1981

**Freedom in the early American novel (1790–1800)**

Ann Ruth Young

*College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd](https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd)

Part of the [American Literature Commons](https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd)

**Recommended Citation**


[https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-7bnv-y612](https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-7bnv-y612)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, & Master Projects at W&M ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects by an authorized administrator of W&M ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@wm.edu.
FREEDOM IN THE EARLY AMERICAN NOVEL
(1790-1800)

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of English
The College of William and Mary in Virginia
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by

Ann Ruth Young
1981
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

[Signature]
Author

Approved, April 1981

Walter P. Wenska
Walter P. Wenska

David Porush
David Porush

Robert J. Scholnick
Robert J. Scholnick
Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part I: The American Definition of Freedom: Before 1765</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation and Isolation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part II: The American Definition of Freedom: After 1765</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union and Sociability</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This writer thanks Walter Wenska for his guidance with this project and the Harold G. Russell Room Special Collections at the University of Minnesota Library (Wilson) for its cooperation in providing rare copies of both Farmer's Friend and of Female Review.
ABSTRACT

This paper traces the theme of freedom in three novels—Enos Hitchcock's Farmer's Friend, Herman Mann's Female Review, and Charles Brockden Brown's Ormond—from the first decade of the American novel (1790-1800), demonstrating the way in which the concepts of freedom presented in the novels reflect the developing concept of freedom in America.

Central to this discussion of freedom is the conflict between the individual and society, between the values associated with individualism and those recognizing the importance of social unity.
FREEDOM IN THE EARLY AMERICAN NOVEL
Until recently the early American novel has been neglected both by literary historians and by literary critics. Writing in 1971, Henry Petter comments that "there has been no comprehensive study of the period in question since Lillie Deming Loshe's The Early American Novel (1907)." Russell Nye also points to this neglect: "The literature produced in America between 1776 and 1830 is ... treated in most literary histories as a sort of blank space between the Revolution and the mature work of Irving, Bryant, and Cooper. The fact is, of course, that these were years of intense and energetic (if not always distinguished) literary activity, and that out of them emerged a strong, native, belles-lettres tradition." That this literature was produced is amazing in itself if the forces against such production are considered. Many literary critics—including Alexander Cowie, Leslie Fiedler, Henry Petter, Lillie Loshe, Russell Nye, and Herbert Ross Brown—discuss the antagonistic environment within which especially the early American novel was made to survive.

In his The Rise of the American Novel, Cowie explains that America lacked many of the prerequisites for literary production: societal unity, free public education (except in New England), publishers (those few American publishers who did exist seemed content to pirate foreign editions), and book reviewing. In addition, America was faced with the necessities of beginning a new nation: the development of land, government, schools, and churches. As a new nation, America was still tied to its mother country, and, as
Cowie suggests, until this dependence was completely dissolved, an independent American literature would be slow to develop.\(^3\) Fiedler describes the American novelist in this frontier land without a literary tradition, exhausted by the task of "merely finding a language, learning to talk in a land where there are no conventions of conversation . . . no continuing literary language.\(^4\) In addition to these circumstances, there was what Nye characterizes as "lingering public and ecclesiastical hostility" toward the novel.\(^5\) Thomas Jefferson believed novel reading to be a national menace: "When this poison infects the mind, it destroys its tone and revolts it against wholesome reading. . . . The result is a bloated imagination, sickly judgment, and disgust towards all the real business of life."\(^6\)

Herbert Ross Brown quotes warnings against novel reading from many magazines of the day: *American Magazine, United States Magazine, Monthly Mirror, Universal Asylum, Lady's Magazine, New York Magazine,* and the *Weekly Magazine.*\(^7\) And it was not uncommon for a preacher, in his Sunday sermon, to warn everyone--especially women--to avoid the evils of reading novels.

Despite these antagonistic forces, novels were written and published and read, beginning with William Hill Brown's *The Power of Sympathy* in 1789. During the decade which followed, nearly thirty novels were published, three of which will be centered on in this discussion: the Reverend Enos Hitchcock's *Farmer's Friend* (1793), Herman Mann's *Female Review* (1797), and Charles Brockden Brown's *Ormond* (1799). These novels, the first two of which have remained virtually untouched by literary historians and critics, are of
interest not only because they mark the beginning of an independent American literature, but because they provide an index to the concept of freedom as it began to develop in early America. This paper will examine that concept of freedom as it is presented in these three works, demonstrating the way in which the protagonists' struggle toward freedom in the novels mirrors the struggle toward a definition of freedom in America, itself.

The American definition of freedom begins with the colonists and their motivations for emigrating to the New World in the 1600s. For some—convicts, beggars, vagrants, and prostitutes—the choice was not their own. By forcing these undesirables to emigrate, England easily unburdened herself of the responsibility for their care or punishment. Also a part of the involuntary emigrants were the blacks, who were stolen or bought in Africa and sold into slavery. But the majority of emigrants chose to come to the New World. Some of the colonists who emigrated were motivated by the sheer love of risk and adventure. Others, convinced by stories of miraculous cures and remedies for illness, came seeking better health and longer lives. But by far the greatest number of emigrants were motivated by one common desire—freedom—whether religious, political, or economic. As Louis B. Wright notes in "Motivations and Aspirations for Colonial Settlement in North America," "the liberty to worship as any sect wished brought thousands of Quakers, Mennonites, Lutherans, Huguenots, Scottish Presbyterians, Welsh Baptists, Moravians, and others." Those who were not inspired by religious concerns were inspired by the opportunity to own land in the colonies, something that was
nearly impossible for them to do in England: "land in England, as elsewhere in Europe, was scarce, expensive, and hard to come by. No laborer by the sweat of his brow could hope to earn enough to acquire even a tiny farm. But in America, in the early colonial period, by merely paying ocean passage, he could acquire an ample estate, and, if luck was with him, he could look forward to taking his place as a member of a rising aristocracy." To these emigrants, "land was the key to status and freedom."1

It is important to note, however, that although the colonists enthusiastically fled the oppression of their mother country for freedom in the New World, complete rebellion against England was not at all a part of the colonists' plan. Indeed, as Edmund Morgan points out in The Challenge of the Revolution, "emigration offered a substitute for revolution [in England] to thousands of men and women."13 Although the colonists separated themselves physically from England, the filial bond was still strong politically, financially, and psychologically: "even the New Englanders who had quarrelled with England to a degree that they could leave her forever, were proud to call themselves Englishmen, and regarded New England simply as a part of the old England which they had left."14 And so it was not a revolutionary spirit that urged the colonists to the New World; rather, it was the colonists' sense that in England they simply were not free to live the religious or secular lives they wished to. Those who were landless, jobless, and hungry, whose religion was out of favor, felt ignored if not persecuted in their mother country. This feeling of neglect and persecution only increased once the colonists
settled in the New World. Morgan notes in *The Birth of the Republic* that England's government "had simply not been designed to cover half the globe" and that Englishmen "were apt to regard a problem of turnpikes in Yorkshire as vastly more important" than anything concerning the colonies.\(^{15}\) Morgan describes the continual passing of responsibility for the colonies from one seemingly unconcerned hand to another:

> Administration of the colonies was left to the King, who turned it over to his Secretary Of State for the Southern Department. . . . The Secretary left it pretty much to the Board of Trade and Plantations, a sort of Chamber of Commerce with purely advisory powers. The Board of Trade told the Secretary what to do; he told the royal governors [in the colonies]; the governors told the colonists; and the colonists did what they pleased.\(^{16}\)

Within this historical background, two circumstances are central. The first is that the colonists were separated, if only physically, from their mother country, and the second is that this separation was due, in great part, to England's neglect of the colonists' needs. These very circumstances are touched on both explicitly and implicitly in many of the early American novels. Their implicit expression comes primarily through the pervasive use of orphans in these works. In each of the novels to be focused on in this study, the protagonists are separated from their parents and orphaned, in part, because of negligence or lack of responsibility on their parents' part.

In the beginning of Hitchcock's *Farmer's Friend*, Mr. Worthy, father of the novel's protagonist, Charles Worthy, falls into financial difficulty. "It was very unfortunate for Mr. Worthy, that the little spot of land he owned joined to one of . . . [an] oppressive man . . .
who had grown rich upon the spoils of those who fell into his debt." More unfortunately, Mr. Worthy had the poor judgment to borrow from this neighbor, and "tho the amount was but small, yet he could not pay it when demanded, and was thrown into prison, by his merciless creditor, and . . . he died in about ten days" (F.F., 19). Not long after her husband's death, Charles' mother "found it necessary to part with her children . . . But her eldest son [Charles], being able to afford a little assistance, remained with her". (F.F., 20). Eventually, however, even Charles is given up, and Mrs. Worthy dies shortly thereafter. Hitchcock describes Charles as "an outcast orphan . . . without a friendly hand extended to his relief" (F.F., 14). Mr. Worthy, in losing his land, fails in his responsibility for providing financial security and independence for his family. Once he is dead, Mrs. Worthy is equally ineffective in providing for her children, leaving, among others, Charles, separated from his parents and alone in the world.

In Mann's Female Review, the father of the novel's heroine, Deborah Sampson, also experiences financial difficulty. "He met with a sad disappointment in his father's estate . . . he was disinherited of a portion that belonged to him by hereditary right. This circumstance, alone, made such impressions on his mind, that, instead of being fired with a just spirit of resentment and emulation, to supply, by good application and economy, that of which he had been unjustly deprived, he was led into . . . the sea-faring business. . . . At length, her mother was informed, he had perished in a shipwreck." In this case, the abdication of parental responsibility is clear.
It is suggested that Mr. Sampson might have applied himself and survived without the inherited wealth; however, he is so distressed over being unjustly deprived of that wealth that he chooses a risky and dangerous business at sea which leads not only to the initial physical separation from his family, but eventually to his death and his leaving his children alone and unprovided for. Like Mrs. Worthy, Mrs. Sampson "was obliged, at length, to disband her family and to scatter her children abroad" (F.R., 23). Although her mother does not die during the course of the novel, Deborah is still referred to as an orphan whose lot is only "as good as that of orphans in general" (F.R., 23).

In the beginning of Charles Brockden Brown's Ormond, Stephen Dudley, father of the protagonist, Constantia, is financially successful, having inherited his father's business. Dudley, however, considers the responsibility of business a drudgery, and when Thomas Craig, a clever young man who intends to make his way in the world through any means, happens along and offers to share the responsibilities of Dudley's business, Dudley foolishly "remitted his attention to his own concerns, and placed more absolute reliance on the fidelity of his dependent," Craig. It is soon revealed that Craig has lied about his past and embezzled a large share of stock, leaving Dudley financially desolate. Although Dudley doesn't die until quite late in the novel, he orphans Constantia in the sense that he doesn't fulfill his parental role of caring for her. Between father and daughter "the chair of subordination and duties was reversed," and Constantia becomes the provider for her father (O., 144).
Mrs. Dudley is her husband's female counterpart in this abdication of parental responsibility. It might be expected that she would encourage her husband to accept his business responsibilities; however, she does not measure up to the task. Mrs. Dudley "was qualified to be his comforter, but instead of dispelling his gloom . . . she caught the infection that preyed upon his mind, and augmented his anxieties by partaking in them" (O., 6). Unable to "accommodate herself to the necessity of her husband's affairs," Mrs. Dudley eventually dies, "a victim to discontent" (O., 21). In contrast to her mother's abdication of her responsibility as "comforter" to Dudley, Constantia accepts that responsibility: "When the task of comforter fell upon her, her strength was not found wanting" (O., 17). Just as Charles Worthy cares for and supports his mother until their separation, Constantia provides for her father until his death.

In each of the three novels, therefore, the historical circumstance of separation between the colonists and England is mirrored in the protagonists' separation from their parents. And, importantly, this separation is not due to the rebellious spirit of Charles Worthy, Deborah Sampson, and Constantia Dudley; rather, it is due to varying degrees of the abdication of responsibility on the part of the parents. The analogy between the domestic sphere--parental rejection of the child--and the political sphere--England's rejection of the colonists' needs and desires--is made clear in the figurative language of this passage from Mann's novel, in which he speaks about the colonists' relationship with England: "we [colonists] were distressed, and like her dutiful offspring asked her lenity and compassion--but could not
share, even in her parental affection!" (F.R., 86).

One of the most striking characteristics of early America, and a central part in America's struggle toward a definition of freedom, was the attitude of isolationism within the colonies and self-interest among the colonists. David M. Potter points out in Freedom and Its Limitations in American Life "how much distrust there was, even between neighbors like Massachusetts and Rhode Island, let alone between the thrifty, pious, hardworking folk of New England and the expansive pleasure-loving plantation lords of the South."20 In The Americans: The Colonial Experience, Daniel Boorstin outlines the complete reluctance "of any one colony to send its militia to join in the defense of its neighbor."21 This attitude, as Morgan notes, existed even within each colony itself: "there were quarrels between different sections. Eastern Connecticut despised western Connecticut. Newport, Rhode Island, was at odds with Providence, and the rest of New England looked upon the whole of Rhode Island with undisguised contempt."22 The colonists themselves were content living in what Morgan calls "the freedom of a relatively isolated and empty continent," feeling little responsibility for their neighbors. In his Letters from an American Farmer, Crevecoeur emphasizes this self-interest as being among the strongest of the colonists' personal traits: "We [the colonists] have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed: we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. Here man is free as he ought to be."23 Indeed, this insistence on having no responsibility to or for anyone and being able to satisfy individual wants and desires--
in effect, doing as one pleased—was close to the heart of the early American definition of freedom.

Unfortunately, this definition proved shortsighted. Boorstin notes that this "pervasive localism" was "the great obstacle to British efforts to combine all the colonial troops against the French and Indian menace."\(^{24}\) The colonists would also find that this reluctance to join together would keep them vulnerable to British oppression through taxation. And, significant in terms of America's literary progress, Cowie notes that colonial isolationism deprived the colonies of "the cohesion and solidarity and traditions which form the best matrix for the creation of art."\(^{25}\) This isolationism and self-interest is strongly reflected in the novels. And this expression of freedom proves to be just as unsuccessful in the fictional lives of the novel's characters as it did for the early colonists.

In Farmer's Friend, there are many characters who try to realize the greatest freedom through a combination of isolation from the rest of society and ruthless promotion of their own interests, the first of whom is the "oppressive man" who threw Charles' father into prison because of his debts (F.F., 19). Long after Mr. Worthy's death, this cruel neighbor continues to oppress Charles and his mother. Hitchcock describes the neighbor as one of those people "who seem to think that the earth was created for them alone, and that they have a right to the service of everyone on whom they can lay their hands" (F.F., 20-21). Hitchcock goes on the comment on how such people as these, who insist on promoting only their own
interests, are a threat to society, which operates best when people realize not their isolation from, but dependence on each other and work to promote the common benefit:

I would only remark here, that a bad neighbor is one of the greatest pests incident to our social state. The unavoidable intercourse of people of the same neighborhood makes their enjoyment of life very dependent on each other. When therefore an individual disturbs the peace of those about him, and vexes those whose quiet and happiness he should study, he becomes an object of hatred, perhaps of dread and detestation to all about him. (F.F., 23)

This cruel neighbor is eventually frustrated, at least by the novel's protagonist, Charles. It is the neighbor's plan to continue the oppression and persecution of the Worthy family; however, he is unable to "get Charles into his service," something that upsets the neighbor very much (F.F., 20). In the end, the neighbor fails in his selfish and oppressive designs, and Charles remains at liberty from this man's tyrannical desires.26

The undesirable effects of defining freedom wholly or mainly in terms of one's own interests, without regard for others, are also revealed in the character Mr. Gruff. "Mr. Gruff was a wealthy farmer . . . [and] one of those churlish beings, who, as they cannot enjoy any thing in life themselves, will not suffer those about them to have any enjoyment (F.F., 28). Mr. Gruff is Charles' distant relative, and when he hears of Charles' situation, he decides to "adopt" him. The author describes Mr. Gruff's act of charity, however, as motivated more than likely by his wanting to "procure a likely boy for his own convenience" (F.F., 25). "This," Hitchcock goes on to explain, "is too often all the charity that actuates
people in taking orphan children. They have their own ends to answer; and when that is done, little else is cared for" (F.F., 25).

Mr. Gruff does take Charles in and treats him so poorly that Hitchcock comments, "no generous master would have put a slave to the severe drudgery that was demanded of Charles" (F.F., 27). Such cruelties as these, inflicted because one man has power over another, the author calls "a reproach upon human nature" (F.F., 36).

One of Mr. Gruff's many vices is "covetousness . . . [in fact] so extremely did this mean spirit prevail, that he would sometimes endanger his life rather than not have it gratified" (F.F., 37). Gruff is so selfish that he even refuses to go to the expense of having his horse shod; consequently, one icy winter night, when Gruff is returning from a business trip, his horse slips, throwing Gruff to the ground. His servant, Charles, after finding the riderless horse, goes to Gruff's aid. Gruff is now at the mercy of his "slave"; in fact he "was so disabled by the fall, that he must have perished on the spot, for it was extreme cold, had it not been for the good offices of Charles, who with great difficulty helped him home (F.F., 38). Mr. Gruff dies, however, a victim to his own selfishness; on the other hand, Charles finds "himself at liberty to quit a place that was so disagreeable to him" (F.F., 38-39).

There are two characters in the novel to whom Charles Worthy is quite directly contrasted, Mr. Timothy Puffum and Mr. Slack. In contrast to Charles' being left without his father's estate, Puffum, the son of a wealthy farmer, inherits his father's rich land. Unfortunately, Puffum does horribly as a farmer. A self-centered
young man, "he was so peevish and ill humored" that his hired workers were unable to please him in anything they did (F.F., 73). When Puffum decides to get married, he is rejected by his first choice, Margaret Smith, and marries, instead, "a vain young girl," whose only desire is that Puffum "gratify her gay fancy" (F.F., 74). In an effort to gratify both their desires, the farm land, Puffum's only hold on real independence, and all of the wealth is eventually spent. Puffum, now "poor and vicious" dies "miserably in a loathsome jail" (F.F., 74). It is because of his self-interest that Puffum loses his independence and actually dies a prisoner. Charles Worthy, on the other hand, marries Margaret Smith, the only desire in which Puffum had been frustrated.

Mr. Slack, Charles' neighbor, also attempts to gratify his own desires, being uninterested in the welfare of all others. He "withheld the wages of the labourer, and ground the face of the poor" (F.F., 109). Mr. Slack, his wife, and children are even unable to cooperate with each other and function as a family: Mr. and Mrs. Slack "rendered each other very unhappy. The consequence was, that their children grew up like wild asses' colts, and all their household were at loose ends" (F.F., 124). Mr. Slack fails in almost everything and is eventually seriously injured when he, like Gruff, is thrown by his abused horse. Charles Worthy attempts to save him, just as he had attempted to save Mr. Gruff; however, Slack finally dies. After his death, Slack's "estate was seized by the creditors, and she [Mrs. Slack] was left in a poor and destitute condition" (F.F., 130).
One of Charles Worthy's many instructive stories touches on the separation of the individual from society as an expression of freedom. As Worthy tells the story, James Mackormick, a man who suffers the misfortunes of poverty, imprisonment, and the death of his wife, chooses to leave society and live alone, declaring: "I have no home--the earth is my home. I will go up and down in it, till I find a cave where human feet will not come" (F.F., 157). This statement echoes what F.L. Pattee in A History of American Literature: With a View to the Fundamental Principles Underlying Its Development calls "the primary motive" of many of the colonists, which was "to seek isolation . . . in a corner of the earth." Mackormick finds, however, that he does not experience freedom by separating himself from society. First, his complete isolation from society makes it impossible for Mackormick to feed and clothe his family. Mackormick sends his children to "the little town not far off, to beg some provision for their poor daddy and themselves" (F.F., 158). Separation from society doesn't free him from the possibility of misfortune either. While living apart from society, his only two remaining children die of small pox, and even his dog is killed. Mrs. Vanhime, a kind women who attempts to help the Mackormick family throughout their troubles, tries to persuade James to rejoin society; however, he refuses and eventually dies, having lost everything.

All of these individuals fail because their perceptions of what it is to be free are shortsighted and selfish. Mackormick, who wanted to be free of any contact with others, finds that such
isolation is not only undesirable, but virtually impossible. Gruff, the cruel neighbor, and Puffum, all of whom believe that to be free is to able to act out one's individual wishes and desires, regardless of others, are also frustrated and defeated. 28

In Mann's Female Review, this concept of freedom is touched on not only indirectly through the characters and their actions, but directly through Mann's statements about the historical climate. Many sections of the novel, which traces Deborah Sampson's part as a soldier in the Revolutionary War, are devoted to descriptions of England's tyranny over the colonies: "as if it had not been enough, that she [England] had driven many of our ancestors from their native clime, by the intolerent and unrelenting spirit of her religious persecution, to seek a new world, and suffer the distress naturally consequent--they insisted still, that our property, our conduct and even our lives must be under their absolute controul" (F.R., 58).

Mann goes on to speak of "the impropriety, that England should have unlimited controul over us," violating "our inherent rights" (F.R., 55-56). The colonies suffered "great confusion and distress by repeating acts of oppression by the British" and Mann finally states, "America . . . clanked her chain under a monarchical and despotic sway" (F.R., 56, 156).

England's tyranny led to great excesses, which Mann describes fully. He protests the massacre of men, women, and children at Boston. He describes the battle at Concord and concludes that it was "as if nature had been convulsed . . . every social and private endearment was, at once, broken up" (F.R., 72). In fact, Mann asserts that the
colonies were faced with "general destruction; unless they would, in One mutual Union, take every effectual method of resistance" (F.R., 70). This is Mann's direct statement concerning the danger of colonial isolationism, which rendered colonial resistance to British oppression ineffectual. Although the colonies believed that they experienced the greatest freedom by remaining isolated and following their own desires, they were actually endangering their freedom, which would only be realized through union, after which they would be able to declare their independence, and free themselves, at last, from England's control.

The novel's heroine, Deborah Sampson, is instrumental in this fight for freedom. Repulsed by England's continued oppression of the colonies, Deborah longs to oppose the tyranny actively. As a woman, however, the role she can play is limited. She struggles with her desire to leave her home and enter the army under a man's disguise. "Must I forever . . . stay within the compass of the smoke of my own chimney? Never tread on different soils; nor form an acquaintance with a greater circle of the human race. . . . shall I submit . . . to a prison, where I must drag out the remainder of my existence in ignorance" (F.R., 107-108). Deborah liberates herself from the limited sphere of female recourse, disguises herself as a man, and offers "her services in the character of a Continental Soldier, in defense of her cause"--liberty (F.R., vii).

Although many of Mann's comments on freedom center on an historical account of England and the colonies, he also makes some observations about freedom through discussions of relationships between his
characters. When Deborah reflects on some people's mistreatment of others, she notes the repulsiveness of such exercises of freedom: "It is the pride of some undisciplined, tyrannical tempers to triumph over supposed ignorance, distress and poverty. In this, our better-deserving orphan found a source of mortification" (F.R., 34). Concerning the exercise of freedom through self-interest and an abdication of responsibility for others, an episode which occurs during Deborah's army career is of interest. While walking with her group of comrades, Deborah and the others "saw a man fleeing for his life . . . The house was on fire, his wife [was] mangled and lay bleeding on the threshold. Two children were hung by their heels; one scalped, and yet alive; the other dead, with a tomahawk in its brains" (F.R., 184-185). This man's self-interest is clearly repulsive. He abandons his own child, who is still alive, to insure his own safety. This is in direct contrast to Deborah, who joins the army to save the lives of countrymen with whom she's unacquainted, but considers her "brothers and sisters" (F.R., vii).

In Ormond, Stephen Dudley also sees freedom in being able to concentrate on only his individual needs and desires, without concern for others. Part of this freedom is escaping his business for a life of inactivity, and "by enlarging in some degree the foundation on which his father had built, he had provided the means . . . of enjoying his dealing ease at some period of his life;" however, "this period was necessarily too remote for his wishes" (O., 6-7). It is because of this pursuit of his "darling ease" that Dudley falls victim to Thomas Craig's dishonesty.
Eventually, "Craig was charged with management of all affairs, and Mr. Dudley retired to the enjoyment of still greater leisure" (O., 9). Due to Craig's embezzlement, however, Dudley suffers complete loss of "independence and ease" (O., 15). After losing his sight, he becomes "dependent for the meanest offices on the kindness of others" (O., 17). For a time, he becomes "enslaved by a depraved appetite" for liquor, and eventually he settles into a life which is "obstinately recluse" (O., 36, 66). Separated from society and living in a state of complete dependence, he is eventually murdered by Ormond, who considers Dudley nothing but a mere "impediment" to his designs on Constantia (O., 210).

Whiston, a neighbor of the Dudleys, is one of the characters who attempts to realize freedom through total self-concern. His story, in many ways, parallels that of the man who flees his family which is under attack by savages in *Female Review*. Brown, more clearly than Mann, outlines the consequences of such behavior. When Whiston's sister, Mary, becomes ill with yellow fever, he rejects his obligation to care for her and flees to the safety of the country. The consequence of this abdication of responsibility is death, both his sister's and his own. Whiston becomes ill after reaching the country and experiences the same abandonment to which he had subjected his sister. The country people have "too much regard for their own society to accommodate him under their roof" (O., 39). "Whiston, deserted by every human creature, burning with fever, tormented into madness by thirst, spent three miserable days in agony. When dead, no one would cover his body with, but he was suffered to decay piecemeal" (O., 40).
The consequences of this complete self-interest also extend to the country people. "The inhabitants were preparing, on this account, to change their abode, but, on the eve of their departure, the master of the family became sick. He was, in a short time, followed to the grave by his mother, wife, and four children" (O., 40). As the narrator comments, "they probably imbibed their disease from the tainted atmosphere around them. The life of Whiston and their own lives might have been saved by affording the wanderer an asylum and suitable treatment, or, at least, their own deaths might have been avoided by interring his remains" (O., 40).

In contrast to these instances of total selfishness, Constantia selflessly helps Mary Whiston. She risks her own life by caring for Mary, even after a doctor has pronounced Mary's case hopeless. Unlike both Whiston and the country people, Constantia accepts the responsibility for another when she attempts to help Mary, and paradoxically, she does not contract the disease. After a night's rest from caring for Mary, she awakes to find "herself invigorated and refreshed" (O., 44).

Constantia's successful development in the early stages of the novel is due largely both to her acceptance of responsibility for her own existence in society and to her interest in the benefit of others. Because Constantia Dudley and Helena Cleves are of similar age and background, and because they share in a relationship with Ormond, these two young women invite comparison. The contrast between them is especially vivid both in their response to the adversity of their early lives and in their decisions concerning marriage.
When her father falls into financial ruin, Constantia finds herself ill-equipped to support herself and is, therefore, even further at a loss to support her mother and father as well. Mr. Dudley had regulated Constantia's education so that her "accomplishments tended to render her superior to the rest of women, but in no degree qualified her for the post of a female instructor" (O., 28). Constantia perseveres, however, and sustains the family and herself by sewing. The only alternative is to acquire money through marriage, an alternative which Constantia is offered.

Balfour proposes marriage to Constantia, offering an end to her struggle with poverty. The idea of marriage to Balfour is not completely impossible for Constantia to entertain. He is a "mild," "placid," "middle-aged" man whose life had been "a model of chasteness and regularity" (O., 66-67). Balfour, however, is completely devoid of any intellect, and his reasons for marrying Constantia reveal his self-centeredness. "He has no judge of her intellectual character, or of the loftiness of her morality. Not even the graces of person, or features, or manner, attracted much of his attention. He remarked her admirable economy of time and money and labour the simplicity of her dress . . . There were essential requisites of a wife, in his apprehension" (O., 68). As Ernest Marchand notes, Balfour "is looking for a housekeeper," not a wife (O., xxxi-xxxii). Balfour's thorough self-centeredness is evident in his attitude that he is doing Constantia quite a favor by marrying her: "He was not deficient in modesty, but he fancied that, on this occasion, there was no possibility of miscarriage. . . . He conceived this union to be even
more eligible with regard to her than to himself, and confided
in the rectitude of her understanding for a decision favorable to
his wishes" (O., 68). Constantia considers the possibility of
marriage to Balfour, since "her poverty fettered her exertions and
circumscribed her pleasure. Poverty, therefore, was an evil, and
the reverse of poverty to be desired" (O., 68-69). However, Constantia
realizes that "riches were not barren of contraint, and its advantages
might be purchased at too dear a rate" (O., 69).

Finally, Constantia decides against Balfour's wishes and makes
the following defense of her decision: "Now she was at least mistress
of the product of her own labor. Her tasks were toilsome, but the
profits, though slender, were sure, and she administered her little
property in what manner she pleased. Marriage would annihilate
this power. Henceforth she would be bereft even of personal freedom.
So far from possessing property, she herself would become the property
of another. . . . Homely liberty was better than splendid servitude"
(O., 69). Constantia realizes that the "union" which Balfour
offers is not one of equal partnership; rather, it is one in which
she would become his "property." Whereas Constantia acts to safeguard
her freedom, Helena Cleves fails to do so.

As Ernest Marchand states in the introduction to Ormond, "in
Helena we see nearly everything that Constantia is not" (O., 98).
Helena, like Constantia, is forced to accept the responsibility for
her own existence at an early age; however, Helena is not successful
in securing a livelihood for herself. "Her father died suddenly and
left her without provision. She was compelled to accept the invitations
of a kinswoman, and live, in some sort, a life of dependence" (O., 99). Unlike Constantia, Helena is unable to accept the responsibility for her own life, which perhaps makes Helena susceptible to the temptation of Ormond's offer to make her his mistress.

The offer Ormond makes obviously is not desirable. "His matrimonial tenets were harsh and repulsive. A woman of keener penetration would have predicted, from them, the disappointment of her wishes; but Helena's mind was uninured to the discussion of logical points and the traces of remote consequences" (O., 99). Helena, however, is tempted by the benefits of this proposed relationship with Ormond. "No doubt, the irksomeness of her present situation, the allurements of luxury and ease which Ormond had to bestow, and the revival of her ancient independence and security, had some share in dictating her assent" (O., 101). Like Dudley, Helena conceives independence or freedom to be the release from the responsibilities for one's livelihood in society, even though this independence or freedom to be the release from the responsibilities for one's livelihood in society, even though this independence means that she will be completely dependent on another. Unlike Constantia, Helena subjects herself to "splendid servitude" for the acquisition of "luxury and ease."

Helena soon finds herself unhappy with her decision. In her relationship with Ormond, "she possessed all the means of solitary amusement;" however, these "were insufficient to render her happy" (O., 102). "She could not complain that her lover had deceived her. She had voluntarily and deliberately accepted the conditions prescribed . . . Her destiny was fixed" (O., 102). Helena's
determination that "her destiny was fixed" is another indication of her abdication of responsibility. She could leave Ormond; however, separation from him would mean loss of security and shelter from the responsibility for her own existence, a security and shelter which Helena mistakes for freedom. Helena's fears are evident in the following passage: Should they separate, whither should she retire? What mode of subsistence should she adopt? She had never been accustomed to think beyond the day. She had eaten and drank, but another had provided the means. . . . She is ignorant and helpless as a child, on every topic that relates to the procuring of subsistence. . . . She can live but one way" (O., 117).

The way in which Helena chooses to live is as Ormond's mistress. Ormond is a complex man, as the narrator suggests: "I know no task more arduous than a delineation of the character of Ormond" (O., 93). Although Ormond's character is complex, his concept of freedom is made clear, and it rests wholly on his attempts to act out the dictates and commands of his own will in the external world. Unlike Constantia who concerns herself with others such as Mary, Whiston's sister, Ormond is concerned only with his own benefit: "Our power in the present state of things is subjected to certain limits. A man may reasonably hope to accomplish his end, when he proposes nothing but his own good. Any other point is inaccessible" (O., 93).

Ormond's devotion to his own interests requires the continual cooperation--enforced if need be--of others. "Ormond aspired to nothing more ardently than to hold the reins of opinion--to exercise absolute power over the conduct of others, not by constraining their limbs
or by exacting obedience to his authority, but in a way of which his subject should be scarcely conscious. He desired that his guidance should control their steps, but that his agency, when most effectual, should be least suspected" (O., 104).

Ormond feels the greatest freedom when the desires and commands of his will are performed, when, as Lulu Rumsey Wiley notes, "all others . . . bow to the force of his personality." The narrator observes that Ormond "wanted instruments not partakers in his authority," and that he required these instruments to assent to the "punctual performance of his will" (O., 105). The most obvious instrument of Ormond's will is Helena.

When Ormond recommends that Helena perform according to his wishes, she does so. "His recommendation was sufficient. The wishes of Ormond, as soon as they became known, became hers" (O., 113). The satisfaction of Ormond's will even requires the remaking of that which did not conform to his wishes. "He had fashioned his treatment of Helena on sullen and ferocious principles. Yet he was able, it seemed to mold her, by means of them, nearly into the creature that he wished" (O., 115). Ormond's control over Helena culminates in her suicide; Helena's final act is in complete accordance with his will. When Ormond finds Helena dead, he states, "Thou hast done my work for me" (O., 141). Ormond's overpowering personality and insistence on doing as he pleases are commented on by many critics. Loshe explains that all of Ormond's crimes--the rape of the Tartar girl, the murder of Sarsefield, Dudley, and Craig, Helena's suicide, and threatened rape of Constantia--"are the effect
of a strong personality brought . . . into conflict with its en-
vironment."  

William Hedges goes, perhaps, a bit further, calling
Ormond a "bloodthirsty, power-hungry egomaniac." Ormond's con-
cept of freedom, that he must be able to satisfy his own wishes and
desires without regard for those around him, that he must be able to
act wholly on his own for his own benefit, is condemned by Brown
when he shows us the tremendous excesses to which such freedom can
lead. Brown will complete this condemnation with Ormond's ruin
and death at the close of the novel.

In each of these novels by Hitchcock, Mann, and Brown, therefore,
we find characters who attempt to exercise their freedom, but fail,
primarily because their beliefs about what it means to be free are
limited and shortsighted. Hitchcock's James MacKormick and Brown's
Stephen Dudley, Whiston, and Helena Cleves attempt being free by
separating themselves from society, escaping all of the responsibilities
attendant on living in a community. This mirrors the historical
circumstance of colonial isolationism. And the failure of these
characters reflects the general destruction which Mann asserts the
colonies faced unless they would abandon their isolation from one
another and unite. In Hitchcock's cruel neighbor, Mr. Gruff, Timothy
Puffum, and Mrs. Slack and especially in Brown's Ormond, we see the
ruin and suffering caused by those who exercise their freedom by
acting according to their own interests and desires without regard
for others. The historical counterpart to this is the selfishness
which developed on the part of the colonies and their insistence on
having their own way despite the effects on other colonies around
them. In fact, this selfishness had become so extreme that, in 1765, James Otis, popular leader of the Massachusetts Assembly, warned that "were the colonies left to themselves tomorrow, America would be a mere shambles of blood and confusion."\(^{33}\)

It is important to understand, however, that isolationism and self-interest were only a part of the maturing American definition of freedom. David Potter points out that too many "unwary observers" have simply assumed "that all American universally subscribed to the idea of liberty . . . as a guarantee to the individual against being subjected to control by his community."\(^{34}\) He goes on to say that this whole concept is contrary to the very nature of man: "Alone, he cannot orient himself in a universe of overwhelming immensity, but in his relations with others, a realization of their awareness of him helps to steady and focus his awareness of himself."\(^{35}\) Potter is pointing to man's need for social interaction, to man's sociability. It is this very quality--sociability--that Clinton Rossiter emphasizes in "American Political Thought, 1765-1776." He comments that the self-interest characteristic of the colonists before 1765, "the impulse to seek one's own happiness even in defiance of the common good," would be greatly discouraged during the Revolutionary period.\(^{36}\) Instead, this self-interest would be replaced gradually by an attitude of sociability, the "urge man feels to associate with other men, even if this means surrendering a substantial part of his original freedom."\(^{37}\) It is this attitude which Rossiter insists is the "most politically significant" in America after 1765.\(^{38}\)

It was not until after 1765 that the colonists began to act on
their growing realization that, to insure their freedom and resist growing British oppression, they would have to cooperate and unite. Attempts had been made, though un成功ously, to unify the colonies before this time, including the New England Confederation in 1643, the Dominion of New England in 1689, and the Albany Plan in 1754. Although each of these attempts had slightly different motivations behind it, primarily they were responses to threats from either the French or the Indians. These motivations, however, were not strong enough to promote a strong bond between the colonies. In the mid 1760's, the colonies were provided with the motivating force—the Stamp Act, an act which imposed a tax on all uses of paper, including newspapers and commercial and legal documents. Morgan comments that "though Americans could not agree on boundary lines and Indian wars, they could agree without argument on opposition to taxes." Representatives from nine colonies met in New York to voice their opposition to this oppressive British act. After the meeting, one of the participants, Joseph Warren, wrote to a friend, commenting excitedly on the new sense of interdependence between the colonies felt at that meeting: "The colonies until now were ever at variance and foolishly jealous of each other, they are now . . . united . . . now will they soon forget the weight which this close union gives them." The bond of union was certainly not secure after just this one meeting. That bond would be tested and tried in the years following; however, as Morgan notes, "each time the colonists felt obligated to use the weight of union, the closeness of union was strengthened," and the colonists became sharply aware that they would win their freedom
"together or not at all."43

The Stamp Act was repealed in 1766; however, the calm which followed was only temporary. Another act, imposed within the next year, required the assemblies within each colony to provide shelter and food for the British troops stationed there. The assemblies, in effect, were to tax themselves to provide funds for this support. This act was followed, in 1767, by the Townshend Acts, which called for the colonies to pay a tax on imported glass, lead, paper, paints, and tea and to set up a Board of Customs Commissioners to insure strict payment of all taxes. The colonies protested because they saw Parliament again infringing on their rights, asking them to pay taxes to which they had not agreed. England and America became equally intolerant of each other: "While the Americans watched their trade and their profits disappear under the claws of a band of harpies, English statemen saw an unruly crowd of smugglers fighting against the imposition of law and order."44

Finally, in September of 1768, two regiments of British troops were sent to Boston. The colonists, Morgan notes, believed that England had sent the troops "to strengthen the hands of the customs racketeers," though, in England's eyes, they were sent only to keep order.45 Hostile feelings were kept under close discipline until, in March of 1770, soldiers and customs commissioners gave in to the taunts of the colonists and became involved in a street fight, which would later be called the Boston Massacre. It was after this flare up in Boston that, according to Morgan, the other colonies "realized that Boston's cause was theirs."46 The movement toward unity grew
stronger and stronger, as the colonists recognized that their isolationism only threatened their ability to safeguard their freedom against oppression from the outside. England responded to the colonists' continued protest by repealing all of the Townshend duties, except the one on tea; however, the colonists were still dissatisfied. On November 2, 1772, a town meeting was called in Boston, during which the colonists created a Committee of Correspondence. According to Morgan, "the business of the committee was to prepare a statement of colonial rights, list violations (past, present, and future), communicate these to other towns, and invite similar statements from similar committees in return." Eventually, other colonies adopted the committee of correspondence idea, and "in March, 1773, a proposal went out from the Virginia House of Burgeses to concern the movement on an intercolonial basis."

England's next move was the Tea Act, in May of 1773. This act was intended to help England's East India Company regain its declining financial security by allowing it to sell large amounts of tea in America. Under this law, "the company was permitted to appoint its own agents in America who could distribute tea directly to retailers, thus eliminating whatever profit had been taken by English and American wholesale merchants." The American merchants cried out and the colonists in Boston responded with the tea party of December 16, 1773, during which the tea was thrown from the ship into the harbor. England's angry reply came in the form of the March and April, 1774 Coercive Acts, the first of which closed the Boston port to all commerce. Again, the colonists united in reaction to
British oppression, meeting in Philadelphia in September of that same year for the First Continental Congress. The colonists, rather than concentrating on the things that made them different, began to emphasize those which, for the most part, united them: language, historical traditions, territory, and religion.\(^{50}\) The battles of Lexington and Concord in April of 1775 also contributed to this sense of unity. Here the colonists voiced their opposition with gunpowder; they defended themselves and grew more resolved in their conviction that they would free themselves from England's control. The Second Continental Congress assembled on May 10, 1775 and busied itself with raising an army, appointing a commander, George Washington, and fighting a war.\(^{51}\) On May 15, 1776, the Virginia House of Burgesses recommended to its representatives in Congress that they propose complete independence of the states from Britain. On July 2, this resolution was adopted, and on July 4, 1776, independence was declared.\(^{52}\)

Before the Continental Congress declared this independence, however, it appointed a special committee to draw up a document to provide the definition and limitations of the new nation's government. This committee, appointed on June 12, 1776, worked on this document until November 17, 1777, at which time it emerged with the Articles of Confederation.\(^{53}\) There was still division among the colonies concerning this step which moved even further toward complete unity, but by 1779, the states had agreed to ratify it, and the Confederation was formally announced on March 1, 1781. From 1781 until 1789, called the "critical period" by Morgan, the Articles of
Confederation governed the United States. During this period the impulse toward unity was again tried. Two types of government, state and central, were struggling to develop, and individual state interests still interfered with interests common to the whole of the thirteen colonies. Washington warned against this very problem: "I see one head gradually changing into thirteen. . . . I see the powers of Congress declining too fast for the consequence and respect which is due to them as the grand representative body of America."55

One more urgent try would be made to secure the bond of union. A general convention was called in Philadelphia in May of 1787. Distinguished men, representing every colony except Rhode Island, took part in this meeting, with Washington presiding. Together, they worked on a constitution which would make the "more perfect union" an accomplished fact. It was completed in mid September, a document of compromise and cooperation "either between radicals and conservatives, between North and South, or large States and small ones."56 According to Morgan, "the most radical change" of the period had taken place: "the union of three million cantankerous colonists into a new nation."57 And it was only through compromise and cooperation and the realization of their dependence on one another that the colonists were able to secure their freedom and begin a new nation. The definition of freedom in America had developed and matured. The colonies that had tried to be free by isolating themselves from the concerns and responsibilities of the other colonies found that unless they could cooperate and work with each other in union, their freedom was greatly threatened. They could not protect
their liberty alone. Those colonies that had tried to be free by acting out their own desires without regard to others found this self-interest equally threatening to their independence. It was only through the concerted effort of all, through the spirit of sociability, the need one man has to live and work in a society of others, that American freedom was won.

It is this sense of freedom, based on man's sociability, that is embodied by the protagonists—Charles Worthy, Deborah Sampson, and Constantia Dudley—in each of the novels. In Hitchcock's Farmer's Friend, Charles Worthy is closely involved with the society of others. One of the very few critical comments made concerning this novel is misleading on this very point. Loshe summarizes Farmer's Friend by saying that it is "designed to show the progressive steps by which an individual can rise by his own struggles." Although Worthy is self-reliant, that he achieves success wholly as a result of his own labor is simply not the case. After his father's death, Charles supports his mother "both by his labor, and by going to ask alms of some of the neighbors, whose charitable disposition contributed much to his mother's comfort and support" (F.F., 20). And eventually Mrs. Worthy finds it necessary to "cast herself upon the public for a support" (F.F., 22). That Charles realizes that he, like all men, needs the help and cooperation of others to survive seems evident in the story which he tells to his own children about James Mackormick, a man who tried to live without others, isolated from society, but failed.

Although Charles is adopted by a cruel man, Mr. Gruff, who only
wants Charles for his own benefit, this cruel man has a good neighbor, who becomes Charles' friend and adds to Charles' benefit greatly. Mr. Heathorn helps Charles to market his trapped quails and other game, and his son, Edward Heathorn, assists Charles in learning to read and write. After Mr. Gruff dies, Mr. Harding, for whom Charles' brother had worked, also helps Charles by giving him a job which enables Charles to save a small sum of money. The Smith family is also instrumental in Charles' success. Mr. Smith invites "Charles to go to his house . . . assuring him his assistance in improving his mind, and offering him small wages for the winter" (F.F., 48). It is through the kindnesses of Mr. Smith that Charles is able to save "money enough to purchase a small tract of wild land," and when Smith offers to loan him money to make purchase of a better tract of land, Charles, feeling "the benefit of good character," finds "the loan of a small sum necessary" (F.F., 51). This kind creditor with whom Charles deals balances the cruel creditor with whom Charles' father had to deal. Charles marries the Smith's youngest daughter, Margaret, and with the Smiths' help, acquires the land on which "Mr. Worthy first felt himself a freeholder" (F.F., 61). It is only through the help of others, therefore, that the admittedly industrious Charles is able to establish an independent existence.

The interaction between Charles and society is tied not only to the benefits which Charles receives from society, but to the help Charles extends to others. Charles attempts to save the lives of Gruff and Slack, both of whom are selfish, abusive people who have been particularly cruel to Charles. He is successful in saving the
lives of two other men, Lieutenant Smith (Margaret's brother) and Mr. Belmont. When Charles, as a soldier in the army, happens upon the wounded Smith, he, "at the hazard of his own life, rescued him from the hands of the pursuing enemy" (F.F., 44). Worthy also saves Belmont's life after Belmont suffers "a most terrible fall from his horse," a not uncommon accident in Hitchcock's novel (F.F., 111). Belmont is a narrow minded man who "conceived a very unfavorable opinion of country people," and whose wife "had not sense enough to know that true politeness consisted in behaving well to every body" (F.F., 111-112). After their experience with the Worthys, however, both Belmont and his wife become generous people, interested in the welfare of others. In fact, as is explained later in the novel, their daughter, Selina, grows up to be as selfless as the Worthys, losing her life due to "a violent fever, occasioned by her unremitting attention to a sick friend" (F.F., 192). When Belmont offers Worthy a reward for all of his help, Worthy replies, "I consider it my duty to regard with care the distresses of others. By serving you, Sir, I have had no view to my own benefit" (F.F., 113). In contrast to the self-interest to Mr. Gruff, the cruel neighbor, Timothy Puffum, and others, is Worthy's tireless concern for the benefit of others.

The importance of family to Charles Worthy is another indication of his need for society with others. After obtaining his freedom from Mr. Gruff, "his first object was to go and visit his brothers and sisters, who were scattered about in different places" (F.F., 41). Just as Charles feels a strong bond between his siblings and himself,
he also works to establish a strong unity within his own family. After his marriage to Margaret, Worthy "went forth to his daily business with more alacrity and pleasure than before, because he now saw that he did not labor for himself alone. His joys were increased by the share that Margaret took in them, and his sorrows were lessened by being divided" (F.F., 61). The Worthys act not only as members of a family unit, but as members of the larger societal unit as well. Worthy works for and realizes the construction of a public school, and he does not "spare any expense or exertions in his power to induce those about him to unite their efforts to erect a house for public worship" (F.F., 69). Mrs. Worthy is as concerned with the common benefit as is her husband. "Touched with the distresses of others, she would spare no pains to relieve them. She would go by day and by night among her sick distressed neighbors" (F.F., 81). She even helps Mrs. Grudge, who believes Mrs. Worthy's effort to help others to be nothing more than her "galloping about from one place to another . . . to get a little praise" (F.F., 82).

Finally the relationship which develops between the Blanford family and the Worthy family represents a unified, functioning society. The Blanfords purchase Mr. Slack's farm, become acquainted with the Worthys, and between the two families develops "the bond of permanent friendship . . . which was useful to both, by affording each an opportunity to assist the other" (F.F., 213). Hitchcock goes on to explain that "they did not live together as too many families do, without seeming to have . . . any agreeable society together; but they conversed together" (F.F., 228). Eventually the
bond between the families is strengthened by two marriages. Young George Blanford marries Worthy's eldest daughter, and later, Henry Worthy marries Theodofia Blanford. These marriages are happy ones and represent good, strong unions. Children are born, and these families continue to live as a societal unit. With the description of this unity, Hitchcock closes the novel. Excessive self-interest, often associated with the greatest freedom, is discouraged, and the importance of society is established. These sentiments are summarized by Worthy when he advises parents to stress the importance of society and the evils of self-interest to their children:

Selfishness is a low mean vice . . . represent man as a social creature, liable to common wants and having in some respects a community of interests--speak of selfishness as a contracted spirit altogether unworthy of a rational being. (F.F., 137)

In his discussion of Deborah Sampson in Female Review, Mann immediately comments on her special interest in society. He calls Deborah a philosopher, and it is the philosopher, Mann maintains, who is "the most eminently qualified for a useful member of society, the most agreeably calculated for an intercourse and union with the sexes, best acquainted with social and enjoined duties of life; and is thus preparing himself for a more refined being in futurity" (F.R., 40). Deborah readily accepts her responsibility for others when she enters the Continental army to "rescue the rest of her brothers and sisters" (F.R., viii), and she becomes "a circumstantial link in our chain of our illustrious revolution" (F.R., 239). Deborah, in order to involve herself directly in the unified effort
toward American independence, must cross the boundary between the spheres of female and male action. Deborah represents, in part, the unity which can exist between these two spheres. In the beginning of the novel, she is a young female in a quiet domestic circle; in the middle, "Robert Shurtleiff" in the Continental army; and in the end, a married woman, with a husband and children. Mann is saying something very important about the American woman, something which Tocqueville later observed as well: the American woman shows "a masculine strength of understanding and manly energy" while still possessing the "manners of women." This unity, Nye notes, is central to the "greater freedom" of American women.

While a soldier in the army, Deborah demonstrates her commitment to others again and again. "In August, on their march to the lines from Collabarack, she requested to be left with a sick soldier, named Richard Stone" (F.R., 176). The man with whom they are left, Vantassel, reveals himself as a tory and aide to the banditti. Deborah and Snow suffer under his control. Eventually Snow dies; however, through the kindnesses of Vantassel's daughter, Deborah escapes. After rejoining her company, she is sent back to arrest Vantassel, which she does, but she recommends that Vantassel and his crew be treated kindly. When her company later encounters a group of Indians, Deborah, unlike the men, is able to interact with the Indians and attempts to understand their customs. This ability saves her life when she is forced to live among them. She blends so well with their society that she is even left with them to recover from an illness. Although the Indians accept Deborah into their society,
they are slow to accept others. In fact, Deborah must save one young girl from being burnt at the stake.

After her sex is discovered, Deborah leaves the army, having been decorated with the "honorary badge of distinction, as established by Gen. Washington" (F.R., 187). Having fought for American freedom as part of the Continental army, Deborah returns to civilian society, marries, and has children, becoming a part of the society that she fought to keep free.

In Brown's Ormond, Constantia Dudley represents that freedom which is not restricted to individual will, but is connected with social interaction and the common benefit. Part of Constantia's developing concept of freedom is revealed by her initial identification with and eventual rejection of Martinette de Beauvais. Constantia's identification with Martinette is first evident when Constantia visits the Baxter home during the yellow fever epidemic. Martinette is known by the assumed name, Ursula Monrose, and lives in a house near the Baxters'. Mr. Baxter has observed Ursula Monrose burying a body, which he assumes was the victim of yellow fever. The power of his imagination suggests to Mr. Baxter that he has contracted the disease by witnessing this burial. It is Constantia who cares for Baxter until his death and then arranges for his burial. Ursula and Constantia are first associated with each other, therefore, in these parallel scenes of the burial of the dead. Immediately after the burial episode, Sarah Baxter informs Constantia that Ursula has disappeared, and Constantia feels regret: "She imagined that Ursula Monrose would prove worthy of her love, and felt unspeakable
regret at the improbability of their ever meeting" (O., 60).

The next source of association between Ursula and Constantia comes when Constantia finds that she cannot pay the rent for her house and must move. The house into which she eventually moves belonged previously to Ursula Monrose. To raise money for the moving expenses, Constantia sells her father's lute. While doing so, she sees Miss Monrose in the music shop. Because she knows of Miss Monrose only through Sarah Baxter's stories, Constantia doesn't recognize who Ursula is; however, she is fascinated by her. The narrator, after relating Constantia's impressions of Miss Monrose, comments, "such is the portrait of this stranger, delineated by Constantia. I copy it with greater willingness, because, if we substitute a nobler stature, and a complexion less uniform and delicate, it is suited, with the utmost accuracy, to herself" (O., 63). Ursula buys the lute, and it is this instrument which later brings Constantia and Miss Monrose together; however, when reunited, Miss Monrose is known by the name Martinette de Beauvais.

During their next meetings, Martinette relates her history to Constantia, which only seems to point out even more clearly how much these two women are alike. For example, Martinette's "education seemed not widely different from that which Constantia had received;" although, to this education, Martinette had added the experience in the world, "a knowledge of political and military transactions in Europe during the present age" (O., 157). Like Constantia, Martinette has been orphaned, losing her mother to disease and her father to grief over her mother's death. Martinette was adopted by a kind man,
Sebastian Roselli, and after a long series of events, she and her step-father live together, devoted to each other. Martinette "revered him too much to desert him" and so cares for him until his death, just as Constantia cares for Dudley (O., 173).

It is during Constantia's last interview with Martinette that the subject of freedom surfaces, and it is within the context of this discussion that Constantia must reject her. Martinette reveals her devotion to freedom, which Marchand describes as Martinette's "ruling passion" (O., xxxiii). "I am an adorer of liberty," Martinette claims, "my hand never faltered when liberty demanded the victim" (O., 170-171). She goes on to describe her role as an assassin and her indifference to the "bleeding wounds and mangled corpses" (O., 171). Constantia is horrified by the picture Martinette reveals and the likeness she once saw between Martinette and herself vanishes: "The image which her mind had reflected from the deportment of this woman was changed. The likeness she had feigned to herself was no longer seen. She felt that antipathy was preparing to displace love" (O., 172). And so Constantia rejects Martinette, whose harsh and violent devotion to her own brand of freedom, as Henry Petter suggests, "appears to have blotted out other praiseworthy values, in particular, the kind of sensibility which makes for a sociable existence."61

Just as Constantia rejects Martinette, she must also reject Martinette's brother, Ormond. The excesses evident in the character of Martinette become even more exaggerated and repulsive in Ormond. Ormond, too, was active as a soldier. He had spent half of his life
"at the head of a band of Cossacks, spreading devastation in the regions of the Danube . . . and the other half in traversing inhospitable countries, and extinguishing what remained of clemacy and justice by intercourse with savages" (O., 174). The crimes Ormond commits during the war are described by Brown in gory detail.

Ormond

made prey of a Tartar girl, found in the field of a recent battle. Conducting her to his quarters, he met a friend, who, on some pretence, claimed the victim. From angry words they betook themselves to swords. A combat ensued, in which the claimant ran his antagonist through the body. He then bore his prize unmolested away, and having exercised brutality of one kind upon the helpless victim, stabbed her to the heart, as an offering to the manes of Sarsefield, the friend whom he had slain. Next morning, willing more signally to expiate his guilt, he rushed alone upon a troop of Turkish foragers, and brought away five heads, suspended, by their gory locks to his horse's mane. These he cast upon the grave of Sarsefield, and conceived himself fully to have expiated yesterday's offence. (O., 218)

Ormond is not a defender of a cause; he is not guided by any noble principles. He is a criminal who commits the murder of a friend as easily as he does that of "the enemy." As is observed later in the novel, "the moral or political maxims," by which Ormond is directed, are "exhibited or hidden, or shifted, according to his purpose" (O., 209). He is a villain and a threat to civilized society, as David Clark notes, "a transgressor of all the ordinary conventions and safeguards of society," which Warfel goes on to identify as "religion, government, and family life."

It is in the final confrontation between Constantia and Ormond
that Constantia rejects him and all that he stands for. When Constantia and Ormond meet at the rural estate, which has passed through the ownership of Mr. Dudley, Ormond, Helena, and now Constantia, the horror of Ormond's will, his insistence on acting out his own selfish interests, is revealed to Constantia. He informs her that he is responsible for her father's death and that he had arranged for Craig to perform the deed. Ormond explains, "I soon convinced him that his reputation and his life were in my hands. His retention of these depended upon my will, on the performance of conditions which I prescribed" (O., 231). Craig becomes a performer of Ormond's will and is considered by Ormond to be nothing more than "a pliant and commodious tool" (O., 232). Ormond proceeds to justify the murder of Constantia's father, saying, "my motive was benevolent; my deed conferred a benefit... My happiness and yours depended on your concurrence with my wishes. Your father's life was an obstacle to your concurrence. For killing him, therefore, I may claim your gratitude. His death was a due and disinterested offering on the altar of your felicity and mine" (O., 231). The word "offering" strangely recalls the atrocity committed by Ormond during the war, involving the rape of the Tartar girl, the murder of his friend Sarsefield, and then the murder of the girl as "an offering to the manes of Sarsefield" (O., 218). These same crimes are at issue here.

When Constantia realizes that Ormond intends to gratify the dictates of his will as concerns her, she immediately considers escape from the situation: "The strongest impulse was to gain a
safe asylum, at a distance from this spot and from the presence of this extraordinary being. This impulse was followed by the recollection that he liberty was taken away" (O., 232). That Constantia considers escape as an avenue to liberty recalls the actions both of Dudley and of Whiston. Dudley, when forced to accept the responsibility of business and maintaining his own livelihood, seeks freedom through escape from these obligations, and Whiston, when obligated to care for his dying sister, seeks freedom through escape to the country. Both men, as will be remembered, fail miserably in these attempts.

The next avenue to freedom considered by Constantia is suicide. She warns Ormond, "Beware! Know that my unalterable resolution is to die uninjured. I have the means in my power. Stop where you are; one step more, and I plunge this knife into my heart" (O., 234). However, Ormond informs her, "Living or dead the prize that I have in view shall be mine" (O., 235). Unlike Helena, who frees herself from Ormond's tyranny through suicide, only to become the perfect worker of his will, Constantia refuses to surrender so easily.

Finally, Ormond makes Constantia aware of his full intentions: "What thou refusedst to bestow," he tells her, "it is my power to exhort. I came for that end. When this end is accomplished, I will restore thee to liberty" (O., 233). Constantia allows Ormond neither to take nor to restore her freedom; rather, she acts to preserve that freedom by plunging the knife into Ormond. His last effort to exercise his freedom by acting out the dictates of his will in the external world fails utterly, and Constantia, who represents the stable, positive
conventions of society which Ormond sought so hard to destroy, is free.

That Constantia acts against union with Ormond is difficult for some critics to accept, especially for those who consider marriage a metaphor for societal unity. And that Constantia chooses to rejoin her good friend Sophia Westwyn Courtland is considered, by some critics, to be even more of a problem. Carl Nelson, in what he paradoxically calls "A Just Reading of Charles Brockden Brown's Ormond," describes Constantia's decision as follows: "Constantia . . retreats under the wing of Sophia instead of marrying Ormond, a man of wide experience, knowledge, and potential for both good and evil. Indeed, the moral of the novel seems to be contained in the failure of Constantia to marry Ormond." Nelson misinterprets Constantia's relationship both with Sophia and with Ormond.

First, Nelson draws attention to Constantia's relationship with Sophia Courtland, a relationship which he sees as preventing Constantia's "mature independence." Other critics proceed even further, as does Paul C. Rodgers, and suggest that this retreat is part of "Constantia's consistent failure to feel or indulge strong heterosexual impulses . . . hinting broadly at latent lesbianism." There is evidence in the novel, however, to prove that this close relationship between the two does not require an explanation in terms of sexuality. In Sophia's history, which Marchand characterizes along with the Craig episode and the story both of Martinette and of the Baxters as digressive, she traces the childhood events which should reveal, according to Sophia, "the sources of my love of Miss
Sophia explains that she was deserted by her mother at birth, taken in by the Dudleys, and remained part of their family for seventeen years. Between Constantia and Sophia, Dudley's parental affection was "equally divided" (O., 186). She is raised as Constantia's sister; therefore, their love for each other can be partially explained in terms of family love.

When Sophia's mother repents her wrongs and desires Sophia to live with her, Sophia feels obligated to do so. Here the tremendous bond of friendship between Constantia and Sophia is revealed. Constantia accompanies Sophia and shares "every disgusting and perilous office" required in the care of Sophia's mother (O., 187).

"The friendship of Constantia Dudley was my only consolation," Sophia explains (O., 188). Part of their love, therefore, can be explained in terms of friendship. And Sophia's impulse to help Constantia resolve her dangerous relationship with Ormond might be partially explained in terms of Sophia's returning the favor which Constantia extended to her during her mother's illness.

Part of the tendency of critics to interpret Sophia's and Constantia's love as sexual may stem from what Paul Krause calls Ormond's "sour-grapes imputation of lesbianism." Although Krause does not identify the passage to which he refers, it is probably the one in which Ormond says to Constantia, "I am not unapprised of the effects of your [Constantia's and Sophia's] romantic passion for each other" (O., 212). Ormond makes this statement when he realizes that union between Constantia and himself is impossible. He is a frustrated, rejected, jealous man, feeling the final impotence of his will. This
accusation, therefore, is hardly reliable.

In connection with this discussion, it is necessary to respond to Nelson's assertion that Constantia refuses union with Ormond because "Sophia requires her devotee's thoughts to move elsewhere." The idea of union with Ormond is seriously in question before Constantia is reunited with Sophia, and her decision to end her relationship with Ormond is as much a result of the counsel of Constantia's father as it is a consequence of Sophia's advice. When Dudley decided to return to Italy, he did so because he knew that this scheme would snatch his daughter "from the odious pursuit of Ormond, and . . . efface from her mind any impression which his dangerous artifices might have made upon it" (O., 174). It was Dudley, not Sophia, who first brought Constantia to the realization of what union with Ormond would mean. Constantia also knows "the conditions of their union. She must go with him to some corner of the world where his boasted system was established . . . and it was evident that it lay beyond the precincts of civilized existence" (O., 175). Constantia realizes that marriage with Ormond would not mean interaction with, but isolation from the rest of the world. She knows that marriage with Ormond would mean complete subjection to the tyranny of his will; she knows that all compromise would be made by herself, that he would not "recede any of his claims" (O., 175). Therefore, when Constantia rejects marriage with Ormond it is not, as Carl Nelson suggests, "that she renounces every connotation of union in the concept, denying not only husband but home, world, and love itself." Ormond does not represent family or society; rather, he represents a threat to
them, as David Clark, Harry Warfel, Lillie Loshe, Henry Petter, William Rodgers, and Michael Bell agree. At the close of this novel, we do not have the very satisfactory unions that we do at the close both of Hitchcock's novel, with the Worthys and the Blanfords, and of Mann's novel, with Deborah's return from the army to marriage and children. This resolution, because of Ormond's character, is not an option. We do have, however, Constantia's rejection of Ormond and all the excesses of self-interest he embodies and her return to society through a reunion with the only family she has left, her adoptive sister, Sophia.

These novels by Hitchcock, Mann, and Brown, though not the most distinguished in American fiction, provide an index to the developing American definition of freedom. We see the separation of the colonies from England mirrored in the separation of children--Charles, Deborah, and Constantia--from their parents. The colonists' expression of freedom through withdrawal from the rest of the world and isolationism among themselves we see reflected in the personal isolation of such characters as Mackormick, Helena Cleves, and Dudley. In the protagonists, Charles, Deborah, and Constantia, we see the legitimate value of self-reliance, as they try to make their way in the world against difficult odds, a self-reliance that reflects that of the early colonists settling in America. But we also see the excesses of self-interest, so evident among the early colonists, in the characters of Gruff, Slack, Craig, and Ormond. We also see that Potter and Rossiter caution us not to overlook in the American concept of freedom, between the legitimate claims of the individual and
those of society.
Notes

1Henry Petter, *The Early American Novel* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971), p. ix. Although Lillie Loshe is comprehensive in her study, when she deals with the novels, she offers little more than plot summary. In her own words, "much space has been given to description of the stories themselves" (p. v).


5Nye, p. 252.


7Brown, pp. 6-8.


9Wright, p. 7.

10Ibid.

11Ibid., p. 11.

12Ibid., p. 10.


Herman Mann, *Female Review* (n.c.: n.p., 1797), pp. 21-22. All subsequent page references will be included in the text of the paper.


Boorstin, p. 359.

Cowie, p. 1.

This episode, in *Farmer's Friend*, involving the cruel neighbor and the Worthys is reintroduced and its lessons reasserted in a story told by Charles Worthy during a lecture to his children. "The story [was] of Mr. Lordly, who was a rich, but envious man, and oppressed by his neighbor Penury to a very great degree" (F.F., 219). Just as the Worthys' cruel neighbor took their cow from them, "Mr. Lordly . . . determined to destroy the little means of subsistence
that his [Penury's] family enjoyed . . . [and] accordingly ordered his people to let loose his great mastiff dog upon the only cow the poor man owned, and from which his family drew much of their nourishment" (F.F., 220). Both men eventually fall into the hands of the savages, a circumstance which makes them equal to each other in status. Because he was accustomed to hard labor, "Penury . . . did his duty well, and pleased his masters very much;" (F.F., 222) however, Lordly, always having been a tyrannical wealthy man, accustomed to having his own way, did not adjust to the conditions. Eventually the savages "made him a kind of servant of the other [Penury]" (F.F., 222). Therefore, Lordly experiences the loss of freedom, becoming a mere servant to Penury, a man he has tyrannized for so long. Penury, it must be noted, did not take advantage of his situation as master; instead, he treated Lordly "with great . . . kindness" (F.F., 222).

27 Pattee, p. 62.

28 Another example of the ill effects of self-centeredness and the desirability of social interaction and dependence in Farmer's Friend is presented in Worthy's story of the Sloth and the Beaver: "By consuming the bark . . . [the Sloth] destroys the life of the tree; and thus the source from which his subsistence is derived, is lost, and he has nothing left to support him. Such is the miserable state of this slothful animal. How different are the comforts and enjoyments of the industrious Beaver . . . In the months of June and July the Beavers assemble and form a society," building homes, gathering food, and living together (F.F., 76-77).

29 Carl Nelson, "A Just Reading of Charles Brockden Brown's Ormond," Early American Literature, suggests that "when Constantia rejects . . . marriage, she renounces every connotation of union in the concept, denying not only husband but home, world, and love itself" (p. 173). Nelson seems to be taken in by Balfour's offer of "union" without considering either the quality of the man who makes this offer or the consequences of Constantia's acceptance of such an offer. The union offered is not one of equal partnership, as is indicated both in Balfour's proposal and in Constantia's rejection. Balfour conceives his offer to be a favor to Constantia ("he conceived this union to be even more eligible with regard to her than to himself"), and Constantia realizes that in accepting such a favor she would become Balfour's "property"--not his partner (O., 69).


34 Potter, p. 9.

35 Ibid., p. 22.


37 Rossiter, p. 288.

38 Ibid.


41 Ibid., p. 102.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., p. 103.

44 Ibid., p. 41.


46 Ibid., p. 49.

47 Ibid., p. 57.


49 Ibid., p. 59.

50 Ibid., p. 101.

51 Ibid., p. 70.
52 Ibid., p. 76.
53 Ibid., p. 107.
54 Ibid., p. 113.
55 Ibid., p. 127.
56 Pattee, p. 79.
57 Morgan, The Birth of the Republic, p. 100.
58 Loshe, p. 21.
59 Nye, p. 143.
60 Ibid.
61 Petter, p. 345.
65 Nelson, p. 169.
68 Nelson, p. 173.
69 Ibid.
Bell, Michael Davitt. "'The Double-Tongued Deceiver': Sincerity and Duplicity in the Novels of Charles Brockden Brown." Early American Literature, 9-10 (1974-76), 143-163.


Mann, Herman. Female Review. n.c.: N.p., 1797.


