

Bleeding Passports: The Ideology of Woman's Heart in the Fiction of Hawthorne, Freeman and Cooke

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ABSTRACT

"For its own sake, if it will do no more, the world should throw open all its avenues to the passport of a woman's bleeding heart." This is the only resolution to women's wrongs that Miles Coverdale, the narrator of Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*, can offer. Hawthorne's ambivalent response to the ideology of woman's heart is more complex than Coverdale's but it remains fundamentally conservative, like the response of another New England writer, Rose Terry Cooke. Hawthorne and Cooke share ideological assumptions about gender subverted by Mary Wilkins Freeman, a third New England writer whose works still have not received the recognition they merit.

RÉSUMÉ

"For its own sake, if it will do no more, the world should throw open all its avenues to the passport of a woman's bleeding heart." Voilà la seule solution aux défauts des femmes que peut offrir Miles Coverdale, le narrateur dans le roman *The Blithedale Romance* de Hawthorne. La réaction ambivalente de Hawthorne à l'égard de la sentimentalité raisonnée des femmes est plus complexe que celle de Coverdale mais elle demeure essentiellement conservatrice, tout comme celle de Rose Terry Cooke, une autre auteure de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. En fait, Hawthorne et Cooke partagent les mêmes suppositions que réfute une troisième auteure de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, Mary Wilkins, dont l'oeuvre n'a toujours pas reçu la reconnaissance qu'elle mérite.

Man with the head and woman with the heart:
Man to command and woman to obey;
All else confusion.

The insistent connection between women and the values of the heart pervading mid-nineteenth century discourse is a notable example of the inescapable nature of ideology as Mary Poovey defines it. "Social experiences—and therefore the responses symbolized as style—are informed at every level by ideology," Poovey emphasizes. "The phrase 'ideology as style' suggests the lived experience of cultural values, and it reminds us that all imaginative activity is part of that experience." For Poovey, ideology is more than "false consciousness," because "it does not necessarily follow that simply identifying the social function of an ideology will enable one to escape or even challenge it. Ideology ... governs not just political and economic relations but social relations and even psychological stresses as well." Moreover, "ideology is always developing," and as its "internal dynamics" or its "implications for a particular group" alter, individual texts may

articulate the "antagonistic positions" within it, and "its inherent tensions may be exposed in what is generally perceived as a crisis of values."¹ The movement for women's rights in Victorian England and nineteenth-century America brought about such a crisis of values. Indeed, its impact on the association of women with the values of the heart is very much apparent even in the text that provides the *locus classicus* of this ideology cited above: Tennyson's *The Princess* (1847).²

"Man with the head, woman with the heart" is sometimes quoted as exemplifying Tennyson's own beliefs. But its context reveals it to be a parody of Victorian masculinist dogma: dogma asserted by one of the two old kings in *The Princess*, the father of the nameless Prince who woos the formidable Princess Ida. The Prince's father is elsewhere depicted as a brutal male supremacist who preaches:

Man is the hunter; woman is his game;
We hunt them for the beauty of their skins;
They love us for it and we ride them down. (p. 183)

Thus, it is not surprising that his distinction between head and heart translates into “Man to command and woman to obey.” Tennyson uses the old king’s credo to unmask the politics of power embodied in the head-heart dichotomy, thereby revealing his considerable awareness of the social function of his own culture’s ideology. Yet as Pooey suggests, to recognize the political function of ideology is not necessarily to escape it. While Tennyson skillfully articulates the “antagonistic positions” within the Victorian gender division of values and spheres, he ultimately undermines the subversive nature of his satiric enterprise by portraying at the close of *The Princess*, not the success of Princess Ida’s attempt to act as the “Head” of a woman’s university, but her capitulation and marriage to the Prince, overcome by the softening feelings of her true woman’s heart. The first part of this essay will argue that Hawthorne’s texts, particularly *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), reflect a similarly ambivalent response to the ideology of woman’s heart. Like Tennyson, Hawthorne perceptively portrays some of the contradictions in this ideology, yet his construction of plots and possibilities for female and male relations remains significantly shaped by it.

Hawthorne’s texts provide a rich American register of the ideological tensions generated by the women’s rights movement because, as David Stineback notes, he grappled with questions of woman’s nature and woman’s wrongs confronted less directly by a later writer such as James.³ Hawthorne is also well known for his engagement with the conflict of heart and head. More than any of his contemporaries, he anatomized the destructive effects of a tyranny of the will and intellect over “the sanctity of the heart,” in the process subtly querying the gender-inflected prescriptions of his culture. The result has been an enduring controversy about Hawthorne’s response to feminism, with some critics, most notably Nina Baym, finding him “strongly sympathetic” towards feminist views, and others such as Richard Chase assuming his hostility to them.⁴ In *The Blithedale Romance*, Hawthorne follows Tennyson’s example in *The Princess* by directly addressing the “woman question” through his depiction of the queen-like Zenobia. There is little doubt that Zenobia is principally modelled on the charismatic and embattled Margaret Fuller; she also resembles Princess Ida, however, both in being associated from the start in Hawthorne’s text with “the advocacy of women’s rights” and in being introduced indirectly through her reputation in male eyes.⁵ Moreover, like Ida, Zenobia encounters the dogma of “man with the head and woman with the heart” — only in her case it is preached not by a future father-in-law, but by the man she loves. Hollingsworth, the philanthropic

reformer, declares to Zenobia that a true woman always subordinates herself to man, “her acknowledged principal,” and that “the heart of true womanhood knows where its sphere is, and never strays beyond it” (p. 123). In other words, for him as for Ida’s future father-in-law, “woman with the heart” translates into “woman to obey.”

For Hawthorne as opposed to Hollingsworth, the translation of “woman with the heart” is more difficult to determine, partly because of the use of Miles Coverdale as a narrator in *The Blithedale Romance*. Coverdale initially interprets Hollingsworth’s assertion as an “outrageous affirmation ... of masculine egoism” (p. 123). Nevertheless, the reader later observes Zenobia, in a much debated development, apparently committing suicide because of her thwarted love for Hollingsworth, at which point Coverdale indirectly sanctions the very ideology he formerly seemed to repudiate. He observes,

it is a woeful thought, that a woman of Zenobia’s diversified capacity should have fancied herself irretrievably defeated on the broad battle-field of life ... merely because love had gone against her. It is nonsense and a miserable wrong, the result, like so many others of masculine egoism, that the success or failure of a woman’s existence should be made to depend wholly on the affections, and on one species of affection. (p. 241)

Yet critical as he is of “masculine egoism,” Coverdale assumes Zenobia’s fatal dependence upon the fulfillment of her heart’s affections to be an incontrovertible fact of her nature. Moreover, he offers no solution to the “miserable wrong” he denounces except a dubious sentimental one, couched in qualifying phrases and vague clichés: “For its own sake, if it will do no more, the world should throw open all its avenues to the passport of a woman’s bleeding heart.”

How much does Hawthorne himself endorse Coverdale’s ideological contradictions and his dubious resolution to woman’s wrongs? Alternatively, how much did his female contemporaries and successors trust to the “bleeding passport” of woman’s suffering heart, and what “avenues” did they see it as opening in the world — if it bled enough, and the world found its own interest satisfied in acknowledging the bleeding? I approach the first of these questions here by comparing Coverdale’s assumptions about woman’s nature and destiny both with narrative acts and their implications in *The Blithedale Romance*, and with the assumptions expressed by Hawthorne’s narrative voice in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The Marble Faun* (1860). The second question is addressed

by comparing Hawthorne's textual inscription of the ideology of woman's heart with that of two other New England writers who concern themselves as he does with the conflict of heart and head, and who also respond, although in contrasting ways, to the ideological upheaval generated by the women's rights movement. Rose Terry Cooke, more nearly Hawthorne's contemporary (her first stories were published in the 1850s), persisted in preaching trust in the "bleeding passport" of woman's heart among her largely female readers — even though her tales themselves sometimes subvert their teller's rhetoric. Cooke's conservative response to the women's rights movement casts into relief the greater complexity and ambivalence of Hawthorne's inscription of "ideology as style," yet at the same time reveals the extent to which his fiction was infiltrated by the gender-inflected values of his culture. In contrast to Cooke, Mary Wilkins Freeman, writing a generation later than Hawthorne, repeatedly subverts through her narrative acts the formula of "man with the head and woman with the heart" in ways that reveal the limitations of Hawthorne's more ambivalent response to his culture's conventional definitions of womanhood.

Like Hawthorne, Cooke and Freeman focus on the warping of the New England Puritan character by the rigidity of the will and the cold repression of emotion. But unlike him, they write in a vein of realism akin to George Eliot's, they typically employ female narrative perspectives, and neither has been accorded the critical attention her work merits. Their best work appears in what Elizabeth Meese describes as the "undervalued" genre of the short story.⁶ Dismissed as minor "local colorists" rather than recognized as significant contributors to the rise of American Realism, Cooke and Freeman have been excluded along with other New England women writers from a canon defined largely in terms of masculine themes and perspectives, and privileging the romance forms preferred by Hawthorne and Melville over realistic depictions of New England life.⁷

Freeman, whose works have attracted more attention than Cooke's, has been viewed by Perry Westbrook and others as "an anatomist of the latter-day Puritan will" akin to Hawthorne, but as Marjorie Pryse points out, the parallels between her works and Hawthorne's remain relatively unexplored (p. 338). Even less consideration has been given to the notable differences between Hawthorne and Freeman, particularly in their assumptions about woman's nature and female and male relations. Cooke more closely resembles Hawthorne in the resolution she typically portrays for the problems created by the Puritan personality, with its imbalance of heart and head. In order

to counteract men governed by the values of the head, who violate their own hearts and the hearts of others in their dedication to the cold logic of an overruling purpose, Hawthorne and Cooke alike turn to the regenerative influence of woman's heart, with its presumed capacity for sympathy with others and for speaking through the bleeding of its suffering. Freeman not only rejects this solution to the perversions of the will in the New England character, but also sees that character in a different way. Writing in the 1880s, 1890s, and into the twentieth century, when the ideology of woman's heart and woman's sphere no longer preserved an unquestioned hegemony, she articulates a more pluralistic vision of human relations, a vision less relentlessly structured by gender stereotypes and more sensitive to variations in individuals and the impact of socioeconomic circumstances.

Part I

Poovey notes that the contradictions inherent in ideology can appear in any literary work "at the level of content or form; they may emerge in the discrepancy between an author's explicit aesthetic program and the emotional affect the text generates, or they may show up simply as significant inconsistencies within an individual character or convention" (p. xiv). To these manifestations, one can add the conflicting ideological assumptions that sometimes emerge from debate among the characters within a particular work, from the comparison of different works by the same author, and from a dissonance between narrative commentary and narrative acts.

In the context of *The Blithedale Romance*, critics are in substantial agreement concerning the ideological contradictions of Miles Coverdale the narrator, particularly with reference to his views on women. Like Baym, Mary Schriber sees Coverdale as an unreliable narrator, whose "repertoire of generalizations" about women represents the conventional mid-nineteenth century ideology perpetuated by what Barbara Welter has described as the "cult of true womanhood."⁸ The fact that Coverdale is in many respects unreliable, however, does not necessarily mean that Hawthorne recognizes or condemns all of his contradictions. Indeed, the sustained controversy about Hawthorne's feminist or anti-feminist views implies the contrary. Moreover, there is a disturbing congruence not only between Coverdale's "repertoire of generalizations" and the unfolding of Zenobia's fate, but also between Coverdale's generalizations and those articulated by Zenobia herself or by Hawthorne in narrating other works.

Through the opinions and attributes of his four main characters in *The Blithedale Romance* — Zenobia, Hollingsworth, Coverdale and Priscilla — Hawthorne sets up a complex debate concerning woman's nature and the values of the heart that is not resolved at the level of dialogue and character, but that does seem to be resolved, after a fashion, at the level of plot. In part, this debate arises from the kind of gender reversals in characterization that are also conspicuous in *The Princess*.⁹ Most strikingly, Hollingsworth, who ultimately tramples the impulses of his own heart and the hearts of others in his pursuit of his obsessive schemes, begins with a larger, more tender heart than any of his fellow visionaries at Blithedale, female or male. Zenobia, who initially knows Hollingsworth only as an "auditor" of his lectures, describes him as "not so much an intellectual man ... as a great heart" (p. 21). We see this great heart revealed in his tenderness towards the frail Priscilla when she arrives at Blithedale and throws herself at Zenobia's feet. Hollingsworth rebukes Zenobia and the other Blithedale women for their coldness towards the mysterious maiden: "The very heart will be frozen in her bosom, unless you women can warm it, among you, with the warmth that ought to be in your own" (p. 28).

Hollingsworth's warmth of heart is also emphasized through a series of ironic contrasts with the coldly egotistical Coverdale. Coverdale describes himself as "a devoted epicure of [his] own emotions," and observes that he has a "cold tendency, between instinct and intellect," to pry into the mystery of other people's hearts, which has "gone far towards unhumanizing" his own heart (pp. 146, 154). It is no accident that Priscilla's father, Mr. Moodie, chooses Hollingsworth over Coverdale to shepherd his daughter to Blithedale, after the latter displays his preoccupation with his own comfort and his genteel surliness. Coverdale, as well as Priscilla, later benefits from Hollingsworth's tender heart when the philanthropist nurses him during his fever. Men in general "really have no tenderness," according to Coverdale, but "there was something of the woman moulded into the great, stalwart frame of Hollingsworth"; nor was he ashamed as men so often are of the "soft place in his heart" (p. 42). Coverdale also praises Hollingsworth's "divine power of sympathy," a quality associated by Hawthorne and his contemporaries with women and the heart (p. 55). For instance, in *The Marble Faun*, Hilda's capacity to appreciate art is explained as arising from her woman's sympathy:

She saw — no, not saw, but felt — through and through a picture; she bestowed upon it all the warmth and richness of woman's sympathy; not by any intellectual effort, but by this strength of heart, and this guid-

ing light of sympathy, she went straight to the central point, in which the Master had conceived his work. (p. 57)

It is thus highly ironic to see Hollingsworth, so "womanly" a creature himself by conventional standards, subsequently insisting on the heart as the only proper sphere for women in his debate with Zenobia at Eliot's Pulpit, while the more subtly egoistic Coverdale criticizes him for his "monstrous" male egoism. This debate is revived in a more pointed form towards the end of the novel in the unmasking scene in Chapter 25, when Hollingsworth, Zenobia, Coverdale and Priscilla come together again at Eliot's Pulpit. Zenobia accuses Hollingsworth of being all "self, self, self!" and of doing a "deadly wrong" to his own heart. Hollingsworth attempts to dismiss her criticism as a mere "woman's view ... a woman's, whose whole sphere of action is in the heart, and who can conceive of no higher nor wider one," thereby contradicting his earlier prescriptive privileging of the heart that "ought to be" in women. Zenobia scornfully replies: "Be silent! ... You know neither man nor woman! The utmost that can be said in your behalf ... is, that a great and rich heart has been ruined in your breast" (pp. 218-19). The emotional affect generated by Zenobia's denunciation, and the congruence between her judgment and the subsequent narrative revelations of Hollingsworth's schemes to exploit her wealth, indicate that her "woman's view" in this scene probably accords with Hawthorne's own.

Such ironic reversals reveal the sophistication of Hawthorne's play with his culture's gender-bound construction of heart and head. Beginning with a simple gender reversal in depicting Hollingsworth as a man with a "great heart" and female tenderness, Hawthorne then proceeds to overturn this reversal in depicting the subsequent diabolic transformation of Hollingsworth's nature — a transformation dramatized through the critical debate among the characters in the romance's peripeteia. Yet the subversive effects of these developments in characterization are unfortunately counteracted by the extent to which Zenobia's own words and actions bear out the gender ideology that Hollingsworth perpetuates and that she criticizes in theory. Despite her apparent scorn for Hollingsworth's insistence on woman's true nature and proper sphere, Zenobia repeatedly acknowledges that if only Hollingsworth had been "one true heart to encourage and direct" her, she would have gladly consented to being commanded by him as Priscilla is (p. 218). "Let man be but manly and godlike, and woman is only too ready to become to him what you say," she confesses to Hollingsworth in the first debate at Eliot's Pulpit (p. 124).

In certain instances, Zenobia's actions and words also lend support to the conventional assumptions Coverdale frequently makes concerning woman's nature and fate, although here the reader is on less certain ground. Some of Coverdale's assumptions emerge as he lasciviously speculates on whether or not Zenobia has been married. He circuitously refers to such a possibility as "a destiny already accomplished," and "the great event of a woman's existence" (p. 46). Later, he condescendingly thinks that Zenobia may have had "a heart which must at least be valuable when new" (p. 79). In a spirited speech, Zenobia theoretically opposes this social construction of marriage as woman's destiny and of a heart only "valuable" when "new." Nevertheless, she subsequently appears to be subsumed by it when she declares her heart to have been "miserable, bruised, and battered" — in brief, "spoilt" by her experience with Westervelt before she met Hollingsworth (p. 225). Before her death, moreover, she again seems to bear out Coverdale's conventional notions when she furnishes him with some possible morals for her own sad story, which she satirically suggests he turn into a ballad:

"A moral? Why, this:—that, in the battle-field of life, the downright stroke, that would fall only on a man's steel head-piece, is sure to light on a woman's heart, over which she wears no breastplate, and whose wisdom it is, therefore, to keep out of the conflict. Or this:—that the whole universe, her own sex and yours, and Providence, or Destiny to boot, make common cause against the woman who swerves one hair's breadth out of the beaten track. Yes; and add, (for I may as well own it, now,) that, with that one hair's breadth, she goes all astray, and never sees the world in its true aspect after." (p. 224)

The first of these morals, although delivered with some bitter irony, is not so very different from Coverdale's pious sentiments concerning the "bleeding passport" of a woman's heart, and it seems to be reinforced at the level of plot by Zenobia's apparent suicide.

As Schriber has argued, however, both Zenobia's speeches and the suicide that Coverdale attributes to her involve interpretive ambiguities. A skilled parodist, Zenobia often seems to describe "woman's life as it is and not as she thinks it should be" (p. 72) — or woman's life as it is perceived to be, one might add. Schriber's reading of Zenobia's final speeches as ironic leads her to the conclusion that if Zenobia commits suicide at all, she does so not out of the motive of thwarted love that Coverdale imagines, but out of despair at woman's lot (p. 76). There is much to lend credence to this interpretation — most notably, Zenobia's second, bitter moral which blames woman's

wrongs not on her bleeding, defenseless heart but on the systematic oppression of any woman who dares to defy convention. Yet Zenobia's own subsequent faltering and self-blaming description of herself as "astray" and blinded to the world's "true aspect" undermines her attack on the social oppression of women; moreover, it is after this speech that she goes on to blame herself further for having the "spoilt" heart that Hollingsworth quite rightly rejected. Zenobia does, therefore, through her own speeches, provide some foundation for Coverdale's interpretation of her death. Schriber introduces a disjunctive fallacy in arguing that either Zenobia kills herself out of thwarted love or out of thwarted feminist aspirations, when in fact the evidence of Zenobia's own speeches points to a complex combination of motives. To paraphrase Virginia Woolf's famous question about Shakespeare's sister, who shall measure the heat and violence of a feminist heart when caught and entangled in a woman's body?

The fact that Zenobia's own words bear out certain of Coverdale's assumptions about woman's nature indicates that his ideas and Hawthorne's may at points overlap. And certain elements in Coverdale's "repertoire of generalizations" about gender do indeed appear in Hawthorne's own narrative commentary in other works — particularly *The Scarlet Letter*. One important "inherent tension" in the ideology of woman's heart evident in Hawthorne's narrative observations as well as in Coverdale's is the contradiction between what might be termed woman's pure versus her passionate heart. When Coverdale speaks of Zenobia's heart as something that is only "valuable" when "new," and when Zenobia herself describes it as "spoilt," both are using the term in a different sense than it is used when Zenobia praises Hollingsworth's "great heart." The tension between these two aspects of the heart — the heart as the locus of erotic desire and the heart as the wellspring of regenerative moral influence — runs throughout Hawthorne's treatment of women in his fiction, and indeed throughout much nineteenth-century discourse. Hilda's heart with its "guiding light of sympathy," in the passage from *The Marble Faun* cited above, is obviously an example of the pure heart in action. So too is Hester's heart in *The Scarlet Letter* when Hawthorne makes it the touchstone of her moral regeneration. Criticizing her forays into the masculine realms of the intellect, he states, "Thus, Hester Prynne, whose heart had lost its regular and healthy throb, wandered without a clew in the dark labyrinth of the mind." This wandering is fruitless, he adds, in a Coverdale-like generalization, because "a woman never overcomes" the problems of her sex and its oppression "though any exercise of thought. They are not to be

solved, or only in one way. If her heart chance to come uppermost, they vanish" (p. 166). Clearly, Hawthorne has in mind here the pure heart of sexless domestic affection and sympathy, for certainly Hester's problems do not "vanish" when she allows her passionate heart to "come uppermost" temporarily in the forest scene with Dimmesdale. The inherent contradictions in Hawthorne's ideological solution for women's wrongs are even more apparent in *The Blithedale Romance*, where Zenobia's problems are confounded rather than resolved by her heart coming uppermost, thereby exposing her dangerously in the "battle-field of life."

Zenobia's heart bleeds in the end for Hollingsworth—not only metaphorically but also literally when his hook accidentally tears her bosom as they probe the black water for her corpse. However, her bleeding heart does not seem to open many "avenues" to the world's pity, in part because the emotional effect of her story on the reader is counteracted by the cold, quizzical skepticism of Coverdale. Choosing to conclude his account of Zenobia's tragedy by morbidly contemplating her grave in Blithedale pasture and dwelling upon the corruption of her mortal part, Coverdale observes, in particular, "the tuft of ranker vegetation that grew out of [her] heart" (p. 244). One might have hoped that all its "bleeding" would have helped to purify Zenobia's heart and make it a safe "passport" to the world's affection. But we are reminded, in the end, of its passionate rankness.

How much at the close of *The Blithedale Romance* is Hawthorne himself also expressing his ambivalence about the woman's heart he elsewhere exalts? While such a question cannot be answered with any certainty, there does seem to be a narrative choice on Hawthorne's part in the final graphic and demeaning image we are given of the rotting heart of the regal and spirited Zenobia, absorbed into a Nature that is utterly indifferent to her beauty. Coverdale concludes his morbid reverie over her grave with the hollow piety, "It is because the spirit is inestimable, that the lifeless body is so little valued." Hawthorne, however, provides no means at the close of *The Blithedale Romance* of forcefully exposing the limitations of Coverdale's perception. The reader's attention is not redirected in any way to the continuing force and vitality of Zenobia's spirit, or of the feminist aspirations expressed in her writings. Finally, we are left asking of Zenobia and her fate what Stineback asks of the heroine in Hawthorne's story "The Shaker Burial":

She is in a no-win situation. The question is, who has put her there—Hawthorne or the male world as we

(and Hawthorne) know it? If Hawthorne is guilty of destroying his heroines, we must still explain why they are more sympathetic in their actual behavior than the men around them. If the male world is guilty, then we have to explain why the women's spirits must be tied so closely to their romantic attraction to men. (p. 99)

While Stineback finds no resolution to questions such as these in Hawthorne's fiction, he persuasively argues that Hawthorne's "confusion in his portrayal of women" can be viewed as "a strength rather than a weakness" if a New Critical preference for textual coherence and unity gives way to the appreciation of culturally determined textual complexities: "Hawthorne's inconsistency in portraying women ... is a liability only if he ought to have been more consistent given the cultural pressures on him" (pp. 94-95). A similar view has been more recently expressed by T. Walter Herbert, Jr. He notes the "unstable fusion of feminism and misogyny" in *The Scarlet Letter*, where a "contest of gender definitions" is played out, and conventional notions of womanhood and manhood are simultaneously endorsed and subverted. He concludes that "*The Scarlet Letter* is a powerful book not because it resolves our gender conflicts but because it draws us into them."¹⁰ The same can be said of the ironic convolutions and contradictions in Hawthorne's exploration of "man with the head and woman with the heart" in *The Blithedale Romance*. The more reductive and straightforward endorsement of the ideology of woman's heart in a lesser writer such as Rose Terry Cooke reveals how much the ambivalences of Hawthorne's more "writerly" texts create a dynamic play of meaning that continues to challenge the contemporary reader.

Part II

In the short stories by Rose Terry Cooke contained in two of her collections, *Somebody's Neighbors* (1881) and *The Sphinx's Children* (1886), one does not encounter the same tension between woman's pure and passionate heart that makes Hawthorne's depiction of women like Zenobia and Hester so intriguing and at times contradictory. Perhaps because of her position as a woman writer dependent upon the popular success of her fiction for survival, Cooke eschews the passionate heart and focuses instead upon woman's heart as a repository of moral influence capable of melting even the flintiest New England male. Like many in her audience, Cooke seems to have accepted uncritically the ideological assumptions about female nature and potential fostered by the "cult of True Womanhood" that leave their mark even on Hawthorne's fiction. For instance, Cooke frequently alludes to that mysterious touchstone of femininity, "a true woman's heart,"

and offers encomiums to its capacity for tender sympathy and altruistic love.¹¹ Further, she assumes this "true woman's heart" to be a universal feature of female character. In "Eben Jackson," a Yankee sailor who has wandered in many barbaric parts of the world, finds the women everywhere to be much the same as the "constant, dutiful, self-denying Yankee girl" he left behind: "women are women all the world over — soft-hearted, kindly creatures, that like any things that's in trouble."¹²

For Cooke, as for Hawthorne in some of his narrative generalizations about women at least, such softhearted tenderness is the essence of womanhood, an essence that is paradoxically both enduring and vulnerable. Describing the dramatic effects of her suffering upon Hester, Hawthorne observes that,

some attribute had departed from her, the permanence of which had been essential to keep her a woman. Such is frequently the fate, and such the stern development, of the feminine character and person, when the woman has encountered, and lived through, an experience of peculiar severity. If she be all tenderness, she will die. If she survive, the tenderness will either be crushed out of her, or — and the outwards semblance is the same — crushed so deeply into her heart that it can never show itself more. The latter is perhaps the truest theory. She who has once been a woman, and ceased to be so, might at any moment become a woman again if there were only the magic touch to effect the transfiguration. (pp. 163-64)

Cooke is more inclined than Hawthorne to stress the enduring powers as opposed to the vulnerability of this capacity for tender love, essential to true womanhood. Thus in "Too Late," she states that God fills a woman's heart with "that love which every wife and mother needs, strong enough to endure all things, to be forever faithful and forever fresh" (*The Sphinx's Children*, p. 236). This enduring love, the product of the pure rather than the passionate heart, finds its apotheosis in "the eternal floods of mother-love, the only that never fails among all earthly passions" (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 387).

There is a persistent dissonance between narrative commentary and narrative acts in some of Cooke's stories, however, that manifests some of the contradictions in the ideology she is promoting. Narrative developments in her fiction make it clear that trusting to the enduring power of womanly love is often a case of making a virtue out of a necessity. In "Mrs. Flint's Married Experience," for instance, she presents a woman who enters into a second marriage to avoid being a burden to others, and who finally dies from a combination of overwork, undernour-

ishment and psychological abuse. As Judith Fetterly points out, Cooke's strength as a realist is apparent in this bleak story where the indirect "murder" of the unfortunate Mrs. Flint at the hands of Deacon Flint is condoned and even facilitated by the institutions of New England village life, and in particular the church (*Provisions*, p. 346).

In part, Mrs. Flint's tragedy is caused by the same feature in her heart that seems to contribute to Zenobia's tragedy. According to Cooke, "there is a strange hunger in the average female heart to be the one and only love of some other heart, ... a God-given instinct, no doubt, to make the monopoly of marriage dear and desirable, but like all other instincts, fatal if not fulfilled or followed." This instinct is "utterly wanting in men, who grasp the pluralities of passion as well as of office" (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 371). If necessary, a man like Deacon Flint "can marry six wives one after the other.... But it is quite another thing for a woman. Such a relation is not a movable feast to her: it is once for all" (p. 387). Hence the fortunate woman is the one who can satisfy her fatal instinct in a loving marriage to a benevolent man who lives a long time and who provides her with children to mother.

If circumstances are not cooperative, and a woman must face "that purgatory of women — old maidenhood," or that limbo, long widowhood, then she is happiest when her heart's yearnings are satisfied by showing affection to a relative's or a neighbor's child — like Miss Beulah in "Miss Beulah's Bonnet," who finds that she is "only a woman, after all" when her heart is "late-awakened" by a child's caresses (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 152). Charity is another avenue of fulfillment for what Hawthorne in *The Scarlet Letter* terms "the dreary burden of a heart unyielded, because unvalued and unsought" (p. 263). But Cooke tends to emphasize this outlet less than Hawthorne or Freeman, and even Hawthorne reveals its limitations when he portrays Hester's tendency to neglect her self-denying role as Able Angel to the community in order to assert her right to love and happiness as an Adulteress. Some women in Cooke's fiction, less directed by the passionate heart than Hester is, turn to pets to satisfy their heart's need for affection, as Miss Lucinda does in the story of that title. Even in such cases there are perils, as Miss Lucinda discovers when she is governed by the whims of a pet cat, and terrified by the exuberant exploits of a pet pig who disconcertingly grows. "If you will be an old maid, or if you can't help it, take to petting children, or donkeys, or even a respectable cow, but beware of domestic tyranny in

any shape but man's," Cooke coyly lectures her readers (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 49).

Cooke is quite definite about woman's dependence upon a male despot who is at best benevolent. Woman's nature is such that a happy state of complete independence is unattainable. This is the lesson of a didactic story about an energetic, self-assertive young woman named Polly, the protagonist of "Polly Mariner, Tailoress." Polly refuses to move in and care for a sick aunt after her sick father dies, insisting,

"I a'n't one o' them complyin' and good-natured critturs that'll give up, 'n' give up, 'n' give up, till they can't call their souls their own: them's the kind that's good to live in other folk's families, 'n' to go into the ministry; and they a'n't good for nothin' else. I want to do what I'm a mind to." (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 240)

After her father's death, Polly sets herself up as a tailoress and lives an active, successful life, only to die an old woman, bitterly repentant of her decision to try it on her own. The moral drawn by Cooke is that while "it may do for men to live their own lives, and die alone, with the courage or stoicism that is their birthright," this course is not for women. "The strongest, the best, the most audaciously independent of us, will be conscious, as age assaults us, of our weakness and helplessness" (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 260).

For Cooke, this emotional dependence upon man is made even more necessary by the intellectual frailty and physical helplessness of women. In intellectual endowment, the most a female can expect in Cooke's fiction is "a certain amount of sense for a girl" (*The Sphinx's Children*, p. 305). If she is truly exceptional, she may possess "that rarest of feminine gifts, — except one, — a logical mind" (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 244). Cooke's estimate of woman's physical capacity is even less complimentary than her view of woman's intellect:

It is a mortifying thing, and one that strikes at the roots of women's rights terribly sharp blows, but I must even own it, that one might as well try to live without one's bread and butter as without the aid of the dominant sex. When I see women split wood, unload coal-carts, move wash-tubs, and roll barrels of flour and apples handily down cellar-ways or up into carts, then I shall believe the theories of the strong-minded sisters; but as long as I see before me my own forlorn little hands, and sit down on the top stair to recover breath, and try in vain to lift the water-pitcher at table, just so long I shall be glad and thankful that there are men in the world,

and that half a dozen of them are my kindest and best friends. (*Somebody's Neighbors*, p. 42)

The logical connection between the strong minds of the feminist "sisters" and woman's physical weakness, here grotesquely exaggerated by Cooke, is not made at all clear. Priscilla in *The Blithedale Romance*, with her physical awkwardness and the "pleasant weakness" that Coverdale finds so endearing in her (p. 74), exemplifies the female feebleness that Cooke describes. Unlike Hawthorne, Cooke nowhere depicts women with the intellectual stature or physical vitality and strength of Hester or Zenobia.

It is evident that Cooke would have frankly deplored the proposition playfully made to Coverdale by Zenobia that the women of Blithedale, after they developed their "individual adaptations," might "go afield, and leave the weaker brethren to take our places in the kitchen" (p. 16). Her stories repeatedly endorse the idea that women can only improve their condition by accepting their proper sphere, and cultivating their God-given faculties of the heart until their powers of love and sympathy soften even the most heartless men. Cooke thus differs from the earlier generation of American women writers which Baym describes in *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-1870* — writers who "exalt heroines who have as much will and intelligence as emotion."¹³ While women like Polly Mariner who assert their competence and independence are forcefully humbled by Cooke, "heroines" like Lovey in "Amandar" and Lovey Mallory in "Freedom Wheeler's Controversy With Providence" receive their creator's unconditional approval and their narrative reward. Lovey, the heroine of "Amandar," is capable of loving "in that divine, almighty, absorbing, unselfish way, that counts not its own life dear unto itself in comparison with the lightest wish or want of the beloved" — in short, in loving in the same unquestioning way that Priscilla loves Hollingsworth. Lovey's love manifests itself in little domestic duties like sewing buttons, brushing suits, stitching collars, and hemming handkerchiefs, until finally the object of all these attentions — a man who has been the victim of unrequited love for another woman — sees the light and falls "manfully in love" with Lovey (*Somebody's Neighbors*, pp. 222, 227).

However, as "Mrs. Flint's Married Experience" and "Freedom Wheeler's Controversy With Providence" indicate, the softening influence of woman's heart is often an ineffectual means of overcoming the strong will of a headstrong man, preoccupied with his own fixed purpose — like Hollingsworth, with his "iron" way, in *The Blithedale Romance* (p. 68). Frequently, Cooke finds it necessary

as Hawthorne does to intensify such influence through the death of one or more women, or through threatening acts of Providence. Like Hollingsworth's, Freedom Wheeler's iron will cannot be softened or bent; it must be broken by a sudden and shattering blow that strikes at the very root of his obsessive purposes. Freedom's obsession is the patriarchal desire for self-duplication: to have a son whom he can name after himself. His first-born son dies at birth, however, along with its mother Lowly. Undaunted, Freedom remarries, but he falls ill when the first son by his second wife is born and the child is baptized as Tyagustus while he is incapacitated. When the next male heir appears, Freedom runs for the parson and has the child christened "Freedom" immediately after its birth. But just as he strides exultantly across the room with the newly named image of himself, he trips and the child is killed. This blow, accompanied by his second wife's tender "warm heart," is finally enough to halt Freedom in his iron way. Yet at what cost is his final conversion to the values of the heart achieved: the expenditure of three lives, and not one but two female hearts! Cooke's melodramatic use of Providence to reinforce the unreliable effects of female suffering reveals the highly unsatisfactory nature of her sentimental formula for the resolution of women's problems. In "Freedom Wheeler's Controversy With Providence" as in "Mrs. Flint's Married Experience," there is a conspicuous contradiction between the manifest ideological message of the writer and the latent significance of the narrative content.

Part III

Freeman, a much finer artist, shares Cooke's preoccupation with the rigid will warping the character of New Englanders. Indeed, the "deathless cramp of the will," as she describes it in the preface to *Pembroke*, is a recurrent theme in her fiction.¹⁴ Many of her stories portray a state of spiritual paralysis in the villagers of New England similar to, yet different from, the more enervated paralysis Joyce seeks to anatomize in *Dubliners*. This "disease" of the will, as Freeman alternatively describes it in *Pembroke*, involves the domination of the head over the heart. Unlike Cooke, and to a lesser extent Hawthorne, Freeman does not look to a larger, warmer heart in women to correct the tyranny of the will and intellect; nor does she see women as necessarily possessing a warmer heart—even though, as Pryse points out, "within a Puritan context, will was considered a masculine quality and heart, a feminine quality" (p. 324).

Freeman's interest in the human will results in numerous depictions of power-structured relationships that fol-

low a typical pattern: a headstrong, inflexible individual ruthlessly dominates a more malleable individual, who embodies the values and weaknesses of the heart. This pattern of wills may exist between two maiden sisters, as in "A Pot of Gold" and "Amanda and Love"; or between a niece and her meek old aunt, as in "An Innocent Gamester."¹⁵ The power-structured relationships Freeman depicts are not necessarily male-female ones, and where they do take the form of a courtship or marital relationship, the power structure may be the reverse of the expected. In *Pembroke*, for instance, the domineering Deborah Thayer, as vigorous and strong as her biblical namesake, rules her husband and her son with an inflexible and efficient regimen.

Because Freeman "re-visions" mid-nineteenth-century assumptions about "true" womanhood, the women in her stories are capable of existing independently of men and marriage. As she depicts them, the natural yearnings of a woman's heart are not necessarily yearnings for fulfillment in the love of one man. In "Louisa," the protagonist of the same name is not governed by the instincts of her heart, but by the rather idealistic "dreams" in her head. Because she values "her own maiden independence," Louisa rejects an offer of marriage from a man whom she does not particularly love, despite the fact that economic and social pressures lead her to desire the comfort of her own home (*A New England Nun*, p. 405). Like the other Louisa in the better-known story "A New England Nun," the heroine of "Louisa" is a notable example in American literature of what Kathleen Blake has called the tradition of "radical chastity" in nineteenth-century women's culture.¹⁶ The independence of maidenhood in Freeman's fiction does not lead inevitably to "that purgatory of women — old-maidhood," as Cooke puts it, because Freeman does not see the happiness of women as being utterly dependent upon men for any reason: emotional, intellectual or physical. The heroine of "Louisa" is independent in all three respects. She is happy although she is unmarried and without a suitor; she finds fulfillment in her occupation of teaching; and, finally, she reveals the absurdity of conventional notions that women are physically feeble when she temporarily loses her teaching position and turns to planting potatoes, splitting wood, raking hay and other chores in order to support herself, her mother, and her senile grandfather.

If unmarried women are miserable or pathetic in Freeman's stories, the root cause of their anguish is usually not some fatal female "instinct," but rather conventional assumptions that warp or violate their normal human needs and desires. One of the most damaging of these

assumptions is the notion of the long-suffering and enduring female heart — Coverdale's "bleeding" heart. Sylvia Crane in *Pembroke* is a "true" woman in conventional respects because she thinks only of her lover Richard during their eighteen long years of courtship. If she worries that time is fleeting by, as he repeatedly fails to come to the point of proposing, it is for his sake and not for her own. As Freeman wryly observes, "She had come, in the singleness of her heart, to regard herself in the light of a species of coin to be expended wholly for the happiness and interest of one man" (p. 28). Avoiding the obtrusive didacticism of Cooke or the narrative "theorizing" of Hawthorne, Freeman does not moralize at length about the negative effects of Sylvia's conventional notions. Instead, through psychologically convincing character and plot development, she reveals the self-destructiveness of such excessive self-expenditure for "one man." Sylvia's sister tells her that "women don't worry much on their own accounts, but they've got accounts," and the subsequent events in the novel show that such accounts must be recognized. Sylvia can spend only so much of herself for Richard before she reaches a state of spiritual bankruptcy and suffers a complete breakdown. Fortunately for her, external circumstances at last bring about Richard's proposal. But other self-denying women in Freeman's fiction are not so lucky. Maria Brewster in "Two Old Lovers" waits with "patient pity" for her suitor to reach the point of proposing until she is over sixty-eight and he is over seventy. The proposal finally comes as he is dying, and this gently comic story ends on a note of muted tragedy:

"Maria" — a thin, husky voice, that was more like a wind through dry corn-stocks, said — "Maria, I'm dyin', an' — I dyers meant to — have asked you — to — marry me."¹⁷

Freeman does not always criticize long-suffering love in women and portray its consequences negatively. In fact, several of her stories follow the plot of the faithfully waiting woman at last rewarded by marriage.¹⁸ She also by no means exalts the self-denying love of woman's heart, which can on occasion be admirable, into a reliable formula for improving woman's condition or a sure "passport" to the world's recognition and reward. Because of the power structure in late nineteenth-century New England society, many of her female characters are portrayed as being oppressed by iron-willed and dominating men. But their problems are not resolved through cultivating the values of the heart. Freeman's study of the human will seems to have led her to the conclusion that a balancing of wills is the healthiest solution for any problematic relationship characterized by domination and inequality.

Such a balancing is not always possible: many of her stories are renditions, in realistic prose, of the eternal dilemma poetically epitomized by William Blake in "The Clod and The Pebble." When a successful balancing of wills does occur in Freeman's fiction, it is usually brought about not by the submissive tenderness of the dominated partner, but by a sudden unexpected assertion on the part of the weak-willed individual.¹⁹

Freeman's most memorable characters are not strong-willed individuals like Cooke's Freedom Wheeler and Hawthorne's Hollingsworth, but meek and submissive individuals who unexpectedly flare up into the defiant expression of a will suppressed through long years. Rebellion of this sort is a pervasive theme in her fiction and, as Pryse notes, usually the rebellion is female, as suppressed women rise against men, social institutions and social conventions (p. 324). There is Sarah Penn in "The Revolt of Mother," for example, who after forty years in the "wilderness" of an old, cramped dwelling sees the promised land of a new house disappearing as her husband Adoniram erects an impressive and unnecessary barn on the very site selected for the house. When Adoniram leaves to buy more livestock to fill this barn, Sarah acts and installs herself, her family, and her furniture in the new structure. Even the minister cannot persuade her to repent of this bold move before Adoniram returns to collapse in shock at the unexpected rebellion (*A New England Nun*). Although Freeman, more cynical of the possibility of such creative rebelliousness as she grew older, later repudiated this story, the pattern evident in "The Revolt of Mother" shapes other stories that she did not repudiate.²⁰

"A Village Singer" is one of the most moving of these stories. Its heroine Candace Whitcomb, the lead singer in the village choir for forty years, is deposed at a surprise party with the gift of a photograph album because her voice has started to crack a little. William Emmons, the male tenor three years older than Candace, and the minister, who has preached for forty years with a hesitation in his articulation approaching a speech impediment, are not pensioned off with photograph albums. Accordingly, Candace is enraged by an act she sees as ungracious, unChristian and unjust. Taking advantage of the fact that her house is next to the church's open windows, she waits until the new choir leader begins her first solo and then begins singing a different hymn, accompanied by her own organ. When the minister approaches this old rebel to attempt a gentle rebuke, he is overwhelmed as he faces a woman who has lived as quietly as he has for forty years, and yet all that time held within her "the elements of revolution."

To this obscure woman, kept relentlessly by circumstances in a narrow track, singing in the village choir had been as much as Italy was to Napoleon — and now on her island of exile she was still showing fight.

Now “the resolution and the ambition” always in her “appeared raging over her whole self” (*A New England Nun*, pp. 28-31). As she invites the minister in, she points out with “vicious irony” that the photograph album “makes a nice footstool,” and says, “An’ I ain’t particular to get the dust off my shoes before I use it neither” (p. 36). Candace’s fiery defiance is short-lived. She survives one more male visitor — her nephew, engaged to the new lead singer — and then dies in a fever. But she does not fade meekly out of life with a whimper of submission. Endowing her nephew and his fiancée with all her worldly goods, she asks the new soloist to sing “Jesus, lover of my soul” while she listens with a “holy and radiant expression.” When the hymn is over, this expression does not “disappear,” but Candace nonetheless looks up and says, “You flatted a little on — soul.” And, Freeman observes, “it was like a secondary glimpse of the old shape of a forest tree through the smoke and flame through a transfiguring fire the instant before it falls” (p. 36).

Unlike Cooke, Freeman does not make a practice of humbling women who exhibit spirit and intellect, and of exalting malleable, lowly women. Her most impressive female characters are not nestling partridges like Lovey in “Amandar,” but fierce rebels like Sarah Penn or Candace Whitcomb. Another such rebel is Hetty Fifield, a destitute old maid who goes about finding herself a job and a home by installing herself in the church as its new sexton — and staying, despite male rumblings to the contrary (“A Church Mouse,” *A New England Nun*). Freeman also frequently portrays strong, resolute young women like Delia Thayer in “A Conquest of Humility,” who stands “like a young pine-tree, as if she had all the necessary elements of support in her own self” (*A Humble Romance*, p. 417). Her stories depict not the popularly praised virtues of the female heart, but virtues not conventionally associated with women: intelligence, resolute self-confidence, courage, independence of mind, and physical competence. When the capacity for tender and altruistic love is favorably portrayed in her fiction, it may be praised in a man as well as a woman. In “Joy,” William Doane, a man who is all heart and a true “home-maker,” patiently waits for the ambitious Grace Edwards to return from the city and her work as a milliner. William waits for Grace through the lonely years “with a sort of sublimity of unselfishness,” an unselfishness reinforced by his quiet faith that “the love in his heart made of it a home and a

nest, and sooner or later birds fly home.”²¹ William is not disappointed. Grace does return to marry him.

Thus Freeman depicts men who achieve success and happiness through exercising the virtues of the heart in the home, as well as women who improve their condition by exerting their will and intellect beyond the home. A mother rebels and wins her point; an old choir singer defies her organized obsolescence and triumphs even in death; a little old maid outrages the community’s male authorities by deciding that she will become sexton, and remains to set the bells in the church ringing; a man makes a home of his heart and waits patiently for his beloved to feel its affectionate influence. Such unexpected developments in plot and character could only have had a subversive impact on the conventional assumptions about female and male nature accepted by many of Freeman’s readers, an impact no doubt reinforced by Freeman’s depiction of mythically androgynous figures such as “Christmas Jenny” in the story of the same name.²²

At the close of *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne describes Hester comforting wronged women by assuring them of “her firm belief, that, at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it, in Heaven’s own time, a new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness.” “The angel and apostle” of this revelation “must be a woman, indeed, but lofty, pure, and beautiful” — not stained by sin as Hester is. This divine She will show “how sacred love should make us happy, by the truest test of a life successful to such an end!” (p. 263). This passage, as marked by halting qualifications and impossible conditions as Coverdale’s “bleeding passport” exhortation, is another indication of how much Hawthorne’s vision was limited by the ideology of his age associating women with the sphere of the heart — despite the subtlety with which he sometimes subverted that ideology. Like Cooke, Hawthorne sees any renovating influence that women may have as arising from the “sacred love” of the heart. Freeman, no “lofty, pure, and beautiful apostle,” and no example in her own life of how “sacred love should make us happy” — indeed, her own late marriage was miserably unhappy — is hardly the angel of revelation prophesied by Hester.²³ Yet, it is Freeman, more than either of her predecessors, who opens new “avenues” in the world for both sexes, within the constraints of a realism that is often uncompromising in its harshness.

NOTES

1. *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen*, Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1984, p. xiv. Poovey's concept of ideology is more useful given my purposes here than a Marxist concept such as Frederic Jameson's because, as Jane Marcus notes, Jameson's "Marxist pluralism" does not deal with gender. See Marcus, "Storming the Toolshed," *Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology*, Nannerl O. Keohane, Michelle Z. Rosaldo, and Barbara Gelpi (eds.), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968, pp. 220-21.
2. *Tennyson: Poems and Plays*, T. Herbert Warren and Frederick Page (eds.), London: Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 188.
3. David Stineback, "Gender, Hawthorne, and Literary Criticism," *Mosaic*, 18 (Spring 1985), p. 95.
4. Nina Baym, *The Shape of Hawthorne's Career*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1976, p. 199. On the views of Richard Chase and other Hawthorne critics, see Stineback's summary of criticism dealing with Hawthorne's feminism, p. 93.
5. *The Blithedale Romance and Fanshawe*, The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Vol. 3, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1964, p. 123. All subsequent reference to Hawthorne's works are to the Centenary Edition. On the parallels between Zenobia and Margaret Fuller, see Oscar Cargill, "Nemesis and Nathaniel Hawthorne," *PMLA*, 52 (1937), pp. 848-62; Austin Warren's response to Cargill, *PMLA*, 54 (1939); and Paul John Eakin, "Margaret Fuller, Hawthorne, James, and Sexual Politics," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 75 (1976), pp. 323-38. I can find no direct evidence of Hawthorne's reading *The Princess*, but it is probable that he would have been familiar with it, given its immediate popularity, the fact that Hawthorne's publisher (Ticknor, Reed and Fields) was also Tennyson's American publisher, and the interest Hawthorne expressed on visiting England in meeting Tennyson. See James R. Mellow, *Nathaniel Hawthorne in His Times*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980, pp. 312, 439, 446.
6. Elizabeth A. Meese, *Crossing the Double-Cross: The Practice of Feminist Criticism*, Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1986, p. 21.
7. Much of the short fiction of both writers was reprinted in 1969 in the Garrett Press American Short Story Series. For bibliographies and summaries of the existing criticism on Freeman, see Marjorie Pryse, *Selected Short Stories of Mary E. Wilkins Freeman*, New York: Norton, 1983, pp. vii-xix, 315-346; on Cooke, see Judith Fetterly, *Provisions: A Reader from Nineteenth-Century Women*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985, pp. 343-49. The gender bias underlying the exclusion of writers like Freeman and Cooke from the American canon has been amply documented and analysed. See Meese, pp. 19-38; Pryse, pp. vii-xix; Fetterly's "Introduction" to *Provisions*; and the essays by Nina Baym, Annette Kolodny, and Jane P. Tompkins reprinted in *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory*, Elaine Showalter (ed.), New York: Pantheon Books, 1985.
8. Mary Suzanne Schriber, "Justice to Zenobia," *New England Quarterly*, 55 (March 1982), p. 64; and Baym, *The Shape of Hawthorne's Career*, p. 202. Baym's view of Coverdale is more mixed than Schriber's; she sees Coverdale as a failed artist, but not as inevitably unreliable in his perceptions.
9. See Winston Collins, "The Princess: The Education of the Prince," *Victorian Poetry*, 11 (1973), p. 287; W. David Shaw, *Tennyson's Style*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1976, p. 126; and my essay, "Gender Inversion and Genre Subversion: *Aurora Leigh* and *The Princess*," *Victorian Poetry*, 25 (Summer 1987), pp. 101-27.
10. T. Walter Herbert, Jr. "Nathaniel Hawthorne, Una Hawthorne, and *The Scarlet Letter*: Interactive Selfhoods and the Cultural Construction of Gender," *PMLA*, 103 (May 1988), pp. 285, 291, 295.
11. "Sally Parson's Duty," *The Sphinx's Children and Other People*, New York: Garrett Press, American Short Story Series, 1969, p. 411.
12. *Somebody's Neighbors*, New York: Garrett Press, American Short Story Series, 1969, pp. 17, 26.
13. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978, p. 25.
14. *Pembroke*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1899, p. i.
15. In *A New England Nun and Other Stories*, Ridgewood, New Jersey: The Gregg Press, 1967.
16. Kathleen Blake, *Love and the Woman Question in Victorian Literature: The Art of Self-Postponement*, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1983, pp. ix-x.
17. *A Humble Romance and Other Stories*, New York: Garrett Press, 1969, p. 36.
18. See "Calla-Lilies and Hannah," "A Discovered Pearl," "Robins and Hammers," "Cinnamon Roses," and "A Pot of Gold" in *A New England Nun and A Humble Romance*.
19. More rarely, as in the subtle "A Conflict Ended," a relationship at an impasse is made happier by the freely chosen compliance of one person locked with another in a struggle of wills. See Pryse's discussion of this story, pp. 324-25.
20. In 1917, Freeman said of "The Revolt of Mother": "There never was in New England a woman like mother. If there had been she certainly would not have moved into the palatial barn ... she simply would have lack the nerve. She would have lacked the imagination.... I sacrificed truth when I wrote that story." Cited by Alice Garden Brand, "Mary Wilkins Freeman: Misanthropy as Propaganda," *New England Quarterly*, 50 (1977), p. 91.
21. *The Givers*, New York: Garrett Press, American Short Story Series, 1969, pp. 144-46. Characters such as the hero of "Joy" call in question Brand's assertion that "Freeman's men are the nadir of humanity" (p. 84).
22. See Sarah W. Sherman, "The Great Goddess in New England: Mary Wilkins Freeman's 'Christmas Jenny,'" *Studies in Short Fiction*, 17 (1980), pp. 157-64.
23. See Pryse's brief biography of Freeman in *Selected Stories*, pp. xiv-xvii.