FEMALE METAPHYSICAL REBELLION
IN THE WORKS OF GEORGE ELIOT AND NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philsophy, The City University of New York

1995

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

3/31/95
Date

Chair of Examining Committee

3/31/95
Date

Executive Officer

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

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Eliot and Hawthorne share many similarities. They deal with similar subjects, such as the need for societal reform and humankind's desire for transcendent truth. They address similar problems, like the individual's need to create a unique identity for him/herself while, simultaneously, coexisting as a member of his/her community. The role, purpose and effect of personal and group conduct, of morality, are explored throughout their novels, short stories and poems. Specifically, they are interested in the relationship between the moral codes of conduct and gender. As they see it, humankind has developed a society around separate moral codes for each gender. The special codes imposed on women prevent them from acting, speaking and living as they so desire. They prevent them from enjoying full personhood. Female metaphysical rebellion arises as a result of this inequality and out of a disquiet of the female spirit. Female metaphysical rebels must first violate mankind's moral laws before they can achieve freedoms that

are automatically granted to men as a privilege of their gender. After they violate these moral laws, they may then join with all of humanity and move through the other stages of metaphysical rebellion, namely isolation, disintegration and reintegration. The goal of metaphysical rebellion is to ascend beyond the mortal world in order to gain truths about it. Chapter One explores the similarities between Eliot and Hawthorne and discusses nineteenth century social conditions in England and America. Chapter Two examines and defines metaphysical rebellion in the context of humankind's need for transcendent truth. Chapter Three discusses Eliot and Hawthorne's male rebels. Chapter Four evaluates the role of boundaries and the specific limitations imposed on females. Chapter Five analyzes females who arrogate men's rights and privileges to themselves. Chapter Six considers the motivations for female metaphysical rebellion. Chapter Seven analyzes the relationship between women and nature. Chapter Eight examines women and words. Chapter Nine discusses the special role of the artist. The dissertation concludes with Chapter Ten which explores the ultimate goals of female metaphysical rebellion, namely the movement beyond gender and mortality as preliminary steps toward the attainment of transcendent truth.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

To look at Eliot and Hawthorne's works simultaneously is to find that they share many similarities. They deal with similar subjects, such as the need for societal reform and humankind's desire for transcendent truth. They address similar problems, like the individual's need to create a unique identity for him/herself while, simultaneously, coexisting as a member of his/her community. They subscribe to similar philosophical and theological approaches, approaches that are grounded in Christian doctrine, whether evangelical or puritanical in kind. They infuse their landscapes, whether in New England or St. Ogg's, with optimistic alternatives to the existing, and often discouraging circumstances, of English and American society. As both writers acknowledge the need for changing their respective societies, they hope to participate in effecting those changes through the power of story-telling. Their fiction, in reality, are the educative tools and the means through which they hope to establish a new world order.

The questions they raise, the problems they consider

invariably lead to moral discussions. The role, purpose and effect of personal and group conduct, of morality, are explored throughout their novels, short stories and poems. Specifically, they are interested in the relationship between the moral codes of conduct and gender. As they see it, humankind has developed a society around separate moral codes for each gender. These different standards affect every facet of life in society and are largely responsible for the inequalities we find there.
Of particular interest to me here, though, are the underlying assumptions that led Eliot and Hawthorne to write such fiction in the first place. These assumptions are manifested in Eliot and Hawthorne's creation of plots, development of characters and in the recurrent themes we find in all of their works, whether novel, short story, or poetry.

In order to examine these previously unexplored correspondences, I will consider Eliot and Hawthorne's shared concerns about humanity which are, at least in part, a result of their living and writing in a time of tumultuous change. Although Eliot lives and writes in England and Hawthorne in America, they live in culturally corresponding countries, countries experiencing various kinds of transformations. In both England and America,

there are rapid developments in technology and a movement toward industrialization. These advances offered the promise of a better society and increased wealth. But they also generated feelings of insecurity as craftsmanship was replaced with mass production and workers moved from small, personal, countryside work environments to the large, impersonal cities with factories. The unsettling effects of these changes and the inequalities that resulted from them coalesced in a call for reform. Perhaps Miles Coverdale, who sets out for a new and better life in Blithedale, speaks for nineteenth century America and England, when he says:

> We had individually found one thing or another to quarrel with in our past life, and were pretty well agreed as to the inexpediency of lumbering along with the old system any further. As to what should be substituted there was much less unanimity...My hope was, that, between theory and practice, a true and available mode of life might be struck out (Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance 85).

For Eliot and Hawthorne, for England and America, the world was on the verge of changing and the writers, as

products of these similar cultures, are innovators and facilitators for changes they believe are necessary. In the course of my study, I intend to examine the relationship between the writers and the role of science and the crisis of faith, as these issues were prominent in England and America and are central to our understanding of the fiction.

Not only do these writers share the same moment in literary history, live in culturally corresponding countries, follow similar philosophical and theological teachings but they also know of each other. While their knowledge of one another is documented in previous research, it is important to mention here, as it adds understanding of the need for this study. Eliot was cognizant of comparisons with Hawthorne. In a letter she wrote to John Blackwood on September 27, 1880, she asks, "'I wonder if you know who is the writer of the N. British, in which I am reviewed along with Hawthorne.'" Her interest in Hawthorne is again seen in an entry in Lewes' diary which says that they "...[Eliot and Lewes] read Hawthorne's first romance aloud together." And finally, we learn of her enjoyment of Hawthorne's writings when she proclaims that "'Hawthorne is a grand favourite of mine'" (qtd. in Dejong 3).

Our substantiation of Hawthorne's knowledge of Eliot is not as well documented, but still provides us with adequate proof. For example, while Hawthorne was in England, he spoke with Eliot's close friend, Caroline Bray, and asks her about Eliot's interests, background and education. Referring to her as "'the Adam Bede lady,'" he is curious about her vast knowledge of "'...English rural life'" (qtd. in DeJong 3). His inquiries and his knowledge of Eliot's works are conscious reminders of his acknowledgment of a connection between them.

I intend to examine the religious and philosophic interests of Eliot and Hawthorne as I believe they form the foundation for much of the fiction. Both writers have a long history of interest in both religion and philosophy. We know, for example, that the young Eliot and Hawthorne each enjoyed an intense religious period. These experiences left indelible impressions, ones which we find in the literature. Although both emerge from their immersion in religious doctrine, they remain staunchly "spiritual" throughout their lives.

By "spiritual" I mean that they are concerned with matters that are above the mortal and beyond the material. I also mean that they internalized a set of beliefs about the nature of the universe, the role and purpose of

humankind, and held clear definitions of "good" and "bad." For now, I will define their "spiritual" interests as living philosophies which probed into matters of soul and inner life. Eliot and Hawthorne bare these living philosophies to us through characters' testimonies, allegories and narrative attestations. I plan to examine these similarities as well as others which will be unveiled progressively in the dissertation. I choose Eliot and Hawthorne instead of other nineteenth century writers because I feel they provide a good parallel, with both a male and female writer dealing with rebellion. In fact, I will argue that they deal with female rebellion like no one else in the period.

Although many critics have explored the correspondences between Eliot and Hawthorne no one, until now, has done a comprehensive and comparative study of the two. Some critics, like Norton in 1859 mentions their similar "wit and humor" (qtd. in DeJong 5). In 1910, Crothers compared Hawthorne and Eliot's style in handling "moral detachment":

> 'In his treatment of sin there is always a sense of moral detachment. We are not made to see, as George Eliot makes us see, the struggles with temptation,-- the soul, like a wild thing, seeing the

> tempting bait and drawing nearer to the trap. Hawthorne begins after the deed is done. He shows us the wild thing taken in a trap which sees the trapper coming from the wood' (qtd. in Stokes 100-101).

His study analyzes Hawthorne's technique and concludes that Eliot's is more active, allowing the reader the opportunity to see into the internal conflicts of characters. Mario Praz employs a similar method when he compares Tito Melema with Ethan Brand, noting their shared "soul debasement"(102).

Others have examined the authors' styles, plots, themes and characters. Mary Lou Gosselink Dejong, for example, mentions their shared view of reality and labels Hawthorne the "romancer" and Eliot the "realist" (9). Her study shows that both writers, whether working from a psychological or sociological perspective, believe in the inseparability of good and evil. DeJong's study sheds light on technique and makes a sound argument for Eliot and Hawthorne's motivation but it fails to delve into the areas of religion or philosophy, areas that are a natural, and surely a needed, outgrowth of concerns she raises in her study. Ellin Jane Ringler too examines questions of good and evil in Eliot and Hawthorne. In "The Problem of Evil: A Correlative Study in the Novels of Nathaniel

Hawthorne and George Eliot," she discusses the psychological effects of choice on the individual. Her approach is philosophic and weighs the moral consciousness of the authors and their works. Calling them "moralists of the imagination,"(9) Ringler adds that religion, most notably the influence of Calvin, is important to our understanding of the authors. She takes a moral view, suggesting that we live in a world without grace. Her study offers a valuable theological dimension, one certainly needed in studying the works, but it fails to support or even suggest the different effect of Calvinism on men and women. It concentrates exclusively on the novels, excluding troves of valuable insight offered in short stories and poetry.

Some critics have looked at the special case of women in the literature, like Joyce Williams Warren and Christine David, who approach it from a sociological perspective, evaluating women's roles and drawing conclusions about opportunities and rights. For example, Warren, in "The American Narcissus and the Women as a Non-Person: A Study in Nineteenth Century American Literature," argues, as I shall, that American culture focuses on individualism and that individualism is a decidedly male goal in Western culture.

Therefore, women in American literature are relegated

to minor roles and, with the exception of Hester Prynne, are treated in a "non-person" (985A) status. David, on the other hand, suggests that women's roles in Eliot and Hawthorne are limited because of the Victorian attitudes prevalent at that time. David's study concentrates on Eliot's cultural interests, with scant attention to the psychological implications and less to the authorial attitudes that develop such a fiction. Eliot and Hawthorne's works call out for a more comprehensive comparative study.

As I subscribe to no particular school and am not committed to any one orientation, I will consider all of these elements in my dissertation using whatever I feel is necessary. This eclectic approach will allow me to draw from psychology, theology, philosophy, anthropology and any other discipline that will add breadth to my study and hopefully promise a better understanding of the material.

Chapter 2

Metaphysical Rebellion

Virginia Jill Dix Ghnassia is surely right when she observes that rebellion has "...been in the shadow of mankind since there was more than one man" (13). The nineteenth century was no exception and, in fact, was a prolific period for the literature of rebellion. Conrad and Melville, for example, dealt with it in many of their works. Some writers who were interested in changing actual living conditions, focussed on sociological rebellion, while some, addressing the ways in which governing systems were organized, analyzed political forms of rebellion. Others yet studied psychological forms of rebellion, correlating the inner lives of individuals with exterior manifestations and effects of psychic life.

Metaphysical rebellion is unlike sociological, political, or even psychological rebellion, though it frequently includes them all. It is unlike feminist rebellion which aims to ensure that women have equal rights with men. Metaphysical rebellion aims to achieve a higher and better form of existence for all of humankind, without regard to gender. It is unlike social rebellion

which is often temporal and occurs at a specific point in human history. Metaphysical rebellion is eternal as it resides beyond mortal time and space. It is unlike political rebellion because it is general and does not address a specific political problem or cause. It strives to eliminate all injustices, all inequalities that face humankind and not just problems that arise out of a particular ideology or political system. Metaphysical rebellion sees all of humankind's systems, social, political and otherwise, as flawed by man-made gender limitations, sexual restrictions and societal confinements.

Metaphysical rebellion is an action or a series of actions by one individual, a special member of the community, who acts on behalf of all other people in the community and the world. But in order to effect a metaphysical act, the individual must have achieved the level of full personhood. As I see it, full personhood is reached only by those individuals who are able to act and speak with total freedom, unrestrained by mortal laws, by sex or by gender. As society has been developed by mankind, men are naturally afforded the freedoms of personhood I speak of here. They are allowed freedom of speech, the right to education, the license to act as

they desire. All systems of human government support and enforce man's right to full personhood, and promote him to reach his full human potential. These rights are, therefore, immediately accessible to all men, by virtue of their gender.

In order for women to achieve the state of full personhood, she must first break through the special and additional limitations that mankind, society has assigned to her as a result of her gender. She, unlike her male counterparts, is not afforded immediate access, not granted the rights and privileges that should be granted to all humans. In order for her to achieve the status of full personhood, she must first break mankind's rules, violate the moral codes that society has assigned to her. She does so in an effort to disentangle herself from the gender-prison imposed on her by mortal society. This is unique to women and, as I will show later in my discussion, an additional boundary which she must cross on her journey toward attaining transcendent truth.

The goal of metaphysical rebellion, then, is to attain a higher truth, one that is beyond mortal man's immediate concerns and theories. By attaining this truth, humankind will gain insight into the role and purpose of human existence and begin to understand the mysteries of

life. This allows humankind to envision alternate realities, to consider other ways of living. It allows humankind to begin a new world, a world that is gender-free, a world that permits all of its inhabitants immediate access to full personhood, allowing each one the right to act and speak as they desire. By so doing, it reestablishes society at a new and higher level.

Metaphysical rebellion is, essentially, spiritual in nature. That is why metaphysical rebellion almost defies definition because it resides in the motivation for action and not in words. It reveals itself to us in a wide range of ways, from sweeping, dramatic actions to the sotto voce of thoughts and reflections. Eliot and Hawthorne understand this form of rebellion well, and their literary landscapes are travel guides for them which assist in our locating their occurrences and their proponents.

To reach the goal of metaphysical rebellion, the special, the chosen individuals must pass through a series of stages, with each one affording greater freedom. It is here that the major distinction between male and female metaphysical rebellion occurs. For male metaphysical rebels, the process occurs in three stages, namely isolation, disintegration and reintegration.

Isolation or separation from the community is needed

so that he is free from its rules and laws. In this transitional state, the division between mind and body disintegrates. This enables him to ascend to a new level of existence, one that is not encumbered by the body or limited by the mind. The rebel gains insight into the truths which are withheld from ordinary man. He is reborn and reintegrated into his society. As a result of this transformation, he and his community are changed and together they possess the power to forge new ways of living on Earth.

For the female rebel, the process occurs in four stages, namely violation, isolation, disintegration and reintegration. Before she is able to commit the metaphysical act on behalf of all humanity, she must first gain access to the ranks of full personhood. This requires her to break through the boundaries that society has established for women. She does this by violating any one of a number of man-made rules that are imposed because she is a woman.

Some female metaphysical rebels violate the educational guidelines prescribed for women, others the rules that seek to confine women to marriage. Others still break moral codes of conduct and engage in illicit sexual affairs. The means vary from individual to

individual but the effects of the violations are the same. The violations allow female metaphysical rebels access to the rights and privileges immediately available to men, the rights of personhood. Once there, she then continues through the other three stages of metaphysical rebellion, isolation, disintegration and reintegration.

As I define it, every rebellious act can be metaphysical or non-metaphysical depending on why it is done and the spirit in which it is done. For example, there are non-metaphysical sexual rebels, like Hetty and Rosamond and metaphysical sexual rebels like Maggie and Hester; there are non-metaphysical sociological rebels like Tito and metaphysical sociological rebels like Zenobia; there are non-metaphysical religious rebels like Piero di Cosimo and metaphysical religious rebels like Dorothea.

Metaphysical rebels are those individuals who, because of how they perceive the world, are unable to accept mortal limitations. They want to know the purpose of life, experience the divine power of creating life from inanimate substances, to replace God's powers with man's powers. They are not the overreachers who want to possess power like God in order to gain power over the earth and humankind. Their goals are loftier and their interests

are more altruistic. They want to achieve a level of perfection, a paradisaic existence on Earth for the good of all humankind. Their philosophic attitude is a "rejection of the given conditions of life" (Schock 6). These conditions may be circumstantial, like Dorothea's bad marriage, experiential, like Puritanical life in New England or psychical, like Latimer's psychic discomfort, and each may or may not be metaphysical. Metaphysical rebels are people who seek freedom by breaking through the material and mortal limitations imposed by society. Metaphysical rebels seek other forms of existence, ones which will, as Ghnassia says, make them "impregnable to the assault of reality" (Ghnassia 8).

In Fanshawe, Ellen commits a metaphysically rebellious act when the stranger presents himself to her and invites her to fish. The stranger represents a threat to Ellen whose physical and moral well-being is placed in jeopardy by his mere presence. The stranger holds the power to physically assault her or, at worst, cast doubt on her moral virtue. In response to this risky invitation, one that is usually examined by critics within a sociological framework, Ellen suppresses and overcomes her desire to "cry out for help" and to "fly" from the situation (Hawthorne, Fanshawe 27). Instead, like the

many metaphysical rebels we discover in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction, she confronts the situation and remains, all the while convincing herself that she is safe. Her refusal to leave and seek refuge and her defiance of an unknown and potentially dangerous force are indicative of that metaphysical spirit. It, also, should not be confused with psychological rebellion because it is motivated by the force of her spirit, not by fear and unconscious anxieties. Moreover, she takes the action as a renunciation of all mortal limitations as represented by the strange man.

The metaphysical rebel is unable to comply with societal regulation, unwilling and unable to compromise his/her own moral sense in order to achieve acceptance from society. Such rebels are driven by their own sense of right and wrong. As a representative of other metaphysical rebels, Ellen sets herself apart from humanity as she begins her metaphysically rebellious journey. Metaphysical rebellion requires this separation from society because it is a solitary route that leads its followers away from the norms and mores of society. In separation, in isolation, the spirit is able to flourish, to gain insight into the real purpose of human existence. So, isolation is one of the markers that identify

metaphysical rebels throughout the fiction.

Separations may occur physically, psychologically or emotionally. For example, Dorothea makes choices which set the stage for inevitable separations. When Dorothea decides to marry Casaubon, she decides to change her daily existence, to trade it for the knowledge which she hopes Casaubon holds. This marriage, she believes, will allow her to "...live continually in the light of a mind that could reverence" (Eliot, Middlemarch 67). Ultimately, the marriage offers little knowledge from Casaubon but more the cultivation of wisdom which Dorothea earns from her unhappiness and her disappointment in Casaubon. The separation forces Dorothea to confront herself, as all metaphysical rebels must, to become more committed to fulfilling her goals of making improvements for humankind.

Dorothea's motivation for making improvements for humankind are manifestations of a spiritual imperative, a drive which extends beyond the present social, mortal and temporary problems confronting society. When, for example, Dorothea meets with Dr. Lydgate to discuss her husband's illness, he wonders if she has heard about the "New Hospital" (477). He raises the subject because he remembers her earlier interest "in the health of the poor" (477). She responds to him from the spirit, from her

genuine interest in humankind. "'I shall be quite grateful to you if you will tell me how I can help you make things a little better'" (477). Dorothea wants a better world for all people, rich and poor, men and women. She derives spiritual satisfaction from doing good and wonders "'How happy you [Dr. Lydgate] must be, to know things that you feel sure will do great good! I wish I could awake with that knowledge every morning'" (479).

Dorothea's concern is neither caught in history nor seduced by the future. It is beyond nineteenth century working condition concerns and unaffected by man's laws or legislative acts. It certainly embodies all of these elements but it is broader than any of them. Her concerns, and the motivations which produce and propel her into action, are metaphysical by which I mean eternal, universal transcendent impulses which pull her to truth. Her personal history, especially her period of separation, allows her to realize that "...the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts" (896). Although Dorothea makes a mistake in marrying Casaubon, she is attracted to him by the spirit which seeks ascendancy and a higher life. She believes that he possesses a spirit like hers and that his intelligence will allow the two of them to climb to new heights

spiritually. "Here is a man who could understand the higher inward life and with whom there could be some spiritual communion" (44). She is mistaken about Casaubon's spirit and his intellectual capabilities, but her remarks reveal her spiritual longings.

For Ellen and Dorothea, separation from society includes taking risks with one's life. As representative metaphysical rebels, they possess special characteristics which identify them as individuals whose ethical and personal imperatives drive them to insights into human nature.

As a frame for my study, I will use the ideas of Albert Camus which study rebellion and are, for my purposes, the most pertinent philosophical perspective. Although Camus writes in the twentieth century and Eliot and Hawthorne in the nineteenth, I hold that Camus, in The Rebel especially, writes at the end of a period that had begun long before. The issues and concerns that Camus deals with are not in contrast to the nineteenth century but really a continuation of it. The ideas and sentiments that we now call modernism were just as true, embryonically at least, in Eliot's and Hawthorne's period as they are today. Camus writes philosophic discourse, therefore, of the attitudes and beliefs out of which

Eliot and Hawthorne wrote fiction.

Some say that Camus is unsympathetic to the metaphysical rebel, that he believes these rebels are aware of their own folly and that metaphysical rebellion is nothing more than an absurd reaction to an absurd world. Such critics hold that metaphysical rebellion is only a confused or extreme form of rebellion whose lofty and multi-dimensional goals are as unattainable as they are foolish. But I argue for a different view of the case. Although Camus may, on the surface, seem cynical about the metaphysical rebel, he sees him/her as a hero, as one who is able to do what few others can do.

Camus defines metaphysical rebellion clearly, accepts the contradictions inherent in it and, perhaps most importantly, understands the source and consequences of the rebellion and the metaphysical rebel himself. He understands the depth and range of this rebellion. In Camus: A Critical Examination, Sprintzen says that for Camus, "To rebel is to put oneself at risk. Each revolt is a break from the normal, challenging the status quo with demands for a new order" (128). Camus asserts that metaphysical rebellion is not about what others think, not about the vain subjectivity of the masses, but rather about the individual and his/her values. He proclaims

that, "...every act of rebellion tacitly evokes a value" (Camus 14). For example, when Lydgate's reputation is endangered by the possibility that he took a bribe, Dorothea asks the community to support him. She wonders "What do we live for if not to make life less difficult for each other?" (789). Our role and purpose on Earth is to attempt to make it a better place, but we can only do this if we are committed to the cause. Born of value, concerned with humankind's role and fate, metaphysical rebellion and the rebels that are imbued with its force, seek to remove the barriers that prevent us from knowing underlying truths.

As various situations present themselves in the fiction, the spirit and definition of metaphysical rebellion becomes more clear to us, "The spirit of rebellion can exist only in a society where theoretical equality conceals great factual inequalities" (141). These problems test the human capacity for sympathy, sympathy for the often absurd human condition in which we find ourselves. Through our sympathy and the resulting acceptance of absurdity as an inescapable condition of humankind, we are able to rise above petty, mortal and often violent tendencies and attain a new and different kind of knowledge and existence.

This knowledge becomes a vehicle with which we can change both ourselves and the world around us. For this reason, metaphysical rebellion offers a "tempered hopefulness" (Male 19). It is "tempered" because the metaphysical rebel understands that society's confinements are necessary for the co-existence of groups of people, it is "tempered" by the experience of living. Yet it holds the hope for improvement of the current condition, even if that does not lead to a perfect existence. Metaphysical rebellion is a mature reaction to circumstances, a seasoned form of non-violent revolution. As Camus says, "...rebellion without claiming to solve everything, can at least confront its problems" (Camus 305). And of the rebel, he says, "...[the metaphysical rebel realizes that he is] laying claim to a human situation in which all the answers are human, in other words, formulated in reasonable terms" (140).

Metaphysical rebellion is only for those who dare not to be seduced into conformity, for those whose spirits involuntarily recoil from blind consent. Camus declares that humanity must identify and parade problems in full view of all others so that they may be addressed. Metaphysical rebels are, by their nature, ethical transvaluists whose imperatives for action gain direction

and force from their unique and unencumbered spirits.

For these reasons, and others which I will explore later in my discussion, I view metaphysical rebellion as I believe Camus did, as a hopeful and transformative power. That is why John Cruickshank says that "to revolt against the absurd is to rediscover oneself" (96). If the existing condition, reality, is absurd, then revolt is one vehicle for challenging the absurd, the existing reality. This process, the course of metaphysical rebellion, is a journey toward a new way of life, toward a reconceptualization of reality, to the rebirth of a revitalized existence. For example, Zenobia attempts to reestablish society in the experimental community of Blithedale. And although it ultimately fails, its temporary success and the changes that it has on its participants is proof that one can reinvent society.

For Camus, metaphysical rebellion is also a nostalgic experience as it looks to the past in order to bring order, find meaning and make peace in the present. It is nostalgic in looking to the past with bittersweet sorrow for what has been lost; it is nostalgic in holding hope for the unforeseeable future. It uses the past to carve out a new direction for the hope for change. This

potential for change is the reason for living. Camus says, "The rebel does not ask for life, but for reasons for living" (108). During his life, Camus' philosophy changed, moving from a pessimistic to a more optimistic point of view. In a sense, Camus underwent his own personal evolution, an evolution that gave birth to the metaphysical rebel we find in his writings. For Camus, for the metaphysical rebel, the promise of metaphysical rebellion carries with it a disillusioned state of optimism which empowers one to make changes for the future. Camus further defines the rebel as "a man who says no, but whose refusal does not imply renunciation" (305). This rebel never turns his back on his commitment and never repents or displays remorse for his/her actions. Further he says that this specific type of rebellion is seen when a man "protests against the condition in which he finds himself as a man" (13).

Metaphysical rebellion thus extends beyond the single self, it is larger than one person, it takes place on the grand scale as one individual comes to represent all of humankind. The protest takes on an expanded meaning, for it is not against a circumstance or the result of a specific event. Rather, it is a protest against all limitations, a protest against boundaries, a protest

"against the whole of creation" (23). Perhaps, that is why Sprintzen says that "it is the scope that makes it metaphysical" (139). Moreover, this type of rebellious act is liberating, Camus says, for "it breaks the seal and allows the whole being to come into play. It liberates stagnant waters and turns them into a raging torrent" (27). Camus suggests that metaphysical rebellion acts as a catalyst for the tensions and conflicts that reside, simmer and often boil, in the lives of these special individuals. In a real sense, these individuals do not exist until they take a metaphysical course of action.

The force and urgency of metaphysical rebellion begs us to look for the source of this type of action. The motivation is clearly from within the individual. It includes a revolt against the, "...injustice of the human condition" (Sprintzen 164). It is more than a "...failure of individuals, or even a social system" (139). Metaphysical rebels are motivated from within, from a part that evades concrete labels; from a place in the spirit. That is why their actions are directed toward attaining freedom, not freedom from a social or political system but another type of freedom, transcendent freedom. Moreover, these individuals do not choose this route in the ordinary sense of the word, for they act out of a compelling call

from the soul. They are driven to seek alternate paths because there are no other options and no other ways for them to deal with reality. As Cruickshank says, "It [metaphysical rebellion] thus transcends the personal destiny and has to do with the nature of man in general" (97).

Metaphysical rebellion is realized and converges at the transitional point between mortality and immortality, at a juncture where the separation between body and spirit ceases to exist and becomes one essence. This is the point of disintegration. Cruickshank describes it well in saying that "The impulse behind metaphysical revolt is essentially spiritual" (97). Metaphysical rebellion is unlike the other rebellions we know so well; it is not excessive, nor is it undisciplined or adolescent. It differs from romantic rebellion because it is not highly energetic, impulsive, youthful, physical, temporal, exotic or earthy. Rather, it is broad, multifaceted, all-encompassing and unifying. It is beyond time and place, although it takes place within it. It reveals itself in the fabric and essence of doing, of acting. It is felt more than described as it resides just below the text, within the discrete corridors where intellect and spirituality intersect. As a result of its subtlety and

pervasiveness, it does not lend itself easily to words, or to formulaic definitions. The essence of metaphysical rebellion is, in short, beyond the limits of human action, speech and language. I will define it by using passages and descriptions from the fiction and analyzing them in an effort to wrest examples of metaphysical rebellion which have, until now, been overlooked.

Finally, it requires its followers, the metaphysical rebels, to confront themselves and to unsurface the forces from within. As Camus says, "We all carry within us our places of exile, our crimes and our ravages. But our task is not to unleash them on the world, it is to fight them in ourselves and in others" (301). For Camus, the struggle is an internal one bound on the one side by an active and fertile mental life and bound on the other by a spiritual anchor that holds one to a strict course of action.

Eliot reveals the experience to us in her descriptions of Nancy Lammeter and Maggie Tulliver who, we are told, are used to "living inwardly" (Eliot, Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe 214). By "living inwardly," characters like Nancy reflect on their actions, consider the consequences of their actions on others. Such characters are reflective by nature, always considering the ramifications of their actions and measuring them

against their own scales of right and wrong. These individuals ask questions of themselves, about others, about all of humankind. They question existing rules and regulations, they inquire into other alternatives forms of actions, they contest humankind's passive acceptance of life as it exists. As Eliot says, Nancy was given to "...excessive rumination and self-questioning [which] is perhaps a morbid habit inevitable to a mind of much moral sensibility. (214) Metaphysicial rebels lead active interior lives, ones which are of a spiritual quality.

Similarly, Maggie, was capable of "performing an inward act of penitence" (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 327). Metaphysical rebels must confront themselves, challenge themselves, question their beliefs. The act of metaphysical rebellion is one that requires reflection, or as Camus says, "self-questioning solicitude. Only through this internal confrontation is one able reach the enlightened state which is...[the] purest outburst... [which] gives birth to existence" (304). The metaphysical rebel is a harbinger of hope in humankind's capability to make positive changes in him/herself and in the world. The metaphysical rebels, unlike the other rebels so prominent in nineteenth century fiction, lie dormant and cozily nestled in the obscure and shadowy chambers of the

spirit.

As the ultimate discontent, the metaphysical rebel wrestles with his conscience which is at odds with society, both in the narrow sense of his/her local community as well as with society in the larger context as representative of the world community. The metaphysical rebel's conscience does not exist alone, though, as Roy R. Male says: He [the metaphysical rebel] needs the group

> [society] to define himself; now he must detach himself from it to confront his soul. Only then does he see that the very sins and aberrations that separate him from others are the universal bonds of humanity. (19)

For Camus, then, metaphysical rebellion is not only a means of withdrawing from society, not only a means of challenging it, but a means of reestablishing it at another level. So it is for Eliot and Hawthorne also. Standing on the threshold, as they see it, of a world that needs to be remade, metaphysical rebellion is the means through which both they and their characters are able to pass from isolation through disintegration to reintegration.

The theme of isolation, disintegration and reintegration recurs throughout Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction but is perhaps no place more apparent than in the

description of the house in The House of the Seven Gables. The house represents the enduring features of metaphysical rebellion that we find throughout Eliot and Hawthorne's works. It, like the metaphysical rebels, has passed into a state of disintegration. Its endurance is testimony of its strength and its ability to defy the destroying elements of weather and time.

> The aspect of the venerable mansion has always affected me like a human countenance, bearing the traces not merely of outward storm and sunshine, but expressive also of the long lapse of mortal life, and the accompanying vicissitudes that have passed within. (355)

And although there has been a "long lapse of mortal life" it retains traces of life and hope, in its "black, rich soil" and as a result of those who "scrupulously weeded," the garden (427). Hawthorne's reference to its "rich soil," suggests that life and growth are still possible in spite of the neglect and abuse.

But human action is needed to tend it, for it is "scrupulously weeded" leading us to believe that someone cares for the garden. The stages through which the individual passes in his/her metaphysical rebellion are

externalized in the house as it moves through the phases of metaphysical rebellion, from isolation through disintegration back through reintegration and finds new life by the end of the novel. The symbolism of the house, as an enduring representation of metaphysical rebellion assists in our better understanding of the process.

In the enduring landscapes of a changing world, Eliot and Hawthorne present metaphysical rebels who, like the house in Hawthorne's novel, pass through the various stages of metaphysical rebellion in order to improve society. But they realize that the journey in and through metaphysical rebellion is burdened by the mortal weight of gender. As they work through the special problems that confront female metaphysical rebels, they offer us their works as illustrations of their belief in the redemptive values of metaphysical rebellion. In each case, we follow the female metaphysical rebels through the four stages of rebellion. In this context, Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction are textbooks which implore us to take the journey ourselves.

Chapter 3

Male Rebels

It is very strange, although not fully unexpected, that we find scant discussion in extant criticism of Eliot and Hawthorne's most pressing concern, rebellion. Indeed both writers are clearly transfixed by those special individuals who take actions that set them apart from their friends and lovers, their families and communities. For these writers, like so many others in the period, the rebel gives voice to the discontent with existing conditions. The act of rebellion sets humankind apart from society's accepted course and attempts to establish a new means of existence. But, unlike their contemporaries, Eliot and Hawthorne send their rebels on a journey whose end it is to reach a new level of understanding of issues greater than those of ordinary life.

We find these rebels and expressions of rebellion throughout the fiction. The motivations and causes for rebellious actions were in the forefront of Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction and, as a consequence, the prominent theme we find throughout their works. In "Wakefield," for example, Hawthorne exposes one such rebel when he tells us that:

> Amid the seeming confusion of our confusing world, individuals are so nicely adjusted to the system, and systems to one another, that, by stepping aside for a moment, a man exposes himself to a fearful risk of losing himself forever. Like Wakefield, he may become, as it were, the Outcast of the World. (298)

Hawthorne and Eliot's landscapes are filled with such outcasts, such rebels. The literature is ridden with outcasts of all sorts, social, political, scientific, philosophical miscreants who are unable or unwilling to accept the given system.

By nature, all rebels have several characteristics in common, they all cross boundaries. But I hold that there is a decided difference in the ways that most writers, and Eliot and Hawthorne are no exception, conceive of and portray male and female rebels. They, like other novelists writing in the century before our own, display concerns and assumptions that are a product of their times and cultures. In their fiction, we find these sentiments in the descriptions of characters, in the assumptions about behavior and in the different limits and boundaries they set for men and women. To be sure, they seem to acknowledge what many critics, even lesser known ones like Ellison believe, namely that "...men as a group possess

disproportionate amounts of political, economic, and cultural power" (97).

Perhaps the best example of the male rebel is found in Hawthorne's Reverend Hooper, who, in "The Minister's Black Veil," is a representative of male rebellion in Hawthorne's fiction. As a part of the clergy, Reverend Hooper holds one of the most traditional roles in society, and at the beginning of the story we find him to be a man of high virtue, respected by his parish with the power "to win people heavenward by mild, persuasive influences" (Hawthorne, "Minister's Black Veil" 185). In his Puritan society, one which admires discipline and order and which invests itself in accepted and codified behavior, Hooper stands as symbol of good and of the human spirit's ability to transcend the realities of the material world.

But Hooper's act of placing a black crepe veil in front of his face separates him not only from his parish but also from all of mankind. It is impossible to avoid comparison with Hawthorne himself, for Hawthorne, too, dressed in black and often wore a large mantle which on occasion he drew about himself, veiling his face (Miller 2).

These unthinkable actions, by the author and the character, are of mysterious motivation and irrevocable consequence, and seem to announce possession of some dark,

deep and powerful knowledge. By wearing the veil, Hooper distinguishes himself from the rest of the parish. His action is treated suspiciously, as his parish believes that he is involved in some kind of forbidden activity. Although neither he nor his followers clearly articulate the meaning of his action, we feel that it represents his involvement with some evil. In this knowledge, as represented by his act, Hooper enters a world filled with some kind of forbidden knowledge, knowledge not granted to mankind. We know that the act and the knowledge it symbolizes is prohibited because of the way in which it is described:

> ...the veil involved his own spirit in the horror with which it overwhelmed others. His frame shuddered, his lips grew white, he spilt the tasted wine upon the carpet and rushed forth into darkness. (189)

The donning of the veil is more than a signal to us of his departure from the ordinary, the common, the mortal. It is an "act of defiance," (Timko 29) an act of liberation, a transgression of the most serious kind.

Dr. Rappaccini, in Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter," presents yet another example of rebellion. Rappaccini distorts science and as a result, acquires a deadly and mysterious power over nature. The role of science and its

potential misuse was an important and recurrent theme in Hawthorne's fiction. His literature, and Eliot's too, addresses the concerns of their respective countries. Indeed, science was accepted into the cultures and gained recognition and professional position through the establishment of organizations like the British Association for the Advancement of Science. The advances in medicine, coupled with the dramatic developments in technology, afforded humankind the ability to control the environment and understand the human body in new and exciting ways.

But these expansive scientific developments also raised concerns about the potential for their abuse. Not only did science afford humankind power to help and to heal, but it brought with it the power to subvert, distort and destroy nature and natural life. It is from this troubled nineteenth century perspective that we are learn of Dr. Rappaccini's involvement in the unknown. Professor Pietro Baglioni, the other scientist in "Rappaccini's Daughter," warns Giovanni about Rappaccini:

> Ill would it become a teacher of the divine art of medicine...to withhold due and well-considered praise of a physician so eminently skilled as Rappaccini. But on the other, hand, I should answer it but scantily to my

> conscience, were I to permit a worthy youth like yourself, Signor Giovanni, the son of an ancient friend, to imbibe erroneous ideas respecting a man who might hereafter chance to hold your life and death in his hands. (Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" 982)

Baglioni is not referring to the power a physician holds in matters of life and death but rather to Rappaccini's usage of the forbidden knowledge he possesses. He further states that, "there are certain objections to his professional character" [and that he, Rappaccini] is infinitely more for science than for mankind" (982). And finally, we learn that he has dedicated his time to manufacturing poisons "more deleterious than Nature" (982). Rappaccini represents that portion of humanity which desires power over humankind. In this way, he attempts to carve our a unique identity for himself and for others like him. He moves away from the common and into the untrodden territories unusually unavailable to the common person in the hope of attaining knowledge and power.

Perhaps, Mannin is right when she says that "Progress in the service of Man...progress on his self-aggrandisement and lust for power...The trend is always towards power and violence" (22). Rappaccini, assuming his god-like, malevolent

role manufactures his own world, created by distilled poisons, and spawns a world filled with death. He joyfully proclaims, at the scene of Giovanni's demise, that "he [Giovanni] now stands apart from common men" (1004). As Beatrice decries Giovanni's death, which results from her father's abuse of scientific knowledge, Rappaccini responds saying:

> What mean you, foolish girl? Dost thou deem it misery to be endowed with marvellous gifts, against which no power nor strength could avail and enemy? Miserable to be able to quell an enemy with a breath? (1005)

Rappaccini, like Hooper, resides in a parallel world, a universe penetrated by the few who have followed a different path. Interestingly, the journey begins with mortal knowledge, of religious doctrine or scientific learning, but their focuses, their interests, perhaps even their spirits lead them into areas forbidden to mortal men. As they rebel against the system that allowed them to gain prestige and position in their societies, their skills take them beyond the mortal world.

Scientists serve as prominent rebels in Hawthorne's fiction, an arena largely reserved for men of affluence and intellect. As science replaces religion as a means of

gaining control over the universe, God is displaced by scientists who appear to possess knowledge about the mysteries of life and human existence.

Aylmer of "The Birthmark," is presented as yet another rebellious scientist. Aylmer's desire for god-like perfection displays his defiance of god and his inability to accept a world tainted by sin, a world that has fallen from grace, an imperfect universe. He, like Rappaccini, has made several "discoveries in the elemental powers of Nature" (Hawthorne, "The Birthmark," 269). His goal, to remove the birthmark from Georgiana's face, represents his domination over the material world, and signals his involvement with areas not permitted or offered to the common human. He successfully eliminates the hand-like mark from Georgiana's face and "laughing in a sort of frenzy [says]...'Matter and spirit---earth and heaven---have both done their part in this!' (281). He scoffs at all other power and fails to realize that "the fatal hand had grappled with the mystery of life, and was the bond by which an angelic spirit kept itself in union with a mortal frame" (281).

There are those men who, perhaps in seeking the truth about the "Unpardonable Sin" loses:

> ...his hold of the magnetic chain of humanity...
> [and be] no longer a brother-man...[sees]

> mankind as the subject of his experiment."
> (Hawthorne, "Ethan Brand" 375)

Gollin depicts the male rebels' troubles, noting that

> Ethan is radically self-isolated, someone who thinks only of himself and would never follow a father's footsteps or anyone else's. (175)

Male rebels in Hawthorne's fiction take action, sometimes aggressively, like Rappaccini, Hooper and Aylmer, but at other times simply by isolating from their communities. David Swann, for example:

> After journeying on foot, from sunrise till nearly noon of a summer's day, his weariness and the increasing heat determined him to sit down in the first convenient shade. (429)

David leaves his community and falls into a deep sleep, a dream-like state. His separation from society, the disintegration of mind and body, imbues his with an supernatural power to avoid mortal injuries. Away from society, he is insulated from humankind's events, both the good and the bad ones. The narrator asks:

> Does it not argue a superintending Providence, that, while viewless and unexpected events thrust themselves

> continually athwart our path, there should still be regularity enough, in mortal life, to render foresight even partially available? (434)

David's case proves that acts of metaphysical rebellion can be passive, quiet and unremarkable. He awakens to a fresh world, a world that a just few moments earlier held the potential for injury and death.

Male rebels separate themselves form society, from their professions and from each other. Perhaps it is, at least in part, as Kimmel says, that for men "The basic masculine sense of self is separate" (6).

Interestingly, but not surprisingly, Eliot creates her male rebels in much the same manner as Hawthorne. Latimer, in "The Lifted Veil, is one such case and serves as a representative example for male rebellion in Eliot's fiction. Uninterested in a "scientific education" (325), Latimer exists in a world quite apart from his conventional society. His talent, his inclinations, his interests, are not focussed on becoming a gentleman, or in conforming to societal dictates of "bon mots and kindly deeds" (328). Rather, his interests reside in the world of intuition and perception. Eliot calls it his "prevision" (321), but for Latimer it is a discomfort with the power of intuition. Redinger,

like Latimer, views his problem as a "disease" (400). A "disease" because it brands him as an outcast, it causes him pain and self doubt as Latimer ponders, whether it might be a:

> ...disease- a sort of intermittent delirium, concentrating my energy of brain into moments of unhealthy activity, and leaving my saner hours all the more barren? (Eliot, "Lifted Veil," 335)

Latimer's "superadded consciousness" (345) [or] "double consciousness" (380) is strong. He, like the other rebels we encounter, seems to be "possessed by, rather than in possession" (Redinger 400) of it. He, like Hooper, has the ability to peer into the recesses of the human spirit. As Latimer looks into Bertha's soul, he says, "I saw into her pitiless soul--saw its barren worldliness, its scorching hate-and felt it clothe me like an air I was obliged to breathe" (346). Take, for example, the time that Latimer gains insight into "Alfred's self-complacement soul" (356). Or as Latimer sees into "the desolation of my father's soul" (358). Latimer's powers allow him to beyond the present moment, beyond the mortal and to steal "a glimpse of the future" (347).

Eliot's concerns with transcendent knowledge, truth and

the soul are not religious ones. She creates characters and sees life through a scientific lens filtered by ethical imperatives. Surely, her philosophy was, at least in part, an outgrowth of her early immersion in religious doctrine. But Eliot is never able to blindly accept any set of religious tenets. Rather, she creates realistic fiction and "accepts the empiricist view--[that] each man finds himself unable to participate directly in the equally isolated consciousness of another or to understand, even indirectly, its true nature" (Bonaparte 1030). The only way to join with others is through transcendence beyond the material world which separates one human from another. By transcending the separations that are inherent in humankind, one reaches through to the soul where all possibilities exist.

The metaphysical rebel is, invariably, isolated from his society. Latimer feels a discomfort from not sharing the same likes and dislikes as his fellow citizens. He is able to see beyond appearances and into the true nature of things, into the character and soul of the individual. This strange power is derived from an internal sensitivity, a heightened perception. It is beyond body and mind, a result of the disintegration and separation of those entities. He is able, unlike the others in the story, to see the other reality, the truth. He sees this truth in the real and mortal world, at

the moment of reintegration into society. Latimer follows the three stage process of male metaphysical rebellion and offers his talent and skill to the material and scientific world.

Latimer, like Eliot, lives inwardly and reflects on life and action. His need for distance, his need to maintain the private is similar to Hooper's, to Hawthorne's. Latimer, we are told "shrank from the sight of a new person" (368) and of Hawthorne we are told that "he was known to dart from the road into a nearby field when he spotted villagers in a distance" (Miller 1). The cross-correspondences between authors and characters are not accidents but rather the result of writers with similar interests, personalities perhaps a universal consciousness operating in the nineteenth century.

Like Latimer, Will Ladislaw typifies male rebellion. In him, we find a passionate young man who "declined to go to English University" and "declines to choose a profession" (Eliot, Middlemarch, 106). He is a man of "dreamy visions" (509). His strengths, his interests are in the creative arts, an area that subjects him to the scrutiny and derision of the community.

Will is liberated from the customs and norms of his society and holds opinions and beliefs that are contrary to

the acceptable behavior for a young man. He cares "little for what are called the solid things in life" (510). In this way, he separates or isolates himself from his community. He defies authority and berates Dorothea when she decides to return to Lowick to be with Casaubon. In a revealing speech, Will tells Dorothea that she has been:

> ...brought up in some of those horrible notions that choose the sweetest women to devour-- like Minotaurs. And now you will be shut up in that stone prison at Lowick. You will be buried alive. (510)

Will's sense of confidence, his ability to think for himself and to be unmoved by casual and widely held opinion are indicative of male rebels. He has found another truth, a higher truth than that of mortal man. Through an imperative of the soul, he is forced to act and guide others to act in a way that will enable them to find another kind of existence, one borne of freedom and imbued with a wisdom withheld from mankind.

Perhaps he found this in his "dreamy visions," where the real world disintegrates and the dream world becomes a visionary state of enlightenment. In his advice to Dorothea, he reintegrates his new found truths into society. He directs her to find wisdom and not to subordinate herself to

man's expectations and customs, we remember Latimer's painful words that:

> There is no short-ent, no patent tramroad, to wisdom. After all the centuries of invention, the soul's path lies through the thorny wilderness which must still be trodden in solitude, with bleeding feet, with sobs for help. (348)

The male rebels we find in Eliot, like Latimer and Will, are as Ermarth suggests, "single-minded" (26). It is this "single-minded" characteristic that prevents them from seeing options, from considering alternatives. It is the reason that the powers of insight and genius take possession of them. Each feels the pressing desire to be something more than ordinary, to be something exceptional.

David Faux, in Eliot's short-story "Brother Jacob," is another example of the male rebel. David possesses all of the characteristics of the male metaphysical rebel:

> His soul swelled with an impatient sense that he ought to become something very remarkable--- that it was quite out of the question to put up with a narrow lot as other men did: he scorned the idea that he could accept the average. (Eliot, "Brother Jacob" 263)

Eliot presents us with a world reminiscent of Hawthorne's

"Wakefield," a world that is, as Eliot says, set "in the present [an] imperfectly organized state of society [where] there are social barriers" (263). But unlike either Latimer or Will, David Faux tends to lie and to cheat in order to get his way. Eliot uses strong language in describing some of his less than admirable characteristics and even calls him a "triumphant demon" (275). David does not understand "why the world [was] so constituted that a man could not take his mother's guineas comfortably?" (278) David relocates and assumes another identity. He sets himself aside from society, as an outcast, reestablishing himself as Mr. Edward Freely. With no desire to be reunited with his family, he finds both love and wealth in his new world, his new existence.

But by the time the story ends, David is, of course, revealed. The townspeople linger wondering what made David take his actions, what would cause him to be so separated from family, community and friends. Perhaps Jonathan states the reason most succinctly when he says that David simply "didn't want to be owned again" (314). In "Brother Jacob," Eliot delivers us to another level, the material, mortal one. For David is very much the mortal man, interested in money, fame and reputation. He is like Rappaccini, like Aylmer, materialistic, paternalistic and domineering.

The most prominent and powerful clear example of this very male non-metaphysical rebel is Romola's husband, Tito Malema. Tito is an arch-politician who ingratiates himself into the very fabric of society. He is manipulative and, as Ermarth says, a man who "lacks the ability to see choices" (26). Tito even denies the existence of his adoptive father, the man who took care of him, and who is sold into slavery for money. Even though he knows of his father's circumstances, he decides not to find him. He is selfish and prideful. He is interested in power and money and all of the material excesses that wealth will bring to him. He is a man who makes the rules and breaks all others in order to have his way. Man's laws are of no consequence to him, he aspires to greater heights, those above all of mankind. As the classic overreacher, Tito sets himself apart from the rest of mankind in his climb to power and dominance. Eliot's portrayal of the Machiavellian character is unsympathetic and although she displays a keen knowledge of his transcendent desires, of the causes of his rebelling against society, she does not excuse nor justify the means he uses to achieve his ends. Not all Machiavellian characters are metaphysical rebels. Metaphysical rebellion occurs only in those individuals who are motivated by a the spirit to transpierce the limitations of the mortal world.

Eliot is, after all, a moral writer who, even in her early writing, believes that those of superior wisdom, those that are rightfully endowed with powers, must be respectful of man's laws. She states her position on this most clearly in 1847 in her essay "Poetry and Prose, From the Notebook of an Eccentric," Eliot says that superiority of wisdom lies in:

> ...faith and obedience in the law--two of the most ennobling attributes of humanity. (Pinney 24)

Tito lacks both "faith and obedience" and rebels against all man-made constructs of society. For him, like other male rebels we find in the fiction, the attainment of wisdom and knowledge lies beyond that held by man here and now. These rebels seek enjoyment and are fearful of anything likely to rob [them] of pleasure (Eliot, Romola 169). They are selfish, ego-centric, even seeing another's death as a removal of a block. He sees Fra Luca as one such person, but when realizing that the Fra was near death, Tito turned away with a sense of relief that 'This friar [Fra Luca] is not likely to live (169).

Male rebels in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction are independent, confident and afforded the rights and privileges not allowed to women at the time. For the outcasts of

society," [the male rebel who] must keep faith in himself while the incredulous world assails him with utter disbelief: he must stand up to mankind and be his sole disciple." (309) Breaking the rules, whether in science, religion, social custom or politics, constitutes a break with material, man-made laws, with civil and mortal laws. Men do so naturally, without questions, interference or encumbrance of gender. As these male rebels stretch for truths and answers to those questions that plague humankind, they fulfill a quest for all of us, for all of humankind. It is a quest that all people long for, but its prerequisite of freedom here and now poses a serious problem for women. Women are not free in the existing society and must cross a preliminary boundary before being allowed to take the kinds of actions that Hooper, Aylmer, Tito and other male rebels take.

Chapter 4

Boundaries

Female rebels, like male rebels, seek ultimate truths and are interested in moving beyond the established boundaries set for all human beings. But unlike male rebels, they must break mortal, more specifically, societal laws that regulate morality, before they are permitted to break divine laws. This warrants explanation for the distinction may, at first, seem minor but is, in reality, essential for understanding the unique progression and circumstance of female metaphysical rebels in the fiction.

In order to explain these limits or boundaries and understand the violations of them, I want to clarify my usage and understanding of the concept of boundaries. Humankind has developed the world by establishing boundaries of all types. There are boundaries that define geographic territories and which define communities, countries and continents. There are boundaries which act as contracts with our fellow citizens, like the laws of traffic control. There are rules that determine the amount of money we will contribute to our country, like tax regulations. There are boundaries that define mental competency and incompetency and boundaries

that, when exceeded, define genius. In short, boundaries are needed, for they afford us control over our environment and ourselves. Through their existence, boundaries and limits bring order and stability to our society, to the world.

But along with the order and control they bring to society, boundaries also confine, restrict and even imprison us. Humankind requires boundaries and limits but, simultaneously, seeks freedom from them. For this reason, boundaries are the seeds of rebellion. In fact, without limits or boundaries, the need for rebellion would cease to exist altogether. Some limits even seem to exist for no other purpose than to function as rebellion-prompters.

Eliot and Hawthorne were very interested in the limits society placed on human behavior. Specifically, they were concerned with the different limits that society placed on people based on their gender. When we consider this issue, we find that most societies, throughout history, regardless of culture or political system, have established what they consider acceptable codes of behavior for men and women. Eliot's and Hawthorne's societies are no exceptions to the rule, and the writers, as products of those societies, implicitly

understand the boundaries that exist in their countries. Since boundaries are, by definition, limits, then the individual must traverse them if he/she is to attain freedom from them. Camus understood this, and that is why he says, "Rebellion...recognizes limits" (Camus 29). Camus, like Eliot and Hawthorne, recognizes the need to identify limits as a precondition for exceeding them.

But the rebels we meet in the literature, whether non-metaphysical or metaphysical, are not simply crossing a boundary or exceeding a limit. For them, the concept of boundary takes on added meaning. For the rebel, the boundary acts as a prison which confines activity and prevents spiritual growth and freedom. The rebel seeks to break out of this prison but can do so only by breaking through a series of barriers which are intended to ensure his/her confinement. As the rebels transpierce each barrier, they by-pass another boundary. The goal of this rebellious journey is to achieve greater levels of freedom and knowledge.

The rebel's progress may be compared to changing from a state of mummification and confinement to a state of exposure and freedom. To clarify my point, imagine the rebel wrapped in four layers of cloth, with each layer more restrictive than the prior and inclusive of all

others. The innermost layer, next to the rebel's skin, but just outside of it, represents the community. The next layer, the one that surrounds the community but adds more to it, represents the country in which the rebel resides. The third layer represents the Earth and includes all of humankind. And, the outermost layer, represents the barrier that separates humankind from the divine. The rebel, through acts of rebellion, sheds these layers of cloth in order to achieve the desired state of exposure and freedom. In this state, he/she shares in the state of humanness. It is the goal of all humans, but one realized by the rare and the motivated rebel. The removal of barriers and the subsequent crossing of boundaries allows the rebel to rise above gender, for all of humankind, and to gain divine freedom and knowledge.

Metaphysical rebels, like Dr. Rappaccini and Latimer yearn for and are driven to usurping power through the acquisition of knowledge. Through their knowledge and the use of it, they hope to extract truths about the universe and the purpose of human existence that is neither promised nor granted to humankind. In fact, the boundaries they cross and the truths they seek are forbidden to mortals. Their acts of acquiring knowledge of these truths allow them to break divine laws, laws set

for humankind by a superior power. But the forces of enlightenment offered by the liberation that metaphysical rebels seek is so powerful, so much a part of the spirit, so natural that they are unwilling to give up the quest for it.

Separately and together, Eliot and Hawthorne are two of the most rebellious authors of their age, and their struggle to live in society with both principle and moral conviction should not be confused with passive acceptance of society's rules of conduct. The writers, like the characters they create, are advocates for changing the order of society, for creating a world order, one based on equality and freedom. But the path to the new world, to the truths to which all people aspire, is paved, as Sutphin says with, "...passivity and forced submission ...evils the heroine must struggle against" (29: 342). Both writers know this, and, it is the tension between their acknowledging this reality and their simultaneous desire not to be fully isolated from their society that develops and motivates them to become early voices of metaphysical protest. They are non-conformists, individuals imbued with special insights and driven by a compulsive desire to go beyond the present situation.

Through Eliot and Hawthorne's writings, we know that

life for all metaphysical rebels is difficult and that it is especially hard for female metaphysical rebels. For those special women, those metaphysical rebels we meet in the literature, must gain access to full personhood before they are permitted to break mortal laws. They, unlike their male counterparts, must break free from the gender-defined regulations imposed by society on women before they are permitted to join the community of humankind.

They, like the mummified rebels I discussed earlier, must peel away the layers of cloth that prevent them from attaining freedom. But unlike their male counterparts, they must transpierce one additional barrier. The female rebel must break free of a fifth layer, one that was created by her community, upheld by her society and which exists for the female gender alone. This layer is like a film that rests between the female rebel's skin and the first layer of cloth. Within the pores of this film reside moral codes of behavior, as defined and imposed by society on females. These limitations separate female metaphysical rebels from the rest of the community and prevent her from reaching the first layer of cloth, the one that is immediately available to male rebels.

The female metaphysical rebel is, consequently, prevented access to her community. In order to begin the

journey of metaphysical rebellion, one must be a part of humankind, a part of the human community. Female metaphysical rebels must, therefore, gain access to their community by breaking through the film, the seal. She disentangles herself from this fifth layer by violating the moral laws that society has imposed on women. Once she violates these moral laws, she becomes a full participant in society. Having achieved the state of full personhood, she is then able to join with humankind and violate mortal laws on the journey toward transcendent knowledge.

As I define them, mortal laws apply to humans, regardless of gender. They are the rules and regulations that humankind has developed and lives by on Earth. In order to break divine laws, humans must first break these mortal laws, the laws of community, society and humankind. As I have discussed earlier, mortal laws are developed and are literally man-made, developed and implemented by those who rule society, namely men. In the patriarchal creation of society, different rules for men and women are established. While men are afforded the rights and immunities that all humans rightfully deserve, women are further restricted by laws that define their conduct in society, specifically their moral conduct. When

discussing metaphysical rebellion, Cruickshank says, "The revolt which Camus has in mind will certainly include attacks on traditional morality" (97). Female metaphysical rebels attack "traditional morality," by breaking the moral laws. In order to achieve full personhood and to join the ranks of humanity, the female metaphysical rebel must first break the ones that were developed and enforced to limit her to gender.

In other words, she must break the moral laws of society before being permitted to join humankind. She must morally rebel before being able to mortally rebel. As we now know, male metaphysical have no such prerequisite. There are no special moral laws for them; they are full participants in their community by virtue of their gender. All metaphysical rebels are "led...to believe that ordinary laws [those of personhood] do not apply" (Hawthorne, Marble Faun 982). Female rebels must do more, they must use the disquiet within their souls as the motivating power, whether consciously or unconsciously, for achieving their rightful place within society.

In nineteenth century society, whether in England or America, women's roles were clearly defined. For example, by society's standards, they needed little formal

education and that which they received was to be in keeping with their anatomical limits, as defined by the society and validated by the medical profession. Sexual improprieties, such as even to suggest of sexual relationships outside of marriage, were forbidden. Marriage was the ideal relationship for "good" women who accepted the responsibility assigned to their gender. "Colonial America believed that women were intellectually inferior to men, and that women's place was in the home" (Simmons 115). Through the early part of the century, women's education was that of apprentice to their mothers and was based on the belief that whatever education was needed could be learned at home. Even those few who advocated some formal, institutional training for women, like Emma Willard and Benjamin Rush, believed that "Education should focus on preparing women for the home" (116). Such proponents believed that women could make better wives if they added a theoretical framework to their practical skills of maintaining a home for husband and children. Women were assigned as moral custodians, the keepers of high virtue. In this role, they were to educate male children and uphold the moral fortitude of the country. Burdened with this supposedly high moral position, they were assigned to educate the future

leaders of the country, male children, for the good of America.

Even though women were afforded greater access to formal education in the mid and late years, access was generally permitted into only the female occupations, like teaching and social work. And while there were sentiments that women might have the same intellectual capabilities as men, the pervasive feelings were that women would be damaged by education. This extended into the 1870's: "Women who went to college...were likely to suffer mental and physical breakdowns and possibly sterility" (Simmons 118).

The situation in England was similar, if not worse. Women were permitted to write, to translate and to edit. What little education she did receive was "...gleaned from her governesses, her brother's tutors, or from teachers at provincial boarding schools which did a lot for deportment but little for the mind" (David 18). Education usually included French, music, drawing and deportment. There were three chief reasons for not affording women access to secondary schooling, and they were that "...educated girls have trouble finding husbands, they develop disfiguring masculine traits, and they deplete energy from their reproductive organs through brain work" (David 19). Women's roles and duties in society were to bear and raise

children, to present herself as a lady and to decorate the environment.

Educating women presented a threat to the stability of society. Education held the power to tamper with biology, to distract women from society's goals for them. The woman enlightened by education might not be as interested in raising children, might question her husband's authority, might choose not to marry. She might, in other words, not fulfill society's predetermined role of femininity. These were threats to established order and jeopardized the home, the future of the country but more, it weakened the possibility of male domination over women.

In mid-nineteenth century America, Margaret Fuller addressed society's long-standing confinement of women, identifying gender constructed boundaries that shaped and influenced appropriate behavior for women. These boundaries limited opportunities and withheld access to a full life. "The lot of woman is sad," writes Fuller. "She is constituted to expect and need a happiness that cannot exist on earth. She must stifle her aspirations within her secret heart, and fit herself, as well as she can, for a life of resignations and consolations" (Dickenson 105). Similarly, Louisa May Alcott writes

about women's suffrage. In Little Women, Alcott draws herself as Jo March, who possesses the energy and drive of the free woman but who deliberately restrains herself and acts "appropriately." As a means of avoiding "a life of resignations and consolations," the little tomboy desires to remain a child and not grow up as a means of avoiding what life holds for women in the society.

Both Eliot and Hawthorne are keenly aware of the societal realities of which Fuller and Alcott write, whether in England or America. But neither writer is able to accept it as a fair or viable life choice for women. We know this because both writers create fiction that empowers their female characters to fight against blindly accepting society's dictates governing gender roles and assignments. Critics who believe that Eliot and Hawthorne are reluctant to embrace ideals of female power are mistaken, I believe. One such critic is Susan M. Greenstein, who in "The Question of Vocation: From Romola to Middlemarch," argues that "Her reluctance to embrace feminist concerns and politics is well known" (35: 487).

In Eliot and Hawthorne's literature, we find numerous "educated" women, who refuse to accept their roles as homemakers and as attendants for their husbands and children. Although many of these characters are not

formally educated, their abilities are often superior to their male counterparts. There is Letty Garth in Middlemarch who is educated at home and brighter than her brother, Ben. Eliot tells us that Letty was troublesome because she was so willing to listen, to learn from all sources. Sometimes these educated women are described as ingenious or clever, like Miss Landor or Ellen Marriott in "Janet's Repentance." But the most important evidence is the woman who is educated in the traditional disciplines, like Mary Linnet, or Romola.

Romola and Maggie represent the full range of Eliot's philosophy of education for women. Maggie, in her earthiness and intuitive intelligence, prepares us for Romola. Maggie, we are told "...found the Latin Grammar quite soothing after her mathematical mortification; for she delighted in new words" (Eliot, Mill on the Floss 217). Education offers "boundless scope" (217) to imagine other worlds and far off places. It allows her to escape the present, the petty and small community of St. Ogg. She takes pleasure in the enjoyment of the Latin Grammar all the more because Tom had once said that "no girls could learn [it]" (217). When he finds her reading it, he chastises her, diminishes her ability and charges that

she cheated by reading the English at the end of the chapter which, as Tom says, "Any donkey can do" (218).

Romola is educated in the classics by her father and serves as his assistant. Romola, a scholar's daughter with "refinement and intelligence," (Eliot, Romola 95) holds aspirations for a better life and seems to always cast her "eyes ...on Latin" (94). The educated female rebels in Eliot, and Hawthorne, too, vow to "study diligently" (100). They possess dedication, discipline and have greater insight into their realities. They love learning, perhaps because it is forbidden, perhaps because it offers escape. But it is most likely because the creator of these characters, Eliot herself, was highly educated, translated Latin and Greek, and wrote prolifically.

Hawthorne's philosophy of educating women is more ambivalent than Eliot's. He seems torn by the conflicting desires of wanting equal education for women but limiting women's' involvement in it. This is seen most clearly in his children's stories which were written as educative tools. In the introduction to "Queen Christina," for example, he warns the reader of the "evil effects of a wrong education [for women]" (Charat, Pearce, Simpson 275). Christina, daughter of Sweden's King, is educated as a boy would be and is not taught the basic feminine

virtues. She does not embroider, make friendly conversation or remain near hearth and home. But King Gustavus wants what is best for his beloved daughter so he "determines to educate Christina 'exactly as if she had been a boy, and to teach her all knowledge needful to the ruler of the kingdom, and the commander of the army'" (Laffrado 17: 124).

Like Romola, Christiana learns to read the classics in Greek and Latin, rides horseback and is free to act as she desires, without the constraints applied to little girls in the society. She is freed from the routine activities and vanities assigned to her gender because she is educated beyond the small scope of a woman's world. As a result, she learns "to despise the society of her own sex" (Hawthorne, "Queen Christina" 281). Her excessive and inappropriate "male" education affects all spheres of her life, like clothing "she wore a habit of gray cloth, with a man's vest over it, and a scarf around her neck, but no jewels, no ornaments of any kind" (282).

For these reasons, Queen Christina never gains social acceptance. She is unattractive, unwomanly because she is unskilled in womanly duties. As a final admonishment, Hawthorne advises that "May none of them [little girls] lose the loveliness of their sex, by receiving such an

education as that of Queen Christina!" (283). Laffrado is right when she says, "The father's blessing on the child's potential transformation is subordinated here to the rigid boundaries established by Providence or the nature of Things" (126).

In "Rappaccini's Daughter," Beatrice holds knowledge of another kind, of the flowers, of Nature, of the secret potions that her father has created. Giovanni tells her that he has heard that she is "deeply skilled in the virtues indicated by these rich blossoms and these spicy perfumes" (Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" 345) and asks her to be his "instructress" (345). But Beatrice denies her knowledge and asks Giovanni to "not believe these stories about my science. Believe nothing of me save what you see with your own eyes" (345). Here, Eliot and Hawthorne are of two minds. They want educational freedom but worry about gender-free education. This is surprising for the female author who we know "was never satisfied to know enough" (Bonaparte 11). But it also expresses the writers' sensitivity to the human need to be accepted by her society. It acknowledges their understanding of the painful humiliation that is experienced by those females who are not trained "properly." I believe it is these painful realizations

that urge the writers to caution the readers against taking an unconventional path. As Marcia S. Midler says there is a definite "resentment toward...female achievement" (7: 99).

But those select women must break these gender-based constraints in order to achieve full personhood which enables them to move toward the broader areas of interest, toward the pursuit of transcendental knowledge and freedom. Perhaps Princess Halm-Eberstein says it most clearly when she says, "You may try-but you can never imagine what is to have a man's force of genius inside you, and yet suffer the slavery of being a girl (Eliot, Daniel Deronda 694). Rebelling against societal rules, violating the boundaries, is the beginning of freedom and movement away from gender imprisonment and into humankind. In each case, the female metaphysical rebel violates society's education guidelines for the women. By so doing, Romola, Maggie, Christiana and the others move through the first phase of female metaphysical rebellion, namely the phase of violation. This allows them to assume full personhood and prepares them for successive stages of metaphysical rebellion, isolation, disintegration and reintegration.

While education guidelines for women are stringent,

they are mild as compared with society's moral and sexual dictates for women. "Fallen women," those women who either have or might have had sexual relationships or experiences outside of marriage, violate sexual morality's boundaries. Rebelling against society's formulaic rules which state that the female ideal for unmarried women is chastity, Eliot and Hawthorne's women refuse to accept either chastity or bound marriage conduct as a pre-condition for female happiness or wholeness. Losing one's chastity is but one way, perhaps the most powerful way, of breaking free from male domination.

This is as true for non-metaphysical female rebels as it is for metaphysical ones. Some females violate sexual norms and mores as a means of possessing a powerful man, and thereby sharing in his power, wealth and social status. Hetty, for instance, consciously sacrifices her chastity in order to win Arthur, the proud and powerful military man. By possessing Arthur, she feels she will gain power and realize her dreams of glamor and affluence. Upon giving birth to the illegitimate child, she is driven by shame to bury it under a tree.

When her community finds out about her crime, she is sentenced to death. Although her life is spared at the last minute, she is ostracized by her community and

excommunicated from it. We sympathize with Hetty's situation because it represents humankind's vain and mortal efforts to gain material and temporary power through manipulating and violating man-made laws. Non-metaphysical rebels have no other recourse as they are permanently bound to the mortal and tangible universe and cannot envision other worlds or alternatives ways of living.

The fallen woman "...heartbreaking and glamorous, flourished in popular iconography of America and the Continent as well as England," says Auerbach. "Her stance as galvanic outcast, her piquant blend of innocence and experience, came to embody everything in womanhood that was dangerously, tragically, and triumphantly beyond social boundaries" (150). To "fall," then, is to rise in this framework, to rise above society's laws and bias, to ascend from the earthly gender-defined conditions and to join the ranks of humankind. Although Hetty successfully breaks through this gender confinement, she remains inextricably tied to the earth because "...she embodies the world rather then transcending it" (176). For these reasons, her acts of defiance are examples of non-metaphysical rebellion.

When we think of female metaphysical rebels whose

sexual transgressions stand for all others in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction, we think of Maggie and Hester, respectively. Maggie's boatride with Stephen Guest is an improper course of action for a young and unmarried woman: "The irrevocable wrong that must blot her life had been committed--she had brought sorrow into the lives of others" (Eliot, Mill on the Floss 596). The "blot" certainly represents a figurative and perhaps a literal loss of virginity. Maggie, by taking an unchaperoned boatride with a young man, violates the moral code of society. Violating moral codes is yet another way in which the female metaphysical rebel disentangles herself from her gender.

In nineteenth century society, merely the suggestion of a sexual impropriety is enough to damage a young woman's reputation and to mark her as an outcast of society. That is why upon her return home, Maggie is rebuked by Tom who speaks for society when he says, "But you are ten times worse than he [Stephen] is. I loathe your character and your conduct" (613). But Eliot is not satisfied by speaking through characters alone. Through the narrator's voice she tells us, in broader terms, that community opinion holds a different standard for women in these circumstances: "Public opinion, in these cases, is

always of the feminine gender---not the world, but the world's wife" (619). The action is one of drama and rebellion and consistent with Maggie's character. Maggie, the quintessential outcast, is unable to accept "traditional femininity: the sacrifice of the self to others" (Sutphin 345). Maggie, passionate, impetuous and unconventionally assertive, "rebels against female passivity all of her life."

In Eliot's fiction, we find many women who cross the morally acceptable line. In some cases, the transgression is suggested, in others it is reported to us as fact. Take Mrs. Transome, for example, who has a clandestine extramarital affair with Jermyn. The affair anticipates a life filled with despair and loneliness. But it brings clarity, reflection and a deepening in perspective, even if that process is bitter. Mrs. Transome's life is a life not fully lived. It is empty and "...dimly suggested tragedy...the dreary waste of years empty of sweet trust and affection (Eliot, Felix Holt 597).

And then there are those who openly and joyously violate societal mores, like Deb Traunter who cohabits with Budd. Deb, a prostitute, represents the epitome of the "fallen" woman. She is socially ostracized by the community and damages the reputation of anyone who

befriends her. Budd is told that, if he invites her, Deb's presence could ruin the success of the protest: "...Pendergast might not take the protest well if Deb Traunter went with you (Eliot, "Janet's Repetence" 250). The presence of a prostitute is, as Auerbach says, the "momento mori of a bad marriage" (Auerbach 160). Deb, as the extreme of women's defiance of sexual restraint, represents pure freedom, unbridled erotic energy whose dialectic is action.

Morality forces Eliot and Hawthorne to confront the society's double-standard for men and women. Indeed Eliot seems very interested in the tension that arises out of this double standard. In fact, she is not tolerant of those writers who only create acceptable, traditional literature which depicts women as quiet and passive citizens. In her 1856 essay, "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists," Eliot discusses current literary fashion and describes the female protagonist we often find in the literature of the period. She says, "Her [the heroine] nose and her morals are alike free from any tendency to irregularity" (302). The moral, the virtuous, the chaste or morally strong heroine is unrealistic and uninteresting to Eliot. They represent literature of women who "...have evidently never talked to a tradesman except from a

carriage window" (303). They are, in short, representative of the norm, the respectable, the boring, the unenlightened.

Hawthorne, like Eliot, draws female characters that either refuse or are unable to abide by the gender-defined boundaries that are assigned to them. Hawthorne's females are more often blatant adulteresses, women who violate the sanctity of marriage. Their defiance is expressive of their passionate and independent spirits. In all of Hawthorne, there is no better example than Hester, whose transgression is an example for all others we find in his literature. Hester is, for Hawthorne, the classic "fallen" woman. Hester has "fallen" from the state of grace afforded to virtuous women. Moreover, she is fallen because she is sexually experienced; as Stout says," [they are] lost creatures, "'temptresses'" soiled beyond cleansing" (Stout 1: 233).

Of all of the boundaries that women must cross in order to achieve full personhood, the one most broadly explored, the one that causes the authors the most problems, is the institution of marriage. In marriage there is security, a bond of the two people and, by extension, a bond with community, society and humankind. Marriage, in its symbolic significance, forms a union of

individuals into a collective, forming an embryonic society. Through commitment to marriage, man and woman affirm their relationship to their community and the world.

Marriage, in its most idealistic form, proclaims love and respect and guards against the "hazards of solitary life" (Flint 19: 112). Flint argues, and I agree, that marriage is the weapon against "Isolation, physical, social and moral--the result of severing one's connection with the chain of humanity" (112). To be sure, this is explored by these writers. We need only think about "Little Annie's Ramble" and the desire to return to hearth and family, the extension of marriage. We hear it in the stranger when he turns to her and says, "Well let us hasten homeward" (Hawthorne, "Little Annie Ramble" 234). Or, we may feel it in the warmth and love of Hannah and Matthew in "The Great Carbuncle," who "...fell asleep with hands tenderly clasped, and awoke, from visions of earthly radiance, to meet the more blessed light of one another's eyes" (442).

I believe that Eliot and Hawthorne hold hope for a time when marriage, bolstered by mutual love, would afford both parties the same rights and privileges. But as both are realists who possess a keen understanding of their

own societies, they also know that in its current state, it is an unequal and unfair institution. For that reason, they are unable to fully support it for all women. In fact, they reject it as a viable institution for those women who want to act and live full lives, as people and not as gender-bound women.

Although the fiction is filled with outspoken liberators, Gwendolen Harleth remains one of the most visible and important representatives. Gwendolen does not envision marriage as a desirable state. In fact, she sees it as "a rather dreary state, in which a woman could not do what she liked" (Eliot, Daniel Deronda 68). For Gwendolen, marriage represents confinement, imprisonment and elimination of freedoms she has a right to exercise. Gwendolen reconciles herself to the necessity of marriage out of her desire for societal acceptance and so that she may reap the power of her husband. Gwendolen is taught a lesson, though, that marriage, for purposes other than love, is dangerous and may result in confinements that are worse than the incarcerations of the institution itself.

Similarly, in the same novel, we find Princess Leonara Halm-Eberstein, Daniel's mother, who proclaims that she "did not want to marry" (Eliot, Daniel Deronda 688). She knows that marriage will limit her ability to

develop her musical talents. Although Alcharisi is desolate, perhaps even repentant for her actions, she is unable to recapture lost time, innocence or integrity. For Eliot, the price for protection in marriage is too high, for it asks women to sacrifice a sacred piece of the spirit, that part that enables them to move beyond society. Marriage is not desirable and not the ultimate goal for these women who have careers, or who are interested in broader, more transcendent issues. The manipulation of the institution of marriage usually results in a greater loss of freedom, a loss of spiritual integrity and honor. Eliot's ambiguous beliefs in the sanctity of a union of two equal people is overshadowed by her understanding of its manifestation in nineteenth century society.

The most extreme example of the negative impact of marriage and evidence of the metaphysical rebel's will and spirit to surmount the incarceration of marriage is seen in "Janet's Repetence." Driven to marry in order to avoid her role as governess, Janet is trapped in a loveless, brutal and repressive marriage. Eliot graphically describes Janet's circumstance to us: "Every feverish morning, with its blank listlessness and despair, seemed more hateful than the last; every coming night more

impossible to brave without arming herself in laden stupor. The morning light brought no gladness to her" (Eliot, "Janet's Repetence" 383). For Janet, who loses herself in alcohol to deaden the pain of her existence, metaphysical rebellion takes the form of survival as she struggles to overcome the reality that is her life.

Janet embodies the characteristics of a metaphysical rebel in her resilience, in her fortitude and in the spirit in which she overcomes her circumstance not just for herself but for all of those so incarcerated and brutalized. The physical and mortal realities of marriage are only the most apparent obstacles within the institution of marriage, though. The pain of subjugation, the pressure of society, cause other side effects, even for those who enter happily into the arrangement, "...the bride, passing with trembling joy from the outer court to the inner sanctuary of a woman's life--the wife, beginning her initiation into sorrow, wounded, resenting, yet still hoping and forgiving..." (Eliot, "Janet's Repentance" 344). Marriage is often the force against and within which character is developed and deepened, though. As a repressive institution, it strengthens women by forcing them to withstand the pain and suffering of subjugation. Perhaps the only benefit in the institution

of marriage is that its very existence promotes female rebellion. Eliot and Hawthorne's conception of marriage includes both points of view. They see it as both a confinement which can strengthen the spirit and something that strangles life out of those women who need and desire freedom.

These philosophic perspectives on marriage are actually complementary and not discordant, as they may seem, with their basic beliefs. That is why I tend to agree with Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth who, in speaking of Eliot's conception of sympathy, says that she [and, I would suggest Hawthorne as well] works with a "split in consciousness that permits two conflicting views to exist simultaneously" (Ermarth 23).

Eliot, for example, leads us to believe that Mrs. Barton, the Reverend's wife, is stuck in a lifeless marriage, one which is neither successful nor financially satisfying. By drawing Mrs. Barton as a kind and gentlewomen, Eliot tells us that she might well have done better in choosing a husband, and that she married below her station. But this marriage offers something that another more successful marriage might not have, namely it has given Mrs. Barton "more scope" (Eliot, "Amos Barton" 55) and the opportunity for greater spiritual development.

As Eliot says, "Mrs. Barton's nature would never have grown so angelic if she had married the man you would perhaps have in your eye for her (Eliot, "Amos Barton" 35). Marriage, for Mrs. Barton, builds character as it requires strength and spirit not to be oppressed by the institution itself.

Hawthorne, too, sees marriage as an institution that does not serve women well. But his conception of marriage is loftier than Eliot's. Seeing marriage as something beyond legal prescription, he imbues it with the power and grace of other-worldliness, a joining of the spirits. Implicit in the joining of spirits is the dissolution of one of those spirits for the completion of the joint unit. Unfortunately, this noble quality of marriage does not adequately compensate for the mortal, worldly realities of the institution.

In his letters to Sophia Peabody (Elbert 16: 239), Hawthorne, like the characters he develops, experiences the pangs of marital restriction. Elbert says, "In a letter to his sister Louisa dated 10 July 1842, Hawthorne describes marriage in terms of victimization at the hands of a firing squad or of a spiritual suicide" (Elbert 251). These statements reveal to us that men also experience a sense of confinement from marriage. If Hawthorne

represents male feelings about marriage and men in society experience greater control and are afforded more rights in it, then a woman's experience must be even more paralyzing and uncomfortable.

In one of Hawthorne's most bleak tales of marriage, "The Wedding Knell," we find Mrs. Dabney on the verge of her third marriage. Hawthorne, through narration and dialogue, tells us of Mrs. Dabney's "cold duty..[of] the dislocation of the heart's principles, and [of] the unkindness of her Southern husband" (Hawthorne, "Wedding Knell" 353). Hawthorne pairs the wedding, the marriage ceremony, with a funeral. The tale mourns the loss of the individual life, the death of the free person, and suggests that the ritual moves both parties into another realm. He tells us that, "...it has been the custom of divers nations to infuse something of sadness into their marriage ceremonies" (356). The bridegroom forebodingly calls to his bride and says, "'Come, my bride!' said those pale lips. 'The hearse is ready. The sexton stands waiting for us at the door of the tomb. Let us be married; and then to our coffins!'" (357). The coffin, or the sealed fate in which society places marriage, is inescapable.

In "The Minister's Black Veil," we find Elizabeth

the Reverend's wife. Although she is characterized as the obedient and dutiful wife, Elizabeth is of higher virtue than the Reverend himself. We know this because she is direct, open, honest and does not cover her face or hide from her community. We have no sense that she is involved with mystery, evil or sin as we do for the Reverend. After she urges him to remove the veil from his face, we are told that her [Elizabeth's] "character is ...firmer than his [Hooper's] own" (Hawthorne, "The Minister's Black Veil" 192). But Elizabeth is unable to convince him to remove the veil and unable to continue the marriage. In an act of outright defiance and rebellion, she says, "Lift the veil but once, and look me in the face" (192). Upon his refusal, she leaves him, for the moment, for all time.

And finally, there is Hawthorne's singularly most important spokeswoman for rebellion, Hester. Hester has strayed from marriage, from the obedience and other-serving role of what constitutes nineteenth century femininity, but she is judged by "the most pitiless of ... self-constituted judges" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 49). These "self-constituted judges" are none other than the town's married women who exclaim "This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die." Their

reference is directed toward Hester's adulterous actions which have brought shame and dishonor to all married women who uphold proper female behavior, who abide by codes of social and moral conduct. Hester's violation of marriage rules for women is shunned as it represents her disregard for the institution of marriage and trumpets her independence and freedom from it. Elbert says that Hester's adulterous act is "...neither single nor married but...on the edge of marital law" (250). Elbert is correct in placing her outside of the realm of marriage, but I argue that she is not "on the edge" of it either. Hester is well beyond marital law, beyond man's law. As Elbert later argues ,"'the world's law was no law for her mind'" (244).

Metaphysical rebellion requires that its disciples traverse the neatly defined boundaries. Each disciple, whether through education, sexual experience or marriage, acts on behalf of all others, in this case for all women. Boundary crossings are transformative and lead these special women into uncharted and valuable forbidden areas. All of the examples I offer here describe the ways in which female metaphysical rebels move through the process of metaphysical rebellion. They depict the rebel moving through the first phase of metaphysical rebellion, the

one that is specific to her gender. As she commits any one of a number of violations, she moves out of her gender and gains access to the realm of full personhood. This permits her to join with all humankind in the journey toward transcendent truth. The change from gender-bound to gender-free is transformative, irreversible and permanent.

For those women who choose this path, or those that must choose it, they *become* new and rejuvenated citizens. Ironically, the forbidden area they cross into is nothing more than the greater public sphere, the real and free world that men normally exist within. Society and community often classify these boundary-crossers as transmogrified women who must be isolated from the rest of femalekind. This is an effort to maintain social order and to prevent all women from rebelling against their lot. In the alembic process of border-crossing, Maggie, Hester, Deb, Janet and all the rest overcome mortal laws and exist in the broader realm of humankind for they are unwilling and unable to exist in the limited, personal and domestic region of femaleness.

Chapter 5

Male Females

> In pride, in reasoning pride, our error lies,
> All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
> Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
> Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
> Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,
> Aspiring to be angels, men rebel. (Pope 2189)

In spite of the boundaries imposed on women by society, we find exceptional women in Eliot and Hawthorne who arrogate to themselves the rights and privileges of men. They are women who see themselves in ways that men see themselves, with freedom, confidence and the ability to accomplish any task. They are women of poise and grace, women whose interests are broad and noble, maybe even lofty. Some like Pope, attribute the desire to "rush into the skies" as evidence of humankind's intrinsic pride and selfishness. I, like Eliot and Hawthorne, attribute it to surviving, to waging war against the status quo, to rebelling against "soul destroying conformity."

The nineteenth century strongly believed in the

need for conformity and used gender as one of the means of ensuring order in society. Assignment to one gender or another, allows society the ability to define appropriate and inappropriate codes of conduct for each gender. It divides the world into two factions and, historically, relegates one to the public sphere and the other to the domestic one. The way one perceives and functions in the world is largely determined by society's genderized class system. Many critics, Minnich for one, have attempted to define gender in terms of its function, equating it with "...what it means to live in a world that created them not human, but always woman or man" (Doty, Myths of Masculinity 15).

I accept this definition and expand it to include any set of societally defined and assigned rules, conventions and habits established for the two sexes. By definition, then, gender differentiations establish boundaries between the sexes. The power of this differentiation has, over the course of history, negatively impacted on women whose ambitions have been thwarted by beliefs about the female gender.

The nineteenth century viewed women as emotional, subjective and anatomically inferior to men. These

sentiments were expressed and felt in every aspect of daily life, whether in America or England. Science, the new hope for society, fueled anti-women rhetoric and "validated" perceptions of women as the lesser sex. Specifically, the medical profession, played a key role in enforcing restrictive and genderized codes of behavior for women. Medicine, through its practices of inspection, dissection and analysis, is able to identify disease, recommend treatments and effect cures. But it, like every science, is bound on the one side by current scientific theory and, on the other, by its society's cultural beliefs.

In the period in which Eliot and Hawthorne write, there were many medical advances, ones that reduced pain and suffering. The benefits of some of these discoveries, though, were diminished by the fact that they served to reinforce negative beliefs about women, beliefs that relegated them as "other" as a result of their anatomy.

One such discovery was that of chloroform. (Much of the material in this discussion are taken from Mary Poovey's article, "'Scenes of an Indelicate Character': the Medical 'Treatment' of Victorian Women'" 14: 137-166). Discovered by Dr. James Young Simpson in 1847, chloroform offered physicians the ability to reduce

pain and complete longer and more intricate surgical procedures. In the mid-nineteenth century, physicians began their use of chloroform for delivering babies. The usage of chloroform eliminated the pain of childbirth, and with it, provided physicians with a fully compliant patient. It also afforded them the opportunity to deliver children, a province previously held by midwives in lying-in chambers. In short, it moved the event of child birth out of the private female-centered world, into the impersonal medical and male environment.

But although they possessed the techniques and skills to deliver children, they could not understand all of the elements involved in a woman giving birth. For example, they were confounded by the inability to predict the actual time of expected birth. Neither their scientific education nor their experience in the world, possessing a male and not female anatomy, afforded them the opportunity to explain the woman's experience of childbirth.

Women's anatomical differentness became the focus of attention within the medical community. Perhaps that is why many of the medical treatises in this period focussed on the uterus as the single most important

aspect of female anatomy. W. Tyler Smith, for example, who wrote one of the most influential textbooks on Obstetrics, likens the uterus to heart in its dominance and power over the human. In America, Dr. John Quakenbush, in addressing the Albany Medical College in 1857, says that woman is possessed of "'...gentleness, feebleness [and that she must rely] upon man for her support'" (Welter 57).

The medical profession reinforced women's behavior as resulting from her anatomy and used it to explain everything from nervous conditions to intellectual capabilities. "This set of assumptions---that woman's reproductive function defines her character, position, and value, that this function is only one sign of an innate periodicity, and that this periodicity influences and is influenced by an array of nervous disorders---mandates the medical profession's superintendence of women" (Poovey, 146).

Moreover, "These men decided that female biology, dominated as it was by the reproductive system, compromised women both physically and intellectually, and thus biology dictated that a woman was less than a man" (Yeager 217). For these reasons and others, during Eliot and Hawthorne's period, philosophic and

scientific beliefs tied women, their dispositions, their abilities, their emotions, directly to women's anatomies. The pervasive, societal beliefs that women were unstable, frail and hysterical and that men were the opposite, gave strength to society's power to confine her to home under the protection of a husband. Further, it validated society's classification of the female gender as inferior and weak.

Beliefs and assumptions like these were, at least in part, responsible for preventing women's access to professions, limiting educational opportunities and assigning her to the private sphere of the home. Society assigned constraints based on the 'anatomy is destiny' belief which permanently stamped women as unable to surmount all types of obstacles and deemed them unable to fully and consistently function in the public sphere: "... women were inferior to men because they were linked to the domestic sphere, once again in consequence of their role in reproduction and child care, while men were associated with the public sphere of social life" (Moore 80).

Recent socio-economic theory extend definitions like these by delineating the differences between sex and gender. "Classification by 'sex' refers to the

dichotomous distinctions between male and female based on physiological characteristics; classification by 'gender' refers to the psychological dimensions 'masculine and 'feminine'" (Glazer, Waehrer 114). These beliefs strengthened and scientifically validated long-held "feelings" that the sexes each had a unique set of qualities. Those qualities of the male sex are masculine, namely "thinking, doing and task-orientations" while the feminine is defined as the "being, the feeling and the socio-emotional orientations" (Glazer, Waehrer 119). Males, and their accompanying masculine qualities, are active while female and feminine qualities are assigned to the passive. Society embraces these gender distinctions and uses them as a means of bringing order and control. And society, as the guardian of humankind, enforces conformity with established codes of conduct for men and women.

The question of society is an important one. Throughout the nineteenth century, there was great emphasis and interest in the individual relationship with his/her society. This interest is seen in De Tocqueville who discusses the effects of equality in modern society and Le Bon who studied the effect of

crowds on individual man.

The idea of community is a prominent theme in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction. They, like many writers in this period, see human beings as social creatures. The interest in society was ignited by population growth and industrialization which forced workers out of the country and into crowded cities. In addition to these factors, the new reliance on science promoted dependence on humankind. Humans and not God had the power and ability to invent machinery, to lessen arduous labor and to change society. Both Eliot and Hawthorne believed in

the individual's responsibility to the community and society. Perhaps that is why Eliot loved Bunyan's "The Pilgrim's Progress," in which we find Christian escaping his society which is on the verge of destruction. Christian leaves his community in pursuit of Paradise. Throughout his journey, though, he is confronted with barriers which represent, among other things, his desire not to leave his society. "The Pilgrims' Progress" demonstrates the power of community and the individual's desire to leave it. It holds that man is a social animal, as Christian craves companionship throughout his journey. Eliot, like

Hester, separates herself from society by living with Lewes. But she, like Hawthorne, is unwilling to give it up altogether. So it is for many of the rebels we find in the literature.

For Eliot and Hawthorne, community affords security and protects individuals from loneliness. Man, the social animal, needs and desires the group to validate his existence, to give purpose to his existence. Sociology is discovered in this period and identified as a distinct science and valid area of inquiry. Hawthorne's characters, unlike Christian, are permitted only temporary separations from their communities.

All we need to do is think about the various separations, disintegrations and reintegrations we find in Hawthorne, and in Eliot as well, to understand the importance of the community in the fiction. Hester is separated but later rejoins the community. Mrs. Hutchinson separates herself from society as a means of creating her own community, and Zenobia leaves society in an attempt to establish a better one but ends up returning to her community.

The community provides a framework within which to work, and it brings form, routine and predictability

into everyday life. These are the beneficial outcomes of being a part of society, of co-existing peacefully within one's community. All people desire to be a part of the group, a part of their society, regardless of philosophy, religious orientation or gender. But, for women, acceptance into society means abiding by its conventions and developing and maintaining habits that are consistent with those prescribed by society for the female gender. For women, convention and habit join to restrain women in straitjackets of gender conformity. Society, in its efforts to control its members, dictates acceptable rules of conduct and behavior for women, and these conventions and habits limit women's freedom.

Assigning women to the domestic sphere enables society to maintain control over women's movements and limits their exposure to the freedoms that exist in the public realm. The home insulates women from the impurity, the corruption of the world. Society desires to keep women in this elevated state of virtue, uncontaminated by mundane existence. It associates purity with a higher state of virtue and appoints women as society's keeper of the higher virtue of purity. Furthermore, Dickenson argues in Woman in the Nineteenth Century and Other Writings, that "To step outside of

the domestic sphere," which according to Dickenson is women's rightful place, "...would sully her purity" (xviii). To live in the public and real world, to leave the enclosure and protection of the domestic sphere, is to become contaminated by the world.

Before I examine Eliot and Hawthorne's male females, it is important to see them against society's perfect female. In this way, the male females' behavior, their violations and transgressions, will be clearer and the ramifications more deeply felt. To be sure, Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction has many conventional women, many "nice" ladies who comply with convention and who see themselves as society does. They are the natural ladies, the acceptable models of womanhood, the model against which all others are measured.

For Eliot, the quintessential right and proper lady is embodied in the proprietress. Proprietresses depict the norms to be cultivated by all women. They are women who follow the rules of etiquette, who show good breeding and never use a loud voice. They are women who have cultivated the "right" feminine skills, like embroidery and dancing. As refinement and manner are of the utmost importance, they stand as an example of

wholesomeness. They are the virtuous moral custodians for society who understand and abide by the rules and regulations of gender assignment. They shape and mold future generations and ensure continuity and stability in society.

Such women usually oversee academies for girls, like Miss Townley, whose influence and stature are given both authority and respect. Proprietresses are conservative in their political views and willingly, they would argue, happily embrace their societally assigned roles. Miss Townley, the head of the Milby school for girls, dislikes innovation and holds societal conventions as a standard to achieve. She is against Reverend Tryan's ideas of church reform, for example, and supports Mr. Crewe, the long-standing, conservative churchman. Proprietresses are against change and unwilling to risk the security of society for what they would consider wild and untried ideas.

Similarly, in Middlemarch, we find two proprietresses, Mrs. Lemon and Mrs. Ballard, both holding the prestigious positions of running excellent schools for young ladies. In Daniel Deronda, there is Madame Meunier, the proper and virtuous woman, who lavishes excessive praise even on the prideful

Gwendolen. Proprietresses always conduct themselves in a lady-like and appropriate way, even in the face of prideful or rude people. And, in The Mill on the Floss, there is Miss Firniss, who administers the boarding school. The proprietress is the embodiment of norm and more, the moral and virtuous reflection of a good and just society. She is desired by men, respected by women, the epitome of convention and the product of habit. In and through their refined manners, they hope to set an example for all others. They not only believe that it is the "right" thing to do, but also hold hope that through their example others who do not act appropriately will eventually change their ways.

For Hawthorne's society, proper ladies exhibit obedience and conformity with society's rules and regulations. Beatrice is the good daughter, never disobeying or confronting her devious father. She is long-suffering and silently clings to the pain of her sex. Even those who rebel, like Elizabeth and Annie, are quiet and, even if hesitatingly, maintain a ladylike demeanor in their rebellious acts. They are never brash, verbally aggressive, shout or curse. The proprietresses and the obedient ladies we find in Eliot and Hawthorne's literature epitomize the Victorian and nineteenth

century ideals of femininity. They are diametrically juxtaposed to those "other," those "strange and unnatural" women we find in the literature, the male females.

These other women, these male females, are seen by the authors as men. Zenobia is the most prominent and important male female and stands for all others in Hawthorne and Eliot's fiction. Physiologically, Zenobia is deficient as a woman and exhibits more similarities with men: "Her hand...was larger than most women would like to have" and her features "a little deficient in softness and delicacy" (Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance 43). From the outset, Hawthorne prepares the reader for a different type of woman. She was a woman who did not look like other women. Her laugh was: "...most delectable to hear, but not in the least like an ordinary woman's laugh" (43).

Zenobia's physical appearance is a violation of society's guidelines for women. She lacks delicacy, softness and laughs in a manner that is not ordinary, leading us to believe that it is not ladylike. A woman like Zenobia's stand out from the others. She, although, refined and poised, is separated from the rest

of women, from the petite and the gentle women. In and through her appearance, she crosses the gender line and appears more male-like then female-like. This is one way in which the female metaphysical rebel passes through the first phase of metaphysical rebellion. It is interesting that it is not of her choosing but rather an act of nature that has marked her and, therefore, empowered her to move beyond gender.

Male females are free from convention and habit, free to act as they choose and free to luxuriate in the trials and tribulations of mortal existence. These women force us to consider, reconsider, our definitions of maleness and femaleness, to look more deeply into the discourse of gender.

In Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction, we find many women who cross the boundary between female and male behavior. They, like Zenobia, are not only agents of change, but seen by their creators as male characters. There are many women like her in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction. They are intelligent and active women, they are women who leave the home and who enjoy adventure, they are the male females.

Women who appear or act like men are not welcomed by their societies. They represent a threat to its

order and stability. They are even rejected by other women who oftentimes seem envious and who vicariously enjoy their transgressions. Conventional women in society internalize the anger that arises from unfair treatment and incorporate the reasons and excuses that society offers for women's confinement. This internalization manifests itself through virulent attacks on male females, often attacks that are worse than all others. But the pressures of society are too forceful and terrorize them into submission.

The male females aim to "quit their spheres," to be "angels...and gods," to possess the power, the freedom and to defy all laws, man-made and god-made. Before male females can defy the laws of god, though, they must attain full personhood so that they, as representatives of humankind, can rebel against divine laws. But first she must violate the boundaries that have been established to imprison her in the sub-person state of gender. This is a preliminary and mandatory step for all metaphysical male female rebels.

Society has identified a wide range of actions that are "inappropriate" for women. But some women are either unwilling or unable to act appropriately. They are unlike the refined proprietresses whose deportment

is cultivated, restrained and lady-like. Zenobia, for example, exhibits "freedom in her deportment [which was] not exactly maiden-like" (71). She uses "emphatic gestures" (171) which suggest that she was passionate and uncontrolled. She does not have the skills that a woman is expected to possess. And, she possesses a strong constitution and is able to do physical labor. Her enjoyment of exercise was "one peculiarity, distinguishing Zenobia from most of her sex," says Coverdale. "She needed it for her moral well-being, and would never forego, a large amount of physical exercise" (169).

Zenobia, a woman who carries herself with great grace, willfully violates the etiquette established for women. She has consciousness of her actions: "Every day I shall give you [Priscilla] a lecture, a quarter of an hour in length, on the morals, manners and proprieties, of social life." (99) This statement reveals her knowledge of society's expectations.

Often, male females are described as vile, rough and crude. The Gypsies, in The Mill on the Floss, are a congregate example of these male females. As Maggie "rebels against female passivity" (Sutphin 29: 343) and runs away from home to join the Gypsies, a group that

she romantically envisions as her spiritual community, she finds a group of rough, tough and unpleasant women. The Gypsies, we learn, are unclean, "...but I [Maggie] wished she [the Gypsy] had not been so dirty"(Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 172). They have bad manners and habits, "...[the tall Gypsy] was lying on her back, scratching his [a male Gypsy] nose," (172) and they are ill-mannered: "...the tall girl snatched the bonnet and put it on her own head hindermost with a grin" (173). They also "stare" (176) impolitely and, are generally, uncivilized.

They, like many of the other male females, seem to act instinctually, and not out of societal training. For these reasons, they exhibit freedom of movement, by "staring," "snatching, and "scratching" as their bodies and their instincts lead them to do. They do not care about their appearances nor seem to give any thought to how they are seen by others. If they are aware of what is expected of them as women, which we have no reason to believe is true, they ignore all such recommendations and guidelines.

Women who do not act like women are considered to be evil, unnatural and are disliked by their community. They are women who gamble, like Mrs. Cragstone. Lady

Mallinger shares society's sentiments about women like her when she says "I do not like women who gamble, like Lady Cragstone" (Eliot, Daniel Deronda 368). The most extreme example of these kinds of women are embodied in Poll Fodge, an unsavory woman, with one-eye and a scarred face who was known as the "...most notorious rebel in the workhouse" (Eliot, "Amos Barton" 64) Poll is aggressive, uses physical force and is given to fits of anger like the time she was "...said to have thrown her broth on the master's coat-tails" (62). She is coarse in approach, unrefined in etiquette, more masculine than feminine in approach and style.

Nanny is another male female of this sort, a woman who is outspoken and honest. In one outburst, Nanny speaks her mind to the selfish and abusive Countess. When asked if Mrs. Barton is ill, she responds "Ill--yes--I should think she is ill, 'an much you care. She's likely to be ill, moithered as she is from mornin' to night, wi' folsas had better be elsewhere" (102). The Nanny represents the woman who speaks her mind. She is unafraid of making enemies, and unconcerned with being liked by her community. These male females may show physical aggression like Dame Ricketts or display an astute business sense like Mrs. Bucks. Others join

demonstrations and participate in rioting like Phib Cook.

All exhibit a disdain, perhaps even contempt, for the rules of conduct established by society for women. Whether they act out of instinct and follow unconscious desires or willfully act contrary to societal expectations, each visibly, irrevocably acts in a manner contrary to what is prescribed for her gender. Their violations push them over the boundary of gender.

Like Eliot, Hawthorne develops many male females in his literature. His male females stand in stark relief to Puritan society. In his fiction, the author's voice, as heard through narration, provides the reader with glimpses into the contradictions and ambivalences that arise out of male female action. Although he believes that women should be afforded the rights and privileges of men, he also sees the problems that arise out of such boundary crossings. His concern about these "unnatural" women is far-reaching and involves his acknowledging that they threaten the social order, a needed but nonetheless unsettling reality. To threaten the social order, to defy the guidelines set by society, is suggestive of potential discontent between the sexes and within the fabric of society itself.

Hawthorne feels ambivalent about this problem. On the one hand, he believes in the right of women to live freely, like men, but he has longings to uphold the Puritan guidelines of order and form. He cautiously, judiciously, develops male females out of these contradictory feelings.

Hawthorne's Gypsies are formed by the dyad of Mistress Hibbins, Governor Bellingham's sister in The Scarlet Letter and Mrs. Bullfrog, of the story of the same name. Mistress Hibbins is "bitter tempered" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 111) and "old" with a facial expression that is ..."sour, and discontented" (145). Everything about Mistress Hibbins stands in opposition to societal dictates for the proper lady, whether it is her "ugly" (178) temper or the repeated references to her as a witch, "the reputed witch-lady," (213) or that she would be "...executed as a witch" (111).

In contrast to Mistress Hibbins' bad disposition, and ugly appearance, her apparel is beautiful. The beauty and excessiveness of her dress are not signs of conventional femininity but rather acts of virulent rebellion. We are told that she had a "...grand appearance, having on a high headress, a rich gown of

velvet, and a ruff done up with the famous yellow starch" (213) and that she was "...arrayed in a great magnificence, with a triple ruff,a broidered stomacher, a gown of rich velvet and a gold-headed cane" (232). But the beauty of her clothing, the level of its adornment, is excessive by her society's standards. In Puritan America, women were supposed to be dressed plainly and thereby ensure that they did not receive unnecessary attention. Their plainness in dress was demonstration of their purity in spirit. To violate the rules of dress, to dress outlandishly, to bring unneeded attention to oneself was deemed to be an act of pride, a symbol of disrespect and an act of rebellion against the society and its rules.

Zenobia "...was dressed as simply as possible, in an American print...Her hair, which was dark and glossy, and of singular abundance, was put up rather soberly and primly, without curls" (42). In this description, we find a woman who tastefully abides by the dictates of her society. But she, too, possesses excessive pride and uses adornments as a form of rebellion. Zenobia always wears a fresh flower in her hair, but this is not a simple flower it is "exotic, of rare beauty... brilliant...so costly...[that] it was more indicative

of the pride and the pomp which had luxuriant growth in Zenobia's character than if a great diamond had sparkled among her hair" (43).

The flower is symbolic of Zenobia's rebellion against society. It is contrary to every element in her plain, simple society. It is "exotic," strange and unknown, holding both mystery and danger. It is "brilliant," and stands out from everything else. It brings attention to Zenobia, an undesirable action for any Puritan women. Most important, and reflective of one of Zenobia's most powerful rebellious characteristics, the flower, like Zenobia, possesses pride in its own beauty. The flower, then, comes to stand for all other forms of physical beauty that are used against societal standards.

Like Eliot's Gypsies, Miss Hibbins and Zenobia reside in the world of nature. Their primitive qualities place them in the woods. Both women carry the woods with them. We find Mistress Hibbins with "some twigs of the forest clinging to her skirt" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 69) and Zenobia who always wears a fresh, exotic flower "...Nature had evidently created this floral gem, in happy exuberance, for the one purpose of worthily adorning Zenobia's

head" (Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance 69).

When Hester wanders into the forest, thinking that her rendezvous has been unnoticed, she is confronted by Hibbins who rebukes her, "Fie, woman, fie!...Dost thou think I have been to the forest so many times, and have yet no skill to judge who else has been there?...I know thee, Hester" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 233). Mrs. Hibbins' powers of insight, her ability to live in the outside world, her open and unremorseful defiance of dress codes, and her verbal protestations are all demonstration of her male female qualities.

Mrs. Bullfrog, like Mistress Hibbins, is also a free woman, even though "she served her husband as a stepping stone" (Hawthorne, "Mrs. Bullfrog" 408). Like Mistress Hibbins, she, too, dresses exceedingly well. She is seemingly the good wife and longs to assist her husband in all that is necessary. But she, like Mistress Hibbins, is in touch with her natural side, an instinctive quality which is unable to be contained for society, or her husband. The primitive aspect of her spirit is revealed in the scene when the carriage turns over and her husband receives, "...blows given by a person of grisly aspect, with a head almost bald, and sunken cheeks, apparently of the female gender, though

hardly to be classed the gentler sex" (409). This creature is Mrs. Bullfrog and in this episode she reveals that unrefined, monstrous side of her spirit.

The incident changes her relationship with her husband, as both know, as she says that "I shall never be the woman I was" (409) and that "Women are not angels" (412) or that even brides have "little imperfections" (412). The other side of Mrs. Bullfrog is the real, brutish nature of all humans. In exposing it as the other side of woman, Mrs. Bullfrog sets a gruesome example for all of the women in society. Hawthorne worries that if woman is allowed to be totally free, then perhaps this "grisly" being lurks in the heart and spirit. Perhaps that is why society has regulated female behavior because if left untended, it would be more monstrous than male nature, more dangerous that anything we can imagine.

Some women, like Alice Pyncheon, defy the male-female boundary by taking risks and overcoming danger. A case in point is Alice's encounter with Matthew Maule. Alice, conscious of her strength of spirit, holds firm that her "sphere [is] impenetrable, unless betrayed by a treachery within" (Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables 526) and puts her "woman's might against man's

might; a match not often equal on the part of a woman" (527). As I read this scene, Alice openly defies Matthew's power, and with confidence and knowledge confronts temptation and evil. These are actions borne out of Alice's spirit. In transgressing the line between male and female, Alice and others like her, destroy the imaginary line that mortal man draws between men and women in an effort to better control the universe. Their actions move them toward a new freedom which includes not only the single transgressor but all of humankind.

Of all of the male females we find in the fiction, the ones that are most convincing and apparent are those who verbally announce their desires and ambitions. Mrs. Hutchinson, for instance, believes she is on a divine mission to carry people out of the depths of corrupt religious doctrine and into a new, free life. She is a woman of pride, intelligence, confidence and verbal eloquence. She possesses courage and passion. In her criticisms of the church, she contests blind obedience to corrupt clergymen, questioning not only the church but also those who administer the church, the priest, the men.

Hawthorne warns the reader that a "Woman's

intellect should never give the tone to that of man" (Hawthorne, "Mrs. Hutchinson" 18), but Mrs. Hutchinson does just that in her exhortations about the church. As she stands in front of the judges, all men, she is poised to usurp their authority. The men attempt to "stand in front of the woman, striving to beat her down with brows of wrinkled iron" (21). But their attempts to quiet Mrs. Hutchinson are to no avail as "...her answers are ready and astute, she reasons with them shrewdly, and brings scripture to support every argument; the deepest controversialist of the scholastic day find her a woman, who all of their well-trained and sharpened intellects are inadequate to foil" (23).

Mrs. Hutchinson is eloquent, educated and vocal about her displeasure with the church, with the religious society the church has erected. In direct opposition to a society which requires bright women to remain quiet and be obedient, we can not help but feel that her open display of intelligence is "...a sort of impropriety in the display of woman's naked mind of the gaze of the world" (19). Mrs. Hutchinson stands "loftily before her judges, with a determined brow" (23), representing all of womankind as she demands the

authority to build her own settlement. As we might expect, the Puritan American women are terrified by her behavior: "...[the women] are shuddering and weeping, and at times they cast a desolate look of fear around them" (21).

The women of the community act as regulators of propriety, proprietresses themselves, and Mrs. Hutchinson displays wanton impropriety, behavior unfitting of a woman in the society. Male females carry a magical power with them, the power to persuade, to dominate. They are certainly not the womankind that society desires, the ones who carry, the "tools of her magic, the broom and the mop" (Scheiber 286).

Zenobia's verbal dominance identifies her as a male female who uses language as a means of rebellion. From the beginning, we find that she has a "...fine, frank, mellow voice" (41). Hawthorne's use of the word "frank" underlines Zenobia's sincerity and prepares us for a woman who speaks openly, without regard to society's expectations. He conveys her confidence and her harmony with nature by telling us that her voice was "mellow." The qualities of Zenobia's voice prepare us for her role as free-thinker and social reformer.

Zenobia is outspoken and unafraid to speak her

mind. For example, in an early meeting, she confesses that she does not like philanthropists because "They are, indeed an odiously disagreeable set of mortals" (49). She confronts people in order to exact their purpose. In the scene in which Coverdale is quietly watching Zenobia, she challenges him to tell her of his interest; "I seem to interest you very much; and cannot reckon you as an admirer," she says. "What are you seeking to discover in me?" (71). This moment of confrontation is stark and surprising to Coverdale who unwillingly answers her truthfully as a result of her unexpected assault. Zenobia's direct approach and her unflinching courage to share her own ideas are male female characteristics.

Zenobia, like Mrs. Hutchinson, wants to establish a better society, one built on freedom and equality. She is keenly aware of the inequalities between the sexes and protests against her society's unfair treatment of women. In response to a smile that comes over Coverdale's face as she speaks of the day when women will be afforded the same rights as men, she proclaims that the best form of expression for women is the right to speak, rather than to write. "It is with the living voice alone [the woman's voice]," she says "that [she]

can compel the world to recognize the light of her intellect and the depth of her heart" (137). The voice is "natural and immediate"(137) and is, therefore, sincere, real and pure. If women are to gain equality, they must speak of their discontent, they must preach change and shape and mold a new behavior.

Zenobia epitomizes the male female character, whether in Hawthorne or Eliot. Zenobia is driven from an imperative of the soul to seek a new and better existence. While she advocates equality for women, she should not be classified as a feminist rebel. Such a label would diminish her importance and relegate her actions to ones that are confined to only half of the population. This is never the case for the true metaphysical rebel.

Feminist rebels have temporal concerns and are interested in changing the rules and regulations that affect present and worldly conditions. As feminist rebels desire equality with men, they focus their efforts toward changing the laws of society to ensure equal rights. For example, in nineteenth century England, they sought the right to retain ownership of their property after divorce. Today, they seek equal pay for equal work. The facet of equality they seek is

tied to the age in which they live. In other words, if the current concern is to gain access to all male clubs, then the feminist rebel will seek legal services which will enable her to join the club. The feminist rebel's concerns are transitory and change with society.

The female metaphysical rebel, on the other hand, has eternal concerns which are not tied to a specific time or place. In fact, they are beyond the concept of time and space and the material and known world. Eliot and Hawthorne, for example, write of the same metaphysical problems that Camus writes of in the twentieth century. The concerns of the metaphysical rebel are unchanged over time.

The feminist rebel voices discontent and seeks to change society for only a part of society, women. One of her goals, then, is to ensure that women have equal rights with those in power, namely men. Feminist rebellion is a branch of politico-social rebellion as it seeks to effect changes in humankind's government and social systems. Feminist rebels want to change the society in which "...men make laws which treat women as property [so that] women are dependent on them, they can treat them as they like, keep their resources, use their bodies, even physically abuse them" (Maynard 238). In

its efforts to improve women's political and social position in society, feminist rebellion results from a secular concern and not from a spiritual one, as does metaphysical rebellion.

Female metaphysical rebels are unlike feminist rebels in that they acknowledge gender as a temporary state of being and not as a permanent characteristic. They see it as a traversable boundary, while feminist rebels view it as a predestined and permanent barrier. While the female metaphysical rebel looks toward breaking through the gender boundary in order to join humanity, the feminist rebel embraces the gender boundary and clings to it as a natural and needed means of existence.

Zenobia is a female metaphysical rebel who, through her male femaleness, traverses the gender boundary as the first journey. She embodies the elements of all of the male females I have discussed in this chapter. But she is more than the composite of Eliot and Hawthorne's male females. After she gains access to personhood by violating societal codes for women, she then isolates herself from the community and establishes a new world. She, like those reformers that followed her, "left the rusty iron framework of society" and broke "through

many hindrances that were powerful enough to keep most people on the wary tread-mill of the established system" (46).

In Blithedale, Zenobia is the ultimate male female, a woman who is neither gender and beyond gender. The separation between the genders, therefore,disintegrates. Zenobia completes the female metaphysical process and returns to her society. She, like the world she has reentered, is different. She no longer believes that there is only way to live. She no longer dreams of utopian existences. She has found a higher truth, one that is above and beyond mortal man's ideas about a human existence.

The Blithedale Romance is Hawthorne's treatise on metaphysical rebellion. And that is why the entire novel revolves around Zenobia and a new world order. Zenobia speaks for all humankind when, near the end of the novel, she is asked if she has given up on the idea of Blithedale: "I should think it a poor and meagre nature, that is capable of one set of forms, and must convert all the past into a dream merely because the present happens to be unlike it. Why should we be content with our homely life of a few months, to the exclusion of all other modes? It was good; but there

are other lives as good, or better" (177). This passage reveals the true nature of the female metaphysical rebel who sees the world as possessing many opportunities and many alternative forms of existence.

For some, freedom from community and ascendance into the divine world is effected by failed utopian communities; for others, by running off into the woods and joining Gypsies. Eliot and Hawthorne's female metaphysical rebels want to, as Pope says, "quit their sphere, and rush into the skies." For female metaphysical rebels this can only be accomplished by violating the many rules that mankind has imposed on women.

Chapter 6

A Disquiet of the (Female) Spirit

For women, one of the most important underlying causes for metaphysical rebellion is anger and outrage. I believe this anger and outrage looms just below the text, at the center of discourse and in the hearts and minds of female characters throughout the fiction. I do not refer here to the anger we have grown so accustomed to in the period in which Eliot and Hawthorne write, to an anger with the political system or with the social condition. Nor do I mean the rage that we often find in revolutionary literature which culminates in a single rebellious act. I refer here to a broader type of outrage and anger, one that embraces all other forms, one that is not directed towards an isolated situation or a particular event. The anger I refer to is unique to the female spirit. I find it in many of Eliot's and Hawthorne's short stories, novels and poems.

For Hawthorne, Hester is the best example and is representative of the disquiet we see and feel in other Hawthornian rebels. Hester, through her act of adultery, violates her community's moral laws for women but she never displays guilt or remorse about her action. In

fact, Hawthorne leads us to believe that Hester, within her heart, does not believe that she has committed a sin and further that she is comfortable and at peace with her action and in full acceptance of it. True, she is forced to openly wear the letter but she does so unabashedly, and once she puts it on, it becomes as much a badge of rebellion as a symbol of moral transgression. Hawthorne tacitly supports Hester's idea that, as Scheiber notes, "...in order to provide for women's happiness, 'the whole system of society is to be torn down, and built up anew'" (Scheiber, "Public Force, Private Sentiment: Hawthorne and the Gender of Politics," 2: 285-299).

By wearing the scarlet letter, Hester commits many transgressions, all manifestations of her anger and outrage. To begin with, she displays excessive pride by embroidering so fine and adorned a letter, by using such luxurious materials and by making it so fanciful. She proclaims her adultery by wearing it so openly and unashamedly. The creation of the letter itself, its materials, its design and its craftsmanship are all representations of Hester's transgressions. That is why Hawthorne goes to great lengths in describing the materials and characteristics of the letter, "...[the A was made] in a fine red cloth, surrounded with an

elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread. It was also artistically done, and with so much fertility and gorgeous luxuriance of fancy...of a splendor in accordance with the taste of the age, but greatly beyond what was allowed by the sumptuary regulation of the colony" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 46). The letter and that which it represents (adultery), isolates Hester from her community. We are told that she feels like an outsider, "in all her intercourse with society there was nothing that made her feel as though she belonged to it" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 79). For that reason, the letter holds the power to change and transform both Hester and her society.

Hawthorne asks us to forgive Hester and to be "...receptive to her [Hester's] new type of law or lawlessness" (Elbert 244-255). It is unfortunate, though, that women must gain such power through isolation. Separation from one's community is, after all, a high price to pay for freedom. Hester's entire existence seems caught up in this one act, but Hester, like the male rebels I discussed earlier, is interested in more transcendent issues, interested in attaining other types of knowledge. For women like Hester, violating moral codes are only the first steps in the journey to

personhood, which brings them a step closer to violating the divine laws which offer transcendent knowledge. But more, "By accepting punishment and guilt, Hester is educated and strengthened by suffering, and acquires a power for good beyond the scope of the rebel of the opening" (Kinkead-Weekes 83). The "rebel" we find in the beginning has not as yet revealed the essence which makes her a metaphysical rebel. It is only as she, and we the reader, endure the grand scope and magnitude of the fall and the subsequent redemption that we come to understand her as a metaphysical rebel.

In "The New Adam and Eve," the female metaphysical rebel is presented as a leader and as an individual who stands apart from husband and society. Eve is the explorer in a library that represents Eden and which holds the same perils and evil of the original sin story. As she leads Adam into the hall of Legislature, the author tells us that she has "delicacy and refinement" and that she "ransacks a work-basket, and instinctively thrusts her rosy tip of her finger into a thimble" (Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The New Adam and Eve" 755). She is a woman, by sex but more by gender as "...she handles a fashionable silk with dim yearnings [feminine] thoughts that wander hither and thither-instincts groping in the dark"

(Hawthorne, "The New Adam and Eve" 749).

This Hawthorne story raises questions and problems that we find in so many of his works, namely the influence of authorial attitude. Hawthorne harbors the sentiments of his culture, and his depiction of women are reflective of this reality. It is impossible for any writer to completely free him/herself from the times in which he or she lives. Their social and cultural influences are bound to effect the choice of subject matter and the depiction of character. Hawthorne lived in an America that was experiencing a period of explosive expansion, with gold discoveries in California and Alaska and Texas becoming part of the United States. America, like England, became industrialized, and with the Industrial Revolution came increased opportunities for men who were able to travel into the cities with greater ease for increased wages and promises of future wealth. This shift from working in the home, or at least in the countryside, to the city strengthened the male role as a public one and assigned women to the home. In other words, gender roles were more strictly defined and along with them, a reliance on domesticity as the right and proper role for women was enforced. The logic of domesticity, with women bearing the moral weight for the household and in the community,

necessarily excluded women from the work force; the public arena of aggression and ambition.

These changes in society had dramatic effects on the literature and so it is no wonder that we find authorial attitudes about the female gender pervading these texts. Hawthorne's attitude, even if frequently ambivalent, is reflected throughout his works, whether in short story or novel. When Eve "...prevails, and rescues him [Adam] from the mysterious perils of the library" (Hawthorne, "The New Adam and Eve" 761) by tossing "...the book upon the floor" (Hawthorne, "The New Adam and Eve" 761), she displays a sense of freedom in her anger. This unrestrained, externalized action reflects her internalized metaphysical rebellion.

Hawthorne chooses to describe Eve in terms of the idealized image of women, as gentle, tender and sensitive, but her actions are contrary to those descriptions. Caught in his own philosophical and male dilemma, he allows Eve to vent her rage against what she knows to be the potential danger and fall of man but makes little of her extreme, forceful and unfeminine actions. He merely reports it to us and thereby forces us into the same feelings of ambivalence. Eve's actions of throwing the book and of being the guiding force and savior for Adam

and of humankind is radical, an act of open virulent rebellion against every male verbal and nonverbalized belief about women.

In "The Gentle Boy," we find another female metaphysical rebel, Catherine. In this parable of persecution, we are asked to consider the dangers of organized religion. The Puritans represent bigotry and the Quakers the persecuted and ostracized group. He tells us that the Quakers long to come to America to "testify against the oppression which they hoped to share," (Hawthorne, "The Gentle Boy" 108). They longed to join the Puritan world where "The fines, imprisonments, liberally distributed by our pious forefathers; the popular antipathy, so strong that it endured nearly a hundred years after the actual persecution had ceased, were attractions as powerful for the Quakers as peace, honor, and reward, would have been to the worldly-minded" (Hawthorne, "The Gentle Boy" 108).

At the center of the tale, we find Catherine, mother of Ilbrahim, the persecuted Quaker who is cast out of the community. Ilbrahim, abandoned by his mother, is left in the custody of the virtuous Dorothy. Catherine, "the persecuted wanderer" (114), similar to Hester, was taken "from prison...carried into the wilderness, and left to

perish there by hunger or wild beasts" (114). Isolated from her community for her religious beliefs, Catherine's rage arises out of society's repression of women. Perhaps that is why Hawthorne calls her a "muffled female" (118), suggesting that her speech is stifled by some external and repressive force, namely society. Hawthorne describes her with "raven hair...[with] eyebrows, dark and strongly defined" (118). Her physical features reveal the strength and passion of her words which provide "images [that were] wild" (119). As she is cast out of society, she does so as the "apostle of her own unquiet heart" (124).

Perhaps it is true that "All Catherine's misdeeds...have been performed in service to the Father above-the arch-sadist of a lunatic universe" (Crews 71). But if that is true, then we are caught in the double-bind of Catherine breaking away from her paternalistic society only to throw herself into the arms of yet another male, God. Catherine's rage and the outrage it causes her society are but the price for adhering or being a part of a different, an unconventional course, in this case religion. Catherine's separation from her community follows the recurrent theme we find throughout Eliot and Hawthorne's literature.

Separation is necessary, unavoidable and, at first,

even desirable. The metaphysical rebel must disassociate herself from the clench of conformity. But she, like all people, returns to her community as a strong and moral presence, as a mirror and instructress for all of the community. When, at the end of the tale, Catherine rejoins society, society has been changed by her actions, "...in the process of time [Catherine's time away], a more Christian spirit--a spirit of forbearance, though not of cordiality or approbation, began to pervade the land" (138). Catherine's anger fuels and revolutionizes the individual and the collective body of society, and in the process, redeems them from the overwhelming pressure of conformity that the masses of society require, often without thought or reflection.

Metaphysical rebellion, then, transforms its apostles as much as those who come into contact with her. It has the power to change the community. Her actions, whether in following the "wrong" religious path or committing "sinful" acts, function as liberating forces for all womankind, all humankind. The journey from incarceration to freedom is, as Pearson tells us, "a darksome and difficult path" (135), but it is also the inescapable life course which results from the particular kind of anger and outrage which we find in Catherine, Hester, Eve,

Elizabeth and so many other female characters in Hawthorne's canon.

The manifestations of anger and outrage take many forms, and are reflected in action, attitude and manner. Take, for example, Maggie, who like Hester, best demonstrates the disquiet of the female spirit for Eliot. Maggie is the quintessential outsider as she shuns the pretty attire that girls are supposed to wear, enjoys reading and looks for knowledge beyond the approved limits established for females. In everything that Maggie says and does we feel a sense of unrest. We feel it when she runs away and joins the Gypsies and when she stays at home and refuses to take part in the activities Mrs. Tulliver assigns. She refuses to conform to the dictates of her community which include but are not limited to, guidelines about the proper conduct for an unmarried young woman.

Specifically, young women must be careful in conduct, ensuring that there is no hint of sexual activity, whether real or perceived. The boatride that Maggie takes with Stephen Guest is a prime example. In this scene and the subsequent discussions of it, we learn that Maggie was alone with Stephen, a situation which is inappropriate for a young unmarried woman. Although we are unsure about the events of that boatride, the possibility that a sexual

encounter occurred is enough to relegate Maggie to being an outcast. We are told that "Maggie returned without a trousseau, without a husband---and in that degraded and outcast position" (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 613). For an individual like Maggie to live in such a society is difficult at best. After all, "The mind of St. Ogg's...has achieved a sense of calm, harmonious existence...by exclusion. It is a mind limited by its narrow vision" (Stump 74).

Such an existence is bound to exert pressure and so it is no wonder that "she rebelled against her lot and fainted under its loneliness" (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 380). She resides in the world as the other, the female who is wild and free, who feels bound and gagged by traditional society. Her acts of violent protest against a repressive moral code for women stem from a disquiet of the spirit, and rage against the "oppressive narrowness" (363) of her community. Maggie is unhappy in her world, in nineteenth century St. Ogg society. She reads in order to escape it:"The world outside of books was not a happy one" (320). The outside world ostracizes the unconventional Maggie. She does not agree with how the world functions, how it grants criticism or praise. "It was true she had theoretic objections to compliments"

(486). In every facet of Maggie's being, she seems uncomfortable with society.

Sometimes she verbalizes her discomfort and anger. When Tom criticizes and ridicules her, she counters the attack and declares that she is "not stupid" (146). She is unhappy with her brother, her mother and her cousins. Neither family nor community offer her comfort or acceptance. She grieves for a society that desires to clone feminine ideals in each and every woman. She also realizes that she cannot change society, and that, like it or not, it will continue to manufacture conventional citizens: "Our life is determined for us," (397) she says.

The disquiet of the spirit that is experienced by female metaphysical rebels, arises out of those thinking and intelligent women who envision other ways of living but realize that society is unwilling and unable to function in any other way than in its current state. The landscapes of Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction are littered with characters like Maggie. In fact, all we need do is think of Eppie or Ester, Celia and Mme. Laure, to name a few. In looking at Maggie and others like her, Eliot brings the disquiet of the spirit into full view.

I believe that it is the unsettled spirit that she

talks about in saying that, when one looks at Maggie, and I would add others of similar natures, there is "a sense of opposing elements of which a fierce collision is imminent" (37). It is this "fierce collision," the clash between the societal need to confine and dictate behavior and the individual's need for freedom of movement and action that stirs the metaphysical rebel to action. It is, as Bonaparte suggests, a clash between irrepressible wills and predetermined destinies. For metaphysical rebels, imbued with strong wills and independent spirits, are unwilling and unable to accept the idea or the reality that they cannot act and speak as they choose. They cannot and will not be "trapped in destiny" (Bonaparte, Will and Destiny: Morality and Tragedy in George Eliot's Novels 1).

Priscilla Lammeter presents yet another metaphysical rebel. Presented as a plain and outspoken woman, she stands in stark contrast to her conventional and virtuous sister, Nancy. Priscilla is independent, holds strong opinions and defies society's guidelines for women. Take, for example, the scene in which Mrs. Osgood is assisting the sisters in the selection of gowns. As Nancy poises herself to effect "...the essential attributes of a lady--high veracity, delicate honour

in her dealings, deference to others and refined personal habits" (George Eliot, Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe 148). Priscilla is, in her usual humorous and self-deprecating way, criticizing her physical appearance and espousing her own beliefs about women's goals. Accepting that she is "ugly," she further states that she really doesn't mind being ugly. Comments like this make Priscilla "too rough" (Eliot, Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe 148) for the average, conventional woman. To most women, "her candor was not appreciated" (148). Women like Mrs. Osgood hold woman's beauty as the idealized virtue and ambition of all women.

Priscilla's comments about physical beauty, and the honesty with which she speaks, reflect the deeply held opinions she possesses toward the established societal [male] guidelines for women. Dismissing their roles altogether, Priscilla says that "I've no opinion o' the men, Miss Gunn--I don't know what you have. As for all of the fretting and stewing about what they'll think of you from morning till night, and making your life uneasy about what they're doing when they're out of your sight...its a folly no woman need be guilty of" (149).

But Priscilla does not stop there. She is not satisfied to simply complain about the way of the world,

as most other women are. She insists on raging against the current and wants to lead her own independent life. "As I say, Mr. Have-your-own-way is the best husband, and the only one I'd ever promise to obey" (149). Priscilla speaks her mind, from her soul, the soul of a rebel, outcast. She, like Mrs. Hutchinson, speaks and acts freely and in accord with her internal dictates, in harmony with rhythms of her spirit. She is neither embarrassed nor remorseful for the comments she makes and the beliefs she holds, contending, when chastised about her statements, that [they] "popped out" (149).

It is interesting to find that many of the female metaphysical rebels we meet in the literature are not the heroines but rather the minor characters. This suggests that they are rare individuals who do not get much attention, perhaps because they are extraordinary and unusual. In Middlemarch, for example, a minor female character deepens our understanding of the disquiet of the spirit. Julia Ladislaw, the elder sister of Reverend Casaubon's mother, abandons Will so that she may marry as she wants. Her decision is to marry a Polish man which is against her father's wishes.

As a result of her actions, her estate falls into the hands of Casaubon. Of Julia, we know very little, simply

that she was disinherited and that a portrait of her hangs in Lowick. The portrait haunts Dorothea whose interest is not revealed to us except for a brief comment by Casaubon who explains his relationship to Will through it. Will, he confesses to Dorothea is the grandson "'...of the lady whose portrait you have been noticing, my Aunt Julia" (Eliot, Middlemarch 104). Julia's action places Will in the position of relying on Casaubon for support. Julia separates and, therefore, abandons her family by her decision. Abandonments are driving forces for female metaphysical rebels. To depart, to move away from, to leave is to abandon the current environment in favor of another. Eliot and Hawthorne's women travel away from the private sphere assigned to them, away from hearth and home and away from the security and shadow of husbands, families and communities and into other worlds, public ones that promise change and offer hope for liberation. Julia Ladislaw abandons more than Will through her elopement, she abandons the rules set by her father, the pedantry and demagoguery of her paternalistic society. Moreover, she abandons her life as it was formed and shaped by society and so, is able to start new and free existence.

For ladies in the nineteenth century, traveling offered excitement and adventure. Appropriate travel for ladies required a legally and societally sanctioned male escort, a husband, a father, a brother. These escorts acted as security for the travelling ladies. They deter hooligans, and act as moral protectors against sexual aggressors who lurked in every doorway in foreign lands. In other words, "You could not be a real lady and a real traveller" (Robinson xii). Sentiments about women travelling were, like many of the beliefs about women at the time, tied to her anatomy, as I have discussed earlier.

Women were thought to be physically incapable of handling the stress of travelling, the stress of functioning in the public sphere. "Assuming she is the sort of person willing to go abroad without some champion [man] to protect her," Robinson says, "she is still hardly equipped with the constitution to endure epic desert treks or polar crossings, to conquer really respectable mountains, or hole herself up with some secret and tropic tribe somewhere" (xv). Travelling, then, is one of the vehicles that Eliot and Hawthorne use to mark the female metaphysical rebel. It is a significant and powerful symbol for those special women who "did not care a fig for reputation, and did not mind who knew it" (xvi).

The authors, like their characters, travelled during their lifetimes. Hawthorne travelled to college, took a trip to the continent and, after marriage, moved his family on at least two occasions. Eliot was the more extensive traveller of the two. Her journeys began in childhood when her family moved to Folehill, Coventry in 1854. She travelled to Geneva with the Brays and during the course of her life, lived in London, Dover, Wandworth and Hyde Park.

Both writers use their own experiences of moving through the world in their fiction. But Eliot's most dramatic, controversial and rebellious sojourn was with the married Lewes. Their trip to Germany in 1854 suggests to us that the influence of the author on the fiction she writes is direct and of great importance in our understanding the literature. By travelling with Lewes, Eliot herself commits the metaphysically rebellious activity of defying her society's regulations on women's behavior. She, like the metaphysical rebels she creates, acts out of an imperative of the spirit. So it is no wonder that the female metaphysically rebellious author creates fiction of and about metaphysically rebellious women who reveal their spiritual disquiet through travel.

The need and desire to travel, to move away from

the known into the unknown, suggests a restlessness of spirit, a disquiet and usually an anger with current circumstances. It allows one to reestablish oneself, to renew the spirit by separating it from its known environment. It also confirms one's existence apart from the others. It centers and stabilizes a person's confidence and nurtures independence. In 1889, in Hints to Lady Travellers, Davidson proclaims that "...the power [to travel] which has become the right of every woman...of becoming her own unescorted and independent person, a lady traveller" (Campbell Davidson 17).

Take, for example, Dorothea whom we find in her apartment in the Via Sistina. She is crying and visibly unhappy, and we sense that she feels lonely and isolated. Her trip to Rome with Casaubon was to be an exciting one, as he looked to filling his notebooks with information from the Vatican. Dorothea was to explore the museums and to enjoy the vast historical landscape of Italy. But her voyage brings intense emotional unrest. She cries not about her trip to Rome and not about the "Ruins and basilicas, palaces and colossi" (Eliot, Middlemarch, 225) but for her dormant life and emptiness of her marriage to Casaubon. The past, and the representations of it, whether in sculpture or paintings of past rulers,

conjures up the ghosts of the spirit that Dorothea has so violently been avoiding. These ghosts are voices of reason and clarity. They force her to view her marriage in its full reality, as the union of a passionate woman and a man devoid of feeling.

These internal forces, these ghosts, were silent while Dorothea was at home. Perhaps they were too subtle, too buried, to be passionately felt at home.. As the narrator says, "If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence" (226). Dorothea's journey to Italy intensifies her emotions and gives vent to them. In strange territories and without the comfort and security of home, in the wilderness of the unknown, the real voice of the soul is heard. Dorothea's soul bares itself as a disquieted spirit whose heartfelt desires for freedom had long been repressed by her restrictive and confining society.

Like Dorothea, Romola journeys into the world, too. Her boatride "Instead of bringing her to death, it had been the gently lulling cradle of a new life" (Eliot, Romola 641). It literally carries her to others shores, to a land filled with pestilence and death, but a place

where she finds both comfort and salvation by assisting the victims of the scourge. In this chapter rightly named "Romola's Waking," Romola cathartically rids herself of self-pity and finds hope for a new life. As the boat coasts along and daybreak awakens her, a "rush of thoughts...urged themselves along with the conjecture of how far the boat had carried her" (641). In this allegory of change and transformation, Romola becomes the ""blessed Lady" (649) whose "encouraging authority" (648) gives the pestilence-ridden village new hope and a renewed life.

As she begins her trip back home, she is "travelling back over the past, and gazing across an undefined distance of the future [and] saw all objects from a new position" (650). The narrator tells us that "The experience was like a new baptism for Romola. In Florence the simpler relations of the human being to his fellow-men had been complicated for her with all the special ties of marriage, the State, and religious discipleship" (650).

Travelling away from the structure of society, replete with its social organizations, institutions and beliefs, gives rise to a rebirth of Romola's spirit. The disquiet of her spirit arises out of a dissatisfaction with her life's course. This restlessness, formed by anger and discontent, compels her to travel away from man's society

into another realm, an alternate reality. Only from the distance afforded by travel, is she able to gain insight into the real purpose of her life and to be reborn into another existence. Her "baptism" is made possible only by travel, as "Romola experienced a rebirth" (Paris 221). I hold that her "baptism" is but a visible demonstration to us, the readers, of Romola's full conversion into the realm of metaphysical rebellion. She, like Hester, "decides at the end of the novel to obey her own law," (Sadoff 141) one which will allow her full being to come into play and one which offers the promise of a full life.

Psychoanalytic interpretations offer other explanations and insights into Romola's rebirth. Such critics view Romola as an autobiographic treatise of Eliot herself. Sadoff, for one, holds that Eliot works from her own childhood experiences, most notably her relationship with her father, in the development of both character and plot. Claiming that Eliot experienced and is working through a traumatic event of oedipal proportions and that seduction, although not literal, was at the center of the experience, she see Romola as a "...transitional narrative" [in which] "Romola binds herself to the law of fathers, discovers the inauthencity of each, and so proceeds to bind herself to her own law" (135). This

type of interpretation holds that in escaping from this traumatic event Eliot, Romola, is merely giving up one father for another, society and the laws of mankind.

I disagree with such interpretations, as psychoanalysis was developed using the medical model and was, therefore, unavoidably ridden with society's male interpretations of power and access. While it provides an interesting comparison of an author's life with the literature he/she creates, its inferences and beliefs are built upon a deterministic "anatomy is destiny" model. Further, as sexuality and normal and abnormal sexual behavior and deviance are the cornerstones of the theory, it falls victim to the same types of patriarchical attitudes that the author so violently fights against.

Finally, there is Maggie, the inconsolable and aberrant female of The Mill on The Floss. Maggie travels constantly, it seems, whether into the woods with the Gypsies or on her final boatride. In the novel's final scenes, we find her "...in the rain with the oar in her hand and her black hair streaming" (650), as she battles the flood. Her feelings of discomfort with life seem inconsequential as "Maggie felt nothing, thought of nothing, but that she has suddenly passed away from that life which she had been dreading: it was the transition of death, without its agony--and she was alone in the

darkness with God" (650-651).

The flood carries Maggie away from the confinement that angers female metaphysical rebels throughout the fiction. The flood, water and baptism, cleanse and free the body and spirit. Indeed through the novel, Maggie is unable to free herself from the long arm of obligations, from the grip, reality and narrowness of St. Ogg's. She carries and works through this pain which results from her attempting to comply with societal rules for females. For it is regulation, whether we call it norm or more or subscribe to one religion over another, that stifles freedom and generates rage.

Maggie, like all of humankind, desires but defies societal control and through her various acts of rebellion, teaches us, the readers, that the disquiet felt in the silent moments, the rage that looms just beyond our auditory capabilities, is a life force for those special and few metaphysical rebels who travel into all types of wildernesses to avail themselves of a fleeting and momentary baptism and renewal.

In the many episodes of travel that we find in Eliot's fiction, whether in abandonment, like Julia Ladislaw and Princess Halm-Eberstein, in small journeys like Alice's visit to Maggie, or in dramatic departures

like Romola's and Maggie's, we are called to reflect on the author herself. Eliot takes us on journeys in her fiction just as she travelled in her own lifetime. They are as much journeys out of the private sphere of domestic life as into the public sphere of society. They are but the overt demonstrations of an inner exploration of the soul and spirit. In all of these explorations there is a sense of urgency and compulsion. Travel then, for both Eliot and Hawthorne, represents a trip in, through and past, the current and transitory present and into the future, immutable universe.

Eliot and Hawthorne's sensitivity to and understanding of the female metaphysical rebel's disquiet of the soul is at least partially attributable to Victorian feminism. The rise of feminism in the nineteenth century was fueled by the increasing idealization of women and by middle class adherence to the concepts of domesticity. Women's rights were at the center of discourse, as Elizabeth Cady Stanton holds the historic Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 and as England passes the 1857 Divorce Act, giving divorced women full control over their property.

Eliot herself was involved in the debate and called for changes in society, ones which would give women just

and equal rights. In her essay, "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" Eliot says, "On One side we hear that woman's position can never be improved until women themselves are better; and, on the other, that women can never be better until their position is improved--until the laws are made more just, and a wider field opened to feminine activity (Eliot, "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" 205). Both Eliot and Hawthorne sought to quiet the spiritual unrest felt by women in the nineteenth century world, and they, like their characters, search for alternative paths in order to reach their goals.

Chapter 7

Woman as Animal

Throughout history, writers have used animal imagery and symbolism in describing women. For example, in Lysistrata, Aristophanes tells us "There is no animal more invincible than women" (Bartlett 91b). So it is no surprise that Eliot and Hawthorne utilize animal symbolism in their descriptions of women. What is important, and perhaps surprising as well, is how they use animal symbolism. Of interest here, is their use of animal symbolism in marking their rebels so that we, the readers, will be more prepared for the circumstances we find them in and ready for their unusual actions. In their descriptions of physical features, gestures or behavior, comparisons with the animal kingdom are plentiful and provide us with insight into the characters' actions.

This is not unusual in the period, though, so it is important to differentiate Eliot and Hawthorne's use of animal symbolism from the normative iconography of the period. Nina Auerbach, in discussing nineteenth century fiction, examines the prevalence of portraying women as non-humans and even as demons. In her discussion, Auerbach says, "The crisis of belief that characterized the

nineteenth century brought with it unorthodox, and sometimes frightening, new vehicles of "transfiguration" (Auerbach 7). These "transfigurations," reflect Victorian and American beliefs about woman's power and sexual appetite. She argues, and I agree with her formulation, that Victorian culture found itself in a double-bind of idealizing woman and raising her above all others as the pillar of virtue, of purity. But she continues, much of the art in the period, and I suggest writing, too, depicts woman as the other, as non-human, as demon, as animal. This dichotomous approach reveals itself clearly in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction.

In the world consciousness in the period in which Eliot and Hawthorne write, we find changes in all fields of human study and inquiry that bring us back to Earth, and that connect all of humankind to the concrete, tactile world. The Earth and its most animate microcosm, humankind, are at the center of both discourse and debate. The advances in technology placed science in the forefront, giving humankind the power and freedom to carve out its own economic futures, as I have discussed elsewhere. In the ability to mass produce goods, though, looms the potential demise of creativity. In short, the new reliance on humankind places humans and not God at

the center of the universe.

Darwin's publication of the Origins of the Species in 1859 captures the confluence of elements that were pervasive and deeply felt in the period. His belief that man evolved from animal and was not created by God expectedly repelled theologians. At minimum, it offered alternative formulations to the uniform ideologies held about humankind. Darwin's ideas connected man to the universe, to nature, to the Earth in new and profound ways. It provided humankind with a sense of belonging, afforded explanations about his/her actions and offered the hope of coming to know the true nature of humankind through the science of inspection, dissection and analysis. In nature, in animals, we could see and find ourselves, in all of the brutish magnificence of power and majesty and in that degraded position that was for the first time bared to us.

Some critics have noticed Hawthorne's interest in the animal suggesting that it would be "absurd to ignore his attentiveness to what he called 'the animal department of our nature'" (Gollin 82). Gollin focuses on Hawthorne's interest in animal forces as proof of his humanness. Her study seeks to rationalize Hawthorne's efforts and to demystify his reputation and fiction by placing him in

the mortal and not ethereal realm. Others, like Midler, believe that many of the animal references of and about women trivialize and dehumanize them (Midler 98). I disagree with such conceptualizations, although they do offer some insight into the fiction, because they are self-limiting and do not explore the more fantastic uses of animal symbolism which run through the literature. Specific to my study here, they ignore the unique usage of animal symbolism that both Eliot and Hawthorne use in conveying the character and sentiment of the female metaphysical rebel. By so doing, they are guilty of the very sin they accuse Eliot, Hawthorne and writers like them of making in relation to the depiction of women. In fact, they seem like the townspeople in Amos Barton who find it:

> ...so much easier to say that a thing is black, that to discriminate that particular shade of brown, blue, or green, to which it really belongs. It is so much easier to make up your mind that your neighbor is good for nothing, than to enter into the circumstances that would oblige you to modify your opinion (Eliot, "Amos Barton 76).

I, like Auerbach who seeks to "become Frankenstein"

(Auerbach, Woman as Demon 9) in order to understand the Victorian imagination and its creation of woman as monster, approach Eliot and Hawthorne through their use of animal symbolism in describing female rebels.

I begin with the patterns of kinship, with the acts and descriptions that demonstrate our authors' awareness of the similarities of female metaphysical rebels to the animal kingdom, with nature. In Hawthorne, the best example is found in the case of Georgiana (Hawthorne, "The Birthmark"). Georgiana, we are told, came "from the hand of Nature" (765). She is inextricably tied to it, a beautiful and "nearly perfect" (765) product of the Earth. Georgiana is flawed by the presence of a birthmark, a small "crimson stain upon the snow" (765), in the shape of a tiny hand. The birthmark is a symbol of her connection with nature, a token of her mortal, earthly existence on Earth. "The Crimson Hand expressed the ineludible gripe, in which mortality clutches the highest and purest earthly mould, degrading them into the lowest, and even with the very brutes, like whom their visible frames return to dust" (766). Georgiana, like all animals on Earth, shares the temporariness of mortality with "brutes." Like them, she will die and together their "frames return to dust," to the Earth. In spite of the beauty and near-perfection,

Georgiana is ultimately nothing more than another species of animal.

For Eliot, it is Maggie's spirit that is in harmony with nature and at one with the forces and powers of the natural. This includes the animate as well as the inanimate worlds of nature. "With her dark colouring and jet crown surmounting her tall figure, she seems to have a sort of kinship with the grand Scotch firs" (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 393). Maggie, tied to trees of majesty and grandeur, is likened to one of the firmest and long-lasting staples in nature. Such comparison, such harmony, offers the promise of an eternal connection, one which is not saddled with language nor one tied simply to "lower" animals. Trees, like Maggie, are deeply rooted in their conviction to a foundation, just as humankind is rooted, even if torturously, to its foundation which is the community.

Maggie demonstrates her connectedness in a variety of ways, as evidenced in her understanding of nature, its normalities and abnormalities, its permanence and its transience, its perfections and deformities. While all of these characteristics offer solace and redemption, her true interest and deepest love is given to the deformities:

> Maggie moreover had rather a tenderness for deformed things; she preferred the wry-necked lambs, because it seemed to her that the lambs which were quite strong and well made and wouldn't mind so much about being petted, and she was especially fond of petting objects that would think it very delightful to be petted by her (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 252).

This is an important passage for our understanding of woman's relationship to the animal. Maggie's love for the deformed, for the different, is surely related to her own "deformity," her own "differentness," to her own inability to achieve acceptance by her society. For the "wry-necked lamb," whose neck is twisted and whose head leans to one side, Maggie's affection is probably a needed and rare treat. Beyond that, though, Eliot's attribution of the human characteristic of thinking to lambs, suggesting that they, the lambs, might "think it very delightful to be petted by her" (252). Not only is Maggie similar to the lambs but they might be similar to her as well. They, too, may "think," in ways similar to our own or for them "thinking" may be done through feeling. This conjoins humankind with the animal kingdom and firmly establishes

humankind's alliance with the natural world.

It may be difficult to conceptualize Eliot's and Hawthorne's depictions of those special and few women I call female metaphysical rebels, as "running with the wolves" (Much of the following discussion is based on Pinkola-Estes) but I believe they are the very women of spirit that Pinkola-Estes discusses in her recent feminist treatise.

> A woman's issues of soul cannot be treated by carving her into a more acceptable form as defined by unconscious culture, nor can she be bent into a more intellectually acceptable shape by those who claim to be the bearers of her consciousness. No, that is what has caused millions of women who began as strong and natural powers to become outsiders of their own cultures (Pinkola-Estes 6).

Pinkola-Estes believes that resistance and defiance are the cornerstones of the "wild woman" archetype and that such behavior is natural and essentially female. Her Jungian approach assists in understanding the tensions and unconscious imperatives of our female metaphysical rebels. But she, like so many of the current feminist theorists, believe that there are particularly male and female

attributes and behaviors. I disagree with such conceptualizations because they, too, genderize the world.

In addition, many theorists believe that the natural feelings of ambivalence that Eliot and Hawthorne and their characters experience, as the real desires of the authors and their characters to find a more liberated and natural existence. Such critics respond by saying that "...instead of clearly representing a new type of heroine, these [writers] question the desirability of a wider sphere for women, because it seems to entail a loss of her femininity (Wienk 2).

This does not necessarily mean that they believe that these women should not desire such freedom but rather that to choose such a course in society means that society, not the female herself, will probably, and I would argue not unanimously, view this female as less feminine. That these authors acknowledge such a reality is incontestable, but that does not lead to the conclusion that it should not be pursued. Wienk, and others like her, misread Hawthorne's intentions in an effort to short-circuit discussion that leads to exploration and which offer the promise of enhanced insight into both the authors and their works.

The spirit, as embraced by nature and the animal

spirit, by the wild, nurtures the entire human and does not lend itself to gender dichotomous discussion. That is why Georgiana's birthmark "was the bond by which the angelic spirit kept itself in union with the mortal frame" (780). The hand itself symbolizes nature's hold on the mortal and the human. It, the hand of Nature, reaches into the mortal frame and actually lives within it. Eliot and Hawthorne see the human being as a part of nature, replete with its power, strength and potential for spiritual ascendance. And they also understand humankind's link with the "lowest, and even the very brutes." In other words, they see the full range of possibilities inherent in and available to humankind. That is why the authors mourn for the reality that is their respective societies, a world disunited by gender.

To be sure, Hawthorne and Eliot felt conflicts and tensions that arose out of their backgrounds as much as out of their clarity of mind and activism. Morris identified this and, in his 1927 essay, says:

> Hawthorne had been unsparing in his criticism of Puritan America [as Eliot was of Victorian England], but he had been its child...His incessant preoccupation, as a writer, with sin and evil; his perception of

> life as a moral experience with a tragic meaning; his emphasis upon the invincible loneliness of the human soul, these were Puritan traits (Morris 4).

But that is not to say that they, and their characters, do not harbor ambivalent feelings about their personal desires as opposed to society's desire for women. The desire for female beauty and perfection haunts "The Birthmark." At the beginning of the story, Georgiana is quite at ease with her birthmark. She does not see it as an imperfection or as a "hideous" mark. When Aylmer suggests that it should be removed, her response demonstrates her acceptance of it as a part of her being. "To tell you the truth," she says, "it has often been called a charm, that I was simple enough to imagine it might be so" (764).

The individuals who admire the birthmark are men. We know this because later in the story we learn that "Some fastidious persons-but they were exclusively of her own sex-affirmed that the Bloody Hand, as they chose to call it, quite destroyed the effect of Georgiana's beauty, and rendered her countenance even hideous" (765). In the gender-severed world of the nineteenth century, nature's imperfections are unacceptable for women. Interestingly,

men are able to accept the tiny flaw and women act as the strict judges and purveyors in deciding what is acceptable and unacceptable for women. Eventually, the pressures of society, as represented by these women and Aylmer, motivate Georgiana to have the little mark removed from her face.

Princess Halm-Eberstein is also aware and conscious of society's feelings toward women. "Every woman is supposed to have the same set of motives, or else be a monster. I am not a monster, but I have not felt exactly what other women feel--or say they feel, for fear of being thought unlike the others" (Sutphin 356). In short, Eliot and Hawthorne are as "invincible" in their beliefs about the presence and need for female metaphysical rebellion as were the characters they created.

There is nothing ambivalent though, about Eliot and Hawthorne's use of animal symbolism which marks the female metaphysical rebels. The authors describe these rebels in a similar manner which is unlike their descriptions and usage of other animals in the fiction. By means of comparison, then, consider the depiction of animals when they are associated with non-metaphysical rebels, with the traditional ladies in the culture. The non-metapshysical female rebels own manageable animals, domesticated ones,

pets. Most of these pets are small, non-threatening and provide companionship. There is Mrs. Irvine and her lapdog, Pug; Lucy Dean and Countess Czerlaski who both own King Charles spaniels, Mrs. Farebrother and Fly, her terrier, Lydia Donnithorne and her little pug, Fido. These dogs symbolize humankind's, society's, willful presence and influence in changing nature, in defining and regulating behavior and in molding nature in accord with societal dictates.

Owning dogs also establishes attachments to the animal kingdom and kinship with those of similar natures. Humankind, womankind, is inextricably tied to nature. In the fiction, we meet women, who like these dogs, have been trained and domesticated by society. But more importantly, we meet women in the fiction who resist such domestication, who break from the figurative leashes which humankind has attached to them. They are the women who run freely into the public sphere of the wild animal, replete with their raw, unaltered and undomesticated natures, the souls of rebels. These characters resist the effort by "Civilization [which] moves to soothe and tame the exotic nature and thus alter her nature" (Crosthwaite 97). Indeed an entire study could be done of the characteristics of owner and dog and the significance of

the breeds as well as the roles they play in the fiction. But that is neither the goal or intent of my study here. I mention it only to suggest that women throughout Eliot's fiction, are inextricably tied to nature and animals, and to demonstrate the many ways in which Eliot develops and deepens these associations.

In addition to the affinity and oneness with nature that Maggie affirms, we find numerous descriptions of women sharing similarities with the animal kingdom. I again concentrate on Eliot here as she offers the concrete and worldly, the earthly comparison that we rarely find in Hawthorne. For Hawthorne, whom I shall discuss later, his comparisons tend toward the other-worldly, toward the mystical, toward the realm that rests at the extreme of the animal kingdom, to the world that straddles earth and sky.

At times, we find women described in diminutive terms, as terms of endearment by a loved one. For example, in "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story," woman is described as having "...unconscious beauty, [with] eyes of a fawn" (Eliot, "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story" 133). We learn of Sir Christopher, who consoles Caterina by saying , "Ah, you black-eyed monkey" (142), or that "'...little monkey, you must be in your best voice...you are a singing bird'"

(167), "'...the little monkey Tina shall give us a song'"(136). These references run through the story as we learn of Caterina's "...usual appearance, her natural paleness and habitually mouse-like ways" (195). It is no wonder that they refer to her as "the pet of the household" (157). At first, it suggests that "one of the caged animals on display in the American [and English, too] menagerie...was indigenous--'the American woman'" (Crosthwaite 98). But Caterina is not a "pet" in reality. She exercises freedom by taking actions that are comfortable for her. "Caterina experiences 'gleams of fierce resistance' to any harsh discipline" (486).

As suggested earlier, Midler believes that these references to women, like the ones cited above, are condescending and pejorative. Further, she holds that they are representative of the desire by men to domesticate women. There is truth in her statements but she fails to develop other connections that arise from such descriptions. By describing women in terms of animals, the author pulls the two creatures closer together and thereby diminishes the differences between them. This strengthens the rootedness of female with nature, with the rest of humankind, and extends the connection beyond the inanimate "Scottish firs" to

living, breathing and sentient beings. By so doing, neither we, nor the animals we are likened to, are as different as what we might expect. In the increasingly godless universe of the nineteenth century, a firmer tie with nature diminishes the possibility of the loneliness wrought by industrialization. It validates our rightful place in nature, in the world. This offers comfort through security and gives information and knowledge about the unknown and mysterious.

But it is also important to keep in mind that these descriptions are the result of the authorial attitudes of Eliot and Hawthorne, as products of nineteenth century society. Women in the nineteenth century were conceptualized with the constraints of that time, just as we conceptualize women based upon our experience and in our time. Eliot and Hawthorne are keenly and consciously aware of their society's norms and mores. Although they were critics of their societies, they were also products of them and, whether consciously or not, absorbed some of the sentiments and attitudes of their societies. This internalization of cultural attitudes and beliefs, especially by these male and female writers, directly affects the creation of literature and the impressions and development of female characters in the fiction.

Janet Dempster represents yet another female rebel in Eliot's works. Janet, supposedly the obedient and long-suffering wife, possesses a strength of character, a presence of spirit that are only seen in female metaphysical rebels. In this tale of subjection and abuse, the "spirit of rebellion" (Eliot, "Janet's Redemption" 362) echoes in the heart and mouth of Mrs. Tryan as she attempts to comfort Mrs. Dempster by explaining the true purpose and role of women in society. Further evidence of Janet's strength, of her ability to endure hardship and pain and yet wage war by spirit over subjection, is heard, ironically, in Mr. Dempster's death-bed words:

> "'Let me go, let me go,' he said in a loud hoarse whisper; 'she's coming...she's cold... she's dead...she'll strangle me with her black hair. Ah!' he shrieked aloud, 'her hair is all serpents... they're black serpents... they hiss...they hiss...let me go...let me go...she wants to drag me with her cold arms... her arms are serpents...they are great white serpents...they'll twine around me...she wants to drag me into the cold water...it is all serpents...'" (381).

In these frightful moments, part reverie, part reality, Mr. Dempster's conscience acts as the spiritual guide, allowing him insight into his wrong-doing. It also allows him to see beyond the genderization of Janet. In that world, a world filled with danger and revenge, the beastly surfaces in order to vindicate Janet from the wrong that has been done to her. As a result of her closeness to nature, nature becomes the source of strength and giver of life. Janet survives her painful reality of the "good" woman's life only to return as the possessor of some special and unique spiritual power. Janet is "Nothing less than a female monster to her husband's sickened imagination, the repentant Janet has been transformed into an image which suggests that Dempster is simply mad with guilt over his mistreatment of her" (Gilbert and Gubar 489).

Comparisons to animals offer women much more than a connection with nature, more than comfort and security which nineteenth century America and England desired for women. Animal characteristics offer her the opportunity to be wild and, by extension, free. Maggie who we are told "...was incessantly tossing her head to keep the dark and heavy lock out of her gleaming black eyes--an action which gave her very much the air of a small Shetland

pony" (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 61). Maggie is always throwing her hair, extending out into the public space. We are told that she talks often "with a toss of her mane" (61) or that she "...eagerly seized one corner and tossing back her mane" (66). Maggie is fierce, regal, like a lion. Others perceive her as "'half wild,'" (168) and perhaps as someone who is not only at one with nature, not only an extension of the wild nature of animals, but an animal herself.

Perhaps that is why she is so comfortable in the woods, why she longs to run away, why she seeks kindred and free spirits like the Gypsies. "'What was it, he [Tom] wondered, that made Maggie's dark eyes remind him of the stories about princesses being turned into animals'" (McSweeney 80). Eliot answers the riddle of Maggie's disposition for us in her many references to Maggie's unnaturalness, unnatural female personality. She describes her as a "child who looks 'like a small Medusa with her snake cropped' and a whirling 'pythoness'" (Gilbert and Gubar 491). Maggie possesses many characteristics of the animal kingdom, she is royal (lions), wild (ponies), and beguiling and mysterious (pythons). As the quintessential maverick, if I may be permitted to affix my own animal metaphor upon her, she stands for and apart from all

others. She celebrates the different, the flesh and ultimately the spirit too.

Using animal metaphors removes women from the confines of society and from her assigned private sphere. By describing women with animal characteristics, Eliot, and Hawthorne too, create rebels who cross the line from controllable, domesticated "pets," to a type of existence which is not as easily controlled, a wild one. As society, through its confinement of women in the artificial prison of gender role assignment, is the basis and cause for development of metaphysical rebellion, it is a prime motivator for the anger and rage we find in the fiction. For those noncompliant women, for the "wild" animals of the fiction, the presence of inappropriate female behaviors are evidence that women are a "distinct species" (Schriber 7). This perspective was a source "both of meaning and outrage" (7). This otherness, which I have discussed earlier and will return to throughout my discussions, recoils from imprisonment and eludes scientific description.

But both Eliot and Hawthorne go one step beyond the simple classification of women as animals and this is where Hawthorne offers additional insight. As I suggested earlier, Hawthorne focuses heavily on another aspect of

the animal metaphor. In fact, his literature seems to divide in two. On the one hand, he draws characters that are transmogrified into the most extreme and beastly of animals and, conversely, he creates characters that are of air and spirit, and who reside at the most refined end of the animal spectrum.

In the case of Mrs. Bullfrog, we are introduced to a refined lady recently wedded to an adoring and subservient husband. Mrs. Bullfrog's true nature is revealed during the stagecoach accident. After the wagon hits a bump in the road and turns over, a monstrous creature emerges on the road. As her husband loses sight of the wife he knows, a beast-like being emerges and delivers "...blows [which] were given by a person of a grisly aspect, with a head almost bald, and sunken cheeks, apparently by the female gender, though hardly to be classed the gentler sex (Hawthorne, "Mrs. Bullfrog" 409).

The unfeminine and brutish behavior of giving a "blow" and inflicting punches to another person is animal-like. As long hair was the standard at the time and a symbol of femininity and gentility, Hawthorne's eliminates Mrs. Bullfrog's hair in an attempt to de-womanize her, to liken her to the unfeminine, which is to say, non-human status. As the scene unfolds, the husband asks, "Who

could this phantom be?" (409) and exclaims "Why the woman's a witch!" (410). He ponders "'How do you suppose a fellow feels, shut up in a cage with a she-tiger?'" (410). The vigor of the physical assault reminds us that woman is "a thing of flesh" (Gilbert and Gubar 198).

Mrs. Bullfrog's transformation from a dutiful wife into a wild and uncontrollable beast-like being suggests that inherent in the character of woman, perhaps as a result of her repressive society but probably as a result of her unseen spirit too, lies a wild, and uncontrollable being which usurps the first moment of freedom to free itself from the prison of society. Perhaps it is this desire, this compulsion, that urges Beatrice to tolerate living in the poisonous environment of Rappaccini's garden. Perhaps it is this strength of spirit that defies death and illness, that resides in the recesses of the heart and soul of female metaphysical rebels throughout the fiction. Perhaps it is inherent in those special female characters, regardless of economic status or age. Pearl, for example, has a "freakish cast [in her] eyes" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 92) and her face was "fiend-like" (92). Hawthorne refers to her conception by saying that, "...Pearl was a demon offspring" (92). Similarly, in Maggie, we find that "...the small demons

...had taken possession of Maggie's soul" (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 161).

But while these negative representations abound, there are also those positive and other-worldly animal metaphors which we find in the fiction. Hawthorne's story of "Sylph Etherege" provides a good example. In this story of a beloved young woman, Sylvia's personage is described as "...slender and sylph-like, tinged in radiance..." (514). She displays a "...sensitiveness of her disposition, the delicate peculiarity of her manners, and the ethereal beauty of her mind" (515-516). She is beautiful and we are told of "Slyph Etherge's slyph-like beauty" (517), "Sylph Etherege looked so slyph-like" (518) that is why her love decides to call her "Sylph" rather than her given name which is Sylvia. Her name ties her to the "...airy creature" (518) and to the woods, nature. Sylph's association with nature is positive, strong and perfect in beauty.

Perfection, though, is not intended for the natural, the animal, the mortal. Georgiana, for example, was near perfection, even though she possessed the tiny crimson birthmark. In order for her to achieve full personhood and therefore be permitted to attain pure perfect and

transcendent truth, she must have the birthmark removed from her face. In an act of female metaphysical rebellion, she decides to have Aylmer remove the birthmark. She says: "'I might wish to put off this birth-mark of mortality by relinquishing mortality itself, in preference to any other mode'" (Hawthorne, "The Birth-mark" 778).

Georgiana dies as "The Crimson Hand" (779) disappears. In those few moments before death, she, as a representative for all of humankind, crosses the line between the mortal and the divine. She becomes a part of Nature, unfettered by gender. To confirm this, all we need do is "Watch the stain of the rainbow fading out over the sky; and you will know how that mysterious symbol passed away" (779). The "symbol" in the sky not only represents the birthmark but also serves to announce that Georgiana has realized both sides of her nature. In other words, she has attained full personhood.

She, as a representative of all humankind, renounces mortality and ascends into the heavens on her way toward transcendent truth. Her death serves as her reintegration with nature. As a result of Georgiana's transformation, the world is improved by knowing that we are all tied to the freedom and wildness of nature just as we are to

society and community.

It would be not only inaccurate but also inappropriate to consider these representations of woman as animal, both demonic and angelic, without considering its influence in regard to the normal woman. In Woman and the Demon: The Life of the Victorian Myth, Auerbach suggests that "there is no human norm of womanhood, for she has no home on earth, but only among the divine and demonic essences" (Auerbach 64).

The simple, human woman, replete with the divine and natural essences, finds a comforting home in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction. The excesses in some of their characters and in some of the descriptions of many of their characters provide for a balanced view of female rebels, and ultimately of humankind. It is the clash of forces, the push of the spirit in the directions of both conformity and rebellion that fertilizes the invisible seeds of rebellion. This, and not the absence of a "human norm for womanhood," is the reason we find seemingly contradictory representations of women.

Eliot and Hawthorne stamp their female metaphysical rebels with physical characteristics like birthmarks, dark, burning eyes, black hair, with natures and personalities akin to those in the animal kingdom. By so

doing, they attach to them the mortal and natural worlds. They link them to society and the Earth, to the flesh and the natural, to the angelic and the divine.

The animal in female metaphysical rebels is as domesticated as Mrs. Irvine's pet dog, Pug, and as fierce and brutal as the demon we behold in Maggie's eyes which burns its way through the text. The animal represents the essential, the natural, the harmonious as much as it represents the other, the mysterious and the dangerous. The female metaphysical rebel violates societal dictates, then, and finds the natural, animal characteristics that reside inside her. As a result, she undergoes a transformation and gains access to the full human experience. At times, we even feel the tension of these dynamic forces, like when we look at Maggie who "has a sense of opposing elements, of which a fierce collision is imminent" (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss 394). But whether we feel it or not, the need for locating and accepting the full range of "opposing elements" is felt by all female metaphysical rebels. It fuels the disquiet of her spirit and "breaks the seal and allows the whole being to come into play" (Camus 27).

Chapter 8

Speech and Actions

The powers of speech and action are effective tools for female rebels. Hawthorne and Eliot carefully sculpt their texts by using words and silences, action and paralysis as ways of revealing female metaphysical rebellion. There are those who love words and reading, like Maggie and Romola; and those who make words their vocations, like Mrs. Hutchinson and Dinah Morris. For female metaphysical rebels, words are a means of expressing protest, of separating oneself from the ordinary. Whether they use them to express dissatisfaction with current living conditions, or whether they employ them to establish new religious communities, words are weapons of rebellion. When rebels use them to educate, persuade or move other women to action, they violate social guidelines which require women to be quiet and passive. Words and actions are, as Rosenman says, "cross-currents of authority and repression, speech and silence, identity and difference" (237).

It should be no surprise to that find Eliot and Hawthorne identify female metaphysical rebels from the rest of womankind. After all, they are writers and

their medium is the written word. They both believed that words were powerful and useful tools for humankind. In his notebook, Hawthorne says:

> 'Words...so innocent and powerless as they are, standing in the dictionary, how potent for good and evil they become, in the hands of one who knows how to combine them' (Crews, The Sins of Our Fathers, 12).

Hawthorne understands the power of words and speech and that is why he gives them to female metaphysical rebels who know how to "combine them" in order to make changes in society. This is true for Eliot as well. In her youth, for example, we know that she actively resisted the temptation to indulge in idle and destructive gossip. She made this commitment because of her religious beliefs, but more I believe, because she understood the power of speech and the effects it has on the lives of others.

Female metaphysical rebels acknowledge and understand that education and knowledge is denied to women because of gender. The attainment of it, therefore, is a way to gain power in society, a way of attaining personhood. The female rebel must realize

that "Verbally they [little girls and women] are expected to be more restrained...than boys" (Miller 97). For those who use speech and action as a means of protesting against their conditions as women, words are transformative vehicles of change.

Maggie and Romola love words and language because they offer the ability to express thoughts and feelings. While Maggie is not as educated as Romola, she, nonetheless, pursues knowledge and yearns for education:

> Maggie Tulliver, you perceive was by no means that well-trained, well-informed young person that a small female of eight or nine necessarily is these days; she had only been to school a year at St. Ogg's, and had so few books that she sometimes read the dictionary; so that in travelling over her small mind you would have found the most unexpected ignorance as well as the unexpected knowledge. (Eliot, Mill on the Floss, 176-177)

In spite of Maggie's lack of formal education and possession of just a "few books," she always has "...a book on her knees" (373). Her driving need for education leads her to read from diverse materials and about a wide array subjects. She reads from the

materials that are available to her, from her brother's books, from books in the house. Her education is not thorough and, as a consequence, there are gaps in her knowledge. The effect of this random accumulation of knowledge results in her acquiring knowledge which we would not expect of her. But more, it somehow allows her to satisfy her spiritual need for learning.

Maggie's knowledge is not scientific, analytical or mathematical. She would resist the restrictions that the study of science requires of its students. In the scene in which we find Tom studying, Maggie's interest in words is revealed to us:

> Maggie found Latin grammar quite soothing after her mathematical mortification; for she delighted in new words, and quickly found that there was an English Key at the end, which would make her very wise about Latin at slight expense. (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss, 217)

She finds comfort in Latin. Latin, as one of the keys to English etymology, offers Maggie the challenge

and the promise of another kind of power, the power of confidence and independence that result from learning. That is why she so easily uses the "English Key."

Perhaps words are a comfort to her because they arrest the disquiet of her spirit by offering an escape from the world of St. Ogg's. By reading, by defining words, by learning Latin, she can "travel" away from and out of her current situation and explore other ways of living. This brings her a sense of relief and freedom.

Maggie is inquisitive and curious about the world around her. She is interested in the different, the unique, the strange. These mysterious sentences snatched from:

> an unknown context,--like strange horns of beasts and leaves of unknown plants, brought some far off region, gave boundless scope to her imagination, and were all the more fascinating because they were in a peculiar tongue of their own, which she could learn to interpret. (Eliot, The Mill on the Floss, 217)

As she decodes "mysterious sentences snatched from an unknown context," she is able to use her reasoning skills and her intelligence.

Similarly, Romola also loves words and learning. True, she is pressed into the service of words and education by her blind father, but her interest extends beyond mere duty. For her, study affords the opportunity to explore, to research. She, like Maggie, enjoys Latin, "...the eyes of the daughter [Romola] were bent on the Latin" (94). But this "over-educated" woman also displays characteristics that are unlike Maggie's. For example, we learn that she displays both "refinement and intelligence" (95) and that she has "a wide-glancing intelligence."

Romola's depth of education is greater and more thorough than Maggie's. While Maggie has but a few books, Romola is literally surrounded by books as she almost lives in her father's library. The two, nonetheless, share a passion for studying and reading. This similarity is important because it demonstrates that the drive for acquiring knowledge transcends the immediate circumstance. Romola, although not permitted to pursue a formal education, attains one through assisting her father. Maggie has limited educational resources available to her and yet she teaches herself some Latin. The rebel finds a way of acquiring words and language because she intuitively understands their power to change both the individual and the society.

Words and speech are most important to those women who use them to change society. I refer here to the female preachers we find in Eliot and Hawthorne, to the women who are called to words as vocation. Greenstein defines vocation as, "the transformation of work into a calling" (Greenstein, "The Question of Vocation: From Romola to Middlemarch 487). I prefer a broader definition and one tied with the spiritual. Vocation is "The action on the part of God [a super power] of calling a person to exercise some special function, especially of a spiritual nature" (OED, 278). For those called to words, for the speech-makers, for the reformers, words and actions are inextricably tied to goal of metaphysical rebellion. In this sense, Eliot and Hawthorne demand our attention in listening to the female preachers because, laced within their speeches, are the seeds of change.

Before I discuss these female preachers, though, I must first discuss the writers themselves who are called upon to write and preach to us. In their vocations, Eliot and Hawthorne hope to educate and persuade us that we can make the world a better place. They offer the

reality of their societies to us as a means of exposing the weaknesses and inequalities that exist in both England and America. Hawthorne is the quasi-feminist who vacillates between advocating full equality for women and withholding power from them. Baym says that Hawthorne is: "one of the few classic authors of the mid-nineteenth century who used women characters in his fiction" (Baym 58).

Hawthorne's depiction of women, especially in a character such as Mrs. Hutchinson, demonstrates that he was "far from affirming the rightness of traditional patriarchal politics, [which] he sees as deeply warped" (61). Baym further argues, and I agree with her, that "The presence of women characters in his fiction is too pervasive, their role too striking, to be overlooked" (58).

I also see Eliot as feminist, although she sometimes succumbs to the temptations of audience satisfaction or surrenders to her own need for harmony with society. This is contrary to much of the criticism about Eliot which holds that she is not a feminist at all but, rather, a traditional and conventional woman writer. McSweeney, for example, argues that "One of the problems encountered by feminist commentators is that

whether by Victorian or contemporary criteria, Marian was not a feminist and did not espouse a feminist ideology" (McSweeney 82). While I can understand the grounds for such interpretations, I do not believe they fully explore nor thoroughly understand the underlying themes of rebellion that are pervasive and recurrent in her fiction.

Hawthorne, through his creation of Mrs. Hutchinson, demonstrates his commitment to women's rights. She is a solid example of the female metaphysical rebel as preacher:

> The women tells them, (and cites texts
> from the Holy Book to prove her words,)
> they have put their trust in unregenerated
> and uncommissioned men. (21)

As an advocate for change, Mrs. Hutchinson fulfills her "celestial errand" (23) by revealing what she believes to be truth to a community that has blindly followed a group of "uncommissioned men," men whose interest is only is in maintaining their comfort and security. She charges that they do not uphold the precepts of religion and that, as a result, the community is without spiritual guidance. She abhors the patriarchal system because it is oppressive, unfair and insincere. She

challenges men's authority and stands as the moral and truthful leader.

Consequently, Hawthorne describes Mrs. Hutchinson as a threat to male power and says that "...changes [are] gradually taking place in the habits and feelings of the gentler sex, which seem to threaten our [male?] posterity" (Hawthorne, "Mrs. Hutchinson" 23). Or, more dramatically, he admonishes us by saying that a "Woman's intellect should never give the tone to that of man" (18).

Mrs Hutchinson as a "reformer of religion" (19), establishes herself as an innovative thinker and a confident leader. As she proclaims her beliefs to an audience of men and women we find:

> ...the females... are shuddering and weeping, and at times they cast a desolate look of fear around them; while the young men lean forward, fiery and impatient, fit instruments for whatever rash deed may be suggested.

This passage is of particular importance in our understanding of the female preacher as metaphysical rebel. Ordinary women, throughout the fiction, act as "self-constituted judges," and display both fear and

anger toward women like Mrs. Hutchinson. We presume that they act in this manner, with fear and hesitation, because they are afraid of the ramifications of her actions. Mrs. Hutchinson is, after all, the rare woman. The other women must still live in a society where men hold power over women's lives. They must surely fear some type of retribution from the male community, whether in the form of physical abuse or the imposition of tighter restrictions on their lives.

But I believe there is another factor at play here. Perhaps, what we see as the women's fear, as revealed by their "weeping" is, in reality, the result of their vicarious enjoyment and support for her actions. I see their silence as a form of support for her and their tears as a cry for liberation from their current predicaments. Mrs. Hutchinson embodies the strength of spirit and acts in a way in which all women would like to act, with freedom and passion. She, unlike ordinary women, has been called into a vocation which demands her violation of man-made rules of etiquette and control.

> She stands loftily before her judges,
> with a determined brow, and, unknown
> to herself, there is a flash of carnal
> pride half hidden in her eye, as she

surveys the many learned and famous men. (23)

Those few and gifted women who are called upon to preach, to enlighten, to lead others into freedom, are "determined," confident and unwavering in their commitment and in their belief that the world can be reinvented.

The quintessential female preacher who is also a metaphysical rebel resides in Adam Bede's world. She is Dinah Morris. Superior to all others, she possesses vision, commitment, spiritual intensity and transcendence. She, unlike Mrs. Hutchinson, does not possess "the carnal pride" that often accompanies the proud who seek power through self-glorification. She unlike the lovers of words, is able to make connections that allow humankind to rise above its current condition.

Dinah's relationship with words is symbiotic, connecting the mortal with the immortal. To be sure, Dinah's ability to convey thoughts and ignite human emotion seems to be a natural talent, a divine gift:

> ...sometimes it seemed as if speech came to me without any will of my own, and words were given to me that came out as tears come, because our hearts are full and we can't help it. And those are

> always times of great blessing.
>
> (Eliot, Adam Bede 135)

Words and speech live inside of her and act as catalysts for dispersing her optimism and energy. When she says that "speech came to me without any will of my own," she acknowledges the gift of words as a mystery. She does not need to think of the right words or to prepare in order to make speeches. She is called to the vocation of preacher because she has the ability and the power to use words to help people, to unite the community. In this sense, her vocation is a "calling," a spiritual imperative that drives her to preach. As proof, consider how she first began making speeches:

> I went to where the little flock of people was gathered together, and stepped on the low wall that was built against the green-hillside, and I spoke the words that were given to me abundantly. (136)

She begins her preaching calmly and naturally. She did not prepare or write a speech, rather she "spoke the words that were given to her abundantly." She speaks with "unpremeditated eloquence," (76) with sensitivity and concern:

> She spoke slowly, though quite fluently, often pausing without question, or before any transition of ideas. There was no change of attitude, no gesture; the effect of her speech was produced entirely by the inflections of her voice; and when she came to the question, 'Will God take care of us when we die?' she uttered it in such a tone of plaintiff appeal that tears came into some of the hardest eyes. (71)

Although Dinah is highly spiritual, she also understands and acknowledges the realities of her society. When she first starts preaching, for example, she tells her congregation that "I know you think me a pretty woman, too young to preach" (66). This is not an act of pride but rather of reflection, an acknowledgment of how society perceives women.

Dinah possesses great power in her ability to sway even the toughest of non-believers. Her speechifying is interwoven throughout the novel, as we find her comforting those in times of need, giving advice for ways and means of better living. She is the virtuous and moral voice of authority that consistently appeals to all people. As she attempts to comfort the troubled

and guilty Hetty, Dinah reveals her capacity for understanding:

> ...trouble comes to all of us in life:
> we set our hearts on things which it isn't
> God's will to have, and then we go about
> sorrowing. (205)

Dinah knows about life, she has the depth of understanding that most people seem to lack. Dinah's vocation, her gift of words and speech-making, allow her to carry out benevolent actions and good deeds. This is one course of action for the metaphysical rebel: "Our deeds determine us, as much as we determine our deeds" (359). For those, like Dinah, who are called by vocation and who possess a purity of spirit and right direction, there is no need to worry about choosing the right course of action because it is already chosen for them.

Dinah, like Hester, and Zenobia, completes the full process of female metaphysical rebellion. She completes the first phase by violating mankind's rules that require women to be quiet. Instead, she not only speaks, but becomes a preacher whose livelihood is the use of words. As a woman preacher, Dinah is isolated from ordinary women who comply with society's rules. Her

ability to go beyond the mortal, her understanding of the spiritual is evidence that mortal life is dissolved into the spiritual one. And, at the end of the novel, she is reintegrated into her society. She, together with all of the other metaphysical rebels, is able to join with humanity in renouncing the unfairness and the pain of mortal existence.

Chapter 9

Artists

Eliot and Hawthorne, like many Victorian writers, deal with the Romantic notion of the artist as rebelling against God and, through the act of creation, replacing him. Many of the female rebels assume the artistic role but not many of the female artists are metaphysical rebels. Art, for the female metaphysical rebel, is the ultimate expression of freedom and rebirth. In and through art, the world is destroyed and rebuilt, religion is challenged and spirituality renewed. Art, then, is a means of reestablishing society at another level which holds the promise of greater freedom, higher truth and spiritual harmony. The female metaphysical rebel who is an artist possesses the talent, the skill and the vision to transform our current existence into a new and better way of living. Art, then, is a means of ascending from the ordinariness of human existence into the superior realm of spiritual enlightenment.

I ground my view of the female metaphysical rebel as artist in Hawthorne's "The Snow Image: A Childish Miracle." This seemingly slight and wispy tale is rich in answering all of the questions that Eliot and Hawthorne

raise about the metaphysical process and the metaphysical rebel. The creation of the snow-image is the major event and not, as Hurst claims, "a minor incident, a trivial scene in the lives of children" (62). This story acts as an educative tool and travel guide for the many journeys of female metaphysical rebellion.

Art, as we find it in the literature, is above mortal existence, beyond religion, science and gender. It is the ultimate dialectic of freedom because it arises out of the invisible worlds of insight, inspiration and intuition. Its manifestations in the material world, whether in craft, painting, sculpture or music, transcend the boundaries of mortal knowledge. Art holds the promise of wonder, of spiritual connections, as it reflects and reveals both external and internal realities. Hawthorne believed in the power of art to see into and beyond reality, beyond the current moment. Perhaps he was influenced, at least in part, by Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, his wife and a painter in her own right. She believed that "a painting held magical properties and could convey something beyond that was strictly pictorial" (Valenti 10).

The female metaphysical rebel is always the artist, whether the authors name her as one or not. She is

always the visionary, the skilled artisan able to see beyond the material and the present, and into the souls of society and its citizens. After breaking through the gender boundaries that confine her on earth, she quickly assumes the leadership role for all humanity in moving toward the acquisition of transcendent truth. In order to complete her assignment, she must be able to extract the best from the current situation while, at the same time, envisioning undiscovered possibilities in another world. It is within this scenario that we find Violet, the sculptor and the child, who becomes our travel guide and instructress into the new world.

In this odd story of two children who, on a wintry and cold day, set outside to "make a snow-image of a little girl" (1088), we find Violet and Peony. Hawthorne's wants us to associate them with nature that is why he names one after a flower and the other after a shrub. Their names suggest their kinship with the natural, uncivilized world as represented by the wilderness and untamed nature. They also suggest the polarities of crudeness and refinement that we find in nature. Violet, the flower, represents the more cultivated, the more refined portion of nature. Peony, the shrub, represents the perennial, the ordinary and stable part of nature.

Hawthorne chooses his characters' names carefully and they often, as in this case, reveal the nature and souls of the characters.

The children request to go outdoors, to leave the safe and warm environment of their home. Their request reflects their need to reunite with nature. There, they hope to effect a "miracle" (1089) by creating a snow-image. This suggests to us that "miracles" are not possible in the known environment of the home, or conventional society. To effect "miracles," the children must separate themselves from their home which stands for society. In fact, their request to create a snow-image is unusual, and it begs us to inquire further into their reasons and goals. In choosing to play in the snow, why do they want to create an image and not a snowman? Do they desire the image as a playmate or as a replacement for other children? Are they looking for a playmate that is beyond mortality? These questions are at the heart of the story and integral to the metaphysical process.

Their seemingly childish desire to play does not lead to the usual outcome of child's play, the simple passing of leisure time. Play in this story is not play at all. Not only is the goal of the snow-outing unusual, namely

the creation of a real living child, but so is the motivation, the attainment of a "miracle." This is the story of a female metaphysical rebel's effort, as seen and felt in a child's world, to violate the societally constructed boundaries that society has set for her gender.

As they go out to play in the snow, we know that they are really seeking something else, the creation of a new life and another form of existence. After all, not everyone wants to effect "miracles," as these children do. Only the few, the chosen, the individuals who possess intuition, vision and courage, are able to effect the "magic" of creation. Hawthorne chooses Violet as the visionary, the leader, "guiding spirit" (1091) for an enterprise that will change mortal existence as we know it.

Violet escapes from her community, from her home that represents the stifling establishment that is Puritan America. Mr. Lindsey, and to a lesser extent Mrs. Lindsey, embody that culture. It is a world of routine, a world made repressive in its simplicity and in its need for order. Although Mr. Lindsey, is a decent man, he is an

> ...exceedingly matter-of-fact sort of man, a dealer in hardware and was sturdily accustomed

> to take what is called the common sense view of all matters that came under consideration. With a heart about as tender as other people's, he had a head as hard and impenetrable, and therefore perhaps as empty, as any of the iron-pots which it was part of his business to sell (1087).

Mr. Lindsey's earth-bound mortality is gritty in its humanness. He is of the physical universe, limited by the seeable and the known universe, unimaginative, lacking depth and insight. He clings to the present, to the established society and fails to see beyond the narrow sphere of the community.

Similarly, Violet's brother Peony possesses the same qualities as his father, in embryonic form. He too is simple, bound to the material, the mundane, the ordinary. When the children first go out in the snow, he "floundered out" (1089) after Violet. He lacks Violet's vision and commitment. In fact, throughout the entire story, Peony "flounders," always looking toward Violet for direction. We learn that Violet "told Peony what to do" (1089). He is never the innovator but neither is he the detractor. He, unlike Mr. Lindsey whose life's experience have deadened him and and made him incapable of imagining that

miracles can exist, is excited by adventure, the newness and the promise of life. When, for example, Violet suggests making the snow-image, Peony says, "Oh, yes!...That will be nice!" (1088). As she sculpts her new "sister," she demands new snow, and Peony, the diligent and hard-working little citizen functions "as the laborer" (1091).

He is benevolent, tender and caring as he assists his sister in effecting a miracle. "Here it is, Violet," he says, "...as he came floundering through the half-trodden snow" (1090). He stands as the chorus of established society which desires change and applauds those brave enough to effect it. At times, he quietly watches his rebellious sister's actions, vicariously enjoying her success. "Well done! Well done! How pretty!" Without Violet's energy, vision and direction, Peony would subsist in the known world of his home, warmed by the "Heidenberg stove" (1102), supported by his father and lulled into the passivity of a routine societal existence. We know from the outset that Peony is destined to become Mr. Lindsey.

Hawthorne creates a microcosm of nineteenth century society, and Mr. Lindsey and Peony stand as the pillars of a world in need and on the verge of massive change. They form, in the most negative sense, the adult world which is devoid of fresh thought, new life or the potential for

"miracles." It is the male world caught on the treadmill of progress and limited by its own short-sighted, mechanical accomplishments. And they, as microcosms for their society, cannot and will not change because they are "empty" and do not possess the depth of character, the power of insight or vision of innovation to see other ways of acting or being. This is the world as Hawthorne sees it, a world that has imprisoned itself in the narrow world of mortality.

In this mundane and uncreative world, in the austere patriarchy of nineteenth century America, we again find the female rebel that is unwilling, unable to accept the rules of the established society. Violet emerges out of this repressed and unforgiving society on a "cold winter's day" (1087). From the beginning of the story, she is set in stark contrast to her father's world. Violet, we are told, "emerged like a snow-bunting" (1088) in "new-fallen snow" (1087). Hawthorne's choice of words is of great importance here. By describing Violet as dressed in "bunting," he suggests that she is swaddled in a hooded garment used for infants. She, like the mummified rebel I discussed earlier, is bound by layers of cloth. This clothing is intended to protect her from the outside world. But Violet cannot exist under such confinement.

While she may retain the protective "bunting" to shield her from the cold, she figuratively peels it off as she begins the process of creating the snow-image. Art, sculpture here, frees her from the external reality of society and allows her soul to pour forth, to transpierce all barriers.

As I interpret this story, the old world has been eliminated and lays underneath the newly established world, the one formed by the "new-fallen snow" (1087, 1088, 1089, 1094). The snow brings with it purity, "chilly brightness," (1087) and the possibility of sculpting a new reality. In the newly created snow world, "new thought" (1088) is made possible as a result of the covering, the symbolic elimination, of the known and old world. In this new universe, the world is remade and life is created in the form of a "new little girl," and "new beings" (1089). This "new little girl" (1088) is the first person in a new world. It is only after her creation, that we are told that there will be "new beings."

Violet's creation of a new species, implies that she has transpierced the boundary of gender. She has *not* created an androgynous being, a being that possesses both male and female characteristics. Nor has she created a

gendered being, possessing the characteristics of just one sex. This is important and the actualization of the true goal of female metaphysical rebellion which is to break free from gender constraint into the newly discovered world of simply "being."

In short, Hawthorne tells the tale of creation, re-creation in the first eight paragraphs of the story. This early plot synopsis, enables us to focus on the real theme of the story, the process of metaphysical transformation. By so doing, he forces us to concentrate on the rebel's activities for she is the one who rises "out of ordinariness [to effect] magic" (Hurst 62). This is not simply a story of "magic," though it is more "about the magical quality of life and about the loss that occurs when we shut ourselves off from believing in the possibilities of miracles" (63). The "magic" and the "miracles" can only be realized in another society, in another world, a world only made possible by metaphysical rebellion.

Violet, like the many other female metaphysical rebels who are artists, creates out of a sense of compulsion, a necessity that is both uncompromising and natural. She is a child of ideas, the inventor, the one who challenges others to think and act differently, "she

looked like cheerful Thought" (1089). She see connections and makes associations that others fail to recognize. For example, having just arrived in the snow, she looks at Peony and says, "You look exactly like a snow-image...if your cheeks were not so red. And that puts me in mind! Let us make an image out of snow" (1088). As Hawthorne reveals her mind to us, we learn that she is the type of person that not only acknowledges reality but who is energized by it. In Peony she sees potential, the hidden possibility of another existence, a snow-image. But it will not be just an image, "...it shall run around and play with us, all winter long" (1088). She wishes to create a living being.

Hawthorne appoints Violet as the creator of the new world. She is awarded this privilege because she "assumed the chief direction" (1089) for the enterprise. She structures the activities, assigns the tasks, uses the materials and possesses the vision to see the final product. Unlike the society which she abandoned, the industrialized world of mass-production and uniformity, she is the fine artist who creates a unique, individual image. She is the skilled one as she "shaped out the nicer parts if the snow-figure" (1089) and added snow to the image "as scientifically as a sculptor adds clay to a

model" (1092).

Moreover, she works from the spirit, from the artistic talent that does not require or need refinement, reflection or science to change the world. She does not plod or "flounder" as Peony does. She is agile in skill, inspired by spirit and passionate in design. "Faster and faster, therefore, went her flying fingers" (1092).

Violet, like the other female metaphysical rebels we meet, possesses both the knowledge and the insight in and about both the new and old world orders. As she gives life to her new playmate, she knows that "Mamma will see how beautiful she is; but papa will say, "'Tush!-nonsense!-come out of the cold!'" (1091). She also understands that the "snow-image," the "new being" can only exist in the newly created snow world and outside of established society, outside of the Lindsey home. We know this because we are told that the snow-image thrives on the "cold west-wind" (1097) and because "the snowbirds...flew at once to the white-robed child...seemed to claim her as an old acquaintance" (1095). She is of nature, not civilization. Violet also understands the snow-image's link with the pure world, the new world and that is why she decides to use "lights wreaths...to make some ringlets" (1091) for her little sister's head.

Mrs. Lindsey shares some similarities with Violet, although I would not define her as a metaphysical rebel. For example, she enjoys the excitement that the children have in creating the snow-image, "What other children could have made anything so like a little girl's figure out of snow?" (1089) She muses over the possibility that they might be able to effect a miracle and create a real, little girl. "Nevertheless, the idea seized upon her imagination; and, ever and anon, she took a glimpse out the window, half-dreaming that she might see the gold-haired children of paradise, sporting with her own gold-haired Violet and bright-cheeked Peony" (1091). And finally, she is convinced that the children have created a real child. "'I do believe," she declares, "she [the snow-image] is made of snow.!'"(1100). Perhaps this is because "she kept her heart full of childlike simplicity, and faith, which was as pure and clear as crystal; and, looking at all matter though a transparent medium, she sometimes saw truths so profound, that other people laughed at them as nonsense and absurdity" (1098).

But she, unlike Violet, succumbs to the mortal world, to the domination of her husband and suppresses the truths that she spiritually comprehends, her view, "...had given way, as it always did, to the stubborn materialism of her

husband" (1101). So, she follows her husband's orders and sits the snow-image in front of the stove. For those women who possess only a few strains of the metaphysical rebellious spirit, they ultimately join with society, their husbands, in the complicitious effort to eradicate the change agents, the female metaphysical rebels.

As a child, Violet possesses a purity of spirit which enables her to believe in the possibility of creating a playmate from snow. She gains maturity and acceptance into the adult and human world by creating "beings." She defies all that is, her parents, her community, her society and, therefore, immediately traverses the boundary established for society for females. She violates the protocols for little girls by going into the wilderness. She violates the rules which require that females defer to males. The artists, like their works of art, are able to go beyond mortal existence. That is why Violet desires to create a "snow-image" and not a snow-girl. The "image" is not only "nonsexist" (Hurst 59) but also gender-free. This should be the reality of the new world order, to create "beings" rather than males and females. Although Hawthorne succumbs to the mortal temptations of a patriarchal society and allows the "image" to evolve into a "little girl," he does so only after he presents his

idealistic dream.

Throughout Eliot and Hawthorne's works there are numerous artists, like Violet. Some follow the traditional female roles of sewing and embroidering, like Mrs. Meyrick, Mrs. Pomfret, Mrs. Taft and Zenobia. Others, like Mrs. Pratt in "Janet's Repetence," publish write and even publish poetry. And others still, are musicians, music lovers, and singers. The musician or singer, like the sculptor, is able to mold a new society by changing those who listen, by evoking emotion and demanding reflection, "music...the voice--allows unmediated access to the character's soul, because the voice is taken as an authentic representation if the self" (Byerly 3).

The most prominent example of female metaphysical rebellion in Eliot is Armgart, the opera singer in the poem of the same name. She is a grand and overbearing artist, and the voice for all of the artists. Through her words and in her statements, we learn of the true role of art in the female metaphysical rebel's life, transcendence beyond the limitations of gender and mortal experience. Art allows women to get closer to the divine by allowing them another way to exist on Earth; it acts as a catalyst for the inner voice, and it is a vehicle for the soul

which seeks ascendency.

Armgart "wonders what life would have been without that voice for to channel her soul" (Eliot, "Armgart" 87). The quest for ascendency forces the artist to seek the highest level of performance, of truth. "'I triumph or I fail,/I never strode for any second prize'" (67). Typical of the female metaphysical rebel, Armgart is unable to accept a secondary position in the world, that of wife or mother. Singing opens "new doors" (77) for Armgart, doors that are forced open by the passion of her spirit, by the rage and disquiet which female metaphysical rebels feel deep within their being. "Oh, pleasure has cramped dwelling in our souls/ And when full Being comes must call on pain/To lend it liberal space" (76). Like so many of the female metaphysical rebels we meet, Armgart confesses that the weight of being a woman brings special pain into her. "I am an artist by my birth-/By the same warrant that I am a woman" (89).

But she refuses to accept the gender assignments that her society wishes to place upon her. "I need not crush myself within a mould/Of theory called Nature: I have room to breathe and grow unstunted" (89). Art allows female metaphysical rebels to experience their full potential. It allows them to attain full personhood. It

transcends the material world and humankind's laws. The true female metaphysical rebel understands that art must come before marriage, before family, before society's dictates for appropriate female behavior. In the scene in which Armgart and Graf discuss marriage, Armgart chooses her art and defies Graf's attempts to contain her in the neat and tidy world of nineteenth century society. Rejecting his notion that "A woman's rank/Lies in the fulness of her womanhood:/Therein alone she is royal" (86), she chooses to "...walk high with sublimer tread/Rather than crawl in safety" (86).

The outright rejection of conventional mores places her on the outside of society. But she rejects more than marriage when she rejects Graf. The consequences of her actions, the decision to pursue art instead of marriage, forces her to acknowledge the fate that awaits her "I will live alone and pour my pain/With passion in music, where it turns/To what is best within my better self" (93). She displays contempt for the traditional women who accept their assigned roles. The finality of her decision is revealed in her display of disdain for traditional society. In one scene, she turns to Graf and directs him to "...seek the woman you deserve,/All grace, all goodness, who has not found/A meaning in her life, nor

any end/Beyond fulfilling yours. The type abounds" (95). Armgart chastises Graf for desiring a woman who exists for the sole purpose of pleasing her husband. She also acknowledges that the majority of women aspire to that position. By so doing, ordinary women are bound to achieve nothing more than a subservient and dependent roles in society. They never violate mankind's rules for them and, therefore, never attain personhood.

For Armgart, her voice is the channel through which her soul is able to leap from her body. It is the way in which the spirit disentangles itself from the gender constraints of womanhood. When she loses her voice, she loses the freedom that it afforded her and she becomes once again entangled in the web of a genderized societal constraints.

> What is my soul to me without the voice
> That gave it freedom?--gave it one grand touch
> And made it nobly human?--Prisoned now,
> Prisoned in all the petty mimicries/Called
> women's knowledge, that will fit the world As
> doll-clothes fit a man. I can do nought
> Better than what a million women do-
> Must drudge among the crowd and feel my life
> Beating upon the world without response (113).

The female metaphysical artist who loses her gift, her

power, reenters society as a changed person. She, along with humankind, has experienced the freedom of transcending mortal existence. Now she will co-exist in a world with both insight and inspiration, a changed person in a world that needs to change. As an ungendered part of all of humanity, she attempts to enlighten and educate the rest of society but frequently finds that her truths will be received "without response." Armgart's voice, once shared with and praised by the world, is quieted, her journey complete.

The impetus for rebellious action arises out of passion, in the case of the artist, out of the gift which allows one to exceed humanity's limits. "An inborn passion gives a rebel's right:/I would rebel and die in twenty worlds/Sooner than bear the yoke of thwarted life" (113).

There are others like Violet and Armgart in Eliot and Hawthorne's fiction. For instance, there is Princess Halm-Eberstein who pursued art and deserted her family. For her, an acting and singing career allowed her the freedom to escape from the predetermined life of marriage and conventional society. It allowed her to gain confidence and to show the world her power. "'I was a great singer, and I acted as well as I sang. All the

rest were poor beside me. Men followed me from one country to another. I was living a myriad of lives in one. I did not want a child'" (Eliot, Daniel Deronda 688-689). Art allowed her to create another world for herself, to cross the boundary that society sets for women. Similarly, Caterina is an artist whose "singing was what she could do best, it was her point of superiority" (Eliot, "Mrs. Gilfil's Love Story" 197). Singing for Caterina, like Armgart, is her rebellion against social norms and mores.

The female metaphysical rebel finds resolution, comfort and salvation in and through art. While all artists take part in the act of creation, the process possesses added meaning for female metaphysical rebels. It enables them to break thorough gender-boundaries set for women, to go out into the public sphere, to speak and to act, to be anything she wants to be. The desire, the drive to pursue art arises out of the disquiet of the spirit, out of a spirituality that is so free and so intense that it simply cannot exist in a restrictive and limited environment, or society. All female metaphysical rebels are artists because they are visionaries who possess the skill and passion of spirit to make changes for a better world.

Chapter 10

Transcendence and Immortality

Female metaphysical rebels in Eliot and Hawthorne's literature seek to transcend gender, society, mortality and the Earth. Through the process of metaphysical rebellion, they hope to attain knowledge that is not granted to ordinary and mortal human. The knowledge I refer to here is transcendent knowledge, knowledge which is neither promised nor granted to humans. Transcendent knowledge is beyond the scope of science, math, literature or philosophy, although it includes all of them. This knowledge is of a higher order and not the product of human inquiry, inspection or formulation.

Metaphysical rebellion is the means by which humanity moves toward transcendent truth and illumination. The process of metaphysical rebellion begins with a renunciation of the entire human condition. It requires metaphysical rebels to isolate or separate themselves from their communities. Away from mortal law and societal regulation, the separation between mortality and immortality, body and mind disintegrates so that the human exists in another realm, as an entity able to view and understand transcendent truth. After attaining this

higher level of existence and, armed with superior knowledge, the metaphysical rebel is reintegrated into his/her community.

As a result of the experience, the metaphysical rebels finds alternative ways of living one Earth and, therefore, becomes a change-agent for his/her society. The process changes both the metaphysical rebel and his/her society. It gives hope for a better world, a world that can only be envisioned by the illumination offered by transcendent truth.

Only selected individuals are chosen to take the metaphysically rebellious journey and they are people who possess an intense spirituality and a commitment to humankind. In order for metaphysical rebels to begin their journey, though, they must have achieved the status of full personhood. By full personhood, I mean that, as a human, the individual has attained his/her full human potential. In order to achieve one's fullest potential, one must be free to act, think, speak, write as they choose. They must, in other words, be afforded all of the freedoms available to humankind.

Men are granted the status of full personhood as a virtue of their gender, while women are relegated to a less than full personhood status because of gender

limitations imposed on her by male-governed society. These gender limitations restrict women's behavior so that she can not act, speak, think or behave with full freedom. Men can, therefore, immediately begin the journey of metaphysical rebellion while women must complete a prerequisite step that will enable them to achieve full personhood.

Women must first violate the man-made laws of mortal society before they are permitted to join with humanity in pursuit of transcendent truth. These laws are imposed on her by mankind because she is of the female gender. To break through these boundaries, she must violate sexual rules, vocational guidelines or behavioral regulations. That is why in story after story and in novel after novel, we find female metaphysical rebels violating various types of man-made laws.

For some female metaphysical rebels, the authors seem to suggest that the process of attaining full personhood must result in death. In "The Birthmark," Georgiana is destined to die as a result of the freedom from gender. Mortal life, as represented by the little hand-shaped mark on her cheek, was "deeply woven...with the texture and substance of her face" (765). The "Bloody Hand" (765) etched upon her face is a symbol of her

mortality. Its removal marks her departure from mortality and her attainment of transcendent truth. It means that she has attained personhood and has joined the ranks of humankind. Once she arrives at that higher realm, the one beyond human flaw and imperfection, she willingly sacrifices her mortal existence for another and better existence.

On the verge of death, she turns to Aylmer and says, "'I might wish to put off the birth-mark of mortality by relinquishing mortality itself. Life is but a sad possession to those who have attained precisely the degree of moral advancement at which I stand....But being what I find myself, methinks I am of all mortals the most fit to die'" (778). The "moral advancement" that Georgiana has attained is the illumination of transcendent truth. Georgiana, like so many of the rebels we encounter, succeeds in her struggle to cross the boundary to the realm beyond gender and, as a part of humankind, breaks the mortal laws of humanity while she moves beyond it to the divine sphere.

Beatrice, too, sacrifices her mortal life for the promise of another existence. True, Rappaccini effects the transformation through his abuse of scientific knowledge, but his power is only the mortal vehicle by

which Beatrice's soul gains the ascendency it so deserves. Beatrice transpierces the boundary of gender through love and knowledge. As she dies, she turns to her father and thanks him. The sacrifice of her mortal life serves as a symbol of hope and purity for all of humankind. Death is the antidote for Rappaccini's earth-bound and deadly poison. She speaks for all of womankind and humankind when she says, "I am going father, where the evil, which thou hast striven to mingle with my being, will pass away like a dream-like the fragrance of these poisonous flowers, which will no longer taint my breath among the flowers of Eden...I ascend" (Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" 1005).

When Beatrice speaks of "the evil" that her father inflicted on her, she means not only the poison distilled through his perversion of nature, but also the evilness of patriarchy. Rappaccini's rule over Beatrice stands for all mankind's oppressive and unfair rule over all of womankind. In death, Beatrice, and others like her, are united with Nature, and freed from man's society. Immortality and permanent truth are the outcomes for those who defy divine law and attain knowledge that is forbidden to mortal man.

Maggie and Zenobia, two of the most prominent and soul-confirming rebels in the fiction, also die. Their

deaths are of great significance in our understanding female metaphysical rebellion, for they, more than any other, are characters whose deaths represent humankind's defiance of divine laws. In death, Zenobia's arms were "bent before her, as if she struggled against Providence in never-ending hostility. Her hands! They were clenched in immitigable defiance" (Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance 240). Similarly, at the end of The Mill on the Floss, Maggie rages against the Nature, against God, and finds death in her defiance. As the waves engulf the town, "Maggie...stood in the rain with the oar in her hand and with her black hair streaming" (650).

For Eliot and Hawthorne, death is humankind's final separation from mortal existence. It is the ultimate freedom from earth-bound concerns, from the mundane and petty differences that human society imposes on itself in its prideful effort to gain power and to exercise control. Death, then, may be the outcome of female metaphysical rebellion. For Georgiana, Beatrice, Maggie, Zenobia and the others, death is the badge that confirms their movement out of the female gender out of the mortal frame and into the state of authors. But death is not the desirable end for female metaphysical rebels but, rather, the inevitable destiny for humankind.

Neither Eliot nor Hawthorne are willing to forgo

life, though death sometimes occurs, and neither is willing to leave society permanently. For this reason, most of the female rebels we find in the fiction rejoin their societies. They do so because it is spiritually comforting and because one of the main goals of metaphysical rebellion is to improve society.

Female metaphysical rebels are special and spiritual women. This is an important distinction and rests at the center of our understanding of metaphysical rebellion. It is spiritual and not psychological because it is not dependent on personality type or intrapsychic activity of any kind. It is spiritual and not philosophical because it is not centered around thinking or the thought processes. It is spiritual and not social or political because it is not tied to a specific place, event or cause. Only women of spirit, women who experience a disquiet of the spirit, are permitted to take the metaphysically rebellious journey. After violating mankind's laws, the female metaphysical rebel progresses through the other three stages of metaphysical rebellion, namely isolation, disintegration and reintegration. In order to complete the journey and pass through its stages, the rebel may isolate herself from the community and join the Gypsies, as Maggie does. Or she may temporarily leave human realm and enter the animal kingdom, like Mrs.

Bullfrog.

By isolating herself from her community, the rebel finds the connections between the mortal and the immortality, between the human and the divine. In other words, the old self is dissolved or disintegrates and, as a result, she ascends to a higher realm of being. In this heightened state of existence, she is genderless and immortal. The fabricated barriers which mankind has placed on womankind, on society, are eliminated.

In this new state of being, the female metaphysical rebel is able to understand life and gains insight the role and purpose of human existence. When she reenters her society, she does so with a renewed sense of commitment and is able to offer alternate ways of living. As a result of her violation, isolation, disintegration and reintegration, the rebel is changed and so is the society that awaits her return.

As example of this process, consider Dorothea and Hester. Dorothea's pure and idealistic ideas for her society isolate her from the materialism of the world. She violates society's rules by having grand visions of changing the world. She is an active thinker and a reformer. But above all, she is isolated from the ordinary women and men because of her intense

spirituality. Her spirit is so strong, so broad, so whole, that she even finds a glimmer of greatness in the vacuous Casaubon. Her marriage to Casaubon serves as yet another separation for Dorothea who leaves the world and enters Lowick.

When she re-enters society, after Casaubon's death, she enters as a new person, a person who has seen beyond appearances, a person who has found transcendent truth. "Her full nature, like that river of which Cyrus broke the strength, spent itself in channels which had no great name on earth. But the effect of her being on others was incalculably diffuse: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts" (896). Perhaps it is Dorothea's metaphysical rebellion that has improved the world, "...things are not so ill with you and me today as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs" (896).

Hester, like Dorothea, completes the female metaphysical rebel's journey. She violates mankind's laws by committing an adulterous act. This enables her to achieve full personhood. After she is condemned for violating society's sexual code for women, she is isolated from her community and enters a long period of solitude.

But, like all of the other metaphysical rebels, Hester ultimately returns to her New England town. For Hester, New England is "real life" (Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter 252). All humans desire to be in a familiar land and to share in the rituals and everyday life of community. Hester transcends her previous circumstance and rejoins her fellow citizens for "Here had been her sin; here, her sorrow; and here was yet her penitence" (253).

Upon her return, her reintegration, Hester is reborn and the world is a different place. She no longer lives for the pleasure of the moment and she does not seek individual satisfaction and pleasure. In her new life, "the scarlet letter ceased to be a stigma which attracted the world's scorn and bitterness, and became a type of something to be sorrowed over, and looked upon with awe, yet with reverence too" (253). This represents a major shift in the community's attitude toward Hester. All we need do is to remember how the "self-constituted judges" (49) sat in judgement of Hester at the beginning of the novel, saying that "did ever a woman, before this brazen hussy, contrive such a way of showing it!'" (51).

Now the same women who condemned her, seek her counsel and respect her advice. She serves her community as a wise and experienced individual who is able to help:

"people brought all their sorrows and perplexities, and besought her counsel, as one who had herself gone through a mighty trouble" (253). Hester has gained strength and insight through her rebellion just as her society has learned that judgements based on genderized rules and regulations limit human potential for growth.

Hester returns to enlighten women about the dangers of the genderized world and to relieve their pain and suffering by means of sympathy and compassion. Those who seek her advise are "Women, more especially,--in the continually recurring trials of wounded, wasted, wronged, misplaced, or erring and sinful passion,--or with the dreary burden of a heart unyielded, because unvalued or unsought,--came to Hester's cottage demanding why they were so wretched, and what the remedy!" (253).

The answers these women seek are found in the female metaphysical rebel's journey from a genderized society into and beyond personhood. Women must rebel against the restraints that society places on them because they are women. They must have a "firm belief [as Hester does], that, at some brighter point, when the world has grown ripe for it, in heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed" (253). The truth has been revealed to us by Eliot and Hawthorne who create Hesters and Dorotheas as a

means of forging a new world through the educative tool of literature.

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