman House, listened to Eliot talk with male writers and reformers in her home, invited Eliot to attend the theater and concerts with her, and visited Eliot to receive advice about her poetry. She would describe Eliot lovingly as having a "'noble'' face, a "'sweet and kind ...expression,"' and a figure, "'remarkably supple'' with "'almost serpentine grace'' (Haight, GE 103). Bessie Parkes also dared to visit Eliot at Cambridge Street, where she moved to spend more time with Lewes, and at East Sheen (180), after Eliot and Lewes returned to London from their elopement. Eliot could expect Bessie Parkes to tolerate her views on women whether she agreed with them or not (Haight, GE 2.174) but had to prove to Bessie twice that her elopement was not a gesture of defiance to respectable society, when she insisted that Bessie stop addressing her as "Miss Evans" (2.232, 384).

Bessie Parkes' attempt to solicit literary contributions from Eliot for the Waverley women's magazine, after Eliot's elopement, affirmed Eliot's life and career, though Eliot gave only advice, since she had stopped writing articles to concentrate on the novel.

Barbara Smith Bodichon also understood and affirmed Eliot's life and work. She guessed Eliot's authorship of Adam Bede and wrote to praise her work. She was especially delighted that "a woman should write a wise and humorous book which should take a place by Thackeray" and that one "whom they spit at should do it" (3.56). She delighted also in telling Eliot, "Almost all women are jealous of you" (3.103). To the
non-conforming Barbara, who traveled unchaperoned, in simple clothes and no corsets (l.liv), Eliot could confide her delight with Lewes as a husband and their practice of birth control (Haight, GE 205), as well as her hopes concerning women's education. Eliot would sympathize with Barbara Smith (Bodichon), co-founder of Girton College and advocate of women's education, suffrage and property rights, in Barbara's love affair with Chapman, in her marriage with the French doctor, Bodichon, and in her finding comfort in the "forms and ceremonies of the Catholic Church," though Eliot chose to live "without opium,...through...pain of conscious endurance" (Haight, GE 3.366). Barbara responded with like sympathy when Eliot wrote of her intention to marry John Cross, and wrote, "Tell Johnny Cross I should have done exactly what he has done if you would have let me and I had been a man" (7.273).

Eliot's friendship with other young feminists (i.e., believers in women's intellectual and moral equality with men and in women's equal right to education, property, employment housing, and suffrage) allowed Eliot to become a "prophetess" (2.170), in her role as mentor, close friend, and mother. With Mrs. Senior, "Among those who [would] always be dear to [her]" (5.285), Eliot could express her views on the "women question" and her belief in the superiority of home education (6.47). Eliot encouraged Mrs. Peter Taylor in her efforts with Bessie Parkes Belloc in establishing houses for unmarried women (5.5). Eliot would guide Mrs. Ponsonby, one of the Girton College founders, through her religious struggles, explaining to Ponsonby her own idea (or Feuerbach's) of God as "the ideal of goodness entirely human" (6.98).

With Mrs. Congreve, Eliot formed a close friendship expressed in loving letters (i.e., letters that were destroyed by Mrs. Congreve's nieces to protect the reputations of the two women, whose expressions of affection might be re-interpreted by twentieth-century readers, Haight, GE 496). Mrs. Congreve, whose father was the doctor attending Eliot's father, had been impressed, as a child, with Eliot and renewed their friendship ten years
later when she and her husband (a disciple of Comte) became neighbors of the Leweses (McKensie 12, 13). Eliot described Mrs. Congreve as a "sweet, intelligent, gentle creature" and felt benefited by her "fine, beaming face, like a glimpse of an Olympian" (Haight, GEL 3.53). Eliot felt jealous when other friends "got so much of [her]..." (3.460) and spoke to her of the "business of life" (3.293). Since Mrs. Congreve, ten years younger than Eliot, grew to love Eliot "lover-wise," according to Edith Simcox, she was shocked and pained by Eliot's marriage to John Cross, especially as she was not told beforehand (5.38).

Eliot also formed close emotional ties with Mrs. Edward Burne-Jones and Mrs. Mark Pattison. Eliot's friendship with Mrs. Burne-Jones grew during the summer of 1870, when she and "Georgie" walked the beach of Whitby in conversation, as the Leweses were sharing lodgings with Mrs. Burne-Jones and her children (Haight, GE 429). Mrs. Burne-Jones was fascinated with Eliot and wanted to address her as "'Honored Madame'" (429). She responded to the news of Eliot's marriage to John Cross with an assurance of always loving her (Haight, GEL 7.272); and to her, John Cross would write the night of Eliot's death, "'My wife and your great friend died tonight at ten o'clock from failure...of the heart supervening on a bad cold" (7.350). Mrs. Mark Pattison, twenty-one years younger than Eliot and, like Mrs. Burne-Jones, a frequent visitor at the Priory, was called "'Dearest'" by Eliot, who signed herself, "'Your affectionate Madre'" (McKenzie 15).

Eliot formed motherly ties with Elma Stuart and, at times, with Edith Simcox, the young woman who idolized her. Since Stuart responded to Eliot's novels with years of gifts, affectionate notes, and pampering visits with her son, Eliot expressed loving concern over Stuart's complaints of arthritic pain, suitors, and her son's changing affections. In gratitude, Stuart arranged to be buried next to Eliot and to be remembered only as one whom Eliot had called "Daughter" (Haight, GE 452). Edith Simcox, like Eliot in being largely self-educated, a "rationalist in religion," financially independent as
a writer (McKenzie 7) and co-editor of a journal, was unlike Eliot in being a political radical, organizing trade unions for women, running for the London school board in order to enforce public education, and being uninterested in marriage. Simcox believed that since for most people, marriage was "not the only alternative," they should "cultivate" all their other alternatives (McKenzie7). Though Eliot allowed Simcox only a few visits, Simcox found Eliot "sweeter, wiser, better, and greater than any man of [her] acquaintance" (102). While in her Autobiography of a Shirtmaker Simcox refers to Eliot as "the Madonna" and "our Lady" and vows to confess to her daily (113), and though Simcox took a "pious pilgrimage and a fact-finding tour of Nuneaton after Eliot's funeral (115), she wrote restrainedly of Eliot, in her article for the Coventry, as "the best of women and the best of friends" (102). In her article, she accurately described Eliot's intolerance "of a vacuum in the mind or character" and explained that in spite of Eliot's "tenderness for all human weakness,...her natural stand was ruthlessly out of reach" (120).

That so many intelligent, complex women sought Eliot's friendship and counsel, revering her as a prophetess, suggests their need of a mentor as they moved beyond the boundaries of conventional society. Eliot's contacts with these women allowed her to recognize women's, as well as men's, need of salvation from lives of misery, especially since she had renounced the orthodox Christian solution to that need, viewing it as responsible for the educational restrictions on women. Believing in her mission of removing misery and degradation bolstered by superstition, Eliot would forge an ideology of humanity in the religious mythus of literature. Eliot's partnership with Lewes would give her the needed companionship, freedom, and model for her ideology.

Union with George Lewes would mitigate Eliot's gender conflict (i.e., the conflict between her own traits and those prescribed by the Victorian aristocratic and ascending middle-class culture), as she and Lewes defied gender stereotypes through their more

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androgynous roles yet together formed a complete person. After their union, Lewes and Eliot devoted their lives to their own and each other's work, finding in their companionship a "constantly growing blessedness" (Haight, GEL 6.1), i.e., encouragement and freedom to grow. After their eight-month stay in Germany, where Lewes pursued material for his biography of Goethe, with Eliot's help, and Eliot wrote articles and translated Spinoza, to help pay their own expenses and those of Lewes' wife and children, they returned to London, where both continued their work and Lewes suggested that Eliot try writing a novel. Lewes, who was impressed with her "concrete description" as well as her "wit...and philosophy" but doubted her dramatic power (2.406-7), cried when he read "Amos Barton," the first of her Scenes of Clerical Life, admitting that her "pathos [was] better than [her] fun" (2.407). From then on, Lewes would devote his life to Eliot's career as a novelist. He negotiated with John Blackwood to publish each of her novels as separate pieces (from the Maga), except for Romola, which was published in fourteen parts in Cornhill (Haight, GE 365). He protected Eliot's writing by leading Blackwood (at first) and others to believe that George Eliot was a diffident, talented clergyman (215); he protected Eliot from criticism; and he protected her "incognito" (Haight, GEL 3.215) as long as possible. Lewes would travel with Eliot, not only to gather material for her novels and his science studies but to rest, and read with her after she had completed each novel, one of which (Romola) he suggested. Eliot's involvement in Lewes' scientific and psychological studies would influence her realistic approach to the novel (Chapter 2), including Gwendolyn Harleth's "running mental reflections after each few words she... said to Grandcourt" in Daniel Deronda, which Blackwood recognized as a "'new device in reporting a conversation'" (Haight, GE 481), i.e., stream-of-consciousness.

As companions, Eliot and Lewes dismantled stereotypical gender roles. Lewes, who was married to the beautiful and unfaithful Agnes Jervis, looked beyond the strong features that had repelled Chapman and Spencer to find a friendship with Eliot that
turned to love, since, as he wrote in his Journal, 28 January 1859, "to know her is to love her"; in loving her, he experienced "a new birth" to "prosperity" and "happiness" (Haight, GE 272). Like others who admired and loved Eliot, he appreciated her brilliance (i.e., her wit and philosophy), as well as her friendship, and was deeply moved by her novels. Eliot, too, looked beyond Lewes' so-called ugliness, that of the "miniature Mirabeau," to find a "very airy, bright, versatile creature--not at all a formidable personage" (3.231), whom she grew to love and whose interests in literary criticism, philosophy, psychology, and science complemented and extended her own. Instead of conceiving of the "perfect wife" (Vicinus ix) in terms of motherhood and management of the domestic sphere, or the "perfect lady" in terms of the decorative, idle, drawingroom lady, who limited her activity to accomplishments and receiving callers and who served as a symbol of her husband's membership in the leisure class (Vicinus ix), Eliot and Lewes conceived of each other as perfect companions, who had acquired educations that allowed for similar grounds of judgment (Haight, GEL 4.468), felt a similar sense of duty to guide humanity, and held similar aims as writers.

Eliot and Lewes demonstrated their indifference to gender roles by assisting each other in research and proofing as well as in housekeeping. Eliot wrote to Sara Hennell that Lewes, a "model husband," had taken upon himself the finding and hiring of a servant and "other exertions" of household duty, leaving her free to write (3.48-49). As she wrote Middlemarch, Lewes wrote her notes and business letters, sacrificing his own work to do so. When Lewes needed to help his three sons establish themselves in careers after their education, Eliot sacrificed her work to be a "Mutter" to them, coaching them for exams, making a home for them, and nursing Thornie in his illness. Together Eliot and Lewes walked, sometimes four hours a day; together they read novels and scholarly works aloud; together they learned Spanish and attended Saturday pops concerts and Sunday lectures by Richard Congreve on positivism.
Eliot and Lewes were to live Eliot's (and Saint Paul's) ideal of human love, as the "mutual subjection of soul between a man and a woman—which is also a growth and a revelation...(4.468). Eliot would attribute her growth to Lewes, in her inscription on the fly-leaf of Adam Bede: "To my dear husband, George Henry Lewes, I give this manuscript of a work which would never have been written but for the happiness which his love has conferred on my life" (Haight, GE 278). She would attribute Romola to her "Husband, whose perfect love has been the source of her insight and strength..." (373). Lewes would evaluate the year, 1863, in his Journal, by writing of "Much trouble about the two boys" and "much bother about the new house" but "continued happiness with the best of women" (373). In her Journal in March of 1865, Eliot writes of her "worship" of Lewes' "good humor, his good sense, his affectionate care for everyone who has claims on him," and concludes, "that worship is my best life" (Haight, GEL 4.184).

Eliot's worship of Lewes suggests her new religious ideal in the marriage union. From her experience with Lewes, Eliot could write of the "growing blessedness in marriage," instead of the self-denying commitment to religious dogma, as the "very basis of good in our mortal life" (6.110). Even when Eliot's "Little man" was in ill health, in the summer of 1878 (7.34) and was dying of cancer, he concerned himself with "Polly"; his last letter to Blackwood, 21 November 1878, discussed her essay "Theophrastus Such" and was to be enclosed with her finished manuscript (Haight, GE 515).

Eliot's sense of union with Lewes would continue after his death, 30 November 1878. Unlike the sense of betrayal, loneliness, and guilt felt by Dorothea after Casaubon's death, when she tried to organize his notes to write his Key to all Mythologies. Eliot spent months with her "darling's earliest work" (Haight, GEL 7.101) and decided to stay in her house until she had completed Lewes' current work, Problems of Life and Mind. By March, 1879, she had arranged to publish his Problem I and to publish his other Problems in a separate volume (Haight, GE 520). She also arranged to establish a
foundation, i.e., "The George Henry Lewes Studentship in Physiology," for students who wished to continue in the work that Lewes had begun (522). After Eliot's death, even the devoted Edith Simcox, writing a valedictory article for The Nineteenth Century, felt it "an intrusion to allude to the perfect union between [Eliot and Lewes] (McKenzie 120).

In spite of Eliot's "newly re-opened life" (Haight, GE 7.291) with John Cross, who had been her financial advisor and "Nephew" for years and cared for the ailing Eliot "as if he had been a wife..." (7.332), she spoke, in a letter to Barbara Bodichon, of the "hidden river of sadness...Deep down below" (7.291), alluding to her buried life with Lewes.

Eliot went beyond the feminist beliefs (i.e., women's equality with men in an intellectual, moral, and professional capacity and women's right to equality in education, to ownership of property, to housing, to membership in trade unions) and beyond her feminist alliances, to find her ideal for humanity in the marriage union, in which she had ceased to be "Miss Evans" to be part of a greater whole. Like Carlyle, Eliot would use her novels as the mythus of her own religious principle. Eliot's conflict between belief in the universe as a reflection of the Infinite and belief in the natural and moral laws as identical with the Infinite, between Christ as a reflection of the Divine and Christ as an objectification of man's desire for perfection, left her with a belief in resignation to natural and moral laws, in moral duty to obey those laws, and in self-sacrificing love in marriage as a means of completing the whole person. She found the whole person, composed of a self-giving, androgynous male and female, to be the divine. Eliot's refusal to comply with Frederick Harrison's request to compose "anything 'in prose or in verse, for public or private use by way of collect, hymn, or litany'" that would express the Comtean worship of "humanity" (Haight, GE 506) suggests that she, like Carlyle, made literature her religious expression. Eliot was to dramatize her belief in the "high and holy" mission as novelist (as expressed in "The Progress of Fiction as an Art," October 1853, WR, Dodd 12), or prophetess of art.
Eliot's vaguely expressed beliefs concerning the nature of man and woman would appear clearer when dramatized in her novels. Eliot believed that while women are born with the capacity for emotions unknown to men, that capacity must be cultivated for expression in women and can be cultivated in men. As expressed in "Woman in France," Eliot describes woman as having, besides "maternal" affections, "comparative physical weakness which...introduces a distinctly feminine condition into her...chemistry of... affections and sentiments, which...gives rise to distinctive forms and combinations" (Eliot 53). In other words, the "physiological differences" i.e., women's comparative physical weakness and child-bearing capacity, cause psychological differences between men and women, which allow for "variety and beauty" (53).

Revealing Eliot's ambivalence about feminism, her letters and articles develop her belief that women's comparative physical weakness and capacity for maternity give them an inborn capacity for affections and emotions lacking in man but that these affections and emotions need to be grounded in knowledge, through education, for a more compatible union with men. In her defense of education to Mrs. Davies, 8 August 1868, Eliot attempts to answer men's "alarm lest women should be unsexed" (4.468). She vaguely defines the "feminine character" as the "affectionateness" suffused within a woman's being by "gentleness, tenderness, and possible maternity" (4.468). At the same time, she affirms, as she discussed fourteen years earlier in "Woman in France," that "complete unity" of man and woman depends on women's access to "the same store of acquired truth or beliefs as men have... (468). Though Eliot believed in (an unexplained) "distinction of function," according to her letter to John Morley (14 May 1867), she also allowed for "exceptional cases for individual organization" (4.364). Also, though she believed that women, by nature of their physiological make-up as the weaker and child-bearing sex, were inclined to "gentleness, tenderness, and "affectionateness," she believed that suffering could subdue and refine the spirit of the "harder sex" (1.140).
Eliot's article "Woman in France," written to influence attitudes about women in England, attributes the "womanly intellect in France," an intellect essential to the compatible union of man and woman, to factors which influenced her own experience. To "laxity...with regard to the marriage ties," she attributes perfect unions of mature individuals, after an early marriage, a series of flirtations, and a period of penitence (Eliot 57). To the salons, where men and women discuss "literature,...war, politics, religion," she attributes the French women's tendency to be "intelligent observers of characters and events," instead of "dreamy moralizers, ignorant of the world and human nature" (58), as described in "Silly Novels" and characterized by Eliot's heroines before they suffer. Eliot formed her own union in maturity and made her homes--both the Priory and the Heights--places for discussions of serious subjects between men and women.

Eliot would use her novels to suggest that even though men and women do have psychological differences (because of differences in physiological make-up) and intellectual differences (because of differences in access to acquired knowledge), perfect union of the sexes depends on man's acquiring the affectionate nature of woman, on woman's acquiring the intellectual resources open to man, and on society's allowing for individual distinctions and make-up. Eliot's early works--Scenes of Clerical Life, Adam Bede, and The Mill on the Floss--expose the misery, degradation, and need of salvation for men and women whose union is not based on mutual affection and self-sacrifice, whose characters are distorted by cultural ideals and stereotypes, and whose lives must end in either self-centered misery or self-sacrificing martyrdom without the intervention of a savior. Silas Marner and Romola, pivotal works, examine the possibility of the displacement and transcendence of gender roles, the feminist desire to be the counterpart of God or to be united with God to save humanity, and the reciprocity of salvation.

In another pivotal work, the dramatic poem, How Lisa Loved the King (1869), composed six years after Romola, Eliot dramatizes, in heroic couplets, woman's desire
for perfect union with, if not God, at least a god-like male, the "Best" (Eliot 50), as suitable to her high character. Set in fourteenth-century Palermo, the work focuses on the high ideals of Lisa, the daughter of a drug merchant and the intended wife for "brave, well-born" (609) Perdicone. Hearing the praise and catching a glimpse of Pedro, king of Aragon, master and liberator of Sicily, and king of cavaliers, Lisa feels the "impregnation of supernal fire/of young ideal love--transformed desire" (47-49), since she longs to love a "hero noble, beauteous, great" (97). Though Pedro fills her fantasies and dreams, the "inward-wailing" Lisa begins to decline physically, dying of love unknown to King Pedro. After her anxious father responds to her request for a singer (not knowing of her plan to have the story of her love sung before the king), the singer Minuccio succeeds in touching the king with his song. King Pedro proves his greatness by vising Lisa, whom he begs "for the love of us" to be "cheered," as she has "endeared" herself to him, who knows her "passing worthiness" (470-472). After he visits Lisa (accompanied by his understanding wife), kisses her, promises to be her "cavalier," and asks her to respond to the vows of Perdicone, so as not to "wrong" herself and her country by remaining "unmated," Lisa yields to his request. Having loved him--"Son, father, brother, lover, blent in one" (388)--as a being above all merit, she yields her will to his and accepts Perdicone, who has learned tenderness through suffering. At this point, Eliot had begun to envision perfect union, reminiscent of the edenic love in Brother and Sister, as predicated upon self-sacrificing love, made possible through the education of women, the sensitizing of men, and society's allowing for individual, not stereotypical make-up.

Eliot's later novels, Felix Holt (written prior to How Lisa Loved the King) and Middlemarch, continued to examine the destructive effects of the feminine ideology, the need of transcending gender stereotypes, and the possibility of forming the whole person through a union of culturally androgynous individuals--male and female. Daniel Deronda would carry this ideal to mythic proportions, as a mythus of Eliot's religious impulse.
In *Scenes of Clerical Life*, George Eliot dramatizes and resolves her emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts, though the distinctions are artificial, and begins to forge her ideal of a savior for humanity, particularly women, a savior in and through whom humanity's conflicts can be resolved. She resolves her emotional conflicts (with male rejection) in her depiction of three exceptional women who devote themselves to unsuitable men, suffer abuse, and are saved or at least appreciated by exceptional men. She resolves her intellectual conflict (with orthodox and heterodox religious beliefs) in her depiction of the clergy as either religious or irreligious (Haight, *GEL* 2.347), depending on their capacity for moral responsibility and self-sacrificing love over their capacity to expound specific doctrines. She resolves her gender conflicts in dramatizing the destructive effects of gender ideologies, i.e., the vulnerability of culturally ideal women to male manipulation and unsuitable marriages, and in proving humanity's, particularly woman's, need of a savior.

As this chapter examines Eliot's dramatizing and resolving each conflict within the context of nature's inexorable laws, in her move toward the ideal savior, it suggests the limited vision of Gilbert and Gubar, who mythologize Eliot as the "angel of destruction" (491), relieving female suffering through death. Eliot progressively depicts and defines her ideal of a savior, in the course of the three stories in *Scenes*, as a person who transcends gender ideologies and stereotypes, in response to natural and moral laws, to effect positive change. Though Milly Barton demonstrates moral duty and self-sacrificing
love in "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton," the narrator depicts Rev. Mr. Cleves as the only person capable of understanding Amos, appreciating Milly, or saving the Bartons from destruction. In "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story," Rev. Mr. Gilfil saves Caterina Sarti from emotional and physical destruction but lacks the capacity to effect her moral regeneration and development. Only Rev. Mr. Tryan, in "Janet's Repentance," can effect Janet's moral rebirth and growth, though his early death prevents their perfect union. The union of two suitable individuals into a whole person, capable of addressing society's messianic needs, is completed in Eliot's later works.

While Gilbert and Gubar insist that, for Eliot, women's savior is death (i.e., death of themselves or their oppressors), this chapter suggests a broader idea. Mythologizing Eliot as an "angel of death" (490), in an apparent brainstorm over her nickname Pollian (i.e., after Apollyon, "Angel of Destruction," in Sarah Hennell's pun on her nickname Polly, when Eliot was translating the controversial Das Leben Jesu of Strauss, Haight GE 79), Gilbert and Gubar argue for "authorial vengeance" (485) in Scenes. Demonstrating their theory that Eliot uses death to rescue Milly Barton, Caterina Sarti, and Janet Dempster from a life of misery, they overlook the evidence that each death results from a violation of natural laws of consequence, a violation encouraged by artificial gender ideologies and stereotypes. Eliot strongly suggests Milly's well-meaning but ignorant culpability in her own death. She suggests that the deaths of Captain Wybrow and Caterina result from a violation of natural laws encouraged by gender ideologies, whose destructiveness is recognized and resisted by the true savior, Mr. Gilfil. Eliot also suggests that while Dempster's death may spare Janet further suffering, Tryan's death deprives both Janet and Tryan of a fruitful union. In her sense of duty to guide society, Eliot had a higher vision than that proposed by Gilbert and Gubar. Her savior is not death but a person capable of thwarting death through positive change motivated by self-giving love.
Eliot's three-fold conflict (emotional, intellectual, gender) provides her focus in the stories in *Scenes*. In "Amos Barton," Eliot's emotional conflict (i.e., her early attachment to her brother and father, her need to keep their affection but her unwillingness to submit to their jurisdiction, and her subsequent desire to win the admiration of exceptional men) is reflected not only in her focusing on a "heroic woman" (Uglow 85) but in her evaluating the different men according to their physical features, perceptiveness, adaptability, and compassion. Eliot's intellectual conflict with Christian orthodoxy and among different heterodox beliefs appears in her disparaging depiction of High-Churchmen Amos Barton (who is Low-Church in his preaching) and Mr. Ely and in her synthesis of High-Church and Low-Church doctrines with transcendental, positivist, and humanistic ideals in the words and actions of Mr. Cleves, the ideal clergyman and human being. Eliot's gender conflict appears in her dramatizing the vulnerability and victimization of the "perfect wife" (Vicinus ix), Milly Barton, who lacks the wisdom and self-assurance necessary to prevent her family's destruction; the destructive self-centeredness of the "perfect lady" (Vicinus ix), Countess Caroline Czerlaski, who lacks the moral awareness and responsibility necessary to prevent her from victimizing the Bartons; and the destructive self-centeredness of Amos Barton, who lacks the capacity to reach his audience or to perceive his wife's superior qualities and failing health. While Milly Barton models self-sacrificing love and duty, her neglect of natural law results in her own death and her family's destruction. While Cleves is the only person capable of offering moral defense, sympathy, and charity, he cannot forestall the despondent family's move to a factory town.

In "Amos Barton," Eliot, freed in the disguise of a Cambridge-educated clergyman (Uglow 84), reveals her attraction to exceptional men, their political and aesthetic preferences, and her interest in the kinds of women that attract and help or destroy men. She establishes a context for such men as Amos Barton and his predecessor Mr. Gilfil (whom she describes in her next story) to enhance the superior (religious) traits and
vision of Mr. Cleves. Eliot contrasts the conservative, pre-Reform Shepperton Church (of twenty-five years earlier), in its "dear, old, brown, crumbling picturesque inefficiency" and its "excellent old gentleman," Rev. Mr. Gilfil, who "smoked very long pipes and preached [or read] very short sermons" (Eliot, "AB" 42), with the "spic and span new-painted ...efficiency" of the post-Reform Shepperton Church and its "methodistical meddlesome chap of a minister," Amos Barton, who disgusts his conservative congregation with his "extempore" preaching in cottages (47), his beginning a Tract society (50), and his "meddling in business" about which he knows nothing (52).

Eliot reveals her opinion of different kinds of men in her evaluation of their appearance, acuity, capacity to communicate truth, and motives. Amos Barton's "narrow face with no particular complexion...," his "features of no particular shape," his "eye of no particular expression" (53), and his reputation of not being "superlative in anything" (85), convey the damning impression of Barton as "the quintessential extract of mediocrity" (85). His lack of acuity is conveyed in Mrs. Hackit's impression that he is not "over-burthened i' th' upper story" (49), in his failure to perceive the impression of ignorance and coarseness that he leaves with the Farquhars (i.e., his having "for to do something" and his sniffing, 53), his failed attempts to hurt Dissent through his anti-Dissent books, his alienating his choir in silencing them during a wedding hymn, his alienating his church in urging them to enlarge the building when the congregation dwindles, his failure to perceive the selfish motives behind the Countess' friendliness, and his failure to appreciate his wife's superior qualities or to notice her increasing debility. He proves his inability to convey the gospel truth, whether he preaches in the church, a cottage, or the workhouse. At the workhouse, he inflicts doctrinal sermons on paupers, reprimands the harmless and destitute Mrs. Brick for her snuff use, and threatens a restless child with burning in hell. As Eliot's narrator sees Barton, he exemplifies the "worthy man who gets himself into the wrong place" (61) and cannot adapt. His motives, like those of Mr.
Cumming in Eliot's article, "Evangelical Preaching: Mr. Cumming," are divided between the desire of seeing his audience converted to salvation and the desire of securing a better living, while he attempts to ascend to the upper class through his friendship with the Farquhars and the Countess.

While Mr. Ely, rector, and Mr. Cleves, curate, have the aesthetic appeal and acuity that Amos Barton lacks, Ely uses his superior qualities for his own amusement, and Cleves devotes his energies to raising the moral and intellectual awareness of his church and the workingmen of his parish. Mr. Ely, a "tall, dark-haired, distinguished-looking man" of thirty-three, regarded for his "remarkable powers and learning," does not let people know that he is "laughing at them" (74). Martin Cleves, though the "plainest and least clerical-looking of the party" of clergymen dining at Ely's rectory, contrasts the others with his broad shoulders (as he works his own land), "negligently tied cravat" (as he dresses for work, not show), "large irregular features, and large head [suggesting intellectual powers], thickly covered with lanky brown hair," instead of a wig (93).

Unlike the distant and supercilious Ely, Cleves' involvement makes him "beloved, consulted, relied on by his flock" (93). Unlike Barton and Ely, Cleves "convey[s] religious truth in down-to-earth sermons" and understands his people's concerns because of his roots in a "harder-working section of the middle-class "(93). He proves his acuity and compassion in his response to clerical gossip. While the others deplore Barton's "folly" in allowing the Countess to live at his home at the risk of his reputation and purse, Cleves defends Barton as a "right-minded man," who successfully maintains, with his wife, respectability in poverty; Cleves also looks for a "simple explanation" for Barton's actions (96).

Eliot also depicts the two kinds of women who attract men and their influence, betraying her own emotional conflict over rejection. While Milly, a "large gentle Madonna" with "thick chestnut curls," "well-rounded cheeks," and "large, tender...eyes,"
makes the "limpest dress look graceful" with her tall figure of "flowing lines," makes even the worst hats seem "miracles of successful millinery" with her long arched neck," and effects a "sensation of timidity" with her "imposing mildness" (54), Caroline Czerlaski, a "lithe, dark, thin-lipped Countess," with her self-assurance, vanity, and ambition (69), uses her "external polish" (78) to hide her shallowness and promote her schemes to advance herself, while evoking admiration in men and jealous avoidance in women. While Milly models self-effacing "gentle-womanhood" (69), Caroline models self-serving femininity and evokes the gossip in Shepperton Church and the destruction of the Barton family.

Eliot's conflict with both Anglicanism and Evangelicalism, as well as her interest in Carlyle's transcendental ideal of Infinity, Comte's positivist ideal of resignation to natural and moral laws through duty, and Feuerbach's humanistic ideal of self-sacrificing love, is evident in her disparaging depiction of High-Church and Low-Church clergymen and her complimentary depiction of Cleves, who demonstrates a sense of duty and compassion more than a concern for doctrine, living what the others neglect to preach. While Amos Barton preaches a Low-Church doctrine (i.e., salvation based on faith, with an emphasis on personal sin and need of conversion) in cottages, he insists on High-Church ecclesiastical functions, alienating his congregation in urging increased subscriptions and in threatening ecclesiastical prosecution to his rebellious choir. Eliot proves her antagonism to Evangelicals in describing Amos Barton's ignorance in "garb as well as in grammar" (56), his unattractive teeth, his belief that he has ascended to the upper class because of the Countess' friendship, his inability to communicate divine love to his parish, his pride in his sermon publication, his enjoyment of his suppers and drinks with his wealthy parishioners, and his habit of borrowing money to cover the discrepancy between his income and his spending. Obtuse about Milly's draining life, he insists on privacy for reading in the sitting-room, after preaching unsuccessfully at the workhouse,
unaware of Milly's having moved and bound his books and set his slippers by the fire and unconcerned that she uses the sitting-room as a schoolroom to teach their six children. He is oblivious to her staying up late and rising early to darn and patch while he snores blissfully till nine. He fails to notice her increasing paleness and weariness during the Countess' extended stay, turning his face in defiance at the gossip in hopes that the influence of the Countess will help him rise.

Eliot delights in satirizing both Anglican and Evangelical clergy, gathered in Milby for a clerical meeting, as well as the ladies and the respectable people of Shepperton parish, for their ignorance of religious truth. Even though the High-Churchmen deplore Amos Barton for being a "low-bred fellow," who "rambles" in his preaching (49), they prove equally ungentlemanly in their character. Mr. Ely laughs internally at his admirer, Farquhar, for calling Barton an "ath" while believing the rumors about the Countess and her half-brother himself. His laughter proves his contempt for his parishioners, his unconcern for their spiritual growth, and his lack of compassion for Barton. Mr. Fellowes, "rector and magistrate," obtained his living through his conversational charm and ability to interpret the opinions of the "stammering baronet" (92). Mr. Archibald Duke, Evangelical, proves his gloomy view of human nature true with an expenditure that exceeds his income (90). Mr. Furness is notable for writing sermons like his poems, full of metaphor. Mr. Pugh reads his sermons and dresses in a manner that hieroglyphically represents the "spirit of Christianity" (93), and Mr. Baird, an "original writer and metropolitan lecturer," preaches to three rich families in a barn (94).

The ladies of the parish, too, are satirized for attributing their alienation of the Countess to secret "vices," not their own jealousy, since her known vanity and dishonesty would be considered "slight blemishes," not enough to bar her from polite society (79).

The Countess Caroline Czerlaske and her half-brother Bridmain, though not nefarious, as people believe, live empty lives, evoke many a rumor and "virtuous
declamation," and prove the inability of Barton and Ely to communicate gospel truth. Mr. Bridmain, not a scoundrel, has retired on a modest fortune earned in a partnership in a silk-manufactory, lives with his half-sister to "shine in the reflected light of her beauty and title" (77), studies weather for conversation with ladies, and studies politics for conversation with gentlemen. Though Caroline's marriage to a Polish count, who escaped Poland and "taught dancing lessons" (77), left her a widow, financially dependent on her half-brother; she does not even consider returning to the life of a governess, a life hidden in her past. Her desire for respectability and her concern for the state of her soul (postponed until she has landed a husband capable of providing a carriage and a settlement) motivates her friendship with the poor and vulnerable Bartons.

The theological ignorance of Amos Barton's parish, as well as his inability to convey the message or life of the gospel, is also represented in the elderly and wealthy widow, Mrs. Patten. Referring to Amos' sermon on sin and the need of mercy, she tells Mrs. Hackit that she has "never been a sinner" (48); she proves her sinless state in having done her "duty" as both a former servant and a wife and has having made dependable cheeses (48). Her neighbors, the Hackits, demonstrate more understanding than others in their concern about Milly Barton's condition, their sending her food and wine, and their taking several of her children to their home to relieve Milly.

Only in Martin Cleves, an "'uncommon knowin', sensible free-spoken gentleman; very kind an good-natur'd too'" (94), can Eliot resolve her intellectual conflicts between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Cleves demonstrates the orthodox gospel as well as heterodox ideals in his "preaching sermons which the wheelwright and the blacksmith [can] understand" (93), his giving "conversational" lectures on stories or essays to educate his workingmen, his defending Barton's reputation, and his giving "recovering warmth" to Barton's "poor benumbed heart" in a silent hand-shake at Milly's funeral (109). Through his acts of moral responsibility and compassion, he is Eliot's idea of a religious minister.
and dramatizes Eliot's belief in good deeds motivated by good will instead of dogma (Haight, GEL 1.144), her belief in practical instruction for life over doctrinal instruction for the soul's eternal life, and her belief in temporal over eternal salvation. Though Cleves appears to be the only person (except the out-spoken Nanny) capable of saving the Bartons or raising moral consciousness, he lacks the involvement and self-sacrificing love necessary for intervention.

While Cleves contrasts with Ely in being a religious (i.e., morally responsible and compassionate) clergyman, Amos Barton proves his "middle" nature, being religious in his good intentions to convert his hearers to salvation, to love his wife, to offer hospitality to the countess, and to be an "excellent man" (Eliot,"AB" 53) but irreligious in his responses to Milly and his motives for his actions. At Milly's death, Amos recognizes his "omissions" (110) of love to Milly and sobs at her grave. Amos' contrition and sorrow, which redeem him from self-centeredness and awaken his moral responsibility and sympathy, strip away his illusions of excellence and prepare him for a manufacturing-town parish. Though redeemed from his former selfishness, he must still face the consequences of natural law.

In her focus on the lives and motives of Milly Barton and the Countess Caroline Czerlaski, Eliot expresses her conflict with the destructive stereotypes of the nineteenth-century gender ideologies. While Milly fulfills the prescription and description of the "perfect wife" and the Countess demonstrates the description of the "perfect lady" (Chapter 3), both women lack the wisdom for sound judgment. Milly, "large, fair, mild-eyed,...timid even in friendship" (70), is described as a "lady-like woman...an a delicate creatur" (56) by Mrs. Hackit. As an ideal of womanhood, the "perfect wife," and the "angel in the house" (Gilbert and Gubar 22), Milly devotes herself to instructing and caring for her six children while carrying the seventh, running her household, doing the work normally done by a maid, and encouraging her husband. The narrator gives Milly
heroic dimensions, for in loving Amos, comparable to a "mongrel, ungainly" dog, her "sublime capacity of loving" has "all the more scope" (Eliot, "AB" 155). Despite the weariness of her body, her "heart [is] not heavy" because it "overflow[s] with love" for Amos and her children (58). Though she longingly eyes the Countess' "rich silk of pinkish lilac hue," in her own sensible black silk (69), she reacts graciously even when gravy is spilled on her dress by the servant and when the Countess ignorantly commends Milly for her indifference to dress (72).

In spite of Milly's sincerity, affectionateness, and involvement in the running of her home and educating of her children, Eliot suggests that Milly lacks the sound judgment to prevent the downfall of her home and her early death. Because Milly allows Caroline to live in her home without contributing to expenses or housekeeping, allows Caroline to occupy her time so that she must work harder and sleep less, and tolerates the financial burden and "calumny" (80) while realizing that Caroline is "inconsiderate" (100), she allows her home and health to disintegrate. If not for Nanny's indignant outburst that sends Caroline packing, now that Milly is gravely ill and their reputations are sullied, Caroline would have witnessed the death of Milly and her seventh child. Even in death, Milly's efforts to be the "perfect wife" bring blessing and cursing; i.e., while she assures Amos, her "dear-dear-husband," that he made her "very-happy" (108), she gives nine-year-old Patty the responsibility of caring for Amos and the five other children. With education for sounder judgment, she could have been a wiser partner and maintained her family and her health, instead of allowing her destruction, leaving a grief-stricken and helpless man and insuring that Patty would never have a separate life. Patty inherits the same domestic burden that Eliot felt at Griff, with the added care of five children and the lack of the Arbury Hall library and private tutors.

Countess Caroline, who fulfills the description of the "perfect lady," an idle, drawing-room lady who functions as a decoration and symbol of her husband's (or half-
brother's) membership in the leisure class (Hunt 140), proves the destructive effects of moral ignorance and self-centeredness. Though "undeniably beautiful" ("AB"69) and accomplished in manners, fancy work, and flattery, she hides her past as a governess and expects to be accepted and revered in Shepperton society for her charm, dress, villa, and title. When Bridmain marries Caroline's maid, Caroline reveals her poverty, inability to support herself, and social insignificance in turning to Milly Barton for accommodations, as she waits for her brother's invitation. At the Bartons', she proves her idleness, frivolousness, and vanity, in rising late to a special and separate breakfast, demanding cream for her dog, never offering to help with the children or work or expenses, and believing she is "behaving charmingly" (98) in keeping Milly from her work and embroidering a baby cap. Described ironically as "a little vain, a little ambitious, a little selfish, a little shallow and frivolous, a little given to white lies" (78-79), Caroline proves to be socially burdensome and destructive, in her use of beauty, title, and flattery to maintain herself.

Caroline's ignorance of work and of moral responsibility, her self-centeredness, and her uselessness make her the model of destructiveness and self-destructiveness for Rosamond Vincy and Gwendolyn Harleth. Caroline not only victimizes the innocent people who support her but allows herself to be victimized. She must either try to usurp the position of the mistress of her half-brother's home and marginalize his wife, or she must put herself in the marginal position of submitting to her former maid, while she hopes for a husband with a carriage and a fortune. She sees no place for herself in society except as a governess, sister, or wife.

The Barton marriage also suggests the disastrous effects of gender ideologies that allow exploitation in marriage through ignorance of natural and moral law, a fear of Eliot herself (Haight, GEL 1.184). Blind, in his own sense of masculine and clerical superiority, to his wife's superior qualities and the inexorable results of her tireless efforts, i.e.,
her managing their home with little help, her keeping the family respectably dressed with little money, her teaching the children without disturbing Amos' privacy, and her deferring to the wishes of her ill-humored and lazy husband while neglecting her own health, he unwittingly brings about the death of his greatest "treasure" (Eliot, "AB" 55) and his source of respect in Shepperton. Never really looking at Milly or assisting her, he goes on his preoccupied way, preaching on Sunday, enjoying his cottage dinners, meddling in church business, attending clerical meetings, and reading. Even the children notice Milly's increasing weakness: little Dickey quietly strokes her hand, and Patty tries to run her errands. Unqualified for his position of curate at Shepperton church and preacher at the workhouse, he is portrayed as equally unsuitable for being Milly's husband, as he ignorantly violates natural and moral law in over-spending, borrowing from Oldinport, asking for charity, exploiting his wife's gentleness, and recognizing too late his "stinted affection" and his "poverty and selfishness [of life]" (111) that hurry Milly's death.

In "Amos Barton," Eliot also introduces the idea of humanity's, particularly woman's, need of a savior, someone capable of guiding men and women from destructive lives of self-centeredness to self-sacrificing lives of "blessedness" (Carlyle 192) through adherence to natural and moral laws. Combining the Christian concept of Christ's redemptive death, the transcendental concept of the moral imperative as an indication of man's participation in the Divine, the Comtean concept of resignation and duty to natural and moral laws for contentment, and Feuerbach's idea of self-sacrificing love as evidence of man's desire for the divine, Eliot begins to develop her ideal of humanity, capable of raising society's moral consciousness. Though Milly Barton models resignation, duty, and self-sacrificing love, capable of carrying the family and instilling goodness in her children (Eliot, "AB"115), she lacks the wisdom to raise Caroline's and Amos' moral consciousness and prevent her family's destruction. Also, even though Martin Cleves demonstrates intelligence, perceptiveness, adaptability, and compassion, he remains too
distant from the Bartons, from Milly, to offer self-sacrificing love or counsel, though he defends them from gossip, comforts Amos, and gathers money for Amos' bereaving family. The combined efforts of Milly Barton and Martin Cleves suggest the human ideal, capable of effecting moral redemption in others. This ideal is developed in Rev. Mr. Gilfil and Rev. Mr. Tryan.

In "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story," Eliot dramatizes her own emotional conflict over rejection, in Caterina Sarti; her intellectual conflict with Christian doctrine, in the antidogmatic clergyman, Mr. Gilfil; and her conflict with the destructive effects and limitations of gender ideologies and stereotypes, in her descriptions of Caterina Sarti, Beatrice Assher, and Lady Assher and in the expectations of Sir Christopher, Anthony Wybrow, and Maynard Gilfil, all within the context of nature's inexorable process and laws, to which humanity must either resign itself in duty and obligation to others or suffer the consequences. Eliot mitigates the dogma of Bray's philosophy of necessity and Comte's positivism with Feuerbach's ideal of self-sacrificing love, demonstrated in curate Gilfil, who answers Caterina's, and later his parish's, need of a savior.

The depiction of Caterina, as well as the pain that she suffers, reflects, to some degree, the descriptions and behavior of young Eliot and her suffering (Chapter 2) but is set within the context of inexorable natural, moral, and institutional laws. Like the small-statured and thin Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) at Arbury Hall of the Newdigate family, whose estate Eliot's father managed and whose library Eliot was allowed to use, Caterina Sarti is small in stature with a "slim figure" (132) and lives as a useful "protegee" (152) at the Cheverel Manor. Perhaps Caterina has the appearance that Eliot would have liked, with "no positive beauty indeed" but "a certain light airy grace" (159), "large appealing dark eyes" and a voice of "low-toned friendliness" that gave her unusual "charm" (159). Though Caterina lacks Eliot's intellectual capacity, she manifests a superior musical talent, for which she is given singing lessons and is expected to perform for guests.
Caterina shows the same independent spirit, as well as the same sorrow over rejection, as Eliot. She throws herself theatrically at Sir Christopher's knees in a demonstration of affection, despite Lady Cheverel's reprimand. She tries to resist Anthony Wybrow's romantic displays, telling him to "go away" (185), and she eventually plans revenge for his cruelty. She refuses to submit to Anthony's and Sir Christopher's plans for her marriage to Gilfil, though she knows he is superior to Wybrow. She refuses to reply to Miss Assher's condescending remarks and rejects her reprimands. Caterina also refuses to accept the limitations imposed by her classless position; i.e., she holds Wybrow responsible for his show of love to her, asking herself how he could have encouraged her to love him if he was not planning to "brave everything" for her (145). She also accepts her own moral responsibility in admitting her guilt in loving Wybrow and wanting to harm him and in deciding to leave Cheverel Manor after his death. Like Eliot, who was encouraged to love Chapman but suffered his rejection, Caterina is encouraged to love Wybrow, who would love her "if he [were] able to love anybody" (164), but suffers rejection when he admires Beatrice Assher for her "splendid beauty" and her "pretty estate" and decides to marry her to fulfill the duty that comes "easiest" to him (165).

Eliot suggests the tragedy that occurs when mortals, blinded by hubris (here selfishness), rebel against fate (here the natural and moral laws). Though Sir Christopher thought of Caterina only as a helpful little pet when he agreed to bring her to England and raise her as a protegee, he must admit that he has been "stone-blind" (225) in believing that he understood her and what was best for her. He has not considered the possibility of Wybrow's trifling with her affections and breaking her heart. Sir Christopher has not considered the possibility that Caterina is more than his little "monkey" (152), as far as her feelings are concerned.

Wybrow, too, selfishly plays with fate, or natural and moral laws, though he intends
to do his "agreeable" duty by his uncle, Sir Christopher, in marrying Beatrice Assher, the
daughter of Sir Christopher's first love (164). Assuming the privileges but not the respon-
sibility of the aristocracy, Wybrow takes advantage of Caterina, the "simple little thing"
(188); he allows his "fascination" for her to master him (179), then tries to remove the
obstacle of her jealousy and pain by arranging her marriage to Gilfil, the very person
whom he had earlier tried to upstage. He also ignores his own "heart-disease" (188)
when playing with the affections of two women and risking the loss of his uncle's estate
and name, if Caterina betrays him or hinders his marriage. In ignoring the moral law in
his irresponsibility toward Caterina and Gilfil, as well as toward Beatrice and Sir
Christopher, Wybrow ignores the natural law of consequence in agitating his weak heart.
In spite of his anxiety over his paleness, weariness, and "palpitations" (201), Wybrow
persists in subterfuge and manipulation of Caterina, Beatrice and Sir Christopher. He
tries to convince Caterina that he must marry Beatrice Assher merely out of duty to Sir
Christopher, tries to convince Beatrice Assher that he has never held more than brotherly
affection for Caterina, and convinces Sir Christopher that Caterina and Maynard want to
marry. In violating natural and moral laws, he brings about his own destruction.

Caterina attempts to fight against fate, i.e., the course of nature and the inexorable
consequence of actions, in trying to hold on to Wybrow. When Gilfil lovingly warns her
of Beatrice's suspicions of her love for Anthony, which would violate class boundaries,
and of the misery she will bring on herself in allowing the "heartless puppy" to encourage
the feelings that will destroy her "peace of mind," Caterina defends Wybrow, insisting
that he loves her but wants to fulfill his uncle's wishes (190). Though Gilfil warns her
that the "peace" of the family depends on her "governing" herself, at the same time asking
her forgiveness for hurting her, she acknowledges him as "Dear good Maynard" but
insists that she does not "know what to do" (191) and refuses to change her course.
Eliot dramatizes her belief in Bray's philosophy of necessity (i.e., that "personal freedom
[is] founded upon insight into the laws of the universe" and "submission" to those laws, Dodd 116) and Comte's positivism (i.e., a sense of duty and obligation based on scientific laws, Dodd 117-20), in showing the futility of trying to change natural and moral laws of consequence and the wisdom of knowing and submitting to those laws. Just before Wybrow arrives with Beatrice Assher, whom he is engaged to marry, Eliot emphasizes the inexorable and indifferent workings of natural law, in alluding to the "inexorable ticking of the clock," the inexorable "clockwork of nature," and Caterina's inexorable movement toward despair, as she awaits their arrival (165-66).

Caterina, kept ignorant of scientific law, fails to accept her place in the universe or English society and to see her duty of moral responsibility. Brought to England by Lord and Lady Cheveral, when her father Sarti, an impoverished musician, died, she was never adopted because the Cheverels were too aristocratic (in blood, title, wealth) to consider such romantic ideas (152). As their protegee, with neither blood, title, nor wealth, she became the pet of the family and the playmate of their ward Maynard Gilfil, with blood and money on his mother's side, and the object of amusement of their nephew and heir Anthony Wybrow, a "beautiful boy with brown curls and splendid clothes" (163). While Gilfil lacked the wealth and prospective title of Wybrow, he came from the upper class, studied for the clergy, and expressed gentleness and affection for animals and a likeness of mind with Caterina, whom Sir Christopher intended him to marry. Wybrow, raised to care for no one but himself and knowing that he was intended for the daughter of Lady Assher, found it amusing to frustrate the young clergyman by "paying [Caterina] attentions" (163), to which Caterina responded romantically.

Even though, at eighteen, Caterina recognizes Gilfil as the better person, who truly loves her, her ignorance of Wybrow's nature and of the consequences of her own actions allows her to violate natural law in maintaining her romantic dependence on Wybrow. When Caterina, after her momentary triumph of singing, sees Anthony lean lover-like.
over Beatrice, she runs to her room and spends hours pacing, sobbing, and asking how he could ignore her feelings and forget his words of love to her (175). Though she considers her wickedness to Sir Christopher, in ignoring his happiness over Anthony's marriage, she whispers in her defiant misery, "I cannot help it," and asks for God's pity (177). As if in mockery, nature continues "her calm inexorable way, in unmoved and terrible beauty," oblivious of "little Tina" and her prayer (177). Eliot suggests here that having ignored the institutional and moral laws, Caterina has become the victim of her own feelings.

Convinced of Anthony's "trifling" with her, she considers only her own misery, refusing to control her hate or to heed Gilfil's warning, and begins to suffer physically by defying her need of rest. As the days pass, Gilfil notices the "feverish spot" on her cheek, and the "deepening violet tint under her eyes" and fears the "fatal effect" of her sleepless nights (195). Though she dashes Wybrow's locket to the floor, after Gilfil warns her that Wybrow is hastening her marriage, she picks it up lovingly again, in her self-pity and weakness. Though she wishes that she could have loved "'Dear, good Maynard instead of Anthony'" and recognizes how poorly she returns his feelings (207), she feels powerless to change. After Beatrice's admonishing her for her "unwarranted feelings" for Wybrow (211), Caterina refuses to control her fury over Wybrow's lies about her and rushes like the "incarnation of a fierce purpose" (212), or the "'angel of death'" (Gilbert and Gubar 490), to get the dagger to murder Anthony in the Rookery. However, when she finds him dead on the ground, as a result of his own irresponsible actions, her feelings of revenge turn to guilt and remorse. Buffeted by passions of jealousy, revenge, and remorse, in ignorance of the laws of consequence and moral responsibility, she becomes powerless to recover from her guilt and debility until Gilfil arrives to counsel her.

Anthony Wybrow, too, proves his ignorance of the natural law of consequence and moral responsibility. His face expresses the indolence of his character, as he expects to accept admiration instead of giving it (136) and proves incapable of love. His face also
expresses the "delicacy" of his physical condition (136), i.e., a weak heart that he ignores in his intrigue with the women who love him. In ignorance, he fulfills his idea of duty in "dressing expensively" to honor his position, "adapting himself to Sir Christopher's inflexible will" to secure the estate, and taking care of his health to secure his life.

Unwilling to control his actions with Caterina, he must lie to Beatrice, Caterina, and Sir Christopher to conceal his irresponsibility. Then, unable to control Caterina's subsequent fury, he must meet her in the Rookery to convince her to marry Gilfil. Ignoring his moral obligations, he faces the inexorable consequences of physical agitation and dies of a heart attack.

Sir Christopher, considered an "obstinate and crotchety man" (159) but capable of affection to his renters and "pet," Caterina, proves his ignorance of the laws of nature and moral duty in trying to impose his will on the affections of others; and in so doing, he assists in their destruction. Just before Caterina rushes into the library to report Wybrow's death, Sir Christopher assures Gilfil that he has never failed to carry out any plan that he has laid, attributing his success to his strong will" (213). However, his ignorance in trying to bring about the two marriages has caused deceit and death in Wybrow, jealousy and illness in Caterina, suspicion and heartbreak in Beatrice, and alienation between Caterina and Gilfil. His success would have brought about two hopeless marriages. When Gilfil tells Sir Christopher the truth about Anthony Wybrow's dishonorable treatment of Caterina, he admits, too late, his ignorance.

Only Maynard Gilfil understands and resigns himself to nature's inexorable process, considers the consequences of his actions, carries out his moral responsibility to others, and finds fulfillment in sacrificing his own interests for the well-being of others. As a boy, Gilfil found no companion "so much to his mind as Caterina" (162), in spite of their age and cultural disparity; then he found his "boyish affection" growing into "ardent love" until he became "her slave" (162). Instead of forcing his affections on her, Gilfil has
watched her suffer over Anthony, suffering for her pain but glad that Wybrow's marriage will end her "false hopes" (167). Trapped between fear of betraying Wybrow and Caterina to Sir Christopher, who might hinder Wybrow's marriage to Beatrice and dismiss Caterina from Cheverel Manor, and fear of alienating Caterina, by obeying Sir Christopher's demand that he marry her, he can only plead that Sir Christopher not insist on the marriage and feel indignant but controlled rage over the self-serving meddling of Wybrow. He must watch helplessly as Caterina and Wybrow bring their own destruction through ignorance and moral irresponsibility.

Only Gilfil resigns himself to nature's inexorable process, watching while the others violate their obligations, devoting himself to Caterina's recovery after Wybrow's death, and continuing his work even in his sorrow. After Wybrow's death, Gilfil searches for Caterina, then spends a night, followed by months, of counseling her toward health and acting as her "guardian angel" (284), confident that she will "come to love him at last" (229). After a brief period of "perfect happiness" as her husband (243), he must resign himself to her death, locking her few possessions in a room, his love for her in a chamber of his heart. Nevertheless, the tenderness learned from his mother (230), and heightened in his suffering over Caterina, allows him to express gentle affection for children, paupers, and the common parishioners.

Eliot's conflict with orthodox Christianity (Anglican and Evangelical) and her synthesis of Comte's idea of duty and obligation, based on resignation to natural law, and Feuerbach's idea of self-sacrificing love, as the "essence of Christianity," appear in her description of Gilfil as the ideal parish priest. Even thirty years after his death, Gilfil is rhapsodized for instructing parishioners against wrong-doing and interpreting well-doing in a manner that "made no unreasonable demand on their intellect" and that "had little to do with deep spiritual doctrine" (126). He showed compassion for pauper Dame Fripp, praising her fine pig and sending her bacon instead of reprimanding her companionship
with her food source and her absence from church. He talked to children and carried plum tarts for them in his pockets. He won the commoners' hearts by satirizing Oldinport for his lack of charity. More practically than spiritually minded, he showed a knowledge of animals and crops, and he performed the "spiritual functions" of his office with "brevity and dispatch" (121). Though he adjusted his speech and manners to his parishioners, he was still regarded as a "gentleman" and a clergyman (125). His "graceful gallantry," which intimated his aristocratic origins and youth (127), proved his sense of obligation in living among commoners to raise their moral consciousness. He spent his later years rereading his old sermons to grateful parishioners, who learned by "repetition" (125), and sitting with his dog by the fire in his "cheerless" house, drinking gin-and-water (127). Though Caterina's death had almost killed him, he "niver gev way, but went on ridin' an preachin'" (131). In resignation and duty, according to Eliot's stories, he did more good than his doctrine-preaching, meddling, and social-climbing successor, Amos Barton.

Eliot dramatizes her conflict with the feminine ideologies in suggesting the destructiveness and debilitating effects of enforcing gender stereotypes, not only in Caterina but also in Beatrice and Lady Assher. Not only is Caterina considered an amusing and useful pet by the Cheverels; she is also denied the education necessary for sound judgment and sympathy as a marriage partner or mother. Only the love of her father Sarti and her companionship with Gilfil develop her affections and conscience, making her at least capable of recognizing Gilfil's superior qualities and finally admitting Wybrow's perfidy. Like Pearl, in Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter, apparently read by Eliot, Caterina develops naturally, without discipline, and is compared to an uncultivated flower, a song-bird, and various animals. She eventually responds to the only person capable of understanding her nature, the gentle naturalist, Gilfil.

Caterina's upbringing as an object of amusement and usefulness insures her intellectual and moral limitations, exploitation by aristocratic males and self-destruction.
When Lady Cheveral brought Caterina from Milan to England, Sir Christopher "took at once to the little black-eyed monkey" (152), and they both considered her a useful and amusing "pet" (152). Lady Cheverel wanted her for "sorting worsteds, keeping accounts, reading aloud" and running errands (152). Given a minimal education of reading, writing, arithmetic, needle-work, and catechism but special training in music, she was capable only of amusing with her theatrical displays of affection and delighting with her singing. With no knowledge (even of the solar system) to widen her understanding of the world or to deepen her sympathies, she responded with more passion to the outward beauty, fine dress, and light flirtation of Captain Wybrow, in his regimentals, than to the solid virtues, "healthy open face[,]...robust limbs" (136) and devotion of Maynard Gilfil, in his clerical garb. She persists in hoping that Wybrow might continue to love her, in spite of his engagement to Beatrice and Gilfil's warning of her future misery if she persists in her illusion (109). Though she finds her only solace in her devoted friend Gilfil, to whom she cries, expresses her broken heart, and speaks with confidence, she finds the knowledge of his love irritating. After learning from Beatrice that Wybrow has lied about her, she thinks of no recourse except destroying Wybrow; and after finding him dead, she thinks of no recourse except running away in despair over her wickedness. In both instances, she neglects the possible consequences of her actions and her responsibility to Gilfil, whom she has involved in her affairs.

Caterina's self-centeredness, illusions, and destructiveness, resulting from her limited education and expectations, dramatize the ideas that Eliot discusses in her articles and letters on the "women question." In her article, "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft," Eliot agrees with Wollstonecraft's argument that "the [woman's] heart would expand as the understanding gained strength, if women were not depressed from their cradles" (206); Caterina had been depressed as a "monkey" and a "poor thing" (Eliot, "MGL-S" 225). Eliot agrees with Wollstonecraft that the "clinging affection of ignorance"
has seldom anything noble in it" (Eliot, "MF&MW" 205,6); Caterina's ignoble affection for Wybrow continues even after she recognizes his moral corruptness. Eliot proves Wollstonecraft's statement, that "women [who] have been allowed to remain in ignorance and slavish dependence...very many years" show "preference of rakes and soldiers" (202), in Caterina's preference for the indolent and unfaithful Captain Wybrow. Eliot dramatizes the potential danger of trifling with a powerless person (202) in Catena's rushing along the dark corridor to the gallery, with "those gleaming eyes, those bloodless lips, that swift silent tread [that] makes her look like the incarnation of a fierce purpose" (Eliot, "MGL-S" 212). She expresses this same idea as the "Nemesis lurking in the vices of the oppressed," in her article on Harriet Stowe's works, for the WR, October 1856 (Haight GE 185).

That a companionship with books and ideas would have instilled in Caterina an understanding of natural law and moral responsibility, as her companionship with Gilfil had instilled an affection for nature, is suggested in Eliot's implied proposal for women's education. She writes to Mrs. Davies that the "Complete union and sympathy" of a woman with her partner can only result from women's equal access to the "store of acquired truth or beliefs..., so that their growth of judgment may be as far as possible the same" (Haight, GEL 4. 468). Without sound knowledge or judgment, Caterina sees her only recourse, after Wybrow's death, in self-exile and death.

The behavior of Beatrice and Lady Assher also suggests Eliot's conflict with the feminine ideology of the "perfect lady" (Chapter 3). According to her article, "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft," the perfect lady is "fit for nothing but to sit in her drawing-room like a doll--Madonna in her shrine" (205) and, according to her article "Woman in France," is entertained with "small talk" and becomes a "dreamy [moralizer], ignorant of the world and human nature..." (58). Both Beatrice and Lady Assher seem fit for nothing but idle drawing-room decoration and small talk, as they lack the wisdom to
understand human nature, though Beatrice senses an inconsistency in Wybrow's behavior. Beatrice fits the prescription of feminine beauty, with her tall, graceful, substantial form, her air of "graciousness and self-confidence," her ringlets of dark hair, her carmine-tinted cheeks and her "straight nose," though Eliot diminishes the effect with Beatrice commonplace brown eyes, narrow forehead, and thin lips (Eliot, "MGL-S"169). Beatrice proves her ignorance of human nature in believing in Wybrow's defense that he could not help it if the "simple little thing" had "fallen in love with him" (189). Instead of inferring from Caterina's illness and ill humor around Wybrow that he had deceived her, Beatrice offers Caterina her "vinaigrette" to "refresh" herself (197) and chooses to admonish Caterina's behavior, proving herself to be as ignorant as Lady Assher.

Lady Assher's words and interests prove her limitations as the drawing-room Madonna and suggest the fate of Beatrice. She entertains Sir Christopher with talk on the "first-rate gravies" of her "man-cook," the necessity of "burying people in woolen," and the virtues of "chamomile tea," then goes on "dribbling like a leaky shower-bath" (173) to Sir Christopher, who regrets this reunion with his "first love" (173). One glance at Lady Assher, by the musically talented and haughty Lady Cheverel, convinces the latter of her own superiority. Both women prove Eliot's belief that only cultured women "yield in trifles," that no woman has had an "air of superiority...in consequence of true culture" (Eliot, "MF&MS" 203), and that men pay a "heavy price" in refusing to encourage instruction and independence for women (205).

Eliot suggests the culpability of the masculine ideology, exemplified in Sir Cheverel's sense of male superiority, Anthony Wybrow's gallantry, and even Maynard Gilfil's protectiveness, in propagating and exploiting the feminine ideology of the "perfect lady." Sir Christopher rejoices in Wybrow's engagement to the "splendid beauty," Beatrice, in spite of her certainty to follow in Lady Assher's footsteps, in becoming an ignorant, prattling woman, and her haughty manner that, according to Eliot, results not from
culture but from a limited consciousness of the world. Sir Christopher has encouraged
ignorance in Caterina and has never considered her a person to be reckoned with; rather,
he believes that he has done everything necessary for her welfare, in giving her a home
and providing Gilfil as a husband, so that she can be a "happy mother" (Eliot, "MGL-S"
242).

Wybrow has never doubted his ability to control both of these "plaguey perverse"
women (179), Caterina and Beatrice, a description he uses because they doubt his
honesty and demand that he tell them the truth. His dependence on love-talk, flattery,
and lies proves his belief in women's vulnerability, vanity, and inferior intelligence.

Even Gilfil allows Wybrow's deception to continue, deferring to the wishes and the
delusion of his aristocratic friend, Sir Christopher, probably to insure Wybrow's marriage
to Beatrice and departure. He hopes, in his loving though patronizing way, that one day
the "little bird with the timid bright eye and the sweet throat that trembled with love and
music" might be "his" (230), not that she would come to a greater understanding of
human nature and moral responsibility. Since he does not see her as an equal with whom
he can communicate his sufferings or hopes, he cannot effect her moral redemption.

Eliot's description of Caterina as a wild flower, a bird, and an animal, and of the
bruises and wounds suffered by the wild creature, suggests her belief that women need to
be cultivated through education and inclusion in serious conversation, such as that
experienced by women in the French salons (Eliot, "Woman of France" 58), if they hope
to have a sounder basis of judgment. Caterina grows up "like the primroses," which the
gardener likes to see but "takes no pains to cultivate" (Eliot, "MGL-S" 159); while she is
taught only basic skills and accomplishments and is left in ignorance about even the
movement of the planets around the sun (159), she develops an "airy grace," a musical
talent, and an affectionate nature without discipline. Unlike Hawthorne's similarly
uncultivated Pearl, who detected the dishonesty of Dimmesdale because of her closeness
to her mother in their alienation, Caterina had missed the benefit of a mother's affection, except in her companionship with Gilfil, had been accepted superficially by everyone, and had grown to believe that life would be easy and that everyone loved her. That she is described as a bird, with its "poor little breast...ruffled and bruised" (230) from its battering against the bars of fate, and as a "leveret" (184), "wounded" in its contact with "hard familiar realities" (185), alludes to Eliot's belief that women need more than a warm nest of love and protection, as offered by Sir Cheverel or even Gilfil, for the "wear and tear of life" (Haight, GE 55-56). Only the education which Gilfil (or Eliot herself) was granted would have provided Caterina with a sounder basis for "judgment" (Haight, GEL 4. 468) than her own uncultivated perceptions. Without education, Caterina proved Eliot's point: The "unreasoning animal is the most unmanageable of creatures" (Eliot, "MF&MS" 203).

Because of the damage resulting from gender ideologies, that allows Caterina to live in ignorance and become the victim of Anthony Wybrow's trifling, leading to disappointed illusions, despair, and broken health, Caterina needs a savior, a person capable of leading her from the prison of self-centeredness (i.e., guilt, remorse, self-pity) to the freedom of a higher consciousness and self-sacrificing love. Building on the characteristics of Cleves (i.e., his intelligence, perceptiveness, adaptability, and compassion), Eliot adds the element of self-sacrificing love to Gilfil, necessary to await, with patience, Caterina's disillusionment and help her recover from physical and emotional illness. Sacrificing his own feelings to hers, he takes the role of brother and counselor and resists the marriage that would make her legally his wife but emotionally his prisoner. As her savior, he believes that his "love and tenderness and long-suffering...must recall her to life" (Eliot, "MGL-S" 229).

Gilfil begins her recovery process, when he finds her bed-ridden at Dorcas' house, in sitting with her through the night, encouraging her to weep and confess her guilt and
assuring her of forgiveness. He assures her of her innocence when he tells her that God, who knows her loving nature, would not have allowed her to do what she would prayed not to do and even now forgives her (234). Suggesting consistency in the law of Caterina's nature, he assures her that "our thoughts are worse than we are," and that God, in seeing her "whole self," knows that she could not have killed Wybrow (235). In attributing part of the guilt (of her intention to kill Wybrow) to Wybrow himself, for using her "ill" (235), he suggests the laws of consequence. As to deceit, he (suggesting Eliot's familiarity with Hawthorne's "The minister's Black Veil" ), assures her that "we all have our sin" and that even Sir Christopher admits being "too severe and obstinate" (236). In this way of uniting her with humanity in her sin, suggesting the law of consequence, and suggesting that everyone must bear the responsibility of his actions, he encourages confession, alleviates her guilt, and widens her understanding of natural law. She will begin to move toward sleep (in submission to natural law) and restoration with the human community (in submission to moral law), for salvation in a Comtean sense.

Gilfil continues Caterina's recovery in moving her to natural surroundings and providing her with natural relations, which have a "remedial power" (Haight, GEL 3.384), according to Eliot. At the Foxhold Parsonage of his sister, Mrs. Heron, and her husband and five-year-old son, Caterina benefits from the sounds of contented chickens, the attentions of a mild and gentle sister, and the companionship of five-year-old Ozzie. These sights connect her to the earlier companionship with Gilfil, an edenic brother-sister companionship similar to that of Eliot and Isaac. With the companionship of wise and sincere people, the sounds of the farm, and walks through the garden, i.e., an education in submission to natural law and moral responsibility, Caterina regains enough strength to be thrilled by the sound of a harpsichord, struck accidentally by Ozzie, and proves that "an active power had been reawakened" (240). She proves the link in her nature between love and music in nestling close to Maynard and putting "up her...mouth to be kissed"
Though Gilfil has effected her emotional and physical regeneration, he cannot prevent the consequence of her earlier self-destruction; i.e., she dies before the end of their first year of marriage. Gilfil had not been able to determine nature's course, in preventing the deaths of Wybrow or Caterina. He must simply resign himself to nature's inexorable laws.

Though their wedding suggests Caterina's near recovery and affection for Gilfil, it does not suggest an equality of love. Though Caterina's hand rests with affectionate pressure on Gilfil's arm, though she leans "entirely on his love" and finds life "sweet for his sake" (243), the narrator gives no indication of a moral regeneration or growth of understanding that would have made Caterina a suitable partner for Gilfil, capable of sharing his vision or completing a whole person capable of new growth. As a result, her death leaves him with the "whimsical character of the poor lopped oak," though he had been sketched out by nature as a noble tree" (244). Having given his all, with little in return, Gilfil is incapable of loving again. Here Eliot suggests the pernicious effect, on men and women, when either is deprived of the knowledge and beliefs requisite for a complete partnership of equal judgment, capable of freeing each person for further development. In "Janet's Repentance," Eliot moves closer to that perfect union with Janet Dempster and Rev. Mr. Tryan.

In "Janet's Repentance," Eliot dramatizes her emotional conflict in Janet Dempster, who endures her husband's abuse and rejection; she dramatizes her intellectual conflict in Rev. Mr. Tryan, in whom she synthesizes orthodox and heterodox views; and she dramatizes her gender conflict in Janet Dempster and Rev. Mr. Tryan, who transcend cultural gender stereotypes because of a higher consciousness of moral duty and self-sacrificing love. The events of "Janet's Repentance," like those of "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story," suggest the necessity of discovering and submitting to natural and institutional
laws i.e., of turning from egoism to fulfill one's moral obligations and duties, in order to find contentment. Since the story focuses on those who have violated natural and moral laws, it emphasizes humanity's need of a savior, one who not only feels a sense of duty and obligation to others, within the context of natural and institutional laws, but who sacrifices his life for others and redeems them through the fellowship of sufferings.

Eliot proves her sympathy with women who have suffered abuse and rejection, dramatizing in Janet, as well as Lucy, a more overt rejection than that suffered by Milly Barton or Caterina Sarti, a rejection that ends in moral degeneration and self-destruction. Eliot herself suffered her brother's rejection as a child, when he lost interest in her companionship, and as an adult, when he disapproved of her union with Lewes. She suffered her father's rejection as a young woman, when he rebuked her for renouncing Christian orthodoxy. As a woman, she also suffered the rejection of John Chapman and Herbert Spencer for her lack of physical beauty. Because of her own experiences, Eliot blamed women's vulnerability to male manipulation and rejection, in part, on their limited education. She writes to Mrs. Robert Lytton that she finds it "piteous to see the helplessness of some sweet women when their affections are disappointed" because they have been taught to "delight in study only for the sake of a personal love" (Haight, GEL 5.107). She writes later that even though a woman should not continue to love a man who, she discovers, is morally corrupt, a woman should remain constant in her marriage because of the possibility of a woman's influence for moral reform (5.132). The events in the lives of Janet and Lucy prove that even though both women are culpable in their destruction through vanity, they are drawn to unworthy men by love, false hopes and ignorance.

Before Janet married Robert Dempster, she had been warned against the marriage but had believed too much in her own beauty and wit, in Dempster's superior qualities, and in the dream that "life was an easy thing" (Eliot, "JR" 343) to read the warnings.
Until her marriage, Janet had felt confident in her mental superiority and beauty, compared to that of other Milby girls. Mrs. Pratt, Milby's "blue-stocking" (268), had considered Janet "the most promising young woman of [her] acquaintance--a little too much lifted up perhaps by her superior education and too much given to satire but able to express herself very well...about any book...recommended to her perusal" (273).

Typically, this young woman of superior "mind" and "person" (273) chose marriage over her other option, i.e., the position of governess. Even though Janet had been warned against marriage to such a notoriously unscrupulous lawyer (257) and even though her mother disapproved of "the connection at first" (273), the "spoiled" Janet persuaded her mother, a poor but proud milliner, to allow her to marry "a professional man," who was known as "the cleverest man in Milby" (273). Only Mrs. Pratt had foreseen the "extent of the evil" in such a marriage (273).

The "evil" takes the form of Dempster's drunken abuse and Janet's proud and silent tolerance of that abuse, her careful cover-up, and her solace in alcohol. When Dempster arrives home after his victory with the Rector Prendergast to stop Tryan's Sunday night preaching in the parish church, a victory which Dempster inflates by inciting mob action, giving speeches, and becoming inebriated, he beats her in a drunken rage for her tardiness in opening the door. In suffering his verbal and physical attacks in silence, Janet is linked, in her mother's mind, to the chalk-drawn Christ, "whose head [is] bowed beneath a cross and wearing a crown of thorns (285), a description which also fits Tryan. When Eliot's editor, John Blackwood, expressed dismay over Eliot's "harsher Thackerayan view of human nature" while admitting that it is "true to nature," Eliot assured him that "Everything [in her story] is softened from the fact [of the real town of her youth], so far as art is permitted to soften and yet to remain essentially true" (Haight GEL 2.347).

The evil consequences of the marriage grow, as Janet, too proud to admit her error and her responsibility in marrying a reputedly corrupt man, hides her misery in charity.
and public support of her husband while she drinks in private. She carries food to the poor and reads to the sick, though she is often unfit to be seen in public (273). She defends her husband's actions, particularly his defense of Rev. Mr. Crewe and High-Church Doctrine. She defends Mr. Crewe's gospel herself because it "makes everybody happy and comfortable" (290). When Tryan wins the issue of preaching the gospel in the parish church, by appealing to the Bishop, Janet tries to please Dempster in making "playbills" advertising Tryan's lectures, and even joins the heckling mob. Despite her efforts, Dempster's abuse increases since his "vices have their natural evolution in deeper and deeper moral deterioration" (Haight, GEL 2.137).

Though Dempster's mother blames Janet, not Dempster, for Dempster's actions, the narrator points out that a man needs no motive for abuse. The aged Mrs. Dempster, living with Janet and Robert, attributes the marriage problems to Janet's lack of meekness, her "neglect of her own house" in "doing things for other people" (Eliot, "JR" 334), and her inability to have children. She assumes that since Robert had been a "good son," he "might have been a good husband" (297). The narrator counters that it was nothing "either present or wanting in poor Janet that formed the motive of her husband's cruelty" (334); rather "cruelty, like every other vice, requires no motive outside itself--it only requires opportunity" (334). Dempster, "an unloving, tyrannical, brutal man," does not need a motive to prompt his cruelty; he needs only the perpetual presence of a woman he can call his own" (335). He has never been forced to acknowledge his responsibility to natural and moral law.

Janet reveals her self-centered illusions about life as she recollects the events that have led to her present desolation, i.e., being pushed and locked out of her house at midnight in her night dress and bare feet. She recollects that she was a "petted child" and a "proud" girl, who believed that life would be easy (343); now she believes that a "cruel destiny" has betrayed her, through her "illusions" and her "gifts of beauty and affection,"
to this "desolation" (344). Though she married Dempster to avoid being a governess and to fulfill her hopes of a suitable marriage, she had also loved him and feels betrayed by her love.

At this point, Janet lacks the judgment to recognize her own culpability in her misery, i.e., to realize that she ignored the natural laws of consequence and her responsibility to her mother and the community when she married Dempster. In her ignorance and self-pity, she has continued to violate the moral law in blaming her mother for allowing her to marry Dempster, separating herself from the community, and turning to alcohol to forget her problems. Now she faces isolation, shame, and addiction.

Lucy, too, allowed her superior qualities and bright hopes to lead her to desolation. At age seventeen, "lovely" Lucy had allowed the college student, Tryan, to persuade her to leave her father's home, though he never intended to marry her because of her inferior social position. When Tryan left her to travel, Lucy attached herself to a gentleman, apparently in desperation, then returned and put herself in the power of a brothel-keeper. When Tryan saw Lucy again three years later, she was lying on a door step, dead from self-inflicted poison, her cheeks painted as a prostitute (360). When Lucy left her home to live with Tryan, she probably believed that Tryan, an educated gentleman, would marry her and make her a lady, then found herself unable to return home and made herself more vulnerable to moral destruction. Eliot suggests that even though Lucy ignored the laws of consequence and her own obligations to her family, class, and morality, she had trusted in false hopes encouraged by Tryan's attention. In both Janet and Lucy, Eliot attributes women's destruction to their ignorantly trusting their beauty, their illusions of a better life, and the flattery of masculine rhetoric, instead of considering the laws of consequence and their duties and obligations to others.

In focusing on Rev. Mr. Tryan, Evangelical curate, as the religious clergyman, i.e., the clergyman capable of moral duty and self-sacrificing love, compared to the irreligious
curate Mr. Crewe and the other High-Church clergy, Eliot reflects her intellectual conflict with orthodox Christianity and her attempts to synthesize different heterodox beliefs. Until Mr. Tryan's arrival, Mr. Crewe, "the curate in a brown brutus wig, delivered inaudible sermons" on Sunday, then imparted "an arduous inacquaintance with Latin...to three pupils in the upper grammar school" on weekdays (253) and was "allowed to enjoy his avarice in comfort" (258). Tryan, the "new curate at the chapel-of-ease on Paddiford Common" (263), demonstrates the perceptiveness, adaptability, and compassion, as well as the sense of moral obligation, of Cleves and Gilfil, though he preaches the Evangelical doctrines of Amos Barton; he also exhibits the aristocratic physical traits of Anthony Wybrow, though he has chosen to leave his upper-class station and sacrifice his life to the commoners as a clergyman.

Like Amos Barton, Tryan at first repels the respectable families as a "Canting parson," with his "extempore" preaching, his "founding a religious lending library," and his expounding the scripture in cottages (263); but unlike Barton, he influences more and more respectable and unrespectable persons with his sincerity and adaptability until the town divides, through Dempster's "exertions," into "Tryanites and anti-Tryanites" (264). What infuriates Dempster in not only Tryan's intention to "preach the Gospel" on Sunday evenings in the parish church because Mr. Crewe does not, but Tryan's message that salvation depends on faith, not works or the church, and that faith is manifested in "self-mastery" (320) and a changed life, a message that offends Dempster's egoism. While Dempster rails against Tryan, accusing him of "perverting the faith," poisoning the church with "doctrines which deny every innocent enjoyment, picking a "poor man's pocket" and waiting for Crewe's position (282), Tryan's influence makes a noticeable change in his hearers. Despite the "weakness of the ladies" in denying themselves luxurious clothes, distributing tracts, and quoting scripture as indications of the Evangelical influence, the people of Milby and Padderford Common, in general, learn that a
"divine work [is] to be done in life" and that "fitness for heaven consist[s] in purity of heart, in Christ-like compassion, [and] in the subdoing of selfish desires" (320).

Like Cleves and Gilfil, Tryan can adapt his message and manner to drawingroom respectability and Paddington Common poverty. He instructs the working people in language they understand, winning the love and support of Mr. Jerome, yet he convinces the Bishop that preaching the gospel in the parish church is essential for the souls of the people. He takes tea with the working people, "makes friends of vulgar women like the Linnets," and appeals to paupers for prayer while maintaining the "air of a gentleman" (277).

Even though Tryan carries the aristocratic traits of Anthony Wybrow, he has learned through suffering to regret his irresponsibility and to control his passions. Like Wybrow, Tryan has delicate hands and well-shapen feet" (276), suggesting aristocratic blood, though he also has large limbs like Gilfil and "well-filled lips" like Cleves (276). Like Wybrow, he had succumbed to the ideology of masculine superiority and gallantry in trifling with the affections of a young woman of inferior social standing and abandoning her. Seeing the consequences of his actions, as Wybrow did not, Tryan decided to redeem his life; i.e., he left a political career to take the office and life of a curate among the commoners. His efforts to "subdue the dragon [within]" are evident in his compressed lips (276), his austere and unaesthetic living arrangements, his "pallid" complexion (296) and his thin, worn appearance (355).

Through the synthesis of Barton, Cleves, and Gilfil in Tryan, Eliot emphasizes the importance of actions to convey doctrine. Doctrine must be transmuted into understandable language and actions to convey the importance of submitting to a higher order, of recognizing the consequences of actions, of carrying out one's duty and obligations, and of sacrificing one's life out of compassion for others. Eliot suggests that whether based on Christian doctrine or philosophical (transcendental, Comtean, Feuerbachian) doctrine,
these ideals must be communicated to save humanity from destructive and imprisoning egoism.

Eliot dramatizes her gender conflicts in Janet Dempster and Mr. Tryan, whose characteristics and behavior violate gender, class, and church boundaries because of their higher consciousness. Janet provides a model for Maggie Tulliver and Dorothea Brooke, with her "tall graceful unconstrained figure, set off by her simple muslin dress...," and her "massy black hair...neatly braided in glossy contrast with the white satin ribbons of her modest cap and bonnet" (288), among women who compete in their "brilliant show of out-door toilettes," including "cannon curls surrounded by large hats, and...ostrich feathers" (285). Janet had proven her superiority over the other young ladies of Milby at the time of her marriage, not only in appearance and wit but in a more serious education than the attaining of accomplishments. Even now she contrasts the other ladies of Milby and Paddiford Common in her unconcern about wearing the same dress repeatedly and her use of her time for charity. She contrasts Miss Mary Linnet, who has "little nose, less lip, no eyebrows," a "sallow complexion," and a "sensible attitude," and who "prides herself on her neat manuscript," her love of "serious and poetic reading" (limited to five works, including Hannah More's *Sacred Dramas*), and her "fancy work" (265). She also contrasts Miss Rebecca Linnet, known for "her finery [in clothing], her fat ankles," her "sharp tongue," and her acquaintance with the lending-library's popular fiction, whose heroines determine her daily dress (266), though Rebecca has subdued her dress and expression under Tryan's influence.

Though Eliot satirizes the lives and conversations of the Miss Linnets and the other women of Milby and Paddiford Common, indicating her conflict with the nineteenth-century feminine ideology of the "perfect lady" (Chapter 2), she sympathizes with their adoration of Mr. Tryan, to whom they devote their time, in covering his books for the library, and their hearts. Eliot understands their attachment to a man who seems to them
a "model of refinement and of public usefulness," particularly if a girl has "coarse brothers" or a "solitary woman" wants to "be a helpmate in good works beyond her own means" (275). Their devotion to Tryan suggests their recognition of, and longing for, a wider vision of life. Similarly, Janet's determination to marry Dempster and her later dependence on Tryan, in spite of her anti-Tryanite family and friends, suggest the limited options even for a woman with a superior education and a vision of usefulness not limited to domestic activities, fancy work, and gossip.

Tryan's appearance and behavior suggest that he too defies cultural stereotypes of gender, class, and clerical roles (High Church and Low Church) in his higher consciousness of moral responsibility. His androgynous appearance and manner make him as disarming and commanding yet vulnerable as Christ. He appears Christlike when he enters the meeting room of his female supporters, as a "strange light from the golden sky falling on his light-brown hair, which is brushed high up round his head, makes it look almost like an aureole" (276). The changing light in his grey eyes accords with a "paradoxical character"--"at once mild and irritable, gentle and overbearing, indolent and resolute, self-consciousness and dreamy"--suggesting both stereotypically feminine and masculine qualities. Tryan's feminine or "well-filled" lips, "delicate hands and...feet," and "blond whiskerless face" (276) comport with his sensitivity to ridicule and criticism and his dependence on his supporters to walk with him through the mob or to pray for him in his dread of physical suffering.

In spite of his upper-class origin, he does not limit himself to High-Church doctrine and society. In spite of his gentleman's air, college education, and expectations of a political career, which would have included High-Church membership or heterodox Dissent, Tryan had chosen the life of a "canting Evangelical" (276). He refuses offers of a horse or suggestions that he move from Mrs. Wagstaff's comfortless, "ugly square brick house, with its shabby bit of grass-plot" (324) in a "dismal Paddiford [lane]" among
"grimy houses, darkened by hand looms" (323), asking how he could preach "resignation" to the poor in their "smoky air and comfortless homes" if he were living in luxury (306). At the same time, he does not hesitate to go over Prendergast and appeal directly to the Bishop for permission to preach in the parish church. With that victory, he braves the heckling mob to begin his lectures, in a scene reminiscent of an event in Eliot's girlhood at Nuneaton (Haight, _GEL_ 2.347-48), and carries his Evangelism even into respectable drawingrooms. Though he feels pain over the "hideous caricature" of himself being pitched out of the pulpit, waved by Dempster's drunken mob (277), and like Christ, has an "accute sensitivity to the very hatred...he provoke[s]" (310), he moans in solitude over his "failing strength and patience" (312) and puts duty over his own life (326).

Eliot defends the sacrifice of a sincere man, whether he is "'Evangelical and narrow', or 'Latitudinarian and Pantheistic', or 'Anglican and supercilious'" (312). She defends the belief in submission to a higher order, duty, and compassion leading to self-sacrifice, in the androgynous Evangelical Tryan as she had in the ostensibly more masculine High-Churchman Gilfil.

While Eliot emphasized the insignificance and tragedy in the events in the lives of Caterina and Gilfil, in the context of nature's inexorable process and laws, she goes further, in "Janet's Repentance," to suggest the necessity of discovering and submitting to the natural and moral laws of consequence and of doing one's duty for happiness. The ideas that Eliot dramatizes developed not only from her experience with orthodox Christianity, including Anglicanism, Evangelicalism, and Calvinism, and her interest in the transcendental ideas of Coleridge, Carlyle, and Hegel, but from her reading of Unitarian rationalists Bray and Hennell; her translation of works by higher critics Spinoza (an originator of higher criticism), Strauss, and Feuerbach; and her study of Comte's positivism (Chapter 2). In Bray's _Philosophy of Necessity_, Eliot discovered the idea that "men are subject to [natural] law" and that this subjection to natural law serves
as a "true basis" for morality (Meyers 17). Reviewing W.W. Gregg's "The Creed of Christendom," Eliot posited "physical science," (i.e., "The conception of universal regular sequence, without partiality and without caprice") as the basis for including "all phenomena within the sphere of established law" (17). For Eliot, the acceptance of "established [natural] law" should lead to "an intense awareness of the...consequences of our actions" instead of an "illusory and ultimately self-centered version of heaven, hell, and an arbitrary providence miraculously intervening and redeeming us" (18).

To this "moralized notion of scientific law," or the adherence to scientific law as the basis of morality, Eliot added the Comtean idea of "submission" (23). In submission, the "personality, from which all revolt proceeds," is repressed, allowing "altruism...to prevail over egoism..." (23). Egoism had prompted, to some degree, Janet's marriage to Dempster, her subsequent separation from her friends to hide her abuse and alcoholism, and Dempster's alienation from his community and wife.

Eliot regarded the Evangelical Revival as a "means by which the doctrine of consequences...made its presence felt historically, with all the...spiritual energy of religion," according to Meyer. Meyer suggests that for Eliot, the "evangelical experience of conviction of sin...is an intuition of necessity" (26). Only a sense of "sin and helplessness" leads to the "regenerative impulse to confess, by which the soul is restored to a respect for truth and accepts responsibility for all past actions and approaches the future with a proper sense of caution" (26). Confession, after recognition of the natural law (of consequence) and the necessity of submission to that law for growth, "makes possible a direct and passionate communication of feeling between human beings" (26).

This positivistic explanation, of the confession of sin and submission to the divine will, underlies Tryan's leading Janet to repentance and submission to Christ. For Eliot, Janet's repentance and submission to Christ's "will" (361) serve as a metaphor of humanity's repentance of law-defying egoism, submission to scientific laws of
consequence, and acceptance of moral responsibility, especially as Eliot had renounced orthodox Christianity.

Eliot's reading of Charles Hennell's *The Origins of Christianity* and her translation of Strauss' *The Life of Jesus* and Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity* (Chapter 2) convinced her that "Christianity, like other religions, is a product of culture" (Brady 17) and that "there is no supernatural basis for Christianity" (27) since "scripture is not divinely inspired" (28). She believed, instead, that the Christian writings were merely "histories consisting of mingled truth and fiction" (Haight, GEL 1.128). Rejecting the supernatural element of Christianity, Eliot accepted Feuerbach's idea of Christ as "human nature purified, freed from the limits of the individual man, made objective" and "revered as another...being" (Feuerbach 14).

From her reading of Coleridge and Carlyle; Bray and Comte; Hennell, Spinoza, Strauss, and Feuerbach, Eliot changed her conception of Christ, from a supernatural being, to a reflection of the divine Idea, to a moral philosopher, to an objectification of man's desire for moral perfection; i.e., she moved from the theological to the metaphysical to the scientific stage, according to Comte's "Law of Human Development" (Comte 1-17). In Comte and Feuerbach, Eliot found a scientific and philosophical replacement for Christian doctrine. Her Christian foundation allowed Eliot to describe Janet's and Tryan's development from self-serving egoism to submission to a higher law in terms that would appeal to an audience in transition from Christian orthodoxy to heterodoxy.

Since Janet, in her egoism and her attempt to maintain the appearance of superiority, has ignored the natural laws of consequence and the moral responsibility assumed in those laws, she suffers moral and physical consequences. She suffers guilt in having married a corrupt man in spite of warnings; shame in drinking for consolation; isolation in denying her need of others, and the physical pain of beatings and addiction. Though Tryan could not reach Lucy in time to save her, he can redeem Janet from moral and

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physical destruction. Unlike Gilfil, he guides his patient and parishioner to new growth through the fellowship of suffering.

Tryan represents Christ (i.e., becomes the human Christ) in his teaching in the face of powerful objection from the ruling order ("the intellect,...the morality,...the wealth" of Milby, "JR" 264), in his persecution and suffering, his power to redeem Janet, his death, his allusion to the next life, and his being the "essence of Christianity" in his compassion. In his persecution by Dempster ("Old Harry...in a human form," 272) for his Sunday-night preaching in the parish church, his message of salvation by faith, and his perception of High-Church hypocrisy, Tryan, like Christ, proves to be fearless and aggressive despite his humility. Though he shows pain over the mob's abusive language and heckling, he, like Christ, remains impervious to Dempster's "obloquy and threats" (277), finds support and solace among the working people, particularly the women, and cries in private because "his sacrifice is a hard one" (312). Caring more for his people's souls than his own well-being, he allows himself "no rest," preaching three sermons on Sunday, teaching a night school for young men on Tuesday, lecturing in cottages on Thursday, addressing school-teachers, catechising school-children, and paying pastoral visits, even "beyond his district of Paddiford Common" (322-23). Like Christ, he also persists in his efforts to establish the true gospel in the established church, until his following grows. Dempster's subsequent desertion by many of his best clients evokes his increased rage and destructiveness, including his locking Janet out of her house and his whipping of his coachman. His egoistical rebellion against his place in the natural and social order, including his moral obligations to others, leads to Janet's despair and Dempster's destruction.

Janet's false opinion of Tryan, of his being an ignorant and pompous trouble-maker preaching a hateful doctrine, begins to change when she hears him share his sufferings with an ailing parishioner and looks into his eyes. She had believed that he preached
about "faith...and grace" to make people "believe they are better than others and that God loves them more than he does the rest of the world" (330). When she hears him asking the ailing Sally Martin to pray for him, she finds in his "tone and words...none of the self-satisfied unction of the teacher, quoting or exhorting or expounding [dogma] for the benefit of the hearer; but rather a "simple appeal for help, a confession of weakness" (331) as he, like Christ in the garden, anticipates with dread his ordeal of physical suffering and death. His simple appeal evokes Janet's sense of need. The "fellowship of suffering" wins her good will, while the "power in the direct glance" of his "sincere and loving...soul" (331) dispells her prejudiced belief in his self-complacency and imperiousness.

Finding herself in "desolation" with a "blank future" (343), Janet remembers Tryan's confession and glance, his acquaintance with sorrow, and his faith that allows him to comfort others (300), and turns to him for salvation. After being thrust from her house at midnight and finding her way in despair to Mrs. Pettifer's house, she longs for one "ray of hope, of pity, of consolation" in order to believe in "divine love" (344). Then she remembers and sends for Tryan, who will link her with the divine, or (for Eliot) with the desire for perfection in herself.

Tryan, as a minister of Christ and a human Christ, gives Janet hope, not through exhortation but in letting her confess her sin, in confessing his own sin to her, and in explaining his own conversion and hope. Like Gilfil, he encourages her to confess her unhappiness, wickedness, and weakness as to a "fellow sinner who has needed just the comfort and help she [is] needing" (356), as confession provides restoration of "respect for truth and...responsibility for...past actions,"as well as "communication" with another human being (Meyers 26). Janet's confession of the events leading to her present drinking, shame, and inability to see the "goodness and right above us" (356) reveals a sad account of ignorance and disappointed love, as the recipient of Robert's displeasure.
over "little things," unkindness, cruelty, and drunken abuse (357). Tryan responds to her account with his own confession to awaken her consciousness of her self-centered ignorance, irresponsibility, and helplessness, all prerequisites to submission to a higher order.

Tryan's account of his own experiences, as a human Christ, brings her to submission and a sense of duty. After he tells of his irresponsibility with Lucy and of his subsequent guilt and despair, he teaches her what a friend had taught him, that "a sense of guilt and hopelessness" is the "essential preparation for coming to Christ" (361). In humanistic or Comtean terms, a sense of guilt and hopelessness is necessary for the rebel's moral awakening to her place in the natural and moral order. Tryan then leads Janet from "rebellion against God," and the desire for her own will and happiness and the "things of this world," to a submission to God, the desire for his "will" and the strength of his "spirit" (361), i.e., submission to the natural law of consequences, subsequent moral responsibility, and the strength that it gives to order one's life.

Eliot uses "submission" to "God's will" metaphorically (Lodge 8), to express submission to the laws at work in the universe, i.e., seeing the laws of consequence, admitting one's irresponsibility and helplessness, and submitting one's will to the natural law, with its implied duty and obligation, as a means of turning from isolated egoism to social and moral responsibility. After Janet's prayer of confession and renunciation of egoism, in which she requests "light and strength," Tryan tells her the means to regeneration: she must "cast away...the pride that keeps her from acknowledging her weakness" of alcohol to her friends and mother, and she must ask for their help" (363), i.e., she must admit her place in the social order and need of the human community.

Through Tryan's "self-renouncing faith," Janet begins her regeneration. She proves her submission to natural law in repenting of her irresponsibility and dishonesty (i.e., her blaming Mrs. Raynor for allowing her to marry Dempster instead of admitting that she had ignored the warnings and persuaded her mother to consent). The requested
"strength and light" come in a "bouyant courage," from the sense of "purification and inward peace" (365), and a "golden light" of hope, "pouring into her dark prison of self-despair" (377); i.e., the light of knowledge of natural law invades the dark ignorance of egoism and reveals her responsibilities. Janet proves her change of heart and admission of dependence on the human community by attending church, where she is touched to grief by the kind response, a response which proves her culpability in her alienation.

Janet also proves her submission to the natural law with its implied moral duty when she discovers that Dempster has been gravely wounded in a carriage accident, brought about by his own drunken rage. She responds with a sense of duty and compassion in demanding to stay with him and forgiving him, though he dies, as she might have, in delerium tremens, terrified isolation, and oblivious of her forgiveness. Eliot suggests that Dempster's rebellion against the natural laws of consequence and moral responsibility has brought his isolation and self-destruction. In his egoism he repulsed and mistreated others, and in his isolated and drunken rage he brought his own mental and physical destruction. Eliot also implies the nemisis of guilt in humanity's rebellion against natural and moral laws: in Dempster's terrifying delerium, he sees Janet, with her head and arms of serpents, approaching him to drag him down to the cold waters, like a cthonic or uboric goddess of the underworld. Saved by Tryan, Janet has submitted to the natural and moral order and has begun her recovery.

When the temptation to ignore the laws of consequence returns, with accompanying moral irresponsibility, Janet responds with momentary weakness, then strength, and runs to her human savior for assistance. The moment of temptation occurs when, in searching for documents in her husband's desk, she finds a brandy flask and is tempted to drink, especially when she discovers that her mother and her friends have left for the day. Gripped by her knowledge of consequence and moral responsibility, she throws the flask to the floor, then, unlike Caterina with Anthony's locket, runs from the room and seeks
the help of Tryan. He helps her take the final steps necessary for contact with the divine.

Janet's "faith" is able to grasp "the idea of Divine Sympathy" in grasping the idea of "human sympathy" in Tryan (397). The "Divine Presence" no longer seems remote, since it is represented in the human presence. For Eliot, influenced by Feuerbach, the divine presence meant nothing more than the human presence with its desire for divine perfection. For Janet, Christ's compassion is represented and made believable in Tryan's compassion.

Walking home from her confession of weakness to Tryan, and through Tryan to the Divine (or natural law), Janet experiences her baptism. She is baptised, not in the water of the church font but in the "dewy starlight," as if her soul were being dipped in the "sacred waters of joy and peace" and were rising "with new energies" (398). Eliot has baptised Janet in the consciousness of natural and moral law, which leads to a sense of harmony with nature and humanity and to new freedom for altruism.

Janet's restoration, in turn, brings Tryan to a new sense of responsibility regarding his own health and to a new desire to live, in spite of his consumption. He submits to her care, when she makes arrangements for his living more comfortably in one of her own houses and attends to him. Too late, Tryan feels a "new yearning" for the joys of life that he had "voluntarily...banished from his life" (408). A reciprocity of divine love gives Tryan a sense of responsibility to resist death.

Even in death, Tryan, like Christ, alludes to the next life and anticipates a future reunion with Janet. He wants Janet's assurance that she has a "sure trust in God" and that he "shall not look for [her] in vain at the last" (410). When she assures him, "I shall be there...God will not forsake me" (410), he asks that they kiss, in a "sacred kiss of promise" (410). The perfect union of self-sacrificing love, that would have allowed for the freedom of each individual to grow, is postponed until the next life and a later novel.

That the divinity in Tryan's self-sacrificing love has effected Janet's moral redemption

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and restoration is evident in her return to the human community after Tryan's death. She adopts and raises a daughter, then reaps the reward, in old age, of "children about her knees and loving arms around her neck" (412). Reflecting, by living, the divine attributes of "purity,...helpful labor" (412), and self-sacrificing love, Janet reaps the inexorable consequences of her duty to natural and moral law in loving companionship.

Contrary to the feminist criticism of Gilbert and Gubar, this chapter has suggested the characters' culpability in their deaths as well as nature's disinterestedness in carrying out its laws. In a vision wider than that of simply seeking female vengeance on oppressing males, Eliot has dramatized the ideas of Bray, Comte, and Feuerbach in Christian metaphor. She has suggested, in the rebellion, confession, submission, and restoration of Tryan and Janet, the inexorable laws of consequence, the necessity of submitting to natural laws and moral obligations for contentment, and the regenerating and freeing power of self-sacrificing love, i.e., the "essence of Christianity." Eliot develops the idea of the demythologized or human savior as the union of like-minded male and female in her subsequent novels, particularly in *Felix Holt*, *Middlemarch*, and *Daniel Deronda*. 

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CHAPTER 5

DISMANTLING GENDER STEREOTYPES

While Eliot continues to dramatize her emotional conflicts (with male rejection) and her intellectual conflict (with orthodox Christianity and among different heterodox beliefs) in the novels that follow *Scenes of Clerical Life*, she begins to exorcise her conflict with gender stereotypes in developing more androgynous heroines, as well as more androgynous males for their companions, in her progress toward the ideal of humanity, within the context of natural law. In *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and (after the intervening *Silas Marner*, *Romola*, and *Felix Holt*) *Middlemarch*, Eliot dismantles gender stereotypes of femininity and masculinity to suggest the harmful effects, on both women and men, of limiting women's intellectual and professional horizons. Eliot dramatizes the thwarting of natural capacities, the subsequently frustrated and trivial lives of non-reflecting ignorance and self-centered materialism, and the susceptibility to destructive romantic illusions. She also demonstrates the destructive influence on the men who propagate ideals of the perfect lady and on marital partnerships that should be based on equality of sound judgment for mutual growth.

Living in an era in which the eighteenth-century ideologies of femininity had been propagated to dominate English culture (Hunt 1), Eliot developed her own ideal of womanhood. While Eliot's ideal incorporated and surpassed the Victorian image of "the Angel in the House," characterized by submissiveness, gentleness, and selflessness (Gilbert and Gubar 21-25), and of the "perfect wife," characterized by the management of the home, the educating of the children, and acts of private and public charity (Vicinus
ix), her ideal conflicted with the Victorian image of the idle drawing room "lady" (Uglow 74) and of the "perfect lady" (Vicinus ix), whose prescribed sexual passivity and mastery of accomplishments and manners before marriage were supposed to fit her for a hearth-centered life of entertaining and "conspicuous consumption" (ix), as a symbol of her husband's membership in the leisure class (Jones 10). Eliot's ideal, a "mode of behavior" for which women had to "strive" (Hunt 142), could also characterize men who had been feminized by suffering or associating with women. While Eliot asserted that certain capacities, i.e., "affections and sentiments," exist innately in females because of their physiological make-up for motherhood (Eliot, "Woman in France" 53), she also suggested in her novels that these natural capacities have to be cultivated in women and can be subverted by the cultural feminine ideals which stress an affectation of passivity, coquettish charm, vanity, and materialistic self-centeredness, to produce a "doll-Madonna in her shrine" (Eliot, "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" 205). Eliot believed that women's access to the "fund of ideas" and the "objects of interest" historically available only to men ("Woman in France" 80) would allow them to cultivate innate capacities for affection and self-abnegation.

Eliot implied her ideal of womanhood in her articles "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" and "Woman in France" and in her own pursuit of an education, a love partnership, and a career (Chapters 2-3). In "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft," Eliot agrees with Fuller on "the folly of absolute definitions of woman's nature and absolute demarcations of woman's mission" (203) and on the idea that women may fill "any" office (204). She also agrees with Fuller that little girls should be allowed to pursue so-called masculine activities, as sawing wood and using carpentry tools, if they are inclined to do so, and that restricting them from such activities results in their sullenness and mischievousness, just as "ennui" characterizes women who are not allowed to pursue an "art of some kind" (204). Eliot warns that a man of "genius" pays for his
"reluctance to encourage self-help and independent resources for women" with years of "routine toil" in maintaining an "establishment" for a woman who can neither understand his "secret yearnings" nor do anything except "sit [idle] in her drawingroom" (205), an idea she dramatizes in Rosamond Vincy. In "Woman in France," Eliot argues for women's education as a means to a higher consciousness, explaining that when women are exposed to the "whole gamut of subjects," including "literature,...war, politics, religion, the...daily news," they become "intelligent observers of characters and events" (58). Eliot's ideal of womanhood, then, consists of affection, sympathy, and self-abnegation, as well as a higher vision of life that includes a sense of duty, dependent on women's access to knowledge and her freedom to develop her interests and abilities.

Eliot formed her ideas about women and her ideal for women in her experiences with men, which resulted in emotional conflict; in her education and reading, which resulted in intellectual conflict; and in her frustration with gender stereotypes, whose characteristics and roles she defied (Chapters 2-3). Because of an emotional conflict between her love of exceptional men and her pain in being rejected for her lack of physical beauty, Eliot gives each heroine both intellectual acuity and uncommon beauty, devoid of vanity, that stuns and converts the men of her acquaintance, at least to admiration and friendship if not to passionate adoration and devoted love. Because of Eliot's intellectual conflict with orthodox Christianity, i.e., her impression that it prohibited intellectual inquiry and emphasized doctrine over living and feeling, Eliot contrasts religious to irreligious clergy, whether High-Church, Low-Church, or Dissenters. Her religious clergy care more for involvement with humanity and humanity's concerns than self-advancement, more about moral duty and self-sacrificing love than doctrine, and more about love of the good than condemnation of the bad (Chapter 4). Because of her gender conflicts, i.e., her conflicts with the contemporary prescriptions for feminine beauty, behavior, and concerns, Eliot contrasts the women who limit their vision to
prescriptions of the "perfect lady" (i.e., Hetty Sorrel and Rosamond Vincy) or the "perfect wife" (i.e., Lucy Deane and Celia Brooke) to those who pursue a higher vision of women's purpose (i.e., Dinah Morris, Maggie Tulliver, Dorothea Brooke, and Mary Garth), as well as their influence on those around them.

Eliot takes a different approach to the woman question in each novel. In Adam Bede, Eliot polarizes types of women and traces their effects on the male protagonist. In The Mill on the Floss, Eliot focuses on the heroine's struggle among the cultural ideals of womanhood and Eliot's ideal, based on natural and moral laws, and among the men who represent the different ideals. In Middlemarch, Eliot polarizes types of women and men, traces their effects on each other, and traces the struggle of the woman who resists gender stereotypes.

As her novels develop, Eliot's "implied author" (Booth 71) gives evidence of a growing attraction to more androgynous women and men and to a more androgynous relationship between woman and man, in which culturally imposed gender characteristics are dismantled and shared. While Dinah Morris' feelings toward Seth Bede never develop beyond those of a sister for a brother, Maggie Tulliver's sympathetic and loyal affection for Philip Wakem overrides her passion for Stephen Guest, and Dorothea Brooke's passionate love for Will Ladislaw prevails over every other consideration. Reflecting Eliot's emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts, this chapter traces Eliot's dismantling of gender stereotypes, i.e., her dismantling the opposition between femininity and masculinity, as protagonists and heroines struggle to attain the "highest human values" (Hunt 139), those of duty and self-sacrificing love.

Eliot accepted neither the Victorian ideals of womanhood nor the growing feminist emphasis on women's rights and self-advancement; instead, she developed her own ideal, based on natural law, Comte's positivism, and Feuerbach's humanism (Chapter 2), an ideal which displaced gender stereotypes and roles. The ideal of womanhood which
prescribed delicacy and physical frailty as well as submissiveness, self-denial, sympathy and piety, was taught in churches, conduct books, and fiction of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, according to Linda Hunt (1,2) and was based on the creation order, the doctrine of the Fall, and the Pauline epistles (Chapter 3). While Eliot accepted self-denial and sympathy as innate capacities in women that must be cultivated through knowledge, she also accepted submissiveness, self-denial, sympathy, and piety as moral duties for both sexes, based on their recognition of natural law (i.e., one's place in the universe and the irrevocable consequences of actions), an awareness cultivated through education and the freedom to develop natural abilities. While the "perfect wife" focused her activity on the domestic sphere of household management and child-rearing and limited her contact with the public sphere to charity and business letters (Vickery 27), Eliot found domestic duties oppressive, decided against children, and demonstrated her heroines' capacities for more than charitable acts and letter-writing. Dinah Morris proved to be a capable factory worker and preacher, Maggie Tulliver employed herself in plain sewing and teaching, and Dorothea Brooke proved capable of architecture, business, teaching, and counseling. While the "perfect lady" of the early Victorian rising middle class was often limited in education to "accomplishments," limited in femininity to "delicacy, refinement" and manners, and limited in function to motherhood, decorative-ness, and entertaining (Hunt 140), Eliot's ideal emphasizes education over accomplishments, sincerity and morality over charm, and the development of natural abilities and judgment for social good over domestic concerns.

The "traditional roles of women," i.e., sympathy and self-abnegation, represented for Eliot, then, not only the "social mission" of women (Uglow 4) but the duty of both men and women who attain a higher consciousness of life. As evidenced in each of the following works, a sense of duty or mission depended on submission to natural law (as a basis for moral laws) over artificially constructed gender stereotypes, and found its full
expression in a partnership in which male and female, free of gender stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, complete each other. Though Dinah Morris and Adam Bede accomplish good work as individuals, they find themselves liberated in their partnership. Maggie Tulliver feels a lack of contentment until reunited with her brother Tom in a pre-fallen, androgynous whole. Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislaw find themselves immobilized by misery outside of a partnership in which gender distinctions are blurred. Eliot's dismantling of artificial gender stereotypes, with their constricting and self-centered focus, and her recognizing life's purpose in duty and self-sacrificing love, based on natural law and a religion of humanity, form the central themes of Bede, Mill, and Middlemarch.

In Adam Bede, Eliot's writing is again guided by her emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts. She dramatizes her emotional conflict (i.e., attraction to exceptional men and fear of rejection because of her appearance) in Arthur Donnithorne's seduction and rejection of the exquisite Hetty Sorrel. Like Tryan's involvement with Lucy, Arthur's trifling with Hetty results in her destruction and his own guilt and misery. Eliot also gets her emotional revenge in Seth and Adam Bede's attraction and devotion to Dinah, whose moral and intellectual power maintains her integrity and self-control. Ironically, it is the complaining and possessive mother, Lisbeth, who shows the greatest wisdom in recognizing Adam's suitability for Dinah and alerting Adam of Dinah's love for him.

Eliot dramatizes her intellectual conflict with orthodox Christianity and among various philosophical doctrines in depicting both Dinah Morris, Methodist "ranter," and Mr. Irwine, High-Church "pluralist," as religious, in contrast to the doctrine-preaching, scolding, irreligious (i.e., non-loving) Mr. Ryde, who rides his congregation for their sins. While Mr. Irwine practices a non-doctrinal, non-judgmental, guiding and peace-making ministry in his parish and family, Dinah practices a methodistical, evangelical ministry,
walking from town to town to preach repentance from self-serving love and submission to Christ's will (i.e., metaphoric language for submission to natural and moral law), among the poor and suffering. Both demonstrate a sense of duty and self-sacrificing love for humanity over self-advancement, a desire for humanity's well-being over interest in doctrine, and a desire to guide and alleviate suffering in the present world.

Eliot dramatizes her conflict with gender stereotypes of femininity in the contrasting behavior, influence, and destiny of Hetty Sorrel and Dinah Morris. While Hetty uses her beauty to captivate men and is allowed to develop without awareness of natural law (of consequence) and moral responsibility, becoming a destructive element in society, Dinah places no emphasis on outward beauty but lives according to natural and moral law, bringing a regenerative influence, through her integrity and sympathy, to those poisoned by Hetty's irresponsible actions. In depicting Dinah and Hetty, Eliot deconstructs gender stereotypes. She suggests that those who guide their character and vision according to an artificial and arbitrary feminine stereotype focus on themselves instead of the world and humanity, where their duty lies. Eliot suggests that men who foster or adhere to the ideology of the beautiful, mindless, and helpless female submit themselves to a life of confusion and suffering.

In Adam Bede, Eliot depicts her own ideal of womanhood, or humanity, in Dinah Morris, a polar opposite of the cultural stereotype Hetty Sorrel. Eliot traces the effect of both women on those around them, particularly on protagonist Adam Bede. Through suffering from the destructive effects of loving Hetty, Adam develops the female capacities for affection, sympathy and self-sacrifice, necessary to appreciate Dinah's truer love and to enter a partnership in which masculine and feminine characteristics are blurred and shared. Eliot dismantles the opposition of masculine and feminine traits, giving Dinah the more masculine traits and Seth the more feminine traits, proving the cultural construction of these traits as well as the culture's ability to inhibit the innate female
capacities of sacrificial love or to cultivate that capacity in men. Eliot proves, as well, that the common elements of duty and sacrificial love, in the differing ministries of Dinah and Mr. Irwin, salvage the despairing and destructive Hetty and Adam and allow Dinah to widen her sphere of influence to include Adam and his family. At this point, Eliot could not form a partnership of the culturally strong female and the weak male (i.e., Dinah and Seth).

Dinah Morris' unaffected androgyny forms a marked contrast to the kittenish delicacy, affected feminine modesty, unreflecting flirtatiousness, and narcissism of her cousin, Hetty Sorrel. Dinah appears above middle height because of her slim figure and simple black dress, compared to the short-statured, round-figured Hetty, in her pinks and whites. Dinah confidently mounts a cart to preach on the green, as Methodist minister to the common people, while Hetty blushes and smiles shyly and coyly at Arthur Donnithorne in the darkened dairy, afraid to speak, though mistress of Adam Bede's heart. Without blushing or trembling, Dinah seems "as unconscious of her outward appearance as a little boy" (Eliot, Adam Bede 66), while the blushing Hetty "tossed and patted her pound of butter with...a self-possessed coquettish air" (127). Dinah looks at her audience with "simple,...candid,...gravely loving" eyes that seem to be "shedding love" rather than "making observations" (67), while Hetty looks at Arthur with "soft rouguishness" from her dark eyes under long lashes (128). Around Dinah's "small oval face," as natural as a white flower, she draws her auburn hair straight back behind her ears and covers it with a "net Quaker cap" (67), while Hetty surrounds her dimpled cheeks, as pink as rose petals, with dark curls that hang in soft ringlets down her back. Compared to Dinah's "full but firm" mouth (67), Hetty's lips pout or smile self-consciously at Arthur. While a listening stranger hears in Dinah's voice the purity of melody as sung by a "boyish chorister" (71), Hetty finds it difficult to speak, in her "self-engrossed loveliness" (186), to either Arthur or Adam, Dinah or Mrs. Poyser. While Dinah preaches "directly from her own emotions..."
and under the inspiration of her own simple faith" (72), bringing conviction of sin to her audience and effecting a change in Seth Bede and Chad's Bess, Hetty uses an affected "meekness and timidity" to triumph over Mary Burge in mastering Adam, though she feels no love for him and no sense of responsibility to a higher power.

Besides Dinah's simple appearance, physical strength, somewhat boyish traits, she has developed a sense of independence, compared to women like Hetty, that allows her the freedom to consult her own heart and make decisions honestly and responsibly. Reared by her Methodist aunt, who died seven years earlier, Dinah supports herself through factory work and walks great distances to preach. She resists her aunt Rachel Poyser's invitation to live comfortably at Hall Farm, choosing instead to devote herself to the needy people of bleak Snowfield. Confident that she was "called to preach" (135) fours years before, when through a "great movement" in her soul she was able to preach in place of a minister who had suddenly been stricken ill (136), Dinah resists Seth's proposal of marriage and even Adam's proposal at first, until she has unhurriedly consulted and tested the "Divine Will" (576).

Free of the culturally constructed and restricting characteristics of femininity, because of the independence and integrity nurtured by her aunt and the higher consciousness engendered by her faith, Dinah has developed the capacities which Eliot considered innate in females, i.e., affection, sympathy, and self-sacrificing love, as well as a sense of moral duty based on an awareness of natural law. Devoted to others, in service, Dinah goes immediately to the Bede home when she hears of Mr. Bede's drowning. There she cries with Lisbeth Bede, takes her mind off her sadness with personal narrations, takes over the household duties in an unobtrusive and efficient way, and offers "earnest prayer" that gives Lisbeth a "vague sense of goodness and love" without religious instruction (158-59). When Dinah also anticipates, from Hetty Sorrel's moral emptiness, a future of trouble and heartache for Hetty, she warns Hetty of the
sorrow awaiting those who leave God's will (i.e., natural and moral law) and assures Hetty of her continued friendship in times of trouble. When Dinah's foreboding for Hetty proves true, she demonstrates her self-renouncing compassion and sense of duty in going to the prison. Like George Eliot's aunt in a similar case, Dinah spends the nights with Hetty, before her execution, to bring the "mighty Savior" (i.e., a sense of a higher power) to her soul. With Dinah's help, Hetty breaks through her self-centered despair to confess her crime and "pray for mercy" (500). After Dinah brings Hetty to salvation (i.e., metaphorical language for submission to natural law and moral responsibility based on that law), Dinah comforts and helps the Poysers. She proves her moral consistency in refusing the comforts of the Poyser home in order to return to her ministry at Snowfield.

Dinah's great struggle begins when she feels that she must choose between love of God and love of Adam Bede, whom the reader knows she loves, from her initial blush in chapter 11 and subsequent agitation in his presence. Afraid that in loving Adam she will "forget the Divine presence," she waits for "clearer guidance" (554), proving, paradoxically, her independence and clear-headedness in making decisions. Since she has dealt honestly with Seth Bede, never promising him more than sisterly love, she feels free to marry Adam when she discovers that she lives a "divided life" without him (576). Since, through suffering, Adam has developed enough to recognize the importance of Dinah's ministry, her married life embraces both the domestic and the public sphere, until the Methodist Conference forbids women to preach. Submitting to its authority, in spite of Seth's suggestion that she rebel and join an off-shoot group, she limits her public ministry to cottage teaching. Dinah's married life proves Eliot's belief that woman's mission is not self-fulfillment but a partnership for "social good" (Hunt 143). In marriage to Adam, Dinah does not choose human over Divine love but, in Feuerbach's view, human love as a manifestation of the divine in man.

By contrast, Hetty Sorrel fulfills a stereotypical feminine ideal which inhibits the
development of those very capacities that exist innately in women, according to Eliot, and instead encourages self-love and destructive romantic illusions. A "simple farmer's girl" (Eliot, **AB** 145), spoiled, scolded, ignored by her busy Aunt Rachel, Hetty trusts in her "kitten-like" (128) beauty and coquettishness to keep the devotion of Adam Bede and capture the love of gentleman Arthur Donnithorne. Believing she has secured Arthur's love, Hetty worships her own image in the mirror, in a quasi-religious rite, emphasized by the lighting of candles "secretly bought at Treddleston" (195), while in the next room Dinah worships the "Divine Presence" and looks out the window to consider suffering humanity (200). Hetty's childish ignorance allows her to construct the romantic fantasy that Arthur wants to marry her and "make a lady of her" (196). Unlike Dinah, who considers Hetty's need of guidance, Mrs. Poyser's need of help, and the Bedes' need of comfort, Hetty has "no feelings" for the "old house," for her aunt and uncle, for middle-aged or elderly people, for children, for flowers. In fact, her "moral deficiencies," hidden under the "'dear deceit' of beauty" (200), are evident to Mrs. Poyser, who declares that Hetty's heart is as "'hard as a pibble'" (201).

Hetty, orphaned like Dinah, lacked the guidance, discipline, and education of a self-renouncing, sensible Aunt Judith, who would have cultivated Hetty's capacities for affection and sympathy. Lacking affection for others, Hetty exercises "coquettish tyranny" over Adam to keep him from "gentle Mary Burge" (143) but has no interest in marrying such a poor man who can not give her luxuries. She encourages Adam to propose marriage only after receiving Arthur's dream-crushing letter of rejection and accepts only to escape the boredom of her uncle's house. Lacking sympathy for others and the courage to admit her pregnancy, Hetty cries over the prospect of running away, not for the anguish that others will suffer in her disappearance but in self-pity (413). Dreading the shame of returning to Hall Farm unmarried and pregnant and cursing Arthur for her predicament, when she discovers that his regiment has departed from Windsor for
Ireland, Hetty considers drowning herself, with no consciousness of the Divine, but loves herself too much to carry out her plan. She kisses her arms instead "with the passionate love of life" (433).

In Hetty, Eliot relates the destructiveness of feminine ideologies to ignorance of natural and moral law. Lacking "religious fears or religious hopes" (i.e., any sense of consequence, moral responsibility, and self-renouncing love) in her narcissistic ignorance, Hetty commits a crime, though passively. Wanting to rid herself of an unwanted burden, she abandons her child in a hole in the ground. That she returns to the spot, drawn by the baby's haunting cry, suggests her innate capacity for maternal sympathy. Refusing to admit her responsibility for the child's death, Hetty becomes hardened in dumb despair, showing horror only over the prospect of her execution. Only Dinah's disinterested love and counsel, which reveal to Hetty a higher consciousness and a moral imperative, effect Hetty's admission of guilt and request for forgiveness from Adam and God (i.e., her submission to her place in the natural order, with its accompanying duties, according to Eliot's Comtean beliefs). In depicting Hetty as a victim of ignorance, vanity, and romantic illusions, Eliot proves the emptiness and destructiveness of a feminine ideal that emphasizes appearance and charm over responsibility.

Eliot also contrasts the effects, on Adam Bede, of a cultural feminine ideal which fosters self-love with her own ideal, which turns outward in self-abnegating love and sympathy. Since Hetty lives in her fantasies of marriage to Arthur but wants to keep Adam "in her power," she carefully entices Adam "back into the net" (143) with a show of meek gentleness, melancholy, and sweetness, evoking confusion and fear in Adam, who never knows if she loves him. In constant uncertainty, he does not dare ask her for fear of losing her. Though she looks like a "kitten" to Adam, her distractingly pretty looks mean nothing (255). When she appears melancholy over Arthur's absence at church, Adam wants to attribute her sadness to love for him and sympathy for his family's
loss of Mr. Bede. Though she amuses him in mockingly dressing like Dinah, when he disapproves of her love of finery, she throws him into fear and anguish at the Donnithorne banquet, where he spies two locks of hair coiled in her broken locket. Motivated more by protectiveness and fear of losing her than love, he proposes to Hetty in spite of his long-range plans for education and a business of his own.

Since Adam considers Hetty an object to be possessed or a child to be protected, he never attributes to Hetty any responsibility for her actions. He blames Arthur for robbing him of Hetty's affection, as if she were capable of any, and he attacks Arthur in the "vanity of his own rage" (347), furious that Arthur had kissed Hetty without intending marriage while he had been working for the right to kiss and marry her (345). Protectively, he warns Hetty that Arthur never intended marriage to her, and he, perhaps unwisely, forces Arthur to break with her under the threat of alerting his tenants of their squire's dishonorable trifling. The narrator explains why a sensible man like Adam would fall in love with a girl recommended only by her beauty, in attributing his love to his strong nature (399) and his tendency to project his own emotions and thoughts on Hetty (400). Adam recognizes the "mystery" of his love, as he creates Hetty's mind out of his own, which is "large, unselfish, tender" (400), a combination of culturally masculine and feminine traits.

Moving toward a self-sacrificing love, Adam must endure suffering and take Hetty's sins on himself, as a figure of the androgynous Christ. When Adam does not find Hetty at Snowfield, his feminizing ordeal of suffering begins. He removes all the blame from the "poor thing" who didn't know her own mind. He blames Arthur and himself for her flight, i.e., Arthur for winning her, deceiving her, teaching her to lie, and himself for urging marriage. He forgives her for running away to avoid him and be with Arthur. Then he refuses to believe she murdered her child, believing instead that she was attempting to hide it.
The night before the trial, Adam becomes a figure of the suffering Christ, which links Adam to the suffering of women, according to Uglow (24). He feels now "as if all that he had himself endured and called sorrow before was only a moment's stroke that had never left a bruise" (472). The narrator calls Adam's suffering a "baptism of fire," which leaves him "with a soul full of new awe and new pity" (472). To Eliot, Adam represents a "chastened, crucified instead of triumphant" Christ (Haight, GEL 1.228); his soul of "awe and pity" suggests the soul of Christ as well as the female soul. As if in recognition of Adam's new insight into the men and "helpless young things" that have suffered like Hetty (Eliot, AE 472), Mr. Massey offers him bread and wine, in a mass or ceremony that links Adam to the last supper and the suffering Christ (Knoepflmacher 59) and thus to suffering womanhood. Reflecting Eliot's religion of humanity, a teacher, not a clergyman offers Adam the sacrament, a teacher who has suffered from similar disillusionment over women and shares his suffering. On the strength of Adam's new self-sacrificing compassion, a compassion already developed in Seth because of his years as a second and a weaker brother, Adam decides to stand with Hetty during the remainder of her trial. When Hetty, like all mankind, is found guilty, this new Adam (or second Adam, as Christ) endures the "extreme moment of his suffering" (Eliot, AB 481). In the moment of his identification with Christ, he resists blaming Hetty and calls on God (481), like Christ on the cross. Then, unable to help her, he sinks into despair and the desire for revenge, suggesting the humanness of Christ.

At this point, Eliot brings Dinah back into the novel to heighten the contrast, in effect on Adam, between Dinah's self-giving love and Hetty's self-love. Until now, Adam has attributed Seth's love for Dinah to her quiet beauty, i.e., her "face like a flower" (167), and her lack of vanity, which he has tried to impress on Hetty. Now he is made aware of her moral or spiritual nature, i.e., her adherence to natural and moral law, her awareness of a higher vision of life, when, through her counsel, Hetty admits her guilt.
and asks his forgiveness. Soliciting Dinah's comfort and companionship for his mother, as Lisbeth will allow no other woman near her, Adam, who has thought of Dinah as a sister because of Seth's attachment to her, now puts her above every other friend.

Dinah's Divine influence on Adam surfaces when Lisbeth speaks to Adam of Dinah's affection for him, as he experiences "a resurrection of his dead joy" (545). Knowing Dinah's nature as he had never known Hetty's, he can spontaneously admit without fear of rejection, "I love you with my whole heart and soul..." (551). Dinah, whose reliance on Divine will (i.e., natural law) allows her to love selflessly and to express her love honestly and openly, an ability that Hetty lacked, tells Adam that her heart is "drawn [so] strongly" towards him that she could "forget the Divine presence, and seek no love but [his]" if she followed her own will (551-52). Having the strength that Maggie Tulliver will lack, Dinah can subject her will to a higher authority, can part with Adam to await Divine guidance (i.e., to consider the consequences of a marriage with him), can separate herself from Seth, and can eventually marry Adam when she realizes that their souls or minds and feelings are knit together.

That the world is now a "great temple" to Adam (559) suggests the divine nature of Dinah's love (i.e., a love founded on awareness of natural and moral law and self-renunciation). Adam had always felt that his work was "part of his religion" and that it was God's will to do "good carpentry" (532). Now he even sees the benefit of Hetty's having been taken from him to leave him with a "greater need" so that he could appreciate Dinah's greater love (574).

Eliot suggests the strength and freedom generated in their partnership, a partnership of a shared higher vision of life. Adam finds "new strength" in Dinah's love and believes that her wisdom will help him "see things right" (574). At the same time, Adam's love completes Dinah's soul and gives her greater power to do her work (576). When they are "joined for life," according to the narrator, they find that their souls "strengthen each
other in all labour,...rest on each other in all sorrow,...minister to each other in all pain" (576). While Hetty's self-love destroyed Adam's strength and freedom with fear and uncertainty, Dinah's self-giving love regenerates Adam, giving him the strength and freedom to grow and sense the Divine in nature. His responsive self-giving love allows Dinah the same freedom and strength to continue her ministry, not only on the greens but in the cottages and in her own family. Their partnership, according to Eliot, gives each the mission of molding and releasing the other to benefit society.

With Adam and Dinah symbolically, as with Seth and Dinah physically, Eliot deconstructs the oppositions of masculinity and femininity, since to Eliot these qualities falsely represent the male and female natures. Thus, Seth, with his "slight stoop" (50), his "wavy brown hair," his "blue dreamy eyes" that often look "vaguely out of the window instead of at his book" (531), and his "confiding and benignant" glance (50), fulfills the more feminine stereotype compared to the "large-boned muscular" Adam, with his "jet black hair," "keen glance of dark eyes," "tall stalwartness," "broad chest" (50), hard-working responsibility in business, and willingness to complete his brother's and father's work. Besides his more feminine appearance and manner, Seth demonstrates the female capacities of tenderness and sympathy toward his complaining mother, willingness to do her housework, self-abnegation in crediting Adam as the better person, and self-sacrificing love in relinquishing his hope of marrying Dinah. Dinah also manifests culturally masculine traits of preferring factory work and ministry to a domestic life at the Poyzers, preaching without self-consciousness, having physical strength and walking great distances, speaking with a boy's clarity of voice, and refusing to adhere to feminine fashion. At the same time, she proves her capacity for self-sacrificing and self-abnegating love and sympathy, because of her Aunt Judith's guidance. Eventually Adam attains the female capacities of Seth and Dinah in becoming "more indulgent to Seth" (531) and repentant of his harshness to his father and to Arthur because of the "growing tenderness
which came from the sorrow at work within him" (531). In their partnership, Dinah and Adam grow more selfless, more androgynous, and therefore more Christlike, according to Eliot's ideal of humanity.

Eliot's belief in necessity (i.e., the irrevocable consequences of actions), in positivism (i.e., the basis of the moral law of responsibility and duty in the natural law of consequence), and a religion of humanity (i.e., the divine as man's self-sacrificing love), controls the sequence of events in Bede and provides the basis for a new ideal of humanity. Because Arthur does not heed Mr. Irwine's warning against involvement with Hetty, turning back from his intended fishing trip to meet her in the wood, the "destiny" of their actions "disguises her cold awful face behind a hazy radiant veil, encloses [Arthur and Hetty] in warm downy wings, and poisons [them] with violet scented breath" (175), so that they cannot foresee or consider their approaching misery. After losing his intentions to end his involvement with Hetty, because of his addiction to their intimacy, Arthur intends to make a full confession to Irwine but fears the consequences of the disclosure (219). Sensing Arthur's inner debate, Irwine stresses the workings of natural law; i.e., "'Our deeds carry their terrible consequence quite apart from any fluctuations that went before--consequences that are hardly ever confined to ourselves" (218).

Losing his opportunity to correct his fatal errors, linked to the male prerogative in the feminine ideologies, Arthur begins his own tragic reversal and recognition. Confronted by Adam Bede, who discovers Arthur kissing Hetty in the wood, Arthur is accused of being a "selfish light-minded scoundrel" (344), though he wanted his tenants to love and honor him, and finds that his first error "makes deceptiveness a necessity" (351). Facing the "Nemesis" in Adam's "judgment of him," since it disturb[s] his self-soothing arguments" (381), he must either marry Hetty or break with her and go away. Though he is worried about the effect of this rejection on Hetty, after having led her into a dream, and filled with a "darker anxiety" over her possible pregnancy (358), he sees
that "our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds" (359) and leaves with the army instead of acknowledging his responsibility for Hetty.

When Hetty, "loosed...from her mooring" of the Poyser home, marriage with Adam, and flattering attention from Arthur, feels her dream collapse, a dream encouraged by the feminine ideal, her deeds determine her actions as well. Unable to marry Adam, to return to the Poyser's, to find Arthur, to avoid having her baby, or to support herself, she sees no solution but putting her baby in the ground and leaving it. She too faces the Nemesis of her actions in being haunted by the child's cry and returns to her arrest for murder. Irwine recognizes his own complicity in the crime in his having been "too fastidious" about intruding in Arthur's private thoughts (453) when he sensed Arthur's desire for confession.

Arthur learns, after Hetty's destruction and his own disgraced life of misery, that actions carry irrevocable consequences; or, as Adam had told him, "there's a sort of wrong that can never be made up for" (584). Though Arthur saves Hetty from execution, he can not save her from the transport that eventually kills her with hard labor or regain his tenants' confidence and respect. Like Mr. Tryan, who took advantage of the feminine ideology of the beautiful but ignorant and child-like woman, he spends his life in mental and physical suffering.

Adam's own course of suffering feminizes him (Uglow 4) to greater sympathy for his father Thais, his brother Seth, and Arthur. He regrets, now, his harsh judgment and shaming of his drunken father, believing that it may have caused Thais' despair and death. He learns to heed Mr. Irvine's warning against the futility and far-reaching consequences of revenge, recalling that he once nearly killed Arthur in the forest, and eventually forgives Arthur. Recalling the irrevocable consequences of his harshness with his father Thais, he shows more indulgence to Seth and tenderness to his mother.

Because Dinah and Seth have submitted to the natural law of consequence, in their
submission to Divine will, and have derived from it a moral law of responsibility and duty to others, which dismantles self-centered gender stereotypes, both find contentment and usefulness, free of illusions. From her ministrations to the Bedes and Hetty, Dinah gains love and completion with Adam. From his deference to Adam in relinquishing his hope of marrying Dinah, Seth finds a permanent home with the Bedes. Adam Bede, then, relates the dismantling of gender stereotypes to a recognition of natural law and moral law; it attributes suffering to violation of those laws.

In The Mill on the Floss, Eliot continues to deal with her emotional, intellectual (or religious), and gender conflicts in focusing on Maggie Tulliver, whom she uses to "avenge the dark women" (433); she proves that Maggie and all those acquainted with her become the victims of their own irrevocable acts, within the context of natural law. Eliot exorcises her emotional conflict over male rejection in dealing with the source of her conflict, i.e., her idolatrous love of her brother, Isaac Evans, and his rejection of her. Her emotional attachment to Isaac and his subsequent rejection was to color her relationships with a series of men (Chapter 2). Maggie's attachment to her brother Tom, their Edenic childhood experiences at the river, his critical and punitive treatment of her, his repulsing her for her involvement with Philip Wakem and Stephen Guest, as well as his desire to make her a lady under his patriarchal care, dramatizes Eliot's painful experiences with Isaac. As she admits in her sonnet sequence, Brother and Sister (Chapter 2), she still longs to return to that Edenic world where she was the younger sister. Eliot fulfills that wish artistically in Mill, where she relives her experiences in Maggie, who is reunited with Tom in death, the only solution to Maggie's longing.

Eliot dramatizes her intellectual conflict with orthodox Christianity in Maggie's acquaintance with High-Churchman Dr. Kenn, who combines elements of previous clergy, including Mr. Cleves, Mr. Gilfil, Mr. Tryan, Dinah Morris, and Mr. Irwine, but lacks the self-sacrificing love necessary to save Maggie from destruction. Combining
High-Church function with Methodist emotion, he reflects Eliot's religious (i.e., dutiful and compassionate) clergy in seeing the Church as a family that opens "its arms to the penitent" (624) and in feeling that it is his duty not only to consider the opinions of his parishioners but to help the outcast, hence his name Kenn, or range of vision. Dr. Kenn, like Mr. Irwine with Arthur, senses that Maggie is distressed when she tells him at the bazaar that she "must go" from St. Ogg's (534). When St. Ogg's makes her an outcast for leaving with Stephen and returning unmarried, Dr. Kenn counsels her, though mourning his wife's death. When she tells him her account of leaving with Stephen, he encourages her to stay in St. Ogg's, believing his church will embrace her. Then, after watching the persecution she suffers, he advises her to move elsewhere, with his help. When she insists on remaining to atone for her error, he responds with duty and compassion, inviting her to teach his children. However, when his position as an effective clergyman is jeopardized by gossip, he dismisses her regretfully, offering his help in securing her another position. Lacking the self-sacrificing love of Mr. Gilfil, Mr. Tryan, and Dinah Morris, as well as the prestige and affluence of Mr. Irwine, Dr. Kenn allows the evil of his congregation and his desire to protect his reputation and position to override his convictions. His capitulation to congregational pressure over conviction suggests Eliot's disillusionment with the Church and her movement toward a belief in human love as the means of society's redemption.

Eliot exorcises her gender conflict (i.e., her conflict with the feminine ideologies) in the appearance and characteristics of Maggie Tulliver. The dark, unconventionally "cute" (acute) Maggie, with her intellectual and aesthetic hunger, wins the adoration and devotion not only of the culturally effeminate Philip Wakem but of the culturally masculine Stephen Guest, whose obsessive love drives him to renounce the feminine ideal, Lucy Deane, to offer marriage to the disgraced and culturally unorthodox Maggie. Maggie's conflict between her loyalty to Philip and her adoration of Tom, and between
her loyalty to Philip and her passion for Stephen, suggests Eliot's own dilemma, as each man would offer Maggie an unsatisfying, because incomplete, life.

Through this three-way conflict, Eliot dismantles gender stereotypes, suggesting their unnatural constriction and the destructive expectations which they encourage, as well as their violation of natural and moral law. While life with her brother Tom would give Maggie patriarchal protection, it would violate her need of intellectual and aesthetic fulfillment and adult passion. While life with Stephen would give her patriarchal protection with luxury and adult passion, it would violate her sense of obligation and self-renouncing love to Philip and Lucy, turning her focus to materialism and vanity. While life with Philip would offer her a companionship of equality with intellectual and aesthetic fulfillment, it would violate her need of adult passion and her sense of obligation to her brother. While a life with Tom or Stephen would force her adherence to a feminine ideal, life with Philip would subject her to scorn for violating that ideal. Only after examining the androgynous natures of Silas Marner and Romola and the ideal partnership in Felix Holt would Eliot resolve her dilemma in the partnership of Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislaw of Middlemarch.

From a focus on the male "angle of vision" in Adam Bede (Hunt 34), to trace the effects of opposing ideals of womanhood on Adam (i.e., the cultural ideals and Eliot's ideal), Eliot moves to a focus on the heroine's struggle between the same ideals in The Mill on the Floss, to trace Maggie's resistance to the cultural feminine ideals imposed by her brother Tom, represented by her cousin Lucy, and invited by her lover Stephen Guest, as well as Maggie's growth in Eliot's ideal of sympathy, affection, and self-sacrifice, represented by Philip Wakem. Instead of making Maggie an embodiment of her ideal, as with Dinah Morris, Eliot combines elements of Dinah and Hetty: like Hetty, Maggie is victimized by a patriarchal culture and a situation which offer only alternative forms of death: like Dinah, Maggie allows her affection, sympathy, and self-sacrificing love to
prevail over self-love. Unlike Hetty, however, Maggie does not commit a physical indiscretion and is not rejected by her lover. Unlike Dinah, Maggie is unable to explore her friendship with Philip and the source of her feelings for Stephen because she has never been freed from patriarchal tyranny to develop a sense of independence. Maggie does move closer to the androgynous male than does Dinah; for she finds in Philip a love that is free of patriarchal restrictions and mastery and develops, through that love, to the point of considering marriage. Maggie's greatest temptation lies in the physical strength and affluence of Stephen Guest, to whom she longs to yield, like Hetty, as the feminine dependent for security, adoration, and material comfort. Towards this desire Maggie drifts with abandonment until her early affections and sense of duty pull her back to self-renunciation and self-sacrifice. In the process, Stephen acquires Philip's capacity for sympathy and self-renunciation through suffering, linking him with Eliot's ideal of humanity.

While Eliot's narrator takes a male angle of vision in *Bede*, the narrator's voice and angle of vision become androgynous in *Mill*. The narrator uses a female voice in Chapter 1, showing affection for nature and past memories, and a masculine voice in Chapter 10, rhapsodizing Maggie's dimpled arm (Hunt 134). Using both feminine and masculine angles of vision, the narrator focuses on the psychological and emotional effects on Maggie, of the struggle between opposing feminine ideals.

As a child Maggie worries her parents with her inability and refusal to conform to their feminine ideal. Her father worries that "she's twice as 'cute [acute] as Tom. Too 'cute for a woman..." (Eliot, *MF* 59,60). Since her acuteness is considered a masculine trait, Maggie is given nothing to satisfy her intellectual craving, so that her curiosity "runs all to naughtiness" (60), proving Margaret Fuller's warning true, that little girls become mischievous when not allowed to develop their natural capabilities. To Mrs. Tulliver, Maggie's aversion to domestic duties, impatience with the feminine toilette, and
refusal to sew counterpanes make her an "idiot" (60). When Mrs. Tulliver grieves over Maggie's straight black hair and brown skin, as being counter to the soft curls and pale skin prescribed by her cultural ideal of femininity, Mr. Tulliver defends his "black-eyed wench" and brags that "she can read almost as well as the parson" (60). While Eliot links Maggie with her father in dark coloring, affection, and acuteness, she links Tom with his mother in his fair coloring and dull-wittedness, dismantling the culture's stereotypes of femininity and masculinity.

Maggie's perception of injustice and rejection at the hands of her mother and brother evokes continual misery, for which her only release is the attic and her doll (links with Eliot's own past). In the attic she batters the trunk of her wooden doll, into whose head she has already driven three nails on three particularly frustrating occasions. Proving doubly symbolic, the doll represents not only Maggie, as an incomplete model of femininity, battered emotionally by a patriarchal culture and impeded intellectually, but also the feminine ideal, as a passive, immobile doll, fashioned to be self-abnegating to the stronger, tyrannical male. Though Maggie retreats to the attic to take revenge on this feminine model when a damp morning's threat to her recently curled hair prevents her from riding with her father to get Tom from school, her greater frustration lies in being denied an education, or "masculine knowledge" (Hunt 141). She alleviates her frustration in escaping to the mill to watch its operations and talk with Luke Moggs, the miller, about Tom and books. When Tom arrives, she expresses both unfeminine delight in her new fishing line as well as an innate capacity for affection and sympathy in throwing her arms around Tom's neck and recognizing his efforts to please her. Though Tom's cruel reproach over the dead rabbits drives Maggie back to the attic, she begs his forgiveness and love, promising to be "good" (Eliot, ME 91), i.e., to meet his expectations.

Maggie's fishing trip with Tom forms a powerful memory that molds her loyalty and affection for Tom through the years and helps shape her androgyny, in the same way that...
Eliot's Edenic memories of her childhood rambles with Isaac determined her future loyalties and character, as recorded in *Brother and Sister* (Chapter 2). Maggie thinks of heaven as the experience of sitting by a pool with Tom, waiting for fish and never being scolded. As she had told Luke, she loves Tom "better than anybody else" in her world and intends that they will "always live together," that she will "keep his house," and that she will teach him "everything he doesn't know in books," though she admires his cleverness in making rabbit-pens and whip-cords. Her innate capacity for sympathy, affection, and self-giving love combines with a delight in Tom's male sphere of empirical and practical knowledge.

Maggie's deficiency in culturally feminine traits evokes criticism from her Dobson aunts, driving Maggie to impulsive actions and subsequent anguish, forming her characteristic response to frustration. Unlike the Dobson women, whom Tom resembles in his narrow-minded criticism, Maggie doubts herself and resists their narrow and traditional vision. They point to Maggie's blond-curled, fair-skinned, passively obedient cousin, Lucy Deane, as a model of perfection. In spite of their preference for Lucy, Maggie loves and delights in Lucy, expressing no jealousy until Tom, reproaching Maggie for some minor violation of his expectations, devotes all of his attention and approval to Lucy. Maggie responds impulsively by pushing Lucy into the mud and running away to join the gypsies, until the gypsies take her to her father. Similarly, when the aunts criticize Maggie's heavy straight hair, she impulsively cuts it off, only to evoke greater ridicule, which drives her to the attic, to be rescued again by Mr. Tulliver. Her actions each time foreshadow her impulsive involvement with Stephen and her anguished return to St. Ogg's in penitance. Only Mr. Tulliver and his long-suffering sister Mrs. Moss, modeled on Eliot's sister Chrissey, love Maggie disinterestedly. Mrs. Moss's suffering from poverty, child-bearing, and disappointment has developed her capacity for self-renouncing love and sympathy, which evokes a tenderness in Mr. Tulliver for Maggie.
Maggie's intellectual superiority over Tom and her resistance to feminine ignorance bring her more rebuke and mortification. As a student of Rev. Mr. Stelling, Tom becomes "more like a girl" in his "susceptibility" and feelings of failure (Eliot, ME 210). When Maggie visits Tom, he benefits from her love of learning, her questions, and her affinity for Latin grammar and begins to improve. Eager to regain his sense of male superiority, however, Tom reprimands Maggie for wanting to be a "clever woman," whom the culture will perceive and hate as a "nasty conceited thing" (216), an action reminiscent of Chapman's effort to keep Eliot in the background as editor of the Westminster Review. While Mr. Stelling's pronouncement that women are "quick and shallow" mortifies Maggie with a "brand of inferiority" (221), it gives Tom one of his few moments of delight and reassurance at Stelling's. When Maggie leaves, he sinks again into helpless ignorance and feelings of girlish inferiority, relieved only in the thrill of sword-drill displays and care of Mrs. Stelling's infant.

Only the sensitive, artistic hunchback, Philip Wakem, modeled after D'Albert Durade (at whose house Eliot lived in Geneva and with whom she developed a life-long friendship), offers sympathy and masculine knowledge to Maggie. Intellectually and artistically superior to Tom, Philip sees the "unsatisfied intelligence and... beseeching affection" in Maggie's eyes (253). Maggie, equally sensitive from her own suffering and Mr. Tulliver's gentleness with her, offers sympathy and affection to the more feminine Philip. Philip defies the culturally masculine ideal with his "melancholy boy's face," his wavy brown hair "curled at the ends like a girl's" (354), his physical frailty, his deformity (matching Maggie's intellectual deformity), and his affinity for painting and piano-playing over athletic skills and sword displays. Since Philip has acquired female affection and sympathy through suffering, he recognizes Maggie's unfulfilled longings and wishes she were his sister. Maggie recognizes Philip's emotional pain and cleverness and wishes he were her brother and could teach her things like Greek. Both recognize
their need of the other for completeness.

In Maggie and Philip, Eliot dismantles cultural stereotypes and suggests their destructiveness. While Maggie is dark and strong, Philip is fair and weak. While Maggie shares with Philip the culturally masculine trait of intellectual curiosity and acumen, Philip shares with Maggie the innately female capacities of sympathy and self-abnegating affection. Both are scorned for their culturally unorthodox traits by Tom, who measures his superiority to Philip in terms of the masculine ideal of physical strength.

Though Maggie and Tom's shared sympathies and feelings of equality form a bond between them, the basis of their future loyalties, that bond is frustrated and thus inordinately strengthened by Tom, beneficiary of Philip's kindness and academic help, because of Tom's acquired masculine prejudice against a physically weak, artistic male, "no better than a girl" (247), and the son of a family enemy, lawyer Wakem. Tom's aversion to Philip's physical frailty and mental superiority turns to hatred when Wakem's client wins Tulliver's land and mill in a lawsuit, unadvisedly initiated by Tulliver. Tulliver's lawsuit, that ends in his bankruptcy and stroke, ends Tom and Maggie's comparatively idyllic existence and makes Tom the harsh patriarchal head of the family, adding greater restriction to Maggie's life.

The restrictions which Tom imposes on Maggie determine her future misery and inability to resist Stephen or marry him, as the irrevocable consequences of human actions replace providence in determining events (Knoepflmacher 114), proving Eliot's belief in the natural law of necessity as the basis of moral law. Since Tom has acquired only "vague, fragmentary and ineffectual notions" (Eliot, ME 264) from his years of education in the classics and math, an education better suited to Maggie than the feminine accomplishments offered at Miss Femiss' boarding school, his authority and notions confine Maggie to a "new life of sorrow" (270), a narrow life restricted to domestic chores, especially now that the family books have been sold with the
furnishings to help pay the debts. When Maggie oversteps the prescribed feminine rule of quiet submission and reproaches her aunts and mother for caring more about their "things" embroidered with the Dobson name than her father or his name, which they scorn, she is scolded by Tom for her "assuming manners" (285). Later, when she unwittingly threatens Tom's male superiority by regretting that she had not taken double-entry bookkeeping in order to teach him, he deprecates the idea of her teaching him and scolds her for setting herself above him and the Dobson aunts, believing himself a better judge of people.

Stiffled by a narrow and "sordid" vision of life on the Floss (362) and tormented by conflicting emotions in having to "mind" her anxiously loved but mentally inferior brother, Maggie hungers for knowledge, beauty, and gladness (320), as a victim of the struggling middle-class feminine ideal. Though Maggie's frustration with ignorance and sordidness increases her vulnerability to romantic illusions, her acuteness and capacity for sympathy alert her to the impending evil in Tulliver's forcing Tom to avenge his misery. The Tullivers' covenant of revenge against Mr. Wakem will prove a kind of "determinism" (Knoepflmacher 111), evoking not only Tom's rejection of Philip as a friend to Maggie, but Maggie's future unhappiness when she finds herself unable to distinguish between love for Stephen and the desire to yield to his seductive world of beauty and ease.

Deprived of the knowledge "that would enable her to understand" and thus "endure the heavy weight" (Eliot ME 379) of poverty and well-meaning tyranny and deprived of the affection of both her brother, preoccupied with removing the family debts, and her father, preoccupied with bitterness and revenge, Maggie experiences more frustration in her attempts at self-education. Attempting to learn "Latin, Euclid, and logic" (379) from her brother's old school books, as a means to "masculine wisdom" (380) or the "secrets of life that were known by "great men" (379), she experiences only "discouragement" in her
unguided learning. As a result, Maggie "rebels against her lot" (380), the lot of the intellectual female denied access to the historical fund of knowledge and dissatisfied with the accomplishments and light fare of the feminine ideal. Hating her father and mother for not being "what she would like them to be" and hating Tom for always "checking" her, Maggie (like Dorothea after her) hopes for "some great man" who will "do something for her" (380-81). This longing in Eliot led to her worship of exceptional men (i.e., Brabant, Durade, Chapman, and Lewes, Chapter 2) and her conception of a partnership of complementary abilities. Ironically, the male who does do something great for Maggie is none other than the former rat-catcher, Bob Jakin, who brings her several little books, in sympathy for her family's plight. Maggie discovers, like Eliot during her own struggles in translating Strauss and accepting her father's death, a type of peace in reading *Thomas a' Kempis*, who teaches "the renunciation of self-love" for "inward peace" (383).

As a result of her reading, Maggie temporarily submits to Tom's feminine ideal of submissive, self-controlled, mindless passivity, in renouncing knowledge, aesthetic pleasure, and open affection. Struggling to find a higher vision of life, Maggie misses the truth, pointed out to her later by Philip Waken, i.e., that renunciation is the acceptance of unavoidable sorrow, not a means of happiness (384). Her new faith, however, helps her deal with loneliness and reproach until she again finds Philip. When Tom rebukes her for going to a linen shop to ask for a job in "plain sewing" (386), instead of staying at home in idleness like a lady of the leisure class, she contents herself with his harshness and "requires nothing," exulting in her "martyrdom" (381).

Maggie's martyrdom of self-enforced femininity as a means of happiness is challenged in the Red Deeps during her unexpected meeting with Philip Wakem, to whom she feels bound by mutual sympathy and memories of childhood affection. Philip's female sympathy and affection, as well as his superior intelligence, encourages
Maggie to express her ideas unchecked after years of intellectual restriction. In response to her false vision of freedom through self-renunciation, he counters that "we can never give up longing and wishing while we are thoroughly alive" (397) and that "we must hunger" after the "beautiful and good...until our feelings are deadened" (397-98), implying that she chooses death. The prospect of secretly meeting and talking with Philip in the Red Deeps resurrects both her spiritual/intellectual life and her inner conflict. She feels that she must choose between friendship with Philip, who feeds her intellectual and aesthetic hunger and treats her as an equal, and loyalty to Tom, who subverts her innate capacities and her attempt to find a higher consciousness of life to his narrow feminine ideal.

With nothing to fill the intellectual and emotional need resurrected in her first meeting with Philip, Maggie goes regularly to the Red Deeps, a name suggestive of the warmth and depth offered by Philip's counsel as well as the mental and emotional intercourse that binds them together. Philip's warning Maggie that whatever "rational satisfaction" she denies her nature now will later "assault" her like a "savage appetite" (429) ominously foreshadows her obsession with the world offered by Stephen Guest. Philip offers to satisfy those intellectual and aesthetic desires in bringing her books and talking with her in chance meetings.

A year of such meetings helps cultivate Maggie's innate capacities for sympathy and self-sacrificing love and her desire for wisdom; their continuation would have given her an understanding of natural and moral law as well as an understanding of her feelings for Philip, similar to Dinah's sisterly love for Seth. When Philip asks Maggie if she could love one who is always rejected, she responds that she would always like to live with him and make him happy, an admission that echoes the sisterly feelings which Tom had repulsed. Unlike Dinah Morris, who is guided to independence and is then free to develop a friendship with Seth and to recognize a love with Adam, Maggie must meet
Philip secretly, guiltily, infrequently. Rooted in childhood affection, sympathy, and a promise to love and kiss him, her adolescent love for Philip merely replaces her Edenic love for Tom and becomes confused with adult passion. In this innocent love, feminine and masculine traits lose their culturally assigned position; for she "stooped her tall head to kiss the low pale face that was full of pleading, timid love--like a woman's" (438). Maggie believes that "if there were self-sacrifice in this love--it was all the richer and more satisfying" (438). This element of self-sacrificing love suggests not only the development of Maggie's innate female capacity but her link with Christ, in Eliot's view, since the element of self-sacrificing love represents man's idea of the divine, objectified in Christ (Feuerbach 62).

Because Maggie's "true human love" (i.e., Haight's interpretation of Feuerbach's idea of divine love, GE 137) for Philip is thwarted by Tom's loveless devotion to principles, it will later become confused with adult love. Devoted to a cultural ideal of masculinity based on physical mastery and to his father's notion of honor, which demands revenge, Tom deprecates Philip because of Philip's physical delicacy and deformity and because Philip's father has won Tulliver's land and mill in the lawsuit. Though Maggie is forced to break with Philip, she rejects Tom's cultural values, accusing Tom of unmanliness in his brutally insulting Philip, and assures him that tyranny, not "obedience," keeps her from Philip (Eliot, MF 450). Maggie perceives the egoism and desire for mastery behind Tom's patriarchal ideals of femininity and masculinity, ideals which, in Eliot's view, defy natural and moral law in the same way that Oedipus' hubris defied the gods and which evoke their own nemesis. At Tulliver's death, however, Maggie yields to her innate self-abnegation and sympathy in asking for Tom's forgiveness and love. She proves her adherence to love over principle, which separates the essence of Christianity from doctrines of Christianity (Feuerbach 263). At the same time, she fills the vacuum left by Philip's absence with an inordinate love for Tom, which will bring her destruction.
Deprived of every rational satisfaction, Maggie yields to every irrational satisfaction when she visits her cousin Lucy after two years in a "dreary" teaching situation, proving the natural law of necessity true. Stephen Guest represents, to her, the romantic and poetic "world of love and beauty and delight" (Eliot, MF 495), from which she has been barred and which demands no self-sacrifice. Increasingly Maggie must struggle between Eliot's ideal of womanhood or humanity, with its self-renunciation, and the cultural ideal of womanhood that encouraged self-centered materialism. At the same time, Stephen struggles between loyalty to the feminine ideal in "little Lucy," with her accomplishments, gentle passivity, delicacy, light brown ringlets, "hazel eyes" (467), and well-meaning but ignorant meddling, for the "tall dark-eyed nymph" (484), with her "peculiar and troublesome character" (491) of directness. Though Maggie longs for Philip's company, since he has loved her "devotedly," she longs to yield to Stephen, i.e., to the charm of being "taken care of...by someone taller and stronger than [she]" (492). Her "great temptation" proves Philip's warning true; i.e., the beauty she has denied herself creates the appetite that overshadows, temporarily, her innate sympathy for Philip and Lucy and her sense of moral responsibility, and it creates confusion in her feelings for Stephen.

Tom's restrictions have increased Maggie's conflict and made her vulnerable to romantic illusions and irresponsible acts. In keeping Maggie from Philip and reproaching her for taking a teaching position, he has deprived her not only of Philip's knowledge of natural and moral law but also of the self-confidence and independence necessary to examine the motives behind her feelings for Philip and Stephen. Experiencing the life of a leisure-class lady for the first time, at Lucy's, she feels the intoxication of "unchecked enjoyment" (513). After she walks with Stephen in the garden at sunset, a far cry from the Red Deeps in that neither of them can speak, she regains her reason, wishing she were speaking with Philip again in the Red Deeps, while Stephen thinks that "To see
such a creature subdued by love for one would be a lot worth having" (523). When Philip arrives at Lucy's, Maggie's conflict between sympathy and vanity increases: Philip's presence appeals to her childhood affection and "womanly devotedness" and provides a "refuge from an alluring influence which the best part of herself must resist," while Stephen's singing and presence awakens a desire for "all enjoyment" (532) and appeals to her "vanity or other egoistic excitability of her nature" (525). At the bazaar, when Maggie remembers seeing herself beautifully dressed in Lucy's mirror and longs to have Stephen Guest at her feet, adoring her and offering her a life of luxuries, her wish is countered by the "memories of...early claims on her love and pity..." (585). Because of her deprivation, her dependence on Tom's approval, and her restriction from Philip, Maggie confuses her attraction for Stephen with her desire for the world he represents, unable to separate the two.

Maggie's lack of self-confident independence and understanding of natural and moral laws thwarts her ability to distinguish between a brother-sister friendship, which she interprets as a self-giving love, and a passionate adult love, which she interprets as a self-interested, materialistic love. Her conflicts, exasperated by Tom's restrictions, her excessive loyalty to Lucy, and Philip's jealous possessiveness (564), lead Maggie, unlike Dinah, to impulsive actions, in which she lets herself be swept along irresponsibly until, too late, she resists and regrets her acts. After she walks indiscreetly to the conservatory at Park House with Stephen, where he displays passion in kissing her arm, she recoils in indignant anger at his disrespect of her and his disloyalty to Lucy, then feels self-recrimination over her own weakness. Then Maggie irresponsibly allows herself to drift with Stephen alone in a boat, beyond the possibility of turning back, knowing that he would marry her and take her beyond the struggles of self-renunciation. Again, when it is too late to return, she feels "angry resistance" (591), envisioning a married life made unholy by their betrayal of Lucy and Philip's trust. Renouncing a marriage to Stephen
and a life of ease, in spite of Tom's refusal to sanction a marriage with Philip, Maggie decides to return and begin a life of "perfect goodness" (603) in penitence and self-renouncing love, a love directed to Tom. From years of recrimination from Tom and restriction from fellowship with Philip, Maggie can not break her pattern of frustration, impulsive acts, guilt, and penitence. Unlike Dinah, she lacks the religious faith to await divine guidance (i.e., the wisdom to consider the results of her acts) and the maturity to distinguish adult love from vanity.

Maggie's great struggle against what she perceives as a self-serving feminine ideal finished, she receives both patriarchal judgment and female sympathy. While Tom reproaches and repulses her and the men and wives of St. Ogg's scorn her for returning unmarried, her mother leaves Tom to live with her, her aunt Glegg defends her, Philip still believes in her, and Lucy admires her. Demonstrating a female sympathy and self-denying love, Philip remains loyal in his affection and in his belief that she meant to "'cleave'" only to him; he expresses gratitude for the "'new life'" he has entered in "'knowing'" her (634). Lucy believes that Maggie is better than she, in renouncing Stephen, and forgives her. Though Lucy combines the feminine ideals of the angel-in-the-house and the drawing-room lady, she acquires, with Maggie, Eliot's ideal of womanhood in sympathy and self-renouncing love.

Linking herself with Christ, in receiving the "Cross" of "self-renouncing pity and affection, of faithfulness and resolve" (648), Maggie commits an act that suggests her devotion to the principle of love rather than to love itself. After receiving Stephen's letter, in which he appeals to love over a "mere idea" and a "perverted notion of right" (647), i.e., Feuerbach's idea of real love over the doctrine or principle of love, Maggie prays for a life of blessing and comfort to others. In the subsequent flood, she mistakenly sacrifices her life to an idea of love over love itself, when she rescues and redeems Tom and brings about their destruction. When Tom sees her willingness to die for him, he
allows his gratitude to overcome his reproach and clasps her in death. In their death embrace, at least, Maggie and Tom ostensibly recover the Edenic tie in which male and female lived in perfect innocence and unity of shared attributes and love, expressed in Christ. Though Tom forgives Maggie’s impulsive act of leaving with Stephen, Maggie must forgive the greater injury, i.e., Tom’s rejection and restriction, which has prevented Maggie from moving beyond a brother-sister loyalty without feelings of guilt. As a result of Maggie’s renunciation of Stephen and her death, Stephen unites with Lucy in a similar self-renouncing love.

While Eliot moves Maggie Tulliver closer than Dinah Morris to a union with the more androgynous male, she prevents Maggie and Philip’s union, with Maggie’s obsessive need to regain her brother’s approval and love; her guilty fascination with the passionate love, strength, and affluence offered by Stephen; and her unacknowledged recognition that passion must be present in a marriage partnership. That Maggie herself resists the idea of marriage to Philip is evident in her feeling of coldness when Lucy asks if she loves Philip enough to marry him. Her reply, that she "would choose to marry him" as the "best and highest lot" for her (557), suggests a division or contradiction in Maggie between "Faith" and "Love" (Feuerbach 247), i.e., between the belief that she should love Philip as her highest calling and a passionate love of Philip for himself. Feuerbach makes this distinction between the form of religion (i.e., faith) and the essence of religion (i.e., love). Had Maggie understood natural law as a basis for duty and obligation, she would have realized that her childhood promise to love Philip formed an obligation of friendship and honesty not to be confused with adult sexual love. Dinah was able to distinguish between kinds of love and make a wiser choice.

While Gilbert and Gubar would suggest Maggie’s role as avenging "angel of death," in being responsible for Tom’s death (493-94), since his attempts to mold her to the cultural stereotype of a lady had resulted in her misery, evidence in the novel leads to the
natural law of consequence, that acts like Providence, or supernatural revenge, as being responsible for Tom and Maggie's death. Mr. Tulliver's adherence to cultural ideologies of masculinity and femininity, as well as his own pride, prompts him to send Tom to a clergymen recommended by Mr. Riley for a classical education instead of a business school more suited to Tom's limited ability. Though Tulliver acknowledges Maggie's intelligence to be more acute than Tom's, he sends Maggie to a girls' boarding school to learn accomplishments after her early years of misery at home. In their respective institutions, Tom's sense of girlish inferiority burgeons, evoking in Tom a greater need to exercise tyranny over Maggy to regain his sense of male superiority, while Maggie's frustration increases, especially as her education has provided no basis for understanding natural law and making wise judgments in the difficult experiences that await her.

When her schooling unexpectedly comes to an end, the new restrictions on her life only increase her frustration, leading to more impulsive acts, and contrition. Because Mr. Tulliver insists, out of pride, on paying his debt to Mrs. Glegg and going to court to keep his water power, his subsequent bankruptcy and stroke lead to Tom's narrow life of work to remove the debts, his sworn revenge on Wakem, and his obsession with respectability. Tom's narrow vision of life restricts Maggie from outside work, friendship with Philip, and subsequently, any spiritual (i.e., intellectual, aesthetic) and emotional fulfillment, increasing her frustration and hunger. Her constant challenge to his authority, according to her greater power of perception, evokes his constant reproach and her subsequent acts of contrition and attempts to regain his forgiveness and love. When the family's sordid poverty and the restriction of Maggie's life lead her to take a teaching position for two years, the weariness of the position only increases her hunger for romance and beauty by the time she visits Lucy, making her more vulnerable to Stephen's adoration and the world that he represents. Also, in spite of Tom's having paid all of the family debts, his loss of Lucy to Stephen Guest only increases his sense of
bitterness and revulsion when Maggie elopes with Stephen and returns home unmarried.

Eliot emphasizes the destructive consequences of the feminine ideology that allowed women to remain in ignorance of the world, in the disastrous effects of Mrs. Tulliver's and Lucy Deane's well-intentioned meddling. Because of Mrs. Tulliver's attempt to persuade Wakem not to purchase Dorcote Mill, she actually inspires him to buy the mill to keep it from Tulliver, resulting in Tulliver's revenge and death. Because of Lucy's attempt to persuade Tom to accept Philip, because of Philip's part in persuading Wakem to return Dorcote Mill to the Tullivers, she inspires him to confirm his renunciation of Maggie if she were to marry Philip.

Tom's rejection of Maggie, not only for her friendship with Philip but for her elopement with Stephen and unmarried return, bringing him more shame, results in Tom and Maggie's destruction, since it draws her to him like a magnet. Maggie's need to regain Tom's love and forgiveness causes her to confuse her friendship for Philip with love and to confuse her love for Stephen with vanity. Convicted by feelings of guilt, she feels the need to prove her love for Tom once and for all by renouncing both suitors and risking her life for him. The need for martyrdom inspires her to ignore the danger of the flood to rescue Tom at the mill, a place he would have probably left long before if not for his need to avenge the family pride.

Even though Eliot dismantles cultural gender stereotypes with Maggie and Philip, she suggests, in preventing their union, her remaining loyalty to those stereotypes. After exploring the androgynous nature of Silas Marner and Romola, through a deconstruction of gender stereotypes, and after completing the whole person in the marriage partnership Felix Holt, Eliot is able to unite two androgynous figures—Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislaw—in Middlemarch.

In Middlemarch, Eliot takes revenge on the patriarchal views responsible for much of her emotional conflict, on the religious views that she had grown to resent, and on the
feminine ideologies that had constricted her. In the process, she continues to develop her own ideal of humanity that blurs gender distinctions, or dismantles gender stereotypes, and emphasizes self-abnegating duty and service to humanity over self-centered vanity and acquisitiveness. She completes the ideal, within the context of natural law, of an androgynous partnership of male and female that, together, make the whole person.

Eliot takes revenge on patriarchy in exposing the foibles of each male character and in avenging the "dark" ladies. Mr. Brooke, with his sense of male superiority (i.e., "Your sex are not thinkers, you know," 77), his smattering of knowledge on many subjects and his mastery of nothing, his support of a cause "up to a certain point" (77), his notorious neglect of his tenants' houses while posing as a political reformer, and his fecklessness as a guardian and a candidate for the liberal party, makes a fool of himself when he forgets his speech because of a second glass of sherry and lack of conviction and brain power. Sir James Chettam, the well-meaning but ignorant country squire of Freshitt (another of Eliot's allegorical names), finds it difficult to form an opinion of his own and bases his judgment on the opinions of Dorothea Brooke (regarding cottages for tenants) and on appearances, tradition, and aristocratic prejudice. The solipsistic and pedantic Edward Casaubon, trying to compile information for his Key to all Mythologies, proves scarcely less idealistic about himself and women than Tertius Lydgate, who intends to remain aloof from political ties and financial worries while he does research, as a country doctor, to discover the "primitive tissue" of all structures (178). Living more in the present than Casaubon, Lydgate does recognize his need of Dorothea's friendship, after marrying a woman who murders her husband more subtly than did the French actress; he also longs to alleviate suffering by advancing medical science. Fred Vincy proves his irresponsible foppery in gambling on the expectations of Featherstone's property and in breaking the Garths financially, while Rev. Mr. Farebrother gambles with what little income he has, in order to make ends meet. Even Will Ladislaw wanders aimlessly in search of a purpose
and a profession until his love for Dorothea and Brooke's invitation to write his speeches and political articles for the Pioneer give him direction. His involvement with Rosamond suggests his sense of social freedom and functions primarily as Eliot's way of avenging Dorothea and destroying Rosamond's vanity. Only Mr. Garth, with the underpinning strength of his wife, remains consistently responsible and compassionate, if naive.

Eliot avenges the "dark" ladies, Dorothea Brooke and Mary Garth, as they win the adoration of the exceptional men. In spite of Dorothea's resistance to the feminine ideologies of the "doll-Madonna in her shrine," represented in Celia Brooke, and the "angel-in-the house," represented in Rosamond Vincy, Dorothea receives the intended proposal and subsequent fierce protection and friendship of Sir James, the proposal and subsequent paranoid fear of Edward Casaubon, the friendship and admiration of Tertius Lydgate, and the adoration and proposal of Will Ladislaw. Mary Garth, a self-admitted "brown patch" of a girl (140), whose "shrewdness had a streak of satiric bitterness" (139), redeems wastrel Fred Vincy with her ironic and playful honesty and wins the devotion and proposal of Farebrother, "the cleverest man in her narrow circle" (561).

Eliot takes revenge on orthodox Christianity in presenting its adherents in an unfavorably judgmental and hypocritical light, compared to the non-spiritual and humane Farebrother. Eliot's narrator deprecates the "apostolic" Tyke (i.e., boor), modeled on Amos Barton, in saying that "Nobody had anything to say against [him] except that they could not bear him and suspected him of cant" (210). Eliot exposes the hypocrisy of lay-evangelist Bulstrode, who upholds the Lutheran doctrine of justification (211) but whose criminal past becomes his Nemesis and who rationalizes his murder of Raffles as a providential mean of removing the impediment to his good works.

Eliot takes revenge on prescriptive feminine ideologies in demonstrating the limitations which they impose on the expectations and intellectual growth of women, as well as their destructive influence on the men and women who adhere or are forced to
adhere to them. Like Maggie Tulliver, the intellectually frustrated Dorothea hopes for a great man to open up "vistas" of knowledge and duty for her. Celia Brooke is contented to make a shrine of her home and a "Buddha" of her baby (579), thinking of Dorothea's longing for a higher vision an "uncomfortable" notion (54). Mary Garth, whose guidance and education from her mother allows her, like Dinah Morris, to resist feminine ideologies and stereotypes, survives the book-restricting and bullying of Featherstone, as well as the temptation to assist Featherstone in burning one of his wills and making Fred wealthy. Instead, she insists that Fred earn his diploma, dismiss the thought of being a clergyman, and begin a useful profession. Through her encouragement and loyalty, she assists Fred in living a productive life as an estate manager and writer and succeeds in writing a book of her own as well as giving a formal education to her sons at home. By contrast, Rosamond, like Hetty in her self-love, reduces Tertius Lydgate's career to maintaining a respectable establishment and medical profession in "London and a continental bathing place" (892), at the expense of his research, since his wife cannot sympathize with his noble dreams and has undermined his interest in medical research with ignorant treachery.

In Middlemarch, Eliot focuses not only on Dorothea Brooke's struggle between the contemporary feminine ideologies and Eliot's higher ideal of women, rooted in natural and moral law, but also on the effects of two kinds of women on Tertius Lydgate; Eliot proves, through the experiences of Dorothea and Lydgate, her belief in a self-sacrificing love between androgynous men and women and in a doctrine-free religion of humanity. Dorothea's longing for "masculine knowledge" (88), which she considers the "completest knowledge" (51), and her longing for great service to humanity, beginning with improving the living conditions of tenant farmers, compels her to reject the aristocratic feminine ideal espoused by Sir James (who was willing, however, for Maggie to have her way in everything). Instead she marries scholar Edward Casaubon, through
whom she hopes to discover all knowledge and higher duties, and, after his death, reformer Will Ladislaw, with whom she finds love and the possibilities for higher service in an androgynous partnership, since Will, through poverty and classlessness, has developed female sensitivities. Tertius Lydgate, who at first prefers Rosamond Vincy as the feminine ideal, since Dorothea strikes him as a girl "too earnest" and "always wanting reasons" (119), discovers the emptiness and the destructiveness of an ideal that leads to his tragic downfall. In his fall, Lydgate faces the discrepancies between his feminine ideal and the woman who supposedly represents it and develops female sympathy and self-abnegation. Even though Dorothea's friendship redeems him from despair, he cannot, like Adam Bede, marry his redeemer. Rather, he must support his destructive but fragile wife until he dies. The self-sacrificing love of Dorothea, Ladislaw, and Lydgate links them to Christ and the religion of humanity that Eliot embraced in Feuerbach.

Like Eliot herself, as well as Dinah Morris and Maggie Tulliver, Dorothea resists the stereotypes of delicacy and domesticity embodied in Celia and of coquettish beauty and affected manners (over morals) embodied in Rosamond Vincy. A composite of Eliot, Dinah, and Maggie, Dorothea contrasts the feminine stereotype, with her "plain garments" (29); her simply "braided and coiled" hair (49) in an era of curls and bows; her "large eyes..., too unusual and striking" (31); her "powerful feminine, maternal" hands (61); her "open, ardent, and not in the least self-admiring" nature (32); her "love of extremes" (31); her exasperation with the "shallows of ladies'school literature" (47) and her habit of "sitting up at night to read old theological books" (31); her disparagement of trinkets, jewels, fashions, and anything worn for "mere effect" (114); her love of "fresh air and the various aspects of the country" (32) but her renunciation of even horseback riding as offering too much "pagan" pleasure (32); her interest in architecture, building, and business; her entering marriage as "a neophyte about to enter on a higher grade of initiation" (67), with the idea that the "really delightful marriage must be that where your..."
husband was a sort of father and could teach you even Hebrew if you wished it" (32); her "intensity of...religious disposition" (51); her strongly expressed opinions; and her belief that the wealthy should improve the living conditions of the tenant-farmer, all unnatural traits for the "angel-in-the-house" and the drawingroom lady but natural for some females, according to Eliot.

Contrasting this anomaly, Celia Brooke and Rosamond Vincy represent different feminine ideals. The "amiable and innocent-looking" Celia (31), with a "shade of coquetry" in her dress (29), her "blond flesh" (35), her defense of wearing ornaments, her dressing "all in white and lavender--like a bunch of mixed violets" (529), her preoccupation with her home and baby, her "common sense" (29) and notice of particulars (i.e., Casaubon's moles, spoon-scraping and blinking) over universals (i.e., the importance of self-sacrifice), her acceptance of Sir James' judgments as her own, and her dislike of strongly expressed opinions (55), fits the aristocratic ideal of femininity as passively gentle, dependent, delicate, and sensible in ordinary matters, with little concern for events beyond the grange or estate. Fitting the feminine ideal of the upward-moving manufacturing class trying to ape its betters, Rosamond Vincy had excelled at Mrs. Lemon's school in the accomplishments and manners designed to amuse and capture a man and prepare her for a life of genteel idleness. Rosamond exhibits the ideal feminine appearance of "perfect blond loveliness" (301) and "excellent taste in costume" (123), with even the movement of her head and positioning of her hands calculated to please. In Rosamond, who perceives love as a means of enslaving a man of rank; marriage as a means of acquiring position and wealth; money as "something necessary which other people would always provide" (301); and herself as the only person never "blameworthy" (716), Eliot proves the ignorance, self-love and destructiveness of the stereotypical cultural ideal, calling her satirically an "angel" (140).

Dissatisfied with the contented passivity of Celia and critical of the destructive
self-love of Rosamond, Eliot redefines the ideal of womanhood in Dorothea, linking it with a higher vision of life, based on an understanding of natural and moral law and acquired through a struggle. Eliot deconstructs the ostensibly feminine traits of Celia and Rosamond, giving Celia a critical nature and giving Rosamond a secret defiance and treacherousness inconsistent with a delicate appearance and passive manner. Eliot displaces their culturally feminine traits in making the strikingly dark and unusual eyes, daringly simple hair and dress, and commanding height and size of Dorothea representative of "beauty in its breathing life" (220) to artist Nauman; in giving the feminine "light-brown curls" (102), "transparent complexion" illuminated by "inward light" (237), shyness, impulsiveness, and artistic temperament to Will Ladislaw, reminiscent of Seth Bede and Philip Wakem; and in giving the more culturally masculine traits of intellectual hunger, desire for social reform, and interest in business (buildings and law concerns) to Dorothea.

Eliot redefines the ideal of womanhood to emphasize not complacence, appearance, and manner (i.e., depicted in Celia and Rosamond) but moral conviction, sympathy, and self-abnegation (i.e., depicted in Dorothea and Mary), qualities that can be stunted by emphasis on appearance and manner but developed in suffering. While Celia finds contentment in her comfortably appointed country home, seeing no need for Dodo's self-denial and uncomfortable notions, first, in marrying the "old and dismal and learned" Casaubon (879) instead of Chettam, and later, in marrying the unaristocratic Ladislaw and living on the London "street" instead of living comfortably at Tipton Grange, Dorothea longs, first, to devote her life to a "living Bossuet" or a "modern Augustine" (47), who will open all knowledge to her and help her know how to serve others, and second, to sacrifice her wealth and position for love with an impoverished reformer-writer. Dorothea feels disappointed when she can do nothing for the Lowick tenants, despondent when she cannot assist Edward and become "wise and strong in his strength and
wisdom" (243), and bored when she must center her attentions on domesticity and Celia's baby at Freshit. While Rosamond proves incapable of loving Lydgate, sharing his professional dreams, economizing at his request, or feeling any affection for her unborn child, so that her angelic affectation of "tender devotedness" masks a "want of sensibility" (702), Dorothea struggles to love Casaubon despite his cold reclusiveness, to assist him by putting his worthless notes in order and reading or writing for him, and to make the promise to continue his work after his death, from which she is delivered by the Nemesis of Casaubon's own anxiety. In her marriage to Ladislaw, as well, Dorothea sacrifices her fortune and her dream of serving humanity on a larger scale to a partnership of love, in which her "full nature...spent itself in channels which had no great name on the earth" (896), since she, like Dinah with Adam, feels incomplete without Will.

In Dorothea's struggle toward a new ideal of womanhood, she reveals the danger of limited knowledge and experience in making judgments. She mistakes useless scholarship for genius in Casaubon, believing him the "most interesting man she [has] ever seen" (40). Though Sir James would allow her predominance of opinion, would delight in her cleverness and pursuit of knowledge, and would build her cottages, she deprecates the idea of marrying the baronet as he does not appear to have Casaubon's "great soul" (43). She also confuses her desire for self-development and duty with self-sacrificing love. She prepares for marriage by reading learned books and pamphlets, in order to be of service to Edward, as his assistant. She accepts his twenty-seven-year advance in age and delicate health as an assurance that this marriage fulfills her sense of "higher duties" over "ease" (64). When his letter of proposal speaks of her "fitness" for the position of companion (66), instead of love, Dorothea feels herself "reclining...in the lap of a Divine consciousness," believing that a "fuller life" of learning and assisting in a great enterprise is "opening before her" (67). Clearly she mistakes her desire for knowledge and service for self-sacrificing love.
In Dorothea's preparations for marriage and behavior after marriage, she resists yet conforms to the Victorian ideal of femininity. She resists the feminine ideal in wanting only to assist, not entertain or amuse, Casaubon. However, in her attempts to learn Greek and Latin under his tutelage, she assumes, in her dismay over her difficulty in learning, that a woman's reason is incapable of the greater depths of "masculine knowledge" (88-89), instead of considering the ineptitude of her teacher. Though Dorothea rebels against feminine accomplishments of "domestic music and feminine fine art" (89) for higher learning, relieved that Casaubon does not care for piano, she defers to his opinions in everything, including even the choice of rooms for her boudoir. While her acceptance of his home, with its subdued and faded colors, proves her resistance to material concerns, her deference to his opinions, efforts to meet his approval, and doubt of her own ability suggest her fulfillment of the feminine ideal that she had rejected in a marriage Sir James. In so doing, she becomes the prisoner of the unpassionate Casaubon, suggested in the name of his estate, "Lowick." That the marriage is "funereal" (72) to Celia and "as good as going to a nunnery" (82) to Mrs. Cadwallader, suggests the extent of Dorothea's emotional and intellectual imprisonment in marrying Casaubon.

During the five-week wedding trip, Dorothea struggles to prevent the collapse of her ideals and learns, through suffering, the true meaning of self-sacrificing love. In Rome, she battles disillusionment and frustration when, instead of assisting Casaubon in his great projects, she is relegated to gallery tours with Tantripp. When Casaubon does attend her, he gives only superficial, measured comments as to the paintings' being "highly esteemed" (229), instead of explaining the art or encouraging her reactions with gentle affection. With art as with scholarship, Dorothea discovers that instead of the "large vistas" which she had hoped to find in his mind, she discovers only "anterooms and winding passages which seemed to lead nowhere" (228) and which contain only "embalmed facts that lead to no great understanding" (230). She battles depression and

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humiliation when, after offering to assist him in assembling his notes for his book on their return to London, she is rebuffed and reprimanded for presumptuous ignorance. Instead of gaining knowledge in assisting Edward, she finds that she must live as a leisured wife, relegated to amusements unless he asks her to read to him. Since he finds her displays of affection "crude and startling" and her offers of assistance to begin his book critical and threatening, she is forced, like Maggie Tulliver with Tom, to restrain and imprison her emotional and intellectual power (i.e., to conform to his narrow prescriptions of femininity) and to struggle with subsequent indignation and guilt. Like Maggie, Dorothea finds her strength "scattered in fits of agitation, of struggle, of despondency, and then again in visions of more complete renunciation, transforming all hard conditions into duty" (230).

Only after gaining, from Will Ladislaw, a higher consciousness of Casaubon's restrictive behavior (i.e., its basis in his fear of betraying his dated information and useless ideas) is Dorothea able to break out of her prison of "anger and despondency" (234) with pity. In experiencing Will's brightness, quickness, interest in her ideas, and ability to understand everything, she experiences increased tenderness toward Casaubon, since now she recognizes his limitations. Realizing the illusion under which she has lived regarding his abilities, she seeks to understand him, repents of urging him to write his book, and struggles to conceal her opinions. When Will Ladislaw tells her a second time that Casaubon's work has little value, Dorothea struggles to defend Casaubon's perseverance, at least, in her new-found sympathy and self-abnegating love.

Eliot proves, in Dorothea, Ladislaw and Casaubon, her belief that happiness or contentment depends on moral duty based on the natural law of consequence. Dorothea's loyal defense and sympathetic affection for Casaubon begin a reshaping of Ladislaw. In adoration of Dorothea, he decides to sever his financial dependence on Casaubon (though the money should have been Will's in the first place) and to return to London to
"work his own way" (257). Since Casaubon lacks a wider consciousness and a capacity to love anyone except himself, Ladislaw's decision only increases his suspicious fear, since he senses Will's influence over Dorothea and imagines her growing condescension toward himself. Ignoring the natural law of consequence and his obligation to love his wife, Casaubon isolates himself even more. His suspicion and his fear of exposing his limitations increase his anxiety, causing his health to decline.

While Casaubon's declining health increases Dorothea's natural sympathy and self-abnegation, causing her to repent of any "scorn and indignation" (317), it does not blunt her sense of justice or moral responsibility. After his first "fit," at their return to Lowick, evoked by fear of beginning his book and feelings of jealousy over Will's possible visit, Dorothea's sobbing appeal to Lydgate (i.e., "advise me. Think what I can do. He has been labouring all his life and looking forward. He minds about nothing else. And I mind about nothing else-" 324), suggests the extent of her sympathy for Casaubon's position. Still, Dorothea urges Edward to correct the injustice of keeping the money that Will should have inherited from his grandmother and requests that half of his estate be given to Will instead of being left to her. When he responds patriarchally that she is not qualified to discriminate (a judgment similar to Tom Tulliver's, betraying his own sense of inferiority), his words, accompanied by rapid breathing, throw Dorothea "in a tumult of conflicting emotions" (410) of indignation and anguish.

As Casaubon's jealous fears lead to his self-absorption and coldness, Dorothea struggles to conquer her resentment and sacrifice her own desires for his. After asking herself what he is, she is able to "estimate him" as she sees herself waiting "on his glances with trembling" and shutting "her best soul in prison, paying it only hidden visits, that she might be petty enough to please him" (464). After hours of spiritual wrestling, she conquers her resentment over his suspicions of her, decides to expect only his bitterness, and humbly waits to help the "lamed creature" (465), a resolution similar to that of
Maggie with Tom. In self-sacrificing love, Dorothea relinquishes her expectations of learning hidden knowledge and condescends to take dictation.

Natural law prohibits Dorothea's sacrifice to Casaubon's ego, however. Though Casaubon suddenly allows her to help him assemble his notes and tries to extract the promise that she will, after his death, write his book, he dies before she seals her own "doom" (522). The natural law of consequence (i.e., the physical effects of anxiety caused by Casaubon's jealous pride) becomes his Nemesis. That Dorothea wrestles with guilt in not completing his project after his death proves the complexity of Dorothea's feelings. In resisting the patriarchal expectations of feminine ignorance and superficiality, Dorothea had willingly bound herself, in the hope of finding truth, to a patriarchal tyrant who after denying her, during his life, a share in his knowledge and work, demands, at his death, that she bind herself to his work. Though she decides to submit to his request, she finds her release from that obligation in the knowledge that Casaubon had distrusted her judgment and twisted her words to his own suspicious imaginings; acting on his suspicions, he had added a codicil to his will, making her wealth contingent on her not marrying Will Ladislaw, i.e., on her again giving up her own "will."

Eliot continues to dismantle the feminine stereotype in Dorothea after Casaubon's death. From her experiences with Casaubon, his "erudition by hearsay," Dorothea has become a "pragmatist" (Knoepflmacher 104) as well as an empiricist, in that she now bases her beliefs on feelings, her feelings on experience, especially with regard to Will Ladislaw. Though she has found Will able to talk with her about art, poetry, history, and theology without deprecating her opinions and though she has witnessed his refusal of help from Casaubon, his willingness to write for Brooke, and his intention of winning an "honorable position" for himself in London (Eliot, M 586), she does not think of him as a lover until being restricted from him by the codicil. She scarcely recognizes her feelings of loss and confusion at his departure as indications of "Love" (592). Instead of
sitting indolently at Lowick, plotting strategy for a second marriage, as a widow of property was expected to do, she considers various projects which might benefit society and which prove her sense of duty. Resisting Sir James and Cadwaller's suggestions regarding "blood, beauty, bravery" in a second husband, she finds their ideas "indifferent and impersonal" (593), since she no longer considers marriage as a means of gaining anything. Instead she considers buying land for "a little [Owenite] colony where everybody should work and all the work should be done well" (594). Next, she forms a plan to relieve Lydgate from his "obligation" to Bulstrode (826), despite Sr. James' warning against it.

Dorothea undergoes her second test of self-sacrifice when she goes to assure Rosamond of Lydgate's innocence. Disappointed and shocked a second time in finding Will Ladislaw with Rosamond in Lydgate's absence, she spends a night wrestling with jealousy and despair at Lowick, fearing that she has fallen into another romantic illusion in trusting Will. In spite of her anguish over Will, Dorothea, like Maggie, yearns for the "perfect Right" and recognizes her obligation, since "the objects of her rescue [Lydgate, Rosamond, and Ladislaw] were...chosen for her" (864). After a night of sobbing on the cold floor, Dorothea buries her "private joy" (848), i.e., her belief in Will's love for her. Overcoming her jealousy and self-love, she returns to assure Rosamond of Lydgate's value, hoping to save Lydgate by saving his marriage. Dorothea's magnanimity and freedom from jealousy shatter Rosamond's "dreamworld" in which she has been "confident of herself and critical of others" (854); influenced by Dorothea's self-sacrifice, she confesses the truth to Dorothea and to Will, then returns her shallow affections to Lydgate.

Dorothea's self-abnegating love and sense of duty over vanity are rewarded with an assurance of Will's love and moral character, an assurance which confirms her experience of Will and determines her future actions. Will proves his own understanding of
natural law as a basis for moral character, in his refusal to accept Bulstrode's ill-gotten wealth and in his decision to leave Dorothea alone, as his marriage proposal would force her to renounce wealth and social standing. Assured of his self-renouncing love and duty, Dorothea again resists the feminine boundaries when she renounces her wealth, her social status, and the respect of her family and acquaintances, in crying to Will, "Oh I cannot bear it; my heart will break...I don't mind about poverty--I hate my wealth" (870). Though Dorothea's life and talents will again become "absorbed into the life of another" (894), each will find completion and liberation in the other instead of a stifling life of conformity to an ideal.

Since Dorothea's suffocating marriage to Casaubon and her uncertainty over Will Ladislaw have sifted her feelings of all self-interest and self-advancement, her marriage to Ladislaw is motivated by self-giving love, exemplifying Eliot's goal for women as a self-sacrificing "partnership with men," according to Uglow (4), as well as her goal for men in a self-sacrificing partnership with women. In that partnership, Dorothea will be broadened intellectually and socially, instead of narrowed with useless data, and Will will be broadened morally through Dorothea's sense of duty and self-abnegating compassion. In this partnership, Dorothea will narrow her sphere of influence but more realistically fulfill her ideals in encouraging and assisting Will, the "ardent public man," reformer, and member of Parliament (Eliot, M 894). Their partnership, an androgynous sharing of culturally masculine and feminine traits, proves for Eliot "the frankest recognition of the divine in human nature" (Haight, GE 137), linking them to Christ as well as to Eliot and G. H. Lewes.

In the secondary plot of Tertius Lydgate and Rosamond Vincy, Eliot proves, as she did to a greater degree in Bede, the influence of two types of women on the patriarchal male. However in Middlemarch, Lydgate is delivered from his middle-class Hetty Sorrel (Rosamond Vincy) not by her death but by his own at age fifty. Aware of her influence
over him, he eventually refers to her as his "basil plant," which "flourished on a murdered man's brains" (Eliot, M 893). As marriage destroys the "charm" in "the shallowness of [his] water nixie's soul" (700) and he faces a life of loneliness and frustration, never able to reach an understanding with Rosamond, his meetings with Dorothea suggest to him the error of his judgments of women.

Though priding himself as a scientific man, a rationalist, Lydgate relies on sentiment in judging women, believing that a woman should fit the feminine ideal of perfect loveliness, accomplishment, and grace, producing the effect of "exquisite music" and "true melodic charm" (121). Taken with Rosamond's appearance and manner, he feels that falling in love with her will be "safe," since she has "just the kind of intelligence one would desire in a woman--polished, refined, docile, lending itself to finish in all the delicacies of life," and made sufficiently evident in the body that "enshrined" it (192). In Rosamond, he sees that "feminine radiance...which must be classed with flowers and music" in its virtuous and delicate beauty (193). Compared with Rosamond, Dorothea seems wanting, in that she does "not look at things from the proper feminine angle," which should produce "a paradise with sweet laughs for bird notes and blue eyes for a heaven" (122). His belief in the feminine ideal, since not based on reality but on appearances, misleads him. Though he had forseen marriage as an idyllic arrangement at a future date, in which his docile, angelic wife would make a paradise of his home and adoringly bask in the light of his noble profession of reforming medical practice through research, he finds instead that he must spend most of his energy and time trying to understand Rosy and raising money to pay their debts. Her refusal to economize with him leads to his financial ruin, moral indiscretion, and loss of the hospital project, which involves his research.

Rosamond's pampered life as the daughter of a manufacturer and student of accomplishments in Miss Lemon's school has deprived her of guidance to a higher vision
of life, based on understanding of natural and moral law, and a love of anyone besides herself. While Lydgate believes that she worships him and adores his pre-eminence, she is preoccupied with visions of a "handsome house in Lowick Gate" and "various styles of furniture" (300). Manipulated into engagement by her tears and ostensibly "natural" behavior of "helpless quivering" in his presence, which he interprets as her dependence on his attention and affection (335), he begins his outlay of money for plate, jewels, home, and furnishings while already paying for his practice, accumulating large debts.

After marriage, Rosamond proves the empty destructiveness of the middle-class feminine ideal of the drawingroom lady. Her obliviousness to their financial problems, disdain for Lydgate's research, and lack of sympathy and love for Lydgate in his social alienation alert him to the reason for her adoration of him—she had seen his talent as a means of prestige. Now she undermines his efforts to sell their house and resists his efforts to cut expenses; rather, she blames Lydgate for bringing her to this embarrassing distress. She ignorantly finds fault with his profession and research and encourages him to move to London. She even goes horseback-riding with his wealthy cousin, against Lydgate's advice, and loses their unborn child, losing (like Hetty) an unwanted burden. Instead of showing sound judgment and joining his efforts or suggesting other ways of economizing, she secretly writes to Sir Godwin Lydgate to ask for financial help. When the haughty refusal arrives from Sir Godwin, Lydgate is shocked and furious, then cowed and "mastered" (719) by dread of her "quiet, elusive obstinacy" (710), her "secret meddling" (716), her dishonesty and her defiance of his injunctions. Fearing that he will cease to love her, he finds that he can excuse her behavior only by thinking of her as "an animal of another and feebler species" (719), since her ignorant meddling constantly undoes his efforts to save them from ruin.

The natural law of consequence, which operates in Lydgate's blind adherence to cultural gender stereotypes, brings his ruin. His financial burdens, brought on in part by
his arrogant belief in his own masculine powers, his judgment of Rosamond on the basis of her ostensible conformity to his feminine ideal, his disdain for Farebrother's warnings about debt, and his belief in his ability to master his exquisitely ignorant wife, lead to his fall. Reticent to admit his blunders and seek advice from Farebrother, Lydgate assumes the burden for his financial problems, turning to opium, gambling, and finally Bulstrode for help, thereby involving himself in scandal and loss of reputation. Believed to have taken a bribe to protect Bulstrode in the death of Raffles, Lydgate becomes an object of "repugnance" to Rosamond, who finds herself in no way blameworthy for his fall. Discovering that her perfect loveliness holds not the "tender devotedness and docile adoration of the ideal wife" (702) that he had envisioned but, instead, an independent obstinacy and violation of his trust with no possibility of mutual understanding, Lydgate has reached disillusion and despair, when he is summoned by Dorothea.

Dorothea's friendship and forthrightness force Lydgate to rethink his feminine ideal. Unlike the self-loving and evasive Rosamond, Dorothea gives Lydgate the "first assurance of belief in him" that he has heard, as she exclaims, "You would not do anything dishonorable" (819). Believing for the first time that he can be judged "in the wholeness of [his] character" (819), he discloses his whole involvement with Bulstrode and his reasons. Through her encouragement to stay and carry out his research, her offer to support the hospital, and her willingness to assure Rosamond of his innocence, Dorothea resurrects Lydgate's hope and self-confidence.

Lydgate sees in Dorothea what he has never seen "in any woman before--a fountain of friendship towards men" so that "a man can make a friend [instead of an object] of her" (826). Dorothea proves her friendship in influencing Rosamond's views--about Lydgate, Ladislaw, and her responsibility as a partner--and in giving Lydgate the money to remove his obligation to Bulstrode. As a result of her redeeming acts, Lydgate, like Adam Bede, changes his view of the feminine ideal. He sees the ideal woman, not as an
object of loveliness that provides a paradisal escape from cares, with her accomplishments and beauty, all of which can hide a treacherous independence, ignorance and self-centeredness, but as a possible friend and equal that can work with him in sound judgment. Their relationship, unlike Lydgate's with Rosamond, is built on "a mutual process of ministration," according to Knoepflmacher; i.e., while his help, "limited by science," had assisted her during Casaubon's illness and death, her help, "spiritually transcendent," allows him to save his reputation and marriage (88). His access to the masculine fund of knowledge and her innate female capacities for sympathy and affection work together for mutual liberation.

That Eliot does not bring about a marriage between Lydgate and Dorothea, as between Adam Bede and Dinah Morris, suggests a change in her thinking regarding men and women. Will Ladislaw proves to be more sensitive and perceptive than Lydgate and is not fooled by appearances or afraid to confront injustice and dishonesty, as when he rejects Bulstrode's offer of "ill-gotten money" (Eliot 672) and brings Rosamond's illusion of perfection and mastery to an end, explaining that "No other women exists by the side of [Dorothea]" (835-36). Dorothea, with her ostensibly masculine traits of intellectual curiosity, independence and opinions, would feel completed and liberated only with a partner of female sensitivity and interests (nurtured by a mother who had suffered poverty because of principles) but without a preconceived ideal of femininity. While Eliot moves toward a partnership of dismantled and blurred feminine and masculine traits, with Dinah and Seth and with Maggie and Philip, she completes that partnership with Dorothea and Will Ladislaw, a partnership of passion, in which each can mold, support, and liberate the other, a relationship like that of Eliot and Lewes.

Though Gilbert and Gubar explain Dorothea's view from the window, i.e., "a man with a bundle on his back and a woman carrying a baby" (Eliot, 846) as representative of Lydgate with his burden of Rosy and Dorothea with her baby "Will" (Gilbert and
Gubar 519), their view trivializes or minimalizes the effect intended by Eliot. Dorothea witnesses the human condition in the natural order, that of shared duties and responsibilities, and realizes her place in that order. While Lydgate, because of his belief in the feminine ideology, may be partly responsible for his "burthen" of Rosy (Eliot, M 858), Dorothea can hardly be represented as a mother to Will. As neither has adhered to gender ideals, they seem, rather, two halves of a whole, in which gender stereotypes have been dismantled. Each will support the other.

In Middlemarch, Eliot moves salvation away from the church and established religion, even metaphorically. Within the context of natural law, in which the irrevocable consequences of human acts become a kind of determinism and the knowledge of natural law becomes a basis for moral duty, Eliot locates salvation in human love and marriage partnerships based on self-sacrificing love. While in Bede, Eliot extracts elements of human and brotherly love from Dinah's Methodism and Irwine's Anglicanism, and in Mill, Eliot shows the limitations and impoverishment of the church, in Middlemarch, she proves the influence of both Hume and Feuerbach in the beliefs of Dorothea, for whom "righteousness is confirmed by experience" (Knoepflmacher 104), and belief is rooted in experience and feeling. Dorothea, despite her Puritan instruction and because of her disillusionment with the clergyman Casaubon, believes that "the desire to do good makes one part of the Divine power against evil" (Eliot, M 427). Her ethics, based on the transcendental idea of a moral imperative, which to a positivist could as easily be based on natural law, are proven in her good intentions, dutiful actions, and self-sacrificing love toward Casaubon, Lydgate, Rosamond, and Ladislaw. Ladislaw's "pragmatic" religion (Knoepflmacher 104), of loving "what is beautiful and good when I see it" (Eliot, M 427), might make Dorothea question his motives for repeated visits to Rosamond, though he expresses love only for Dorothea. Farebrother, too, represents the good in his efforts to befriend Lydgate in spite of Lydgate's vote, in his gentle care of his
mother and sister (reminiscent of Mr. Irwine), and in his selfless love toward Mary Garth in helping Fred Vincy. While Dorothea believes that the "apostolic" preaching of Mr. Tyke would be "of no use at Lowick" (536) and prefers the Christianity that "takes in the most good of all kinds, and brings in the most people as sharers in it," pardoning rather than condemning (538), she can, according to Knoepflmacher, "only imperfectly emulate the Saint [Theresa] who...embodied the sweetness of Jesus" (75).

As an imperfect representative of Theresa and Jesus, Dorothea shows her need of a partner. The partnership of Dorothea and Will represents to Eliot the essence of divine love, a self-giving love of two culturally androgynous selves, foreshadowed in the friendship of Dinah and Seth, the love of Dinah and Adam, and the love of Maggie and Phillip, in which shared abilities and characteristics complete the whole person. Eliot implies that the loving partnership completes the Saint Theresa and represents Jesus, the perfect unity of all that is good in male and female. Eliot had moved to that partnership in Felix Holt, after examining the androgyny of male and female in Silas Marner and Romola, and completes the human ideal in Daniel Deronda.
CHAPTER 6

CONSIDERING ANDROGYNY AND FEMINISM

Between The Mill on the Floss and Felix Holt, Eliot experiments with androgyny and feminism in her progress toward an ideal of humanity, which she posits as a whole of male and female in Felix Holt and a whole of androgynous male and female in Middlemarch. In Silas Marner, Eliot considers the male capacity for developing female emotions (i.e., "affectionateness," "gentleness," "tenderness" associated with maternity, according to Eliot, GEL, 4.4681) and performing culturally feminine roles. In Romola, Eliot considers the female capacity for attaining masculine knowledge and experience and performing culturally masculine roles, in spite of a culturally engendered sense of inferiority to males, described by Susan Gubar as a sense of "lack" (306). In Romola, Eliot suggests that this feminine sense of lack can be attributed to masculine rhetoric, motivated by egoism and used by males to disguise their own "lack" of a moral center. In both novels, Eliot displaces gender stereotypes, suggesting their destructive disregard of natural and subsequent moral laws. In positing a female savior, who not only saves but finds salvation in the process of helping others, Eliot also implies a reciprocity of salvation, between female and male, assistance and fulfillment. This chapter examines the androgyny of male and female as each transcends gender stereotypes in response to natural and moral law and, in saving another, finds salvation. While Silas Marner is saved from destruction by an infant female, to whom he gives succor, Romola saves a race from destruction and, in the process, finds regeneration in a higher vision of life.

Inspired by her own emotional, intellectual and gender conflicts (Chapters 2, 3),
Eliot focuses on the shaping and subsequent suffering of the androgynous male in *Silas Marner*. In the first of her two pivotal novels, Eliot substitutes a culturally feminine male for a female as an object of male manipulation and exploitation, suggesting that female emotions and feminine traits encourage victimization. Eliot plays out her own intellectual conflicts with orthodox Christianity in contrasting the effects of dogmatic Christianity with a non-dogmatic, humanistic Christianity on Silas Marner's development and in dramatizing the human tendency to regard as divine intervention (i.e., divine reward, punishment, and deliverance) the natural consequences of human acts as well as the human tendency to trust chance when violating moral law. Eliot's conflict with gender stereotypes prompts her to trace the development of female emotions and feminine traits in Silas Marner and Godfrey Cass and to examine their differing methods of negotiating with male oppression, as each method implies a certain feminine ideology. In tracing Silas Marner's development, Eliot suggests a dialectic of emotional and religious conflicts and a synthesis in gender conflict, which leads to Silas' despair and need of a savior.

Working from her own emotional conflicts with male rejection and her belief that men learn female emotions through association with women and suffering (Chapter 2, 3), Eliot focuses on the shaping and subsequent suffering of a culturally androgynous male in *Silas Marner*. Eliot traces Silas' capacity for gentleness, sympathy, and affection to his childhood association with his mother and sister, whose influence molded his character to that of healer, domestic manager, and care-giver. His mother "imparted" her knowledge of "medicinal herbs" to young Silas "as a solemn bequest" (10,11), which became associated with "delight ...in wandering in fields in search of foxglove and dandelion and coltsfoot" (11). Though his delight in finding herbs and administering potions is quelled by religious fervor, as he submits to the authority of the Dissenting chapel of Lantern Yard, Silas resumes his work with medicinal herbs in Raveloe. Only when the town begin flocking to him as a "wise" man versed in occult powers does he turn them away.
refusing to exploit their ignorant superstition.

The influence of Silas' early association with his mother turns his interest to domes-
tic management as well. He forms a great attachment to his "brown earthenware pot,"
whose "form, ...impress of its handle on his palm," and assurance of "fresh clear water"
(22) give him delight. His sorrow when he breaks it, his keeping it as a "memorial," and
his lack of interest in replacing it suggest his association of domestic items with comfort
and pleasure. This same comfort and pleasure are suggested in his dependence on his
loom when he leaves Lantern Yard, his careful planning of his evening meals (i.e., his
slow-roasting method of cooking his meat to fit his evening schedule), and his devotion
to his gold, not as a means of acquiring goods but as a source of aesthetic and emotional
fulfillment.

His mother's influence, as well as his own experience as care-giver, allows Silas to
respond in gentleness and sympathy to the infant on the hearth. Silas' memory of carrying
his little sister "about in his arms for a year before she died, when he was a small boy
without shoes or stockings" (115), suggests Silas' early responsibility for his infant sister,
while his mother worked, and the affection and sympathy engendered in this respon-
sibility even in an atmosphere of poverty. Even in Silas' belief that his sister has come
back to him only in a dream, his emotional "fibres" stir for the first time in Raveloe, in
his feeling "old quiverings of tenderness" as well as "impressions of awe" that "some
Power presides over his life" (115). Here Eliot uses the Wordsworthian concept that
eyarly affections and sympathies link a child with humanity, nature, and divinity. (The
Prelude 2.232-244). When the child on the hearth cries, proving her reality, Silas'
immediate response in comforting the child, preparing food and feeding her, removing
her painful boots, and holding her as he searches for the mother suggest the power of his
early associations.

The events in Lantern Yard suggest that Silas' association with his mother and sister
(i.e., no males are mentioned in his childhood) has also engendered a sense of sincerity and trust that make him vulnerable to male authority. His early responsibility in caring for his sister is translated in Lantern Yard to his diligent work as a weaver (a trade probably learned from his mother) for a "wholesale dealer" and to his giving large amounts of his earnings to his church and to charity, since he at first values money only for its "purpose" (Eliot, SM 18). His early sense of the Divine apparently draws Silas to a Dissenting chapel, where he submits, in faith, to religious instruction.

Silas' trusting and sincere nature molds his appearance and behavior, which also link him with feminine ideologies and make him vulnerable to masculine domination. His "defenseless deer-like gaze," expressing "trusting simplicity," contrasts with William Dane's "narrow slanting eyes and compressed lips," expressing a "self-complacent suppression of inward triumph" (11). Deferring to Dane's presumption of superior wisdom, Silas expresses admiring awe at Dane's assurance of salvation, based on a dream of seeing the words "calling and election sure" in an open Bible (11), since Silas feels only "hope mingled with fear" (11). When Dane interposes himself in Silas' visits with Sarah, Silas feels unsuspecting delight. When Dane suggests that Silas' "fits" (i.e., cataleptic seizures) imply satanic visitations instead of "special dealings" with God (12), Silas feels painful self-doubt instead of angry indignation. When Dane frames Silas for the robbery of the church money, Silas simply trusts God instead of making a defense. Only after the lots declare Silas guilty does he bring forward his evidence of Dane's guilt and accuse both Dane and God of deceit and injustice, renouncing both. While Silas has performed the more culturally feminine skill of weaving cloth, he accuses Dane of the more aggressively masculine skill of weaving a plot to commit a sin and "lay it at [his] door" (15), i.e., of plotting a politically and economically motivated crime to secure his social position, recently marginalized by Silas.

Silas' suffering betrayal by his mentor, desertion by Sarah, rejection by the chapel,
and apparent injustice from God increases his capacity for gentleness and sympathy, giving him feminine vulnerability for exploitation in Raveloe as well. When his sympathy overcomes his diffidence and distrust, prompting him to administer his medicinal herbs to Sally Oates, he suffers further alienation when he angrily sends away those who would purchase his occult powers, since he detests the culturally masculine tendency to exploit ignorance. When Silas' feminine solitude, defenselessness, and weaving attract the curiosity and arrogant scorn of the village boys, who spy on him and mock the sound of his loom, his "gaze" frightens them away, since its "dreadful stare" (6) does not comport with his ostensible femininity. Several years later, Silas vulnerable isolation, gentleness and honesty make him vulnerable to Dane-like Dunstan Cass, who covets Silas' money as a means of recovering his respectability, lost in staking his brother's horse and muddying his shoes, and who presumes mastery over Silas.

Silas' reaction to the theft of his gold, similar though opposite to his reaction to betrayal by Dane, suggests a dialectic of emotional and religious conflict. While Silas had first suspected Dane, then accused God of injustice, he now suspects first a "cruel power" of devastating him a second time (44), then considers the possibility of a human robber in the hopes of retrieving his gold, since the idea of God precludes that possibility. He considers Jem Rodney as "the man" who has woven a plot to rob him, since Rodney has demonstrated the aggressively masculine behavior of jesting with him about his money, entering his house to light his pipe, and "lingering" about uninvited (45). Because of Silas' increased capacity for sympathy, however, he retracts his accusation at the Rainbow, recalling his own victimization by a false accuser.

Silas' being violated a second time by man and God alienates him even further from patriarchy, despite neighborly attempts to guide him. While his emotional violation in Lantern Yard turns him from belief in man and God to belief in materialism (i.e., work and gold), his emotional and material violation in Raveloe turns him from work and gold
to a mindless immobility, represented by his fits of catalepsy. Like Caterina Sarti and Janet Dempster, he needs a savior to rescue him from living death. Eppie will save him by regenerating his sense of affection and sympathy (i.e., the innate female emotions engendered by his mother's influence and responsive to natural and moral law).

Expressing her own antagonism toward dogmatic Christianity, Eliot turns from the intolerant Anglican church of St. Ogg's, in *The Mill on the Floss*, to the tolerant but lazy, affluent, and ignorant Anglican church of Raveloe, in *Silas Marner*, comparing its effect on Silas' development to that of the dogmatic, hard-working, and pious Dissenting chapel of Lantern Yard; the different effects suggest that the Raveloe church demonstrates a more religious (i.e., humane and tolerant) Christianity. Predisposed to his "exemplary life" and "ardent faith" from his early association with his mother and sister, Silas had apparently responded to the call for conversion, which had led to his submission to religious instruction and belief in divine intervention. Believing that the chapel expresses "Christianity and God's kingdom on earth," with its "white-washed walls," its sight of wide-spread hillsides," and its "little pews," where the minister delivers "unquestioned doctrine" (16,17), Silas transfers the trust and sense of affection and duty engendered at home to his church.

The progress of Silas' rise and fall in the Lantern Yard chapel dramatizes Eliot's belief that Christian dogma fosters superstition, arrogance and inhumanity (i.e., a belief apparent in her description of the Methodist minister in her article "Evangelical Teaching: Dr. Cumming" 160). As Silas subjects himself to church doctrine, he relies on prayers unassisted by herbs for healing, narrows his acts of charity to giving money, and replaces his wanderings in nature with the study of scripture and theological considerations. When he begins to experience his "fits," he is encouraged to believe in God's "special dealings" (12) with him instead of seeking a medical explanation. Only his veracity prevents him from proclaiming prophetic visions, like those of "election"
claimed by Dane in order to enhance his standing in the church community. Since social
importance depends on "election," "special dealings," and mastery of doctrine, Dane, who
already assumes doctrinal authority, finds Silas' notoriety and engagement to Sarah a
threat to his position. His transparently arranged evidence against Silas suggests his
exploitation of religious superstition and dogma in planning his crime. The superstition
of the congregation, in assuming the infallibility of the lots, and their unreligious (i.e.,
inhumane and intolerant) actions, in turning Silas away, effect Silas' loss of faith and less
than human existence. After his move to Raveloe, Silas proves the damage inflicted by
unreligious Christianity, in his evolving atavistically into a harmless, spider-like recluse,
devoted to "weaving and hoarding" (22). Since his link with "Unseen Love" has been
broken by his disillusionment with humanity, Silas lives a purely mechanical and
material existence, weaving "like a spider, from pure impulse, without reflection" (18),
responding only to physical hunger and thirst, and seeking no human companionship.

In spite of its superstitious avoidance of Silas, the parish of Raveloe expresses a
more religious (i.e., humane, tolerant) Christianity than the chapel of Lantern Yard.
When Dunstan Cass' theft drives Silas to the Rainbow (i.e., a public house), the members
of the Anglican parish, with their lazy piety and doctrinal simplicity, provide the benign
atmosphere necessary to nurture Silas before and after his regeneration by Eppie. In
contrast to the white-washed and religiously unctuous, hill-side Lantern Yard chapel, i.e.,
a new Jerusalem on earth, Raveloe is described as nestling in a "low, wooded region,"
where Silas feels "hidden even from the heavens by screening hills and hedgerows" (16).
Instead of self-denying and self-disciplined earnestness and piety, the Raveloe farmers
resemble their orchards, which look "lazy with neglected plenty" (17), and believe that a
too frequent attendance at church suggests a desire to impress God at their neighbor's
expense (18). When Silas reports the theft to the men at the Rainbow, their suspicion of
this reclusive man, related to his unknown origin, occupation, and "fits," quickly changes
to sympathy and interest. Their listening to him with belief begins the "circulations of sap" (i.e., human emotion) that will bring forth the "bud" of Silas' new faith in man and God (59). Instead of accusing Jem Rodney on circumstantial or supernatural evidence, they turn to the constable, not the minister, for instructions to begin a long investigation that, if nothing else, assures Rodney's innocence.

Raveloe theology, based more on feeling than on doctrine, proves inoffensive to Silas. Instead of condemning or alienating Silas for possible links with the devil, the Raveloe people try to befriend Silas and offer advice based on experience. Mr. Macey's telling Silas that he is better off without the money than to have kept it by "foul means" (80) suggests a country distrust of industry in linking it to devilry. Dolly Winthrop's visit with her son Aaron, her gift of lardcakes stamped with Christian symbols, and her recommendation of church attendance at Christmas as a means of comfort suggests her recognition of higher powers and subsequent moral duty as the source of good. Dolly manifests this sense of duty in her devotion to the needy, her offer to clean and cook for Silas, and her eventual offer to assist him with Eppie in an unobtrusive way, always deferring to his wishes and making suggestions for the good of the child. Her simple faith and sympathetic affection help to humanize Silas after Eppie regenerates his feelings of "love and divine faith" (89). Unlike the minister of Lantern Yard chapel, who limits his office to preaching doctrine and policing the spiritual condition of congregation, Mr. Crackenthorpe, Rector of Raveloe, maintains more of a social than a spiritual tie with his parishioners, joining the festivities of the aristocrats and leaving Silas alone. Raveloe parishioners see no reason why their rector should not be a "reasonably faulty man" (106).

Eliot uses the women of Raveloe, i.e., Dolly Winthrop and Nancy Lammeter, to influence Silas Marner and Godfrey Cass toward a belief in contentment based on moral duty, in response to a higher authority or natural law, and away from a belief in
capricious divine intervention or chance. Because Silas has been framed for a crime, despite his ardent faith in God, and violated by a thief, despite his diligent work and harmlessness, he believes in capricious and unjust divine intervention. By contrast, Godfrey Cass' conscious violation of his moral obligations and duties, without suffering immediate consequences, has encouraged his belief in "Chance,...the God of all men who follow their own devices instead of obeying a law they believe in" (70). Neglecting Nancy after years of courtship because he has allowed Dunstan to involve him with a lower-class barmaid, diverting his father's rents to silence Dunstan after feeling compelled to marry the pregnant woman, then keeping silent when he should claim his dead wife and abandoned child, Godfrey blinks at the "orderly sequence" of natural law (76). Only when he faces a childless marriage and a life of futility with Nancy does he consider divine retribution.

Dolly and Nancy, with their adherence to a moral imperative based on higher powers or higher law, guide Silas and Godfrey out of paranoid egoism (i.e., a belief in unmerited divine attention). Just as Dolly instructs Silas that his right to Eppie is contingent upon his being a "father to her" and that he should have "gone on trusten" in Lantern Yard, (148), suggesting that rewards or punishments eventually result from one's own actions, Nancy points out to Godfrey that his "wrong" in refusing to acknowledge Eppie as his child can probably "never be all made up for" (167) when he decides to claim her after sixteen years. Though Nancy had innocently refused to adopt the orphan child Eppie, in fear of contradicting Providence, her "unselfish clinging to the right," her "sincerity," and her "sense of responsibility for the effect of her conduct on others" (157), had cleared her "obstinacy" to Godfrey of any unjust motives (161). Because of her obstinacy, Silas has been delivered from the devastation inflicted on him by the Cass family, and Godfrey Cass has simply faced the consequences of refusing to acknowledge Eppie as his child. Nancy's innocent conjecture, that "perhaps if he had married a woman who'd have had
children, she'd have vexed him in other ways" (161), unwittingly points to the consequences of Godfrey's choices as his rewards and punishments. While Silas grows toward faith in divine law from the consequences of his own responsible actions and Dolly's guidance, Godfrey grows toward faith in natural law from the consequences of his own irresponsible actions and Nancy's guidance.

Most importantly, Eliot uses the events in the lives of Silas Marner and Godfrey Cass to suggest that gender stereotypes, with their undergirding feminine and masculine ideologies, make the androgynous Silas Marner and Godfrey Cass vulnerable to masculine manipulation and exploitation; in developing their characters, Eliot dismantles gender stereotypes to study the cultural response to androgynous males and their effectiveness in feminine roles. The differences in their outlook and sense of responsibility point to their parenting, which conditions Marner for the industrious role typical of the "perfect wife" but conditions Godfrey for the leisure role typical of the idle drawingroom lady. Though Silas suffers unjustly and Godfrey suffers because of his own irresponsible actions, both suffer from masculine exploitation. In their development, Eliot distinguishes between the influence of the innate female capacity for affection, sympathy, and gentleness, which responds to natural and moral law, and the influence of the feminine and masculine ideologies, which encourage ignorance of those laws.

Silas' early female associations, which engender female emotions and suit him for culturally feminine roles, also make him vulnerable to masculine exploitation, which drives him further into a culturally feminine life. Since Silas has spent his childhood in an atmosphere of sympathetic affection, gentleness, moral responsibility, and respect of nature, he has not learned to fulfill the masculine prescription of self-confidence, aggressiveness, and imperiousness. Subsequently, he, like Sarah, is defenseless against the imperious William Dane. Accused by his church, Silas has prepared no defense and can make no convincing argument against the patriarchal authority of the lots.
In Raveloe, his life follows the prescription of feminine ideologies for an outcast woman, like Hawthorne's Hester Prynne (a comparison noticed also by Edward Stokes, 165). Invited to no one's home, he also "invite[s] no comer to step across his doorsill, and he never stroll[s] into the village to drink a pint at the Rainbow, or to gossip at the wheelwright's" (Eliot, SM 98). He limits his human contact to his customers and to those who can supply his physical needs. Though he arouses suspicion with his weaving craft, a culturally feminine craft, since "weaving comes next to spinning" (135), he is tolerated by the "richer housewives" and the "more provident cottagers" who want his cloth (9), as Hester was tolerated by the New Englanders who coveted her needlework. When his masculine "gaze" frightens away young Dunstan Cass and other Raveloe boys, because it violates feminine and effeminate demeanor, his knowledge of herbs aligns him with the "wise woman at Tarley" and could provide him with a constant income but for his sympathy, which wants only to relieve suffering and refuses to exploit ignorance.

Like a married middle-class or outcast woman, cut off from the activity of her former life, or a married laboring-class woman, not only cut off from her former life but still responsible for earning wages while she keeps house (Stearns 112), Silas allows weaving, collecting coins, and domestic chores to occupy his thoughts until he has little connection with the male sphere of activity. His life's hardening and narrowing itself "into a mere pulsation of desire and satisfaction," unrelated to "any other being" (Eliot, SM 22), foreshadows the spiritual and emotional deprivation of life in industrial towns like the one that engulfs Lantern Yard. That Silas' body eventually molds itself into the "impression of a handle" of his loom, that his skin becomes "withered and yellow," and that his eyes, once "trusty and dreamy," become "protuberant" (6) from staring at the patterns in his cloth and coins, suggest the fate not only of laboring wives, confined to their houses and looms, but of the former inhabitants of Lantern Yard, confined to their factory.

The feminine defenselessness and harmlessness that encourage Dunstan Cass'
exploitation of Silas also encourage Eppie's trust. That Dunstan considers Silas' gold an easily procured resource fits the masculine stereotype of aggressiveness and physical and intellectual superiority. In fact, Dunstan never questions his ability to extort gold from the effeminate Silas, just as he never questions his ability to best the gentler Godfrey or to exploit Molly in his efforts to degrade Godfrey. That Silas' gentleness, honesty, and domestic economy (i.e., in leaving his door unlocked so as not to disturb his cooking device) actually makes his violation by Dunstan easy suggests the male advantage in propagating the feminine ideologies of passivity and domesticity. The very passivity and domesticity that allure the predatory Dunstan also draw the abandoned child. Silas trusting obedience of the half-serious suggestions to "sit up and hear the old year rung out and new year rung in" for good luck in retrieving his gold (114) allows him to stare hopefully, in a vulnerable "fit," from the doorway of his lighted cottage, which provides a haven for the abandoned child.

In Silas' care and parenting of Eppie, Eliot suggests the artificiality of gender stereotypes, which limit women to domestic roles and men to professional or non-domestic roles. While Molly allows the desire for opium and revenge to supersede her interest in her child's safety, Silas immediately administers affection and care to Eppie and refuses to relinquish her. While Godfrey, like Hetty Sorrel, wants to be rid of his burden, Silas wants to do whatever is good for her. Responding to natural law and moral law, Silas easily assumes the role of "father and mother" (144) to Eppie. Though Dolly Winthrop instructs Silas in bathing and dressing the child, he holds and dresses the child himself and can "take to it quite easy" (127). Silas even agrees to follow Dolly's suggestions of christening and catechizing the child and taking her to church, in spite of his betrayal, since he wants "to do everything as can be done for the child" (129).

Silas' parenting, which follows natural and moral law, evokes the reward of Eppie's self-giving love and sense of duty. When his attempts at punishment fail, like those of
Hester Prynne with Pearl, Silas instructs her "without punishment, frowns, or denials," patiently and vicariously bearing "the burden of her misdeeds" and making a "soft nest for her" (135). This "tender and peculiar love" is called a"perfect love," as Silas' constant companionship and watchful instruction of Eppie, like that of his little sister, precludes the necessity of punishment. Since Silas lives in relative isolation from "village talk and habits," including gender stereotypes, Eppie develops a "touch of refinement and fervor"(149). At eighteen, Eppie's refinement distinguishes her in appearance and talk from the other village girls, while her fervor expresses itself in her love of her animals and her desire of a garden, her careful huswifery(modeled by Silas), her desire to marry Aaron only if they care for Silas, and her fearless rejection of Godfrey and Nancy's offer to change her station in life. Proving the natural law of consequence true, Eppie passionately explains of Silas, in reaction to Nancy's admonition that she show duty to her natural father, "he's took care of me and loved me from the first, and I'll cleave to him as long as he lives, and nobody shall ever come between him and me" (175). Though Eppie's name, "Hephzibah," means "gift of God," suggesting God's reward for Silas' constancy in moral duty, her loyalty to Silas also suggests the natural consequence of Silas' devotion to her.

While Godfrey's early association with his mother engendered female sympathy and affection, his growing up without discipline in natural law and moral responsibility has made him incompetent in fulfilling a culturally masculine role and vulnerable to masculine exploitation. While Godfrey's mother effected a gentleness and sympathy in Godfrey, evident in his being a "fine, open-faced [i.e., honest], good-natured young man" (26), Squire Cass has failed to discipline his sons in natural law and moral responsibility in indulging them and keeping them "at home in idleness" (25), an idleness that Godfrey resents. Since Godfrey longs to do what is right but lacks the moral fiber to carry out his intentions, his father labels him a "shilly-shallow fellow" without a will of his own, like
"poor mother" (74). Despite Godfrey's ostensible masculinity, i.e., "big muscular frame and animal courage" (27), his lack of self-discipline makes him a victim of his own impulses (i.e., his sexual involvement with Molly resulting in a secret marriage); and his "natural irresolution and moral cowardice" prevent him from correcting his mistakes (i.e., owning his dead wife and child before marrying Nancy). Like the idle drawingroom lady, falling victim to a rake (described in Eliot's article "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" 202-203), Godfrey proves vulnerable to Dunstan Cass' and Molly Farren's manipulations. He discovers too late that his ignorance of natural and moral law has brought the large-natured Nancy a life of disappointment and has precluded his chance of being a father to Eppie.

In Mr. Lammeter and Silas Marner, Eliot displaces gender stereotypes of femininity, since both men effectively fulfill the role of mother and father to their children. The sense of duty and loyal affection evident in Nancy and Priscilla Lammeter and in Eppie in caring for their aging fathers and their homes indicates that Mr. Lammeter and Silas have modeled natural and moral law and self-sacrificing love. That Dunstan lacks a sense of moral duty and loyal affection proves Squire Cass's modeling of self-indulging idleness (71) and his relying on aristocratic blood (70) and inherent masculine superiority to assure his sons' fulfilling the cultural ideal of masculinity. That Godfrey had longed for discipline to control his weakness (74), had wanted to manage his father's estate, values domesticity, and has at least provided for Eppie out of "duty" suggests a foundation laid early by his mother's influence but contradicted by his father's influence.

In the lives of Godfrey and Silas, Eliot not only attributes emotional and religious conflicts to gender stereotypes but suggests that emotional and religious conflicts are synthesized in gender conflicts. Because Godfrey's and Silas' culturally feminine emotions have made them vulnerable to masculine exploitation, both recede from the world of men and look to other than the Christian God for help. After suffering abuse from his
father and blackmail from Dunstan, Godfrey at first trusts Chance, then domesticity; i.e.,
he "[sees] himself with all his happiness centered [not on his estate but] on his own
hearth" (138), as he looks forward to redemption by Nancy and regaining the "fountain of
wholesome love and fear in parlour and kitchen" (25) that he lost when his mother died.
After Silas suffers his second violation, he not only renounces patriarchy but is reduced
to a living death, in which even his gold and weaving give him no pleasure.

In using a child to redeem Silas' life, Eliot develops an idea that she began in
"Janet's Repentance"; i.e., Janet's very helplessness, which evokes Tryan's response as
savior, gives him a new life of hope as well. In Silas Marvel, Eppie saves Silas from
destruction through her very helplessness and infant curiosity, reawakening the affections
and sympathy he knew as a child and turning him from self-centered pity to self-
sacrificing love. The narrator specifies Eppie's role as savior in explaining that while
angels no longer lead men away "from the city of destruction," as they did in "old days,"
still "men are led away from threatening destruction" and that the hand that leads them
"may be a little child's" (136-37). Here Eliot suggests that divinity is human response to
suffering in self-giving love. Eppie saves Silas not only from a mindless immobility but
from the destructive influence of the gold. Eppie, as savior, differs from the gold in
making "endless claims" on Silas' attention instead of demanding worship in "solitude";
she "force[s] his thoughts onward" instead of keeping them "in an ever-repeated circle";
and she "reawaken[s] his senses" instead of deadening them with ever-increasing work
(130). The loving dependence of the infant female reunites Silas with the community of
men, who now regard Silas as an "exceptional person" (144); with nature, as Silas again
begins looking for herbs in his walks with Eppie; and with the Divine, as Silas now feels
that an "error," not God, had thrown "that dark shadow over ...his best years" (145). As in
"Janet's Repentance," salvation becomes reciprocal; i.e., Silas' response to Eppie's need
rescues him from "misery," and Eppie's rescue of Silas from self-destruction saves her

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Together, Silas and Eppie defy gender stereotypes through adherence to natural law and to self-sacrificing love. In responding to Eppie's need, Silas feels the awakened affection, sympathy, and moral obligation to raise her; and in mothering her, Silas sows the seeds of his own redemption. Since Eppie is reared in "perfect love," she expresses her opinions fearlessly but gracefully when Godfrey and Nancy come to claim her; she also refuses a life of wealth and ease to marry Aaron and care for her father, finding pleasure in her work. In Romola, Eliot further exposes the myths of the feminine and masculine ideologies and develops the idea of a female savior and the reciprocity of salvation.

In Romola, Eliot considers the possibility of feminism as a solution to political, religious, and familial instability in the patriarchal society of fifteenth-century Florence. Eliot considers the female capacity for attaining masculine knowledge and experience and performing the culturally masculine roles of leader, savior, and head of household. Using Romola to dramatize her own emotional conflicts over exceptional men, she demonstrates Romola's conflicts over her father's deprecation of her abilities despite her devoted assistance to him, her conflict over her husband's distance and deceit despite her affectionate commitment to him, and her conflict over her priest's apparent hypocrisy despite her belief in him. As emotional conflict operates in a dialectic with religious conflict, Romola's struggle with each man's egoism moves her from belief to belief, i.e., from scholarship to sensual pleasure to belief in Catholicism, which incorporates both intellect and senses, until, like Silas Marner, Romola comes to empty despair, in need of a savior. Romola's emotional and religious conflicts become synthesized in a gender conflict, when she disguises herself in a nun's habit to flee both man and God. Her symbolic death and new life as the savior of a race of suffering people baptizes her to a higher level of consciousness, so that in redeeming others she finds redemption.
movement from self-love to duty based on self-sacrificing love, Romola transcends gender stereotypes to become the androgynous savior/mother capable of stabilizing a patriarchal culture.

Romola first experiences emotional pain over the injustice meted out by her egotistical father, to whom she devotes herself. Though she serves as her father's assistant in scholarship and accepts his belief in pagan humanism, she must endure his bemoaning the loss of his son, with whom he had planned to compile his masterpiece and secure his immortality. When he deprecates her "feminine mind" for its "vagrant propensity," Romola reminds him that she reads for him, finds passages for him, and makes notes for him (97). When he recalls her fainting in the "search for references," she attributes her condition to the "weight of the books," not a lack of interest (97). When he rejoins that he needs the "sharp edge of a young [male] mind," to "pierce the way for [his]...blunted faculties" (98), she suffers the pain of gender conflict. Romola suffers a sense of "lack," "negation," or "absence" in a phallocentric culture, that predicates the capacity for authorship on the capacity for fatherhood (Gubar 305,306) and that assumes that without a penis a woman cannot effectively wield a pen or quill. Having never given Romola the education needed to write a scholarly work, the physically blind Bardo is spiritually blind to Romola's innate ability.

Eliot displaces cultural stereotypes in Bardo's children and son-in-law to demonstrate Bardo's spiritual blindness. Just as his son Dino fits the feminine stereotype of inconstancy in scholarship because of sensual longings and fanatical dreams, his son-in-law Tito will fit the same feminine stereotype in his narcissism and his attraction to pleasure and ease. Only Romola, with her "wide-glancing intelligence" and "ready apprehension" proves capable of the work that Bardo wants, though she has been denied the necessary training, a model for Dorothea Brooke. In her anguish that she can fill only the "lower category" of humanity as a "sweet daughter," though with a "man's nobility of
soul" (100), Romola demonstrates the nobility lacking in her father, brother, and future husband in declaring her intention to "study diligently" so as to become "as useful to [her father] as a boy" so that a "great scholar" will marry her without a dowry and become Bardo's son and remove his disappointment in having a daughter (100). Romola would offer herself as a sacrifice for her father, since she finds no place in his phallocentric world. Ironically, when he reminds her of his refusal to make his translations public in order to protect his scholarship, she applauds his "contempt of injustice and meanness" (102), though she is pierced repeatedly by that injustice and meanness.

When the young scholar Tito is introduced to Bardo and Romola, Bardo fits the cultural stereotype of masculinity not only in assuming that Tito is superior to Romola in intellect and constancy in scholarship but in blindly conceding to Romola's desire for self-sacrifice. When Bardo complains of Romola's neglect of the "minutia" necessary for accuracy (110), Tito takes advantage of Bardo's physical and spiritual blindness by smiling at Romola in "comradship" (111), thereby piercing his way into her affection, and by agreeing to write Bardo's book, gaining Bardo's allegiance. When Bardo deprecates Romola's gender as craving "repose and variety and so [begetting] a wandering imagination" (116), he unwittingly describes not only his lost son Dino, who could not control his sensual desires except in the priesthood, but Tito himself, who needs constant change and amusement and does whatever delights him or comes most easily to him. Like Oedipus, for whom he serves as a model in Cosimo's painting, Bardo belies his spiritual blindness to Romola's intellectual capacity and scholarly constancy, in lauding the males who supposedly compensate for her "lack."

Romola, whose constancy and superior ability prove unwavering after her marriage and even after Bardo's death, attempts to compensate for Tito and Dino's "lack." When Tito disappoints Bardo as a son-in-law, in finding excuses to absent himself instead of piercing the way for Bardo and writing Bardo's book, Romola fulfills Bardo's scholarly
demands until his death. After his death, she remains constant to his request that his library be preserved. By contrast, Tito violates his obligation to Bardo, as had Dino, in arranging to separate and sell Bardo's artifacts and books as his easiest source of money, in the possibility that his double life and treachery (i.e., his "lack" of moral substance) be exposed.

Romola determines to fulfill the expectations that Bardo had conceived for a son or a son-in-law, supplying their moral "lack." She decides to leave Tito and Florence in order to acquire an education from "the most learned woman in the world,...support herself ...[and] write something to rescue her father's name from oblivion" (394). Her intention proves not only her distrust of men but her emotional conflict between the pain of injustice inflicted by the male perception of women and the desire to enter the phallocentric world through writing. Romola transcends the gender stereotype of femininity in her response to natural and moral law. While Gubar suggests that Eliot prevents her heroines from writing, in the conviction that "female creativity has been perverted" into "enthrallment to male authority" (97), the novel suggests Romola's deflection from her plan by the sense of a higher calling, i.e., duty to natural and moral law as a Florentine.

Romola's emotional conflict over her father, between her painful sense of unjust censure and her desire to please him, finds temporary alleviation in love of Tito and belief in the religion of sensuality, which she embraces as offering the "secret of...life" (398), denied in her father's dedication to humanistic scholarship and her brother's fanatical spirituality. To Romola, Tito represents the god Bacchus or Dionysus, as she could not have been more astonished if he had "worn a panther-skin and carried a thyrsus [i.e., cone-shaped rod]" (105). Representing sensual delight, Tito seems like a "wreath of spring dropped suddenly in Romola's young but wintry life" (105) of books, broken relics, and "grey-headed men" (105). Not only does Tito remind her of the "youthful and beautiful" masculine face of her brother, who had long ago taken her on his knees and
kissed her (105), a mirror image of Silas with his infant sister, but his presence seems to promise a non-threatening compensation for her culturally inflicted sense of "lack," with his "absence of [masculine] demand and assumption" ((106). Instead of an imperious "air" and "glance," he approaches her like a "fleet, soft-coated, dark-eyed animal that delights...by not bounding away in indifference" (106). With new delight in her sense of camaraderie with Tito, Romola projects her own sympathy for Bardo on Tito's willingness to work with Bardo, not realizing that Tito acquiesces good-naturedly because of Romola's attention and the prospect of social promotion. She does not recognize his "lack" of moral substance.

Reacting against the pain of her father's censure and his devotion to "lifeless objects" of the past, Romola finds temporary fulfillment in Tito and his sensual beauty and love. On the day of her betrothal to Tito, she delights to his gift of a "tabernacle" of sensual beauty, a triptych on which Piero Cosimo has painted "Bacchus...seated in a ship," his thyrsus in his hand and "fair-haired Ariadne" at his side (244), in Tito's perversion of Ovid. When Tito instructs her to place Dino's crucifix inside, she half-heartedly believes that she hides her sadness over Dino's prophetic vision in a "tomb of joy" (259). Through suffering, she will recognize that a tomb of deceit hides the true secret of life, i.e., self-sacrificing love.

Over a two-year period of marriage to Tito, Romola's emotional conflict continues and, to her distress, only increases after her father's death, as Tito's rejection brings self-doubt and disillusion with his sensual beauty. While her father lives, she suffers from his disappointment, as well as her own, over Tito's frequent absence, and labors to fulfill her father's demands for scholarship. Though Tito excuses himself with "charming gaiety" and "found playfulness," she feels betrayed in his unwillingness to "sacrifice...pleasures of society" to fulfill his promise to her and her father, as she would have done for him, and recognizes the difference in their natures (309) in his "lack" of duty.
Anticipating a more perfect union after her father's death, she experiences only greater distance, for which she is conditioned to blame herself, believing that she is "too sad" or "too critical" (313). She has yet to learn that she evokes Tito's "repulsion" of her by her very mind and nobility, which he perceives as a threat to his duplicity.

Using her culturally masculine mind to pierce this repulsion, Romola begins to suspect a cause external to herself, a moral deficiency in Tito. She links his wearing of protective armor to fear of an escaped prisoner (Baldassarre), whom she sees clutching a terrified Tito in Cosimo's painting. Admitting a "terrible flaw in her trust" (324), Romola dares not question Tito for fear of confirming her suspicions that he has betrayed this man in his "lack" of a moral conscience.

Romola's "rising contempt" for her new god Tito (353), and his religion of self-serving pleasure, accelerates with his separating and selling her father's library and leads to her use of a rhetorical weapon to pierce his soft deceitful beauty and probe his moral nature. To his "fluid talk" (353) of seeing no point in fulfilling the trust of a dead man, Romola asks whether "faithfulness," gratitude, promise-keeping, and honoring a "just life" are good, or if hardening one's heart against "the hopes of those who depend on us" is good, whether good "can belong to men who...talk cleverly and find soft couches for themselves" (354). Her rhetorical questions accurately reveal Tito's moral "lack," i.e., his forsaking his adoptive father, selling the gems that were to redeem his father from slavery to purchase a soft life, labeling his father "some madman," virtually marrying a young cantadina on the day of his betrothal to Romola (in case she discovers his duplicity with Baldassarre and rejects him), abandoning his father-in-law, selling the Bardo library for his own security, and, as triple agent, betraying the confidence of the three political factions in Florence, i.e., the Medici, supported by Bernardo del Nero; the Popular Party, supported by Savonarola; and the Evil Companions, supported by Doflo Spini.

With her rhetorical weapon, i.e., a culturally masculine perceptiveness and skillful
use of words, Romola temporarily masters Tito, prevented from defeating him only by his superior strength and her sense of duty. Though she calls him a "treacherous man" (355) and a "faithless man" (357), when he admits having sold Bardo's library, she is prevented from overtaking the purchasers only by Tito's "masculine predominance" (356), which she despises. When she accuses him of robbing "somebody else...not dead" as a reason for his armor (357), she cows Tito with the truth of his betrayal of Baldassarre. Her agreement not to put him in an "odious light" if he will repay her godfather, Bernardo, for his investment in preserving Bardo's library suggests Romola's discovery that her sharp-edged mind at least gives her masculine bargaining power.

Disillusioned with Tito's deceit and egoism and guilty of not fulfilling her father's request, Romola renounces Tito's religion of pleasure as a lie and decides to pursue an independent life of scholarship and writing, as a nobler life than that of wife to a man who lacks a moral center. Seeing "happiness" as a "hateful, smiling, soft-handed thing with a narrow selfish heart" (387), she reveals her disgust with her sensuous god Bacchus, who was to save her from her father's dead world and unjust censure and her brother's suffering world of terrifying prophecies. Repulsed by Tito's "lack" and deceptive softness, qualities culturally ascribed to femininity, Romola snatches Tito's ring off her finger, feeling "no obligation" to him, now that love and reverence are impossible (392). Her donning a nun's habit and taking her brother's crucifix for disguise suggests her recognition of suffering as the secret of life, even in her parodying of the nun's life. She now regards the tabernacle of Bacchus and Ariadne as "pitiably" mocking, a "lying screen" of sensual delight that, without the crucifix, holds nothing at its center. As she turns her back on Florence, she feels "free and alone" (401) in her independent life as a scholar intent on writing a work to preserve her father's memory. Though she must acquire her knowledge from a woman, since male scholars have proven untrustworthy, she will participate in the male world as a scholarly writer.
While Romola's emotional conflict between devoted love of her father and pain over his rejection had led her from a pursuit of scholarship to a pursuit of pleasure, her conflict between love of Tito and pain over his deceit has led her back to scholarship but on a higher level, as an independent woman and writer, until she is deflected from her course by Fra Girolamo Savonarola. Her new god, Savonarola incorporates the gods of father and husband in that of priest (i.e., spiritual father and husband) and the religions of pagan scholarship and sensuality in the religion of Catholic Christianity, proving the dialectic of emotional and religious conflict. When Savonarola commands Romola to return to "her place," she yields to his command, since it is not he but "truth" that commands her, and because his "gaze" expresses not masculine imperiousness but a "bond" of "human fellowship" (429). Using neither the command of a father nor the sensuous appeal of a lover, he appeals to her pagan reason, in reminding her that she breaks her "duty" as a pledged wife and a born Florentine, i.e., the "duty of integrity" (430) that she found lacking in Tito.

Using the metaphors of Christianity, Savonarola, introduces her to the idea of natural law and subsequent moral duty. He tells her of a "higher law" than her own will and a "higher love" than a "carnal one" (436), with his instruction that "Good" comes from the "Invisible Throne" and is obtained in "obedience" (432). Still using sensuous (not sensual) Christian metaphor, he points to the crucifix of her disguise as an "image of Supreme Offering made by Supreme Love" for the great need of man (432). Since the suffering of Florence is great, she must lighten that load, not escape it for "selfish will" (436). Like Rev. Tryan with Janet Dempster, Savonarola turns Romola from self-centered egoism, if directed to memorializing her father, to self-giving duty, incorporating intellect and flesh.

After Romola submits to the painful and dreary life that she wanted to escape, she sees the road as one of "hot lava," a metaphor that Eliot uses seven years later in her
dramatic poem Armgart. In Armgart, the heroine refers to the medicine which cures her illness but ruins her singing career as "lava-mud." Like Romola, who wants a writing career, Armgart wants a singing career; and like Romola, Armgart renounces marriage for that career. While the lava of duty blocks Romola's road to a writing career, the lava of a male cure blocks Armgart's voice. Like Romola, who is accused by Savonarola of holding herself above the "common blood" (433), Armgart is accused by her lame cousin of holding herself above ordinary people, when she considers suicide because she can no longer sing. Like Romola, Armgart decides to devote her life to serving others, not as a sister of mercy but as a teacher, Romola's eventual role. The "hot lava" suggests not only the smothering of Romola's writing voice but the pain of enforced submission to principle.

Yielding to the religion of duty and suffering based on principle, Romola transcends the gender stereotypes of the leisured aristocratic wife to become Florence's "Madonna Romola" (452), a role in which, by responding to natural and moral law, she develops a greater capacity for sympathy, gains knowledge of the different political factions, and out-wits Tito to prevent treachery. Her confession to Fra Salvestro, which for Eliot suggests submission to a higher law, strengthens her bond to duty, a bond incrementally weakened in Tito, since he has refused to acknowledge a higher law and has avoided each chance of confession until his "moral youthfulness" has departed, leaving him with a "self-conscious adoption of a part in life" (279). Wearing a simple "black serge" gown and drapery, no longer as disguise but as identity with the sisters of mercy and the common people and as a symbol of her transition from wife to savior, Romola tends the sick and relieves the hungry (446), as Florence suffers from plague, famine, and threat of attack from the "League" of Italian States, which the Florentines (under the Medici) have refused to join. When she stops to help a released prisoner (Baldassarre, the father of Tito), whom she recognizes as the man in the painting with her terrified husband, she

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prefers "ignorance of [Tito's] wrongdoing" since she "must not...warn against him" (462) as his pledged wife. Though Gilbert and Gubar propose Baldassarre as Romola's "double," taking the revenge that Romola wants (495), it is rather Romola's intention to protect Tito's name, as well as Tito's own pernicious acts, that results in his death.

As Romola makes the fellowship of suffering and the relief of suffering her new religion, her work becomes the "one unshaken resting-place of her mind," and Savonarola's ideals become the "rope" to keep her from falling into despair (Eliot, Romola (463). Her attempted submission to Tito, which increases his fears of detection in treachery, only widens the gulf between them. Her sympathy with Savonarola's desire to end the abuses of "the Church and ...States" and her attempt to satisfy her moral needs in the Church, since neither scholarship nor sensuality has satisfied her, only conflicts with her revulsion over the narrow-minded superstition and "stale repetitions" (463) of the believers. While she upholds Savonarola's ideals and listens to his sermons, she wonders why he does not "publicly denounce...pretended revelations," that cast a shadow over "Supreme Will" (526), and begins to doubt his integrity.

Since Romola's attempt to save her father's library and her involvement with the common people have given her knowledge of the male sphere of political intrigue, she begins to act politically to prevent the destruction of Savonarola, supporter of the Popular party, and Bernardo del Nero, supporter of the Medicians. Becoming more politically knowledgeable, Romola detects "impressions as subtle as odours" (477) that Tito is working for Dolfo Spini's Evil Companions ("Compagnacci") to betray Savonarola, while he pretends to work for Savonarola and the Popular Party. Her suspicions confirmed, when she hears the drunken Spini allude to a plot to kidnap Savonarola and deliver him to Pope Borgia in Rome, Romola threatens to denounce Tito publicly if harm comes to Savonarola. Her threat, which virtually forces Tito to warn Savonarola of the plot and endangers Tito's career of treachery, temporarily saves Savonarola from betrayal.
and inspires Tito's fear and hatred.

Romola's androgynous nobility, which inspires either love or an admiring "dread" (95) and which had at first appealed to Tito's highest ideals of love and ambition, now inspires his fear lest she discover the extent of his duplicity and ruin him. Romola's androgynous nobility of character is evident in her tall womanly frame, "queenly step," father's "refinement of brow and nostril counterbalanced by a full though firm mouth and powerful chin" (94), lack of feminine self-consciousness, and "boyish frankness of look and smile" (145), which, with her reddish-gold hair, recalls Dinah Morris. Though years of sympathetic devotion to her father had "transfigured" her "pride," "passion," and "intelligence" to "lovable womanliness" (95), her suspicion and contempt of Tito's treachery have transfigured her pride, passion and intelligence into culturally masculine political and rhetorical weapons that Tito feels he must master.

Dreading her perceptiveness, nobility, and imperviousness to threats, Tito uses his only remaining weapon to cow her: exploitation of her feminine insecurity in political and rhetorical strategy, in which his years of triple dealing have given him an advantage. He begins on the offensive, blaming the change between them on her luck of trust. When she counters by blaming his "deception," beginning with the old man (Baldassarre) and the armor, he accuses her of cooling his passion with "impetuosity about trifles" (493), then trivializes Baldassarre as an embittered former servant, who was dismissed for thievery and wants revenge. Attributing his armor to a possible assassination attempt, he accuses Romola of trying to hasten his death by inviting a suspected enemy (Baldassarre) to the house. He then "arrests her intellect" by describing politics as a web of "hopeless complexity," in which individual affairs defy "any moral judgments" (495) and warns that her attempts to save people from danger may result in their destruction. Lacking moral force, Tito uses words, not only as a weapon to frighten and control Romola but as a web to imprison her. When her godfather, Barnardo del Nero, is arrested with other
supporters of the fallen Medici, Romola realizes that Tito has betrayed them, since he is not among those arrested, though claiming to work for the Medici.

While Romola's limited political experience has allowed her to save Savonarola temporarily from betrayal and arrest, her public work as a sister of mercy allows her to discover and assist Tito's other wife and to learn the truth about Baldassarre. When Romola sees a band of "beardless inquisitors" accosting the gentle Tessa, demanding that she throw her silver necklace and beltclasp (given to her by her husband Naldo, or Tito) on the bonfire of Vanities, erected in a "sacred parody of the old" Carnival (499), she rescues Tessa and admonishes the youths for misinterpreting Savonarola's ideals. When she stops to aid Baldassarre again and listens to his account of Tito's treachery as an adopted and educated son, as well as his treachery as her husband in having another wife and family, she struggles between fear for Tito's safety and fear for Baldassarre's safety. Though she assures Baldassarre that she will assist him in ways other than violence, she never finds him again. Her helping a lost child find his home brings her to Tessa, who helplessly awaits the return of her husband, Naldo, i.e., Tito. When Romola perceives that Tito has never legally married Tessa, she fears for this family's survival and gives Tessa a lock of her hair, like a knight-errant, in promising to return and help her.

Romola's culturally masculine involvement in political events and city life still have not equipped her to duel rhetorically with Tito, who begins on the defensive but soon gains mastery through pretended hyperbole. When she accosts Tito with the betrayal of Baldassarre and the "perpetual lie" of their marriage (568), he makes her assumptions seem like madness. He commends her for her "wifely position" of claiming that a madman is her rational husband's betrayed father and that her husband has worked for and betrayed, to each other, the Mediceans and the Signoria (568). Exploiting her sense of feminine inferiority he attributes her grievance to his failure to fulfill her "lofty indefinite" ideals and accuses her of using him to support her life of charity as a
Piagnoni. Feeling an inability to match Tito in wielding a rhetorical sword, Romola turns to Savonarola's higher vision to save her godfather Bernardo, whom Tito has betrayed.

Romola's unsuccessful confrontation with Savonarola, her spiritual father and husband, like her unsuccessful confrontations with her father and Tito, leads her to disillusion and despair. When Savonarola refuses to urge an appeal for Bernardo, explaining that Bernardo had attempted to reinstate a "tyrant" in working for the Mediceans, he equates the cause of his party to "the cause of God's kingdom" (578), and refuses to uphold the law of appeal that he had helped to pass. Like Tito, when he cannot refute Romola's arguments, Savonarola suggests that Romola does not understand the complexity of the matter, exploiting her feminine sense of self-doubt. Savonarola's refusal to urge Bernardo's appeal destroys Romola's remaining faith in patriarchal ideals. Her emotional and religious conflict, having moved her from her father's scholarship to Tito's Epicurianism to Savonarola's duty to the Church becomes synthesized in a repulsion not only of gender stereotypes but of patriarchal beliefs.

While Romola's education has deprived her of the masculine egoism necessary for rhetorical dueling, her natural intelligence has pierced the egoistical masculine rhetoric that conceals a moral "absence"; her subsequent loss of faith in "Invisible Goodness" (588) results in her escape from the patriarchal world, in which she feels powerless to effect good. With nothing to call her back this time, Romola lies down in her small purchased boat, hoping to sleep on the waves and "pass from sleep into death" (588). Unlike Maggie Tulliver, who believes she can escape a life of stifling duty for a life of love, Romola sees no possibility of love in a world controlled by male egoism and rhetoric, which conceals an absence of moral conviction. In despair, Romola turns to "destiny" (a female concept of divinity, which Eliot seems to be using as an allusion to natural law) to take her to death or "new necessities that might rouse [in her] a new life" (587). She turns to destiny since she feels "orphaned" by God in "those wide
spaces of sea and sky" and reads "no message of love for her in that far off symbolic writing of the heavens" (590). Like Silas, she has ceased to believe in man, man's concept of God, patriarchal symbols, and patriarchal rhetoric, whether spoken or written.

The different fates of Tito and Romola on the Arno River suggest Eliot's adherence to Bray's philosophy of necessity and Comte's positivism (Chapter 2). Unlike Tito, who has violated natural law (i.e., the law of necessity, of irrevocable consequence) and subsequent moral law (i.e., the law of duty and moral obligation based on natural law) and whose actions, therefore, move him toward death inflicted by the man whom he has betrayed, Romola has respected natural and moral law and meets no Nemesis on the river. Since Tito has abandoned and impoverished Baldassarre, who now sits by the river waiting for bread to come to him as it did once before, and because Tito has been forced to jump into the river to escape the Compagnacci, who have detected his treachery to their party as well as to the others, Tito swims to death from the embittered Baldassarre, with whom his rhetoric has had no effect. Since Romola has wronged no one, she has no one to fear when she floats down the river to arrive at an unknown place.

Romola's sleep suggests a ceremonial death or baptism as well as divine visitation, resulting in a higher level of consciousness. While the narrator alludes to Romola's boat as "the gently lulling cradle of a new life" (641), Romola's sleep suggests a death preceding her rebirth as a child of divine love and natural law. Her sleep also suggests a Leda-like encounter with Divine Goodness, in which she becomes mother/ savior to a race. Responding to a child's cry, she discovers her new life and her new androgynous role.

Transcending gender stereotypes of feminine dependency, passivity, and delicacy, i.e., stereotypes which are displaced to the priest and his companion, who have withdrawn in fear from the dying Jews, Romola responds to natural and moral law, motivated no longer by mere duty but by an "impulse" of love (650), and restores life, faith, and organization to the island. Responding first to the physical needs of the living, she
carries and feeds a child and gives water to a woman suffering from the plague. Responding next to the need of order and faith, she commands the priest and the youth Jacopo to help her save the living and bury the dead. After several months on the island, Romola has restored the people to cultivation of land and domestic management and has restored the church to administering the sacraments. Leaving behind the legend of a "blessed lady" who came from "over the sea" to rescue a people put ashore by greedy sailors and abandoned by frightened islanders, Romola has proven her capacity as savior and leader. She has also demonstrated a new consciousness of duty, motivated not simply by principle but by self-denying love, i.e., a union of natural law and divine love.

While Leavis criticizes Romola’s abandoning herself to the sea to choose her lot for her as Eliot’s weakness in abandoning intellect for emotion (49), the event demonstrates Eliot’s use of an image to represent an idea, i.e., her art of romantic realism. Romola’s disillusion with patriarchy, its symbols, its rhetoric, its idea of God, leaves her, like Silas, in a death-like state. Her sense of duty and self-sacrificing love are awakened from death only in response to another’s need. Her response to need becomes her baptism to a new life; i.e., in saving others, she finds salvation. Eliot uses a number of other images or even paintings to represent her ideas; for example, Cosimo’s painting of terror links Tito to the prisoner as the adoptive father whom he has betrayed and whose vengeance he fears; Cosimo’s painting of Oedipus and Antigone suggests Bardo’s blindness to Romola’s ability as well as his own moral deficiency or lack; Cosimo’s triptych of Bacchus and Ariadne suggests Tito’s corruption of texts and words to suit his own need; the triptych with the Dino’s cross removed suggests the spiritual emptiness or "lack" of Tito; and the vision of Dino as well as the masqued procession of "Winged Time" foreshadows the spiritual wasteland brought about not only by Tito but by the patriarchal institutions of the family, the Church, and the State, as evidenced on the island that Romola rehabilitates.

Romola’s saving a people from death, i.e., a reciprocal salvation in that in saving
others, she finds her own salvation, has baptised her to a new consciousness, a vision higher than that of self-serving scholarship, sensuality, and pious duty, which conceal their moral lack in clever rhetoric. Recognizing the egoism in her former complaints about discontentment and in her desire to die, and recognizing the complicating of "simpler human relations" in marriage ties, political alliances, and "religious discipleship," Romola decides that in a world "where everything else is doubtful" (650), since rhetoric conceals an absence of moral substance, she can at least alleviate suffering as she has done here. Unlike Savonarola, whose egoism blinds him to his own moral duplicity, Romola perceives that the sorrow, not the glory, of the cross is the "truer" (650).

Responding to a sense of natural and moral law, but motivated by self-sacrificing love instead of mere principle, Romola returns to Florence to relieve the possible suffering of Savonarola, Tito, and Tito's abandoned family.

In returning to Florence, Romola transcends gender stereotypes of femininity, i.e., dependency, passivity, delicacy, and even charity, to model the roles culturally associated with masculinity (i.e., roles of savior, head-of-household, and father) but abandoned through egoism and lack of moral substance. When she learns of Savonarola's denial of his prophetic gift under torture, of his subsequent retraction of the denial, and of his retraction of the retraction under torture orchestrated by the all-powerful Dolfo Spini, she pardons Savonarola, reasoning that he dies a true martyr by virtue of his own self-doubt and admission of egoism in laboring for God's glory and the "moral welfare of men" (664). In her adopting of Tito's abandoned wife and children, after taking only enough of Tito's estate to support her adopted family, she acts as savior, husband, or head-of-household, and father. As Lillo's patron and tutor, she gives him the classical education of his father (Tito).

As mentor to Lillo, Romola attempts to awaken in him a higher consciousness of life than that of self-serving pleasure. She tells him of the lives of Bardo, Savonarola,
and Tito (unknown to Lillo except as "Naldo"), not simply to use the "matriarchal
tradition of story-telling" as a "defiance" against a patriarchal tradition of writing, as
suggested by Gubar (306), but as a way of illustrating the life of a wise man, encountered
by Lillo in Petrarch's canzone. As Lillo longs for a life of ease and pleasure, Romola
counsels him in what she has learned, i.e., that the "highest happiness" comes through
"wide thoughts and much feeling for the rest of the world as well as ourselves" (Eliot, R
675). Contrasting Bardo's "integrity" and Savonarola's efforts at "moral reform" to Tito's
self-serving life of pleasure, she warns of the latter's tragic fall to "calamity" (675). That
she saves the completion of this story for "another time" (675) suggests a decision to
postpone the revelation of Tito as Lillo's father until Lillo is more mature. Her explan­
ation that she honors the much-hated Savonarola because he helped her in her "greatest
need" (676) suggests that even though his noble intentions were clouded by egoism,
Savonarola had taught contentment through self-sacrificing devotion to duty, awakening
Romola to natural and moral law. Only her baptismal of saving the deserted race had
widened her consciousness to self-denying love, over principle, as a motive for duty.
This consciousness suggests that for Eliot, influenced by Feuerbach, divinity is simply
humanity's response to need in self-sacrificing love, not a supernatural being represented
in Christian doctrine or the Church.

Romola's ability to pierce male rhetoric (i.e., Bardo's scholarship, Tito's sensual and
political words, and Savonarola's sermons) to discover the lack of moral substance, her
subsequent flight from patriarchy, her baptism to a new life of duty motivated by self-
sacrificing love, and her return to Florence to assume the duties abdicated by father,
husband, and priest suggest Eliot's consideration of feminism as a reaction to the deceit
engendered by masculine egoism and as a means of stabilizing society. Eliot demon­
strates the moral absence in masculine written rhetoric in Bardo's great book, being
written really to preserve his name; in Tito's code, betraying Savonarola's message to

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France, and in Savonarola's different retractions. She demonstrates moral absence in masculine oral rhetoric in Bardo's deprecation of Romola, in Tito's rhetorical maneuvers, and in Savonarola's defense of his political position. By contrast, Eliot demonstrates the moral substance (i.e., the recognition of natural and moral law) in Romola's parting letters to Tito and Bernardo del Nero, which explain her reason for leaving Florence; in her confrontations with her father, her husband, and her priest; and in her dealings with her adopted family.

Although Eliot uses Romola and Eppie as saviors, she demonstrates the idea of the reciprocity of salvation, based in adherence to natural and moral law. While Eppie's need awakens Silas' self-sacrificing love to save her, his love for Eppie redeems her life from destruction. Similarly, while the needs of the Jews awaken Romola's self-sacrificing love, her love for the people redeems her life from destructive self-pity. Even in a feminist novel, the heroine demonstrates a deference to universal law and moral law, motivated by self-denying love, as the substance needed by both male and female.

Eliot demonstrates that the sense of "lack" engendered by the feminine ideology and propagated by males is a rhetorical device used by a patriarchy to conceal a lack of moral integrity. While Silas has developed a moral center through the influence of his mother and sister and the needs of Eppie, Romola demonstrates an innate capacity for moral duty and deference to a higher law than that of her own pleasure. The addition of male knowledge and experience gives her the wisdom necessary to lead a people as well as a family and demonstrates Eliot's belief in women's access to male knowledge as a means of their development into competent partners and mothers ("Women in France" 81). That Eliot moves beyond feminism in *Felix Holt*, only after exposing the myths of masculinity and femininity in *Silas Marner* and *Romola*, suggests her belief in a higher human ideal: a whole of male and female.
CHAPTER 7

BEYOND FEMINISM

From the culturally androgynous heroine in Romola, who discovers a lack of moral substance behind male rhetoric and subsequently transcends gender stereotypes of femininity to fill the roles abdicated by males, Eliot moves beyond feminism in Felix Holt, Middlemarch, and Daniel Deronda to express her ideal of humanity. Eliot posits a whole of female and male, in which each finds completion in the other and evokes the excellencies of the other for mutual growth. While Jennifer Uglow, quoting from Eliot's "Woman in France," posits Eliot's ideal simply as a "partnership" that allows woman to be a "friend, confidant and counselor of men" (73), Eliot's works go further, propelling two admittedly incomplete individuals (i.e., Esther and Felix, Dorothea and Will, Mirah and Daniel) beyond the limiting ideologies of femininity and masculinity and uniting them into one person, as they counsel, redeem, and complete each other in recognition of natural and moral laws. Though Linda Hunt limits Eliot's subversiveness to the depiction of a non-conforming good woman (138), Eliot forces both heroine and hero to a paradigm shift, i.e., from adherence to gender ideologies, in which actions are motivated by egoism, to adherence to moral duty motivated by an impulse of love. Contrary to Gilbert and Gubar's angel-of-destruction myth, which proposes that Eliot uses acts of vengeance against her rebellious heroines (479) and their oppressors (490) to resolve the contradictions of her life, i.e., a "fallen" woman writing of virtuous women and an "intellectual writing of life (479), Eliot simply traces the workings of natural, moral, 241
and institutional law, by which characters face the inexorable consequences of their actions (Meyers 17-23). As Himmelfarb points out, Eliot saw herself not as a fallen woman but as a devoted wife, who upheld morality as a bulwark against social chaos (16-21). Her involvement with her family, friends and art (Chapters 2-3) suggests that she was more than an "intellectual." Eliot did dramatize and resolve, in her art, the emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts evoked by the ideologies of her culture, as a guide.

In Felix Holt, Eliot traces the development of a higher consciousness in Esther Lyon, evoked by the influence of Felix Holt's critique of gender ideologies, with their deceitful rhetoric and destructive effects. Felix Holt's honesty and sense of moral responsibility, attributes lacking in Tito Melema and clouded by ambition in Bardo de' Bardi and Fra Girolamo Savonarola, awaken Esther to the superiority of her father's ideals over her own as well as the superiority of Felix' vision of life over that of Harold Transome. While Felix' critical counsel saves Esther from a vacuous life of bitter disillusionment, in awakening her to a higher law and duty than that of pleasing herself, Esther saves Felix from a life sentence of hard labor, not only as a criminal but as a reformer untempered by humility and love, proving Eliot's ideal of a reciprocity of salvation and human divinity.

After the intervening Middlemarch, which posits the ideal of humanity as a whole of androgynous male and female, Daniel Deronda suggests the messianic power of the androgynous whole as a substitute for supernatural divinity.

In Daniel Deronda, Eliot traces the development of a higher consciousness in Gwendolen Harleth and a messianic consciousness in Daniel Deronda. Unlike Esther Lyon, Gwendolen Harleth lacks the guidance of a wise parent and ignores the advice of her potential mentor to resist the feminine ideology of self-serving vanity. In taking the fatal step with Mallinger Grandcourt that Esther resists with Harold Transome (i.e., marriage), Gwendolen faces the consequences in destructive despair. Though Daniel
Deronda rescues her from this despair, Gwendolen lacks the capacity (of Esther Lyon or Dorothea Brooke) to complete and inspire the androgynous Daniel. Instead, the tiny but wide-visioned Mirah completes, with Daniel, the human Christ, necessary to galvanize the Jewish nation and reform society. This chapter traces Eliot's completion of the human ideal, which transcends the artificial limits of masculine and feminine ideals, to resolve her own emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts.

Eliot dramatizes her emotional conflict (i.e., between attraction to exceptional males and fear of being rejected, Chapter 2), in Esther Lyon's conflict over Felix Holt and Harold Transome. Felix Holt offends Esther's pride with his criticism. In pointing out the empty vanity, trivial comments, pretentious literature, and cultivated tastes of a "fine lady" (Eliot, Felix Holt 149), he penetrates the feminine stereotype to expose the absence of moral substance in the upper-class feminine ideology. By contrast, Harold Transome appeals to Esther's pride through his gallantry. In offering her his admiration and protection, he presumes her vanity and weakness as a female and confirms what Gubar describes as a culturally inherited sense of physical and intellectual "lack" (306). While he propagates that sense of lack through gallantry, he conceals it through the rhetoric of a supplicant. Since he considers marriage as a means of achieving his own ends, i.e., keeping Transome Court from its rightful heir, he, in a sense, seeks her mercy in the rhetoric of friendship, then love. He ends this deception only when he discovers the disgrace of his birth and his lack of aristocratic blood.

Eliot dramatizes her conflict with orthodox Christianity in the intellectual struggles of Rufus Lyon and Felix Holt. Though Rufus at thirty-six had pastored a large Independent (Dissenting) congregation, he had been forced to resign over the question of the moral and spiritual propriety in his keeping a destitute young French woman and her child instead of sending them back to France or releasing them to a member of his congregation. Motivated by love over doctrine or propriety, Rufus had kept the woman
and child, resigned his pastorate and earned their living as a "printer's reader" (170), until the woman (Annette) agreed to marry him. Though Rufus had returned to the ministry, he had again been forced to resign because of a change in doctrinal beliefs; i.e., he had extended the "limits of salvation" to "unconscious recipients of mercy" (174) to include the doctrinally ignorant and deceased Annette. Though Rufus had accepted a "call" from the congregation in Malthouse Yard, Treby Magna, his love of his "unregenerate" adopted daughter, Esther, forces him to remain lax on the "doctrine...of salvation" (174). Unlike his congregation at Malthouse Yard, or that of Lantern Yard, Rufus evinces a spirit of humility and uncertainty regarding knowledge of God's grace and election, a spirit lacking in most evangelical preachers, according to Eliot's scathing essay, "Evangelical Teaching: Dr. Cumming" (160).

Rufus Lyon manifests a religious, as opposed to an unreligious, adherence to Christianity (Haight, GEL 2.347), not only in his tolerance and humaneness but in his moral and intellectual integrity, compared to his congregation and the clergy of the Anglican church. Since Rufus spends his time meditating on "great texts" (Eliot, FH 132), arguing with Satan "on matters of vital experience as well as church government" (131-132), and preaching to the cottagers and colliers in Sproxton, in addition to holding his own services, he takes no notice of the "small acts and petty impulses" of those who scorn his small legs, large head, reprehensible clothes, distracted manner, and theological talk (131-32). Despite his Calvinistic views, his tireless schedule, and his congregation's criticism, he allows Esther to enjoy her worldly possessions and tastes while he prays for a work of grace in her life; he sympathizes with the radical views of Felix Holt, in whom he sees a love of truth and "disguised workings of grace" (137); he uses his pulpit to preach political as well as religious freedom (142); and he shows tolerant compassion in counseling his more ignorant members, i.e., Felix' mother. When his sense of Christian responsibility prompts his offer to debate Rector Augustus Debarry on "the constitution
of the true Church" (260), he experiences surprise and frustration, not only when the cowardly and theologically ignorant rector declines but when his substitute, the curate, flees town to avoid the confrontation. In his tolerance of different views, his political and intellectual fervor, and his humility in interpreting and applying doctrine, Rufus Lyon represents Eliot's ideal of a religious clergyman and fits his name.

Though Eliot recognized in Rufus Lyon the positive social force of sincere and ardent religious faith (Haight, GE 331), she was more closely aligned with Felix Holt's humanistic faith. Felix uses the term "conversion" to describe his turning from self-serving debauchery and materialism to self-renouncing duty in order to improve the world (Eliot, FH 142-43), a belief that reveals Eliot's reading of Bray, Hennel, Comte, and Feuerbach (Chapter 2). Eliot demonstrates the sincerity of Felix' belief in his denouncing his father's trade in quack medicines, in his rejecting a middle-class profession for the life of an artisan (watch-repairer) and teacher of laborers' children, in his preaching moral reform at the Sproxton ale-house, in his defying the corrupt political practices of Johnson at Sproxton, in his warning Harold Transome of the potential dangers in bribing the non-voting colliers with drink, in his attempting to divert the mob at the risk of his own safety and reputation, in his relying on his own testimony in court over the manipulative rhetoric of lawyers, and in his renouncing marriage lest it injure both partners and deflect his dedication to relieve the world's ignorance (419). Eliot suggests Felix Holt's sense of incompleteness in his near inability to leave Esther on election day, in his unpremeditated cry of "Esther!" as she leaves the prison, and in his acknowledged need of her in order to be a better person (603). The reader recognizes his need of Esther to balance his factual testimony and appeal to logical reason with her character testimony and appeal to moral reason.

Eliot's conflict with the ideology of femininity, which she suggests as both the cause and eventual synthesis of emotional and religious conflicts, is dramatized in the life of
Mrs. Transome, Harold Transome, and Lawyer Jermyn and in the development of Esther Lyon. Because Mrs. Transome had been taught to adhere to a feminine ideology of the "fine lady" (149), an ideology among the upper classes which encourages vanity, good taste, and propriety over moral responsibility motivated by awareness of a higher law, her education had been limited to writing "a good letter," expressing herself "with propriety on general subjects," taking pride in her appearance, sitting "well on horseback," singing and playing "a little," painting "small figures in water-colours," and delighting with a "naughty sparkle in her eyes when she made a daring quotation" (105). After marrying the "hatchet-faced" Transome to deliver her family from poverty, she had believed in the passion and homage of Mr. Jermyn over duty to her husband (515), had carried on an affair with her husband's knowledge (521), had tyrannized and despised her husband, and had found herself being exploited by the man to whom she had "stooped" (518). Since she needed "to have her hand kissed and be the object of chivalry," she had resolved never to tell Jermyn "what she saw him to be" (201), believing that their affair, resulting in the child Harold, must allow him to rob her estate with impunity. Now, like a gray-haired Eve, bearing the reproach of a resentful Adam, Mrs. Transome must listen while Jermyn twists events to make her culpable for his actions and insists that he sacrificed his career for her (585). She must also bear trivialization and rejection by her son, Harold, who demeans "women's attempts to transact business" (193), takes away her power of decision-making as having ruined the estate, and treats her with "contempt and neglect" (201).

Mrs. Transome's emotional conflict turns to intellectual conflict when she admits her belief that "God was cruel when he made women" (488). She fears that even if Esther wins Harold's love and proposal through her "fine spirit," she will lose his love in using her will (488), just as she has lost Jermyn's and Harold's love. She feels no hope for spirited women. Though Gilbert and Gubar believe her prophecy for Esther (496-97),
they fail to consider the differing circumstances and motivations of the two women. Since Esther learns a higher ideal than self-serving materialism, vanity, and tyranny, she will avoid the violations of natural and moral law that bring the consequence of "joyless, embittered age" (Eliot, FH 585).

Mrs. Transome's emotional and intellectual conflicts are synthesized in a gender conflict when she refuses to disclose Harold's parentage in order to save Jermyn from ruin. Realizing that Jermyn has used rhetoric to conceal a lack of moral substance, she counters, "One must be a man--first to tell a woman that her love has made her your debtor, and then ask her to pay you by breaking the last poor threads between her and her son" (519). Seeing the moral lack hidden by male rhetoric, she warns Esther, "men are selfish...and cruel. What they care for is their own pleasure and their own pride" (597). Despising her own gender and hating men, she fails to see what Felix Holt has revealed to Esther; i.e., the ideologies undergirding gender stereotypes appeal to pride instead of encouraging duty and self-denying love through knowledge of higher law.

Mr. Jermyn and Harold Transome fulfill the prescriptions of the masculine ideology, which, as Eliot suggests, includes a belief in male superiority and a use of rhetoric to propagate and exploit femininity insecurity. Though Jermyn dislikes "rascality," he has done things "in law and in life" (i.e., pursued Mrs. Transome while engaged to a virtuous woman, arranged for the arrest of Christian Bycliffe to keep Transome Court in the Transome family, and used his affair with Mrs. Transome to obtain wealth from her estate) which, in the abstract, he would have "condemned," in order to gain "concrete things" (205). Presuming Mrs. Transome's sense of feminine inferiority as well as his capacity to exploit that sense with masculine rhetoric, Jermyn had made her feel the blame for the illegitimate child and the criminal proceedings against Bycliffe in order to keep her silent while he mismanaged her estate. When she refuses to protect him from Harold's lawsuit in Chancery, now that she recognizes his original dishonesty and
"calculation" in exploiting her, he breaks her trust to save himself. He tells Harold, who recognizes him as a scoundrel, "I am your father" (581), in the presence of the magistrates and other country gentlemen at White Hart. Having ruined the reputations of Mrs. Transome and his own son to save his wealth, he leaves town.

Harold too had assumed his belief in the masculine and feminine ideologies (i.e., his capacity to control women through his physical presence, his intellectual superiority, and his rhetorical skill) in his assuming control of the Transome estate, in his wooing Esther to keep Transome Court, and in his assuming that Esther would love him rather than the poorly dressed, lower-classed, honest Felix Holt. As a young man, Harold had followed the masculine prescription of becoming a financial success to deliver the family from its genteel poverty. He had chosen a career as a means of gaining "advantages in life" (99). In becoming a "merchant and banker," through the "luck" of saving a man's life and the use of his "practical mind" (99), Harold had ceased to care about his home and his mother until he learned that his older brother's death had made him heir to the estate. At his return he intimidates his mother with his "rapidity, decision, and indifference" to anyone that does not "further his own purposes" (101), using his language as a weapon. His learned masculine aggressiveness and manipulation is evident in his intention not only to stand as a radical but to use, then "get rid of," Jermyn in the process (114).

Harold's treatment of his mother suggests his belief in separate spheres for men and women as well as his belief in the idle drawing-room lady, i.e., Eliot's "doll-Madonna in her shrine," a "useless absorbent of precious things" and an "idol" whom men are "not obliged to admit...to be strictly fellow-beings, to be treated...with justice and sober reverence" (Eliot, "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" 205). When his mother reproaches him for abandoning his class in standing as a radical, he deems her gender, saying "it does not signify what [women] think—they are not called upon to judge or to act" (117). He assigns her to the domestic sphere in saying, "[you] must really leave me
to take my own course in these matters, which properly belong to men" (117), and in relegateing her to decorating the house as she wishes and enjoying her new carriage. Taking control, he informs his mother that "she had better cease all interference" (193). Barred from the dignity of responsibility and consigned to material pleasure, Mrs. Transome not only feels "as unnecessary as a chimney ornament" (204) but wishes Harold "had never been born" (204). Her discontent is surpassed only by the fear that he will discover his true heritage.

As to young women of his class, Harold assumes masculine superiority, calculated to propagate and exploit the ideology of feminine dependence, vanity, and delicacy. He appeals to their vanity with "gallantry," regards them as "slight things" to be enjoyed "in the intervals of business," and keeps them "within such bonds that they should never interfere with the course of his serious ambition" (266). He has had no intention of marrying in England, since "Western women" in their "transition from the feebly animal to the thinking being" are "troublesome" and "not to his taste" (454). Harold prefers a "slow-witted, large-eyed woman, silent and affectionate, with a load of black hair weighing much more heavily than her brains" (455), the kind of woman he had "bought" in Smyrna (541). After learning that Esther Lyon is the heir of Transome Court, he assumes his ability to "win her good-will...with frank gentlemanliness" (455), calculating that she "may fall deeply in love with [him]" so that he may be "obliged to marry her" (459). When Esther's independent spirit challenges his egoism, he desires her as a "conquest, in which it would be disappointing to fail" (525). Though Harold presumes success in winning and governing Esther, her "dangerously quick and critical mind" (491) disturbs him, since any "sign of a dangerous judgment" should be absent in a "perfectly charming woman" (525). Priding himself on a "power" of understanding women and assuming that women's passions are easily beguiled by gallantry, Harold interprets Esther's feelings for Felix Holt as hero-worship, not love.
Only when Harold faces the truth, i.e., that a "yolk of...resistless destiny [has been] laid upon him by the acts of others as well as [his] own" (538), does he decide to act responsibly. His harsh introduction to natural law, i.e., the irrevocable consequences of his illegitimacy and his parentage in making him less than a "gentleman," compels him, for once, to maintain the "conduct" of a gentleman (582). Resolving to replace rhetoric with moral substance, he confesses to Esther the discovery of his sullied "name and fame" and his decision not to induce her to accept a name "stained by...obloquy" (588). His pride in his superiority shaken, he realizes that to remain a gentleman he must conduct himself as one, i.e., adhere to natural and moral law instead of deceitful rhetoric.

Eliot dramatizes her conflict with gender ideologies especially in her development of Esther Lyon, who, because of Felix Holt's influence, rejects the vacuous and embittered life of Mrs. Transome; in her religious and moral awakening, Esther transcends gender stereotypes to recognize not only the sense of "lack" propagated in feminine ideologies but also the moral lack in men who exploit women for self-serving ends. Though Esther, like Eppie, has been raised in perfect love by her gentle and self-denying adoptive father, his deference to Annette's higher rank had led him to send Esther to a French school, where she, unlike Eppie, had been influenced by the upper-class feminine ideology. Her position of governess among people of rank, who had actually deprecated her father's life and ministry, had taught her to value "good taste" over "right opinions" (209) and to envision a "Utopia" (473) in which she would be the object of masculine homage and gallantry. Because Esther now regards herself as superior to Treby society and is allowed to hold a queenly position in her father's home, she is resented (and Rufus Lyon is criticized) for her "airs and graces" and her worldly "notions" (157). These notions include her "little code of...scents and colours, textures and behaviors" (159).

Though Rufus Lyon has demonstrated admiring love and deference to his adopted child, praying tearfully for her regeneration and accepting the blame for her "spiritual
deficiencies" (160), Esther appreciates neither his convictions nor his sacrificial toil.
Though she feels "affection" for her father and recognizes his purity and "quickness of intellect," her cultivated feminine tastes take offense at the impression he makes on others with his "dreary" piety, shabby clothing, and tendency to "pour forth" his opinions on "church government" and eminent divines when greeted on the street (161). Oblivious to her adoption and Rufus' sacrifices to keep her and her mother, as well as his adjustment of doctrines to include them in God's grace, Esther considers only his reflection on her position and tastes.

Esther's spiritual and moral awakening, or regeneration, begins when Felix Holt, her potential savior, visits Rufus Lyon to explain the reasons for his refusal to sell his father's medicine, i.e., his conversion from debauchery to a life of honest labor and teaching. Felix' detestation of vanity and moral irresponsibility and his penchant for brutal honesty target Esther's pretentious literary idols and her shibboleths. His calling Byron a "misanthropic debauche," whose heroes are "paltry puppets... pulled by the strings of lust and pride" (151), suggests Eliot's disapproval of the "mystique of sexual promiscuity and perversity implicit in so much Romantic literature" (Gilbert and Gubar, 451), literature that Esther reads instead of attending her father's chapel. Felix suggests Byron's pretentiousness and narcissism when he refers to Byron and Child-Harold as "gentlemen of unspeakable woes, who employ a hairdresser and look seriously at themselves in the glass" (153). Felix awakens her to the idea of a moral, not intellectual or physical, lack in women who subscribe to the feminine ideology; i.e., he calls Esther's "fine lady" a "squirrel-headed thing, with small airs and small notions, about as applicable to the business of life as a pair of tweezers to the clearing of a forest" (153), a creature whose failing is her unnatural self-absorption and intellectual irresponsibility.

On a subsequent visit Felix exposes the superficiality, i.e., the lack of moral substance, disguised by the masculine and feminine ideal of "good taste" (209). He explains
that one who has "good taste" but lacks "right opinions" is a "pettier sort of being" (209) because of a limited vision. He rejects Esther's feminine self-depreciation as a false "boast of littleness" and explains the wickedness in an intelligent woman's hindering a man from living a noble life with her devotion to littleness (209), a sentiment expressed in Eliot's "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" (205). He attributes his decision not to marry to a fear of toiling for "petty things" instead of following noble intentions (Eliot, FH 212), following Eliot's warning to men who encourage dependence and ignorance in women (Eliot, "MF&MW" 205). While Rufus Lyon recognizes in Felix Holt a love for honesty and truth, despite his doctrinal nonaffiliation, Esther feels that he has exposed her moral deficiency and dismisses Felix as "coarse and crude" (Eliot, FH 151).

In spite of Esther's wounded pride over Felix' deprecation of her ideals and her vexation over his apparent obliviousness to her charm and wit, she senses a superiority in his mind and manner that awakens her moral consciousness. While he attributes his reasons for not attending her father's chapel and reading her father's religious texts to an adherence to principle, he attributes her reasons to "idle fancy" and "selfish inclination" (210), again suggesting her intellectual irresponsibility and moral deficiency.

Felix' suggestion that Esther either be ruled by her father's thoughts or "show her power of choosing something better" (210) reveals Eliot's criticism of the woman's movement (Eliot, GEL 5.58) as well as her defense of choosing rationalism over her father's orthodoxy. Felix challenges Esther "to change" her ideology, from a discontentment with her inability "to get the small things that suit [her] pleasure" to a discontentment with the wrongs and moral pollution that cause misery (Eliot, FH 211). Though Esther suffers from indignation, she begins to consider life from a wider perspective, i.e., as a "solemn thing...in which she [may] be either a blessing or a curse to many" (211).

While Harold Transome will use masculine rhetoric to make Esther feel important, perfect, and dependent on his intellectual power for protection (499), Felix uses honest
criticism to make her feel "trivial, narrow, and selfish" in her misuse of her intellectual powers (214), shaking her faith in the feminine ideology. Considering for the first time that her father's life may be "worthier than her own" (214), Esther begins to show her father un wonted kindness, confessing her lack of appreciation and goodness toward him. This confession begins a "new epoch" with her father, since, according to the narrator, "the beginning of compunction is the beginning of a new life" (246), i.e., submission to moral duty evokes a sense of "harmony" with nature (Eliot, GEL, 1.143). Their new closeness allows Rufus to confess the truth about Esther's real parentage and prepares her for her inheritance of Transome Court. Esther's awakened consciousness to higher laws will allow her to compare the moral substance and motivations of Felix Holt and Harold Transome and to imagine the kind of life that she could expect with each.

Esther will begin to see Felix Holt as the narrator depicts him on nomination day and election day, i.e., in the role of a human savior, one who challenges ideologies instead of exploiting them. During Felix' speech on nomination day, his roughly cut face resembles "the human face divine" (Eliot, FH, 398) as he fearlessly makes accusations of political corruption and unethical practices, as did Jesus of Nazareth. Instead of inspiring a violent revolt among the non-working laborers by giving them false hope in the passing of the Reform Bill, he challenges them with the need to understand the moral character of men before concerning themselves with the "vote" (400). On election day, he shows his concern for Esther's possible fears, visiting to reassure her during the tumult (i.e., the mob action he had anticipated from Johnson's bribing the colliers with beer), despite his determination to break with her and carry out his mission or "knighthood" (419). When a violent mob seizes Mr. Spratt and runs toward Treby Manor, Felix acts as mob leader to save Spratt and the Debarrys, knowing his actions will be misinterpreted. He even refuses any defense but his own testimony and the testimony of Transome.

During Esther's difficult association with Felix, which forces her to examine and
articulate her ideals instead of relying on charming repartee, she loses the false "sense of superiority" (264) granted to women in courtship and, paradoxically, gains independence in recognizing her need of adopting his wider vision. Esther begins to censure her own clever, self-deprecating remarks with Transome, despite the pleasure of receiving Transome's easy admiration and gallantry, since the repartee would suggest her intellectual inferiority and need of male protection. She also takes an interest, like Romola, in the election, to correct her deficiency in political awareness. She begins to realize that with Felix Holt, her life would be "exalted into...a sort of difficult blessedness" (327), i.e., a term by which Carlyle distinguishes a life of duty from a pursuit of pleasure (192), since she would be "growing into higher powers" of awareness and purpose (Eliot, FH 327).

In a new recognition of life's seriousness after learning of her real parentage, Rufus' self-renunciation to support her and her mother, and her inheritance of Transome Court, Esther is won to a higher sense of purpose than that of seeking a Utopia of pleasure and admirers. When Felix reveals his intention to "withdraw...from the push and scramble for money and position," his intention to involve himself with the "labor and common burthen of the world" (362), his "hope to make life better for a few within ...reach (367) through teaching, and his desire for Esther's acquiring a "vision" that develops her "best self" (366), she imagines choosing his difficult life as the "better lot" (367).

Esther's new sense of natural law (of consequence) and moral responsibility allows her to perceive the lack of moral substance concealed in Mrs. Transome's social rhetoric and in Harold Transome's courtship rhetoric, on her subsequent stay at Transome Court. She perceives that life at Transome Court does not fit her Utopian dreams, as ease gives way to dullness. She quickly discerns the boredom of a life in which a woman can discuss only "blood and family," society gossip, or past conquests based on beauty and dress and can gain only the brief attentions of a man who neither respects nor understands the
woman he indulges for his own advantage (493-94). She also perceives Harold's concern
for trivialities (i.e., "sauces, gravies, and wine" 528), his evaluating everything according
to "his own pleasure and...advantage" (529), and his good-natured lack of sympathy,
understanding, or respect for those he indulges. His rhetorical power is evident in
Esther's forgetting her impressions of his "padded yoke" when he assures her of her
power over him (538).

Since Esther has begun to view Felix, now in prison, as a savior, as an "influence
over her life rather than a part of it" (468), and as one too strong to evoke her pity, she
internalizes his criticisms to serve as checks and illuminations in making judgments.
When she considers marriage to Harold Transome, she sees it as leaving the "high
mountain air...of perfect love" and "adjusting to a life of middling delights," in which she
must "compromise with things repugnant to the moral taste" (547). She now under­
stands Felix' interpretation of failure, not as losing his court trial but as relinquishing his
hold on his "best" purpose (556). In Felix' "great Gothic head" (evidence of Eliot's belief
in phrenology) and "large grey eyes" (suggesting the wisdom of Athena), looking
"carefully and undefiantly" at the court, Esther recognizes the "outward stamp of a
distinguished person" (561), which diminishes the people of rank by comparison, despite
their cravats, coats, and waistcoats.

That Esther has been regenerated from an irresponsibly and a powerless self-­
centered life is proven in three decisions, each of which suggests her capacity to tran­
scend gender stereotypes of femininity through a sense of moral duty. Motivated by an
impulse of love and duty to testify in Felix' behalf, she proceeds without blushes of
"vanity or shyness" (572), without the "fear of appearing ridiculous" (573), and without
Harold Transome's permission, to the witness box, where she explains Felix' actions and
thoughts before the riot, to convey his integrity. Though Harold Transome, Felix Holt,
and Rufus Lyon feel admiring surprise that this seeming "toy or ornament" (573) can
speak so powerfully, her efforts result in a reduction of the murder charge and execution to a manslaughter charge with four years' imprisonment, then inspire the Debarrys and other persons of rank, including Transome, to secure his pardon.

Esther's subsequent decisions, i.e., to reject Transome's marriage proposal as well as her right to the Transome estate, involve renunciation of wealth and ease for duty and work. Urged by her vision of Mrs. Transome's tragic life, with its "weary waste of years empty of...trust and affection" (597), Esther turns from a self-serving life of Utopian delusion to a self-giving life of "devout love" and "reverence" for natural law and moral duty. In so doing, she transcends the feminine stereotype of the "fine lady," with its moral lack and its sense of intellectual lack, to use all her powers.

Esther's response to a higher ideal carries far-reaching consequences. In her regeneration from feminine delusion, Esther delivers Felix from duty motivated by principle to duty motivated by love, a distinction which Feuerbach makes between the form of religion and the essence of religion (247). Forming a whole from mutual need of completion, both intend to work more effectively for the good of the common people, preparing the way for political reform in teaching moral reform. Felix, like Esther, is "forced to be a much better [person] than he ever thought of being" (Eliot, FH 603) or could have been alone; Esther never regrets her life as does Mrs. Transome; and Rufus Lyon, like Silas Marner, remains secure in the new family. Since their mutual belief in each other effects a reciprocity of moral growth, Eliot suggests that faith creates a divinity while submission to a higher law and subsequent moral responsibility effects a harmony that yields the fruit of a productive life. Transcending the gender stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, both are delivered from egoism that destroys moral substance and conceals its lack behind manipulative rhetoric and good taste. Together, they form a whole person, capable of moral reform.

While Felix Holt exposes the morally vacuous life concealed in gender ideologies,
Daniel Deronda exposes the destructiveness encouraged by gender ideologies and resolves, in Eliot's human ideal, the emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts propagated by these ideologies. While Esther Lyon and Felix Holt form a whole, capable of generating moral reform through their adherence to natural and moral law, motivated by self-giving love, and while Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislaw form a whole of two androgynous individuals capable of generating political reform, Mirah Lapidoth and Daniel Deronda form an androgynous whole to represent the human Christ, a composite of mother and son, daughter and father, sister and brother, wife and husband, realist and visionary, with shared feminine and masculine traits and ideals, capable of galvanizing the Jewish nation for society's reform.

In her final novel, Eliot uses the metaphor of theater, i.e., professional and amateur acting, rhetoric and poses, to convey the ideal of performance encouraged in gender ideologies, one that conceals egoism, greed, and moral corruption or "lack." Eliot suggests that fulfillment lies in transcending performances through a higher consciousness of life. While Esther Lyon reaches a higher consciousness to elude Transome's manipulation in his rhetoric of gallantry, Gwendolen Harleth falls victim to the rhetoric and play of Grandcourt, with his appeal to the feminine ideology, and must subsequently adopt roles and lines to conceal her moral guilt and emptiness. Mirah's ability to perceive and reject false roles, through her acquaintance with the theater and literature, allows her to resolve her own emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts, representing Eliot herself.

Eliot resolves her emotional conflict (i.e., between her attachment to men, beginning with her brother, and her fear of rejection, Chapter 2) in Mirah Lapidoth. Mirah's intellectual, artistic, and moral self-discipline allows her to penetrate false rhetoric, perceive the moral corruption concealed beneath, and pursue a higher life, which eventually results in her reunion with her brother and marriage with Daniel, the two unions most coveted by Eliot. Though her father had whisked her away from her home
and exploited her musical and acting talent abroad, Mirah had submitted to rigorous musical training. At the same time, her study of literature, philosophy, and languages as well as her secret pursuit of Jewish history and religion, scorned by her father, had awakened her to life's higher laws and purposes. Her heightened perception had recognized her father's acting, in his promising to take her home and in his relaying her mother's and brother's death. Detecting the dishonesty of applause, the moral corruption of the theater, the seductive rhetoric of her father's male friends, and her father's intention to sell her to the "Count," Mirah had escaped from her father to avoid moral wickedness. When she finds herself destitute in London, with no trace of her mother and brother, she turns to death as access to the "Eternal," as had many of her suffering nation in order to escape apostasy (Eliot, DD 563). Able to distinguish Daniel's sincerity in offering to help her from the treachery of her father, she trusts him, believing that "Faith" and God assist her (264).

Because of Mirah's access to masculine knowledge and experience, her sense of moral duty and her distrust of false rhetoric, she proves to be Daniel's emotional and intellectual equal, capable of awakening his own need of completion and his "personal love" and "tenderness" (813). Mirah's speech and behavior, as well as her appearance, strike Daniel as "unspeakably touching" (213) in their sincerity. Devoid of coquetry and calculation, she returns his gaze and responds to his offer of help with trusting honesty; i.e., "You look good. Perhaps it is God's command" (231). She acknowledges her name and race immediately, gives her history to Mrs. Merrick, accepts opportunities to teach music and reading and to sing in drawingrooms for a living, and allows no one to attribute selfish motives in Daniel's assisting her. Despite her quiet gentleness, she sings without self-consciousness, vehemently defends Daniel's character to Gwendolen, and reproaches Hans Merrick for his innuendoes concerning Daniel's helping Gwendolen. When she finds herself in love with Daniel, she conceals her emotions lest they disturb
the unity of Daniel and her brother Mordecai.

Eliot seems to find her identification and emotional closure in Mirah and in Mirah's union with her older brother and with Daniel, unions made possible by Mirah's adherence to moral duty motivated by self-giving love and respect for a higher law. Eliot can identify with Mirah's appearance, her honesty with men, her intellectual and artistic self-discipline, and her religious quest. While Eliot can identify with Mirah's "low slim figure" and "dark curls" (227), as similar to her own small slender form and abundant dark hair (Chapter 3), she must wistfully describe Mirah's "most delicate little face" (227). Recalling perhaps her own relationship with George Henry Lewes, Eliot traces Mirah's impact on Daniel and his receptiveness to her culturally androgynous nature, as she lacks the artificiality of the feminine coquette. Mirah's natural "look and words," the "exquisite appealingness" of her sincerity and compassion, awaken his "care for womanhood" (813), i.e., his care for a woman's natural "affectionateness," "gentleness," and "sympathy" (Eliot, GEL 4.468). Daniel responds to Mirah's "womanhood" through his own capacity for female emotions, developed by years of quiet suffering over his declassé position. Daniel's sense of "lack" or shame, in not knowing his parentage and fearing its disgrace, has prevented him from developing the sense of aggressiveness and superiority prescriptive of the upper-class masculine ideology. While Daniel's sense of moral integrity and sympathy, gained in a life of reading and contemplation instead of pursuing a lucrative career, appeals to Mirah's "thirst of soul" for "equality" (Eliot, DD 710), Mirah's intellectual depth, her mastery as an artist, and her sincerity and sense of duty, evident in her unaffected manner (421), evoke Daniel's admiration and determine his efforts to study Judaism and find her brother, as he has always "longed for an ideal task" (819).

Though their "honest associations...for[bid] wooing," as wooing involves acting, Daniel falls in love with the "beloved type of womanhood" in Mirah (813). As they
spend days together in the company of her brother Mordecai, through whose teaching and reading they learn their cultural heritage and duties, Daniel and Mirah fulfill their longing for a higher vision of life's laws and purposes. Their higher consciousness, which transcends the gender ideologies, perceives and rejects the performances of gallantry and coquetry used for mutual manipulation and mastery.

Daniel's love of Mirah's "womanhood," i.e., her capacity for affection, sympathy, and gentleness, in response to a higher law, reduces Gwendolen's "capacity to fascinate him" (813). Involved in a love untainted by false rhetoric and built on mutual respect and a common purpose, Daniel feels only a "self-martyring pity" for Gwendolen (813). This pity allows him to rescue and counsel Gwendolen as her savior, then to separate himself from her to be united with the "beloved life" of Mirah and pursue a common ideal "in the East" (880). In Mirah's union with her brother Mordecai and marriage with Daniel, Eliot mends the emotional tears of her own life, which began when her brother Isaac rejected her as a child and continued when John Chapman and Herbert Spencer rejected her for her lack of physical beauty (Chapter 2).

Eliot resolves her intellectual conflict with Christianity in Daniel's demythologized Judaism, which unites duty and love. Daniel voices Eliot's belief that "a people can be blessed only by having counsellors and a multitude whose will moves in obedience to the laws of justice and love" (818). Daniel's vision of life, which reflects Eliot's belief in Necessity or natural law (scientific determinism), Positivism (natural law as a basis for moral law), and Feuerbach's human divinity (Chapter 2), looks beyond Jewish doctrines to a sense of moral duty motivated by self-giving love. Daniel's belief blends with the beliefs of his grandfather and his grandfather's friend, Kalonymos, who had said to the grandfather on parting, "Let us bind love with duty, for duty is the love of law; and law is the nature of the Eternal!" (788). Though Daniel will not "profess" the faith of [his] fathers," i.e., their faith in the supernatural, he will fulfill his duty of "restoring or
perfecting [the] common life" of his people (792), a duty motivated by love, not only of natural and moral law but of humanity.

While Daniel, as self-appointed priest of a humanistic Judaism, fulfills Eliot's ideal of a religious man, i.e., tolerant and humane in his beliefs, Gascoigne, as a rector of the Anglican church, appears unreligious in his self-serving kindness and his catering to the upper-class gender ideologies. The son of a corn dealer, Gascoigne allows considerations of social rank and wealth to determine his affections. When he sees his son's consuming love for Gwendolen, he expresses profound relief in discovering Gwendolen's indifference to his son's pain, since Gascoigne bases marriage on financial settlements, not love or common ideals. Though Gascoigne has heard rumors of Grandcourt's "experiments in folly" (177), he believes that aristocratic heirs, like royal heirs, are exempt from "ordinary standards" of morality (176) and urges Gwendolen not to trifle with Grandcourt. Rather, he sees the proposal as an act of "Providence," offering Gwendolen "power," "position," and "fortune," which it is Gwendolen's "duty" to accept for the sake of her family, despite her "personal feelings" (179). Gascoigne's ambition, obvious in his changing his name from "Gaskin" to "Gascoigne" when he took his "orders" as a clergyman, prompts him to cultivate friends on the basis of their usefulness and allows him to relegate Mrs. Davilow (his sister-in-law) and her daughters to "Sawyer's cottage" and domestic service instead of assisting them himself. Partly because of Gascoigne's pressure on Gwendolen to save herself and her family from an ignominy that violates the upper-class feminine ideology (i.e., she would have to take a position as governess), Gwendolen conceals her "indignation and loathing" at the thought of Grandcourt's "outworn life" (343), violates her promise to Mrs. Glasher, and accepts Grandcourt's proposal.

Since Gascoigne never conceives of Gwendolen's knowledge of the Glasher affair or her suffering in her marriage from a sense of wickedness, Gwendolen can not turn to him for advice. Foreign to moral struggles himself, Gascoigne does not recognize hers,
believing that women are secure in the "sphere" of marriage, the "only true and satisfying sphere of women," and woman's natural capacity "to grace [that sphere] with a good and consistent life" (180). Gascoigne, like Lapidoth and Daniel Charisi, uses masculine rhetoric to exploit Gwendolen's sense of feminine inferiority for his own ends. Her subsequent moral confusion will leave her in need of a savior.

Eliot resolves her gender conflict (i.e., with the restrictions and expectations of feminine and masculine ideologies) in the rise, fall, and redemption of both Alcharisi and Gwendolen. Since both women are victimized by a feminine ideology, i.e., Alcharisi in rebelling against the ideal of the "Jewish woman" and Gwendolen in reluctantly adhering to the ideal of the "perfect lady," both take fatal steps that evoke their own disillusionment and moral deterioration, and both feel the need of redemption. Unlike Mirah, who is forced by Lapidoth into professional singing and barred from her own religious and cultural heritage, Alcharisi is forced by Daniel Charisi into the traditions, marriage, and motherhood of the "Jewish woman" (692) and barred from professional singing, despite her "man's force of genius" (694). When her father and self-denying husband die, she takes the fatal step of ignoring natural law, moral law, and self-denying love; i.e., she gives her infant son to Sir Hugo to spare mother and son an unhappy life, part of which is their Judaism. After nine years of happiness, she takes another fatal step in marrying a Russian noble in the fear that her voice is failing her. Unlike Armgart, who takes her place among common humanity as a teacher instead of marrying for status, Alcharisi submits to the feminine ideal for prestige and "[makes] believe" that she prefers marriage to her career (703), discovering too late that her throat ailment was temporary. Her subsequent life becomes that of an amateur actress, performing the role of the satisfied wife and mother of five children. She even resorts to acting with Daniel in an effort to convince him that she is "not a monster" despite her difference from other women (691). Now that she faces death, she admits her sense of guilt in violating her father's intention
for his grandson and submits to a higher law, a "stronger Something" (i.e., natural and moral law) in giving Daniel his birthright.

Through Alcharisi, Eliot suggests the destructive folly of forcing all women into one career or of barring a child from her natural interests, (Eliot, "MF&MW" 204), especially as such morally irresponsible acts precipitate further violation of natural and moral law. Alcharisi has lived with the guilt, not only of denying her son his birthright but of pretending satisfaction in the domestic sphere. Ironically, both Daniel and Mirah pursue the lives forbidden to them. Their early sense of alienation and shame precipitate an idealism (i.e., a quest for their lost traditions and beliefs and a sense of duty to their people) that contradicts the unnatural designs intended for them. Both Alcharisi and Lapidoth face the Nemesis of bitterness and disillusion subsequent to their sacrificing their children to their own desires.

While Gwendolen Harleth's rise and fall dramatizes the destructive effects of gender ideologies (i.e., the vanity, shallowness, and dependence prescribed in the upper-class feminine ideal, the exploitation of women's sense of "lack" encouraged in the masculine ideal), her salvation through Daniel Deronda dramatizes the redemptive effects of adherence to natural law, moral law, and self-giving love. Because Gwendolen Harleth, like Janet Dempster and Mrs. Transome, is allowed to develop into a self-centered rebel, without the masculine knowledge, self-discipline, and moral insight necessary for real independence, she allows a desire for prestige and the deceptive appeal of masculine rhetoric to overrule her conscience, resulting in a life of guilt, fear, and destructiveness. Because Daniel's higher ideals allow him to penetrate and transcend the debilitating limits of gender ideologies, he attains the divine capacity to awaken her consciousness to a higher law and to detect and share her suffering. While his disinterested compassion for Gwendolen allows him to lead her from destruction through wise counsel, making him an angel of light, who was once a "seraphic boy 'trailing clouds of glory'" (Eliot, DD
224), his union with his moral and intellectual equal, Mirah, creates a whole person, the human Christ, capable of redeeming a fallen nation.

The only child of her mother's first and happier marriage, Gwendolen receives deferential treatment as the "pet and pride of the household" (53), a position that engenders her deluded sense of superiority. Two years of excelling in the limited education of a "showy school" (53) strengthen her delusion and her expectations of a "brilliant marriage" that will not put an end to her horseback riding or doing what she likes (68). At Offendene, Gwendolen tyrannizes her widowed mother and step-sisters, who treat her like a "princess in exile" (71); she also presumes her superiority of beauty and talent in her uncle's parish, where her caustic wit inspires "fear and fondness" (72). After the plainer Miss Arrowpoint demonstrates a mastery of the piano which far surpasses her own and Herr Klesmer shakes her confidence with his "lofty criticism" (82) of her singing, Gwendolen restores her shaken confidence in performing posed attitudes and affected speeches before an admiring domestic audience. Though Gwendolen presumes a superiority of beauty and cleverness, her lack of higher knowledge or purpose proves frustrating. When, as Eliot's childish double, she complains that "girls' lives are so stupid: they never do what they like" (101), she betrays her double sense of constriction.

Indifferent to others' feelings and indignant at the thought of submission or duty, Gwendolen refuses to teach her sisters, seeks her own pleasure, and resists male affection as an attempt to master her. Observing her mother's marriage as a "dreary state," in which a woman has more children than she desires, becomes subsequently dull and powerless, and immerses herself in "humdrum" domestic duties (68), Gwendolen decides to be "hopelessly sighed for as a bride" (68), to marry for "social promotion" (69), then to "lead" her husband and do as she likes "in a striking manner" (69). When Rex Gascoigne expresses his love and desire to marry her, Gwendolen repulses his love-making, as she detests affection, "shall never love anybody" (115), since she perceives love as the lure
to subjection.

This mistrust arises from a "spiritual dread" (94) of her own "helplessness" before "some immeasurable existence aloof from her" (95), an allusion to God or, for Eliot, natural law. Gwendolen betrays that sense of dread during an acting performance, when a panel opens to reveal the artwork of a soul fleeing from a dead face. Her momentary terror at the prospect of accountability does not fool Herr Klesmer, who graciously attributes her display of fear to clever acting. Though she accepts his praise as a tribute to her talent, she is haunted by the threat of powerlessness and accountability before God or natural law or another mortal.

Gwendolen's expectation of an advantageous marriage, i.e., a marriage free of emotional constraints and duties, makes her vulnerable to the very person who wants to master and shame her. Mallinger Grandcourt, whose name suggests both deceit and arrogance, attracts Gwendolen as a "desirable match" (139) because he inherits wealth and estates, because he is "not ridiculous" (146) in shows of affection, and because his cold manners and indifference make him appear less likely to demand accountability or interfere in her designs. When Gwendolen's expectations of mastering Grandcourt are checked, not only by his feigned reluctance to propose but by the discovery of his nine-year attachment to Mrs. Glasher, sequestered in a mining town with their four children, she perceives all men as "bad" (192), decides never to marry, and escapes to Leubronn for pleasure.

In her effort to escape Grandcourt and a marriage that would not only violate her promise to Mrs. Glasher but subject her to humiliation, Gwendolen irresponsibly seeks distraction in gambling, until Daniel Deronda's critical gaze awakens her moral consciousness. When Gwendolen notices Deronda "examining her as a specimen of a lower order" (38) instead of admiring her as a "goddess" (39), she feels her confidence in her femininity shaken, perceiving a different standard of judgment than what she is used to.
When he redeems and returns her pawned necklace (in a foreshadowing of the redemptive work to come), with an admonishing note, she resents what she perceives as "irony and contempt" from this "supercilious mentor" (49), who has not only made her feel guilty but made it impossible for her to continue playing with any self-respect. In spite of her shaken confidence, she returns to Offendene under the delusion of being able to save her financially ruined family from poverty in starting a stage career of singing or acting.

When Gwendolen's delusions of a stage career are extinguished, she must wrestle with the feminine ideology, which prescribes that a woman need only develop the charm and talent sufficient to win a husband of rank and wealth, as her security lies in the domestic sphere under male protection. When Gwendolen learns from Herr Klesmer that her voice and acting talent will require years of hard work and sacrifice to be considered even mediocre, she balks at the idea of moving with her family to the ground-keeper's cottage and becoming a governess, accountable to a bishop's wife. Like other young ladies, Gwendolen has been encouraged to believe in her own "divinity" until a change of rank removes all her "homage" (334). Realizing for the first time that her face and figure have "no magic in them" (335), that her talents exhibit no genius, and that her future holds no extraordinary prospects, she escapes to the lie of the upper-class gender ideology, i.e., the pleasure and ease of the "fine lady" and the homage and protection of the superior male. Despite the "indignation and loathing" inspired by the idea of marrying a morally corrupt man who denies his own family, her guilt in revoking her promise to Mrs. Glasher not to marry Grandcourt, and her horror at the thought of barring Grandcourt's children from legitimacy, she accepts Grandcourt's proposal, believing in her her power to master Grandcourt and please herself.

Gwendolen's ensuing moral struggle over her approaching marriage suggests her growing awareness of a higher law. Again Eliot uses sexual imagery to convey the mind's capacity, when guided by natural and moral law, to penetrate the veneer of gender
stereotypes and rhetoric to reveal the moral lack beneath, similar to the masculine ten-
dency to expose and exploit a feminine sense of physical and intellectual "lack," as explained by Gubar (306). When Daniel's "gravely penetrating eye" (376) had pierced Gwendolen's veneer of confident egoism at the gambling table, revealing her moral lack, he had generated a moral consciousness in Gwendolen that smarts under her dishonesty and both dreads and longs to confide in Daniel. Though she dreads Daniel, since her marriage may bar Grandcourt's illegitimate son from his inheritance as Daniel has been barred from Sir Hugo's estates, she feels that he controls her thoughts (374) with his moral integrity and wants to know his opinions.

His effect on Gwendolen at the Diplow estate, similar to Felix Holt's effect on Esther, allows her to perceive the moral lack or corruption under Grandcourt's veneer of a gentleman. In the light of Daniel's standards, everyone else's standards appear "somehow wrong" (376). Even his voice, compared to Grandcourt's "toneless drawl," sounds like a "violencello to the broken discourse of poultry" (376). Listening to his opinions on gaming, race, and the pursuit of interests, she longs to be "judged" by this socially "inconsequential" man (376). When her newly born conscience drives her to ask Daniel about his objections to her gambling, she finds herself involved in a "mutual understand-
ing" (377) with one who prescribes duty to natural law and moral law for contentment, unlike Grandcourt, who finds everything dull and merely seeks diversions from boredom. When she asks Daniel's opinion of responsibility, especially in a situation which one cannot help, his advice, that people be as good as possible and avoid making another's loss their gain (388), validates Gwendolen's earlier resolution not to marry Grandcourt.

Though Daniel's advice feeds Gwendolen's recently quickened conscience, she lacks the wisdom and courage to resist the pressures of the feminine ideal. At first she rational-
izes her engagement, telling herself that marriage to Grandcourt will allow her to provide for her mother and help Mrs. Glasher and Grandcourt's children, who otherwise
might never find their lot improved. She finally accepts the proposal to avoid the indig-nation of poverty and work (i.e., the life of a governess) and to attain power through Grandcourt's wealth and social rank.

Gwendolen's marriage to Grandcourt forces her to face the inexorable consequen-ces of violating moral law. With the Grandcourt diamonds, she receives Mrs. Glasher's curse, assuring Gwendolen of coming retribution for breaking her word. Gwendolen realizes that Grandcourt's knowledge of her willingness to marry a morally corrupt man to escape poverty will allow him to control her and do whatever he pleases. While she fears his detection of her acquaintance with Mrs. Glasher, Grandcourt exploits her sense of dread and guilt.

While Gwendolen undergoes disillusionment with the feminine ideal (i.e., the discovery of her constriction and powerlessness as Grandcourt's wife), Daniel continues his development as a potential savior, a human divinity. Like Felix Holt, he has transcended the masculine ideology, rejecting the struggle and manipulative aggressiveness necessary for worldly success, and longs instead "to make a little difference for the better" (414), awaiting only the opportunity and direction. While his rescue of Mirah and his efforts to locate her brother begin his interest in Judaism, his acquaintance with Mordecai provides him with the intellectual and religious mentor necessary to galvanize his life of self-sacrificing duty.

Daniel's consciousness of natural and moral law, his sense of duty, and his self-giving desire to better the world make him sensitive to Gwendolen's moral struggle after her marriage to Grandcourt. He detects the "superficial smile" (459) in her efforts to conceal her tormented conscience. After he learns of Grandcourt's mistress and children, he hypothesizes correctly that Gwendolen had discovered the truth of Grandcourt's secret life, had resolved not to marry him, but had broken her resolve to escape the indignation of poverty and now contends with guilt and revulsion.
As Deronda infers Gwendolen's spiritual or moral conflict, she perceives him no longer as a potential admirer or judge but as a moral and intellectual guide. Here Eliot replaces the orthodox belief in God's awakening of the elect by grace with man's awakening of another's conscience through his adherence to higher laws. As Gwendolen regrets her former arrogant ignorance in presuming a mastery of Grandcourt and a life of pleasure and power, her dread that he will discover her broken resolution draws her to Daniel, to the "foothold" his standards might give her (485). Compelled to confess her moral predicament and her desire to be "something better if she could," she now reveres Daniel as a "priest" (485), or representative of the divine.

Admitting her need of redemption, in wearing on her wrist the necklace that Daniel had redeemed for her from the pawn broker, Gwendolen begins her confession, a confession which indicates, to Eliot, submission to a higher law (Meyer 26). She admits that she has committed an act worse than gambling, in making "another's loss" her gain (Eliot, DD 500), and asks what to do to expiate her guilt and dread. She even asks what to think, since he has asserted himself in her conscience as a guide to truth. Daniel begins his counsel by instructing her, as Felix instructed Esther, to transcend the self-absorption and ignorance encouraged in the feminine ideology, i.e., to turn from the "gratification of small selfish desires" to "what is best in thought and action" (502).

In response to Gwendolen's second confession, in which she details her sin and seeks restoration, Daniel counsels her with advice that reflects Eliot's adherence to natural law (scientific determinism) and subsequent moral law (positivism). He assures her that submission to the "yoke" of her own "wrong doing," i.e., accepting the responsibility and consequences of her acts, may "urge her towards a good" that will "counterbalance [since it cannot eradicate] the evil" (506). Convicted by his words, she confesses her selfishness, her imperviousness to others' feelings, and her moral "confusion" (507), thereby admitting that she is not above the natural order. Like Felix Holt, Daniel advises...
"knowledge" and religion "clad with knowledge" as a means of gaining a "higher life" (508), though he neglects to suggest any specific works or beliefs. In suggesting that she make her fear a "safeguard" (509), he forces her to consider the consequence of her future actions. This advice reflects Eliot's belief in scientific determinism, or the irreversible consequences of actions, and her belief in positivism, which advises submission to moral laws on the basis of the inexorable workings of natural or scientific law, as a means of harmony with nature, development, and altruism (Meyers 17-18, 23).

That Daniel visibly suffers with Gwendolen and comes to her with counsel effects her decision to "try" (Eliot, DQ 509). Here Christ's sufferings are transposed to the human mentor, with the effect of desired change in the rebel.

While Gwendolen's limited vision allows her to assume that Daniel's chief concern in life is her redemption and restoration, he studies with Mordecai and Mirah to prepare for his larger messianic mission, vindicating Eliot's rejection of a self-deluding feminine ideal and a belief in a personal God. Daniel has already seen proof of Mordecai's assertion that people make illusions real with their belief (560); i.e., Gwendolen's apotheosizing Daniel has effected her redemption. He also discerns the "links" that have brought him to Mordecai as well as the sense of "duty" and "citizenship" (571) which he will gain as Mordecai's spiritual heir. With the discovery that Mordecai is Mirah's brother (Ezra Cohen), he anticipates the further good in Mordecai's "visionary selection of him" (606) and agrees to carry Mordecai's spirit, or ideas, forward in his own. Mordecai's idea of human life's "tending to the image of the Supreme Unity" reflects Eliot's interest in Hegelian ideas, in which she paradoxically envelopes natural law and positivism.

Though Daniel's instruction as Mordecai's spiritual heir is interrupted by his trip to meet his Jewish mother in Genoa, his mother's giving him his heritage of "Deliverer" (726) convinces him that Mordecai has been preparing him for a messianic mission. He
leams that in spite of all his mother's efforts to prevent his knowledge of his Jewish ancestry, he has mysteriously developed the "Jewish heart" (726), i.e., wisdom and sympathy, that his grandfather wanted him to have. Since his grandfather believed that every Jew should be reared as a potential "Deliverer" (726), Daniel believes that "a stronger Something" than his mother's designs have made him become the grandson that his grandfather wanted (727). Daniel's belief alludes to the irrevocable and seemingly ironic consequences of actions that become a kind of determinism. Eliot also implies that the belief in the illusion of a deliverer has effected its reality. She would argue, therefore, that because Jesus of Nazareth and his followers believed that he was the Messiah, their belief gave his words the power to effect change, her argument for religion apart from any supernatural element.

Assured, by virtue of his biological roots and intellectual training, of his destiny as a deliverer, Daniel feels compelled to undertake Gwendolen's moral and emotional redemption after Grandcourt's drowning. Eliot takes Gwendolen further than Janet or Esther into moral complexity; i.e., in wishing Grandcourt dead and not trying to save him, she assumes the guilt of murder. Eliot takes Daniel further as a savior who suffers from his own humanity; i.e., though he "dreaded the weight of this woman's soul flung upon his own with imploring dependency" (754), he bears her sin and guilt. When Gwendolen confesses her guilt in marrying Grandcourt, her terror in wanting to kill him, and her complicity in his death, Daniel accepts her remorse as the "sign of a recoverable nature" (762), since it acknowledges a higher law. Acting as priest and savior, he absolves her of guilt, convincing Gwendolen that she could not have saved Grandcourt. His assurance that suffering has prepared her for a "worthier" life (765) alludes to Eliot's belief that suffering can influence even the "harder sex" to feel the sympathy, gentleness, and affection innate in women (Eliot, GEL 1.140), emotions often destroyed in the self-centered egoism fostered in the ideology of the "perfect lady." Though Gwendolen credits
Daniel's goodness for saving her from wickedness and despair, she grieves that her sin has banished her from a possible union with him. She, like Esther, recognizes the distance between herself and her savior.

As "Deliverer," Daniel helps his supplicant transcend the feminine ideal of intellectual lightness, charm, and dependence. Daniel widens her consciousness with a sense of the "Invisible and Universal" (835), or natural law, though at this point Daniel himself seems like "God" to her (833). He advises her to think of her ordeal as "preparation" for making life good for others. This advice echoes Felix Holt's desire that Esther discover her "best self," a self that encourages nobility in others. He also advises Gwendolen to accept the two thousand pounds per year provided by Grandcourt's will (i.e., Mrs. Glasher's son inherited the estates) to support her mother.

For the first time, Gwendolen experiences not "love-making" but "Mighty Love," which demands "self-change, confession" and "endurance" (842). Self-change, confession, and endurance imply submission to a higher law than self-interest, in the duty of caring for others. When Daniel tells Gwendolen of his Jewish heritage, his plans to restore political existence to the Jews, and his approaching marriage to Mirah, she begins the crisis that she has always dreaded: the recognition of her own powerlessness and insignificance in the face of a "vast mysterious movement," dislodging her from "her supremacy in her own world" (879). She must recognize that the universe and her "God" do not revolve around her and that she is accountable to a higher law than her own pleasure. When Daniel responds to her cry of anguish with visible grief and an assurance of his continuing correspondence with her, she relinquishes her hold of him. After a night of agony, like that suffered by Dorothea when she relinquishes Will, Gwendolen accepts her position in the universe and assures her mother "tenderly" that she will "live" (879). Here Eliot suggests that the reformed and beautiful heroine is not suitable to complete the messiah or Christ.
The marriage of Daniel Deronda and Mirah Lapidoth forms the androgynous savior needed to inspire the restoration of a Jewish state. Daniel's mother recognizes Mirah's suitability for Deronda in her similar attachment to Judaism, while Daniel finds in Mirah a "complete love," unlike the guarded, pitying, and self-sacrificing love he feels for Gwendolen (863). Their equality of intellect, their transcendence of gender ideologies, and their common sense of duty make them equal though distinct halves of a physical and spiritual whole. Claiming Mirah's reprobate father, as well as her brother's spirit, as his own, Daniel becomes Mirah's brother and husband in order to join her suffering and her glory as a Jew and to complete his own humanity. Here Eliot depicts her idea of the true savior or god as an androgynous composite of male and female, imaged in Christ and separated by the artificial distinctions of gender ideologies.

In Daniel Deronda, Eliot develops Feuerbach's ideal of human divinity. In making a Spanish Jew, with an English guardian and sympathy to both Jewish and non-Jewish beliefs, the savior of Gwendolen, and in making a whole of Jewish female and male the savior of the Jewish state, Eliot suggests that the Jewish traditions (though generally deplored by a Victorian audience) and demythologized Judaism would serve as well as (if not better than) orthodox Christianity, to instill a sense of the divine in humanity and to link humanity with the divine within themselves, which according to Feuerbach, is objectified and projected on a supernatural Christ. In giving Daniel wisdom and "more than a woman's acuteness of compassion" (747) and in giving Mirah a culturally masculine intellect and experience of the world as well as a directness and ease of manner, Eliot transfers the perfections projected onto Christ (according to Feuerbach, 14) to mortals. Daniel and Mirah together have the capacity to help organize a Jewish state, which, like Felix Holt's working class and Mr. Tryan's parishioners, can be a blessing to mankind. While Eliot proves woman's and man's need of a savior, one to help them transcend the cultural ideal in submission to natural law and moral responsibility, she
suggests the savior's dependence on faith for efficacy. In the marriage of shared visions and traits, Eliot's savior takes on the androgynous character of Christ to become more fully human and, thus, from Feuerbach's perspective, more fully divine.

Perhaps most startling is Eliot's depiction of humanity's existential coming of age, in which theology is replaced with abstractions. Unlike the New-Testament and Medieval Christians, who awaited their savior's return and were assured of his abiding if invisible presence, Gwendolen must face life and death in her own strength. Her savior informs her that they "can perhaps never see each other again" (878). In Gwendolen's assurance to her mother that she "shall live" and "be better" (879), Eliot informs her readers that man and woman can live without hope of a supernatural God. In Daniel and Mirah's adherence to natural and moral law, Eliot dispenses with God but keeps the laws and moral precepts instigated by God; in Daniel and Mirah's union, she dispenses with the supernatural Christ but retains the androgynous nature of Christ and his characteristic of duty motivated by love to indicate the divine nature of humanity. She makes humanity responsible for their own salvation.

Eliot's human ideal, i.e., the androgynous whole of male and female, who transcend gender stereotypes in response to natural and moral law and to duty motivated by self-giving love to complete each other, replaces the divinity of Christ for society's redemption. This ideal whole redeems male and female from artificial distinctions and roles that stifle their genius and their response to universal law and self-giving love. In so doing, her ideal resolves the emotional, intellectual, and gender conflicts evoked by gender ideologies, for continual progress toward self-consciousness, unity, and perfection. In spite of Eliot's adherence to the philosophies of necessity and positivism, as a basis of moral responsibility, and to Feuerbach, as a guide to human divinity, she seems to return to her first post-Christian love, the transcendentalism of Hegel and Carlyle, to resolve her conflict. She also reveals her growing sympathy with the Jewish people, many of whom
responded to her novel with appreciation and, in retrospect, believed that *Daniel Deronda* indeed helped to galvanize the Zionist Movement (Haight, *GE* 486-88).
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Showalter, Elaine. *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte...*


