ABSTRACT

Title of Document:	"STRANGER IN THE VILLAGE": READING RACE AND GENDER IN HENRY JAMES THROUGH A BALDWINIAN LENS
	Dwan Henderson Simmons Doctor of Philosophy, 2008
Directed By:	Professor John Auchard Department of English

This project studies gender and racial constructions in Henry James's canon through the lens of James Baldwin. Where previous critics have created a direct comparison between the two, addressing primarily Baldwinian echoes of or indebtedness to James, this project allows backward readings of James's explorations of masculinity, race, and their place in American identity. Baldwin articulated that the shaky, raced, and gendered foundation of the American masculine model was inherently unsympathetic to difference of any kind; in doing so, he enabled us to re-envision James's critiques of American masculine constructions and consider them as James's path toward interrogating race in America. Through Baldwin, we can see that James was searching for freedom to locate a self identity absent of the categorization and fragmentation endemic to the American identity, and that, ultimately, race in a Baldwinian sense was far more important to James than critics have previously understood.

"STRANGER IN THE VILLAGE": READING RACE AND GENDER IN HENRY
JAMES THROUGH A BALDWINIAN LENS

By

Dwan Henderson Simmons

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2008

Advisory Committee:
Professor John Auchard, Chair
Professor David M. Wyatt
Professor Carla Peterson
Professor Ralph Bauer
Professor Sheri L. Parks

Preface

> "True happiness, we are told, consists in getting out of one's self, but the point is not only to get
>
> out, you must stay out; and to stay out you must have some absorbing errand."—Henry James[1]
>
> "In my own case, I think my exile saved my life, for it inexorably confirmed something which
>
> Americans appear to have great difficulty accepting . . . A man is not a man until he's able and
>
> willing to accept his own vision of the world, no matter how radically this vision departs from that
>
> of others (When I say "vision," I do not mean "dream")."—James Baldwin[2]

This project began with a stirring of echoes. I was twenty-five years old, and I had

previously read James and Baldwin, enjoying each immensely and often receiving jabs

from my peers. To them, James was 'impossible to read,' and Baldwin was either 'too

militant,' 'too convoluted,' or, strangely, 'too gay.' Perhaps because as a young woman,

I felt quite alienated for a variety of reasons and because I have not put stock in labels, I

did not find their statements to be true. Reading James, I simply knew that I was jarred by

how intensely he was displaced—from America, from manhood, from his family, from

all that should have centered him. Despite his grace and subtlety, I felt as if I could see

into him when reading his works. Later, reading Baldwin, I felt something very similar. I

saw the same displacement amplified by the combination of his blackness and overt

homosexuality, and I recognized the sadness and anger that I often felt at being an

outsider on multiple levels in my own environment. With both authors, I felt I had found

a literary home.

Yet, the idea of joining them in a study did not coalesce for me until I was

enrolled my doctoral program. I had come to The University of Maryland infatuated with

William Dean Howells and his personal crisis between practicality and morality; in fact, I

had written my Master's thesis on that topic and intended to continue my research. But,

during my first semester, I found myself having to read James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) academically for the first time. I had previously read it for pleasure, and reading it again, I realized that there was so much that I had missed, though I had seen quite a bit. Oddly enough, during my first winter break at Maryland, I happened to read Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* (1956) again. Reading the texts so closely together was like lightning in a bottle for me. Baldwin seemed to 'know' James intimately—to feel a kinship with him, to adopt elements of his style and psychological purposefulness in a way that I had never noticed before then. There was a similarity in the aims of the novels—in terms of gender and masculine typology—that had previously escaped me. I felt as if I understood *Portrait* far better after having read Baldwin's text—as if Baldwin had laid a magnifying lens over James's alienation and silences, revealing nuances that I had not before seen.

The key for me was to figure out why. I began to pore through Baldwin, noticing his frequent allusions to James. I began to read James again, starting this time from the beginning. From the resonant titling of Baldwin's work, "Notes of a Native Son" (1955) and James's *Notes of a Son and Brother* (1914) to the copy of James's *The Ambassadors* (1903) lying on Eric's table in Baldwin's *Another Country* (1962), the fact was that there was so much James to be seen in Baldwin and so much more clarity in reading James because of it. Moments began to stand out for me. In "The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy" (1961), for example, Baldwin wrote, "The world tends to rap and immobile you in the role you play; and it is not always easy—in fact, it is always extremely hard—to maintain a kind of watchful, mocking distance between oneself as one appears to be and oneself as one actually is."[3] The disconnect between self-perception and societal

perception made clear, Baldwin deliberately resisted reliance upon labels and categorization.

This resistance has served as a touchstone for me in reading links between the two authors. For instance, in *Another Country*, Baldwin wrote of the contrast between Rufus's black manhood and Eric's white manhood. As a dark complexioned African-American male, Rufus is the embodiment of myriad white male fears. As a bisexual, he is also subject to the confounding resistance of a white construct seeking simultaneously to maintain its primacy and to sweep the dirty little secret of homosexuality and institutionalized racism under the proverbial rug. Wholly displaced, he visits the rage bubbling within him on the white woman with whom he is involved, Eric, himself, and others, but he cannot escape it. Rufus commits suicide, the combination of his blackness and homosexuality far too great a weight to bear. Eric is also doubly alienated; his homosexuality stains his masculinity, but his whiteness is also tainted by the fact that in the American South, where he is born and where history and law dictated non-negotiable racial boundaries, his first homosexual experience is with a young Black man. Where he is able to *escape* the refiguring of his maleness by going to Europe, Rufus cannot do so. Eric, however, must find his way to some sense of peace once back in New York; he must find a space in which he may be himself without consequences and without feeling aberrant. Baldwin ends the text by suggesting that he might do so with the little piece of Europe that he brings to the States—his French lover, Yves—yet given all that transpires in the text, we have lingering doubts that he will find peace, for as Yves says, "Americans are very different—when—in their own country."[4]

Similarly, in *The Ambassadors*, James wrote of Lambert Strether being caught between wanting to see Waymarsh and not, between wanting to complete his errand and not, between youth and old age, between a sense of model American manhood and something different. Strether is not only the "ambassador" of Brahmin sensibilities abroad, but he is also an envoy in a battle to force Chad Newsome—the prodigal son in material America—into his 'proper' manly role. No longer a father or a husband, Strether feels a sense of failure; when we meet him, he is a 'kept' man. In order to be financially secure and thereby achieve a limited share of the American dream, he bows to the whims of a woman who seems the symbol of Republican motherhood with a socially elite twist. His manhood is stained triply—as a provider, as a husband, and as a father[5]; unlike Waymarsh, who has not only achieved material success, but who also stringently adheres to a narrow and almost ahistorical way of perceiving his place in the world, Strether is consumed by his mediocrity.[6] Yet, Strether experiences a type of freedom in Europe from American norms that he has not experienced previously. James wrote of him in his "Preface,"

> He *can't* accept or assent. He won't. He doesn't. It's too late. It mightn't have been sooner—but it is, yes, distinctly, now. He has come so far through his total little experience that he has come out on the other side . . . Yes, he goes back *other*—and to other things.[7]

Returning to America, Strether is "other," for he has "experience[d]" things that show him the limitations that conceptions of manhood within American impose upon him. Yet, the same values and beliefs that were the impetus for his journey remain, and as with Eric

in *Another Country*, he wonders (as do we as readers) if there can be a place for this "other" in the American psyche.

Such resonance seemed so promising. Looking into the probability of pairing the two for a larger project, I learned that the pairing had been attempted before. Baldwin biographers Horace Porter and David Leeming attested to Baldwin's affinity for James.[8] In 1967, Charles Newman's "The Lesson of the Master" focused on Baldwin's mimicry of James.[9] In 1984, Lyall H. Powers followed Newman's lead, writing "Henry James and James Baldwin: The Complex Figure"; he interrogated the 'complexities' of this authorial relationship, but still reduced Baldwin to an indebted disciple to the "Master."[10] In the 1990's, critics began to take the comparison in new directions: in 1992, Eric Savoy introduced race and gender into the scholarship; in 1995, Bryan Washington wrote of Baldwin's failure to escape James's white ideology in creating a new sense of identity; and, in 1999, Cyraina Johnson-Rouiller wrote of James and Baldwin within the modernist aesthetic.[11]

Yes, James and Baldwin shared a self-imposed exile. Yet, while exile ideology has helped to make this pairing a viable one in the academy, what was the *locus* of discontent that pushed them to exile? It is not enough to say simply that Baldwin borrowed from Henry James. What made him want to do so despite their differences? It is not merely important to iterate that Baldwin created a bridge of sorts between white literature of exile or alienation and the African-American protest novel. And, it is not enough to suggest that Baldwin drew from James's discomfort with modernity. If the central tropes of modernism are alienation and challenging tradition to "make it new," in the words of Ezra Pound, then what was alienating them, and what were they

challenging? Modernity does not really seem to be the issue; what were the separate and shared problems that made the bridge between traditions both feasible and necessary?

It is not enough to suggest that Baldwin recognized the veiled evidence of James's homosexuality and was drawn to its pathos and power. The veil's very existence points to a singular problem of gender normativity in America that no critic to date has examined thoroughly enough in relation to these two authors. And, it is not enough to say that both authors found America's inability to accommodate otherness problematic. As Dwight A. McBride insists, "every time we refuse to be silenced by the dictates of some prescribed norms, we are chipping away at the exclusions and exclusivities of our world and exposing them for what they are—forms of power and control that aid and abet racist and heterosexist ways of thinking, imagining others, and controlling others."[12] If McBride is to be believed, which I think that he is, and if James's and Baldwin's focus was *felt* or *perceived otherness,* then despite differences, what did they share in the end?

It is in what was shared that I have found my niche. I argue that what they shared was victimization by a flawed idea of American manhood—one constructed as the heterogeneous center of Americanness—one through which both come to access their gendered and racial differences and their marginalization. As the project evolved, my readings of their texts became more political as America settled into its insularity—a historically closed and rigid conception of national identity and individual validity. Both Baldwin's and James's deconstructions of race, gender, and national identity shed light on the fact that no matter one's race, sexual identity, or, perhaps, sex, conceptions of American identity seem far too narrow for comfort. James resisted the precision of

concrete definition based on gender, sexual orientation, and, yes, race. At no point does

his resistance become clearer than when rereading him through Baldwin's eyes.

Dedication

To Eric and Sydney.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

Introduction: James, Baldwin, and the Inefficacy of "The American Ideal of Manhood"[1]

"But all this side of the feminine genius was re-enforced by faculties of quite another order—faculties of the masculine stamp; the completeness, the solid sense, the constant reason, the moderation, the copious knowledge, the passion for exactitude and for general considerations." —Henry James on Saint-Beuve[2]

"The American idea of masculinity: There are few things under heaven more difficult to understand or, when I was younger, to forgive." —James Baldwin[3]

Despite their notable differences, James Baldwin and Henry James similarly articulate what Robyn Wiegman calls the "double bind" of American masculine existence. To differing degrees, each writer is "marginalized in his culture and writes a powerful critique of that culture"; "later, [each] becomes championed as a major cultural voice in the academy."[4] In Wiegman's terms, both writers demystify and critique a construct of American manhood that is isolating, exclusive, and nebulous. Where, however, previous critics have created a direct comparison, exposing primarily what Baldwin owes to James, my aim is to reflect on James through Baldwin, for what criticism does is enable backward readings not yet illuminated. Baldwin articulated that the shaky, raced, and gendered foundation of the American masculine model is inherently unsympathetic to difference of any kind; in doing so, he has enabled us to re-envision James's critiques of American masculine constructions, as well as the freedom from them that he found in expatriation and fiction. Through Baldwin, we can see that James was searching for freedom to locate a self identity absent of the labels and stereotypes endemic to the American man, and that, ultimately, race in a Baldwinian sense was far more important to James than critics might understand.

We see Baldwin inspired by the subtleties of James's thematic inquiries, particularly his dismantling of American 'rules' of manhood. Because of his own experiences as an African-American, male homosexual in America, however, he muddied further the typology that James exposed and disassembled. Triply displaced by race, sexuality, and class, Baldwin not only questioned gender normativity in terms of body and psychology, but also fiercely attacked the racial emphasis of American manhood, taking to task whiteness as a power construct. As he did, he undermined archetypal white manhood and exposed its ability to damn both those who perpetuate it as a normative construct and those it designates as 'other'.

James was initially concerned with deconstructing the typology of the American man—the locus of Americanness—exploring gender normativity, and questioning the fate of those who exist on the margins for any reason. In his canon, he focused specifically on gender norms and examined how the body and manners so quickly delineate one's degree of manhood in the social psyche. Near the end of his career, however, he also awakened to the ties between modes of power in his Anglo-Saxon heritage and his own gender alienation; he discovered, in a rather encroaching and inescapable way, the overwhelming links between the warring racial or ethnic and gender energies underlying American national identity.

My reading of the intersections between the authors exposes a paradigm that begins with James exploring the deepest recesses of the gendered subject and becomes, with Baldwin, an exposé of the most insidious effects of raced gender ideals on both the individual and societal psyche. I submit that James's marginalized sensibility actually allowed him to consider racial complexities far more often associated with Baldwin. I

argue that though critics rarely key in on such subtleties or that theme in James's work, Baldwin found inspiration to interrogate the fragmented layers of his identity. Both authors deconstructed the gendered, sexual, and raced identities that inform Americanness from the vantage point of Europe. Much as it was for Gertrude Stein and the 'Lost Generation', "it's not so much what [Europe] gives [them], as what it doesn't take away."[5] James's and Baldwin's removal to Europe enabled them not to be gay (as is prominently argued in current scholarship), not to be raced, but to locate themselves as *men* despite sexual and racial prescriptions in America which robbed them of the ability to be perceived masculine. Their similarities in spite of their differences suggest the need to question the nature of American alienation. Despite privilege or poverty, heterosexuality or homosexuality, whiteness or blackness, *neither* felt at home in his homeland; in fact, James, like Baldwin, believed himself a "stranger in the village" of America.

<u>"The Master" and "The Henry James of Harlem"[6]</u>

Born in 1843 to a family whose name has become synonymous with the highest achievements of America's intellectual heritage, Henry James matured in a privileged environment. His father, Henry Sr., was the son of William of Albany, an Irish immigrant who "amassed a fortune in business and real estate holdings that made him the second-richest man in the country, after John Jacob Astor"; by mid-life, Henry Sr. was wealthy enough to live "life as a leisured thinker and writer."[7] His wealth enabled him to act on rather unconventional ideas about education and life, and his young namesake, as well as the rest of his male children, were widely traveled and educated broadly in America and Europe.[8] Young Henry's brother, William, would become one of America's foremost

thinkers and educators in the fields of psychology and philosophy, teaching at Harvard

University and embodying, as his contemporary George Santayana suggested, "the

normal practical masculine American."[9] The James family's circle of friends and

influences included the most noted Americans of the day, among them Nathaniel

Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the Henry Adamses. Traveling about Europe,

James's position and letters of introduction gained him access to the finest literary minds,

from Balzac to Turgenev. Never married, Henry would choose to travel, live, and write in

Europe from early adulthood, returning only a handful of times to America and

expatriating officially in 1915—just one year before his death. He was a man whose

sexuality is still enigmatic and whose temperament, tastes, and interests were somewhat

effeminate by the standards of his era.[10] Though recent studies have engaged him as a

closeted homosexual, allowing further readings of his alienation as an American, the

question of James's expatriation is a complex one requiring far more than the cursory

application of labels. Henry James was an author who could, homosexuality masked,

draw upon the intellectual and physical resources of the world that were fully at his

disposal by mere accident of the color of his skin and the privilege of his birth. Yet, he

still felt the need to leave America.

James Baldwin's reasons for leaving are far easier to discern, yet just as complex.

He was born in 1924 to a life of "almost barefoot poverty" in Harlem, New York—the

illegitimate son of Emma Berdis Jones, who worked as a maid for wealthy whites.[11] His

mother married Baldwin's stepfather, David, in 1927. An African-American preacher

from Louisiana embittered by racism, brutality, and poverty, David Baldwin's hatred for

whites, inability to display affection, and abject verbal, emotional, and physical cruelty

defined their household.[12] The eldest of eight children, James Baldwin was a gifted

speaker and writer from early youth. During his years in the New York public school

system, he developed a love of literature and was regarded as "exceptionally, even

uniquely, intelligent" by those educators who took note of him (among them Countee

Cullen, his French teacher in middle school, and Gertrude Ayer, the only African-

American principal in New York City). [13] But, his opportunities were limited, for

American conceptions of race dictated them.

Because his stepfather had an innate distrust of education, and their financial

situation prohibited it, Baldwin did not attend college. Instead, he was more formally

educated in another very powerful institution—the African-American church. A source of

intense moral certainties and deeply rooted faith, it is historically vital to the embattled

African-American psyche. Because of his gifted use of language, Baldwin was being

reared to preach, and his skill as a preacher is evident in the tone, style, and Christian

resonances of his writing. His recognition of his homosexuality, though, flew in the face

of not only his imbibed sense of morality within the church, but also taboos within the

African-American male community; this community brooked no further challenge to its

already challenged manhood. Thus, as a thrice-oppressed male—black, poor, and

homosexual—Baldwin felt a need to "flee" America, where he "doubted [his] ability to

survive the fury of the color problem," let alone fight for identity on any other front.[14]

What surfaces in this bare account of their histories is the racial and class

differences between the two. In America, the gap between them is great, and one wonders

how that chasm can be bridged. But, as David Adams Leeming noted in his introduction

to a 1986 interview with Baldwin, "when Baldwin talk[ed] of Henry James . . . he sp[oke]

of James as the writer who share[d] with him the one essential theme, that of the failure of Americans to see through to 'the reality of others.'" Baldwin, too, spoke of this ability:

> It seemed to me when I was reading that critic years ago that James, as I watched him in *Daisy Miller,* in *The Turn of the Screw . . . The Wings of the Dove*, and of course, above all *The Ambassadors*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, and *The Princess Casamassima*—it seemed to me that in each case he was describing a certain inability (like a frozen place somewhere), a certain inability to perceive the reality of others. [15]

In each of the texts named, James unmasked our tendency to project typologies onto others rather than see them as they are. It is, as Baldwin noted, as if there is something "frozen" in us. We assume that difference is negative, that others' identities are deficient or less vital because they are not our own. Forced norms, biases, and stereotypes become so pervasive that they often inhibit our understanding of others' values, beliefs, and even validity. The fact that Baldwin referred to James as "critic" was key, for in doing so, he aptly recognized the depth of perception with which James approached his analyses of manners and culture in both fiction and non-fiction. His ability to delve beyond the surface, through the deepest recesses of a subject, and into the "frozen place somewhere" in the American psyche spoke to Baldwin. As biographer James Campbell indicates, in James, Baldwin "found an attention to that 'intensest thing'—one's essential self—that was truly his own subject."[16]

Perhaps nothing was more important to Baldwin than finding the essence of the self—what James might call the center of consciousness. Baldwin would say later in his career:

In France, I had to live in a kind of vacuum, absolute silence . . . So I had

to listen to what I had been avoiding. I had to start facing where I really

came from, the speech I really spoke, which is much closer to Bessie

Smith than it is to Henry James. But as a writer I needed a box to put

thoughts in—a model . . . James became, in a sense, my master. It was

something about point of view, something about discipline . . . And *Go

Tell it on the Mountain* I could never have written without that silence and

without James . . . The closest thing to a model I could find for the means

to order and describe something that had happened to me in the distance—

America—was James.[17]

In that "silence," without the external cacophony of stereotypes that hindered him, and

with the quieting of the same internally, Baldwin found himself. With the model provided

by James's meticulous notes, his copious descriptions of even the most minute details

about a subject, his insistence on the psychological realism of his characterizations, and

his search beyond the superficial, Baldwin found a means by which he could interrogate

the discord of his American experience. The two shared a "point of view"—a shared

consciousness of "Americans [inability] to see through," a shared recognition that the

"distance" provided in expatriation enabled them to see in ways previously unseen. When

the model is applied not only to gender, but also to racial prescriptions, Baldwin and

James can be read as kindred spirits. James provided Baldwin with a model for naming

the "frozen place" inside the American man and achieving the level of introspection

necessary to understand the damaging and lingering effects of this construct on the

psyche. Baldwin, then, delved far more openly and deeply into the American psyche than

Victorian mores allowed James to do. Because of it, Baldwin's work provides a means of reviewing Jamesian nuances and subtleties through new critical eyes.

American Manhood, Queerness, and the 'actual'

For each, American manhood was historically nebulous. It was legally tied to race—to whiteness particularly—from the moment of colonization.[18] In American law, the ideal American man was white, heterosexual, middle to upper class, invested in ensuring the longevity of his lineage, and fully entrenched in perpetuating the norms that maintained his hierarchical status. American masculine identity was intertwined with conceptions of nation and status. By the time that the First U.S. Naturalization Law (1790) decreed that only those who were "free white persons over the age of twenty-one" could become citizens of the Union, the law not only omitted slaves, Native Americans, free African Americans, and other groups, but it also omitted indentured servants, many of whom were white, though not *free*. The law specified that those who would become citizens must have "good moral character." Ideas not only of freedom, then, but also of precisely what "good moral character" was not and who could achieve whatever it was had already been encoded onto the American psyche in terms of whiteness and manhood.[19] Accordingly, by 1800, when Gail Bederman indicates that over ten state constitutions regarded a man as someone who could practice "manhood rights—the right to vote, to hold office, to serve on juries, to own property, to join a militia," it was clear that these rights, the staples of democratic identity, were limited to those deemed white by law.[20]

More important, however, were the consciously constructed legal manipulations of manhood—particularly at the end of the nineteenth century. Just as Nina Baym argues,

"the term 'America' or 'American' in works of literary criticism" is attributed to "authors on the basis of their conformity to . . . [an] idea of what is truly American," manhood was also negotiated according to similar arbitrary standards.[21] As the nineteenth century progressed, notions of manhood were increasingly linked to physicality, a fact that had profound racial and ethnic implications.[22] When James's career was at its peak, the ensuing "crisis of manhood" led men to re-conceptualize proper male behavior."[23] Though "in the early years of the republic, men had grounded their own sense of manliness in virtue, honor, and public service," as Amy Greenberg attests in *Manifest Manhood*, in the later years of the nineteenth century, "a new vision of 'primitive masculinity'" emerged in response to three-class structure, commercial competition, increased ethnic diversity, and participation in 'global' warfare. Based on a "selective reading of Charles Darwin's 1859 theory of evolution," this vision called for "men . . . to embrace their animal nature[s] . . . to develop their martial virtues so that they could successfully compete with men of less-refined classes and races."[24] The need to contend with "less-refined classes and races" rooted new conceptions of manhood firmly in the "refine[ment]" of whiteness and social status in the Gilded Age. Insistence on "martial virtues" and "animal nature" as "essential masculine virtues" enabled the white American male to combat the threat of new expressions of masculinity literally embodied in the physical presence of the immigrant or African American.[25] Males in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, therefore, were driven by conscious attention to "correctives"—sexual, racial, social, familial, and political; "normal men" were, above all, heterosexual, white, physically commanding, socially influential, married, and not

simply mindful of, but actively and unwaveringly participatory in the political,

militaristic, and economic force that American wielded.[26]

Perhaps there was no more easily identifiable symbol of the "corrective" nature of

early twentieth century manhood than Teddy Roosevelt. Nicknamed "Theodore Rex" and

described as "a dangerous and ominous jingo" by Henry James, Roosevelt was a man

who knew his status, brooked no offense to it, and by the sheer, inviolate belief in his

dominance set forth to make it known in the world.[27] In fact, the altered image of

masculinity provided by Roosevelt became the public face of American manhood before,

during, and after his Presidency. The notion that a man should "talk softly and carry a big

stick," besides its obvious sexual reading, depicted a man who was craftily able to control

his detractors and simultaneously wield his considerable power.[28] Roosevelt's rise in

popularity, rise to power, and drive for imperial dominance coincided with what Julian

Carter calls a period of increased and powerful "normality discourse" in masculinity.

Carter argues, "'Normality' . . . provided a common and deeply sexualized, vocabulary

through which . . . whites could articulate their common racial and political values to one

another."[29] For Roosevelt, the 'normal' man was

> the man who [was] actually in the arena, whose face [was] marred by dust
>
> and sweat and blood, who [strove] valiantly, who err[ed] and [came] up
>
> short again and again . . . who, at the best, [knew], in the end, the triumph
>
> of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fail[ed], at least he
>
> fail[ed] while daring greatly, so that his place sh[ould] never be with those
>
> cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.[30]

In language that at once alluded to and drew from his history as a hunter, sportsman, cowboy, and "Rough Rider," Roosevelt created a separation between those with enough strength of "energetic character" to assert and defend their manhood and those who were "cold," or un-"energetic," and "timid," or spineless.[31] He merged the idea of a man of 'character,' reclassifying that attribute as resolute will, and the man of brute strength, associating physical cunning with physical dominance. In this paradigm, a man was normal and more physically forceful, or "soft" and outside of the norm—either fully masculine or feminine.

His tactics were not only rhetorically, but also visually charged. Rather than solely on the basis of skin color and internal virtues, as Keith Gandal suggests, the new man relied heavily on the "politics of looks," the conscious, physical pose of masculinity.[32] In an age in which photography and portraiture took on new importance, both image and rhetoric were integral to rebuilding white manhood. Visually, the American man was to be a robust physical specimen; the appearance of power was central to America's political and social structures. The picture that Roosevelt painted of the "man in the arena"—a man embattled, dirty, but ever ready to stand up when felled— connoted the type of brawn and resolution that Roosevelt demanded in American men. From images of Theodore Roosevelt wielding his rifle as the conquering hero or hunter to the Herculean imagery used in photographs of boxer, Jim Jeffries, the white male was reinforced as physically dominant and unconquerable. Conversely, those of "less-refined classes and races" were depicted as bestial—from the ape-like imagery used to depict Jeffries' victorious, African-American opponent, Jack Johnson, to political cartoons depicting immigrant males as caricatures.[33]

Modern American manhood relied on the supposed neutrality of whiteness and heterosexuality; much like a control group in a scientific experiment, it was against their absence of difference that others were judged. Both James and Baldwin were decidedly outside of these norms; in fact, Teddy Roosevelt, himself, questioned directly James's 'manhood.'[34] Though James was 'white,' he was not heterosexual, married, or athletic, and he was clearly not extremely impressed by American political force if his statement about Teddy Roosevelt and his ultimate expatriation were indicators. Though a thinker and critic like James would have been at home with the "early nineteenth-century ideal of manly behavior [that] resided largely in the life of the mind . . . 'the preeminent masculine ideal'" of the fin-de-siecle took on "physical criteria" that were both alien and alienating.[35] Baldwin, in turn, fit nowhere in Roosevelt's notion of normalcy, for he was African-American, homosexual, slight in stature, and thoroughly unimpressed by America's political and economic force. Both authors resisted the narrow insistence on the ideal of manhood that Roosevelt actively participated in constructing.

Effectively converging the gender, class, and racial struggles so important to both authors, this male ideal spanned both the end of James's life and the start of Baldwin's. Because of it, we can reflect on the ways in which Baldwin and James built their canons around resisting the consciously constructed norms that it promoted. As a black male, Baldwin was placed in the position of being constantly aware of "the absence of his blackness"—the negation of his gender identity historically necessary to effect a definition of the white male self.[36] Just as race is not just a matter of skin, but an ideology, Baldwin learned that gender is far more than visual markers of sex. As Robyn Wiegman insists, "The black male . . . entered enfranchisement through the symbolic

12

possibilities that accrued to the masculine as the precondition of the patronymic." His maleness should have afforded him citizenship rights, but his "entrance was marked by extreme and incontrovertible violence, often in the form of lynching and castration, demonstrat[ing] how unsettling was the possibility of the black male as *male*."[37] Baldwin's physical body, particularly the psychosocial connotations of its color, historically signified emasculation in the same way that castration literally effected an unsexing of the male body.[38] Baldwin responded to gender and racial prescriptions by exposing the myriad flaws in the white male ideal; he not only juxtaposed it to the marginalized subject, but also pulled it apart piece by piece from the outside inward until he unveiled it as something monstrous. Baldwin's treatment of gender norms was, therefore, heavily raced—even when only whiteness was mentioned; he directly addressed the simultaneous power and confusion housed within the white, male frame and generated the possibility for declarations of manhood removed from arbitrary markers of Anglo-Saxonism.

What allowed him to do this, I suggest, was James. Though evidence of James's initial attention to race was discernible as early as *The American* (1877), critics typically argue that it is not until he returned to America late in life that he became fully conscious of the weight of racial constructions.[39] However, in examining his own alienation, even in instances in which he did not mention race, James was interrogating the degree to which white men fit the prescribed masculine ideal. As Sara Blair indicates, "[Henry] James's strategic allegiances to British, American, Anglo-European, and other fluidly constituted cultural communities . . . register the discursive repertoires of whiteness, as well as the anxieties of national identity that attend its very mobility."[40] As for many who preceded

him, the question for James was not necessarily whether a man was white, but which white man was more of a man? Yet, looking through Baldwin's eyes, James's treatment of the Anglo-Saxon male can be complicated to show that he may have been conscious of deeper racial complexities. If it is true, as Gail Bederman argues, that "by harnessing male supremacy to white supremacy and celebrating both as essential to human perfection, hegemonic versions of civilization maintained the power of Victorian gender ideologies by presenting male power as natural and inevitable" in America, then for a "marginal male" such as James, the white male ideal was a source of intense alienation, a construct ironically based on intense 'blindness' and dualism that still persists.[41] When James wrote, "it is a complex fate, being an American," his statement was telling, for intrinsically raced and gendered American identity was a confusing space to inhabit.[42] Read retrospectively, then, James's texts are potentially, to borrow from Blair, "transfigur[ing]."[43] As readers see his plots unfold and lament characters' failed attempts at breaking identity bonds, they become strikingly aware of what Baldwin sensed that James *felt*—the power of the American masculine construct to subsume any who internalize it and the immense difficulty of displacing its weight for those outside of it.

James's journey toward naming the thing that alienated him began with the exteriority of manhood—the "politics of looks."[44] Like Baldwin's, we can read both James's treatments of the white male body and unsettling of superficial markers of manhood as evidence of his outsider status early in his career. For example, reflecting on his life in *A Small Boy and Others* (1913)*, James recounted a visit to Sing-Sing Penitentiary to visit his cousin, Gus Barker. Seeing one of the "unfortunates," he wrote rather revealingly:

In that early time I seem to have been constantly eager to exchange my lot

for that of somebody else, on the assumed certainty of gaining by the

bargain . . . As I think on what one sees one's companions able to do—as

against one's own falling short—envy, as I knew it at least, was simply of

what they *were*, or in other words of a certain sort of richer consciousness

supposed, doubtless often too freely supposed, in them. They were so

other—that was what I felt; and to *be* other, other almost anyhow, seemed

as good as the probable taste of the bright compound wistfully watched in

the confectioner's window; unattainable, impossible, of course, but as to

which just this impossibility and just that privation kept those active

proceedings in which jealousy seeks relief quite out of the question. A

platitude of acceptance of the poor actual, the absence of all vision of how

in any degree to change it, combined with a complacency, and acuity of

perception of alternatives, though a view of them as only through the

confectioner's hard glass.[45]

Though he spoke of the "other[ness]" of the man he was watching, what resonated in his

words were echoes of his own pain at not being more like this "other." Arguably

conscious of a male center just out of his reach, James seemed to desire "to *be* other,

other almost anyhow." On the surface, he was painfully aware of his difference—his

existence apart from that which the young man represented. It is as if that representation

was forbidden to him and housed behind "confectioner's glass."[46] Inevitably, he was

cognizant of "the absence of all vision of how in any degree to change [the actual]."[47]

Whether the "actual" was his "falling short" *or* simply the very model that diminishes him is unclear, but the ambiguity foreshadowed his increasing anxiety.

The question is from what precisely did he fall short? The answer to that question is multilayered. James's attention to the young man's physical characteristics showed his early recognition of the outward show of manhood. The youth presented a posed, romantic figure, wearing a "loose uniform of shining white (as [he] was afterwards to figure it), as well as in his generally refined and distinguished appearance." The descriptor "shining white" connotes a sense of aristocracy, for white was difficult to keep clean. James found it "commendable" that he was able "[to pare] his nails with a smart penknife," yet he marveled over "his hands [which were] fine and fair, one of them adorned with a signet ring." He was a combination of beauty and physical mastery—something that speaks of James's early resistance to binaries. The young man's physical appearance, romanticized in the child artist's mind, heightened his stature, his hands and "signet ring" giving him the appearance of a man of wealth and leisure, the 'fair[ness]" of his hands and his attention to grooming suggesting gentility and refinement. James "envied the bold-eyed celebrity in the array of a planter at his ease"; "we might have been *his* slaves," he wrote. The fact that James used the word "slaves" screams his perceived inferiority, but bespeaks subtle attention to the contrasting courtliness and racial dominance of the planter aristocracy.[48] James seemed envious of the command and confidence with which the young man appeared to hold court—the "bold[ness]" of his eye, the dexterity of his hands, the outward performance of "refine[ment]" regardless of his present circumstances. However, James's discomfort appears to stem from his position apart from the gentility and force unified in this youth's figure.

This visit to Sing-Sing was meant to serve as a warning to James about the dangers of becoming just such an "unfortunate," and he was enthralled rather than admonished by this presence. That James would be so intrigued by this subject's performance and outward show of masculine attributes evidences "the power of surfaces."[49] The model that James envied was imitative—mimicry of the "planter" to which James compared him. This youth's surface, to borrow from Gandal, was little more than a "structure of disguise or mask" by "which the relationship between aesthetics and power [might be] imagined."[50] James imbued this figure with a masculine power signified by his appearance. But, that appearance "mask[ed]" what lay beneath and revealed far more than James may have realized.

The fact is that this youthful figure was an inmate in an institution that, by its very nature, had (and still has) the power to divest its inhabitants of their social, political, and psychological claims to masculine identity. Founded in 1825 and constructed by inmate labor for its opening in 1828, Sing-Sing was a militaristic institution run by an army retiree, who made its inmates march in lock-step and live in silence, and who narrowly and brutally enforced the discipline that was not only meant to rehabilitate them, but also to maintain the penitentiary as an economic, mining powerhouse for the town of Ossining.[51] Told when to rise, when to sleep, when to wash, when to work, the inmates had no command over their bodies or psyches. What resulted was an inherently feminized masculinity, for male prison culture, by nature, dismantled the conception of an ideal manhood. The image that James described not only pointed to harsh societal discipline "dressed up and made palatable," but also the romance of masculinity that James early imbibed.[52] This youth, carving his nails with his "smart penknife" bespeaks a

17

roguishness, a subtle violence, even a bit of danger veiled by the purity suggested in his spotless white uniform, manner, and confidence; the latter, James sorely lacked.[53] By the author's own admission, the boy may not have been "as [he] was later to figure it"; whatever he was, however, James perceived himself as far less masculine than he.[54]

Nowhere was James's felt difference more evident than in his relationship with his brother, William. In it, we see the tensions over burgeoning manhood that Greenberg's "manifest manhood" model suggests. James perceived that he was not only physically inferior to his brother, but also that with*in* him, there was something less manly than in William. In her discussion of the sibling "rivalry" between William and "Harry," Kim Townsend notes in a particularly revelatory moment, that William perceived his brother to be a "queer boy . . . so good, and yet so limited, as if he had taken an oath not to let himself out to more than half of his humanhood, in order to keep the other half from suffering."[55] William's definition of this "queerness" as "something very oriental" carries a bit more weight when read in the context of his discussion of "Instinct" in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890).[56] In the course of that chapter, he related "modern Orientals" to "unnatural vice," a term linked specifically to the definition of homosexuality and the lawlessness, vulgarity, and immorality of sodomy during the period.[57] Reading his words about Henry in that context, William appeared to target softness in Henry that foreshadowed his incongruence with Teddy Roosevelt's reconstruction of American manhood. More apt in William's description, however, might be the term "manhood" because his use of the term "queer" suggested "pathological aberrance."[58] From one of his most prominent family relationships, then, Henry moved

from the exterior to the interior, internalizing his outsider status. William seemed to believe that "Henry was less than a man, he did not live life the way *men* lived life."[59]

What precisely William meant is easier to understand in relation to Henry's literary niche, for William's criticism became more severe. In a letter dated 4 March 1868, William "violently" chastised Henry for the lack of "blood" in his latest "male versus female" project. William wrote,

> I have rec'd the 2ⁿᵈ Galaxy & Atlantic for Feby. With yr. story of Old Clothes. Both stories show a certain neatness & airy grace of touch wh. is characteristic of your productions (I suppose you want to hear in an unvarnished manner what is exactly the impression they make on me) and both show a greater suppleness & freedom of movement in the composition; altho' the first was unsympathetic to me fm. being one of those male versus female subjects you have so often treated, and besides there was something cold about it, a want of heartiness or unction. It seems to me that a story must have rare picturesque elements of some sort, or much action, to compensate for the absence of heartiness, and the elements of yours were those of every day life. It can also escape by the exceeding "keen"-ness of its analysis & thoroughness of its treatment as in some of Balzacs, (but even there the result is dis*agreeable*, if valuable) but in yours the moral action was very lightly touched and rather indicated than exhibited. I fancy this rather *dainty* and *disdainful* treatment of yours comes fm. a wholesome dread of being sloppy and gushing and over abounding in power of expression like the most of your rivals in the

Atlantic, . . . and that is excellent, in fact it is the instinct of truth against

humbug & twaddle, and when it governs the treatment of a rich material it

produces 1ˢᵗ class works. But the material in your stories (except Poor

Richard) has been *thin* . . . so that they give a certain impression of the

author clinging to his gentlemanlyness tho' all else be lost, and dying

happy provided it be *sans deroger.* That to be sure is expressed rather

violently . . . I feel something of a similar want of blood in your stories, as

if you did not fully fit them, and I tell you so because I think the same

thing wd. strike you if you read them as the work of another."[60]

William's "violen[ce]" severely contrasted the style that he attributed to Henry; it was

heated, forceful, and full of "blood." It is true that there is a familiarity and bluntness that

only a sibling might be allowed. However, herein one recognizes manly disapproval on

the basis of masculine ideological norms that would, in part, characterize their

relationship throughout their lives. Like Henry's life, William perceived his writing style

as "dainty," or delicate. To him, Henry's story seemed "cold," an adjective that Teddy

Roosevelt would later use to describe those timid men who were not "in the arena."[61]

That William did not believe his brother "fully fit" his stories is revelatory, indicating

further that for him, Henry did not "fit" as a man. Very early concerned with the battle of

the "sexes" (read here as genders), James was beginning to carve his niche in a style that

would ensure his greatness—and neither had "enough blood" or manliness for his older

sibling.[62] The tendency toward silence and "gentlemanlyness"—the idea of a subject

being "lightly touched and rather indicated than exhibited"—the desire for the novel to be

representative of "every day life" in which silences abound, and the "[keen] analysis" that

would carry him far into the interior of his characters' psyches clearly incited William's criticism. In essence, William's words not only *queered* Henry's work, but his person as well. While William saw the characteristics of his writing as flaws, for in his eyes, men were not "dainty," or feminine, or "queer," these were the stylistic tools with which the younger James would pointedly address his marginality.[63]

The notion of "queer[ness]" links James to Baldwin in a rather striking way that at once bespeaks and belies sexuality. It opens a door beyond homosexuality to issues of gender normalcy, and very few critics have addressed the homosexual's battle with defining either the label given him or the sexual identity that it presupposes, particularly with James. Baldwin shed light on James's alienation, for as Baldwin would later write, "The condition now called gay was then called queer . . . [T]hose epithets really had *nothing to do with the question of sexual preference*: You were being told simply that you had no balls—that you were not a *man*."[64] The question for Baldwin, and I argue for James as well, was *not* inevitably about "sexual preference." The idea that manhood was defined as something apart from the physical presence of male genitalia was troubling to Baldwin; it involved skin color, sexual activity, economic status, education, and far more, and it was always in flux. Though sexual dimorphism was long a focal point in evolutionary theory and the identification of gender norms, despite their physical maleness, neither Baldwin nor James was *manly* in America.[65] As a young man, Baldwin found the "American idea of masculinity" not only "difficult to understand," but also hard "to forgive," for he existed on its margins.[66]

As his career progressed and he came to terms with his sexuality, he began to express confusion over American masculinity that will resonate strongly in my reading of James. He wrote,

> The American *ideal*, then, of sexuality appears to be rooted in the American ideal of masculinity. This ideal has created cowboys and Indians, good guys and bad guys, punks and studs, tough guys and softies, butch and faggot, black and white. It is an ideal so paralytically infantile that is it virtually forbidden—as an unpatriotic act—that the American boy evolve into the complexity of manhood.[67]

This "ideal" is dichotomous, energized and nurtured by the perpetuation of superficial binaries; therefore, it is not "ideal" at all. The binaries that Baldwin referenced were, themselves, not only rooted in the physical, but also perpetuated on the ideological level; Baldwin complicated them and purposefully exploded them. Each binary was as dependent on the seen as it was the unseen (the psychosocial impressions that normalized it), but the entire construct was "paralytically infantile" insofar as the terms neither operated equally, nor held up under scrutiny. The idea of "cowboys" and "Indians" played into racial constructions and fear of the 'other,' privileging the "cowboy" of Anglo-Saxon origins. "Good guys and bad guys" was a fluctuating paradigm, for while the "good guy" was always favored, determining who was "good" and who was "bad" in an age dominated by McCarthyism and the Red Scare was not always so easy to do. The juxtaposition of "punks and studs" with "tough guys and softies" and "butch and faggot" undercut the hierarchy suggested by each, for the respective terms were not equivalent; "studs" could be "tough," and "punks" were often perceived as "soft"—all talk and no

bite; additionally, someone who was "butch" was "tough," but homosexual panic undermined this "tough[ness]," making "butch" an aberration from the norm that was naturally perceived as "soft."

More interestingly, however, Baldwin set the binary "black and white" in opposition to all that preceded it and forced the reader to revisit the earlier pairings. Because the legitimacy of the privileged terms in each of the other binaries is complicated, the question of the position of blackness in these models naturally becomes confounding. If "blackness" is positioned in a place seemingly reserved for the more dominant and hyper-masculine term—"punk," "tough guy," and "butch"—is its status also equivalent to the hierarchical position attributed to the "cowboy" and the "good guy"? Baldwin superficially seems decidedly other in this model; he was "black," a "faggot," a "softie," and, therefore, perceived as "bad." But, his words illustrate that the terminology of masculine normalcy in America could not sustain itself. Though the favored identity spaces were arbitrary and in flux, they were presented as unforgiving and finite. Because they were privileged, Baldwin could find no means to define himself as a man, and this is what he found so hard "to forgive."

In fact, in the "ideal" touted societally, the "deviance" associated with homosexuality was linked to the "deviance" of blackness; both were diametrical to the norm—in this case, the white masculine center whose primacy and sanctity were threatened by their existence. Baldwin's blackness signified that his inferiority as a man was "*always already there*."[68] Further, American conceptions of racial and gender supremacy made both blackness and homosexuality a problem. His homosexuality, then, rendered what limited masculinity he was allowed both legally and psychologically null

and void not only within an African-American community that desired no further affront to its identity, but also within the white male psyche that could not allow any threat to its primacy. Therefore, Baldwin's otherness was signified not only by a quantifiable (read visual) sign, but also by a hidden sign deemed psychologically aberrant.

But, what of James? Looking backward, where might he lie in this model? His whiteness could mask his difference, but his 'queer[ness]' would be at issue. His autobiographical works offer some insight to the way in which he came to terms the latter.[69] Again, in *A Small Boy and Others*, we see that one of Henry's "very first perceptions" "was that of [his] brother's occupying a place in the world to which [he] couldn't at all aspire—to any approach to which in truth [he] seem[ed] to [himself] ever conscious of having signally forfeited a title."[70] As with the youth at Sing-Sing, Henry recognized that he was in a space apart from William. In his mind, he was simply "less" than his sibling—in intelligence, in artfulness, in boyishness, in robustness, in physical ability, and later in manliness. As they became older, James recalled an episode in which William did not wish him to come out to play with him, saying "*I* play with boys who curse and swear!"[71] His brother's very early taunt subordinated Henry, and in this moment, he realized that not only were boys "difficult to play with," but also "that [he] simply [was not] qualified."[72] He did not play roughly. He did not "curse and swear." William's words recall Baldwin's binaries. Henry played "softie" to William's "tough guy," and though in James's psyche, William's type was privileged, the arbitrary nature of the "good guy" and "bad guy" paradigm raises questions; it is arguable whether "boys who curse[d] and sw[ore]" were definitively "good guys."

Later, Henry was not suited to Harvard, to politics, or to law. By his own admission "not a grasping business-man," he would not marry, would not insure the posterity of his lineage with a family, and would not achieve financial success in business as was expected of the American man of his time.[73] Imaginative, quiet, and observant as a child, and labeled an aesthete in adulthood, Henry had not been a boy's boy and would not grow to be a man's man. Within Baldwin's decisively complex paradigm, then, James, who perhaps never joined in a game of "cowboys and Indians"—would be a "softie"; he would be a "punk"; and, if recent scholarship is to be believed, he would be a "faggot." Without voicing his homosexuality, James was not visibly identifiable as an outsider; his racial mask afforded him a level of comfort to which Baldwin had no access. But, within America, his otherness, or marginal manhood, necessitated that one portion of himself be veiled perpetually under a façade of contemporary, gentlemanly manners and attire, for, if revealed, that aspect of his being alone would render him "bad" and outside the ideal. Roosevelt's deliberate revisions of American manhood, then, might be read as an extension of William's "boys who curse and swear," and, as such, we understand that by the time they occur, James had not only felt unmanly, but also worked to renegotiate his own masculinity for much of his life.[74]

Psychologically, this need to veil a portion of one's identity perpetually because of its 'unfitness' is just as damaging as being told repeatedly that you are 'unfit' because of the color of your skin. If we believe that you can no more change your sexuality than your skin color—that both are genetic, though the former may be unmarked visually— then, the impact of subordination resulting from either is equally fragmenting. Defined in terms of opposition (what it is not rather than what it is), with whiteness, physical

prowess, mental toughness, goodness, and heterosexuality privileged, the idea of American manhood can never be an "ideal" because it is an intrinsically divisive force. Any identity space "rooted in the American ideal of masculinity" is, therefore, inherently flawed and psychically terminal.[75] It is a paradigm that both breeds and is based on the pedantic; it is "infantile," as Baldwin suggested, for the "American boy" might never mature or evolve to a self-realized state. Instead, he is locked in a state of preadolescence in which proving what he is *not* based on societal norms that dictate what he is *supposed to be* becomes more important than learning what he truly *is*.[76] Just as Baldwin found the need to unearth manhood's depths and expose the potential for a variety of masculine expressions, so, too, did James move past the outward performance of manhood to questions of how one comes to imbibe normalized male ideology.

"Stranger[s]" to Masculine Ideology

James wrote in the "Preface" to *Portrait of a Lady*, "Tell me what the artist is, and I will tell you of what he has *been* conscious."[77] From the moment that each began to write fiction, it is fairly easy to gauge "of what he ha[d] *been* conscious," for James and Baldwin consistently mined the fields of manhood, particularly those within the American psyche.[78] Baldwin's characterizations—whether of the homosexual, the African-American male, the white male, or some combination of each—pointed to American manhood not only as the center of American identity, but also as a rigid, raced, physical, hierarchical, and oddly ambiguous construct. In "Stranger in the Village" (1953), Baldwin offered what serves as a template for reading both his and James's fiction in this project. Visually bombarded, psychically embattled, and brutally honest in his reactions, Baldwin railed against the American struggle to resist the unavoidable fact

26

that a truly inclusive American identity could not be built on segmentation and racial or gendered hierarchy. Baldwin wrote a modern, abbreviated discourse on the futility of resistance to change and the necessity of racial re-conception.[79] His recorded thoughts were his means of coming to terms with his own American nativity—the fragmentation and self-loathing that riddled his psyche because of his dual outsider status in his homeland. Despite his citizenship, his skin and sexuality made him a terminal "stranger." His body and presence naturally evoked negative perceptions among many white Americans. Rather than as an American, he was perceived instantly as other—someone whose origins, purpose, and aims were always in question in the Anglo-American mind.

Only by being estranged elsewhere—being in the silence of a small Swiss village away from the cacophonous labels that filled his head at home—could he understand how purposefully fabricated his subject position was in America. Newly arrived in the mountain village, Baldwin found himself among people who had "never seen a Negro before." "Partly because he [was] an American," he was shocked that his blackness would be so "foreign" to those around him. While this may speak in part to the same sense of American entitlement that I will later discuss in James, Baldwin, whose blackness was such an integral part of the American psyche, was awed by the fact that it was not so elsewhere, that the importance of this his pigment was not a worldwide epidemic. Because of it, he had to negotiate a new subjectivity for himself. In this village, his presence as a "stranger" moved him to interrogate the concept of 'home.' He began to fathom that he "must accept the status which myth, if nothing else, g[ave him] in the West before [he could] hope to change the myth."[80] Despite his supposed inferiority, his altered subjectivity allowed him to step outside of American racial hysteria and theorize

how whiteness and blackness, as well as narrow ideations of masculinity, came to be so ingrained in conceptions of American identity. Focused intently on the Anglo-Saxon, masculine nexus of white supremacy, his reading of America speaks to the necessity and inevitability of amalgamated racial and gendered spaces, not only physically, but also psychologically; his essay exposes the oppositional spaces in which he and those who othered him existed as not simply mad, but maddening. Ultimately, he discerned that the question of stranger and native becomes moot, for the very question of nativity is negated by the history of immigration, both forced and otherwise, upon which the United States has been built. Moreover, the question of his identity, he learned, could not be resolved externally; it had to be answered internally—in his consciousness.

These themes remained with him throughout his career. For example, in "Sonny's Blues" (1957), as in *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* (1968), he explored the questions of definition, difference, and status with pairs of African-American brothers. His characters meandered the periphery of manly identity and attempted to reconcile racial identity with masculinity. In "Sonny's Blues," there is such distance between the narrator, a schoolteacher, and his younger brother, Sonny, a jazz musician. The former has "kept . . . outside of [him] for a long time" his mother's admonition that "the world ain't changed" for a black man, though in Harlem, he sees signs all around him that her words are true.[81] Sonny, though, recognizes the truth of her words and wants nothing more than "to stand it, to be able to make it at all on any level…in order to keep from shaking to pieces" in a world that constantly reminds him of the "low ceiling of [his] actual possibilities."[82] His means of doing so is jazz and the blues. Baldwin's narrator initially shows disdain for jazz and blues musicians, labeling them (as did his father),

"good-time people." But, he misses entirely the cultural relevance and importance of the art forms in coping with suffering, particularly in Harlem. Though he lives among his people, he strives consciously not to be 'of' them, instead viewing them with disdain and seeing them as "menacing." To him, Sonny's drug habit signifies weakness, and his profession as a jazz musician, shortsightedness. Rather than seeking to understand how Sonny could have come to this place, or understanding that his heroin addiction, like jazz, is a means of "dissembling" and coping with his rage, the narrator imposes his views of what is and is not acceptable on his brother, ultimately judging him and distancing himself from him—and, therefore, himself.

But there is a subtle tension in the story, for the narrator cannot escape the fact that he simultaneously feels kinship and "contempt" for those in the school yard, on the streets, in the neighborhood, for those who play jazz, his brother, and those who are addicted to heroin. They are the external projection of something that he has buried deep within his psyche and refuses to acknowledge. Though non-linear, the story's segments reveal that the narrator has never truly known Sonny, nor listened to him—that, perhaps, he has "never . . . supposed that [anyone he has rejected] *had* a story of his own, much less a sad one."[83] Baldwin spent this text melting away his narrator's "frozen place," his blindness to others, what he pointedly describes as the "great block of ice . . . settled in his belly."[84] Sonny's music serves as a catalyst for connection. To understand Sonny and acknowledge his own emotions as an African-American man, the narrator must dignify the music. It speaks the pain of being a black man in a nation that not only emasculates him, but also limits his opportunities and equates his pigment to nothingness. It has been Sonny's way of "dealing with the roar rising from the void and giving order to it"—to

the "rage" and "contempt" and "dissembling"; he has been "at that piano playing for his life."[85] What he creates is at once "terrible" and "triumphant" because it speaks emotions and experiences that words could never convey, but that must be heard and not forgotten.[86]

Through the restorative power of the blues, Baldwin slowly reconnects the narrator to Sonny, his memories, and his roots. His final epiphany reengages him with the richness of the long "frozen" portion of himself and reveals to him the disillusion under which he has been operating. He attempts to assimilate a masculine model from which his skin omits him by forgetting what Sonny knows he never can forget if he hopes to survive—"where [he's] *been*. And *what* [he's] been."[87] By the end of the story, he can appreciate "the cup of trembling," the unspoken, ever-present struggle of being black and male, that Sonny so clearly evokes with each brutally honest note that he plays.[88] The realization that he and Sonny share more than he has acknowledged diminishes the gap between them. He finally understands that Sonny not only plays for himself, but also for him and others at the risk of his own "ruin, destruction, madness, and death in order to find new ways to make [them] listen." The narrator recognizes that Sonny does not cower, is not beaten, and "rid[es] it like a man"—a different, but far stronger one than he could have fathomed.[89]

Less metaphorically and, in some ways, more painfully, in *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* (1968), Baldwin leaves the reader dazed by Caleb Proudhammer's reflective anguish as he tells his brother, Leo, "he made me feel like I was my grandmother in the fields somewhere and this white mother-fucker rides over and decides to throw her down in the fields. Well, shit . . . I ain't my grandmother. I'm a *man*. And a

man can do anything he wants to do, but can't nobody *make* him do it" even as we go on

to see him beaten, emasculated, and tormented.[90] In Caleb's words, Baldwin distantly

communicates the trouble with his own sexuality in the African-American community;

figuratively, and sometimes literally castrated, black men have been statistically the most

homophobic of American men, for homosexuality is an affront to already contested

manhood. Though Caleb's last name not only evokes sexual strength and potency, but

also the sense that he has self-worth, his color is a visual marker of his lack of status to

the white man; in fact, to this man, Caleb is little more than an effeminate entity to be

forced into submission.[91] That his body is physically powerful, that he is sexually male,

seems to mean nothing; he will be 'broken' nevertheless. The mythology of masculinity

seems deeply etched in Caleb's mind; a man has self-will and self-governance. His words

reflect the binary distinction between masculinity and femininity that helps to define

white manhood. But, his color is linked to gender ideals, as Baldwin repeatedly argued.[92]

His race compounds the implications of effeminacy. It is as if, in Baldwin's words,

Caleb's color means that "he has no balls," though he adamantly cries the existence of

them.[93] He is understandably enraged, for the perception of his color is threatening.

But this "menace" grows from feelings unspoken, questions unasked and

unanswered, and assumptions made. It seems the literal manifestation of words that

Baldwin wrote nearly a decade earlier in "Stranger in the Village":

> The rage of the disesteemed is personally fruitless, but is also absolutely
>
> inevitable; this rage, so generally discounted, so little understood even
>
> among the people whose daily bread it is, is one of the things that makes
>
> history . . . Rage cannot be hidden, it can only be dissembled. This

dissembling deludes the thoughtless, and strengthens the rage and adds, to

rage, contempt. There are, no doubt, as many ways of coping with the

resulting complex of tensions as there are black men in the world, but no

black man can hope ever to be entirely liberated from this internal

warfare—rage, dissembling, and contempt having inevitably accompanied

his first realization of the power of white men.[94]

Baldwin attributed this rage to blackness alone, and it is quite pronounced when one

cannot escape the visual marker that "disesteem[s]." But, Baldwin's insights in "Stranger

in the Village" directly apply to a review of James. The "power of white men" is not only

physical; it is ideological. It exists in the laws, both legal and social, that govern the

existence not only of the "black men" of whom Baldwin spoke, but also of the white men

who would be party to that governance.

Though evidence of "rage" is hard to come by in James's texts, like Baldwin, he

inevitably interrogated the validity of an identity paradigm that resulted in such engulfing

psychic destruction. Rather than full-fledged ire, James often exhibited reserved anger,

building frustration, deep disappointment, or masks of gentility disintegrating as a result

of gender norms. The practices that Baldwin discussed—"dissembl[ing]," evading,

"delud[ing]," "disesteem[ing]"—are just as present, however, in James's canon. For

instance, in *Roderick Hudson* (1875), James's first novel published in hardback, we are

privy to the nebulousness of the male roles played by the young artist, Roderick Hudson,

and his benefactor, Rowland Mallett; the mentor and protégé relationship between the

two masks a multilayered struggle over what a man should be. In the final exchange

between Roderick and Rowland, we see James give voice to the "frozen place" within the

American man. After Rowland attempts to warn the fickle Roderick away from Christina Light, Roderick says:

> There is something monstrous in a man's pretending to lay down the law to a sort of emotion with which he is quite unacquainted—in his asking a fellow to give up a lovely woman for conscience sake when *he* has never had the impulse to strike a blow for one for passion's! . . . there are such things as nerves and senses and imagination and a restless demon within that may sleep sometimes for a day, or for six months, but that sooner or later wakes up and thumps at your ribs till you listen to him! If you can't understand it, take it on trust and let a poor visionary devil live his life as he can! [95]

Though ultimately his character may not, Roderick's words illustrate imbibed male norms. For Roderick, "something monstrous" lies in Rowland's manhood. There is "something monstrous" about Rowland's contention that he should relinquish his pursuit of Miss Light. Though James began the segment by conflating 'lay[ing] down the law" with "emotion," complicating the manliness that he was discussing with the emotional realm of the feminine, he continued by presenting an almost hyper-masculine allusion to conquest without morality—pursuit of "lovely woman" and reluctance to "give [her] up" for "conscience sake." Rowland's suggestion that it is somehow immoral to pursue Christina Light given Roderick's wavering attentions places him outside of Roderick's norms. The idea of "strik[ing] a blow for one's passion's" connotes a physicality or forcefulness that is expected in the 'normal' man, as well as a type of "passion" for which men may be forgiven—that for the opposite sex. In the end, Roderick breaks his vision of

manhood down to science and psychology—"nerves and senses and imagination"; as he does so, he reveals that prescribed norms are both physical and psychological and prepares the reader for James's deconstruction of his accepted ideal.

Referencing an animal nature that waits within the man to emerge, James foregrounded the fin-de-siecle anxiety over masculine constructions.[96] Yet, the mention of a "devil" points the reader back to the first line of this paragraph. Roderick juxtaposes his perception of Rowland's "monstrous[ness]" with the "devil" within himself, and in having him do so, James was actually "visionary." The suggestion is that they are both "monstrous[ly]" outside of the masculine ideal in some way. Through Rowland's reply, James undermined Roderick's perceptions of his own masculinity. More importantly, he undercut the very idea of a 'normal' expression of manhood. Rowland replies:

> 'You are talking arrogant nonsense. What do you know about my senses and my imagination. How do you know whether I have loved or suffered? If I have held my tongue and not troubled you with my complaints, you find it the most natural thing in the world to put an ignoble construction on my silence! I loved quite as well as you; indeed I think I may say rather better. I have been constant . . .'
>
> 'Your love—your suffering—your silence—your friendship!' cried Roderick. 'I declare I don't understand!'
>
> 'I dare say not. You are not used to understanding such things . . . You are altogether too much taken up with your own.'[97]

James's dialogue reminds us of Baldwin's, for in it, we may easily envision anger that "cannot be hidden . . . only dissembled . . . delud[ing] the thoughtless, . . . strengthen[ing]

the [anger] and add[ing] . . . contempt."[98] Rowland questions Roderick's distinctly

American "arrogance"—his self-centered desire to impose his own ideological

assumptions on Mallett's "senses and imagination" rather than "understand" them.

"Thoughtless[ly]," Roderick assumes that Rowland's "silence" is indicative of something

"ignoble." Rowland experiences "contempt" at Roderick's "unwarrantable aggression"

and one-ups him in this rhetorical battle over masculinity.[99] He asserts that he has not

only "love[d]" a woman as a man should, but also "rather better" than Roderick because

he has been "constant." He resists the young man's "ignoble construction" of his

manhood. The word "ignoble" suggests the comparison in quality of manhood that James

effects. It seems "the most natural thing in the world" for Roderick to characterize

Rowland as different and base, rather than seek to understand his "silence."

But, it is not merely Rowland's difference that is at issue. Neither of these

characters is normative. Roderick walks a tightrope between the feminine and the

masculine. He believes himself to be consciously manly, but he is fickle and overly

passionate. He is ruled by his passions, something often perceived as effeminate; his

passionate nature makes him unreasonable, and his fickleness is counter to Rowland's

resolution. While it would seem that James's assertion of Mallett's "constan[cy]"

privileged Rowland as the better man, he quickly counteracted that assumption.

Roderick's response to him locates his complaints within the realm of the sentimental

heroine, "love . . . suffering . . . silence," undermining the evoked ideal. James implied

that what Roderick "[does not] understand" is manhood apart from the norm. When

Rowland's behavior defies Roderick's notion of the masculine, rather than question the

norm itself, he labels Rowland "abnormal."[100] In much the same way that Baldwin

intimated his narrator must accept an expanded view of masculinity and blackness in "Sonny's Blues," in *Roderick Hudson*, James exposed the need to recognize both characters as alternate and valid realizations of manhood.

There are myriad examples of such queries in James's canon. In "The Beast in the Jungle," we see John Marcher's attempt "to pass for a man like another," needing May Bertram, above all, to fulfill a particular societal vision of masculine existence to mask his difference—difference which we, as readers, can only conjecture.[101] In *The American* (1877), Christopher Newman is "the superlative American: to which affirmation of character he was partly helped by the general easy magnificence of his manhood." He is the "perfect" physical specimen of American manhood, but his expression embodies American "contradic[tions]" and speaks to his character. He is

> frigid yet friendly, frank yet cautious, shrewd yet credulous, positive yet sceptical [sic], confident yet shy, extremely intelligent and extremely good-humoured, …vaguely defiant…and profoundly reassuring in [his] reserve.[102]

James description suggests inconsistency—as if one does not know quite how to read him or the type that he represents. But, more importantly, as Eric Haralson has argued, Newman, does not quite know how to read himself. His American assurance (both physical and 'capital') and that touch of "defian[ce]" make him "dangerously incognizant of himself in any larger social context."[103] He is limited; his ideological space is limited. Moreover, because he is wronged and wounded in the novel, manipulated in a way that James's heroines later would be, the incongruous "elements of his identity" push the reader to question *The American*'s manhood, itself.

Perhaps the most pointed and overt treatment of the male self comes in *The Ambassadors* (1903). In it, James created a middle-aged man who has lived his entire life according to inscribed masculine values—only to discover that there is an identity beyond them. James wrote of Lambert Strether,

> *The* false position, for our belated man of the world—belated because he had endeavoured so long to escape being one, and now at last had really to face his doom—the false position for him, I say, was obviously to have presented himself at the gate of that boundless menagerie primed with a moral scheme of the most approved pattern which was yet framed to break down on any approach to vivid facts; that is to any at all liberal appreciation of them.[104]

In his dealings with Chad Newsome, as well as with Mrs. Newsome, Mr. Waymarsh, and Ms. Gostrey, Strether is operating under a delusional set of standards that stifle him and in some cases emasculate him. Neither physically, nor ideologically superior, Strether is once asked by Waymarsh, "ain't you about up your usual average?"[105] He is an average man—not "the highest type."[106] Financially and materially unsuccessful, he is a 'kept' man under the proper, hawk-like eyes of Mrs. Newsome. His subject position is an impotent one.[107] Being in Paris and gaining a "consciousness of personal freedom as he had n't known for years" awakens him to his hand in his own imprisonment.[108] He comes to Paris as the "ambassador" of American masculine precepts in order to return Chad Newsome to his proper place at the head of the family enterprise, but as he comes to know Chad and his counterparts, he sees that the nebulous system to which he has

adhered is "framed to break down on any approach to vivid facts." According to James, he is

> encaged…[because] he has to keep in view properties much stiffer and more salutary than any our straight and credulous gape are likely to bring home to him, has exhibitional conditions to meet, in a word, that forbid the terrible *fluidity* of self-revelation.[109]

The "exhibition" of manhood damns him, and ultimately, James used him to question an antagonistic construct, asking whether his awakening, come so late, leaves him "time for reparation . . . for the injury done his character"?[110] In this one moment, Baldwin's words resound, for Strether, too, is locked in "an ideal so paralytically infantile that is it virtually forbidden—as an unpatriotic act—that . . . [he] evolve into the complexity of manhood."[111] James engaged the idea of corporate manhood, and his awakening to its stifling nature opened the door to a more varied, "fluid," and more "complex" understanding of masculinity.

Even in those texts featuring "the American girl," such as *Daisy Miller* (1878)*, The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), or "Mora Montravers" (1907), James exposed the alienating and ambiguous qualities of manly identity, for the women sought to escape their subordination and be free of male-designed dictates for their identities. We are struck by the fact that in James's *Daisy Miller*, Winterbourne's narrow and proprietary visions damn Daisy; his distinctly American obtuseness and unflinching, though erroneous moral certainty hinder him from seeing Daisy for what she truly is. While James positioned Winterbourne as a "gentleman," and while the very idea of the "gentleman" points more to class than to gender, I suggest that even this label is related

to status and the imbibed notions of primacy and societal authority surrounding his maleness.[112] He is unforgiving; he damages those around him because of it; and a young girl who exists outside of the gender model to which he ascribes is destroyed. Though James offered that perhaps Winterbourne had been away from America too long, his frigidity and regimented tastes, like those of Waymarsh in *The Ambassadors,* are typical of the American manly sensibility that James presented.

Through Gender to Race

The question of James's racial subjectivity is far more complex and entwined with his understanding of gender alienation. Baldwin may easily have recognized this. Rereading James, it is likely that race may have been far more important in his works than first imagined. There was often tension between his position as beneficiary of whiteness and the consciousness of difference that his masculine marginalization afforded him, as an excerpt from a letter written to E. L. Godkin in 1882 shows. James wrote of the American capital, "Washington is too much of a village—though the absence of trade & stockbroking (sic) is delightful. It is too niggerish, & that has rubbed off on some of the whites."[113] His statement reminds us of his position outside the masculine mold, for his Emersonian aversion to the "grasping business-man" and his joy, perhaps, in the gentility of the "absence of trade and stockbroking" recalls his need to challenge the idea of the masculine. However, his use of the term "niggerish" stings and displays an investment in a troubling, though common, means of racial categorization. Involved in a figurative performance of the 'hokey pokey,' with one foot in the center circle, he suggested that there was slowness, laziness, or something otherwise derogatory associated with the African-American overtaking "the whites" and, by extension, the

39

nation's capital. This speaks to his awareness of, if not immersion in, the racial hysteria of the epoch. At the same time, however, his other foot was outside of the enclosed circle symbolically celebrating a possible departure from the typology of the model American businessman.

As his career progressed, however, there were a number of moments that less obliquely foreshadowed the critical inquiry of ethnic otherness through gender that would characterize his late writings.[114] Take for instance, the moment in *The American* (1877) in which Mr. Tristram indicates to Christopher Newman that Paris is "really the only place for a white man to live."[115] Tristram is chauvinistic, banal, void of intellectual depth, and fixated on appearances. He is a man whose life centers around the empirical ordering of things, but whose characterization leaves us wondering who he really is and whether his rather naturalistic classifications have any meaning at all. Mr. Tristram's words hint at a sense of freedom in Paris—freedom from American rigidity. This seems appropriate for a character who frequently launches into harsh criticisms of his home country based on his sense of hierarchical dominance. But, his use of the words, "white man" rather than simply "man" is laden with potential meaning. Yes, James located this character within the masculine anxiety accompanying women's rights during the time period. However, given the year of publication, the final year of federally mandated Reconstruction in the South, Tristram's statement also potentially taps into the fear of racial encroachment that dominated the union. In that sense, and in keeping with Tristram's sense of ordination, what Paris gives "a white man" is freedom to be "white" without the resonance of a Civil War fought over slavery or the looming presence of the freed African-American, the amalgamated being, or anyone other encroaching on his

40

status as a "white man." In Paris, his 'manhood rights'—the privileges of his race and sex—are not threatened. Although James offered no further commentary on the statement, somewhere between the reader's (or James's) possible dismissal of Tristram for his faults and the expatriate racial retreat intimated by Tristram's statement lay James opening a door to racial interrogation.[116]

The Europeans (1878) presents a similar instance. In it, the Baronness exclaims her desire to have "a cook! . . . an old negress in a yellow turban" for "local color." [117] As with Mr. Tristram, James satirized the Baroness' affectations, making her seem ludicrous and ostentatious amidst her rural surroundings and sedate, minimalist cousins. In fact, he cast her as the stereotypical, upper class, Euro-American woman, haughty, frivolous, and, quite frankly, in poor taste. He imported the 'Mammy' stereotype, playing into the racial anxieties of the period. The "mammy," publicly typified by an exoticized "old negress" in a "turban," is a heavily contested caricature of the African-American woman, slave and non-slave. She was historically the woman who bore children of multiple hues and cared for the master's offspring often at the expense of her own; she nurtured, reared, and loved only to be lampooned and cast aside.[118] More importantly, her role in the white southern home was one that troubled the traditional roles of womanhood and motherhood. Along with the ideation of the promiscuous black woman, she allowed for the binary construction of pristine white womanhood in opposition to the bestial black woman and breeder.[119] Again, James left room for reader interpretation, for there was no further verbal engagement of her words. Yet, the contexts of the age of minstrelsy and Jim Crow give James's language far more weight. His use of the stereotype and the

vehicle through which he used it simultaneously locate him *in* the raced rhetoric of the moment and *outside* of it as its interrogator.

Such early instances evidence a steady movement toward dealing with race overtly, and in the 1880's and 1890's, James began to access the racial conversation much more pointedly. We see him straddling a fence between 'alien' spaces—readily interrogating gender and treating race with approach/avoidance. This is most evident in *The Bostonians* (1886), James's fictionalization of the Women's Movement. His protagonist Basil Ransom is a Mississippi native with all the "feminine softness [of] a Southern gentleman." The description of him toys with notions of gender separation and seems to suggest the hazy gender hybridity for which James might have longed. However, James troubled gender with race through the regional reference. The "feminine softness" of this "gentleman" is at odds with the harshness and bloodiness of his roots and Southern ideology. Ransom is a representative of "the old slave-holding oligarchy which . . . had plunged the country with blood and tears."[120] Basil's characterization melds James's early interest in gender, high culture, and status with the racial and economic tensions that tore America asunder, for the South had effectually held the union in 'ransom' over slavery.[121] While his appearance, behavior, and origins suggest between-ness in terms of gender and allude to racial violence, Basil's voice subtly suggests a merging of racial types. His speech is "pervaded by something sultry and vast, something almost African in its rich, basking tone, something that suggested the teeming expanse of the cotton-field." The resonance of the "African" hybridizes his voice, making it symbolic of a new identity beyond understanding, sensuous, exotic, and larger than anything previously imagined. The crux is that it is rooted in the ironically juxtaposed *life*

42

of the flourishing "cotton-field" and *death* inherent in the paternal institution that nourished that "teeming" field in blood.

In Ransom, a man attempting to locate his masculine place and come to terms with his racial heritage, James suggested something new. All that the author put into creating him shows the complexity of unraveling and re-imagining the American self. Perhaps because it is so complex—this mire of race and gender—James pulled back; rather than directly entangle himself in the racial miasma, he retreated superficially from the fray and allowed the fight for women's rights to become the symbol of difference as a whole in the text. Ross Posnock might term this a "serpentine negotiation with otherness.[122] If one accepts Posnock's critique, James's skirting the issue seems, in part, understandable, for accepting and engaging the racial hybrid necessitates coming to terms with America's dark history and the extreme ironies that belie it; this is not an easy or comfortable task (as Baldwin clearly stated).

Rather than an overt critique, then, I find it more fruitful to read Ransom and *The Bostonians* as James's attempt to learn to deal with racial difference within his own comfort zone—gender. He began with the masculine and the feminine, for clearly, the tension between Olive Chancellor and Basil highlights the very same battle for gender primacy that characterized *Portrait* and other novels. Olive's 'masculine' strength and unwillingness to be cowed is a threat to Basil's already effeminized, Southern manhood. Their 'battle' for Verena Tarrant binds them.[123] Yet, when Verena voices her purpose in the Women's movement, there is meaning far beyond the sexual politics that Olive and Basil represent. She says,

I believe I attracted considerable attention; of course, that's what Olive

wants—it paves the way for future work. I have no doubt I reached many

that wouldn't have been reached otherwise. They think that's my great

use—to take hold of the outsiders, as it were; of those who are prejudiced

or thoughtless, or who don't care about anything unless it's amusing. I

wake up the attention.[124]

In this moment, Verena mirrors her author, who spoke from a gender margin to alter the

gender center, showing those in the center that they are asleep in their adherence to their

beliefs. Through Verena, James inverted the idea of "outsiders," quite obviously

disrupting the sexual hierarchy.[125] For Olive and Verena, the term "outsiders" denotes

anyone on the periphery of their movement—anyone who needs to be "[a]wake[ned]" to

their "prejudice" or "thoughtless[ness]." But in America, it is they who are the

"outsiders"—the marginalized beings who are the "disesteemed" victims of the

"prejudiced or thoughtless"; their job is to "wake up the attention" of the nation or be

forever subordinated.[126] Basil, though a regional and ideological "outsider" in the North,

is afforded certain privileges because of his race and sex—rights for which Verena,

Olive, and their sisters are fighting ardently. By extension, in the South, his race and sex

grant him privileges above both those of African descent and women. Thus, Southern

origins, racial ideology, and gender norms make him triply representative of both the

"prejudiced" and "thoughtless" individuals who Verena is meant to "reach."

Though not as overtly, James disrupted the racial hierarchy as well. Moving

through gender to race, James foreshadowed the discussion of ethnicity that would

permeate *The American Scene*. Basil's presence links masculinity, suffrage, and slavery.

The ties between suffragists and abolitionists are well known, as are the racial and political reasons for the separation of the two movements. Suffragists agitated because they were granted no more rights of citizenship than a foreigner in America—rights that had already been linked to manhood and rights over which Basil is suffering quite a bit of anxiety.[127] In one instance, the narrator asks, "What else were the Africans" than "foreigners?," linking and complicating the ideas of citizenship, manhood, womanhood, and blackness.[128] James momentarily questioned the position of the "African" in the national scheme, wondering, if only vaguely, if his physical and ideological presence was truly part of the nation. Through the woman question, he briefly occupied himself with one of the biggest racial questions of the day, and he opened the door to contemplating race just a little further, as if building to a threshold racial cognizance that would ultimately explode in *The American Scene*.[129]

Through Baldwin's Eyes

It is from the need to find an identity space to inhabit peacefully that Baldwin's and James's characters seem to be born. Their voices differ, and this cannot be ignored. Baldwin's brand of psychological realism brings with it an overt, biting examination of gender, racial, and national exile because of his own historicity. Where James's texts show us Victorian silences filled with tension, subtle allusions, unspoken agonies, and loss, Baldwin's, largely due to the volatile and far more open times in which he wrote, show us characters writhing visibly and painfully under the weight of labels—male, female, gay, straight, white, black, American, European. Yet, differences in voice and context aside, their works reveal characters struggling to free themselves and locate their identities despite that which has been dictated for them—often to no avail.

Their male characters seek to perform norms outwardly—often unconsciously—while some awaken to consciousness of hoped-for alternatives to them.[130] The performance of gender roles spans multiple genres and fields, for it is essential to normalizing American masculinity and both James's and Baldwin's explorations of all gendered spaces—whether overtly or covertly. That space in which the polarities of gender prescriptions intersect in their writing—the space *across* genders—is most fruitful for and most unattended in current scholarship. Both writers explored what Michel Foucault labeled the "more confused, more obscure domain" between "the empirical orders with which [every man] will be dealing and within which he will be at home" and the ""theories" or "interpretations" that explain that order. To Foucault, it was in that realm of the "obscure" that "codes of a culture" could be questioned and potentially relinquished.[131] James and Baldwin seemed to consider that though many men found this space "uncomfortable," it was simply a fact of human existence. It was through this space that both James and Baldwin, internally at least, seemed to pass in order to "relinquish" the labels that so poorly defined them. The ways, then, that James, like Baldwin, explored whether or not a subject could (or could not) explode or circumnavigate the boundaries of dominant gender and/or racial prescriptions comprise the lens through which I approach the texts read in my chapters. Acting as the conscience of a nation, as artists often do, James, read in a Baldwinian manner, sought to enable his readership to imagine a locus for identity that was not so tragically flawed in its accommodation of multiple facets of the self. His goal, it seems, was developing a space truly representative of the full consciousness that could be reasonably manifested in the societal psyche.

Therefore, the remainder of this study is a series of close readings in which I consider certain fictional and non-fictional Jamesian texts in light of Baldwinian ones. In five chapters, including this introduction and a conclusion, I reexamine James's responses to and interrogations of masculine norms and racial normativity mediated through masculinity. Though their canons are large, I have selected the texts that I have found most directly reflective of one another, for Baldwin did rely on certain Jamesian fictional models. I offer that the ways in which Baldwin recast these models enriches our reading of them. In short, I present a Baldwin manipulation of a Jamesian model and reflection of James's text in light of it. Ultimately, my intent is to probe the means by which James, more vividly than has previously been shown, aided us in scrutinizing the multiple facets of American identity itself.

My first chapter, "From a *Portrait* to a *Room*" examines Baldwin's manipulation of the paradigm that James sets forth in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). In *Giovanni's Room* (1956), Baldwin presents a novel of gender confinement. Though the novel is entitled *Giovanni's Room* seems superficially to be about Giovanni, in fact, this novel is about the potential for making the perceived aberrant male 'acceptable' beyond the walls of his room. It is much like, I argue, *Portrait* is about exploding the metaphorically gendered frame of the portrait inside which male characters attempt to force Isabel. Though with Giovanni, Baldwin invited us to see the subjugation of a marginalized being, as did James with Isabel, Giovanni is ultimately sacrificed far more violently for white masculine primacy than is Isabel for Victorian gender norms. Overtly privileging the male in a novel that is absent of fully characterized women, Baldwin primarily featured not Giovanni himself, but another intensely fragmented male as the dominant

47

consciousness. Though the novel is absent of non-white characters, Baldwin wrote a text that queried a masculine model that was intensely raced. Rather than the separate male typology that James so carefully constructed in *Portrait*, Baldwin housed multiple layers of consciousness in one, white male frame—David. He allowed the reader spectatorship as this white, blond, and extremely virile model of Anglo-Saxon manhood battled fiercely within his consciousness to inhabit a perceived masculine 'ideal.'

Through David, Baldwin more overtly questioned the nature of racial hegemony's relationship to masculinity than did James, for David is externally representative of an Anglo-masculinity that subordinates all in its path. He is faced with reconciling his behavior with his appearance and the realization that, should he be true to himself, there would be no "ideal" to inhabit. Not only does his relationship with Giovanni explode it, but also it necessitates that he accept that there is not *one* expression of manhood, but many. Giovanni's four walls become symbolic of an alternative space in which David could view his buried homosexuality as something other than flawed manhood. But, he rejects it, and because of his refusal to see the lunacy of male mythology, he incurs his own self-abhorrence. Giovanni is subsequently destroyed—a symbolic purging of the aberrant self—so that the performance of American, white male prescriptions may continue. But, in being single-mindedly complicit in flawed masculine performance, David also destroys himself.

My second chapter, then, "A *Portrait* of Masculinity" explores Jamesian gender deconstruction through new eyes. In it, I read James's *The Portrait of a Lady*, one of Baldwin's favorite texts, to explore the author's use of overt marginalization to question male identity. Again, despite the titular mention of the "lady," and despite James's

insistence in his "Preface" that the text was about and written from the perspective of Isabel Archer's "consciousness," it is the idea of portraiture itself that is at issue. The title leads one to the artist rather than the subject, and I argue that though we are privy to Isabel Archer's consciousness in the text, James introduced his reader to multiple, white males of varied body types and degrees of adherence to a supposed male norm. I examine the ways in which the novel demystifies the conception of American manhood and identifies its prescriptions as constrictive forces for anyone who attempts to exist within *or* outside of them.

I read *Portrait* as James's most insistent depiction of the limited and limiting spatial confinement involved in Anglo-Saxon, masculine gender construction, for before he revealed Isabel to us, he used his first chapter to delve into the masculine gender performance that would govern Isabel's existence. Later segments of the text build on the first as we are introduced to the aging American male who is growing increasingly emasculated, the sickly American male, feeble and effeminate, the rigid and physically powerful American male, and a studied representative of their Anglo-Saxon roots. Amidst them, we meet a hyper-stylized and consciously forceful performance of masculinity by a Europeanized American man who is outwardly effeminate.[132] As the novel plays out, we learn that in this war of male typology, there is no room for an emergent, feminine strength *or* a psychologically marginal man.

My third chapter is titled "A 'Stranger' Encounters the 'Alien.'" In it, I link Baldwin's "Stranger in the Village" narrowly to James's *The American Scene* (1904). From the vantage point of Europe (and only from that place), Baldwin was able to separate himself from the immediacy of racial subordination and deconstruct its sources.

Baldwin's work mirrors James's long psychological journey through *The American Scene*. I argue that looking backward at James's through "Stranger['s]" filter, we can see that James's marginalized male sensibility primed him for engagement with racial constructions. In "Stranger," Baldwin captured the mindset that I argue James ultimately learned that he must reconsider. "Not, really, a stranger" to "any American alive," Baldwin's race was intertwined with white American identity, or rather, the "illusion" under which white Americans operated to convince themselves that they "still ha[d] the luxury of looking upon [him] as a stranger."[133] Gifted with "an authority which [Baldwin would] never have" and "initiated" in the history of America that was "trapped in [him]" because of his Anglo-Saxon origins and appearance, James first approached those who were othered in a way that Baldwin distinctly articulated; he viewed each "quite rightly, not only as a stranger in [his] village but as a suspect latecomer, bearing no credentials, to everything [he had]—however unconsciously—inherited."[134]

But, the alien, again borrowing from Baldwin, "strangely graft[ed]" himself on James's psyche and pointed to the assimilating "system" at the center of American ideology as mythology. Consequently, he learned that the idea of whitening those who would be American was not only anxiety-laden to all involved, but clearly impossible. Though James's whiteness had always been the mask behind which he could hide his marginalization, a mask granting privilege, his return to America amidst a sea of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants forced him to face the fact that race inevitably could not be ignored in America, as Baldwin insisted all must. Mediating his discussion of race through gender and, ultimately, realizing that the two were interminably bound in the American male psyche, James documented his homeland's racial and gendered

50

impotence. In doing so, he recognized himself not only as a gendered outsider in a hyper-masculine America, but also as an ethnic and racial outsider, for at least on the streets of New York, his whiteness marked him as the "alien"; his difference no longer hidden, he became, to use Baldwin's words, a "stranger in the village" of the place of his birth. Because of it, he, like Baldwin, began to question the primacy of Anglo-Saxonism, and he discerned not only that race and status as he had imbibed them did not exist, but also that because of this fact, the American idea of masculinity, long challenged as an ideal in his canon, was null and void. As Baldwin did in "Stranger," James ultimately suggested that those who subscribed to the otherness of all who were non-white were actually the "stranger[s]"—to themselves, those around them, and the actualities of a nation not created by their hands alone. The end of the text shows us an author who metaphorically insisted that the American man reconsider his identity because he was increasingly de-centered in a nation that, as Baldwin wrote, had never been and would never be white.

My conclusion positions this study in a broad field of American literary and cultural scholarship. James and Baldwin called for a broadening of Americanness—apart from race, apart from prescriptive masculine norms, apart from binaries themselves. They were lodged between actual American experience and dreamed American existence—one in which alienation from the self need not occur because being 'American' need not be predicated on singularity and divisiveness. They called for respect and validation of multiple facets of individual identity. In fact, the flaws that the two perceived in America are those that inform its largest flaws presently. Numerous authors have drawn upon this fact. The authors' journeys into the psychology of American identity lay the groundwork for myriad authors within the larger field of American literature who have suggested and

51

continue to suggest a failure in the collective American psyche. The idea of whiteness and male primacy, the same one that validates a construct like the validity of "cowboys" and the invalidity of "Indians," the rightness of the "stud" and the wrongness of the "queer" is the current running through a populace which buys the puerile duality of an "Axis of Evil." There is a naiveté and blindness in a people who seem uncompromisingly to believe that everyone has the same opportunities, that racism, classicism, and other "isms" no longer exist. This blindness, this isolated experience of the world and themselves, this epidemic alienation in the American psyche was arguably, for each author, the potential source of America's demise. Ultimately, Baldwin built upon James's standard of "seeing through" and created, like his predecessor, a revelatory vision of American identity construction built on a deeply flawed foundation.

Chapter One: From a *Portrait* to a *Room*

We are all androgynous, not only because we are all born of a woman impregnated by the seed of a man but because each of us, helplessly and forever, contains the other—male in female, female in male, white in black and black in white. We are a part of each other. Many of my countrymen appear to find this fact exceedingly inconvenient and even unfair, and so, very often, do I. But none of us can do anything about it. –James Baldwin[1]

As Baldwin intimated, the potential for gender and racial re-imagination is actually *within* each of us, a hybrid space—one that is not masculine OR feminine, as society necessitates, but unnamed and "androgynous"—"inconvenient" even—because it is not normalized. It is in this type of space that Baldwin could have felt whole, but masculine anxiety necessitated that departures from the norm be disparaged or destroyed. It is this sense of being imprisoned in system of definition that was not only sexually normative in a biological sense, but also hetero-normative, that bespeaks a sense of damnation in James's work—one that clearly impacted Baldwin.

In his canon, Baldwin burrowed through the gender chasm to articulate race, but, unlike James, he overtly and frankly engaged racial prescriptions, often privileging them in his discussion of manhood. While he found kinship in James and his model of gender critique, his own experiences called for him to trouble manhood further than James from the start, for as a Black man and a homosexual, whiteness and perceived emasculation plagued him. His blackness was a visible marker that historically placed him outside the confines of American masculine precepts. His homosexuality, an unseen marker, further displaced him. Suggesting that a person need not be raced or gendered, but conceived as something apart from racial *and* gender binaries and their connotations, Baldwin complicated James's masculine uncertainty, effecting a reading of American manhood

that called into question the historical confines of citizenship and place in American society.

This chapter, then, explores Baldwin's addition of racial and sexual discord to James's already troubled "Portrait" of gender identity in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). Understanding that "the Negro Problem in America can[not] be discussed coherently without bearing in mind its context[,] . . . the history, traditions, customs, moral assumptions and preoccupations of the country," Baldwin addressed sexuality, class, and gender constraints with attention to their racial implications, for these were the nation's "preoccupations."[2] The question at hand for him was whether someone who is African-American, homosexual, or marginal in any way could be a *man* within the dominant male construct? Historically, the answer to that question is no. But, Baldwin wrote, "The sexual question and the racial question have always been entwined . . . : if Americans can mature on the racial question, then they have to mature on the sexual question."[3] Thus, his agenda, however doomed it may have been, was clearing a path for the "matur[ation]" to occur—undercutting the blindness both to others and ourselves that James so well characterized.

Baldwin addressed the foundations of manhood in *Giovanni's Room* (1956). Instead of within the mind of a woman relegated to marginalized spaces as in James's *The Portrait of a Lady*, Baldwin's text takes place solely in the consciousness of the male skirting the edges of marginalization and fighting with all of his might not to cross the socially imposed line between the masculine and feminine. According to Baldwin biographer, James Campbell, Giovanni is Baldwin's Isabel Archer.[4] And, clearly, Giovanni, whose room alternately serves as safe-haven and prison, is confined to spatial

boundaries similar to those that confine Isabel. Here, however, there are not four pieces of a frame, but four walls. In that respect, Leeming's point is well taken. Baldwin's novel is far more complex than Leeming's reading suggests, though. Yes, Giovanni is subordinated, and yes, one can easily link his plight to Isabel's. He wishes to be free, to choose his existence, and to throw off the labels that plague him. But, just as I will argue in chapter two that the focus of James's novel is the artists of the portrait and their anxious masculinity, the focus of *Giovanni's Room* is much more the masculine dilemma that necessitates Giovanni's subordination.

Baldwin situated the discomforting, 'dominant' male consciousness *and* the things that undermine its primacy in one white male figure—David. More specifically, in him, Baldwin housed multiple masculine expressions vying for identity sanctuary, writing David's consciousness as a battlefield on which the war between pristine manhood and its feminized self—between representative masculinity and one of its challenges, the homosexual male—is fought. In doing so, he wrote, as Dwight McBride argues, "a novel [not] about gay sexuality as much as it is a novel about the social and discursive forces that make gay sexuality a 'problem.'"[5] The result is a text that reveals the war over performed manhood as an intensely internal one both projected onto and emanating from the social psyche. Baldwin addressed the Jamesian confusion over gender identity, intensified it with a clear homosexual reference, and then, complicated it further by directly addressing race.

Though I argue that the novel is remarkably raced, it is notably absent of any overtly 'raced' characters. Of his reasons for writing the novel in this way, Baldwin explained:

Giovanni came out of something I had to face. I certainly could not possibly have—not at that point in my life—handled the other great weight, the "Negro Problem." The sexual-moral light was a hard thing to deal with. I could not handle both propositions in the same book. There was no room for it. I might do it differently today, but then, to have a black presence in the book at that moment, and in Paris, would have been quite beyond my powers.[6]

Baldwin insisted that he could not deal with race and sexuality simultaneously, but I argue that if sexuality and race are entwined in America, "the sexual-moral light" is a symbolic means of dealing with the "Negro Problem." African-American males are historically emasculated, and Baldwin frequently argued that ideas about homosexuality had "nothing to do with sexual preference."[7] Because white ideology is ever-present in America, Baldwin's exploration of the "sexual-moral light" necessarily revolves around whiteness, for it is against the construction of a dominant, white male social and sexual identity in America that the negative space of homosexual and black males exists.[8] Baldwin used *Giovanni's Room* to uncover what exactly a white man *believed he should be*—the "portrait of man"—before introducing us to the victims of his mythology.[9] At the heart of this novel, then, is whiteness and manhood combined with all of their collective weight, ferocity, and dysfunction questioned, as well as refigured hopefully to include space for a homosexual man.

The Face of A Conqueror

Baldwin had no mask. But, he created a character that *could* have one—much like James. By doing so, he illustrated that the same construct that rendered his multi-faceted

56

identity null and void destroyed itself because of its reliance on the presence of 'others' for its existence; the others' presence naturally called its validity into question. Baldwin began his text in the tradition of Poe's "William Wilson: A Tale" (1839) or Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (1912); he introduced us to a fractured figure flashing back to his sins and offering limited repentance. He did not begin with sexuality, as James did not begin with womanhood. Instead, he opened with exteriority of the white, male body, moving meticulously by degrees into the mangled layers of the psyche beneath it.

As the novel opens, David stares out of his window in the South of France drinking to forget, studying his

> reflection in the darkening gleam of the window pane. [His] reflection is tall, perhaps rather like an arrow, [his] blond hair gleams. [His] face is like a face you have seen many times. [His] ancestors conquered a continent, pushing across death-laden plains, until they came to an ocean which faced away from Europe into a darker past.[10]

The description taps into the historical elements of whiteness and manhood.[11] The dimming light casts a shroud over his appearance, clouding what we soon learn is his distinctly Nordic exterior. His "tall" stature suggests that he is physically imposing, "rather like an arrow." At the same time that this simile resonates of masculine penetration, it also alludes to warfare. A weapon of war, the "arrow" is arguably as brutal a representation of primacy as Warburton's "dog-skin gloves" in *Portrait*.[12] Building on this link, Baldwin continued by locating David, with his "gleam[ing]" blond hair and

markedly familiar face, to the brutal history of the Anglo-Saxon male, and evoking the patriarchy and violence of colonization with the image of "death laden" plains."

The "arrow" imagery also blurs the lines between oppressor and oppressed. A weapon of early Anglo-Saxon warfare, it firmly locates David in a history of conquest. The allusion to the violence of American colonization deepens the significance of the reference. On the "plains," the Natives' "arrows" were no match for colonial guns. Though the weapon is a shared one linking the Natives' and Anglo-Saxons' pasts, this image recalls violence that leaves the Native displaced or destroyed, the white American male questioning his future, and neither sure of his identity. When faced with a boundary to their conquest (in this case "the ocean"), David's forefathers could no longer claim the sanctity of "Europe"—the very idea of European primacy—because the "plains" they had crossed and the destruction in their wake pointed not to their civilization (not to "Europe"), but to their savagery (to their resemblance to the image projected upon the native).[13] In his opening, Baldwin undermined the outward purity of white masculinity, "darke[ning]" it with its "past" and questioning its historical price. At the same time, he created a parallel between European and Native Americans—our first hint of the symbiosis that will dominate the text. David is essentially questioning the sanctity of raced, masculine identity and articulating the dichotomous relationship between 'center' and 'other'. Through him, Baldwin foreshadowed the doom of both the dominant and marginalized presence that later becomes the focus of the novel; the weight of this "past" is too heavy for David to bear. Though we do not yet know David's crime, Baldwin's opening implies that at the root of it is the burden of his whiteness.

We have only to build on the reading of the opening paragraph to see the continued blurring of boundaries. David is unfurled to us in increments *within* his consciousness. Awareness of his whiteness echoes in most of David's thoughts, but, more importantly, his complicity in its perpetuation and in creating his current misery do as well. For instance, David notes that on his journey away from the South of France, "the train will be the same, the people, struggling for comfort, and even dignity on the straight-backed, wooden, third-class seats will be the same, and I will be the same."[14] We notice as we read this passage that in David's current reverie, the projected train journey is both literal and metaphorical. Traveling away from the countryside will be lengthy, literally uncomfortable, and closely quartered in the third-class cabin. The "seats" are "straight-backed, wooden"–their rigidity suggesting the impossibility of "comfort" or "dignity" while in them, much as we learn in the novel that there is none for David in his attempts to inhabit an imaginary white male ideal.

Yet, the "same[ness]" of "the people" relegated to these seats in their "third-class" environment takes on a larger degree of symbolism. We learn as the novel unfolds that David refuses the potential "comfort" that Giovanni offers because he sees only its "[in]dignity"—the male-male love that, in his mind, makes him a "third class citizen." David's commonality with those who will be on the train—the shared struggle of humanity—is deceiving, for Baldwin did not write, "and the people [and I], struggling for comfort." He wrote, "[they] will be the same, and I will be the same," suggesting an intrinsic separation between David and those around him. We wonder if it is something anchored to his crime that sets him apart. As if foreshadowing the ambiguity of his conclusion, Baldwin seemed to ask whether David, with the face of a conqueror, truly

could be a part of the community, *or* if there is some aspect of his being that will keep him removed from it despite his similarities to those within it.

I indicate racial identity (in terms of Anglo-Saxonism) because, at this point, David has not revealed his personal crisis with sexual identity. Baldwin began with whiteness as the root of David's struggles, laying the groundwork for examining the alternately othered, sexual existence that is later of pivotal importance in the text. The illusory sense of community within the scene takes us deeper into David's mind. As David considers the journey more fully, he divulges a deeper fear—the enigmatic thing that casts a shadow over him, that which he believes separates him from all around him. He writes,

> We will ride through the same changing countryside northward, leaving behind the olive trees and the sea and all of the glory of the stormy southern sky, into the mist and rain of Paris. Someone will offer to share a sandwich with me, someone will offer me a sip of wine, someone will ask me for a match. People will be roaming the corridors outside, looking out of the windows, looking in at us. At each stop, recruits in their baggy brown uniforms and colored hats will open the compartment door to ask *Complet?* We will all nod Yes, like conspirators, smiling faintly at each other as they continue through the train. Two or three of them will end up before our compartment door, shouting at each other in their heavy, ribald voices, smoking their dreadful army cigarettes. There will be a girl sitting opposite me who will wonder why I have not been flirting with her . . . It will all be the same, only I will be stiller.[15]

On this ride, David will be the beneficiary of kindness, of community. He will have something that he can perhaps offer in return. He, like those around him in the cabin, will be the object of some scrutiny, feeling himself under a microscope in a sense. When the army recruits travel through the train, there will be the air of "conspiracy" amongst them—that feeling of "sameness" heightened in the face of regulatory force. David will be riding away from the "glory of the stormy southern sky," returning to the "mist and rain of Paris"—a site that we later learn was one of hoped-for resistance and is now one of submission to convention. Even in Baldwin's descriptions of the locales, we see diminishing potency—the difference between the fertile and sublime (in a Hudson River School sense) and the commonplace; the variance between the two suggests that of the possibility for a "storm" of resistance and the impotence, or resignation to the status quo, implied by the word "mist."

The army recruits, with their "heavy, ribald voices" signify the exact opposite of this impotence. "Smoking their dreadful army cigarettes"—dreadful because they are so *strong* and heavy in the air—they are "shouting at each other." They bombard David's senses—sight, sound, and smell—and impose themselves on an environment characterized by its forced quietude. They are incongruent with the scene, for their dominance and forcefulness is expected, but invasive in the closed quarters. Yet, including them allowed Baldwin to strike to the heart of David's internal disquietude. David considers the "girl sitting opposite [him] who will wonder why [he has] not been flirting with her." Juxtaposed with the soldiers' emergence, their loudness, camaraderie, and uniformity appear hyper-masculine in the face of David's uncertainty, inaction, and "stillness." Not performing the expected—"flirting with" this young woman—suggests

the very lack of potency to which the storm imagery alludes. Read against the virility of the soldiers, David is effectually marginal, and this small community of riders is resonant of a larger community seeking to inhabit defined roles—"conspir[ing]" together to appear to be what forces of convention push them to be. When David thinks, "they will be the same, only I will be stiller," we hear him realize his complicity in perpetuating the silent forces of social normalcy; and, he seems to recognize the falsity of doing so. At the same time, we see inaction that further emasculates him.

<u>"We can't invent our mooring posts"</u>

Four pages into chapter one, Baldwin shifted gears in his painstakingly precise revelation of David, and in doing so, reminded us again of the opening's import. The young man thinks, "And the countryside is still tonight, this countryside reflected through my image in the pane."[16] David's reflection, with its long, "arrow[-like]," imposing shape, is the lens through which we view a French countryside known for its rolling hills, beauty, and fertility. Because his appearance suggests Anglo-European dominance and all that this means hierarchically, socially, and sexually, the mediation of the landscape through the "reflection" of David's body again alludes to the whitening of the land in the colonial moment; it also mirrors the mediation of masculinity through whiteness. We question whether the landscape itself is "still," or if it is only being reflected through his translucent portrait's "still[ness]." When the light of the window fades, all that will remain is the dim likeness of his image and the darkness beyond it; metaphorically, the land will be gone, and David's impression will remain. While he undermined the potency of the Western male body and psyche, casting it in shadow, Baldwin's return to an echo of Western usurpation of the New World highlights the burden of David's heritage—

epitomized by his physical image. Baldwin pushed the reader to recall that a normalized

male self is not only white, but also heterosexual. He, then, thoroughly confused the

"image" in the window, displaying that it is simply the reflection of an ideological

construct linked to a socialized and ingrained façade; as such, it is damning, for it

demands that its inhabitant follow false rules, resist self realization, and destroy himself

by adhering to it.

Once readers are aware of David's performance of the white, masculine role that

his exterior represents, Baldwin's text pulls away another layer of the construct and starts

to unravel the mythology of normalcy in terms of sexuality. David's attempt to maintain

a heterosexual relationship is resonant of "Normman" seeking peace with his "Norma."[17]

Speaking of his "girl, Hella," David tells us that it is with her that he initially rented the

villa in the countryside. We learn that she has left and is currently traveling "back to

America." He envisions her aboard the ship carrying her home, "elegant, tense, and

glittering, surrounded by the light which fills the salon . . . drinking rather too fast, and

laughing, and watching the men."[18] Outwardly nearly iconic, Hella hearkens back to a

Hellenic queen or goddess in human form sparkling amidst her finery, aloof, lonely,

"laughing", drinking, and studying the bevy of male suitors surrounding her as she plays

her role.[19] David tells us

> That was how I met her, in a bar in Saint-Germain-des-Pres, she was
>
> drinking and watching, and that was why I liked her, I thought she would
>
> be fun to have fun with. That was how it began, that was all it meant to
>
> me; I am not sure now, in spite of everything, that it ever really meant
>
> more than that to me. And I don't think it ever really meant more than that

to her—at least not until she made that trip to Spain and, finding herself

there, alone, began to wonder, perhaps, if a lifetime of drinking and

watching the men was exactly what she wanted.[20]

He resembles Hemingway's "American" in "Hills Like White Elephants" (1927) in all of

his manipulative, self-absorption. As in that story, David's attachment to Hella is

superficial at best. Their relationship, built on "drinking," "watching," and "[having]

fun," is not rooted in any deep sense of understanding or empathy; there is no profound

emotional connection, no true ability to "see through" or feel for each other.[21]

As if reminding us that David is involved in an ongoing internal war, Baldwin

merged his revelation of David's homosexuality with this heterosexual relationship—the

ab-normal with the normal. He juxtaposed that which is expected of a man, that which

was deemed unmanly, and the potential for freedom from these expectations. In the same

instant that he overtly awakened us to David's being "with Giovanni" for the first time,

he exposed David's perfunctory marriage proposal to Hella. David recalls,

> it was too late by that time. I was already with Giovanni. I had asked her
>
> to marry me before she went away to Spain; and she laughed and I
>
> laughed but that, somehow, all the same, made it more serious for me, and
>
> I persisted . . . And the very last night she was here, the very last time I
>
> saw her, as she was packing her bag, I told her that I had loved her once,
>
> and I made myself believe it. But I wonder if I had. I was thinking, no
>
> doubt, of our nights in bed, of the peculiar innocence and confidence,
>
> which will never come again, which had made those night so delightful, so
>
> unrelated to past, present, or anything to come, so unrelated, finally to my

64

life since it was not necessary for me to take any but the most mechanical

responsibility for them. And these nights were being acted out under a

foreign sky, with no one to watch, no penalties attached—it was this last

fact which was our undoing, for nothing is more unbearable, once one has

it, than freedom. I suppose this was why I asked her to marry me; to give

myself something to be moored to . . . People can't unhappily invent their

mooring posts, their lovers & their friends . . . Life gives these and also

takes them away. The great difficulty is to say yes to life.[22]

David "laughs" in the discomfort and oddity of the moment. Clearly, by his admission, he

and Hella are not connected in a way that lends itself to marriage. Their laughter triggers

something in him—some place in him that registers the amusement as an affront to his

manhood, at least, a sense of manhood troubled by the fact that he "was already with

Giovanni." This makes him "more serious about" his proposal, largely because he

recognizes that "it was too late"; he knows that his proposal is merely a ploy, a means of

playing the role that he believes he should play. He and Hella act the couple "under a

foreign sky" free from constraint. When he later wonders if he "had loved her once" and

thinks that perhaps he had only "made himself believe it," his detachment and gender

performance are obvious. He cherishes nights of sexual play with her "since it was not

necessary for [him] to take any but the most mechanical responsibility for them."[23]

Robotically engaging in what is expected of him, he does not fully "connect" with

himself or her. Conversely, under this same sky, David has had the "freedom" to be

himself, to be "with Giovanni . . . with no one to watch, no penalties attached . . . [and]

nothing is more unbearable, once one has it than freedom." Faced with a liberty to

explode constraints, David cannot bear what his "freedom" exposes in him, for it is a "dangerous freedom" that will enable him to throw off the yoke of normative masculine mythology.[24] Frightened, perhaps, he proposes to Hella reactively, needing to "moor" himself amidst strong currents pulling him in directions that he cannot accept and psychically retain his manhood.[25]

What ensues is a seminal realization: "people can't invent their mooring posts, their lovers, & their friends"; they simply exist and are ours because the course of our lives and the needs inherent in our existences bring them to us. This insight is melancholic for him; it suggests that he is *meant* to be with a "boy," despite all of his resistance. Very much like Sartre's characters in *No Exit*, there is an understanding that "hell is other people," that there is "no exit" from the heterosexual, white, male prison.[26] He appears profoundly aware of the heterosexual trap in which he lives; yet, he neither accepts his means of escape, nor musters the will to alter his course. What David understands far too late is the need to "say yes to life"—his life, his needs, his identity, that which is given to him, not that which he believes he should have—even if it means that he must "invent" his own conception of manhood rather than subscribe to one that is dictated for him.

Baldwin ended this portion of the opening chapter with an awakening—one that suggested not triumph, but a sense of resignation and even despair. Moving closer to admitting that his identity is built on untruths, David thinks,

> Now, from this night, from this coming morning, no matter how many beds I find myself in between now and my final bed, I shall never be able to have any more of those boyish, zestful affairs—which are, really, when

one thinks of it, a kind of higher, or anyway, more pretentious masturbation. People are too varied to be treated so lightly. I am to various to be trusted. If this were not so I would not be alone in this house tonight. Hella would not be on the high seas. And Giovanni would not be about to perish, sometime between this night and this morning, on the guillotine.[27]

While he laments the innocence lost in his experiences, in the unraveling of his deceits and conceits, he understands that, like himself, others are "varied" both internally and externally—far "too varied" to disregard their depths. Furthermore, his inability to reconcile himself to the facet of his identity that he deems substandard makes him a danger to others. In truth, if he cannot be true to himself, then he can in no way be true to anyone else. His lies lead his partners to a hell of their own—Hella to the "high seas" and Giovanni to the "the guillotine."

"But he is a boy . . . and I am a *man*"

Baldwin painted David as toxic to those around him, and, then, literally drew a line of asterisks signaling the end of the previous segment. David discloses, "I repent now—for all the good it does—one particular lie among the many lies I've told, lived, and believed . . . that I had never slept with a boy before." He finds "something fantastic in the spectacle . . . of having run so far, so hard . . . only to find [himself] brought up short once more before the bulldog in [his] own backyard."[28] Like his author, David leaves the States so that he may run from that which he perceives emasculates him, that which others him. He cannot stomach having "been with a boy before." But he cannot run from it, for the construct that makes his encounter with another male a problem is in his psyche, and without attending to what it has done to him, he cannot shake it—no

matter his locale. Though David begins with an apology, he understands that his lies have had dire consequences, and he will have no absolution.

The reader begins to travel further backward into David's psyche to his first homosexual experience. Foremost in his description of the encounter is self-loathing and raced, gendered hysteria. David tells the reader of Joey, once his "best friend . . . [and] later . . . proof of some horrifying taint in [him]."[29] A derivative of the French verb teindre, the word "taint" can be read in both a moral and racial sense. That this young man is, for David, evidence of his own corrupted manhood becomes clear as the brief narrative unfolds. At the same time, the course of the story shows us that Joey stains, or un-whitens him. Their experience begins innocently enough. They are horsing around on a summer day in Coney Island. It is hot, the "heat coming up from the pavements and banging from the walls of houses with enough force to kill a man." The stifling heat reflects the hellish, reprehensible thing David sees in himself –that "something. . .[he] had not felt before, which mysteriously, and yet aimlessly, included" Joey and "kill[s] [his] man[hood]." Pointing us to the body again, Baldwin returned to David's physical size as the character remembers that he was larger than Joey and "proud . . . because his head came just below [his] ear."[30]

David recalls the end of their day. Having showered and fallen asleep, he awakens to find Joey "examining the pillow with great, ferocious care." When he asks what is the matter, Joey believes that a bedbug has bit him, to which David replies, "You slob. You got bedbugs?" Though the bedbug theory is disproved, the suggestion of dirtiness introduces an episode that David believes to be dirty in the most profound way. He recollects,

Joey raised his head as I lowered mine and we kissed, as it were, by accident. Then, for the first time in my life, I was really aware of another person's body, of another person's smell. We had our arms around each other. It was like holding in my hand some rare, exhausted, nearly doomed bird which I had miraculously happened to find. I was very frightened; I am sure he was frightened too, and we shut our eyes. To remember it so clearly, so painfully tonight tells me that I have never for an instant truly forgotten it. I feel in myself now a faint, a dreadful stirring of what so overwhelmingly stirred in me then, a great thirsty heat, and trembling, and tenderness so painful I thought my heart would burst. But out of this astounding, intolerable pain came joy; we gave each other joy that night. It seemed, then, that a lifetime would not be long enough for me to act with Joey the act of love.[31]

For the first time, David is fully conscious of himself and of someone else. The feeling of being with Joey is "like holding . . . some rare, exhausted, nearly doomed bird which [he] had miraculously happened to find"; it is life giving and wondrous. The moment is a potentially exalting one—one that could enable transcendence of ordinary strictures and bonds.[32] Frightening though it may have been, the moment is ingrained in David's psyche, for it is a pure "act of love." Through it, we are reminded of David's earlier admonition that we cannot "choose our mooring posts." There is "joy" in this moment, a feeling of completion that he has never felt, and all that he has to do is "say yes to life."

But Baldwin's avian imagery reminds us vividly of the fate of an "exhausted, doomed bird['s]." With Joey, David experiences the "joy" of transcending the things

constict him. But, as in James's *Portrait*, there is a "missile" of "convention" that "drop[s him] to the ground"—his growing regret of this act with Joey.[33] The dirt with which he began his recollection invades his mind. The light of day returns him to consciousness of 'normalcy'. The "lifetime" seemingly endless in his moment of elation proves to be "short . . . bounded by night . . . ended in the morning."[34] When he looks at Joey in daylight, he sees the raced and gendered existence that he has inherited weighing in on him, enveloping him. He goes through stages of recognition that mirror the stages through which Baldwin revealed David's identity to us. First, he is the conqueror, for he wakes to see Joey, "still sleeping, curled like a baby on his side . . . He looked like a baby, his mouth half open, his cheek flushed, his curly hair darkening the pillow." While the day before, he had been proud of his larger size, he was now

> suddenly afraid. Perhaps it was because [Joey] looked so innocent lying there, with such perfect trust; perhaps it was because he was so much smaller than me; my own body suddenly seemed gross and crushing and the desire which was rising in [him] seemed monstrous.[35]

Not yet fully cognizant of the homosexuality at issue, David simply is aware that there is something "monstrous" in his body, in his image. He objectifies Joey, but he fears what he has done to him, and Baldwin's external representative of white maleness both recognizes and regrets his dominance of the weaker other.

Then, suddenly, as if he has had an epiphany, the alternality of his sexual act is "borne in on" him: "*But Joey is a boy.*" The scene before him changes instantaneously, just as the soldiers' presence on the train drove home his difference. David sees

suddenly the power in [Joey's] thighs, in his arms, and in his loosely

curled fists. The power and promise and the mystery of that body made

[him] suddenly afraid. That body suddenly seemed the black opening of a

cavern in which [he] would be tortured till madness came, in which [he]

would lose [his] manhood.[36]

Gone is the "innocence" of his first associations. Joey, though "smaller," is like him—a

boy, bodily the same, and therefore, sexually off-limits. Just as there is "power" in him,

there is "power" in Joey, a "mystery" wrapped in the sinews and muscles of the male

body. Joey's body becomes a signifier. It is the darkness, the abyss, the physical

manifestation of Foucault's "obscure domain" where lines blur and fear ensues, where

the mind in need of order or classification loses its hold, where, in this instance, David

believes the "man" loses his identity–his singular white American "manhood." While the

shadows ironically represent white masculine construction itself in all of its

"heterosexism," they simultaneously correspond to its opposite—what David perceives is

the perversion in his buried homosexuality.[37] This darkness represents *simultaneously* the

weights of the "center" and the "other." The boundaries of perceived gender and sexual

absolutes are less distinct, and Baldwin essentially located David in the intersecting

space, giving him a means to reclassify himself (through Joey and later Giovanni). In that

space lay Baldwin's hoped-for realization of the self, but David rejects it—several times,

in fact.

Baldwin's incorporation of this dark space—this "taint"— heavily impacted the

remainder of the novel. Its inclusion necessitates that we read its sexual and racial

implications conjunctively. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick contends that "in any male-

dominated society, there is a special relationship between male homosocial (including homosexual) desire and the structures for maintaining and transmitting patriarchal power: a relationship founded on an inherent and potentially active structural congruence."[38] Simply put, there is a symbiotic relationship between patriarchal dominance and male homosexuality; creation of an inter-masculine hierarchy is dependent upon the existence of something deemed less masculine or un-masculine. In terms of sexuality then, demonizing homosexuality may be necessary to construct and maintain superior male heterosexuality, and this is precisely what happens within David's consciousness.

However, just as masculine hierarchy is a dependent creation, so, too, is racial hierarchy. Toni Morrison puts forth that "Africanism is the vehicle by which the American self knows itself as not enslaved, but free; not repulsive, but desirable; not helpless, but licensed and powerful; not history-less, but historical; not damned, but innocent; not a blind accident of evolution, but a progressive fulfillment of destiny."[39] Whiteness is defined analogously. Much like a reading of Eliot's "The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock" or Melville's "The Whiteness of the Whale," it is often impossible to define what whiteness is, but it is always possible to indicate what it is not. The negative is needed to define the positive, suggesting that in absence of one, the other could not exist. When read together, then, Sedgwick's and Morrison's statements demonstrate the like delineations of sexual and raced otherness. Sexuality masked, like Henry James, David could benefit from all of the privileges of whiteness. What is clear, however, is that it is the same parasitic raced and gendered ideological center working to sustain itself that deems both the alternatively oriented and alternately raced individual as outsider.

Baldwin built upon the Anglo-Saxon imagery that he so carefully crafted and subtly merged gender and race. David recollects that "Joey's body was brown, was sweaty, the most beautiful creation I had ever seen till then."[40] Though there is no mention of Joey being anything other than white, David reads him (and Baldwin positioned him) as the darker other—exoticized, but despised. In his sexual act with Joey, David's manhood is not only spoiled, but also his whiteness is "tainted."[41] Reinforcing Joey and this act as an infection, David begins to consider the reactions of the outside world—Joey's mother seeing the sheets, his own father, and his own mother who had died long ago. The prescriptive identity that they represent bullying him, David thinks

> A cavern opened in my mind, black, full of rumor, suggestion, of half-heard, half-forgotten, half-understood stories, full of dirty words. I thought I saw my future in that cavern. I was afraid. I could have cried, cried for shame and terror, cried for not understanding how this could have happened to me, how this could have happened *in* me.[42]

David's perception that he is descending into darkness, that he will reside in it, is one common in queer theory. As David Bergman argues, "the homosexual suffers a categorical, perhaps even ontological, otherness since he is made to feel his 'unlikeness' to the heterosexual acts and persons who gave him being . . . He is distanced without definition . . . [His is a] negativity of self."[43] As Bergman also argues, homosexuality is traditionally understood by the homosexual first in terms of "legend," the body of tales and symbols that prescribe who he should be; "legend" institutionalizes heterosexuality as the norm, deterring homosexual identity and manifesting itself in the "half –heard, half-forgotten, half-understood stories, full of dirty words" that David fears. He feels the

pressure of normative, heterosexual, white, male constructions intrinsically, and has learned them not only socially, but also familially. The "shame and terror" that he feels come not entirely because of the act itself, but from the associations thrust upon that act in the larger social psyche. In Baldwin's oeuvre, because white, male identity was "built upon homophobic foundations," David cannot be a man if he has "[been] with a boy."[44] His actions are, therefore, symptoms of a disease—a cancerous, cannibalistic entity that has been awakened and will consume him. His perceived illness "in-validates" his masculinity.[45] He believes that something is happening "*in* him" that changes him fundamentally. Because of it, he is much more aware of what he must *not* do if he wishes to be perceived as a man.

His subsequent decision to "pick up with a rougher, older crowd" and be "very nasty to Joey" antedates his similar treatment of Giovanni. In response to an act believed un-manly, he aligns himself with those who are closer to manhood and adopts behaviors that are "rougher"; he believes that this is what a "man" does. He recalls that the "sadder [his treatment] made Joey, the nastier [he] became."[46] In short, he announces to us that in order to maintain accepted notions of manhood, to prevent being perceived as an "in-valid" man, he scapegoats Joey, acting out all of his bitterness, rage, and self-abhorrence on him. David becomes the aggressor, punishing Joey for bringing the flaw that he sees in himself to light; his actions make manifest the potential for his body to be "gross and crushing" and in treating Joey so menacingly, he eventually runs him away, metaphorically excising the part of him that is aberrant by "crushing" his spirit.

Baldwin foreshadowed the far more violent end that Giovanni would meet at the end of the text. Much like his earlier realization about Hella, David becomes aware, far

too late, that he "began, perhaps, to be lonely that summer and began, that summer, the flight which has brought [him] to [the] darkening window" with which chapter one begins.[47] Despite Joey's departure and David's cruelty, his difference is embedded in him. While he thinks that it is what separates him from those around him, it is actually his refusal to accept it that isolates him and makes him "lonely." His recollections, then, of what he calls "the incident with Joey" identify a pattern for us—one of true and constructed selves battling for life in his consciousness.[48]

The self-exploration that David undertakes is his means of searching for "the crucial, the definitive moment, the moment which changed all others." In it, he finds himself "pressing, in great pain, through a maze of false signals and abruptly locking doors."[49] By degrees, we are taken even further backwards into his past, and because of it, even further into the recesses of his mind. The door fastens on "the incident" for a moment, and trying to "find the germ of the dilemma which resolved itself, that summer into flight," David searches the "reflection [he] is watching in the window as the night comes down outside," believing that the answer is "locked" within it somehow. Perhaps, as he believes, it is trapped in his body, behind what its whiteness and sex represent. If not there, "it is trapped in the room with [him], always has been, and always will be, and it is yet more foreign to [him] than those foreign hills outside," for though it is a part of him, he cannot recognize or validate it.

He queries the familiar, thinking back to his family life and wondering if the disconnect was there. Shortly, we learn that David's childhood was rootless. He reports his early locales to us with journalistic detachment:

We lived in Brooklyn then, as I say; we had also lived in San Francisco,

where I was born, and where my mother lies buried, and we lived for

awhile in Seattle, and then in New York—for me, New York is

Manhattan. Later on, then, we moved from Brooklyn back to New York

and by the time I came to France my father and his new wife had

graduated to Connecticut. I had long been on my own by then, of course,

and had been living in an apartment in the east sixties.[50]

His mother dead, the "we," in his own words, is "my father and his unmarried sister and

myself." That the family unit he describes contains a widower, a spinster, and a

motherless child speaks volumes. Despite their proximity to one another, each inhabits a

space representative of loss and detachment. The lack of individual connection transfers

to the family relationship. But, it extends beyond it as well. With the exception of San

Francisco, ironically the place of his birth *and* his mother's death, not one locale in

catalogue seems to evoke an emotional connection in him. When read in conjunction with

his inability to find a home within his consciousness, David's lack of a physical 'home'

points to the overwhelming groundlessness of his existence.

His father is a man who has drowned his pain in drinking and women. His sole

wish is that "David . . . grow up to be a man. And when [he] say[s] man . . . [he] doesn't

mean a Sunday school teacher."[51] His father's ideology suggests that a man is one who

follows his whims and sews his oats at all costs. David's father puts forth this model, but

it is, ironically, a woman's voice that undermines its validity; Ellen, his sister, believes

that his father is not a suitable role-model for David, for in her estimation, his "manhood

and self-respect, too" are notably absent.[52] What becomes painfully clear is that David

drinks in notions of manhood from a tainted fountain. Neither his immediate model of manhood, nor its critique offers concrete visions of masculinity. Each member of this family is only a fragmented soul playing a role.

Moreover, his mother's death has left David emotionally and psychologically scarred. His mother is a haunting presence in his subconscious. In the character's dream of his mother's rotting body, we recognize Baldwin's manipulation of Freud.

> I scarcely remember her at all, yet she figured in my nightmares, blind with worms, her hair as dry as metal and brittle as a twig, straining to press me against her body; that body so putrescent, so sickening soft, that it opened, as I clawed and cried, into a breach so enormous as to swallow me alive.[53]

Psychological realism in its truest sense, Baldwin inserted a twisted reading of the Oedipal complex. While the dream points to a fear of death and his lack of connection with his mother, it also points to an early desire for and fear of being enveloped in her love. She becomes symbolic, nightmarish, and more importantly, sexualized. Envisioning her "straining to press [him] against her body" as her body "open[s]" and consumes him, her body and her womb are conflated, for he associates each with "putrescence." David fears the female sexual self and associates it, like the homosexual act, with the dark. Because of it, his revulsion at being drowned in the abyss by his love for Joey, his horror at his possible homosexuality, can be read as a by-product of the womb, a *hysteria* embedded in his unconscious and externally reinforced.[54] In his mind, homosexuality is fundamentally tied to female sexuality; this is not surprising, for his cry, "I'm a man," is a reaction to his fear of being feminized. His fear is not only of being consumed by the

womb, a biological symbol of female sexuality, but also of being locked within the gendered feminine. Though he "[claws] and [cries]" in his dreams, the fantastic becomes real, for psychologically, he believes that his difference condemns him to the "dark."[55]

David's flight from the States is his attempt to repair the disease within him. To stay with Freud for a moment, the trigger for recalling David's "latent" memory with Joey is the experience with Giovanni and his eminent death by guillotine. In Freud's model, at the same time that David's "repression" (or "suppression" in this case) of the memory should lead to the recurrence of his homosexuality, the realization of the memory would allow him to deal with his hysteria and displace its effects on his unconscious. But, homosexuality is not a disease. For, David, it is also not a choice. It is not the aberrant, anti-manly identity that it is socially constructed to be. It simply is, and Baldwin suggested that David must learn to say "yes" to who he is rather than enslaving himself to convention and being fearful of losing the pristine vision of white manhood of which his face is representative.

<u>"If thine eye offend thee . . . ": Reading "Giovanni's Room"[56]</u>

The actual space of "Giovanni's Room" allowed Baldwin to explicate the identity fragmentation that he evidences in the first chapter in a far more pronounced way. Physically, David embodies an Anglo-Saxon model. Psychically, however, he is segmented, and he fears that he does not fit that paradigm. In one portion of his psyche, David houses his subordinate self—the one who can be with Joey or Giovanni, essentially defying gender norms. This portion of himself, should he allow it to see the light, would be the embodiment of a new gender safe space. Yet, in another segment of his mind, there is a perceived dominant masculine force that not only casts his

subordinate self as feminized and threatening, but also calls for its extinction. Like the French countryside in the opening scene, the room and his homosexuality are filtered through that dominant vision. In David's mind, Giovanni's room becomes the extension of his own personal hell.

It is convention, then, that makes Giovanni's dingy, little room the symbol of all that is shameful, distasteful, and taboo in David. Though this is the one space in which David is allowed an opportunity to understand and be honest with himself without fear of societal repercussions, he does not accept it. This little room is where male homosexuality is located as a space apart from manliness. Inside this room, David could simply be a human being in love. But like his mother's womb, this space becomes synonymous with an "abyss"; it is a stifling, claustrophobic space down a "short, dark corridor," where "in the gloom," he thinks: "If I do not open the door at once and get out of here, I am lost."[57] David likens his alternate sexuality to a cavernous pit that threatens to swallow him whole.[58] In so doing, he negates both literally and symbolically, the only portion of himself that renders him complete.

Though he is initially happy with Giovanni, David soon looks upon Giovanni and himself with increasing shame. After his first evening with Giovanni, David thinks,

> The beast which Giovanni has awakened in me would never go to sleep again; but one day I would not be with Giovanni anymore. And would I then, like all the others, find myself turning and following all kinds of boys down God knows what dark avenues into what dark places? With this fearful intimation there opened in me a hatred for Giovanni which was as powerful as my love and which was nourished by the same roots.[59]

Evoking themes of James's "The Beast in the Jungle" or Crane's "The Monster," David again likens his homosexuality to aberrance, to a kind of hysterical deviance in which one becomes like "the others" and travels willy-nilly seeking the companionship of "boys."[60] The fact that David does not think of "following [men]" is telling, for it intimates several things. First, though he does not mention Joey, his associations in the opening chapter govern his mind in this moment as well. He would recall his experience with Joey and hear the words "But Joey is a boy." As in that first instance, homosexuality is rendered as predatory in nature, requiring inferior prey. More importantly, real "men," in his mind, would not be what he has become; they would not be subject to the bestial desires of a deviant. Though his Anglo-Saxon exterior evokes thoughts of oppression and brutality throughout the text, real "[m]en never can be housewives."[61] In short, real "men" are *never* emasculated, and because he is bound by the constraints of white, heteronormative ideology, he deduces that life with Giovanni would effeminize him interminably—bastardizing the very idea of manhood.

The final conversation between David and Giovanni only serves to reiterate David's foolish allegiance to a brand of manhood that cannot embrace him; it also allows him to voice the fear that has silently invaded his mind to this point in the novel. Baldwin let the two characters verbalize the interior skirmishes that have dominated the battle in David's consciousness for the bulk of the text. Giovanni emerges fully as the physical manifestation of David's perceived aberrant self. What becomes painfully obvious in their dialogue is that Giovanni understands David and his dilemma far better than David does, for his experiences give him a degree of insight that David cannot have. Giovanni is a human being as he conceives it—not as others do. He is not bound by the "American

idea of masculinity" that Baldwin so loathed.[62] Only when faced with its representative does he feel the pain of being outside of an imposed norm. Across an ocean, outside of America's boundaries, David subordinates the other. Giovanni's story becomes the catalyst to David's exposure. "I have never known anyone like you before," Giovanni says,

> I was never like this before you came. Listen. In Italy I had a woman and she was very good to me. She loved me, she loved *me*, and she took care of me and she was always there when I came in from work . . . and there was never any trouble between us, never. I was young then and did not know the things I learned later or the terrible things you have taught me. I thought all women were like that. I thought all men were like me—I thought I was like all other men.[63]

What Giovanni learns from David is his difference, his dirtiness in the "far-off, dirty world." In his previous relationships, *he* had been the object of love—not the lovesick. He had not felt unlike "other men." He had been with a woman, lost a child, become angry at God, and left his village to come to Paris, but never, before David, had he so intensely felt the "lonel[iness]" of difference.[64] When Giovanni tells David that in him, he has "found a lover who is neither man nor woman, nothing that [he] can touch," he speaks truths that David refuses to admit.[65] David is a damnable manifestation of what Baldwin's epigraph takes to task because he cannot realize that there are no absolutes— that he can be 'in-between' and outside of norms. David is playing the man, and while he does not wish to play the woman, he has skewed notions of both masculinity and femininity that prevent him from either knowing himself or being known by others. He is

in a nether region of gender and sexual identity, but he insists on continuing his farcical play of manhood.

Soon, David announces that he is leaving Giovanni to return to his "fiancée, Hella." It is here that Giovanni rails against David's lies, for he replies:

> You are not leaving me for her. You are leaving me for some other reason. You lie so much, you have come to believe all your own lies. But I, I have senses. You are not leaving me for a *woman*. If you were really in love with this little girl, you would not have had to be so cruel to me.[66]

Giovanni *reads* the deceit that David has yet to recognize with the same depth of perception that allows the marginalized Ralph Touchett to know truths about Isabel, Osmond, and others in *Portrait*. Because Giovanni is able simply to exist—to take what life gives him and live with it—he has thought himself free from the boundaries that confound David. In this scene, however, he is battered, bruised, and defeated by David's performance of masculinity; he recognizes that David's "cruel[ty]" stems from self-hatred

David continues to perform, avowing his love for Hella. Giovanni's reply, however, cuts to the heart of Baldwin's exposé.

> You do not love anyone! You never have loved anyone, I am sure you never will! You love your purity, you love your mirror—you are just like a little virgin, you walk around with your hands in front of you as though you had some precious metal, gold, silver, rubies, maybe *diamonds* down there between your legs! You will never give it to anybody, you will never let anybody *touch* it—man *or* woman. You want to be *clean* . . .

82

You want to leave Giovanni because he makes you stink. You want to

despise Giovanni because he is not afraid of the stink of love. You want to

kill him in the name of all your lying little moralities. And you—you are

immoral. You are, by far, the most immoral man I have met in all my

life.[67]

With each word reverberating truth, the supposed "purity" and "cleanness" of whiteness

conjoined with the perceived masculine ideal resound in this passage. Giovanni

recognizes David's wish to be heterosexual at all costs; he must be "clean" rather than

"taint[ed]" as he was with Joey, for part and parcel to the male portrait that he seeks to

inhabit is the purity and dominance of white masculinity itself. He is disconnected from

women, but he refuses to connect with men out of fear, and because of this, his heart is

hardened. That Baldwin had Giovanni move from softer metals to the hardest and most

precious of stones as he describes David's 'family jewels' is no accident. This obvious,

external symbol of his sex, what he can see in "his mirror," is indicative of his internal

quandary. Through Giovanni, Baldwin avowed that manhood, as conceived in the social

psyche, cannot be malleable like gold or silver; it cannot be *almost* the most valuable or

most solid jewel like the ruby; it must be solid and impervious like the hardest of

diamonds. For David, it must have no occlusions: he believes that it determines who he

must be, but it is vehicle through which he feels aberrant; the contradiction alone should

register with him, but it does not. Giovanni attempts to teach him, insisting that

personhood comes with impurities; it is only our imbibed notions of what is and is not

"pure" that ruin us.

But, Giovanni knows that he will not succeed in changing this "man." He makes David "stink," and this is precisely why David believes he must escape this room. He will not relinquish his feigned supremacy for anyone, and his "lying little moralities" are integral to his deceptions. His image of manhood is a conceit, a fable, and though to Giovanni, David *is* valid despite their male-male love, David's consciousness of the trap in which he lives and his performance anxiety will not allow him to explode it.[68] Giovanni insinuates that it is not his sexuality that makes him "immoral." Instead, because his self-image is based on lies, because he lives and treats others deceptively, he is "the most immoral *man*" whom Giovanni has ever encountered. David's is an acceptable, alternate expression of "man[hood]," but his insistence on resisting his difference is toxic, just as the opening pages of the novel suggest. Though Giovanni does not believe himself "acquainted with the mythology of [David's] country," he has met it head on, deconstructing American masculinity and laying it bare for David and the reader to see its flaws.[69]

The full confrontation between masculine selves is biting and overtly revelatory. In response to Giovanni, David transfers all of his self-loathing onto him. He has silently condemned both Giovanni and his homosexual self, attempting to sequester them so that the deviance within him could be contained. But, he feels smothered; "I want to get out of this room, I want to get away from you," he cries. Giovanni clearly grasps the cause of David's merciless cruelty, his need to hurt the one who embodies all that he finds repulsive in himself. But, he knows fully well that David does not. As if he is the voice of reason amidst a sea of voices in David's head, Giovanni continues to press him until David finally explains that which most troubles him. With "eyes . . . so bottomlessly

bitter it was almost benevolent," he asks David, "You want to get away from me . . . At last you are beginning to be honest. And do you know *why* you want to get away from me?"[70] The "benevolence" of this moment lies in Giovanni forcing David to speak his masculine panic aloud, to face what thwarts self-realization, and to dig deeper into that "frozen" place in himself.[71] David begins:

> I cannot have a life with you . . . What kind of life can we have in this room? —this filthy little room. What kind of life can two men have together, anyway? All this love you talk about—isn't it just that you want to be made to feel strong? You want to go out and be the big laborer and bring home the money, and you want me to stay here and wash the dishes and cook the food and clean this miserable closet of a room and kiss you when you come in through that door and lie with you at night and be your little *girl*. That's what you want. That's what you mean and that's *all* you mean when you say you love me. You say I want to kill *you.* What do you think you've been doing to me?"
>
>   "I am not trying to make you a little girl. If I wanted a little girl, I would be *with* a little girl."
>
>   "Why aren't you? Isn't it just that you're afraid? And you take *me* because you haven't got the guts to go after a woman, which is what you *really* want?"
>
> " . . . You are the one who keeps talking about *what* I want. But I have only been talking about *who* I want."
>
>   "But I'm a man . . . a man! What do you think can *happen* between us?

"You know very well . . . what can happen between us. It is for that

reason you are leaving me."[72]

Giovanni exposes that which Baldwin frequently discussed—the American need for

labels, for categorization. He references the hunter-gatherer ideology that governs binary

gender constructs in America. For David, one of them must be the "big laborer and bring

home the money," and the other must be the "little girl."[73] His dualistic reading of the

world is his means of maintaining a sense of order. There is "something…broken in

[David]" that makes him "so cold and so perfectly still and far away," and his iciness and

distance are insidious.[74] In David's mind, there is a "what" that determines a concept of

masculinity or a concept of femininity; he must fit into one at all costs lest he be shoved

forcibly into the other. He does not want to be a "girl"; he is "a man!" Being the former

would "kill" his sanctified, but unclear model of masculinity. He would, then, be "filthy"

like the room, and he would have fallen from the uppermost rung of a constructed

hierarchical ladder. With increasing urgency, culminating in Giovanni's heartbreaking

denunciation of David's contrived obtuseness, their dialogue tells more about the

pathology of the manhood model that eats away at David's psyche than perhaps any other

in the text. What Giovanni attempts to drive through David's consciousness is the fact

that, to him, David is not a "what," but a "who"—simply a person who is loved beyond

the boundaries of all labels.[75] Still, David refuses to accept the safeness of this space.

Though Baldwin wished that there could be a reconceived notion of masculine

identity, he understood that a male who openly contests deception in societal rules, either

vocally or experientially, is a dangerous thing; manhood's greatest threat, because it is

intra-gendered, cannot truly exist. The hopelessness that he evidenced in his novel is

heartbreaking, but it reveals the degree to which Baldwin grasped that gender and racial prescriptions have a vice-like hold on the psyche. The final segment of *Giovanni's Room*, shows us the hybrid male being written out of existence; Giovanni is forcibly removed. As a physical symbol of David's invalidity, Giovanni's 'illness' is constructed, his 'deviance' contrived, and he is subject to David's cruelties; just as in the earlier instance with Joey, David attempts to 'man-up,' showing how well he can inhabit the strong, resolute, reasonable rather than emotional, heterosexual model of a white American male. Baldwin condemned this behavior, writing an end for Giovanni that returns us to the violent conquest suggested in David's initial introduction. Playing on the idea of the predator, the colonizer, the destroyer, the historical Anglo-Saxon, Baldwin ended Giovanni's life by guillotine. The severing of his head from his body serves as a violent, ritual sacrifice, a metaphorical castration of the supposed aberrant half of David's self. As Richard Dyer argues in *White* (1997), slaying difference grants full ownership of whiteness and masculine identities—together a valuable commodity that must be protected at all costs.[76] The physical manifestation of the subordinate consciousness within David is purged in blood so that the dominant may reign supreme.

This does not make David whole, and that was precisely Baldwin's point. We see him torn asunder by the schism within him. What David learns is what Baldwin noted about him in several interviews: there is no escape for him. "Giovanni's Room" will be with him for the rest of his life. His war over his self-identity is projected into that space with four walls, but the true battle is in his own frame. The room becomes a symbolic repository of his truth—a truth that will relegate him to outsider in the gender, sexual,

and racial status quo; that, he cannot stomach. So, he lies to escape it—both to himself and to all around him.

<u>My Body, My Prison</u>

To end the text, Baldwin recaptured the confessional mode of his first chapter. David's recognition of his lies serves as the foundation for his revelations as the book ends. In the final pages, there is an inversion of the opening's setup. While we begin with sunset, a window, and Giovanni's impending execution, we end with sunrise, a mirror, and the moment of Giovanni's execution. There is a twinning in this final moment— much like I argue there is between Isabel Archer and Ralph Touchett.[77] The light illuminates David's body and image in a mirror before him in the same instant that he imagines Giovanni is being pushed through a "door" and cast into the darkness. We are reminded of the hell in which David exists, one of which his archetypal white body and its dark connotations are emblematic. The "door" through which Giovanni must to be taken to the guillotine, David thinks, is "the gateway he has sought so long out of this dirty world, this dirty body." But, his vague pronouns make us unsure whether he is referring to his own "dirty body" or Giovanni's.[78]

More ambiguous in this reference is the fact that Baldwin replaced the window frame in his opening by a framed mirror, making this final image of David more like a portrait than a translucent impression. The physical portrait presented and examined is not backed by darkness; it is fully enlightened. Ending as he began, with the body, Baldwin reminded what lies beneath this exterior might have been the starting point for a new conception of gender, but it has not become one. The shining exterior blinds David to his internality. He says, "the body in the mirror forces me to turn and face it. And I

look at my body . . . It is lean, hard, and cold, the incarnation of a mystery. And I do not know what moves in this body, what this body is searching. It is trapped in my mirror as it is trapped in time and it hurries toward revelation."[79] His body, "dull and white and dry," "lean, hard, and cold" is enigmatic, encapsulating some understanding—some key to its inner workings, its inner longings—"trapped" in his image. Hearkening back to the opening chapter, David realizes that the thing that damages him is not "trapped in the room with [him]."[80] It is even more insidious; it is "trapped" *within* him, in his body, in his image, and in his mind "trapped in time." He wishes to excise it and has attempted to do so through his rejection of Giovanni. But, understanding it is the key to all that he could have been and still could be; David's self-comprehension is closed to him, for it is locked behind the image in this mirror, behind the very "confectioner's glass"—the power of appearances—of which James spoke in his visit to Sing-Sing.[81]

As he concluded the novel, Baldwin drew on his pulpitic roots, incorporating I Corinthians 13:11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."[82] The words are appropriate, for the word "child" is gender neutral, and the innocence that it connotes is long gone from David's consciousness; in its place is what Baldwin unveiled as the actual abyss—not homosexuality, but the "man[hood]" that makes it problematic. David "long[s] to make this prophecy come true . . . to crack that mirror and be free. [He] look[s] at [his] sex, [his] troubling sex, and wonder[s] how it can be redeemed, how [he] can save it from the knife." Ironically, with his conception of the male self, he can no more break free of the image imprinted in his mind than he can save Giovanni from the guillotine. Like Ralph for Isabel, Giovanni exists as David's "apostle of freedom."[83] He

offers David the means, the location, and the path to realize himself, but the need to iterate a model of manhood that he believes finite stifles him.[84] Thus, the rending of Giovanni's head from his body tells us that "the knife" wins. David's desire to "become a man"—"to break free" from the "dirty body" that daily betrays his sensibilities is rooted in an insensate ideological system. A victim of a sort of societal, Freudian castration complex, he is too bound by imposed mores to be free.[85]

Finally, Giovanni is "thrown" into the darkness, "and his journey begins"; David leaves the countryside for Paris, taking the journey that he foreshadows when we first meet him. He attempts to cast aside the torn pieces of a letter announcing Giovanni's impending execution. It is a final act that signifies a hoped-for release from all that Giovanni represents, and Baldwin wrote, "The morning weighs on [his] shoulders with the dreadful weight of hope."[86] That hope has come at the cost of Giovanni's head, and we as readers perceive that the "weigh[t]" of David's guilt may be too "dreadful" for "hope" to live. As the wind blows the pieces "back on [him]," his "hope" is "dreadful" because of its cost. It is also likely fleeting. As did James in *Portrait*, Baldwin left his character "en l'air," literally, with the wind—a force beyond his control.[87] Baldwin insinuated that all that Giovanni represented will *always* be with David, *always* be *in* him no matter how far he runs. And, we are left to wonder what will become of this man struggling to shake the yoke of the masculine ideal—a man who would be gay, who could be happy, who could be whole should he simply recognize the futility of his internalized notions of manhood. In Baldwin's eyes, if David would accept himself in this room with another male as a whole human being—not bound by labels or constructions, but merely himself, a male who just happens to have found love and

90

contentment with a male—then, perhaps, he could leave the room to enter the world with these same beliefs. If he could understand that he cannot inhabit a finite set of arbitrarily constructed traits that define the masculine and feminine, then he would have an opportunity to transcend his bonds—to step out of the portrait. In doing so, he would become a transformative power—living proof of an imagined existence. He would inhabit, in the words of Toni Morrison,

> a new space . . . formed by the inwardness of the outside, the interiority of the "othered," the personal that is always embedded in the public. In this new space one can imagine safety without walls, can iterate difference that is prized but unprivileged, and can conceive of a third . . . world "already made for me, both snug and wide open, with a doorway never needing to be closed."[88]

There would be no "abyss," no "cavern . . . in [his] mind," for he would not allow socially constructed identity spaces to govern who he is.[89] The "other[ness]" that he so despises would be "prized," and there would be no need for hierarchy. But, this is a utopian vision, as Baldwin was well aware. If Giovanni's death is any indicator, Baldwin doubted that anyone could successfully alter masculine rules entirely, challenge them though they might. As readers, we come to understand that David will continue to live the lie that he tells himself—that he can be what society wants him to be and be complete. He psychically commits himself to the raced and gendered status quo, and it is damaging, deadly, and psychically vampiric in its effects.

Baldwin cried the need for a sort of psychological gender cleansing—one that addressed the racial undercurrents of the construct. I borrow from Dwight McBride in

saying that a "narrow-minded embrace of a race-centered identity bias" omits "other critical forms of difference that are so rightly constitutive of any inclusive understanding of . . . subjectivity."[90] Though this may be misread and seemingly contradict my argument, it does not if we consider that "race" is often "centered" in our understandings of those "other critical forms of difference." If American masculinity is understood in terms of race and gender, both of which are arbitrary and socially malleable, then its construction is insupportable. Recognizing that each person is a composite of multiple identity spaces that must be tended and validated, Baldwin revealed the divisiveness of American manhood, particularly in its adherence to racial and sexual norms, and attempted to author more inhabitable and more wholly inclusive constructions of the self. Though Baldwin did not show these identity spaces being realized, this too is part of the lesson, for "an unexamined life is not worth living."[91] And, his examination allows us to reconsider James's purposes in creating the masculine typology in his model for *Giovanni's Room—The Portrait of a Lady*.

Chapter Two: A *Portrait* of Masculinity

> It is the ladies in a word who have lately done most to remind us of man's relations with himself, that is with woman. His relations with the pistol, the pirate, the police, the wild and the tame beast—are not these prevailingly what the gentleman have given us? And does not the difference sufficiently point my moral?—Henry James on "Matilde Serao"[1]

It has often been said that Henry James was more comfortable inside the psyches of his women characters than those of his men. Though there are critics who would argue that this comfort was little more than literary arts*man*ship—the skillful maneuvering of a literary man with an eye for marketability—it also points to something else.[2] As the epigraph shows, James understood that even the gendered nature of writing offered fertile ground for exploding norms. He later found within women writers' oeuvres an insight to masculinity and femininity that allowed for engaging the middle ground between the genders—the softer side of man and the stronger side of woman. Directly condemning the conventional path taken by male writers, James called for them to explore further the male inner self rather than the outward hyper-masculinity so often privileged in their fiction. Rather than in externality—in "the pistol, the pirate" and all other staples of the fin-de-siecle aforementioned hyper-masculinity that was so alien and "forced" to him— James found his niche by moving beyond the body and focusing on the psyche, for it is there that identity—one's understanding of and relation to the self—truly forms.[3] I would argue that though the woman's psyche offered him a marketable theme, it also offered him a vehicle for challenging the existence of a male ideal subtly and artfully. Clearly, James was not unaware of the larger reaching issues involved in the gender (for him also "sexual") battle—namely that the psychic reconception of manhood in America that

would enable women to achieve their goals might leave room for "a marginal male" like himself to feel at home.[4]

For that reason, I begin my readings of James with *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), arguably James's most insightful treatment of gender marginalization in society. Read through the lens of Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* (1956), it becomes clear that even when James did not address race openly, he mediated it through gender and did so quite subtly. Through the titular suggestions of the "physical" boundaries of gender, as well as the exposure of the Anglo-Saxon, masculine forces that maintain those boundaries, the readers of *The Portrait of a Lady* come to question, just as does its author, "what it is open in their destiny to *be*."[5] In Isabel, we find a female consciousness awakened to the limitations of gender performance, but rereading this text through a Baldwinian lens, I argue that we more prominently find an author intent on exposing the tenuousness of the manly identity that necessitates her subordination.

Unorthodox though this reading may be, a look at James's "Preface" to *Portrait* offers striking support for it. Before any discussion of the text, itself, James summarized "The Art of Fiction" in almost apologia-like fashion—as if he had to explain *why* he ventured into the world of the American literary heroine before explaining how the text evolved. In doing so, James insisted that there was "no more nutritive or suggestive truth . . . than that of the perfect dependence of the 'moral' sense of a work of art on the amount of *felt* life concerned in producing it" (italics mine).[6] James did not write 'seen' or 'perceived,' but "felt," indicating that what he included in his works were the feelings of his own lived existence. He continued:

The house of fiction has in short not one window, but a million . . . every

one of which has been pierced, or is still pierceable [sic], in its vast front,

by the *need of the individual vision* and by the pressure of the individual

will . . . they are, singly or together, as nothing without the posted

presence of the watcher—without, in other words, the consciousness of the

artist. Tell me what the artist is, and I will tell you of what he has *been*

conscious.[7]

James spoke of applying this method to other artists. But, as the "Preface" continues, and

we are faced with James's discussion of how the characters came to be, we should

question how the text divulges "the need of his individual vision"? Of what, we must ask,

was James "conscious*"*?

True, James indicated that he would "place the centre of the subject in the young

woman's own consciousness," and "press least hard . . . on the consciousness of [his]

heroine's satellites, especially the male." But, James also indicated that without the

heroine's "sense of [her adventures], her sense *for* them, as one may say, they are next to

nothing at all."[8] In keenly written dramatic irony, we learn fairly early in the text that

Isabel Archer's consciousness, though sharp, is untrained—that her "sense" of things is

skewed by her innocence and her desire for independence. In the heavily pregnant

silences that fill the text, we learn that unbeknownst to her, her path is laid for her—under

the radar of her naive consciousness, one just awakening to its intensely gendered

existence.[9] Isabel Archer is presented to us as a living portrait rendered, one that becomes

a collectible, a commodity. We see her moved this way and that as is a portrait in a

gallery. And despite her desire to be anything other than the model nineteenth century

Victorian woman, her characterization illustrates precisely the marginalization of which James was conscious.

While scholars are quick to note that the text is about "the Lady," and while James indicated this as well, I contend that this text is much more about James's own consciousness of the social and ideological systems that define her (and himself)—almost in the same manner that *Moby-Dick* is not really about that whale, but what it represents and its effects on those who chase it.[10] As Ross Posnock argues, James, like his brother William, was "[suspicious] of the assimilating, homogenizing thrust of totalizing systems" in a "social and political order seeking to dissolve difference into a monolithic American identity."[11] With respect to manhood, James's suspicions translated in this text to a system of beliefs and socially performed norms that defined the gendered subject far too narrowly—"dissolv[ing]" his or her "difference[s]" in favor of a "homogen[ized], American vision of the gendered self. A letter written to Jane Dalzell Finlay Hill indicates as much, for as James wrote, *Portrait* was "intended to throw light on the American mind alone & its way of taking things."[12] The "American mind" of the historical moment was a male-conceived one in which others struggled to find their identities. Likewise, in *Portrait*, Isabel's role is defined, not by her, not in her consciousness, but in the consciousnesses of her "satellites, especially the male." The consummate observer of manners and culture, Henry James brought them to the fore as the artists of her *Portrait*. Laying his groundwork with an intricately woven tapestry of masculine performance in the first chapter, James created an exposé of manly construction—not only of an external ideal, but also its psychological underpinnings. Subsequently and much like Baldwin does with Giovanni and David's homosexual

consciousnesses, through the subordinated Isabel Archer and Ralph Touchett, James highlighted the degree to which the Anglo-Saxon model of American masculinity was a destructive creation that some fought to emulate and others suffered needlessly to escape.[13]

Portrait "Chapter One": Shades of Manhood, a black comedy in one act

Just as Baldwin did not begin his text with a discussion of sexuality, instead focusing on the physicality of David in juxtaposition to the scene enveloping him, James devoted the first chapter of _Portrait_ almost entirely to a little play of masculine types. Portraying the "satellite[s]," he overturned, from the first moment, certain gender expectations and fixed our attention on the men. In the novel's opening, we recognize the theatricality in the characteristic Jamesian setting of scene, the lovely English garden, the attention to the most minute of details, the stage set for afternoon tea, and, perhaps, most importantly, the absence of the lady in question. In the very first paragraph of the text, after describing the soft shadows and lovely adornments of the garden at teatime, James indicated that the garden's inhabitants "were not of the sex which is supposed to furnish the regular votaries of the [tea] ceremony [he had] mentioned." Instead of the women whom we might expect to meet in such a scene, James presented us not simply with men, but men of different ages and statures. We are introduced to "an old man sitting in a deep wicker-chair . . . [and] two younger men strolling to and fro . . . in front of him." On first mention, the reader might imagine the enfeebled versus the robust—a man well past his prime fading into the background while the "younger men" take the foreground, carrying on their active lives "in front of him."

However, like Baldwin, James situated these men amidst a scene of deepening shadows and sharpness fading, of soft lines and blurred outlines, and he played with gender on the level of language. On a late summer afternoon, when the "flood of summer light had begun to ebb, the air had grown mellow, the shadows were long upon the smooth, dense turf," these "shadows lengthened slowly . . . and the sense expressed that sense of leisure still to come."[14] The description is romantic, even sensual, the gradual "lengthen[ing]" of the shadows evoking something almost sexual against the "smooth, dense turf." Building on his earlier suggestion that their sex is incongruent with the scene, James described their "shadows on the perfect lawn" as "straight and angular" as if they penetrate the softness of the scene and are too stark for the "sense of leisure" evoked in the setting. We are reminded of the similar incongruence of Baldwin's "arrow" and "conquer[ed] . . . plains" filtering the French countryside or his uniformed soldiers who impose themselves on the stillness of the train car.[15] Superficially, it may seem that James supported rather than resisted the status quo, indicating that his masculine figures were interlopers in a setting and pastime associated with the feminine.

Yet, James questioned the very supposition that the pastime and the language associated with it were so gendered. In the same manner that Baldwin clouded gender polarities by revealing the soft, rolling hills of the French countryside to us through David's reflection in the glass, James forced the reader to reconsider the gendering of afternoon tea by importing the "angular" shadows of men in an English garden.[16] He muddied perceived gender polarity. With the characters' interplay, James undermined any 'monolithic' vision of manhood. As Leland S. Person notes in his reading of *Portrait*, "With every male playing the gentleman, the term effectively deconstructs—opening

98

gentle manhood to plural performances. The question of being a gentleman seems necessarily in suspense."[17] The "plural[ity]" of masculine performance does not simply place the "gentleman" in suspense, though. Instead, it collapses the foundation of masculine identification itself by displaying masculinity clearly in crisis. Each male character in this text *plays* the gentleman publicly; it is a by-product and expectation of their social class. But, to what degree do they fit a prescribed male ideal? By toying with the tension between the externality and internality of masculine ideology, James, as did Baldwin with David, disturbed the very notion that there *was* an ideal manly figure.

I begin with Lord Warburton, though James did not, for in the first six pages of the text, he is the only character named—a fact that gives him authority and compliments the imperial force of his name and his description. James later contrasted him and the two "Americans" at his side. Tapping into the historical elements of Anglo-Saxon heritage, James, like Baldwin, positioned the "American" against his Anglo-Saxon model with old world versus new allusions. [18] James described him as

> A remarkably well-made man of five-and-thirty with a face as English as
> that of the old gentleman . . . was something else; a noticeably handsome
> face, fresh-coloured, fair and frank, with firm, straight features, a lively
> grey-eye and the rich adornment of a chestnut beard. This person had a
> certain fortunate, brilliant exceptional look—the air of a happy
> temperament fertilized by a high civilization—which would have made
> almost any observer envy him at a venture. He was booted and spurred, as
> if he had dismounted from a long ride; he wore a white hat, which looked
> to large for him; he held his two hands behind him, and in one of them—a

large, white, well-shaped fist—was crumpled a pair of soiled dog-skin gloves.[19]

Lord Warburton, whose name we learn shortly after this description, is named fifteen times prior to the naming of the other two characters in the scene. He is presented as the masculine focal point with the other characters painted in contrast. Warburton is English, a Lord, and the expectation is that he is the male model to be upheld. To reinforce this point, James depicted him as a specimen of manhood narrowly described in almost empirical fashion. He is "remarkably well-made," "noticeably handsome," his features "frank," "firm," "straight"—adjectives as narrowly associated with the masculine as the "angular[ity]" of shadows on the lawn and almost as sexual. They speak to a directness, resoluteness, and lack of dissembling; moreover, they suggest virility. He has the look of fortune and the manner of one embedded in "high civilization"—something to which many men aspire. The figure that James painted is nearly physically perfect. "Adorn[ing]" Warburton with what can be assumed is a full "chestnut" beard—perhaps glossy and well trained—James's suggestion is that he is as handsome and powerful as the most purely bred "chestnut" stallion, much as Baldwin's is that David is a neo-Adonis.

The equestrian imagery continues, for he is "booted" and "spurred," suggesting his vigor. But, this moment also plays on the commanding imperialism connoted in his name. His "soiled dog-skin gloves" in his "large white, well-shaped fist," mark him as a "gentleman," for he has removed his gloves when calling upon acquaintances, yet the fact that they are "soiled" suggests a ruggedness and brutality that belies his "fair" appearance.[20] They conjure images of the power and violence that resonate in the history

of Anglo-Saxon conquest that is his birthright; the impact of these images deepens when we consider the import of Baldwin's first description of David's as the face of a "conqueror."[21] Warburton's gloves do not lay in his "large, white, well-shaped [hand]"; they are "crumpled" in his "fist"— words that connote the dominance associated with his ancestry. One might substitute the word 'crushed.' He is the archetype of Anglo-Saxon manhood in this moment, outwardly historical and hyper-masculine.

But, just as he began the chapter by unsettling gender expectations, James continued by subtly unsettling the model Anglo-Saxon manhood that Warburton is supposed to signify. We perceive a telltale flaw in Warburton—one that pushed James to make the qualification that "*almost* any observer [would] envy him."[22] Perhaps the "observer" looking more closely would recognize that something does not quite "fit" about him—just as William suggested that James, himself, did not "fit" his sex or stories. Warburton's "white hat . . . looked too large for him," almost as if James was intimating that the historical role that he fills is too big for him, or even that it simply is too amorphous to be filled by anyone. Though it is the style of the day, it is ironic that it is his "white hat" that does not quite suit him, that it is crowning article of his clothing that is too large for him. In a conversation between Mr. Touchett and Isabel in chapter eight, James related a bit more about the possible deficiency in his representative male, his words suggesting far more than the possible overthrow of the feudal system that gives a Lord such as Warburton land and wealth. "He's the victim of a critical age," says Mr. Touchett, "he has ceased to believe in himself and he doesn't know what to believe in . . . [He] can neither abolish himself as a nuisance nor maintain himself as an institution."[23] He, like Baldwin's David, carries the weight of a past that is burdensome. Warburton is

caught between the realization that the model that he represents is an antiquated

disturbance and the fact that he is the purveyor of "institution[alized]" Anglo-Saxon

supremacy—between the ideological inefficacy of an ideal and the physical embodiment

of it. Though gifted with a "handsome, easy, important physiognomy," Warburton makes

us wonder whether the archetypal Anglo-Saxon male that he appears to be is a fitting

masculine mold amidst perpetual signs that the exemplar he evokes *dwarfs* those who

subscribe to it.[24]

James's unsteady introduction of Warburton leads us to the other two characters

in the scene—the first and third introduced. Mr. Touchett and his son, Ralph, are

Americans by birth and residents of the estate in which the scene unfolds. They are each

invalidated as masculine models to differing degrees. The father is an elderly "shrewd

American banker,"

> the old gentleman at the tea-table, who had come from America thirty
>
> years before. [He] had brought with him, at the top of his baggage, his
>
> American physiognomy; and he had not only brought it with him, but he
>
> had kept it in the best order, so that, if necessary, he might have taken it
>
> back to his own country with perfect confidence. At present,
>
> obviously, nevertheless, he was not likely to displace himself; his
>
> journeys were over and he was taking the rest that precedes the great
>
> rest.[25]

At one time the quintessential American businessman, he is "thirty years" removed from

his prime, as well as his homeland. James graced him with a well-maintained "American

physiognomy," a "narrow, clean-shaven face, with features evenly distributed and an

expression of placid acuteness . . . [on] which the range of representation was not large, so that the air of contented shrewdness was all the more of a merit."[26] While his visage suggests the mental acuity or "shrewdness" that made him successful, his "placid[ness]" at once suggests the unwavering confidence that may have aided in his success and his advanced age—as if he has "been comfortable for so many years that . . . [he has] got . . . use to it."[27] James immediately contrasted the aging American's visage with Warburton's, indicating that Warburton's "face [was] as English as that of the old gentleman . . . was something else."[28] Though he has achieved wealth in a field that is representative of the stronghold of the male in America, commerce, and though the first American citizens were little more than immigrated Englishmen, the old man does not look the part of the model man. Though he has maintained himself as well as he might, well enough to return to his home "with perfect confidence" in his status, here in this garden, in this scene, his Americanness is held up to intense scrutiny. What seems important is that while the "English" gentleman is a distinct type, the juxtaposition of the old American's visage as "something else," something non-descript and not easily quantifiable, illustrates James uncertainty about an American ideal.

As if to accentuate the character's ebbing manliness, James imported gendered signs in a conversation between the man and the Lord, the referents alone suggesting the hierarchy of their positions. Warburton sees a shawl covering the elder gentleman's legs and remarks,

> "I should think you would be very unhappy with that shawl," Lord
> Warburton resumed . . .
> "It belongs to my wife," said the old man simply.

"Oh, if it's for sentimental reasons—" And Lord Warburton made a gesture of apology.

"I suppose I must give it to her when she comes, the old man went on."[29]

Much is left unsaid here, but the jab is clearly recognizable in this brief manly skirmish. Warburton calls the elder Mr. Touchett's manhood into question, as a shawl is typically reserved for women's wear just as a garden tea is typically the milieu of women. Mr. Touchett's "[simple]" reply is not really so; recognizing the vulnerability of his masculine position, he relies on the very norms that Warburton references and represents when he attributes ownership of the garment to his wife. His reply takes some of the sting out of the barb, but not entirely. Warburton offers an "apology," yet in his allowance for Touchett's "sentimental" ties to the shawl, there is trace of condescension. "Sentimental[ity]" is considered womanly as well.[30] Seemingly, there is no means of regaining ground in this play of types. Warburton emerges the verbal victor, for in "suppos[ing]" that he "*must* return" the shawl to his wife, Touchett's final words seem a concession. His age, the *need* for the shawl, and the implications of both undermine him.

What weighs more heavily upon his characterization and the affront to his manhood is that James never *named* the elder man in this chapter—a fact that robs him further of his stature. Because he is identified as the patriarch very early, his position as sire and conveyor of wealth would seem a powerful one. However, the role that he serves is precisely that by which he is known—"the old man." Only four times in the chapter is he referenced as "[Ralph's] father" or "daddy." As gender studies scholars such as E. Anthony Rotundo, Michael S. Kimmel, and Gail Bederman alike observe, the changing notions of masculinity in the period between the middle and end of the nineteenth century

show us a tableau of shifting priorities. Whereas the man of the early nineteenth century was to be a man of character, measured not only by his success in business, but also his role in the community and as head of the household, the man of the late nineteenth century was a man in flux—defined far more by his exteriority than his character.[31] When late in the chapter, the following exchange occurs, James enabled us to understand Mr. Touchett's role more clearly. To Lord Warburton, Mr. Touchett says,

> "You've no excuse for being bored anywhere. When I was your age, I had
> never heard of such a thing."
>
> "You must have developed very late."
>
> "No, I developed very quick; that was just the reason. When I was twenty
> years old I was very highly developed indeed. I was working tooth
> and nail. You wouldn't be bored if you had something to do; but
> all you young men are too idle. You think too much of your pleasure.
> You're too fastidious, and too indolent, and too rich."

Mr. Touchett's words are reminiscent of G. Stanley Hall's critical views of nineteenth-century masculinity. He feels that young men are too much the men of leisure, no longer the mentally forceful, driven, or resilient men their fathers were. For the American man, this is more pertinent, for their fathers had the resilience and purpose to resist servility, to work "tooth and nail," and found a nation. They had purpose. In the same moment, however, that he offers his critique of the younger male and his vision (or lack thereof) of the masculine self, Mr. Touchett proves himself outdated and laughable to the young Warburton. His views show us that he is a model of American man whose day is past. Almost as much as Washington Irving showed us transforming masculinity nearing the

turn of the eighteenth century in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" or "Rip Van Winkle," James featured "the *old* man" seeing manhood change before his eyes.[32] The scene in full proves to us that not only his body, but also his ideas and his vision of masculine life are outdated. James's focus on the internal strength that his features display enlightens us to the fact that there is something valuable there beyond the surface, but bodily, he is enfeebled, feminized, and robbed of his patriarchal status. The very disconnect between his waning masculine philosophy and his feeble physical presence reinforces James's puzzlement over precisely what superlative American manhood was to be near the turn of the century. This man is marginal in every way.

As an invalid, the elder man is "in-valid."[33] But, so too, is his son. The younger male, too, is marginal—perhaps much more like James himself than any other character in the text. It is he who is most clearly characterized as a mixture of polar gender traits— who is most overtly on the margins. It is also he whose characterization occupies the largest portion of the chapter and who is most nearly linked to Isabel Archer. A young man, born to wealth and on the verge of inheriting money that would concretize his position in society, Ralph Touchett ostensibly would be the character in whom American masculinity could be renewed, but he is not. He is first introduced in relation to Lord Warburton as follows:

> [Lord Warburton's] companion, measuring the length of the lawn beside him, was a person of quite a different pattern, who, although he might have excited grave curiosity, would not, like the other, have provoked you to wish yourself, almost blindly, in his place. Tall, lean, loosely and feebly put together, he had an ugly, sickly, witty, charming face, furnished, but

by no means decorated, with a straggling moustache and whisker. He looked clever and ill—a combination by no means felicitous; and he wore a brown velvet jacket. He carried his hands in his pockets, and there was something in the way he did it that showed the habit was inveterate. His gait had a shambling, wandering quality; he was not very firm on his legs.[34]

Most obvious in this description is his body and its vast difference from that of Lord Warburton. Though they are of similar height, Ralph is "of quite a different pattern"; he is "sickly," "ugly," "feebly put together," and "not very firm on his legs." These characteristics immediately locate him outside of the apparent masculine model represented by the young Lord. No one would see him and "wish [himself] . . . in his place." Physically weak and ill, his body alone displaces him. Like his father, whose knees are shrouded by a green shawl, he is clothed in a velvet jacket; his attire, like his face and his body, announces his "invalid" and "in-valid" status.[35]

Ralph also remains unnamed until page ten and is referenced in a variety of ways that undercut his manliness and authority. He is "the son," "the younger man," "his companion" in relation to the others in the scene, all labels that suggest a "secondary" status.[36] He is "the gentleman in the velvet coat," which calls attention to his illness, and perhaps to a sense of effeminacy. He is twice the "ugly young man," for his sparse facial hair and sallow appearance are far from the handsome appearance of Lord Warburton. And, finally, he is "the *other* young man" to Lord Warburton—a direct reference to his othered status. It is not until mention is made of his mother, Mrs. Touchett, that Ralph's surname is provided. Only after "the old man" discloses that Isabel is a "niece of [his]

wife's, Mrs. Touchett" do we know Ralph as "the young Mr. Touchett"; ironically, for a brief period after Ralph's naming, his father remains "the old man."[37] While this instance empowers the maternal figure—naming her, rather than the man whose name she carries by marriage—James later revealed that Mr. Touchett "was the more motherly; [Mrs. Touchett], on the other hand, was paternal."[38] Once more, gender roles are inverted, though the sexual role remains the same. This moment of Ralph's naming mimics birth in that the son gains existence through the mother as he would biologically. But, this moment shows him emasculated through the womb, as is Baldwin's David in a far more terrific manner.[39] The identification of Ralph through and with his mother rather than his father both undermines the "old man['s]" traditional paternal role and further impedes our reading of Ralph as a full-fledged man.

As Dana Luciano has noted, Ralph plays a very particular role in the novel. Luciano draws specifically upon the moment later in the novel in which Mme. Merle can quantify Ralph as nothing more than "'an American who lives in Europe'"—a state of being "that signifies absolutely nothing—it's impossible that anything should signify less." She argues that while Mme. Merle believes that women "have no natural place anywhere" and must "claw" their way to one that suits them, "men are required to stand for something in themselves."[40] For Luciano, Merle "[sutures] bourgeois gender identity to nationality and then [exempts] women from this requirement," insisting foremost that Ralph, too, is "exempted from this requirement by virtue of his weak lungs." His "very condition . . . unmans Ralph (by depriving him of a career, by making him vulnerable, by emphasizing his dependency)" while it also "protects him from unmanliness." His feeble state and weak appearance offer him what is essentially both an identity and an anti-

identity, a space apart from the conventional ideology of manhood—a space both freeing and psychically constrictive. He is consciously and purposefully alien to the male ideal, but he is intensely aware of his difference.

While Luciano focuses primarily on later scenes in the text, concentrating on "the deployment of power, . . . [and] the regular transmission of bloodlines and property," I point to James's opening chapter as the one that sets the stage for the very representation of otherness that is the novel's foundation.[41] Ralph readies liminal gender space for the heroine, for he is our first glimpse of the true "other."[42] In relation to his father, who was once fully virile and male with "the American tone," and Lord Warburton, who is superficially the quintessential male specimen, Ralph is painted as the most feminine of the scene, for his invalidism would also seem to afford him the opportunity to embody traits that are perceived as more feminine without an exchange such as the previous one between his father and Lord Warburton occurring.[43] Both prior to and immediately after that exchange, we see Ralph characterized as "clever" and sarcastic, offering up playful banter and witty retorts with his friend and his father. He is profoundly self-aware, making light of the ailments that simultaneously free and limit him, marginalizing them and his invalid status. Inserting Ralph's responses in the above dialogue and continuing with James's scene, it becomes obvious that Ralph subjectivity and role are meant for something more. To Warburton's barb, Ralph replies, "Oh no, he must have the shawl! . . . Don't put ideas such as that into his head."[44] He ignores the masculine power play, for he is not outwardly bound by its rules. However, while this reads as little more than Ralph playing the doting offspring to an ailing father, his words indicate that in absence of his mother, he exists as mother hen.

In nearly an additional page of dialogue, James effects a pointed examination of the indeterminate masculine space in which Ralph and his father exist, as if not wealth, but weak masculinity has been transmitted. To the elder Mr. Touchett's suggestion that he will "return" the shawl to Mrs. Touchett, Ralph utters,

> "You'll please to do nothing of the kind. You'll keep it to cover your poor old legs."
>
> "Well, you mustn't abuse my legs," said the old man. "I guess they are as good as yours."
>
> "Oh, you're perfectly free to abuse mine," his son replied, giving him his tea.
>
> "Well, we're two lame ducks. I don't think there's much difference."
>
> "I'm much obliged to you for calling me a duck . . . "

Ralph hen-pecks. More intriguing, however is that Ralph adds, albeit innocuously, to the attack on his father's manhood that Warburton begins by calling attention to his "poor old legs"—the deterioration of his body. His father responds by diminishing Ralph's manhood comparatively. "Not [very] firm on his [own] legs," Ralph is no better than "the old man"; "two lame ducks," by definition weaklings or without achievement, there is not "much difference" between them. Though as Ralph uses it in his reply, we can read the term "duck" as 'darling,' which reinforces Ralph's child-like position, Ralph initially uses his "clever retort" both to own and diminish his ailments.

Making Ralph appear so undisturbed by the jab allowed James to press a bit farther with this gender exposition. His father continues

> "He's a very good nurse, Lord Warburton."

"Isn't he a bit clumsy?" asked his lordship.

"Oh no, he's not clumsy—considering that he's an invalid himself. He's a very good nurse—for a sick-nurse. I call him my sick-nurse because he's sick himself."

"Oh come, daddy!" the ugly young man exclaimed.

"Well, you are; I wish you weren't. But I suppose you can't help it!"[45]

Ralph fills the role of "nurse" that, during the time, was the sphere of woman. The unmanly 'otherness' associated with the male nurse is well documented, particularly in the decades following the Civil War and marking the United States' commercial and imperial rise. I have only to point to Thomas Wentworth Higginson's tirade against Walt Whitman in 1887. Higginson, whose career in the 1880's involved far more than maintaining a firm hold on the literary tastes of his day, wrote, "There is, it is true, a class of men whose claims are intermediate between those of the soldiers and those of the women . . . men who, being rejected from enlistment for physical defects, sought honorably to serve their country as hospital nurses."[46] Higginson's definition of the space "between" men and women occupied by those who were not quite whole enough to be soldiers—the most manly of duties, it would appear—points us in the direction of James's own inability to enlist for war because of his ailments. Ralph is, like his author, feminized and relegated to the realm of the "intermediate"; not only is he a "nurse," but even his fulfillment of that function is diminished because he is "sick."[47]

James's character grows less manly by degrees as the scene continues. Warburton notes that Ralph is "clumsy"—a characteristic that is far removed from the "strength" and "independence of bearing" that Bederman attributes to the manliest of men.[48] His father

apologizes for this failure, attributing it, too, to his illness. Ralph, at this point exclaims,

"Oh come, daddy!," appearing at last to recognize just how damning these words are.

Yet, his response is more reminiscent of a pre-adolescent boy vexed with his father than a

man, something that speaks of manhood not quite attained. Again, Ralph recalls his

author for us—a man for whom, according to Alfred Habegger, "one of the basic givens

in [his] life was a deep and humiliating anguish at his failure ever to become a proper

man."[49] Ralph's father appears to lament his son's state, saying, "I wish you weren't. But

I suppose you can't help it!" Looking backward, we can hear faintly beneath his words

David's father crying out in *Giovanni's Room* that he just wants his son to "grow up to be

a man," for the suggestion is the same.[50] Though we assume that Mr. Touchett wishes his

son were not ill and that he recognizes that his illness is not by choice, there is enough

ambiguity to suggest that he wishes that his son could have become more of a man; his

words reveal lament that there is something that Ralph is not, by societal standards, what

it should be.

But, what precisely is it that Ralph is supposed to be? James's transition to

Ralph's ideas underscores his 'between-ness' and resonates of Baldwin's gradual turn

inward to the consciousness as the focus of *Giovanni's Room*.[51] Similarly to Baldwin,

James used the sense of community in the scene to delve into the psyche, for the

characters occupy the same space like those on Baldwin's train, and are subject to the

rather arbitrary "mill of convention."[52] Ralph exists somewhere between the English type

and the unclear American example. Albeit in a jovial way, Warburton brands Ralph a

"cynic," insisting "he doesn't seem to believe in anything."[53] Henrietta Stackpole,

James's "ficelle," admonishes Ralph similarly. In chapter ten, she says, "If you've got

any charm, it's quite unnatural . . . Make yourself useful in some way . . . Take right hold of something . . . Some new idea, some big work . . . You're not serious . . . that's what's the matter with you."[54] Both statements speak to his liminality. He is not prepared to do his "duty" as a man or an American, according to Henrietta. That he is duty-bound "to get married," to achieve something great, that he should be "full of blood" as William James suggests his brother should, or instilled with the "manly virtues" of "energy, strength, courage, alertness, persistency, stamina and endurance" as Dudley A. Sargent suggested, these are not part of Ralph's make-up.[55] In fact, the young man's illness limits his options in an ideological system that requires foremost that a *man* believe in something and be resolute. As the text proceeds, and we learn that Ralph is disinterested in business, that he essentially relinquishes half of the fortune that is his birthright, and that he will not marry, we see key resonances of his author.

Intriguingly, Henrietta's suggestion that Ralph is "unnatural" follows on the heels of Warburton branding of Ralph's "theories" as "queer."[56] It is an adjective that recalls William James's own classification of his brother Henry. When Mr. Touchett answers Warburton's declaration by saying to his son, "I hope you haven't taken up that sort of tone," we as readers wonder exactly which "tone" he means. Because the term "queer" had such negative associations with the "unnatural" and "unmanly," Mr. Touchett gives an impression here of "hoping" that what limited masculinity his son has is not further compromised by anything "unnatural."[57] Later in the text, the father appears to reify Ralph's "unnatural[ness]," indicating that "when [he] cared for a young girl . . . [he] wanted to do more than look at her."[58] In light of the implications of David's inaction on the Paris-bound train when a young woman flirts with him, Ralph's inaction reads far

more suggestively. Ralph's father attends to his difference in a way that recalls *Roderick Hudson*. The homosexual associations are fairly obvious, and, on the surface, this would be an easy means of labeling Ralph's difference.

This facility is deceptive, though; like Baldwin, James resisted arbitrary categorization. He complicated each verbal marker that he featured, the English Lord, the "old man," the "unnatural"; for James, what was at issue was not the label itself, but the system of beliefs that made it necessary, just as Baldwin's issue was not sexuality, but the ideology that made homosexuality a problem. The label emerges from the need to quantify difference as something aberrant, and in James's scene, Mr. Touchett attempts to excuse Ralph's divergent ideas and behaviors in just such a way. He tells Warburton, "It's because his health is so poor . . . It affects his mind and colours his way of looking at things; he seems to feel as if he never had a chance. But it's almost entirely theoretical, you know; it doesn't seem to affect his spirits."[59] In the same way that Thomas Higginson consigned the "intermediate[s]" to gender middle ground because they "[could]n't help it," so, too, does Mr. Touchett. His father's words suggest that because of his invalid status and sickly appearance, Ralph simply cannot help his strange theories and behaviors; he simply doesn't "fit"—to borrow from William again. But, by his silent admission, Ralph is "too perverted a representative of the nature of man."[60] The word "perverted" has sexual implications and is reminiscent of Baldwin's David confronting the perceived "perver[sion]" of his homosexuality; in this instance, however, before Ralph's life is fully revealed to us, his words point to the fact that Ralph resists and deviates from manly norms both outwardly and inwardly.[61] Perhaps his "spirits" remain because his resistance enables him to envision an identity for himself and others that is

outside of normative constructions. Although it might seem that James privileged one male form over another, the battle between physical and ideological types in the novel's open actually undermines manly typology and idealism entirely.

An "Interesting Woman"

James destabilized the idea of manhood itself, destroying the guises of masculine performance, for each character is an ambiguous representation of the masculine. Only after James positioned his males and subtly accentuated their adherence to and departures from normative gender identity did he directly address the very public crisis in contemporary masculinity by incorporating the question of the woman. Mr. Touchett speaks to the seriousness of the situation, telling the two younger men, "You young men have too many jokes . . . I believe things are getting more serious. You young men will find that out . . . I'm convinced there will great changes; and not all for the better."[62] Though it is clear that he is discussing political change, particularly projected alterations to the feudal-based system that had dominated Anglo-Saxon culture for centuries and cemented notions of entitlement, the conversation that ensues plays up the "decline of the sentiment of sex" that James saw as the defining social issue of the time.[63]

> "I quite agree with you sir," Lord Warburton declared . . . I'm very sure there will be great changes, and that all sorts of queer things will happen. That's why I find so much difficulty in applying your advice; you know you told me the other day that I ought to 'take hold' of something. One hesitates to take hold of a thing that may the next moment be knocked sky-high."
>
> "You ought to take hold of a pretty woman," said his companion. "He's

trying hard to fall in love," he added, by way of explanation, to his father.

"The pretty women themselves may be sent flying!" Lord Warburton exclaimed.

"No, no, they'll be firm," the old man rejoined; "they'll not be affected by the social and political changes I just referred to."

"You mean they won't be abolished? Very well, then, I'll lay hands on one as soon as possible and tie her round my neck as a life-preserver."

"The ladies will save us," said the old man. [64]

Warburton again uses the word "queer" to describe the goings-on in his orbit. His suggestion that "unnatural" things will occur on the political and social scene seems rather telling given the historical moment in which this text was created. Warburton's suggestion that "pretty women themselves may be sent flying" calls two possibilities to mind: First, that the very notion of a "pretty woman"—the ideal, externally lovely and internally insipid female model—might be sent careening into some gender abyss seems possible, leaving men scrambling to figure out what a woman is and by extension, what they are. This seems fitting given how pointed James's deconstruction of manhood is in this text; and secondly, that if the woman takes more of an active role in the sociopolitical sphere, both males and females may find themselves unsettled in the political mêlée.

However, it is Warburton's next words that indicate more fully the direction in which James could have been heading. Mr. Touchett insists, oddly, that the women will be "firm" and unaffected by the "changes" on the horizon. Warburton's reply, "You mean they won't be abolished?," evokes not only the changing ideals of Lordship (and what we learn later are Warburton's radical views on his station), but also the concern

that the result of agitation on women's behalf would be the abolition of manhood itself. Warburton conveys the central anxiety over manhood. In answer to him, Mr. Touchett's conviction that the "ladies will save us" is reminiscent of James's own father's views on marriage. The senior James writes,

> The history of each man and of civilization itself follows the same path; first man glimpses in the 'downcast eyes' of the woman he has enslaved a radiant glory; he binds himself to her for life; and eventually the confinement of marriages proves to be a saving discipline for him and he transcends himself."[65]

Thus, man is a creature who is responsible for the "civic consciousness of the race." Yes, he "enslave[s]" the woman, but because he is innately base and passionate, he finds himself saved by her "radiant glory." In an ultimate irony, though marriage itself is an act of bondage, only through marriage can he "transcend" his flaws; only through subordinating the 'weaker' sex can the man have salvation. At the same time, however, the conversation between the three men speaks to the very sentiment that James's words in the epigraph beginning this chapter convey: it is the women, the very idea of what a woman is and what she hopes to be, that can lead men away from the construction that is so evidently damning them because it allows space for a new expression of gender. Reminiscent of Baldwin's importation of the homosexual in the masculine war, a seemingly far greater affront to masculinity than the woman because of his physical sameness, the conversation about womanhood intimates the need for gender revision.[66]

On the heels of this conversation, Isabel is introduced—not by name, but as an unseen entity in relation to Mrs. Touchett and the idea of woman that James's characters

117

create. The idea being discussed among the men is precisely what "an interesting woman" is. Lord Warburton is "not at all keen about marrying," since "there's no knowing what an interesting woman might do with [him]." He reminds us of the fear intrinsic to masculine posturing; wanting nothing to be "do[ne] with him," he is fully conscious of his role, though he does not entirely fit it. He also intimates that the model woman of the day, perhaps, is not necessarily "interesting"; rather, she is a "portrait"—an exterior.[67] Ralph questions what "an interesting woman" is, and Warburton replies, "My dear fellow, you can't see ideas—especially such highly ethereal ones as mine. If I could only see it myself—that would be a great step in advance."[68] Warburton has never *seen* an "interesting" woman, but he is fearful of her, and his otherworldly idea of her would seem to indicate that he has no intention of marrying and carrying on his lineage as is his duty.

Predictably, Isabel is the "interesting woman" to Warburton's "ethereal idea," a fact which does not bode well for her; the perfection of the "ethereal" is unattainable. It, like the manhood ideal that James undermined, is a concept doomed from its inception. Through the "idea" of Isabel, however, James set to work representative manhood in relation to women. We find ourselves drawn into Ralph's query of what exactly Mrs. Touchett means by indicating that Isabel is "quite independent." He ponders,

> "In what sense is the term used? . . . is it used in a moral or in a financial sense? Does it mean that [she's] been left well off, or that [she] wishes to be under no obligations? Or does it simply mean that [she's] fond of [her own way?"[69]

Though Warburton censures "American girls" for their apparent lack of fidelity or morals, as the scene ends, the question of Isabel's "independence" is one that bears mention, for it is the most often contested in the text. She is repeatedly told that she has too much *or* will tire of her "liberty" and "independence."[70] While Ralph seems confounded by the very idea of an "independent" woman, he is intensely interested in the notion—much more so than the other males in the garden. As a marginal male, himself, he is better able to fathom the possibility that such an entity exists.

Warburton, the archetypal male, however, is amused by the prospect. As chapter two begins, and Isabel enters the scene framed by "the ample doorway," a tall girl in a black dress, who at first sight looked pretty," we see Warburton make wordplay with the notion of her "independence"—as if the very idea is comical to him. In reply to Mr. Touchett's "Dear me, who's that strange woman?" he quips, "Perhaps it's Mrs. Touchett's niece—the independent young lady . . . I think she must be, from the way she handles the dog." When Touchett asks the whereabouts of his wife, Warburton replies, "I suppose the young lady has left her somewhere; that's a part of the independence."[71] Keeping an "attentive eye upon Miss Archer" for the majority of the short scene, speaking only once, he inserts Isabel's image and figure—for he knows nothing else— into the mental box that he has created for his *imagined* "ethereal idea" of an "interesting" woman. Her presence silences him, and at the close of chapter two, as if to reinforce her status for him, Lord Warburton says to Ralph, "You wished a while ago to see my idea of an interesting woman. There it is!"[72] Only *after* the gender dynamic in which she will come to consciousness has been conveyed, after the anxiety of manhood has been established, and after we are privy to the fact that the "independent" woman is

119

an "idea," a "what" rather than a "who," is Isabel's ideation inserted among the manly players.[73] Grammatically, of course, the "it" that Warburton uses is correct, but through him, James underscores the fact that on this masculine playing field, Isabel, the "independent" woman, like Ralph, is 'other.'

"Oh! My Brother!": the 'twinning' of Ralph and Isabel

Ralph's questions spark our own and are our initial ideological frame for Isabel. What does an independent woman do? How does she behave? Again, "what is it in her destiny to be?"[74] Fittingly, it is by Ralph Touchett's conveyance of his Mother's cryptic "description" that the idea of Isabel emerges. This is the first instance in which he gives her life, so to speak. Ralph is later the first to *see* and be introduced to her. He also gains a named identity in the same moment that she is introduced as "a niece of [Mrs. Touchett's." Both are metaphorically 'birthed' and 'twinned' in this moment through Mrs. Touchett—the male and female sides of the same gender coin. Where Ralph "doesn't seem to believe in anything" normative, Isabel holds no weight in things that are "imposed on [her] by society."[75] Where Ralph describes Isabel as being "intelligent and generous" with "a fine, free nature," Isabel likewise finds him "a bright, free, generous spirit."[76] She "strikes [him] as very natural" and without pretense; these same attributes are deemed "unnatural" in Ralph. Their twinning, however, is one vehicle through which James exposed the very narrow frames that contemporary gender norms provided for each.

Ralph's marginality allows him to be fascinated by her difference, encouraging her inquisitive, adventure-seeking nature and valuing her intelligence when others like Warburton and Osmond either find her too theoretical or demand her submission. Ralph

can find her "very pretty indeed; but" his relegation to the margins makes it acceptable for him not to "insist upon that"—to be more captivated by "her general air of being some one in particular."[77] Seeing her as "full of premises, conclusions, emotions," he finds joy in the fact that she "ask[s] more questions than he could answer, and launche[s] brave theories, as to historic cause and social effect, that he [is] equally unable to accept or refute."[78] As Ralph's female counterpart, his illness and her sex ironically equating them, Isabel is the magical realization of the wants and desires that he can never achieve.[79] Together, they illustrate that their marginalization is the result of the same opposing ideology.

Admittedly, Ralph harbors romantic feelings for Isabel. He confesses to his father in chapter eighteen that he is "not in love with her; but [he] should be if—if certain things were different."[80] What holds him back from her, what makes thinking "of Isabel . . . an idle pursuit, leading to nothing and profiting little to any one" is the very thing that leaves him on the periphery of a powerful masculine self—his illness. Again, we are reminded of the need for purpose, and perhaps, the drive for profit seminal to manhood. Within a few short lines, Ralph seems to address Henrietta Stackpole's condemnation of his brand of manhood and Warburton's accusation of cynicism in chapter one directly. He acknowledges, "I haven't many convictions; but I have three or four that I hold strongly. One . . . is that people in an advanced stage of pulmonary disorder had better not marry at all."[81] Ralph does believe in something, but his invalid state gives him a perspective beyond that deemed 'natural' for a male. He has no access and no means by which to compete for Isabel in a romantic sense. Although Isabel decides at one point that his "unnatural[ness]" gives him "a kind of intellectual advantage[,] it absolve[s] him from all

professional and official emotions and [leaves] him the luxury of being exclusively personal"; her presence and his inability to engage in normative romantic pursuit further displace him as a man.[82] Though his difference frees him from the "professional" and "official"—or external—aspects of maleness, he is more decidedly other in juxtaposition to Isabel than he is even in relation to the conflicted male typology of chapter one.

Ralph's subjectivity informs his intense, but shortsighted faith in the ability of the gendered other to successfully circumnavigate social prescriptions. In fact this, as well as his love for her, is the foundation of his desire to see Isabel live independently. It is Ralph who furnishes her with the wealth to follow her dreams, wanting to see her fly when he cannot. It is he who envisions her "soaring far up in the blue—sailing in the bright light, over the heads of men" as "imperturbable, inscrutable, impenetrable" as she is perceived early in the text.[83] It is he who comprehends her desire "to be free," who in the end "always understood . . . though it was so strange—so pitiful[, that she] wanted to look at life for [herself]—but [she was] not allowed; [she was] punished for [her] wish . . . ground in the very mill of the conventional!" It is he who, as a twin "hurts" when she falls "as if [he'd] fallen himself"—who feels it intensely when, just like Baldwin's "exhausted, doomed bird," she can no longer fly with the weight of convention clipping her wings.[84] In due course, it is he who Isabel recognizes as her "brother"—her kindred spirit and the one person with whom she can fully share her consciousness. They are intellectual and ideological matches, but this is not necessarily a positive in James's novel. Her sex and his illness are given an equivalency that is just as damning as David's desire to be manly and his belief that both his and Giovanni's sexuality are illnesses. What does it mean to be equal to an entity that has no true place in society?

Ralph finds her defiance of norms entertaining—a distraction from his liminality. He repeatedly wishes that he might "be there to see" her "intentions."[85] He takes pleasure in her "liberty" when others find her too free. After Isabel's refusal of Lord Warburton's marriage proposal, Ralph indicates that wishes to "have the thrill of seeing what a young lady does who won't marry Lord Warburton."[86] In this moment, James highlighted just how far outside of quintessential Victorian womanhood Isabel is. By extension, he also alluded again to the contrast between Warburton and Ralph in the first chapter. "As a man," Ralph admits, Warburton "has hardly a fault . . . He has immense possessions, and his wife would be thought a superior being."[87] He is everything that a Victorian lady should want, but Isabel refuses him. In fact, she refuses not only this archetypal male "specimen," but also his hyper-masculine, American counterpart, Caspar Goodwood—both of whom she believes will fully subsume her identity as an independent young woman. Isabel fears Caspar Goodwood's sexuality, as well as the weight of the history represented by Lord Warburton, but she is more "afraid of [the] suffering" that necessarily meets a woman who overtly relinquishes her identity and succumbs either sexually or ideologically to what she is told to be.[88] She bolsters the sense of tragedy inherent in this text; she wants to define herself beyond the borders of feminine portraiture, but can this happen? Similarly, Ralph exists on the margins of masculinity and either is not privy to or relinquishes those things deemed his manly rights. James seemed to desire a gender construct that would enable what both of these characters represent to exist and be valid.

Ralph and Osmond: Un-masculine masculinity

James also used Isabel to unravel the ways in which even those males on the margins are ensnared by gender constraints. James positioned Isabel most prominently against two physically weak and, therefore, insufficiently masculine figures, Ralph Touchett and Gilbert Osmond. It is through these two characters that James effected his most pointed dismantling of a masculine ideal. I begin with Ralph. Like his author, Ralph is at once within and without the masculine construct, for he seeks to defy it while being bound by it in so many ways. At the same time that he values her inner rarity, several of his early impressions of Isabel lean toward the objectification that is central to the "male gaze," to borrow from Laura Mulvey.[89] She is "rare" and "original," and that appeals to him. She is "better worth looking at than most works of art," Ralph thinks on their first evening in the gallery.[90] These moments also point to Isabel's collectibility—her portraiture. He repeats this assessment in the chapter that follows their first meeting. "Conscious she was an entertainment of a high order," Ralph says to himself,

> A character like that . . . a real little passionate force to see at play is the finest thing in nature. It's finer than the finest work of art—than a Greek bas-relief, than a great Titian, than a Gothic cathedral . . . I had never been more blue, more bored than for a week before she came; I had never expected less than anything pleasant would happen. Suddenly, I receive a Titian, by the post, to hang on my wall—a Greek bas-relief to stick over my chimney-piece. The key of a beautiful edifice is thrust into my hand, and I'm told to walk in and admire.[91]

This moment seems that of a voyeur ogling his obsession, or, perhaps, of a collector locating his next rare find for the gallery. Ralph's words foreshadow Isabel's treatment at Osmond's hands and illustrate the degree to which masculine power has multiple faces.

James supported Ralph's wielding of manly power in a rather subtle way. Read in the context of gender exploration, Ralph's bequeathing of his fortune to Isabel takes on near-Frankenstinian weight. While his financial gift to her has been read as a testament to his "fine, free good nature," it could be read as an attempt to purchase her rather than grant her freedom—a scenario that brings with it its own difficulties. Further, for my purposes, it can also be read as Ralph's attempt to create his own image of the "independent woman." As Kurt Hochenauer suggests, Isabel's sexual identity is divided (at least psychologically); she is in fact more *male* than Ralph is, but her externality damns her to a limited existence.[92] As if he understands this, Ralph wishes to make her rich, "able to meet the requirements of [her] imagination," but his imagined existence for her is an unfettered "exploration of life" that she cannot realize.[93] He desires that she never "[come] to the consciousness of a lot of wants she should be unable to satisfy," but both her wants (and his in this case) are outside of accepted boundaries.[94] He feels that Isabel will only be "as good as her best opportunities."[95] But, what are her opportunities as a woman? Hearkening back to Warburton, it seems that Ralph is attempting to piece together an "ethereal" idea, believing that Isabel will not fall prey to the madness of "convention." Just as Warburton's idea is unattainable, Ralph's is as well. What he overlooks is that the predetermined path for the woman of this time is set in relation to masculine precepts and out of a need for the preservation of masculine power. Ralph's resistance to norms clouds his recognition of the fact that the forces guiding his own

existence on the periphery of manhood guide Isabel's womanhood as well. Ralph fails to recognize just how insidiously ingrained the nuances of gender construction are at the same time that he falls prey to them. In his attempt to make her what he would be were he not ill, Ralph selfishly dooms her, as his father forewarns, making her the target of "fortune hunters" and promising the death of her spirit, if not her person.[96]

The "fortune hunter" in question is Gilbert Osmond. Not the finely tuned masculine specimen that either Lord Warburton or Caspar Goodwood is in the text, he serves simultaneously as one of James's most vivid defiances of physical manliness and critiques of masculine rules. Though studies exist that read Osmond as the stereotypical New York Jew, Osmond's is the most painstaking and comprehensive performance of masculinity in the text.[97] His presence neither calls to mind violence, nor overt sexuality. In truth, when he is introduced to us, his physical presence is far from desirable. Outwardly, he is more akin to Ralph than to Warburton or Goodwood. Again focusing on the male body, James appeared to play up his effeminacy. His appearance, like his taste, is precise. Of him, Isabel observes,

> [His] peculiarity was physical, to begin with, and it extended to his
> immaterial part. His dense, delicate hair, his overdrawn, retouched
> features, his clear complexion, ripe without being coarse, the very
> evenness of the growth of his beard, and that light, smooth, slenderness of
> structure which made the movement of a single one of his fingers produce
> the effect of an expressive gesture.[98]

His "peculiarity" is key, for we could read it as "unnatural." That his "features" are "overdrawn" and "retouched" suggests that he is painted, alluding to both the portraiture

at issue in the novel and the theatricality that is at the heart of his very existence. His cosmetically enhanced 'perfection' emphasizes his womanliness as clearly as do Ralph's "velvet robe" and feeble appearance—though with opposite effects. That his hair is "dense" and "delicate" points to something girlish. That his "complexion" is "clear" and "ripe without being course" points to a concerted effort at evoking a sense of maturity and agelessness simultaneously. The "evenness of the growth of his beard" is a testament to his attention to detail and his painstaking training of the hair; James's description of his beard reminds us of Warburton's "chestnut" one—perhaps just as equally trained for appearance's sake.[99] His "slenderness" recalls Isabel's own "willowy" frame, as well as Ralph's "lean, tall" frame. The artistry, the practiced beauty, evident in even his slightest of movements is the very opposite of Goodwood's stiffness and Warburton's "dog-skin gloves . . . clenched" in his "white fist." His exterior defies any notion of a monolithic male; in fact, it is a throwback to historical European, elitist, externality—the painted nobleman. The subject of his own masque, he externally performs something that Ralph's exterior naturally epitomizes—the un-masculine.

Osmond skillfully becomes that which Isabel's imagination most desires to win her, his outward pretense hiding a sadistic, psychically impenetrable consciousness. Therefore, the fear of losing her*self* that Isabel experiences with Warburton and Goodwood is not a factor. When she tells Ralph that she is "not afraid of ghosts," her statement is key. As "her mind contain[s] no class which offer[s] a natural place to [Osmond;] he [is] a specimen apart."[100] Osmond is essentially a "ghost" of man for her, for he is almost androgynous. She believes that he is unlike any man that she has ever known or seen, but James contradicts her, highlighting how easily she dismisses the

similarities between Osmond and Ralph. He ends Isabel's description of Osmond by noting that for his heroine, Osmond's "personal points struck our observant young lady as the signs of an unusual sensibility."[101] She compares his "appearance of thinking that life was a matter of connoisseurship" with a similar quality in Ralph. She notes, "In Ralph, it was an anomaly, a kind of humorous excrescence; whereas with Mr. Osmond it was the key-note."[102] Although the habits of the invalid are "inveterate" with Ralph, his high tastes are perceived as antithetical to his sickly nature, though it is his sickly nature that allows him the social freedom to cater to his "sensibility." Conversely, Osmond is "sensibility" itself. Ralph's feebleness masks the fact that he can afford to entertain his "sensibility"; Osmond is a "connoisseur" without an income; he needs Isabel's money to continue his highly contrived lifestyle—a fact that undermines his masculinity further, for he is not a breadwinner. He is an aesthete without means. As such, he would appear to be as deficient and marginalized a man as Ralph is.

Herein lay James's design. Though externally non-masculine, Osmond is masculine "convention itself" at its most vicious internally.[103] Osmond's danger to Isabel lies precisely in the fact that physically, he is not an ideal manly "specimen"; she becomes ensnared by his feminized theatricality, and because of it, underestimates and misjudges him. Although she recognizes that he exists in a "sorted, sifted, and arranged world," she dismisses the danger that such regimented categorization poses to her independence.[104] Her untrained consciousness is far too susceptible to the innocuous outward show, and beyond it, she cannot see Osmond's "malignan[ce]."[105] His tastes and passions become his weapons in exerting masculine energies; through them and his icy will, he is a silent, calculating, unbending, master of his environment and its inhabitants,

a bastardized version of the silent, powerful force of Henry Adams's "Quincy."[106] He wields his power to ensure Isabel's conformity to the norms that he holds paramount.[107]

Osmond views her as a possession; an object of exchange, Isabel alternately inhabits all of the facets of the Victorian "male gaze" for him. She is to be the ideal Victorian woman, a perfect portrait fixed in time for display. As Donatella Izzo so eloquently states, in Osmond's "mind," which "appeared to become [Isabel's] habitation," Isabel is "caretaker of children, companion of men, a being for whom innocence and self-sacrifice [should be the] guiding values of feminine existence."[108] In one instance, Osmond even urges her to use her feminine wiles to persuade Lord Warburton, her former suitor, to wed his daughter, Pansy; in essence, she is also to assume the role of whore because her husband dictates it.[109] Osmond believes that Isabel has "too many ideas," that it is good that they are "bad ones" because "they must be sacrificed"; his home is a museum, the "house of darkness, the house of dumbness, the house of suffocation," housing numerous valuable items, including her, for display. Each is a testament to his role as collector and connoisseur. He is interested only in "the old, the consecrated, the transmitted," as his appearance well indicates.[110] In order to exist in his sphere, Isabel must sacrifice all of her identity to become that which Osmond demands, for all that he desires is a "pretty appearance," or as Ralph determines it, a "representation" or "advertisement" of the "serenity painted on [her face]."[111] On the surface, "at all events, framed in the gilded doorway," she "look[s] to be "the picture of a gracious lady"; beneath, she is a spirit crushed by the mass of a heavily constructed and visibly deceptive manly ideal.[112]

I use Isabel's suppression to illustrate the degree to which the visibly marginalized subject is undone by gender ideology. According to Melissa Valiska Gregory's "From Melodrama to Monologue: Henry James and Domestic Terror,"

> While . . . late-nineteenth-century assessments concede Osmond's cruelty and even acknowledge his ultimate ineffectiveness, their professed appreciation of his character as "the real power" of the book points to a deeper preoccupation with the version of masculine authority that he represents. Osmond's model of refined male control, his tactics of subtle mastery, alternately attracted and repulsed James's readers, for his character evokes a host of increasingly urgent late-nineteenth-century anxieties about manhood and rhetorical power.[113]

Acknowledging James's attention to changing notions of manhood, Gregory taps into the vexing ambiguities of maleness at the turn of the twentieth century. James painted Osmond's mask, allowing its very presence to deconstruct normative masculine rules. Hiding pure, raw strength of will beneath it, he is easily overlooked as a threat, but his force becomes more threatening than Warburton's historicity or Goodwood's phallic image. He defies the norm outwardly, yet masters it inwardly. Isabel comes to realize that he is "the finest--in the sense of being the *subtlest*—manly organism she had ever known."[114] Such subtlety, such artistry in perpetuating "manly" norms, is difficult to avoid or counteract.

Ironically, it is James's most thoroughly marginal male who exposes the specific depths of Osmond's intricate performance to us. Ralph realizes Isabel's error and notes that she "invent[s] a fine theory about Gilbert Osmond, . . . love[s] him not for what he

130

really possesse[s], but for his very poverties dressed out as honors."[115] Of Ralph, James

wrote,

> Ralph was a clever man; but Ralph had never—to his own sense—been so
>
> clever as when he observed, *in petto,* that under the guise of caring only
>
> for intrinsic values Osmond lived exclusively for the world . . . Everything
>
> he did was *pose*—*pose* so subtly considered that if one were not on the
>
> lookout one mistook it for impulse. Ralph had never met a man who lived
>
> so much in the land of consideration. His tastes, his studies, his
>
> accomplishments, his collections, were all for a purpose . . . It had made
>
> him feel great, ever, to play the world a trick . . . [The] gullible world was
>
> in a manner embodied in poor Isabel.[116]

James openly referenced the very "clever[ness]" with which Ralph both owns his

marginality and responds to being unmanned in chapter one. He is more of an outsider

than is Osmond, and sees through Osmond's ruse. His recognition of Osmond's falsity

"in petto" emphasizes the implied contrast between them. In his breast, or

metaphorically, in a heart that Osmond does not seem to have, he sees the superficiality

of Osmond's persona.[117] Recognizably, Osmond fulfills Henrietta Stackpole's dictum

that a man must have a "purpose." His is constructing a "pose"—one that heightens

others' perception of his marginality. Under this absurd façade of "culture," "cleverness,"

"amenity," "good-nature," "facility, [and] knowledge of life," "his egotism lay hidden

like a serpent in a bank of flowers."[118] His determined concealment of it effectively

allows him to make a fool of the "world . . . embodied in poor Isabel." Ralph is further

displaced, for his "cleverness" is no match for Osmond's well-oiled, performative machine.

Osmond internalizes the rigid conception of masculine strength.[119] Ralph senses both the maliciousness beneath Osmond's surface and the joy that he takes in his deception. As an artist, perhaps Osmond's greatest work is himself. "A critic, a student of the exquisite . . . natural[ly] curious of so rare an apparition," Osmond's initial reading of Isabel reminds us of Ralph observing Isabel for the first time in the gallery at Gardencourt.[120] Arguably also a connoisseur, then, Ralph recognizes great artistry. Yet, the fact that the two marginal males recognize the truth about one another is no accident. Because both of these men signify an unrecognized expression of masculinity in James's fictional world, it would seem that James was indicating that like recognizes like. Osmond identifies Ralph as a threat because Ralph truly sees him and because, like Joey in *Giovanni's Room*, he is biologically male. Ralph's "unnatural" theories, like his similar outward weakness, make him a threat.[121] In what seems as near an unguarded moment as he has in the text, Osmond even vaguely admits as much. To Isabel, he says, "Your relations with him, while he was here, kept me on pins and needles . . . I've never liked him and he has never liked me. That's why you like him—because he hates me," he says to her.[122] Like a petulant child, he believes that Ralph is Isabel's means of revenge against him. But, the fact that Ralph's presence pricks at him and pierces his façade, which this revelatory moment could well intimate, speaks to their kinship. Ralph recognizes him for the "sterile dilettante" that he is.[123] As much as Osmond attempts to overcompensate for his insufficient physical manliness by heightening it and using it maliciously, he cannot hide his nature from Ralph.

James began chapter forty-five by telling us that Osmond "wished [Isabel] to have no freedom of mind, and he knew perfectly well that Ralph was an apostle of freedom."[124] The larger part of Ralph's belief system is the converse of the masculine "convention" that Osmond holds dear; he is a champion of exploding norms. Because of it, James seemed to comprehend, the purveyor of male normative ideology would want to eradicate him. As a predator targets the weakest prey, Osmond gradually attempts to enfeeble Ralph, symbolically negating any power that he has over Isabel. Osmond tells his wife

> You're certainly not fortunate in your intimates; I wish you might make a
> new collection . . . Your cousin I have always thought a conceited ass—
> besides his being the most ill-favoured animal I know. Then it's
> insufferably tiresome that one can't tell him so; one must spare him on
> account of his health. His health seems to me the best part of him; it gives
> him privileges enjoyed by no one else. If he's so desperately ill, there's
> only one way to prove it; but he seems to have no mind for that.[125]

He begins by paying homage to his role as "connoisseur." Even one's acquaintances must be staged, "collect[ed]" so that they best indicate one's "fortune." In their respective lots, one might argue that neither Ralph nor Osmond has been "favoured" by "[F]ortune"—as if the goddess' wheel simply failed where they are concerned. Osmond finds him "tiresome" and a "conceited ass" because he represents an independence from and disdain for convention that all but reduces Osmond's façade to nothing. More importantly, Osmond references Ralph's subject position—somewhere outside of the

dictates and "privileges enjoyed by [any]one else." Not only is he characterized by his invalidism, but he is also held to far different standards because of it.

Later, in a conversation with Caspar Goodwood, who has come to Europe in hopes of gaining some insights to Isabel's happiness, James created his earlier masculine power play anew. Osmond offers:

> "You travel, by the by, with Ralph Touchett . . . I suppose that means you'll move slowly . . .
>
> You're very accommodating. We're immensely obliged to you; you must really let me say it. My wife has probably expressed to you what we feel. Touchett has been on our minds all winter; it has looked more than once as if he would never leave Rome. He ought never to have come; it's worse than an imprudence for people in that state to travel; it's a kind of indelicacy. I wouldn't for the world be under such an obligation to Touchett as he has been to—to my wife and me. Other people inevitably have to look after him, and every one isn't so generous as you."[126]

Like Mr. Touchett in chapter one, but with far more malicious intent, Osmond plays on Ralph's illness, effectually unmanning him by calling attention not only to it, but also to the wholly dependent state in which it leaves him. As a man, Osmond intimates that *he* would *never* stoop to such dependency.[127] Osmond also digs into Goodwood quite subtly, suggesting that his "generous" nature makes him little more than an accompanying nurse, the label that emasculated Ralph in the first chapter. To Osmond, Ralph's actions are "indelicate"—a sin to a man so consumed by appearances. I must point out here that Osmond's suggestion of Ralph's dependence is tremendously ironic. Though legally,

Isabel's fortune becomes his once they marry, he is, in fact, dependent upon her for the continuity of his lifestyle. When Osmond indicates that it "looked more than once as if he would never leave Rome," he is alluding to Ralph's poor health, but he is also subtly referring to Ralph's presence as a potential deterrent to his utter domination of Isabel. James effectively reinforced both the othering of Ralph and the similarity between the two men.

In doing so, James illustrated the difficulties of formulating the new gender spaces that he desired in much the same way that Baldwin did near the end of *Giovanni's Room*. Though Ralph's outward appearance has masked the one male with whom Isabel could be her self—the one male who, despite his purchase and re-creation of her, would and could allow her to fly beyond "convention," outward appearances have also masked Osmond's threat to her self-identity; similarly, external masculinity and deeply entrenched notions of "convention" have blocked David's path to happiness and self-realization. Through Osmond and Ralph Touchett, James effectively exploded the idea of external manly models, suggesting that identity is beyond the surface. But, in Osmond as well, James registered the difficulty of battling unseen, imbibed, and deeply ingrained masculine norms. In the battle between two marginalized males, the 'victor' is still the one who best reflects gender prescriptions ideologically.

Osmond is correct in assuming that Ralph is Isabel's "apostle of freedom," for Ralph's is the death of the one person who affirms the 'manly' independence that hybridizes her, however limited it may be. Upon his death, any hope for freedom from "the mill of the conventional" dies as well. Where Osmond, the exaggerated, physical manifestation of hybridized gender survives, Ralph, not only a physical symbol of

deviance from the masculine norm, but an ideological one as well, has been dying

throughout the novel and finally does pass away—becoming the actual "ghost" to

Osmond's "ghost" performance of masculinity.[128] James seemed to indicate that he

perceived something fatal, perhaps, for the male who attempted to re-vision masculinity,

or gender roles in total. In fact, in purging Ralph's presence from his fictional world,

James put forth that a "marginal male," both physically and psychologically outside of

the masculine norm, was perceived as far more dangerous than a potentially masculinized

woman or even a man in drag.[129]

<u>"Of what [should we be] conscious?"</u>

We may have a desire to resist didacticism with James's novel, but it is at the

heart of this novel's purpose. James deconstructed gender identity at every turn. Isabel's

return to Osmond is problematic, and though it may be explained, in part, by her

assumption of agency in her own destiny, it also exemplifies James's consideration of

masculinity. In that "most troublesome silence in the novel," we fear that she is returning

to a place in which her person will be locked forever within her portrait, for this signifies

that the girl full of "liberty" and "independence" is lost to intrinsic masculine

dominance.[130] Leaving her "en l'air," as James famously described his ending, shrouded

in ambiguity, allows us to envision a gender space for her that will free her. Given

Ralph's demise, however, we also recognize its improbability. In *Giovanni's Room*,

Baldwin tapped into James's sense of masculine doom, writing the dominant male's

perceived need to eradicate his feminized counterpart in a far less subtle, far more vicious

manner. Giovanni's death is tragic and, by the end of the novel, damning for David.

Ralph does not die by guillotine, but his death is no less painful, for it means that there is

no soil in which new visions of gender may take root. James deposited both Isabel and Ralph in a world defined by the insupportable and unstable masculine norms exposed in chapter one. Although he authored potentially inhabitable, unconventionally gendered spaces, and asked us to imagine that which could defy customary constructions, his gender experiment proved unsuccessful. Through Ralph and Isabel, James forced us to recognize that though there is really no masculine ideal, the belief in one—the investment in its survival—enlivens it in the social consciousness; the very idea is unforgiving, unwavering, alienating, consumptive, and destructive—particularly for the feminized male presence.

The novel's end, like *Giovanni's Room*'s, leaves the reader with little hope that change might come, though both authors fully comprehended masculine ideology's toxicity. While neither could feasibly see their authored gender safe spaces through, Baldwin's adoption of James's themes suggests that retrace James's steps, for James did, in fact, expose not only unsupportable masculine norms, but also the Anglo-Saxon myths upon which they were built. James's pointed troubling of the manly ideal's existence served as the gateway through which his recognition of racial normativity would come. One must wonder if he could not issue a full challenge to normative masculinity or a successful fictional escape of it, how, then, would he engage and rethink visible markers of difference?

Chapter Three: A "Stranger" Encounters the "Alien"

"Where has he come from and why has he come, what is he doing (as we Anglo-Saxons, and we only, say), in our foredoomed clutch of exotic aids to expression in that *galere*? –Henry James[1]

"There is an illusion about America, a myth about America to which we are clinging which has nothing to do with the lives we lead and I don't believe that anybody in this country who has really thought about it or really almost anybody who has been brought up against it—and almost all of us have in one way or another—this collision between one's image of oneself and what one actually is always very painful and there are two things you can do about it, you can meet the collision head-on and try and become what you really are or you can retreat and try to remain what you thought you were, which is a fantasy, in which you will certainly perish."—James Baldwin[2]

In examining race and ethnicity, it might seem that Baldwin would have a degree of expertise that James would not. He was visibly marked; he was openly degraded; and, he was born into American racial subordination. One wonders how he possibly could have used James as a model to examine the most perceptibly denigrated portion of his identity. But, there is, perhaps, no other American, male writer who challenges gender norms and the doomed, fragmented American male self more than Henry James. Fittingly, both Baldwin and James connect whiteness and gender. In *Giovanni's Room*, Baldwin rooted his critique of masculine norms in their Anglo-Saxon roots; in doing so, he evoked the idea of a personal, masculine hell heightened by the historical implications of white skin. Though not as hellishly, James renounced normative masculine and feminine constraints; by naming Warburton alone to begin *Portrait*, he tied his critiques to the "booted and spurred" Anglo-Saxon model of martial manhood. The marginalization felt in being a gender outsider later afforded him insight to racial marginalization.[3]

I argue, however, that attention to race is not wholly absent in James's canon— that buried in James's prose (in *Portrait* and other works) and treatments of the masculine

and feminine was an emergent awareness of the interminable bind of gender and race. Like Baldwin, he learned that race in America damns not only the visibly marked, but also those who benefit from their subordination. Because of this, my aim in this chapter is to depart from the paradigm that governs the previous two readings. Rather than separate treatments, I hope to create a more direct inter-textual dialogue between Baldwin's "A Stranger in the Village" (1953) and James's *The American Scene* (1904).[4]

My reasons are two-fold. "Stranger" reads like a literal synopsis of the psychological journey that James made to alter his perception of America, those who are other, and himself. What Baldwin's work suggests in relation to James is that race inevitably cannot be avoided because the problem of race (and the reluctance to engage it) is representative of America's larger identity issues. Historically embedded in its laws and development, it is attached to conceptions of gender and class; race and the conflation of ethnic bias with racism, are, in many ways, crosses that America bears in seeking out its space in the world.[5] In the "Preface" of *The Ambassadors*, James wrote, "art deals with what you see," and his words seem eerily appropriate for reading *The American Scene* (1904), as the idea of race in America relies foremost on the seen markers of ethnic or racial difference and the associations that accompany them. For both authors, "see[ing]" was more than visual; it was a full-fledged, multi-sensory experience—more the merging of sensations leading to total comprehension than merely sight.[6] More specifically, Baldwin was in a racial prison where his skin—the visual— served as the bars. But, he was also in a raced, "male prison" defined by perceptions of his body and psyche rooted in his pigment.[7] We see this throughout his canon: in the lunacy of David's violent plight to maintain an imbibed notion of white masculinity at all

costs in *Giovanni's Room*; in the African-American, Christian roots in *Go Tell it on the Mountain* that teach him about the physical 'ugliness' and aberrance of his emergent homosexuality; in the devastating absence of identity, rage, and projected violence housed in the doomed, black body of Rufus in *Another Country* (1962); in the promise of rage by those whose bodies and psyches have been beaten and bruised in *The Fire Next Time* (1963); and in the lesson that Arthur Montana, a gospel singer, was worthy of love and respect because of his personhood—not unworthy of them because of his homosexuality and his blackness—in *Just Above My Head* (1978). James's stylistic and disciplined approach to deconstructing identity norms and insistence on altering the psyches of those who had othered him resonate loudly in Baldwin's work, and James's agonizing realizations helped Baldwin to understand that his racial prison's lock might be weakened, even if escape seemed a utopian vision.

When Baldwin wrote "A Stranger in the Village" and, later, *Giovanni's Room*, he insisted that whiteness, its correspondence to masculinity, and the psychological weight of both had to be dealt with in America before any other thing, including his blackness, might be; for him, the visual signifier robbed the American of his ability to "see through" to his identity. Baldwin echoed the pleas, even demands, for personhood that characterized the writings of many African-American writers before him.[8] While recent works by critical race and literary scholars such as Gene Jarrett suggest that pigeon-holing the African-American author in his engagement of race alone is reductive, the heightened anxiety caused by visual markers of racial difference, and the inability to escape them, are pervasive.[9] Perhaps this is best illustrated by Baldwin's words in a rather contentious conversation with Peregrine Worsthorne. When asked to consider the

similarities between the hardships experienced by Irish immigrants and African

Americans, Baldwin retorted,

> If my son or my nephew or my wife or my daughter walk into any room in
> the Western world, and nobody knows their name, she's just another
> nigger . . . If your son, your daughter, your wife walk . . . they're white.
> You may have been starving, you may . . . have died in the potato famine.
> But that is not written on your brow. I wouldn't know you were Irish
> unless you say so. But to be black in a white man's world, it's quite a
> different thing.[10]

Baldwin voiced the fundamental difference between his experience of blackness and the

experience of being an immigrant who could become white; at the same time, he recalled

that the very concept of America was borne in the white male mind.[11] Criticizing

American racial constructions was *always* important to Baldwin, for he was the victim of

the denunciation of his blackness naturally a part of them. His multiply subordinated

subject position allowed him to recognize the unquestioned dictates damning Americans

to underdeveloped self-consciousnesses.

Yet, Baldwin's battle with his own skin suggests that James might have been

imprisoned in his as well, not simply in his masculine confusion. To his skin, James

attached notions of primacy that he would learn were false. Importing James to Baldwin's

paradigm, he was the grandson of an Irish immigrant, but it was not "written on [his]

brow." Because of his appearance, the perception of his whiteness, conceived as Nordic

or Anglo-Saxon from very early in America's history, was simply there. His

understanding of the insidiousness of racial hierarchies was not *felt* (or seen) until he

perceived himself as racially threatened and othered within America. It is no surprise, then, that while Baldwin had to leave America to escape the burden of the racial norms permeating his existence, James had to return to America, the "golden door" through which the immigrant came en masse, to see race as illusion—to lose the sanctity of a belief system reliant on false norms.[12]

After an absence of twenty-one years, James wandered through the United States that he thought he knew only to find it unalterably changed by the presence of the "alien." He recognized himself as surprisingly other—locked in a space that was not only gendered, but also raced more than at any other moment in his experience. His understandings of his Americanness were rooted in the security of his whiteness, yet his journey forced him to consider anew what precisely it meant to be an American at the start of the twentieth century. He found the racial constructions that he had imbibed inherently unsupportable in a pluralized, ethnic America, the racial "illusion" under which he had been operating akin to the masculine "illusion" that had displaced him. In short, he arrived home only to find himself un-homed—more of a "stranger" than he would have ever imagined. The travelogue, then, reveals James reconciling his historical "fantasy" of America with the raced *and* gendered vortex that it "actually [was]"— exposing the lunacy of American ideology.[13] Grappling with the necessity of "meet[ing] the collision head-on" no matter how painful and deciphering "what [he] really [was]" rather than "what [he thought he was]," James learned that re-visioning Americanness called for an overturning of the American exception, of both whiteness and masculinity, for the struggle for American identity was a struggle across races and genders.[14] As with gender, he moved toward a subtle suggestion of hybridity, and as if *The American Scene*

was a case study for the psychological path toward racial cognizance that Baldwin lay out in "A Stranger in the Village," James traveled through stages of racial consciousness to get there—encounter, fierce resistance, resignation, and, ultimately, re-visionary awareness.

The Traumatic Encounter and Nostalgia

From the first moment in *The American Scene*, James revealed what Baldwin believed was the primary impediment to the white American's realization of democratic self-identity—"the strain of denying the overwhelmingly undeniable [that forces] Americans into rationalizations so fantastic that they [approach] the pathological." For Baldwin, the combined naiveté and intentionality with which the white American struggled to "maintain his identity," no matter its inaccuracy, was unsettling; James's initial responses to his encounter supported Baldwin's assessment.[15] In his "Preface," James admits that his absence had given him "time to become almost as 'fresh' as an inquiring stranger," but it had not given him "enough to cease to be, or at least to feel, as acute as an initiated native."[16] Despite his long absence, his "nativ[ity]" placed him in a supposed superior position. He approached America with a sense of "authority" that was simply innate, bound to his racial identity and triggered by sight of the other.

The lens through which James viewed his homeland was nostalgic. Tied to memories about identity and place in his formative years, he initially could not shake them. He revealed that his first "impressions," the "instant vibrations," pointed to "a past recalled from very far back . . . to the dimness of extreme youth."[17] He encountered them "at every turn, in sights, sounds, [and] smells." Yet, he was not immune to the "absurd[ity]" of these memories and the growing "difficulty" of locating that past in "the

chaos of confusion and change" that marked his present.[18] His "vibrations" spoke the undercurrent of tension between what was and what had become; more importantly, they uncovered a "fantastic" and frequently incorrect reading of the past. As he later acknowledged, his "excursions of memory—memory directed to the antecedent time— reckless almost to extravagance" had the power to trap him in "an artful evasion of the actual."[19] His near "reckless[ness]" and "extravagance" akin to the "pathology" to which Baldwin's epigraph refers, they represent a concerted effort to escape the "unavoidable" present in the hazy comfort of the past. Though some degree of nostalgia is understandable after so long an absence, James's entrenchment in the old potentially clouded his perception of the new.

His simultaneous insistence on nostalgia and awareness of its limitations show James responding, perhaps unwillingly, to another Baldwin directive. Drawing on his roots in the church, Baldwin wrote in "The Price of the Ticket":

> In the church I come from—which is not at all the same church to which white Americans belong, we were counseled from time to time, to do our first works over . . . To do your first works over means to reexamine everything. Go back to where you started, or as far back as you can, examine all of it, travel your road again and tell the truth about it. Sing or shout or testify or keep it to yourself" but *know whence you came*.[20]

Baldwin did this first in leaving America and then, returning to "examine" his roots, relationship with his family, church, race, and nation. He learned that there was a reason for his father's rage, his mother's quiet strength, his community's dysfunction, and even the nation's hate; he grew to "tell the truth about it." He suggested that "white

Americans" must do the same, but often found they "[could not] afford to do" so and maintain their identities.

From his first human encounters in his homeland, James unraveled the "truth" of the nostalgic past to which he escaped; like Baldwin, James literally "[did] his first works over," revisiting scenes of his past. "Three hours after his arrival," James found himself "on the deck of a shining steamer bound for the Jersey shore . . . surrounded [by] a rare collection of young men of business returning, as the phrase is, and in the pride of their youth and their might, to their 'homes.'"[21] The fact that James was "ready to hail [this sight] as the most characteristic in the world" raises red flags. Though he viewed them as "golden apples" in the "orchard" of "impressions," this "type"—this "[young] grasping business man"—and the prevalence of it, was the same against which he protested to his brother William thirty-five years before. The "overwhelmingly undeniable" difference in this *American Scene* was not immediately racial for him. It was characterized by the permeation of this type. His focus on them, therefore, begs the question, 'of what were they "characteristic"'?[22]

The answer lies in the irony of James's subjectivity. His characterization of the young men as "golden apples" brings to mind the goddess Eris' "apples of discord." This "type" would instinctively create conflict within James, for it historically alienated him; it inexorably reminded him of his de-centered, masculine, American consciousness. The very idea of the businessman in America spoke to a paradigm of power, wisdom, and success (economically, romantically, or otherwise) that James could not quite access— one that he, in fact, openly rejected.[23] He had come "home" to find them most "characteristic" of this Bay scene. As they traveled "to their 'home[s],'" James was

145

immediately un-"home[d]" by the glaring reminder that he was still outside of the American male mold.[24] These young men, "in the pride of their youth" represented what had become the "might" of the American man. In James's awareness of their "unconscious affluence," it is unclear whether he was referring to their standardized reflection of materialism or their "unconscious[ness]" of what they signified.

James realized that business, commerce, the "outward show of the fortunate life," and "consciousness of quantity, rather, as opposed to quality" had replaced the manners and culture upon which he had so long focused.[25] The most notable symbol of commercialism and materialism, "the expensive," had become "a power by itself, a power unguided, undirected, practically unapplied, really exerting itself in a void that could make it no response, that had nothing—poor gentle, patient, rueful, but altogether helpless, void—to offer in return."[26] The "void" is feminized as well, as if it represents the perceived, boundless opportunity of the New World, and this world, "poor gentle, patient, rueful, but . . . helpless," has no redress against such a "power." It permeates America, in its new structures, its hotels, its railways, its churches (or absence thereof). Tellingly, James portrayed it as a very masculine construct, "like a train covering ground at maximum speed and pushing on, at present, into regions unmeasurable."[27] The image of the train "pushing," barreling through the land that seems virginal is sexual. It is even more so when the material, the 'expensive,' is juxtaposed with "nature," the "*feminine*," and "humiliat[ed]." James noted that the

> land . . . seemed to plead, the pathetic presence, to be liked, to be loved, to
> be stayed with, lived with, handled with some kindness, shown even some
> courtesy of admiration. What was that but the feminine attitude—not the

actual, current, impeachable, but the old ideal and classic; the air of

meeting you everywhere, standing in wait everywhere, yet always without

conscious defiance, only in mild submission to your doing what you

would with it . . . [consenting] to be viewed, to their humiliation, in the

mass, instead of being viewed in the piece.[28]

Landscape and industry play out a gender battle in which the latter usurps, rapes, and

subsumes, while the former can do little more than acquiesce to being commodified; the

value of its entire "mass" is taken, while its individual aspects remain unappreciated. In

these words are echoes of Giovanni's final conversation with David, of Isabel's

recognition that Osmond values her as little more than an acquisition, of James's and

Baldwin's searches for self-validation through their fiction. James's sensibility is clearly

linked to the land, the feminized presence being overtaken. By highlighting the predatory

relationship between the masculine and feminine symbols, James posited the need for

balance between them and led us again to his peripheral relationship the masculine.[29]

At the same time that he acknowledged the "characteristic" nature of the

businessmen, he pointed to "the variety in identity of the young men of business."[30] His

statement subtly suggested the ethnic difference that would further complicate his

conception of "home," but his treatment of masculinity was far from complete. As he

traveled, he saw not "variety" in this "type," but the "business-block unmitigated by any

other influence definite enough to name." This "block" emerged as the truly

"characteristic" thing in America—the "[mark] of success," "too uniform" with a "scant

diversity of type that left [James] short."[31] His perception of it as a "block" is telling; as a

model of masculinity and telltale American commercial success, it was a force that

"block[ed]" itself against "any experimental deviation." These men were homogenous in "facial cast and expression"; as a result, they were his nemeses, not only as a "story-seeker" and "picture-maker," but also as a man.[32] Harvard, he soon perceived, was the training ground for this type of young American man—much as it had been when he was a youth. And, he found the "approaches [as] closed to him" as they had been during his single year at Harvard Law School. In that institution, behind its "sovereign" gates, he "had to enter, to the loss of all his identity, some relaxing air of mere sentimental, mere shameless association"—a symbol of the "commemorated old life."[33] This existence, the "consecrated," to borrow from Osmond, pushed an already discomfited James further into his own alienation.

The stultifying production of sameness startled him, and he explored hybridizing this masculine power with the feminine subtleties that he believed could temper it. James couched the emergence of the "business" type in a discussion of maternal versus paternal influences that hearkened back to his 1901 review of *Matilde Serao*, as well as the notion of portraiture governing his depictions of gender.[34] Wondering at the influences of the "world of men" with "men supplying, as it were, all the canvas, and the women all the embroidery," he asked,

> In what proportion of instances would it stick out that the canvas, rather than the embroidery, was what [this type] had to show? In what proportion would he wear the stamp of the unredeemed commercialism that should betray his paternity? In what proportion . . . would the different social 'value' imputable to his mother have succeeded in interposing?[35]

In asking these questions, he articulated the vagueness and largesse of the masculine model itself. "Commercialism" was its emblem, for through it came a link to posterity and masculine success that made its weight something to which these young men "*had*" to adhere. They were required to be reflections of the larger "canvas," the "masculine stamp," rather than the finer points imported by the "feminine genius."[36] The "embroidery" was not a concern in the "world of men." In response, much as Baldwin insisted that the union of the male and the female created a whole being, James suggested that the adornment of the standardized, blank canvas—the marriage of the masculine and feminine "stamp[s]"— made the creation unique.[37] The process by which men were made, however, made such a new conception of gender impossible. James recoiled from the phenomenal and intensely masculine "will to grow" that had become the staple of America's "monstrous form of Democracy."[38]

Without the reminder of own masculine alienation, I argue that James would not have been open to considering the question of the ethnic other and the "truth . . . about . . . *whence he came.*"[39] His felt marginalization allowed him to complicate the assimilatory, American masculine machine a bit more. Through his increasing sense of masculine anxiety, James began to touch on racial identity. He wondered, "*Whom did* ['these swarming ingenuous youths'] *look like the sons of*?" Continuing, he remarked, "In the collegiate cloisters and academic shades of other countries this absence of a possible *range* of origin and breeding in a young type had not been so felt."[40] His question of paternity is superficially one more of status than ethnic heritage, but the two often have been conflated in America. The men's uniformity would seem to suggest limited ethnic variation, submission to the "commemorated old life," and a desire to keep it that way.[41]

Their singularity of expression and the making of the "business-block" speak to a system of assimilation so obsessive that one wonders if there might be an undercurrent fear of 'passing.'

This becomes far clearer as the discussion of the young men merges with James's impending trip "out to Ellis Island." Returning to the "overwhelming preponderance . . . of the unmitigated 'business man' face," he located his emergent understanding of American ethnic difference and racial construction within his subtle call for altered gender norms. Looking at their faces, James thought about Ellis Island, that there he would "catch in the fact, a couple of hours of the ceaseless process of the recruiting of our race, of the plenishing of our huge national *pot au feu*, of the introduction of fresh— of perpetually fresh so far it isn't perpetually stale—foreign matter into our heterogeneous system."[42] His perceived ownership of "race" and the "national pot," intimated with the word "our" (and the unspoken, but very evident "their") reinforced the sense of ethnic superiority with which he approached his initial disembarkation.

His language also foreshadows Baldwin's critical exploration of the "price the white American paid . . . to become white."[43] James's label, "heterogeneous system," moves the reader further toward ethnicity and illustrates that the "price" is the fabrication of an American identity that negates the other. Though he was disenchanted with the homogenized institutional creation of a masculine construct, he was invested in one in terms of race and ethnicity. In the same manner that he cast Harvard in the role of institutional machine of masculine assimilation, he wrote Ellis Island as a sort of racial factory. He was immediately displaced by the uniformity and insularity of the Harvard system, but his privileged position in the American racial hierarchy was inherent in the

150

very idea that "foreign matter" must be (or might be) assimilated into the "heterogeneous system" of American identity. At the same time that he spoke the need for a gendered amalgam, he rejected the notion of an American racial and ethnic one. In doing so, he emphasized the patriarchal inheritance of whiteness and suggested its ties to manhood. It is the same inheritance that Baldwin's David sees in the window glass and battles to protect, and that Giovanni's violent death serves to reify. It is the same system that Ralph Touchett metaphorically casts aside in divesting himself of his fortune for Isabel, that Ralph's invalidism and Mr. Touchett's absent patriarchal authority call into question, and that Ralph's death reinforces.

The very act of assimilation, of "ingest[ing] this "matter," altered the national body and consciousness, and James could not resist this fact for long. He did not use the word "digestion," for he seemed to believe that one might take in without absorbing or processing the foreign presence.[44] But, as if writing forced him to recognize this impossibility, he slowly revealed a consciousness of his own unsteady, raced, hierarchical existence. He was soon plagued by a "haunting wonder as to what might be becoming of us all, 'typically,' ethnically, and thereby physiognomically, linguistically, *personally*?" He alluded to the ethnic fusion that necessarily attended the "ingest[ion]" of the immigrant, and he subtly affirmed the fear that the immigrant presence constituted both a psychic and physical usurpation of the "heterogeneous" white body, character, and heritage.[45] The "ceaseless process[ion]" of the immigrant through Ellis Island invalidated the "system" through which those deemed white maintained their primacy. In number alone, the "alien" necessitated a rethinking of "type." James fathomed, as Baldwin uttered in both "Stranger" and "Price," that "America is not, and never can be, white."[46]

Ellis Island, then, and New York as a whole became potential sites of transformation for James. There, he revealed a threatened western sensibility, a threatened Anglo-Saxonism itself. Not the "native" sitting aloft his perch and looking down upon those who were other, he was transformed into the estranged wanderer, the "alien" meandering amidst a sea of others clawing their way to the dream of America. His response was to retreat just as Baldwin intimated; but, "there was no escape from the ubiquitous alien into the future, or even into the present; there was an escape but into the past"—into the nostalgically "fantast[ic]" sanctity of his youthful memories. James fled Ellis Island to the "felt moral and social value of [a] comparatively *unimpaired* moral self of the Fifth Avenue heritage"—the "quickened memory" that allowed for envelopment in a rapidly disappearing, "pleasanter, easier, hazier past." His retreat and sense of "vibrations" not quite felt in that "past" reveal the illusion of racial and ethnic primacy. For him, however, there was no safety in a past being "perpetual[ly] repudiat[ed]."[47] What ensued for James was the same tug of war between privilege and alienation that characterized his earlier writings—until he could resist unraveling the American racial chimera no longer.[48]

Though he made efforts to dodge the alien, he could not elude him. As Ross Posnock argues, when James traveled to Washington Square, he sought the comfort of his birth house. The reader comprehends that he

> finds [it] 'ruthlessly suppressed by an immigrant presence. The "effect on
> [him]" . . . is "of having been amputated of half [his] history." The rapid
> schism not only ruptures James's "artful evasion of the actual" but also

implicitly joins him with very figure from whom he sought relief—"the ubiquitous alien."[49]

Baldwin might well have been hooked here, for in a sense, this moment is as pregnant with meaning as that which necessitates Giovanni's execution. And, James could no more remove the presence of the other than could David. There was a "simplicity" that James longed to recapture.[50] Instead, the actuality of this place violently severed him from one conduit through which he accessed his history, removing "half" of the seeds that formed his youthful consciousness. His difference from those surrounding him became a catalyst to questioning racial constructions, as there could be no pretense about America's homogeneity. The great "melting pot" of the "tired, poor . . . huddled masses yearning to breathe free" had settled on James's island and would not be ignored.[51]

It may seem that I am painting James in a rather uncomplimentary light by suggesting his resistance to perceiving the American racial illusion fully. But, this is not so. Though James was intellectually aware of the fallacies of race early in his career, personally, inwardly, he could not divest himself fully of them without divesting himself of the sense of his past which empowered him. His marginal masculinity robbed him of some degree of power; without confidence in his mask of whiteness, what then would he be? For both James and Baldwin, to borrow from Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks, "whiteness ha[d] been the master signifier of race." It both "engender[ed] the structure of racial difference" and created a "lethal fantasy of sameness and mastery [offered] as the real yet concealed motivation for the maintenance of race."[52] When contested, whiteness revealed itself as both "support and panic-inducing kernel" of mastery and "something inassimilable" both for those deemed white and other.

In light of this and the uncertainty that James's trip to Fifth Avenue produced, James and Baldwin share far more than critics have previously explored. For Baldwin, the imbibed inferiority rendered by the "sexual moral light[s]" was only compounded by the weight of racial constructions. Similarly, *The American Scene* placed James, already a "marginal male," in the unfamiliar position of ethnic outsider in a nationalized racial system was amorphous at best.[53] Because of it, he reexamined the "kernels," racial and otherwise, that served as the foundation of his already marginalized identity. The sense of loss, of decentralization, that such a realization brought with it was traumatic for him, and I suggest that the episode at Ellis Island and his subsequent reactions leading up to "The Last Regret" are a sort of psychological case study of a sensitive consciousness under siege.[54] He, like Baldwin, attempted, however painfully, to extricate learned norms from his psyche and either imagine a new identity for himself apart from them, or find himself a victim of their inefficacy.

The confusion that followed for James was immense. Because of it, he questioned his lifeblood, his ability *to perceive*. In New England, he was struck by "how many corners of the general of the local, picture had anciently never been unveiled for me at all, and how many unveiled too briefly and too scantly."[55] Intriguingly evoking legality, James wondered, "by what strange law one had lived in the other time, with gaps, to that number, in one's experience, in one's consciousness, with so many muffled spots in one's general vibration." He experienced a natural fear of this question's answer because "it might carry with it an infinite penetration of retrospect, a penetration productive of ghostly echoes as sharp sometimes as aches or pangs." Should he consider his past more deeply, he might reveal things that he did not want to recall, things that were protectively

embedded in his psyche long unseen. Or, more painfully, it might lead him to question why

> so many had been the easy things, the contiguous places, the conspicuous objects, to right or to left of the path, that had been either unaccountably or all too inevitably left undiscovered, and which were to live on, in the inner vision, through the long years, as mere blank faces, round, empty, metallic, senseless disks dangling from familiar and reiterated names.[56]

"Easy" to evade those things uncharacteristic of his "path," he had become a victim of the "old, the transmitted, the consecrated," the "familiar" and "reiterated."[57] As an adult whose perception and consciousness were far more honed, he asked almost angrily, "Why . . . had the consciousness of irritation from these vain forms not grown greater? Why had the inconvenience, or the disgrace of early privation become an accepted memory?" His entrenchment in forms breaking down around him deeply troubled him, for his journey showed him a

> perpetual repudiation of the past, so far as there had been a past to repudiate, so far as the past was a positive rather than a negative quantity. There had been plenty in it, assuredly, of the negative, and that was but a shabbiness to disown or a deception to expose; yet there had been an old conscious commemorated life too, and it was this that had become the victim of supersession.[58]

Though in this moment, he was referring to the charged, economic, hyper-masculine bent of America, his words may be read self-reflectively. Each step on his journey was a "repudiation of his past," and he was growing unsure if "there had been a past to

repudiate," whether those things that he had absorbed were ever valid, or if he had missed something in his blind acceptance of them. He questioned, to use Baldwin's words, whether he had become locked in the "myth of America to which we cling so desperately.[59] James recalled the "negative" spaces, the silences and distortions, in his own historical narrative; he recognized "shabbiness" and "deceptions" discarded and revealed. But, his last line suggested something far more tragic for a person of his sensibility. All that was being "repudiated" had been part of the "conscious commemorated life"— tragically, "conscious[ly] commemorated," unquestioned, and perpetuated. An author celebrated for his depth of perception, he had failed to see the depth of the "deceptions."

His immersion in Ellis Island only deepened that melancholy. He began his sojourn with a flawed sense of primacy, and the manner in which the "inconceivable alien" was ushered into the nation seemed at first to reinforce their subordinate status. It mirrored the processing of slaves. They were "marshaled, herded, divided, subdivided, sorted, sifted, searched, fumigated" in the "intendedly 'scientific' feeding of the mill."[60] His diction is Darwinian, for as he understood it, the intent of the Commissioner of Immigration was categorization of those fit and unfit to be American—the isolation of those fit to partake in "the fixed element" of the American consciousness. The idea of that "privilege" unraveled, however. James found himself "questionably privileged," for the "truth" of "the degree in which it [was] his American fate to share the sanctity of his American consciousness, the intimacy of his American patriotism, with the inconceivable alien . . . had never come home to him with any such force."[61] Though he referenced the internal and the ownership of "his American patriotism," his visceral reaction to the scene

relied heavily on his "vision of the business." The term "business" reinforced the ties between gender and ethnicity, as well as his awareness of the overwhelming commercial bent of *The American Scene*. In a two-page passage reading almost like stream of consciousness, he revealed one anxiety-riddled thought after another, a barrage of images and sensations, and "a thousand more things to think of than he [could] pretend to retail."[62] The word "retail" reinforced the commercial, and Ellis Island became for James a symbol of the "American gregarious ideal"—the conspicuous, consumptive, commercial bent earlier signified by the "business-man."[63] The processing of the immigrants was a "visible act of ingurgitation on the part of [the] body politic and social," and it overtook him. He, himself, "ingest[ed]" the scene as if he had "eaten of the tree of knowledge, and the taste w[ould] be for ever in his mouth." In a very Adamsian "Virgin and the Dynamo" sense, he perceived this place as a testament to a country's identity moving (not necessarily progressing) exponentially and awfully toward something "profane"—"as a tick or two of the mighty clock, the clock that never, never stops."[64] It "[shook] him . . . to the depths of his being."

He recalled the natural "instinct . . . the safe one . . . of keeping the idea [of America] simple and strong and continuous, so that it shall be perfectly sound," rather than "in peril of weakening."[65] Key in his recollection is the fact that his construction of Americanness and whiteness was not his alone. As David Roediger argues, the "nation commonly denied citizenship rights and naturalization to those classed as not white."[66] Although immigrants were denied entrance based on illness, others were denied on the basis of some "mystifying chalk mark" that had no relation to infirmity; because there was "racial privilege" inherent in "naturalized citizenship," some were denied because

they were unfit for whiteness.[67] While Baldwin saw readily how the importation of immigrants changed the idea of whiteness, James attempted to retain his sense of ownership in that property because his "supreme relation . . . was [his] relation to [his] country—a conception made up so largely of one's countrymen and one's countrywomen."[68] At this point, not only the individual, but also the "country" perceived Americanness as whiteness and the influx of immigrants as "race suicide."[69]

At the Island, however, James "look[ed] in[to]" a great machine of America that was unalterably and defiantly heterogeneous; his words indicative of his new location as an outsider, his reading of the scene bore in mind materiality and inheritance. He spoke of "the affirmed claim of the alien, however immeasurably alien, to share in one's supreme relation." His resistance to their "claim" reinforced his investment in his own, for even though their foreignness was "immeasurable," they would be "ingurgitated," altering "immeasurably" the American "body" and mind. He remarked on "*their* monstrous, presumptuous interest in New York."[70] As if by sheer numbers, "the combination there of their quantity and quality" (each term an economic marker of supply and demand), they "insist[ed] on mattering," as much as the American girl did in his "Preface" to *Portrait*.[71] That they would be so "presumptuous" shocked him, for the were "so other" and his response evoked the inevitable rending asunder of white ideology.[72]

The alien's "assault" was as much on his psyche as on the purity of the nation itself. A man with the "spirit of any sensitive citizen," he returned "from his visit not at all the same person that he went." What he realized reluctantly, but inevitably, was nearly Baldwinian:

158

That loud primary stage of alienism which New York most offers to sight

. . . operates, for the native, as their note of settled possession, something

they have nobody to thank for; so that the *un*settled possession is what we,

on our side, seem reduced to—the implication of which, in its turn, is that,

to recover confidence and regain lost ground, we, not they, must make the

surrender and accept the orientation. We must go, in other words, *more*,

than half-way to meet them; which is all the difference, for us, between

possession and dispossession. This sense of dispossession, to be brief

about it, haunted me so.[73]

The American, he understood, must embrace a hybridized identity—"*more* than half-way" between Anglo-Saxon and other—to remedy the fragmented self that the alien's very presence exposed. The alternative was the "unsettled possession" of the American consciousness that James experienced. Ironically, as Baldwin noted, what "unsettle[d]" it was the investment in an unstained American identity, one that relied upon the otherness of anyone deemed "alien" and entrapment in the unhealthy act of always desiring, but never achieving the primacy of whiteness. The fear of "dispossession" drove this desire. But, at Ellis Island, whiteness as "support" deconstructed for James, while whiteness as "panic-inducing kernel" remained.[74] The author sensed reparation required compromise, mostly on the part of the "native." The binary of "native" (read white) and "alien" (read other) might be overcome, but the prospect was "haunt[ing]." What would this new American identity be? To repeat James's earlier question, what would "[become]… of [them] all, 'typically,' ethnically, and thereby physiognomically, linguistically, [and] *personally*?"[75]

159

James's use of the word "orientation" announces that this identity must be decidedly other in an almost postcolonial sense. Moreover, in the psyche ensconced in a belief in the 'naturalness' of whiteness, the new identity would be "unnatural." But, it, like the spaces between and outside of the masculine and feminine, must be acknowledged. James's diction requires a merger of Edward Said's study of "Orientalism" and William James's.[76] The combination illustrates two things: that the rhetoric used to discuss national identity intersects with that used to discuss gender identity; and, that what James underwent was a clash of cultures central to postcolonial nation formation. Said argues that by 'knowing' the Orient, the West came to "own" it and depict both the land and the culture as inferior to the West. William James's work reifies Said's argument, for he indicated that in that "own[ership]," those things deemed aberrant in a sexual sense were linked to the Orient—not to Western culture. But, as Baldwin asserted and James suspected in an encroaching way, the West's "possession" was never stable; its primacy was neither fixed, nor supportable. The new identity about which James wondered would, therefore, call for a psychic "dispossession" of Anglo-Saxonism—a frightening and "[dis]orient[ing]" consequence.

Confounded by what he witnessed, James longed for "order" and the "personal" safety of "the ideal." To achieve it, he repeated his pattern of escapism, attempting again to find a "fond alternative vision" in an "imagination, exasperated to envy." What he "env[ied]" was those with the "luxury of some such close and sweet and *whole* national consciousness as the Switzer and the Scot"; he longed for a "*whole* national consciousness" that was Anglo in origin, for the suggested hybridity of the "alien" presence de-centered Americanness itself.[77] With these words, we are led to Baldwin's

village in Switzerland, and his warning that "no road whatever will lead Americans back to the simplicity of this European village where white men still have the luxury of looking on [the alien] as a stranger."[78] Baldwin's and James's diction are eerily similar, and the lesson seems clear. Try as one might, there is no means of reversion—only a revising of identity that allows for the ethnic complexity of America to be realized.

I read James's reversion to "imagination" as an appraisal-based (self-protective) coping mechanism, one which belies the firm hold that raced ideology had on him—just as his inability to see a space for a fictional marginal male to exist revealed the hold of gender ideology.[79] With "past," "present," and "future" in ethnic flux, the "restless analyst" combed the recesses of the only inhabitation that quelled the "alien" fear—his mind's eye rather than his eyes. His instinctual reaction was to distance himself from the stressor at hand. It is no wonder, then, that James lapsed into wishful reverie at the thought of the country club that "testifie[d] . . . from the box, with the inimitable . . . American authority, . . . in which the flame of Democracy burn[ed] *whitest* and steadiest . . . taking its place thus on the positive side of a line which ha[d] its other side over-scored with negatives."[80] It is no surprise that he returned to contemplating the "future of taste" or the depletion of manners, for these were his comfort zones. Though Martha Bantha argues that "*The American Scene* continually provides differing, contradictorily engaged responses to matters of publicity and privacy, inclusiveness and exclusivity--a dialectic expressive of the divergent needs and motives of James the private individual and of James the story-teller," we must recognize that the mind under siege uses all avenues at its disposal to steady itself. James's continued travels required him to engage ethnic difference with the same level of introspection and depth as his treatments of

gender; in short, he was called to transcend his anxieties, embrace what was in front of him, and as Ross Posnock claims, "[find] himself open to remaking and renewal."[81] This was not so easily accomplished.

The 'ethnic' outlook and 'acceptance'

Shortly after his trip to Ellis Island, James involved himself in an internal dialogue that foreshadowed an eventual relinquishing of his illusions. In it, he contemplated "the business of slow comminglings and makings-over" in the great "cauldron" of America.[82] Again, "business" responds to whiteness and national identity as commodities. Yet, the term "cauldron" predates the widespread use of the term "Melting Pot" after 1908 and points to a witches' brew in terms of identity—more "makings-over" into something new than "commingling" of existing traits.[83] Beginning to question the assimilatory nature of the national "machine," James wondered, "Who and what is an alien . . . in a country peopled from the first under the jealous eye of history? —peopled, that is, by migrations at once extremely recent, perfectly traceable, and urgently required?" He continued, "Which is the American, by these scant measures—which is *not* the alien . . . and where does one put a finger on the dividing line, or, for that matter, 'spot' and identify any particular phase of the conversion, any one of its successive moments?"[84] James momentarily located himself in the fin-de-siecle debate over internal versus external markers of difference, and in words very reminiscent of DuBois' "color-line," linked himself further to Baldwin.[85] Is the "dividing line" in the face, manners, or blood? Particularly in those of dominantly Anglo-Saxon origin (or those of increasingly mixed heritage), the signs of "alien[ness]" are sometimes so unreadable that they prevent defining "which is the American" and "which is *not*." A

nation populated by forced or self-imposed immigrations "urgently required" by someone, America was not a place where the question of 'nativity' was so easily answered; however, the difficulty of discerning the difference was not, James noted with frustration, the reason that he "had sought to take up again the sweet sense of the natal air."[86] A carload of individuals characterized by "alienism unmistakable, alienism undisguised and unashamed that . . . make . . . [James] gasp with the sense of isolation," but readers understand that his "isolation" stems not from the fact that *they* are alien, but that he is ancestrally like them.

Baldwin later echoed James's realization, writing "there was a day, and not really a very distant day, when Americans were scarcely Americans at all but discontented Europeans, facing a great unconquered continent."[87] By default, James and Baldwin both questioned the Anglo-Saxon claim to the nation. James referred to their *becoming* American, just as his grandfather had so successfully done; but, he also acknowledged, in his own way, the "huge white-washing brush" at the heart of American identity.[88] He wondered at the "element . . . in *them* which . . . from far back, so enhanced for the stranger the interest and pleasure of a visit to their beautiful country."[89] Though for a brief instant, he returned to the possessives "our" and "their," he could not sustain them, for he gathered not only that the "natal air" was his alone no longer, but also that something "in *them*" prior to their arrival had sparked "interest" and "pleasure." However, "after a deep inhalation or two of the deep native air," they "shed ['the element'] utterly . . . with a conscientious completeness which leaves one looking for any faint trace of it."[90] The air itself—that which breathes life into the "great assimilative organism"—absorbs their difference and subsumes that which had been identifiably

alien. The "white-washing brush" suggested there should no longer be a marker indicating "whom did they look like the sons of."[91]

What "loom[s] largest" in this new American space are the "several lights" under which the "citizen-to-be" is shown the "error" of his ethnicity.[92] James's words foreground Baldwin's, for comparing Ellis Island to a magic door through which many walked to become white, Baldwin wrote:

> They come through Ellis Island, where Giorgio becomes Joe, Pappavasiliu becomes Palmer, Evangelos becomes Evans, Goldsmith becomes Smith or Gold, and Avakian becomes King. So, with a painless change of name, and in the twinkling of an eye, one becomes a white American.[93]

Despite the relative ease with which Baldwin suggested those racially unmarked became "white," he seemed to recognize that the transformation was not "painless," as it came at the "price" of their heritages. James and Baldwin collectively exposed the immediate othering of alternate ethnicity within America and the privileging of the Anglo-Saxon model. The ethnicity of the immigrants' former names was an "error," and somehow, they learned that they must change their names—"whitewash" them—to become a part of the nation. The need to "whitewash" was integral to the nation, for as James wrote, "Not only in New York, but throughout the country," the immigrant was made gravely aware that "his manners of the other world . . . ha[d] been a huge mistake." As a testament to how well the system of assimilation worked, James observed, "with a slow brooding gravity, a dim calculation of his bearings," the former alien was convinced to become, like the "business-block," a "tolerably neutral and colourless image."[94]

The mention of "colourless[ness]" points the reader in a new direction. James's attention to "'Colour,' of that pleasant sort," forces the reader influenced by contemporary racial sensibilities to question which "sort" was "pleasant" to him and which was not, and to take issue with the implications of his words. We may be reminded that in America, Baldwin was called upon to mask his sexual difference, but could not mask his racial difference; his skin made him "immeasurably alien."[95] Yet, what follows these words is as sensitive and delicate a treatment of potential racial and ethnic hybridity as James would ever effect. He discussed "colour" in terms of the assimilated Americans' relinquished manners. In doing so, he acknowledged "what ['the citizen-to-be'] had appeared . . . most to have" in his homeland—the worth of his ethnic and cultural heritage.[96] The great national "pot au feu" transfigured this nascent citizen insofar as it usurped singular identity to satisfy the larger raced, moral code of the extended national consciousness. No longer a "stew" or something to be consumed, the "pot" that holds "like that of the tub of hot water . . . a piece of bright-hued stuff [reduced] on immersion, to the proved state of not 'washing.'"[97]

The washtub imagery recalls the earlier notion of a "whitewashing-brush," but James intensely complicated it with the logic of the wash.[98] "If the stuff loses its brightness," he argued, "the water of the tub at least is more or less agreeably dyed with it." The water would absorb the color and be discarded, ostensibly leaving the garments within it spotless. But, the argument made little sense. If it had "rubbed off on any number of surrounding persons, the whole process would be easier and perhaps more comforting to follow" for him. But, for a man well acquainted with socially constructed uniformity, there was no comfort. Illustrating remnants of racial anxiety, as well as

newfound confusion over the construction of whiteness, he added, "We surely fail to observe that the property washed out of the new subject begins to tint with its pink or its azure his fellow-soakers in the terrible tank."[99] The colors, red faded to pink, bluest black faded to blue, seem to call to mind two of the most denigrated groups in America—the Native American and the African American. Perhaps James was not this progressive, but recasting the "great pot" as a "terrible tank" degraded it, giving it the cast of vessel in which individual identity is held captive like Osmond's house, like David's body or his perception of *Giovanni's Room*. James came to a belated understanding of rejected ethnic difference at the same moment that he realized how futile that rejection made the notion of a "dividing line."

As a result, he undercut the imperialism innate in American assimilation. As James had with his homosexuality, the alien donned a socially constructed mask. Because of the self-veiling necessary to inhabit the American identity space, both authors intimated how unstable the construction of whiteness, and therefore Americanness were; the need for skin or ethnic roots to symbolize the antithesis of whiteness undermined its authority. James's reaction narrowly pointed us through the years to Baldwin, who added to his Ellis Island imagery by lamenting the loss of roots. "Later, in the midnight hour," he grieved, "the missing identity aches. One can neither assess nor overcome the storm of the middle passage. One is mysteriously shipwrecked forever, in the Great New World."[100] As if channeling his own alienation at society's hands and his career-long fascination with gender hybridity, James penned similar words:

> What *does* become of the various positive properties . . . as to which the
> process of shedding and the fact of eclipse come so promptly into play? It

has taken long ages of history, in the other world, to produce them, and

you ask yourself, with independent curiosity if they may really be thus

extinguished in an hour . . . The 'American' identity that has profited by

their sacrifice has meanwhile acquired (in the happiest cases) all apparent

confidence and consistency; but may not the doubt remain of whether the

extinction of qualities ingrained in generations is to be taken for quite

complete? Isn't it conceivable that, for something like a final

efflorescence, the business of slow comminglings and makings-over at last

ended, they may rise again to the surface, affirming their vitality and value

and playing their part . . . [T]he speculation, at any rate, irresistibly forced

upon us, is a sign of the interest, in the American world, of what I have

called the 'ethnic' outlook. The cauldron, for the great stew, has such

circumference and such depth that we can only deal here with ultimate

syntheses, ultimate combinations and possibilities.[101]

It is not the alien that darkens the American in this moment; it is, instead, the American

that "eclipses" the alien—as if America's "cauldron" is an abyss into which they are cast

only to have their heritages obliterated. James addressed the "irresistib[ility]" of an

"'ethnic' outlook'" in an almost Borgian fashion, intimating that "resistance [was] futile."

As both authors acknowledged, these "ethnic" characteristics could not simply disappear,

for they "ache[d]" to be felt and seen again. Perhaps, as James offered, they lay in wait

for the day when they might reemerge and alter conceptions of national identity. They

have "vitality," and more importantly, "value" that was all but lost in the superficial

adherence to American normativity. The "confidence and consistency" that "the

'American' identity . . . acquired" was, therefore, rooted in a naïve sense of permanent primacy.

This was an important moment for James because though it refers us back to the anxiety with which he regarded the faces of the young men on the Harvard yard, it evidences a new approach to the source of it. Though the system of ethnic othering and erasure might be fine for the *un*conscientious observer, James's perception of the vastness and variety within the "cauldron" moved him to question "what type . . . the hotch-potch of racial ingredients is to be conceived as shaping itself?"[102] By characterizing its contents as both "stew" and wash, he brought to bear not the singularity of flavors and colors that a homogenous American consciousness insisted upon, but the fusion inherent in a "heterogeneous" system—the "comminglings," "ultimate combinations and possibilities," the myriad flavors and colors in the "American Scene."[103] Although he ended the passage by referencing the "nebulous remoteness" of these "possibilities," I contend that in his own "spirit of intellectual dalliance," he recognized that the hybridization of American identity was neither too remote, nor entirely avoidable, however discomfiting.

Clearly, James's understanding was far from consistent. This discomfort with the ambiguity of merged ethnic spaces often pushed him back into the easy language of ethnic stereotyping—particularly with the East Side Jew and the Negro. He described New York as a "New Jerusalem," equating "the swarming of Israel" embodied in a "Jewry that had burst all bounds" with the bustle of the American machine itself.[104] But, he characterized it as older than America and far more exoticized. Where the

168

businessman and what he represented were intensely masculine, James feminized and dehumanized Jewry" as he played on stereotypes. He recognized himself surrounded

> in the crowded, hustled roadway, where multiplication, multiplication of everything[, multiplication with a vengeance] was the dominant note, at the bottom of some vast sallow aquarium in which innumerable fish, of overdeveloped proboscis were to bump together, for ever, amid heaped spoils of the sea.[105]

As at Ellis Island, James was dwarfed by the swarming masses of "Jewry" around him, the "cauldron" at the Island now an overfilled, sickly "aquarium" in which the inhabitants of non-Anglo-Saxon New York (apart from the Waldorf Astoria and Central Park) consumed "heaped spoils of the sea." The "sallow[ness]"—the sickly yellow hue—of the "aquarium" racializes the Jew, for he is not white at the turn of the century. Calling attention to the nose, or 'trunk,' in this instance, caters to the common caricature of the Jew and reflects the Anti-Semitic sentiments of the era. "Multiplication" used thrice within two paragraphs and, later, "overflow" suggests the dominant perception of the Jew as the Shylock of the century's end—a being consumed by economics and the acquiring of wealth. Yet, these terms also reinforce feminization, for though there is an allusion to economic production, there is also the sense that the collective Jewish community is one large womb producing without end, "burst[ing]" forth at an uncontrollable rate.[106] It is evident that James simply was conflicted in what to make of the community at all.

When shortly after his description, James referred to the "conquest" of New York by the Jew, he intimated the need for controlling this exponential growth and animalized the presence. He likened the individual Jew to a "snake or worm" that could be

169

"chop[ped] into myriads of fine fragments without loss of race quality"; he seemed both troubled and fascinated by the solidarity and perceived singularity of purpose in a people "there for race . . . not . . . for reason."[107] He orientalized the Jewish citizens of the East Side with their attention to appearances, "hard glitter," and "new style of poverty," making them seem ab-normal; but, he could not discount the fact that in their aims and prodigious existence, they epitomized the assimilatory commercial bent of American as a whole—as if they, "there for race," somehow were far more adept at the ideology underlying Americanness than the native being usurped. James segued from this discussion of the Jew to a critique of "the Trusts and . . . new remorseless monopolies that operate as no madnesses of ancient personal power . . . on the historic page ever operated"; in doing so, he equated them as well. Intriguingly, however, he left the reader with a condemnation of a system that disregarded "the living unit's paying property in himself" in the face of mass "American growth."[108] The last suggests, perhaps, that what was at issue for James was not the Jew, himself, but the enterprise of America that made what the Jew came to represent the primary aim.[109]

Similarly, when James attended to the African American in the South, he resorted to typology. He seemed to paganize him in writing of the "weird chants of the emancipated blacks."[110] On the train from Richmond to Charleston, he commented on the lack of "personality" in his "fellow-creatures" of the "right complexion" and "the negroes . . . not at all intendingly sinister [as] the lustier race." His language suggests the usurpation of the weakened whites in the South and shows his investment in racial hierarchy. His "fellow-creatures" are white, and the "negroes" are clearly different. But, what he sees in the Negro reinforces, albeit disconcertingly, the same challenges to racial

dominance felt in New York. The Negro is not "intendingly sinister," and while his "lust[iness]" might be read for its sexual connotations, what James saw in them was a an energy, a vitality lacking in his "fellow-creatures."

Washington, D.C. presented James with a similar instance. He had occasion to "[consider] . . . an African type or two encountered in Washington."[111] Described as "tatterdemalion darkies," they have a raggedness and darkness that overshadows. Observing them "loung[ing] and sunn[ing] themselves within range," the writer wrote as if on safari and created the image of the men as both leisurely and predatory. Though both terms suggest leisure, they suggest a lack of industry and a predatory nature. As if they are predators whose kill has been made and who rest within "range" of their prey, they, James observed that "to take in with any attention two or three of these figures had surely been to feel one's self introduced at a bound to the formidable question, which rose suddenly like some beast that had sprung from the jungle."[112] As a "pilgrim from afar" visiting the South, James met "the Southern black as [he] knew him not . . . at the North"—a figure "ragged and rudimentary, yet all portentous and 'in possession of his rights as a man.'" A far different entity in the South, the "Southern black . . . man . . . loom[ed]" and "count[ed]" in a region where "there were comparatively so few other things."[113]

His imagery evokes "The Beast in the Jungle" (1903), and it is through that imagery that his racial critique comes. After May Bertram's death, John Marcher must "live entirely with the other question, that of his unidentified past, that of his having to see his fortune impenetrably muffled and masked" by his inaction.[114] He experiences the "horror of waking" to the "knowledge" that he had been complicit in building his life

171

upon falsehoods and creating his end; he had not seen what was right before his eyes, choosing instead to fabricate an existence that fulfilled his vision of himself.[115] He had seen May Bertram only "in the chill of his egotism and the light of her use." For Marcher, "it was as if, horribly, he saw, in the truth, in the cruelty of his image . . . the Jungle of his life and saw the lurking Beast." His past was all; "absent in short was any question of anything still to come."[116] Marcher's realization helps to explain James's reading of the South. Though James's image of the Negro suggests their bestiality, subsequent passages indicate that the author was not positioning them as the "Beast[s]," but the Southerners who only saw them "in the chill of [their] own egotism and in the light of [their] use."

As with the East Side Jew, James seemed to explore why the perception of Negroes existed—what made it necessary. True, the fact that "the negroes were more numerous than the whites" was threatening. "The collapse of the old order, the humiliation of defeat, the bereavement and bankruptcy involved" left the "community" at Richmond "disinherited" of not only "art" and "letters," but also, like James and John Marcher, the sanctity of their history.[117] The Negro, however, was not an "alien" from afar, but an inseparable part of the social and political fabric of the South. Southern whites had been married to an idea of race that had been their political and socioeconomic lifeblood, and this was the problem. Southern racial identities constructed against each other reflected the system at Ellis Island and perhaps, if we recall James's "pot," the future "collapse of the old order" of assimilation. James juxtaposed the same sense of conquest felt intensely at Ellis Island with recognition of the "afflicted South['s]" historical "false position."[118] There is a sense that he was confounded by the perpetuation of "a hundred mistakes and make-believes, suppressions and prevarications"

in the South.[119] He revealed the delusions of the Southern white "position"— as he had

with Marcher and the assimilatory machine. When he encountered a Southerner willing

to recount the exploits of his father in the Civil War, he showed the insidious persistence

of racial supremacy. In the "New South," there were those "wouldn't have hurt a

Northern fly, [but] there were things (ah, we had touched on some of these!) . . . that, all

fair, engaging, smiling . . . [they] would have done to a Southern negro."[120] The final

lines of the segment illustrate not only the illusion of racial harmony, but also the masked

violence with which the sanctity of whiteness might be protected against the freedmen—

the obliteration of the dark body akin to the rending of the dark heritage at Ellis Island.

Because of his reversion to stereotype, numerous scholars have argued that James

did not address racial and ethnic inequalities in America with enough force. In *Black and*

White Strangers, Kenneth Warren submits that James's reaction to the "race problem

falls dreadfully short of the clear denunciations of lynching and mob violence that

prevailing conditions called for."[121] Ross Posnock responds to Warren by indicating,

"However one may judge the fairness of [Warren's] judgment . . . it remains unmoved

and unmovable," for James in fact, does not directly attack the "prevailing conditions."[122]

Even Sara Blair, whose aim is to query the politics of power and difference in James

powerful "ethnographic project" suggests James's lack of vehemence, writing that he

"preserves…the high cultural, as a space of social performance at the cost of more radical

attacks on the politics of hierarchy, of race supremacy, of margin and center

themselves."[123]

But, their remarks about his tactics lead us back into a discussion of gendered

space, reading, and language. As Gert Buelens argues, it is not that James does not

engage race at all, the fact is that for these critics, his readings are highly aesthetic and therefore, according to Buelens, "insufficiently masculine."[124] If we return to William James for a moment, the argument becomes clearer. To these critics, James's critiques lack enough "blood"; his "moral action [is] very lightly touched and rather indicated than exhibited."[125] As a well-known white male artist, his condemnation of the racial realities of the moment might have helped to usher in greater change. In keeping with Buelens' assessment, then, the "better James" for these scholars would be a manlier and more intensely, rhetorically combative champion of the othered subject. However, this was never James; by condemning his lightness of treatment, these critics privilege one othered space over another, suggesting that James failed in both.

I bring Buelens into this conversation because his treatment of James evidences one potential draw for Baldwin. Baldwin, though fiery and "full of blood," was often attacked for not being 'black enough' in his works. Critics such as Eldridge Cleaver find his work "void of political, economic, or even social reference[s]" that link him to blackness, for Cleaver feels that homosexuality either displaces or merges with race in too overwhelming a manner.[126] Cleaver (or other Africanist or African-Americanist scholars for that matter) might wonder why an author like James Baldwin would even show interest in an author like Henry James who, despite his stylistic and intuitive strengths, fell so easily into "racial slurs"; for them, the "better [Baldwin]" would not have done so. Yet, both Baldwin and James were fascinated by the silences of identity formation—behind the rhetoric, behind the easy categorizations. I argue that Baldwin recognized that truths emerged in the stillness of contemplation, in those silences in which one could truly mull over "what happened in the distance"—rather than in loud

174

and potentially empty words.[127] James's awakening to racial awareness was not an epiphany. Label his approach 'feminine' though some may, he came to it in an interior battle between the safety of privilege and the "dispossession" of otherness that could only have been engendered through his subordination to a masculine ideal.

<u>"The Last Regret"</u>

In *The American Scene*, we watch James lose the sanctity of his past, feel the tumult of the present, and be troubled by the ambiguity of the future. With nowhere left to turn, our "restless analyst" seemed to wonder how Americans arrived at this place and how they could be saved.[128] Yes, there is fear of the modern in his works, but far more important for my purposes is the fact that in answering these questions, we see him delving into a past beyond his past, beyond that of his immediate ancestors, beyond whiteness, beyond constructions of race or gender to locate the moment of the literary 'mulligan'—a chance to create identity anew before what we have created destroys us. While some might read "The Last Regret" as nothing but another attempt at artful escape, what it shows is James doing several things: recognizing that some flaws in America are potentially uncorrectable; personally identifying with the racial other; and suggesting that the American experiment as it stands is destined for failure, that beauty and worth may only be found in a past before the Western sense of identity that he had been taught. Though still quite idealistic, it is a step toward realizing that not only the alien, but also the Anglo-Saxon, in Baldwin's words, "has arrived at his identity by virtue of the absoluteness of his estrangement from his past." Perhaps by looking beyond it, there is hope for a more applicable identity construction.[129]

Returning North before his departure for Europe, James "settled, at the eternal car window, to the mere sightless contemplation . . . of an ugly—ah, such an ugly, wintering, waiting world."[130] Although he traveled in spring, his winter imagery reminds us of Melville's snow-covered landscapes and the "colorless, all-color of atheism from which we shrink." This "wintering . . . world" of his birth had been comforting to him, but now, it was only a lovely façade covering a "world . . . waiting" for its death if it cannot bring forth new life. We see that his "eye had perhaps been jaundiced by the breach of a happy spell," and that this coloring of his eye bespeaks the departure from the "spell" or "illusion" (to borrow Baldwin's word) of whiteness under which he had been operating. Inevitably, he sought a means of salvaging this world. He found it in the "poetic" modern. James recalled the "electric launch" at Lake Worth as little "but an institution of yesterday, a wondrous floating tea-house or restaurant, inflated again with the hotel-spirit and exhaling modernity at every pore."[131] As if channeling a future Ezra Pound, who channeled Confucius, he painted the vessel as a hotel '[made] new.'"[132]

In a very modernist sense "mak[ing] it new" carried him through the end of the text, for he sought to create something new by reinvigorating the perceptions of primordial state. Through a slew of "associations," all of which point to a grandeur in both darker hues and amalgams, James moves us with a "return in the divine dusk, with the flushed West on [his] right" alluding to both a darkening and heightened coloring of the West as the sun sets. "Against the golden sky," a fitting canvas, he described "the individual black palms" as a "frieze of chiseled ebony," erect and magnificently rendered in the most priceless of African woods. The very "air" was charged with his African reverie, its "texture, for faintly-brushed cheek and brow, of an air of such silkiness of

velvet, the very throne-robe of the star-crowned night."[133] Tall and majestic, the "palms"

evoke a scene that takes the reader back to a

> Nile so simplified out of the various fine senses attachable . . . the
>
> antiquity of the infinite *previous*, of the time, before Pharaohs and
>
> Pyramids, when everything was still to come. It was a Nile, in short,
>
> without the least little implication of a Sphinx, or, still more if possible, of
>
> a Cleopatra . . . the primitive *plate* in perfect condition, but with the
>
> Impression of History all yet to be made.[134]

James words remind us of a time before "history." His allusions are loaded not only with

the weight of an ancient land populated by the non-Nordic men who had crafted his

"history," but also with the troubled distinctions between masculine and feminine that

had haunted him. His reference to the Sphinx calls to mind John Marcher's inability to

solve the riddle of a dying May Bertram, whom James described as "the picture of a

serene and exquisite but impenetrable sphinx."[135] His passage evokes the aesthetic

"primitive" in its fixed "perfect[ion]"; it is a "riddle [before the] Sphinx," like an ode on a

"plate," older and revelatory of how to begin anew.

Similarly, his allusion to "Cleopatra" brings to mind Madame de Vionnet in *The

Ambassadors*, "a goddess still partly engaged in a morning cloud, or . . . a sea-nymph

waist-high in the summer surge . . . the femme du monde . . . like Cleopatra in the play,

indeed various and multifold."[136] In her is housed the mystery of "the femme du monde,"

a feminine presence equally enigmatic and profoundly aware of the power in her

projected self that she is capable of wielding it with precision and raising the status of

others merely by her company.[137] In Mme. de Vionnet's description, James effected a

vast juxtaposition, merging Ancient Greece, the Italian Renaissance, France, and Ancient Egypt; he toyed not only with the revolutionary power of the feminine subject, but also the fusion of cultural traditions anticipated and feared at Ellis Island. Continuing to yoke ethnic and gendered otherness, he lamented the loss of a "positive joy in barbarism," and while his use of the term might connote a quasi-aggrandizement of noble savagery, he showed us a desire for a time before the "riddle" of gender or ethnic hierarchy came into being.

I do not want to suggest that modernity is entirely comforting for James. In fact, it is just the opposite; the 'progressive' modern was contemptible for him and came to represent all of the failures of white ideology in a postcolonial world.[138] The Pullman emerged as the "great symbolic agent" in his very nuanced reading of the American present. Castigating the "general pretension of the Pullman, the great monotonous rumble of which seems forever to say to you: 'See what I'm making of all this—see what I'm making, what I'm making," James recalled colonization, of the great intent of his Anglo-Saxon forebears to civilize and make something of the 'New World' and its people. It is as if all moments in the text lead here—to the final exposition of what the masculine machine has wrought on the feminine. In the same moment, he deepened our perceptions of the colonizer's brutality, speaking of "painted savages . . . dispossessed" and "every disfigurement and every violence . . . every wound with which you have caused the face of the land to bleed."[139] The land again linked to the disenfranchised other, the Pullman is painted as a product of commercialism, democracy, and white progress with a bullet-like appearance and behaviors; it is a masculine force of destruction that has done little except "ravage" that land (and its people) with a "pretended message of civilization [which is

nothing] but a colossal recipe for the *creation* of arrears, and of such as can but remain forever out of hand."[140] James characterized the Pullman as an iron monster signifying a similar monstrousness in the American himself. James loathed the loss of humanity and basic human connection that this creation symbolized, writing:

> When nobody cares or notices or suffers, by all one makes out, when no displeasure by what one can see, is ever felt or ever registered, why shouldn't you, you may indeed ask, be as much in your right as you need? But in that fact itself, that fact of the vast general unsconsciousness and indifference, looms, for any restless analyst who may come along, the accumulation, on your hands, of the unretrieved and irretrievable.[141]

The blindness, the "general unconsciousness" and even "indifference" of other "looms" over the landscape—over the nation as a whole. It testifies to the paradigm of center and other, privileged and disenfranchised, that begins with whiteness and carries over into every other identity space. This blindness is both created by and feeds the machine, for if no one cares or utters complaint about its tactics, then "why shouldn't ["dispossession" and "violence] be as much in [its] right as [it] need[s]" to ensure its survival? The Pullman for him seems to "stand for all the irresponsibility behind it"—the "irresponsibility" of negating all in one's wake to maintain primacy and progress.[142]

James also located himself *in* the image of the other rather than *against* it. He imagined himself as a "beautiful redman with a tomahawk . . . rejoic[ing] in the occasional sandy track or in the occasional mud-channel, just in proportion as they fell so short of the type."[143] While the stereotype here is glaring, James made the racial other real to himself, envisioning what the machine of civilized whiteness had done not only to

him, but also to his land. Longing in a very transcendentalist way for the "solitude" of a long-gone and raped natural landscape, James felt his like humanity to the true 'native' of America in an unprecedented way. Although he earlier wondered "who is" and "is not the alien," and questioned assimilation in total, he had not placed himself in the shoes of those previously deemed "alien." Within the confines of the Pullman, James finally queried if "the germ of anything finely human, of anything agreeably or successfully social, supposedly planted in conditions of such endless stretching and such boundless spreading as shall appear finally to minister but to the triumph of the superficial."[144] His words should remind us of Baldwin's David looking at his image in the mirror, his image resonant of conquerors who "stretch[ed]" and "[spread]" until they reached the ocean and could no longer look to the glories of their British pasts, only to the carnage in their wake as they crossed the 'New World'. We may think again of Warburton, whose exterior screams the "triumph" of the Anglo-Saxon model, but whose interior whispers of white manhood unsure of a past troubled with violence, or perhaps, a future embodied in hardness of Goodwood or the disquieting gender nebulousness of Ralph Touchett or Gilbert Osmond.

More narrowly, James's symbolism reminds us of Baldwin's "Stranger." Baldwin wrote: "People who shut their eyes to reality simply invite their own destruction, and anyone who insists on remaining in a state of innocence long after that innocence is dead turns himself into a monster."[145] I read James here *seeing* at last the fallacy and shallowness of white construction; he also undermined it—far less boldly than does Baldwin, but pointedly nonetheless. The Pullman speaks both literally and metaphorically to "the portentous truth . . . [of] a criminal continuity," ideological and physical, that must

be stopped. As did Baldwin, James underscored the impending end of a nation built upon the "criminal" negligence of any and all who are othered. He recalled his "impressions" of *The American Scene*—the buildings, the houses, the importance of the ostentatious show, the immigrants and their usurped identities, the African-American and his survival amidst the violence of the South—as evidence of the monstrousness and ugliness of racial supremacy, the conquestorial spirit of whiteness beneath the "superficial" construct.

In response to it, James longed for the "infinite *previous*."[146] While we could read this as another moment of "serpentine negotiation"—James's nostalgia for a time before he became conscious of all that disquieted him—it may well be that James was seeking a place of identity renewal.[147] The "infinite *previous*" is non-descript, absent of labels or categories—a moment of swirling energies awaiting discovery and understanding. Where the Foucaultian split embodied in "an unbridgeable abyss or an insuperable mountain" might have been a source of racial anxiety earlier in the travelogue, the "previous" that he mentioned at its close was its opposite. Only in the chasm uncrossed or the obstacle unclimbed by man's invasive force could the mystery of identity created anew have a home. There can be nothing but the "triumph of the superficial" (the external, the outward show) in a land and collective psyche built upon violence and immorality, and though James knew innately that what had been set into motion could not be undone entirely—that each turn of the Pullman wheels brought the American closer to doom— the question that he suggested and that Baldwin clearly articulated was 'would the white American understand the price of his ticket before it was too late to salvage any

semblance of his humanity?' The "story-tellers" in each of these authors seemed to hope

so.

Conclusion: James and Baldwin in a Contemporary Context

"Europeans refer to Americans as children in the same way that American Negroes refer to them as children, and for the same reason: they mean that Americans have so little experience— experience referring not to *what* happens, but to *who*—that they have no key to the experience of others. Our current relations with the world forcibly suggest that there is more than a little truth to this. What Europe still gives an American—or gave us—is the sanction, if one can accept it, to become oneself. No artist can survive without this acceptance. But rare indeed is the American artist who achieved this without first becoming a wanderer, and then, upon his return to his own country, the loneliest and most blackly distrusted of men."—James Baldwin[1]

When I first began this project, an African-American literary scholar asked me, "What makes James worthy of being paired with Baldwin?" At the time, I was extremely disturbed by that question. It privileged the harshness of Baldwin's experiences as a black male and homosexual—as if intimating that no amount of psychic trouble that James could have experienced could validate pairing them. Additionally, I felt that my understanding of the experience of being an African American was being questioned—as if, somehow, I was relinquishing my 'race card' by combining these two authors. I found that simply ludicrous. However, during the course of completing this work, I have since come to understand that what this person was asking me to do verbally is what I have done in this project: illustrate how, despite their differences, there are shared experiences of being an American that alienated both James and Baldwin and manifested themselves in their fiction. It could have only been in that critical, exploratory space that this project would come to fruition.

As artists, both James and Baldwin "wander[ed]," "return[ed]," and found themselves "lonely" in their difference. Through Baldwin's eyes, it becomes far clearer that from *Roderick Hudson* (1875) through *The Outcry* (1911), James's forays into

masculinity, class, and culture denaturalized ideal white masculinity. When he returned to America and found himself displaced not simply as a man, but as a white man, he began to question the sanctity of the ideological system that fed his displacement. He soon understood that he had blindly accepted an American fable. Through gender, James deftly mediated insightful, albeit subtle racial critiques of the combined spaces that shored up American ideology. What he learned, as Baldwin's epigraph suggests, is that part of the American condition is categorizing "what" rather than "who" people are. James was forced to come terms with the gendered and ethnic plurality of America. Moreover, he had to reconcile that plurality with the racially exclusive, gendered, and psychologically limiting conception of American identity embedded in his mind. The very idea of Americanness was built upon labels—"what" was acceptable, "what" was at the center of American identity, and, more importantly, "what" was outside of that construct. The result was national identity privileging whiteness and manhood, while disclaiming "the experience of others," including James and Baldwin.

Given the recent critical emphasis on moving "beyond race" to a far more humanistic and global awareness of identity, it would seem that I am backtracking a bit by so heavily racializing my readings of gender.[2] Yes, James and Baldwin share a strong sense of American alienation across races and across time, and ideally that moves us past race. However, if enabling these backward readings of James points to anything, it is the historical intensity of American exceptionalism, the weight of the raced masculinity, and the xenophobic eyes through which America has viewed the "alien" in *any* form both within and without its bounds since its beginnings. Baldwin's divergence from norms was easily identifiable; it began with his physical appearance. James's alienation, without

visible markers of his outsider status, elucidates the degree to which even *he* could not

inhabit an identity paradigm partially built upon the value of his skin color; the

supremacy signified by his physical appearance, like the confinement of gender

construction, was a falsehood. Because of their shared displacement, James and Baldwin

illustrate the "obvious fact" that in order to move *beyond* categorizing difference, one

must deal with the historical emphasis on those distinctions in establishing national

identity. In some ways, failing to do so means acquiescing to the very system of

assimilation that each railed against; refusing to deal with the raced and gendered

complexities of America's past and present is tantamount to accepting the call to 'get

over' racial, ethnic, or gender exclusion. And, this is not so easily done.

Ultimately, because of what the readings of James reveal, this project opens new

avenues in scholarship, making it fruitful to view James's critiques of both gender and

culture with more racially critical eyes. Though James was white, his disillusionment was

rooted in the same source as Baldwin's—an archetypal, alienating, conquestorial model

of Anglo-American masculinity; it negated the potential for self-realization by those

variably marginalized because it was racially and behaviorally prescriptive and reactive.

Whiteness, heterosexuality, toughness (in a martial sense) were normalized, and neither

Baldwin, nor James fit the norm. Where recent scholarship has explored James's battle

with homosexuality, and where Baldwin's attention to this double bind of American

dysfunction has always been explored, their work unveils something larger:

discontentment with the institutionalized prescriptions for what an American man (and,

therefore, the American) should be—across races.

The American Scene, particularly, and his larger canon as well, validates Henry James as an author who may be read for his contributions to areas of scholarship more often associated with Baldwin—most intensely the dichotomous definition of race and its links to masculinity. This understanding moves this project beyond mere literary criticism to literary history. Scholars previously struck by the similarities between James's and Baldwin's works did not delve deeply into why those links were there; instead, they focused on direct comparison, creating a literary and stylistic hierarchy in which James was "The Master." Early critics like Charles Newman and Lyall Powers even subtly suggested that there was something in James's training or background that enabled him to create such literary masterpieces; conversely, because of something in his background, Baldwin, try as he might, could not quite rise to his level—in style, in language, in characterization, in any aspect of his fictional writing. In short, Baldwin could never be a James. Whether that hierarchical reading stemmed from James's historical precedence or the perception of heightened ability due to his race does not matter. Privileging him and assigning categories in such a way is antithetical, on many levels, to the aims of the cultural critiques in both authors' canons. This dissertation has aimed to overturn standardized ideas of privilege in their literary relationship, performing on that relationship what the authors wished performed in society—a removal of labels.

This, then, has not been a study of influence. Rather, it has been one about the practice of reading and positioning literature—though attributed to different 'traditions'—in its larger, shared cultural and national contexts. Neither author's works may be separated from his American nativity, for his identity was forged in the fires of American divisiveness. What their works collectively reveal is not the unconsciousness,

but the consciousness with which alternate self-expressions have been devalued in America. Binaries such as normal and deviant, center and other, or white and 'alien' have been embedded fastidiously in the collective American psyche from its conception. What Noam Chomsky later identified as "Orwell's Problem," then, *was* 'James's Problem,' 'Baldwin's Problem,' and, by extension, 'America's Problem.'

> Orwell was impressed with the ability of totalitarian systems to instill beliefs that are firmly held and widely accepted although they are completely without foundation and often plainly at variance with the obvious facts about the world around us . . .To solve Orwell's problem we must discover the institutional and other factors that block insight and understanding in crucial areas of our lives.[3]

Chomsky used Walter Lippman's phrase "manufacture of consent" to characterize the psychic manipulation and institutionalized assimilation that American ideology necessitated.[4] Both James and Baldwin recognized Americans' fully conscious investment in flawed racial and gender ideologies—their complicity in the operation of the assimilating machine. Baldwin came to this knowledge early in his career; James gradually came to it through gender. They knew that belief systems were not always rooted in "the actual"; rather, they were often meticulously fabricated and instilled.[5] Racial and gender constructions, then, emerged from notions of primacy that were "firmly held and widely accepted although . . . completely without foundation and often plainly at variance with the obvious facts about the world."

Because they challenged the same norms at different points in history, we can read James's and Baldwin's works as both reflective and prophetic. Their writing was

personal. But, their personal experiences reflected national experiences. Their revelations have never seemed more important than now. The tensions between various 'centers' and "others" that James and Baldwin pointed out in their lifetimes are still evident in ongoing debates over language ("Spanglish" and "AAVE"). They are realized in the reactive profiling of people of Middle-Eastern descent post-September eleventh. And, though we have yet to figure out what to make of the current Presidential election, the same tensions are evident in the following: the perception that Hillary Clinton is not 'feminine enough'; Geraldine Ferraro's "off-the-record" comment that Barack Obama would not be in his position if he "was a white man" or "a woman [of any color]"; and suggestions that Obama is not 'black enough."[6] The same questions prevail. What does it mean to be feminine, masculine, black, or white? Who is privileged, and who is not? Who creates and perpetuates the language of difference? In an election marked by the presence of two representatives of historically marginalized groups, how tragic is it that political maneuvering and public commentary keep returning to race and gender? Though personhood should be the focus, these instances still highlight difference—"what" rather than "who" people are.

Tellingly, ninety-one years after James's death and twenty-one years after Baldwin's, this chapter's epigraph seems truer than during the Cold War when Baldwin wrote it. The American relationship with the "world" is far more tenuous; the tightrope on which this country walks is largely the result of a hyper-masculine drive for supremacy and power over 'others.' The battle for primacy in the space and arms races that founded American fears during the Cold War has become a war of conquest over fuel and American energy interests in Iraq. The "evil" projected onto Russia has been

transferred to an "axis" of several Middle-Eastern countries which, apparently, threaten the sanctity of American existence. The derisive language used in each situation reifies the historical binaries of the American experience. Native Americans were often demonized and destroyed to protect the European settler's 'better' and more 'civilized' way of life; more importantly, Natives were later wholly removed because they were in the way of the American "will to grow."[7] Freed Negroes were depicted as bestial and violent, as threats the Southerner's way of life, though they had helped to build the South; both during and post-slavery, tactics used to suppress African-Americans and reestablish white dominance were often too horrible to describe. Immigrants in the Gilded Age seemingly threatened the American way of life as well, despite the fact that they provided labor to support it; so, they lived in slums, were racially stereotyped, and often kept in a cycle of poverty that maintained the rights and wealth of the few at the expense of many. Hispanic immigrants now 'threaten' America's way of life, though their willingness to perform jobs that many Americans believe beneath them arguably makes them integral to that way of life; because of the threat, America's goal is to build a bigger, sturdier fence between 'us' and 'them.' Finally, Iraq and Iran (and the whole of the "Axis of Evil") 'threaten' America's very existence, for they are not like us; they are painted as Godless men and "enemies of freedom," who "hate our democracy" and are "jealous of our freedom and our wealth."[8] At no time does it register that our history bastardizes the ideas of "freedom" and personal validity with conquest and "wealth," that "democracy" is a utopian construct, or that, perhaps, "others" in the larger world see through American ideological falsehoods.

The near illogical actions taken to combat difference in America have always reflected the "paralytically infantile . . . ideal of American masculinity." Based on the perceived finiteness of binaries such as "black and white," "cowboys and Indians," or 'us' and 'them,' the "ideal" is far too dualistic to be validated or sustained.[9] Yet, it has persisted. With the act of writing, James and Baldwin attempted to be truth-tellers and change-makers, demystifying the very existence of an "ideal." Though James officially expatriated in 1915, just one year before his death, and Baldwin felt that exile was his salvation, a clean break with America would have been impossible for both. Though they were "stranger[s]" at home, the sense of being 'estranged' abroad enabled them to reflect on their Americanness. As artists, they "deal[t] with what they [saw]" and waged "a lover's war with "society"; in doing so, each attempted "to do what lover's do, which is to reveal the beloved to himself, and with that revelation, make freedom real."[10] Both urged resistance to norms that limited self-realization and self-valuation; each inevitably registered that until its citizens defy the existing unattainable "ideal" of American identity consciously, openly, and collectively—until they no longer "consent" to defining each other based on "what" they are, rather than "who"—Americans will remain victims of a construct that damns them to fragmentation and prevents them from being consciously themselves in a world far larger than that of their exclusive experience.

Notes

[1] Henry James, *Roderick Hudson,* ed. Geoffrey Moore (New York: Penguin, 1986), 53.

[2] "The New Lost Generation," *Esquire* (Jul 1961), rpt. in *James Baldwin: Collected Essays*, ed. Toni Morrison (New York: Library of America, 1998), 667.

[3] James Baldwin, "The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy," *Collected Essays,* 271.

[4] James Baldwin, *Another Country* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 223. Yves and others in the novel suggest that America does not allow its inhabitants to be freely conscious of the totality of their existences; they are not as "free" as they believe they are (413). Baldwin wrote a novel that featured alternately raced individuals quite prominently, but, in doing so, he pushed his readers to see that "suffering doesn't *have* a color" (417). Rufus, Eric, and every other character "suffer" in myriad ways despite their differences. The idea of "suffering" links Baldwin to James in untold ways.

[5] I point to Dwight McBride's parity between "capital" and the "'whiteness of capital'" in *Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality* (New York: NYU P, 2005), 26. The notion that there is property in whiteness more powerful than money or physical property resounds in *The Ambassadors*, though whiteness is not mentioned in the text. Strether is sent to battle forces that would thwart tradition, centers of power, economic influence, and inheritance in Gilded Age America.

[6] Henry James, *The Ambassadors*, 1903, ed. Harry Levin (New York: Penguin, 1986). In book one, chapter, Waymarsh asks Strether, "Ain't you about up to your usual average?" (72). This question follows a internal monologue in which Strether thinks not only of Waymarsh's success, but also of the type of "overwork, or prostration, or sensible shrinkage" that characterizes his life. There is the sense that Strether does not have the character or ability to be the archetypal man of his generation. I discuss this instance further in my Introduction.

[7] *Ambassadors* 511. Strether, in the end, sees himself "afraid of ideas" and going home to "a great difference—no doubt." But, he says, "Yet I shall see what I can make of it." His words suggest "doubt" that anything can be made of his newfound "difference." Chad Newsome returns to assume his 'role' in American society. It is as if the square peg is beaten and chiseled until it fits into the round hole—something that reinforces the notion of "assimilating force" later discussed in James's *The American Scene* (see chapter three).

[8] Besides Leeming's biography, see also Horace Porter, *Stealing the Fire: The Art and Protest of James Baldwin* (Ohio: Wesleyan UP, 1989).

[9] Charles Newman, "The Lesson of the Master: Henry James and James Baldwin," *Yale Review* 56 (1967): 45-9. Newman's was the first critical engagement of this pairing, and while he did note insightfully, albeit reductively, that "at the outset . . . Baldwin's characters suffer no more from their color than James's suffer from their money—these are only the peculiar conditions of his their suffering," he did not delve deeply into intersections of race and class that he introduced (45). Referencing James's

view that "the American knows that a good deal remains; what is it that remains—that is his secret . . ." and tying that "secret" to "the invalidism of [James's and Baldwin's] public poses, their exile *in order* to communicate," Newman had an opportunity to analyze truly the nature of the "consciousness" that served as one parallel between them (46). In reviewing the novel and its characters, however, Newman insisted that Baldwin "ha[d] not yet demonstrated, except in his essays, that the artist can build a structure to *use* self-knowledge," that Baldwin "[gave] us an opportunity to test our preconceptions" without giving us a means by which to move beyond the realization of their inadequacy (58). Newman argued for praise of the promise of Baldwin, writing that in his later fiction, James characters became "personalities of transcendent value . . . sufficiently complex to sustain them beyond the dialectical conflict which created them"; he suggested, therefore, that Baldwin was effectually not there yet, writing what is "social science, not literature" mired in vagueness and ambiguity (58).

[10] Lyall H. Powers, "Henry James and James Baldwin: The Complex Figure," *MFS: Modern Fiction Studies* 30.4 (Winter 1984): 651-67. Powers referenced Newman directly and insisted that by focusing on Baldwin's "indebtedness," "the reader may be in a better position to understand just what Baldwin was about in fashioning *Another Country* and therefore to offer some correctives to the often dissatisfied (and unsatisfying) response to this novel" (656). However, even his suggested "correctives" were "unsatisfying" insofar as they relied merely on a catalogue of Jamesian themes at work in Baldwin's novel: "the problem of individual identity"; "the artist in confrontation with 'the world' [as] a direct equivalent of the American hero or heroine in confrontation

with the manners and conventions . . . of 'the world' of Europe"; echoes of "James's comments . . . on New York skyscrapers" in Baldwin's rendering of the artist's return to New York; and, though "it is a theme that came to James via the literary tradition of Milton, Blake, and Hawthorne—the theme of the paradox of the fortunate fall" (655, 654, 659, 665). It is true, as he insisted, that these themes were evident and that Baldwin invited comparison, but, again, the focus on indebtedness precluded querying how these two very different men came to such similar conclusions about the world in which they existed.

[11] Eric Savoy, "Other[ed] Americans in Paris: Henry James, James Baldwin, and the Subversion of Identity*," English Studies in Canada* 18:3 (Sept. 1992): 335-46. In 1992, writing that "previous attempts to sustain this connection have relied upon James's historical and canonical priority, and have tended, perhaps unconsciously, to privilege James as master over Baldwin as ardent disciple" and that "Baldwin . . . sought an affiliation, not an identification, with James," Savoy began to move beyond the idea of debt to the identity formation at work in James's *The Ambassadors* (1903) and Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* (1956). He noted that "Baldwin learned in Paris, as had Henry James before him, that 'America'—particularly the burden of its historical inability to accommodate 'otherness,' however defined—is not something that one leaves behind, but rather demands investigation with increasing urgency in response to reductive European myths of the promises and possibilities of the new world" (335, 341-42).
He read James's and Baldwin's works as attempts to expose American ideologies ill-suited for the changing cultural and physical landscape within its borders; Bryan R.

Washington, *The Politics of Exile: Ideology in Henry James, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and James Baldwin* (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1995). Washington built on Savoy's platform, exploring the political nature of exile ideology. He argued that this ideology unified Henry James, F. Scott Fitzgerald and James Baldwin, proposing that James lays the groundwork for white exile ideology in literature, Fitzgerald donned the mantle of this ideology as he worked through his own feelings of alienation, and Baldwin, try as he might to escape the privileging of whiteness by incorporating "other," failed to escape the ideology fully and master a new conception of self and national identity. Richardson insisted that because Baldwin was attempting to inhabit and white ideology rather than reaching beyond it, he *could not* be successful. However, married to the notion that there must be a clearly defined resolution—a path "beyond" the inconsistencies that the ideology of white exile helps Baldwin to expose—Richardson fails to realize that this ideology's inability to help one "to see through" was *precisely* Baldwin's focus, for the failure "to see" others relies heavily upon the failure "to see" oneself. When Baldwin later wrote in "Notes of a Native Son" that "blackness and whiteness did not matter; to believe that they did was to acquiesce to one's own destruction," he was articulating the sad and inevitable failure of the American's analogous identity formation (84); Cyraina Johnson-Rouiller "(An)Other Modernism: James Baldwin, Giovanni's Room and the Rhetoric of Flight," *MFS: Modern Fiction Studies* 45:4 (1999): 932-56. Reading Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* as a transition between African-American protest literature and American modernism, she drew on the link between James, termed "the Euro-American modernist," and Baldwin to argue that Baldwin translated a central theme of

modernism in the pages of his text (934). Referencing both Powers and Newman, she was adamant that the literary relationship between James and Baldwin was not merely one of indebtedness. Instead, she argued that Baldwin reenacted the tropes of modernity to isolate humanity in a universal sense, rather than simply as an African-American or an American. Further, she indicated how difficult this undertaking became in light of the American incapacity to accept otherness. Alluding to T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent," she wrote, "it is the fact of exile that takes Baldwin's work out of the more isolated problem of the search for African American identity and into the more universal problem of the relationship between the individual and society. This in turn leads into one of the central problems of modernism, which is the relationship of the artist to tradition, a problem that takes the same general form as that of the problem between the individual and society" (934). In her attempt to circumvent the intersections and incongruence of Americanness (read whiteness) and African-Americanness, she failed to acknowledge that racial and gender constraints in America often determined the gravity of "the problem between the individual and society."

[12] McBride 31.

Introduction

[1] James Baldwin, "Freaks and the American Ideal of Manhood," *Collected Essays* 814-829. I must address the use of the terms male, female, manhood, masculinity, gender, and sex as they appear in the context of this project. In the 19th century, James conflated the terms that contemporary scholars use to make the distinction between gender—masculinity and femininity—and sex—male and female. For him, the sociological was

rooted in the biological. Baldwin, alternatively, separated the two—gender from sex; but, he invariably linked the social understanding of them. While I understand the complexity of using the terms maleness and masculinity in a seemingly interchangeable way in reference to manhood, I do so consciously, for the presence of not only male organs and physicality, but also the character and associative traits prescribed for the American male work conjunctively in the construction of American manhood. See William James, "Instinct"; William James illustrated this when he linked the term 'queer'—as in not manly—to an aberrant use of male genitalia. See also Baldwin, "Freaks" 819; Baldwin clearly reflected this as well when he discussed the use of the term 'queer'. Though scholars are quick to point to the differences between the terms, within the social psyche, they are not always so clearly separated.

[2] Henry James, "Saint-Beuve," rpt. in *The Art of Criticism: Henry James on the Theory and Practice of Fiction*, ed. William Veeder and Susan M. Griffin (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986), 27.

[3] "Freaks" 821.

[4] Robyn Wiegman, *Who Can Speak?: Authority and Critical Identity* (Champagne-Urbana: Illini Books, 1995), 1.

[5] Qtd. in Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno, *The Continual Pilgrimage: American Writers in Paris, 1944-1960* (New York: City Lights, 1998), 11.

[6] I borrow the name "The Henry James of Harlem" from Colm Toibin's "The Henry James of Harlem: James Baldwin's Struggles," *The London Review of Books* (14 Sept. 2001) <http://books.guardian.co.uk/lrb/articles/>

[7] Kim Townsend, *Manhood at Harvard: William James and Others* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1996), 40.

[8] For in-depth treatment of Henry James, Sr., his background, and his impact on his family, see Alfred Habegger's *The Father: A Life of Henry James, Sr.* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Girous, 1994). For further treatment, see "The Heritage of Failure and Shame in the Life of Henry James, Sr." in Carol Holly, *Intensely Family: The Inheritance of Family Shame and the Autobiographies of Henry James* (Madison: Wisconsin UP, 1995). See also Alice James, *The Diary of Alice James*, ed. Linda Simon and Leon Edel (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1999). In this text, we see Alice James's struggle to overcome misogyny and the double standard with which Henry, Sr. approached his children. Unlike her brothers, and like many women of her time, Alice was not educated formally and was not widely traveled. Her misery and its effects on Henry James (see *HJ Letters*) further exemplify James's confusion over gender construction.

[9] George Santayana, *The Genteel Tradition: Nine Essays by George Santayana*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1967), 55.

[10] See the discussion of his relationship with William James on pages 12-14.

[11] James Campbell, *Talking at the Gates: A Life of James Baldwin* (Los Angeles: U of California P, 1991), 7.

[12] Baldwin wrote a great deal about David Baldwin in his work. The fact that he loathed him, yet eventually came to understand his cruelty and anger featured prominently in his texts. He recognized David Baldwin's rage as that of a Black man powerless, emasculated and constricted by the conventions of the white world around

him. See *Go Tell it on the Mountain* (1953) and *Notes of a Native Son* (1955). Ironically, the character who is the primary consciousness in *Giovanni's Room* is named David. As chapter two will show, David undergoes an internal battle over manhood caused by his desire to inhabit a male ideal that is not made for him. In talking about his stepfather, Baldwin attributed his bitterness, in part, to the fact that in America, his stepfather was subjected a model of manhood invented with whiteness as its center.

[13] Qtd. in Campbell 12.

[14] Baldwin, "The Discovery of What it Means To Be an American," *Collected Essays* 137.

[15] David Adams Leeming, "An Interview with James Baldwin on Henry James," *Henry James Review* 8.1 (Fall 1986): 47. Additionally, see Angela Cobbina, "Blues for Mr. Baldwin," *Concord Weekly* (28 Jan. 1985): 31, 33, rpt. in *Conversations with James Baldwin,* ed. Fred L. Standley and Louis H. Pratt (Jackson, Mississippi: UP of Mississippi, 1989): 255-259. In that piece, Baldwin admitted, "I left America much more than I went to live in France" (256). I argue that the same is true for James and England.

[16] Campbell 113. Some might argue that Baldwin's "essential self" was a homosexual one and privilege that link between the two authors. But, I argue that this is only one facet of Baldwin's identity, and much of Baldwin's intent in exposing the lunacy of labels was to move both himself and his reader beyond them.

[17] Leeming 49; 56-7.

[18] For further readings of the intertwining of whiteness and gender identity, see Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1995); David

Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness* (New York: Verso, 1999); Dana Nelson *National*

Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of White Men (Durham:

Duke UP, 1998); or Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New

York: Oxford UP, 2005). Among other issues, each argues that racial primacy is endemic

to national ideas of American manhood from colonization forward.

[19] By insisting that manly idealism is established in terms of what manhood is *not*,

rather than what it is, I am arguing that the ideal is inherently racialized. One thing that

the ideal man was not was anything other than white.

[20] Bederman 20. Bederman begins her study with a discussion of the 1910

prizefight between Jim Jeffries, "the Great White Hope," and Jack Johnson. She argues

that the racial primacy on the line in that fight is symbolic of the battle for the primacy of

white manhood in America as a whole. Ultimately, she finds that though a number of

individuals, Jack Johnson, Ida B. Wells, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, among others,

attempted to challenge and change the notions of "civilization" rooted in whiteness and

masculinity in America, it is those notions that ultimately survived, reconstructed

themselves, and insured their posterity. See also *Unforgivable Blackness*: *The Rise and*

Fall of Jack Johnson, Dir. Ken Burns (Washington D.C.: WETA and Florentine Films,

2004). For discussion of 'whiteness' as a property unto itself in America, see Cheryl

Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review* 106.8 (June 1993) 1714-17. Harris

proves that whiteness as a construct is a means of ostracizing those outside the center of

power. History makes her case. It is important, therefore, to define the limitations and

diachronic delineations of its construction—to see the ways in which its design is not

only the foundation of class or culture (manners), but is also reliant on periodic, calculated reconfigurations of the socially designed identity spaces that are both a part of it and a result of it. To be a *man*—to be recognized as a civilized male—required whiteness both legally and socially. See also George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1998).

[21] Nina Baym, "Melodramas of Beset Manhood: How Theories of American Fiction Exclude Women Authors," *American Quarterly* 33.2 (Summer 1981): 123-139.

[22] See Caroline Field Levander, "Much Less a Book than a State of Vision: The Visibility of Race in Henry James," *Henry James Review* 23.3 (Fall 2002): 265-272. In this article, Levander argues that even when the African-American was "whitened" through amalgamation, "the most convincing visual markers of whiteness [could] not erase a given race's 'mental characteristics'" (266). Moreover, as early as William Apess's *An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man* (1833), we see the paradigm in which white skin is perceived to symbolize morality and principles contested.

[23] Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2005), 8. Joining reconfigurations of manhood to the God-ordained conquest epitomized by "Manifest Destiny," Greenberg argues that redefining manhood in terms of whiteness and physical strength could be equated to claiming a new frontier in gender construction amidst the social, cultural, and political changes in the Gilded Age.

[24] Ibid. 9.

[25] To complete Greenberg's argument more fully, these same "virtues" would enable the male of Anglo-Saxon descent to conquer a new frontier of masculinity—

ensuring his primacy over "less[er]" male subjects as he believed was not only his scientific right, but also his longitudinally God-given one. Reliance on physical dominance, on cultivating what might be perceived in naturalism as 'the beast within,' seems an ironic refiguring of masculine identity, for it overtly acknowledges within the white male the animalistic attributes long displaced onto those males of "less refined races and classes." I see this as a natural outcome of the Gilded Age—in which the physique of a former slave or the labor-hardened body of an immigrant more vividly threatened to explode former notions of white male dominance.

[26] Ibid. 9. Another example of both visual and ideological markers would be Andrew Carnegie. In "Wealth" (*North American Review*, June 1889), Andrew Carnegie wrote, "We might as well urge the destruction of the highest existing type of man because he failed to reach our ideal as to favor the destruction of individualism, private property, the law of accumulation of wealth, and the law of competition; for these are the highest results of human experience, the soil in which society so far has produced the best fruit. Unequally or unjustly, perhaps, as these laws sometimes operate, and imperfect as they appear to the idealist, they are, nevertheless, like the highest type of man, the best and most valuable of all that humanity has yet accomplished." Carnegie continued by supporting his brand of capitalist idealism, suggesting that the unequal distribution of wealth would be good in the long term—since "the surplus wealth of the few will become, in the best sense, the property of the many, because administered for the common good." However, the reliance on typology—on the idea of a "high[er] type of man" who adeptly used both the "law of the accumulation of wealth and the law of

competition" no matter how "unequally or unjustly . . . these laws . . . operate"—merged capitalist and corporate aims with the rhetoric of Social Darwinism.

[27] See Leon Edel, *Henry James: The Master, 1901-1916* (London: Rupert, 1972), 265-66.

[28] Theodore Roosevelt, "To Henry L. Sprague," 26 Jan. 1900 (Albany, New York), Carbon Copy Letterbook, 52A, *American Treasures of the Library of Congress* <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/at0052as.jpg>. Roosevelt wrote to Sprague about the need for dissembling in the face of those who would have undermined his goals as governor of New York (in this case, Louis Payne, insurance commissioner). He also spoke of the need for a "big stick" to move others to his will. Though he was a well-known big-game hunter in Africa, the irony of his use of the West African Proverb in light of the image of manhood that he signifies, is noteworthy. The text of this letter is his first known use of this phrase, which would become synonymous with his imperial interests and aggressive pursuit of foreign interests. He writes, "Dear Harry:-- Your letter of the 25th really pleased me. Of course, I shall not feel real easy until the vote has actually been taken, but apparently everything is not all right. I have always been fond of the West African Proverb: 'Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far.' If I had not carried the big stick the Organization would not have gotten behind me, and if I had yelled and blustered as Parkhurst and the similar dishonest lunatics desired, I would not have had ten votes. But I was entirely good humored, kept perfectly cool and steadfastly refused to listen to anything save that Payn had to go, and that I would take none but a

thoroughly upright and capable man in his place. Unless there is some cataclysm, these tactics will be crowned with success."

[29] Julian Carter, *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America, 1880-1940* (Durham: Duke UP, 2007). In this study, largely reliant on close readings of historical texts, Carter illustrates the means by which "discreet depictions" of whiteness and heterosexuality had "the ability to construct and teach white racial meanings *without appearing to do so*" (2). Using the statues of "Normman" and "Norma" displayed at the 1939 New York World's Fair as one such "discreet depiction," Carter argues that they present, without doubt, not only the physical norms of the white body (for they are racially marked with Anglo-Saxon features), but also in their juxtaposition, the roles of the male and female in relation to one another (1-41). "Normman" is ever in search of "Norma" to be "normal" and vice versa. Carter's example is particularly interesting given James's and Baldwin's differences from both the physical and sexual norms that "Normman" reinforced.

[30] Theodore Roosevelt, "Citizenship in a Republic," 23 Apr. 1910. Sorbonne, Paris, rpt. in *The Man in the Arena: The Selected Writings of Theodore Roosevelt*, ed. Brian M. Thomsen (New York: Forge, 2003), 1. He later wrote on 5 August 1916 to Mrs. William Brown Meloney, wife of the editor of *The Pawling Chronicle* and suggested purging those who could not fit his model of manhood from the heart of America. He argued "[t]hat every molly-coddle, professional pacifist, and man who is "too proud to fight" when the nation's quarrel is just, should be exiled to those out of the way parts . . . where the spirit of manliness has not yet penetrated." Roosevelt's words confirm not only

a new image of manhood, but also a new "spirit of manliness." Dictating precisely what

that "spirit" was, he argued, "Every decent young man should have a family, job, and the

military training which will enable him to keep this country out of war by making it

dangerous for any ruthless military people to attack us." Clearly, Roosevelt worked

tirelessly—both publicly and privately—to ensure that the American "man" become

someone who upheld his duty to propagate, to work, and to fight. A new man for a new

millennium in a nation on the verge of entering World War I, this man was a combination

of early character-oriented norms and new imperialist aims.

[31] Greenberg 9.

[32] Keith Gandal, *The Virtues of the Vicious: Jacob Riis, Stephen Crane, and the
Spectacle of the Slum* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997), 118.

[33] Reading the imagery of this era is quite fascinating. There are times at which

Roosevelt would challenge perceptions of softness by posing in a lawn chair, fist set at

his belly. Pictures of him as a soldier and cowboy were widely circulated as well, making

him the model to be emulated. Images of Theodore Roosevelt may be found at "Theodore

Roosevelt: Icon of the American Century," *National Public Gallery, Smithsonian

Institution* <http://www.npg.si.edu/exh/roosevelt/>. They range from hunting photos, to

military photographs, to those of him in a suit with his pocket watch. In short, they span

the range of his manly poses and suggest that the 'normal man' needed to be capable of

surviving in *all* "arena[s]"—political and social. Photographs of Jim Jeffries may be

found in Bederman and *Unforgivable Blackness*. Political cartoons from the popular

publication *Puck* may be found at the online version of Michigan State University

Museum's traveling exhibit entitled, "Immigration and Caricature: Ethnic images from the Appel Collection," <http://museum.msu.edu/museum/tes/immigration.htm>.

[34] See Philip Horne, "Henry James and 'the forces of violence': On the track of 'big game' in 'The Jolly Corner,'" *Henry James Review* 27.3 (Fall 2006): 237-247.

[35] Greenberg 9.

[36] Baldwin, "The Price of the Ticket," 1985, *Collected Essays*, 830-842. This phrase is also used in Arthur Little's 1993 essay "'An essence that's not seen': The Primal Scene of Racism in *Othello*." Essentially, whiteness is defined as the "absence of blackness," and blackness is simply defined as an "absence." In a Freudian sense, the negative space of white identity is projected onto the African-American, making him the scapegoat and whipping boy for all that white Americans could not face in themselves— whether weakness, brutality, ignorance, or any other trait.

[37] Robyn Wiegman*, American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (Durham: Duke UP), 68.

[38] I discuss Baldwin's metaphorical exploration of castration in *Giovanni's Room* in chapter one.

[39] See David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness* (New York: Verso, 1991), 3. See also Malini Johar Schueller *US Orientalisms* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1998) and Edward Watts and Malini Johar Schueller *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003). In each, the authors argue convincingly the centrality of racial conflicts to the beginnings of Anglo-European colonization. As each has shown, whiteness need not be openly addressed to be evident.

David Roediger, for instance, argues that "even in an all white town, race [is] never absent" because white ideology is a fundamental building block of the nation. James's position as a gendered outsider did not negate the fact that his racial insider status granted him privilege. See also Sara Blair, *Henry James and the Writing of Race and Nation* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1996) and Ross Posnock, *The Trial of Modernity: Henry James, William James, and the Challenge of Modernity* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991).

[40] Blair 5.

[41] Bederman 26. Additionally, I borrow the term "marginal male" from Kelly Cannon's *Henry James and Masculinity: The Man at the Margins* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997).

[42] Henry James, "To Charles Eliot Norton," 4 Feb. 1872, *Henry James: A Life in Letters*, ed. Philip Horne (New York: Penguin, 1999).

[43] Blair 8. Blair argues that in the prefaces to the New York Editions of his novels, James "does the hard labor of transfiguring race and nation as categorical imperatives." I agree that this is true, but I argue that in order to transform conceptions of "nation," James understood first that gender "imperatives" needed to be altered; through them, he realized the importance of addressing racial "imperatives" as well. Both are key in constructing national identity.

[44] See Gandal 118.

[45] James, *A Small Boy and Others*, 1913, rpt. in *Henry James: Autobiography*. Ed. Frederick W. Dupee (New York: Criterion, 1956), 101.

[46] James desires to be this "other," who, in his memory had a certain grace, grandeur, and dexterous certitude. His feeling that what this boy represents is candy denied him behind a "confectioner's glass" bolsters readings of his homosexuality, for it calls the desire for consumption to mind. Yet, we can read this moment in far different ways. There is the suggestion of the juvenile fascination with the 'bad boy,'—the figure who embodies all that you are instructed not to be. In that sense, one could liken this moment to what Gandal terms a romanticizing of slum or immigrant culture. More simply, however, one might also consider that James inadvertently points to a desire for a masculine self that differs from the norm that his brother and others typified (and he did not), even though what he longed for was socially aberrant in this case.

[47] I am reminded here of the idea of the "artful evasion of the actual" that James seeks in *The American Scene* when confronted with the alien presence in America (4).

[48] Though I do not quote him in this segment, it is important to note that Michael Moon, in *A Small Boy and Others: Imitation and Initiation in American Culture from Henry James to Andy Warhol* (Durham: Duke UP, 1998), argued that in this text, James's "recognition of [his] desires" translates to "the production and transmission of images and narratives of these desires" (3). Moon suggests that in reflection, James is actually relating the formative processes of a "modern queer childhood" (3). He reads the text not only as memory, but also as a surprising emergence from the closet. His text raises key points, but he casts James as the "small boy," misrepresenting entirely that the titular "small boy" is actually William.

[49] Gandal 118.

<superscript>50</superscript> Ibid.

<superscript>51</superscript> See Guy Cheli, *Sing Sing Prison* (New York: Arcadia Publishing, 2003) or Denis Brian, *Sing Sing: The Inside Story of a Notorious Prison* (New York: Prometheus, 2005). James recollection of this moment seems far more theatrical when one considers the actualities of this prison—the fact that the uniforms were gray striped rather than white or that the prisoners were "compelled to labor diligently during the day" in the nearby marble mines. Though the construction of Sing-Sing was the result of the drive for penal reforms following the Second Great Awakening (in fact, on the day after its opening, all of the inmates were given bibles, though many could not read and were not taught), the prison's brutality and mismanagement are well documented. It is possible, by all accounts however, that the prisoners, as well as the environment, were 'dressed up' for visitation so that the idea of the "disciplinary[, reformist] institution" for convicts devised during the Second Great Awakening maintained its momentum (Gandal 118). Touted as a militaristic institution because of its warden, Elam Lynds, the public face of Sing Sing was far more like James's projected image in these lines—a testament to the "power of surfaces."

<superscript>52</superscript> Gandal 118.

<superscript>53</superscript> I speak particularly of the penknife in this instance. Contemporary prisons would not allow such a weapon to be on an inmate's person, for as we see going back to Lord Byron and further, a penknife was an ample weapon for murder or suicide. However, the penknife, typically very sharp, was used not only for shaping quills (which would call to mind the gentility that James's recollection seems to suggest), but also for

shaping bullets and whittling, as well as cutting the pages of newly bound books. Notably, penknives were also used to test the hardness of minerals in mines and to 'chisel' out smaller pieces of stone (Cheli).

[54] Though he would later visit other penitentiaries that he would find far more "dismal," his romantic recollection actually foreshadows his sense of nostalgia in *The American Scene*.

[55] Qtd. in Townsend 72, from *The Correspondence of William James,* Vol. 1, ed. Ignas K. Skrupskelis, Elizabeth M. Berkeley, Bernice Grohskopf, and Wilma Bradbeer (Richmond: U of Virginia P, 1992), 173.

[56] See William James, "Instinct," *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2 (Boston: Holt and Co., 1890), 383-441. Thompson inaccurately states that William's essay is on "Modern Orientals." Instead, William used "ancients and modern Orientals" as an example of baser "instinct" unchecked by normative reinforcement. He wrote, "The fondness of the ancients and of modern Orientals for forms of unnatural vice, of which the notion affects us with horror, is probably a mere case of the way in which this instinct may be inhibited by habit. We can hardly suppose that the ancients had by gift of Nature a propensity of which we are devoid, and were all victims of what is now a pathological aberration limited to individuals. It is more probable that with them the instinct of physical aversion toward a certain class of objects was inhibited early in life by habits, formed under the influence of example; and that then a kind of sexual appetite, of which very likely most men possess the germinal possibility, developed itself in an unrestricted way" (438-439).

[57] His "queerness" and "unnaturalness" have striking connotations in light of the laws against "unnatural acts" such as sodomy being revisited and revised during the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see title I, chapter 272, sections 34 and 35, of Massachusetts General Laws—respectively "Crime against Nature" and "Unnatural and Lascivious Acts"). Such descriptors seem to support reading James as a closeted homosexual.

[58] See Carol Holly, *Intensely Family,* 77. Holly sheds some light on Henry's lifelong feelings of inadequacy. She writes, "To the end of *A Small Boy and Others* and well into *Notes of a Son and Brother*, he continues to characterize himself as somehow deficient or defective: 'I quite recall being ashamed . . . it was only I who didn't understand,' 'the shame of my sad failure,' 'my own case must have been intrinsically the poorest,' 'my general dazzled, humiliated sense . . .'" Henry seemed to imbibe intensely the feelings of aberrance that William frequently addressed.

[59] Townsend 72.

[60] William James, "To Henry James,' 4 Mar. 1968, *Correspondence*, Vol. 1, 36-37. The two stories in question are "The Story of the Masterpiece," *Galaxy* 5 (Jan 1868): 5-21 through (Feb. 1868): 133-43 *and* "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes," *Atlantic Monthly* 21 (Feb. 1868): 209-20.

[61] See Roosevelt, "Citizenship in the Republic."

[62] I refer you to the epigraph that opens the chapter.

[63] James would use them to venture into the realm of the "feminine" a number of times apart from *Portrait* in his career, most notably with *Daisy Miller* (1878), "Julia

Bride" (1907), and "Mora Montravers" (1907)—even in the character of young Maisie in

What Maisie Knew (1897). In each text, he seemed to be reaching for something—some

means by which to free the subordinated figure from her bonds. In *Portraying the Lady:*

The Technologies of Gender in the Short Stories of Henry James (Lincoln: U of Nebraska

P, 1993), Donnatella Izzo argues that James's "famously intransitive and abstract

writing" late in his career might be seen as "a response to the double-bind of

representation and self-representation." She suggests that as he evolved as a writer, he

turned toward "speaking with" rather than "for and of," creating "writing that

accompanies its subject without peremptorily defining it" and enacting "a pattern of

resistance to all injunctions of totalizing (self-) definition" (242-43). Citing the case of

"Mora Montravers" (1907), reportedly James's final short story, Izzo insists that Mora,

whose greatest desire is "to be free," becomes not the tragic heroine familiar from much

of James's fiction, but the "mastermind of a prodigious system of metamorphosis," the

"active subject of a story organized according to her own precise design" (257). I agree

that there is a constant tension between external definition and self-definition in his texts

from very early in his career—a need to align himself with culturally and socially

constructed norms at the same time that he sees himself unalterably alienated from them.

Perhaps Izzo's feeling that he begins to "[speak] with" is a signal of his final frustration

with the critical adherence to labels and conduct that so permeate his earlier writings—a

need to break "free." What she sees with "Mora Montravers" could well be the final

stride of an author who traversed a sea of constraints and fictionally, at least, found a way

for the marginal figure (symbolically female) to survive on her own terms. The name,

itself, is thought-provoking given Izzo's reading of the text. "Mon," of course is "my" in French. "Traverser" means "to cross." "Traverse" is the first-person singular form of traverser. "Travers," sans –e means "through." It would seem that Mora's last name is "my" "cross"—as in to bear or crossing. Or, perhaps, it suggests my "through" (as in breakthrough).

[64] "Freaks" 819, italics mine. Baldwin also addressed the disparity between being physically male and socially outside of the ideal of manhood in "Take Me to the Water," an essay in *No Name in the Street* (1972). He wrote, "Every black man walking in this country pays a tremendous price for walking; for men are not women, and a man's balance depends on the weight he carries between his legs. All men however, they may face or fail to face it, however they may handle, or be handled by it, know something about each other, which is simply that a man without balls is not a man; that the word *genesis* describes the male, involves the phallus, and refers to the seed which gives life. When one man can no longer honor this in another man—and this remains true even if that man is his lover—he has abdicated from a man's estate, and hard upon the heels of that abdication, chaos arrives . . . The world in which we live is, after all, a reflection of the desires and activities of men" (392). Baldwin's focus on the male body has consistently been read as emblematic of his homosexuality. More important, though, than his homosexuality in this instance, is the socio-cultural critique implied here. Men, particularly, white men, conceived of this nation and did not conceive of a place for the black man or anyone other within it. The key to maintaining a nation built on such a foundation is the perpetual unmanning of the ab-normal male—a perpetual negation of

the fact that he has "balls." Baldwin saw this disparity as something that must be faced before progress could be made toward inclusiveness or the dream that is America.

[65] See Ann Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000). Fausto-Sterling's text is the result of her research into the relationship between sex and perceptions of sexuality. Focusing on terms such as 'sex hormones' or 'sexual identity' as they relate to biological sex, she suggests that removing such dualistic labeling might give us the potential to allow individuals to define (or revise) their sexual identities apart from societal norms.

[66] See Baldwin, "Freaks" 821; see also epigraph, Introduction.

[67] "Freaks" 815.

[68] I borrow this phrase from Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* to illustrate that Baldwin's perceived deviance was not only instilled, but also inescapable by societal standards.

[69] Again, this is a reference to William.

[70] *Small Boy* 7.

[71] Ibid. 147.

[72] Ibid. 147-488.

[73] "To William James," 15 June 1879, *HJ: A Life in Letters,* 108. See also Dana Nelson, *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of White Men* (Durham: Duke UP, 1998).

[74] *Small Boy* 147.

[75] See again "Freaks" 815.

[76] See also Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Oxford UP, 2005). Kimmel insists that proving one's manhood became an imperative in the ideation and evolution of American masculinity.

[77] "Preface," *Portrait* xxiv.

[78] For Baldwin, this seems inarguable. For James, see Eric Haralson, "James's *The American*: A (New)Man is Being Beaten," *American Literature* 64:3 (Sept. 1992): 475-495. Haralson opens his piece with "By now, it is proverbial that questions of masculine performance constituted the most nettled site of conflict for young Henry James. From Stephen Spender and Leon Edel to Philip Sicker and Jean Strouse, the critical consensus is that James took a look at what it meant "to be a man" in his society and quietly turned down the job" (475). His words make the interrogation of James's works on the basis of masculinity seem commonplace; yet, there is much left to be done—as Haralson's own article shows.

[79] Baldwin's text is one that decidedly parallels the course of James's psychological experience in *The American Scene*. In chapter three, I discuss this in more depth.

[80] "Stranger" 128. In this instance, "myth" may be defined in the sense of storytelling, for Baldwin's skin is a symbol that, in its constructed absence of worth, defines certain aspects of American identity; therefore, it gives him a "status," however degrading, in the creation of that identity.

[81] Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues," 1957, *Going to Meet the Man* (New York: Vintage, 1995), 103 and 118.

[82] Ibid. 131, 104.

[83] Ibid. 106.

[84] This moment was another that led me back to James. Recall Baldwin's description of his admiration for James (Leeming, "Interview," 47); he was inspired by James's ability to understand that there was a "frozen place somewhere" inside the American that prevented him from seeing past his own projected ideas of worth and identity to the validity of others' existences. Merged with the intra-racial separation that naturally followed the privileging of all things associated with whiteness in America, this is precisely what Baldwin exposes in "Sonny's Blues."

[85] Ibid. 139.

[86] Ibid. 137.

[87] Ibid. 134.

[88] Baldwin's allusion to *Isaiah* 5: 17-21 serves dual purposes here. First, it signifies Baldwin's roots as a preacher and locates this text in a larger and longitudinal trope within African-American literature—one that equates the suffering of African-Americans with that of the Israelites. Secondly, though the biblical verses indicate that Israel will drink no more from this cup, Baldwin's text, in fact, suggests that the "only thing that doesn't change is trouble." The cup of scotch and milk atop the piano that Sonny is playing, a mixture of cloudy white and transparent brown, is a physical representation of that trouble, and Sonny is playing to cope with it by whatever means he can.

[89] "Sonny's Blues" 137. The mention of "riding it like a man" recalls the rhetoric of masculine normalcy and shows Baldwin pushing against the imposed boundaries of masculine expression.

[90] Baldwin, *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* (New York: Dial, 1968), 234-35.

[91] I would be remiss if I did not note that the African man was just that—a *man*—prior to his arrival in the Americas. He could head a household, provide for his family, select a wife, choose to procreate, and practice other rights of "man's estate." Inarguably, with his arrival and enslavement, he was figuratively castrated, for while he was allowed to put his maleness to use (as breeder, as 'buck'), he was no longer afforded the legal rights or psychic certainty of manhood. I am also reminded of Robyn Wiegman's *American Anatomies*; in it, she argues that though it is contradictory, the male slave was "ungendered" so that he did not have to be recognized as male in the patronymic American construct; however, his body was also feminized, which presents a startlingly contradictory vision of the black male self.

[92] Baldwin returned to this theme numerous times. Most notably, in *Another Country* (New York: Dial, 1962), Baldwin's primary African-American male character, Rufus, commits suicide before the end of chapter one. A musician, he is embittered by his emasculation; unlike Sonny, he plays the drums, and Baldwin uses them to play up the near tribal rage that Rufus feels. The "roaring in his head . . . and intolerable pain in his chest" reflects the cacophonous voices and pressure in a city that screams to him that he means nothing (46). He searches everywhere for an identity that is whole, in

homosexuality and heterosexuality, in interracial and intra-racial relationships, but he quickly becomes lost. Though Baldwin did not condone the sexual violence with which he makes his wife, Leona (a white woman), and his former lover, Eric (a southern white man) pay for the sins of those who unman him, Baldwin did offer his explanation of why this "roaring" and "pain" are too much for him to handle. Rufus says, "Sometimes I listen to those boats on the river—and I think wouldn't it be nice to get on a boat again and go someplace away from all these nowhere people, where *a man could be treated like a man* . . . You got to fight with the landlord because the landlord's *white*! You got to fight with the elevator boy because the motherfuckers *white*. Any bum on the Bowery can shit all over you because maybe he can't hear, can't see, can't walk, can't fuck—but he's *white*!" (68). Albeit in far more colorful language, Baldwin hearkens back to Douglass, DuBois, Dunbar, even Wright, in capturing the historical dilemma for a black male—anyone with white skin is already always more of a man than he is in the societal psyche.

[93] "Freaks" 819.

[94] "Stranger" 134.

[95] *Roderick Hudson* 374. The text was James's second novel, but his first published in book form. James wrote *Watch and Ward* in 1871; it was published serially in *The Atlantic Monthly* by then editor William Dean Howells, from August through December. James later revised the novel heavily and published it in book form in 1878.

[96] See Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood* and Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981).

[97] *Roderick Hudson* 375.

[98] "Stranger" 134.

[99] *Roderick Hudson* 376-77.

[100] Contemporary readers might consider sexual deviance in reading this passage. Because Rowland has never expressed interest in a woman, or as passionately pursued female love and companionship as Roderick perceives that he should, Roderick assumes that he is not a normal man. Rowland later suggests that in being so harsh with Roderick, "All [he] wished to do was defend [him]self against the charge that [he was] an abnormal being" (378). The word "abnormal" when read in conjunction with the word "ignoble" suggests something sordid, unnatural, or aberrant; if considered in relation to William's later treatment of the "unnatural" (see "Instinct"), this moment may be read in a 'queer' light. James, however, did not go so far.

[101] "The Beast in the Jungle," *The Portable Henry James*, ed. John Auchard (New York: Penguin, 2004), 257.

[102] *The American* (New York: Oxford U P, 1999), 18-19.

[103] Haralson 478.

[104] "Preface," *The Ambassadors* 41.

[105] *The Ambassadors* 72.

[106] Carnegie, "Wealth."

[107] James's borrowing of the name "Louis Lambert" for his title character, Louis Lambert Strether, was telling. Louis Lambert, the title character in Balzac's novel, was not only sexually impotent, but also celibate. He was the penultimate symbol of

performance anxiety within the masculine construct. Strether was his symbolic counterpart who had to learn to define himself rather than allow others to do so.

[108] *The Ambassadors* 55.

[109] "Preface," *The Ambassadors,* 46.

[110] Ibid. 33-34. The word "reparation" seems to suggest not only his own repair, but also, perhaps, some form of restitution.

[111] "Freaks" 815.

[112] The way in which I read "class" is very similar to Dwight A. McBride in *Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality* (New York: NYU P, 2005). Upon leaving for college his mother cautioned him against losing his "soul," his "identity" in his departure. He writes, "In retrospect, this was, I think my mother's way of expressing a conflict that I was to come to know all to well in my life—a desire for capital, on the one hand, and the conflicting experience of the desire for capital, on the one hand, and the conflicting experience of the "whiteness" of capital on the other. In our world, where capital and the possibility of class ascension are concerned, African Americans are taught the same ideological lessons that their poor white and immigrant counterparts learn. The difference between them on this score is that African Americans have to come up against the whiteness of capital in U.S. Society" (26-27). What McBride points to in this instance is the filtering of class through a racial lens. Where "poor whites" or, perhaps, Anglo-European immigrants may be privy to a larger portion of the "whiteness of capital," the African American is not. The point, however, is that there are *degrees* of access to racial capital, and those degrees can translate into notions of class.

[113] "To E. L. Godkin," 22 Jan. 1882, *HJ: A Life in Letters*, 135. I include this instance not to position James as a supremacist, but to contend that he emerges from the United States with a very keen sense of the American man as the prototypical Western one—Anglo-Saxon or Nordic in ancestry. Very early, we see him conflate constructions of race with ethnicity, intimating that the Jew, the Bohemian, the Italian, and the Spaniard are not *white*. See Blair, *Race and Nation*, for further discussion of the importance of Anglo-Saxon performance in racial production. See also Richard Dyer, *White* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

[114] A brief explanation of my use of the terms 'race' and 'ethnicity' seems important here. I do not use them interchangeably with James because I am unaware that that there is a difference between the two. Instead, I use them in this manner because the conflation of ethnicity and race was standard in his time (and sometimes still seems to be). An American was perceived as someone of Anglo-Saxon or Nordic ancestry. Later in this section, James uses the word "African" for Negro. For him, the question was one of ancestry and physical appearance.

[115] James, *The American* (New York: Oxford UP, 1999), 360. In the novel, the focus is the class differences between Christopher Newman and Claire de Cintre, as well as the tension between old world/old money and new world/new money. However, the mention of whiteness shifts the focus a bit and should make us question what status means in the novel and what exactly a "white man" gains being apart from America.

[116] Tristram's naming is very interesting. James's Mr. Tristram is resonant of Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* in whose narrative the crisis of manhood, the gender

struggle of the marriage/property agreement, and the gender politics of birth in the 18th century play out. Sterne's own uneasiness with masculinity is well treated. Because of it, one might surmise that in pairing the words "white" and "man," James drew upon the dual anxiety of retaining manhood and race amidst forces that could change the understanding of both. See Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean, "Of Forceps, Patents, and Paternity: *Tristram Shandy*," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 23.4 (Summer 1990): 522-543.

[117] Henry James, *The Europeans* (Boston: Houghton, Osgood, and Co., 1878), 22 Mar. 2003, 5 Jan. 2007 <http://www2.newpaltz.edu/~hathaway/european.html.>

[118] I think here most vividly of Frederick Douglass' description of his grandmother being left alone to die in the wilderness in his *Narrative*. Though Douglass' rendering was far weightier thematically than I discuss here, the African-American slave woman who cared for generations of the master's white children, often sacrificing the care of her own (or seeing them sold away), is the historical precursor to such caricatures as Aunt Jemima or "Mammy" in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*. Nancy Green, the first Aunt Jemima, was heavily marketed after the 1893 Chicago Exposition, where she made pancakes, sang songs, and told tales of the 'Old South' to vast crowds outside of the 'White City.' What was perceived as an innocuous marketing campaign actually keyed into the need to *imagine* the old slave woman in exactly this light. For further discussion of the prevalence of ethnic caricatures in American Realism, see Henry B. Wonham, *Playing the Races* (New York: Oxford UP, 2004).

[119] From Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman" (1851) to Linda Brent's (Harriet Jacobs') *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) to Pauline Hopkins' *Contending*

Forces (1900) and beyond, African-American women authors used rhetorical strategies designed not only to write themselves into the master American narrative, but also to question the constructions that I suggest here (both of which rely on perceptions of her sexuality or ability to sexually reproduce). Their blackness immediately signified their status as mammy or whore. Just as skin color seemed to rob the African-American male of his manhood in the societal psyche, so too did skin rob the African-American female of protected womanhood, however limited that power was in each time period.

[120] *The Bostonians*, ed. R.D. Gooder (New York: Oxford, 1998), 9. Think also of the moment when Basil's "antagonist," the police officer, "enters into his humour" and says, "I guess Ms. Chancellor isn't her nigger" (419). James treated Basil complexly. While there are elements of his gentlemanly nature that James seemed to celebrate, he also disturbed that gentlemanliness with references to his skewed moral center. The use of the word "nigger" taps into the Southern racial model in which he was reared. James made the word sound so much uglier here, though, by linking its racial negativity to the gender constructions at play between Olive Chancellor and Basil Ransom. The juxtaposition of the suffragists plight with the need for racial transformation that James, perhaps unwittingly, effected in this moment, points to the same juxtaposition in the larger national psyche. More importantly, however, the remote suggestion of Olive's "nigger[ishness]" reinforces the perception of her aberrance, for she represents a masculinized female presence that is a threat to Basil—particularly in his relationship with Verena. I suggest that James linked the "others" in this moment to show that not only gender constructions, but also racial constructions were impediments to a "free

223

union" (79). For a keen treatment of Basil's masculine anxiety linked with race, see Leland S. Person, "In the Closet with Frederick Douglass: Reconstructing Masculinity in *The Bostonians*," *The Henry James Review* 16.3 (1995): 292-98.

[121] For further consideration of silences in James, see John Auchard, *Silence in Henry James*: *The Heritage of Symbolism and Decadence* (University Park: Penn State U P, 1986). For an in-depth study of James's incorporation of race, see Sara Blair. Blair addresses James's awareness of racial and national identity performance. She argues that "borrowing from [performative] arenas of racial production and exchange such figures as the atavistic Italian, the Negro servant, the culturally exhausted European, the Jewish usurer, and even the 100 percent American, James constructs a literary 'internationalism' through which definitively national and racial feelings, aspirations, and characterologies are elaborated and transfigured"(3). Her argument sheds light on the "agenda" of an artist often labeled little more than an aesthete. In effect, she argues that James used "type" to resist and refigure typology. Though key, her argument does not pay full homage to the very specific role that gender plays in these racial "elabora[tions] and transfigur[ations]." Blair's discussion of Anglo-Saxonism and cultural performance is essential, though, for the power of white manhood lies not only in the ability of its perpetuators to define what the traits of a man (read white man) and a woman (read white woman) are to be, but also in their ability to institutionalize these traits as norms.

[122] Ross Posnock, "Henry James and the Limits of Historicism," *The Henry James Review* 16.3 (Fall 1995): 276.

[123] Though James had a broad collection of names in his notebook, and because of it, the focus on the naming of characters is often less fruitful with James than with other authors, Verena's naming is intriguing. Verena, whose name is German for 'sacred wisdom', is ideologically in a space more pure and transcendent than those who surround her. Tarrant is also an interesting choice; Welsh for "thunder," it suits her ability to rouse the masses and "wake up the attention." Alternately, her last name ironically links her to a rather prominent Virginia slave-owning family—the Tarrants—and a well-known slave whose service in the American Revolution was only partially rewarded. Though Selah Tarrant in the novel is a "detestable carpetbagger" according to Basil, his manipulation of Verena calls to mind the misuse of Ceasar Tarrant, a Virginia-born slave who became a revolutionary war hero and was renowned for his "coolness under pressure," his "ability to rally the men" and his "skill in weathering attacks." He was returned to slavery after the war, and, later, the Virginia General Assembly emancipated him for his service, though his wife and three children remained enslaved. He was able to purchase the freedom of his wife and son, but his other two children remained in slavery until after his death in 1797. See Thulani Davis, *My Confederate Kinfolk* (New York, Basic: 2006), 56-58. See L.P. Jackson, "Virginia Negro Soldiers and Seamen in the American Revolution," *The Journal of Negro History* 27.3 (Jul. 1942): 247-287. See also Leland S. Person, "In the Closet with Frederick Douglass."

[124] *The Bostonians* 236.

[125] I might also note here that at the same time, he reinforced it in an intra-gendered way. In many ways, Olive places Verena in the role of 'perfect hostess' for the

Woman's Movement in much the same way that a husband might consign his wife to this role in the domestic sphere.

[126] I borrow the word "disesteemed" from Baldwin's "Stranger in the Village."

[127] See Joanne L. Goodwin, "Bigger than a Ballot Box," *Journal of Women's History* 11.1 (Spring 1999): 219-228; Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage* (New York: Cornell U P, 1978) and *Women's Suffrage and Women's Rights* (New York: NYU P, 1997); and Sally Roesch Wagner, *A Time of Protest: Suffragists Challenge the Republic, 1870-1877*. (New York: Sky Carrier, 1988). Roesch writes, "For example, the fifteenth amendment, which excluded women from suffrage, had initially been proposed by the suffragist lecturer, Anna Dickinson. When the initial vision of universal rights [of citizenship] began to appear hopeless, radicals like Charles Redmond, who had initially opposed the amendments, reluctantly came to believe that it was too much to ask that the difficulties of the women's rights question be incorporated into those necessarily belonging to the question of Negro suffrage. Redmond was joined by Abbey Kelly Foster, whose presence as the only woman on the Business Committee had split the American Anti-Slavery Society over the issue of woman's rights in 1840. Foster was now arguing that woman's rights should come *second*. Her husband Stephen, however disagreed, using this logic: We must demand that the national right of suffrage shall be conceded to the black man, and therefore to the black woman, and therefore, since we abjure distinctions on ground of color, to the white woman" (8-9). In this way, the rights of the white woman suffragist became the third priority rather than the second, and the question of the African-American's status in the country became volatile with the passage

of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments. Roesch also notes, "Political conditions for women worsened with the passage of the fourteenth amendment . . . which used the word "male" three times in connection with citizenship, raising the obvious question of whether or not women were even considered citizens" (38). James seemed to be echoing this question, linking notions of freedom, citizenship, gender, and race in one.

[128] *The Bostonians* 25.

[129] In addition to the example discussed in this paragraph, I point also to "The Real Thing" (*Complete Stories 1892-98*, *LOA*), 34. James narrator describes Mr. and Mrs. Monarch in a way that melds James's focus on the masculine body subtly with the meat market mentality of the auction block. He writes, "I was so amused by them that, to get more of it, I did my best to take their point of view; and though it was an embarrassment to find myself appraising physically, as if they were animals on hire or useful blacks, a pair whom I should have expected to meet only in one of the relations in which criticism is tacit. I looked at Mrs. Monarch judicially enough to be able to exclaim, after a moment, with conviction: "Oh yes, a lady in a book!" She was singularly like a bad illustration . . . [The Major,] I could take his measure at a glance—he was six feet two and a perfect gentleman. It would have paid any club in process of formation and in want of a stamp to engage him as a salary to stand in the principal window." Notably uncomfortable with the direction that his mind takes him, the narrator's description merges the shame of ogling and external assessment with the problematic conflation of an animal and "useful black" (a phrase that implies the inutility of others). James both undercut and reinforced whiteness while attending to the image of external masculine

perfection. See also Sara Blair's or Ross Posnock's readings of James's unsettling of ethnic norms and purity in *The Princess Casamassima* (1886). Such instances reflect James's growing discomfort with learned racial norms.

[130] For a thorough study of the role of performance in perpetuating gender norms, see Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

[131] Michel Foucault, "Preface," *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1994), xx.

[132] Respectively, these characters are Mr. Touchett, Ralph Touchett, Caspar Goodwood, Lord Warburton, and Gilbert Osmond.

[133] "Stranger" 121, 129.

[134] Ibid. 119.

Chapter One

[1] Baldwin, "Freaks," 828-29.

[2] Baldwin, "Autobiographical Notes," *Collected Essays*, 8. See also "Disturber of the Peace: James Baldwin—An Interview," 1969, with Eve Auchincloss and Nancy Lynch, in *Conversations with James Baldwin*, 81-82. Though I understand that a current trend in critical race theory is to move "beyond race," I contend that Baldwin addressed race because he "[couldn't] find another term besides Negro to say what [he meant]" (81). A tangible symbol of otherness, the term "negro" (or one of its variants) was used to create order and prevent turmoil in an insecure white psyche. The "vocabulary" of "black and white" was the "tragedy" of American existence for him, and he felt that though there

might be terms beyond that "vocabulary," not "much [would] happen except disaster to change things" (82). In short, for him, the American was too bound by racial rhetoric and ideology to get "beyond" it. See also Gene Jarrett, *African American Literature Beyond Race*.

[3] Baldwin, rpt. in Richard Goldstein, "Go the Way Your Heart Beats: An Interview with James Baldwin," *James Baldwin: The Legacy*, ed. Quincy Troupe (New York: Touchstone, 1989), 178.

[4] *Talking at the Gates: A Life of James Baldwin* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1991), 89. Campbell talks about the embryonic stages of Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*, providing its alternate titles "One for My Baby," "A Fable for Our Children," and "Ignorant Armies." He notes that in announcing the text to his agent, Baldwin made a comparison between his unfinished novel and Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, but saw "his heroine as being closer to Isabel Archer in James's *Portrait of a Lady* than to Hemingway's Brett Ashley." Campbell also notes that in that early announcement, Baldwin did not disclose the novel's homosexual love affair "not because he wished to hide the fact; simply because he did not yet know it himself." Initially, the novel featured a man and a woman ("a younger, unstable actor" and "a thirty-ish American divorcée"). While the earlier version would give insights to the power struggle inherent in gender relations, the final novel became the highly internalized battle for gender primacy that I discuss here.

[5] *Abercrombie* 48.

[6] *Conversations* 239.

[7] See "Freaks" 819. I discuss this quotation in detail in my introduction.

[8] David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness* (New York: Verso, 1991), 3. See also Malini Johar Schueller *US Orientalisms* (1998) and Edward Watts and Malini Johar Schueller *Messy Beginnings* (2003). In each, the authors argue convincingly the centrality of racial conflicts to the beginnings of Anglo-European colonization. I also point again to Julian Carter's *The Heart of Whiteness*.

[9] In chapter three, I argue that what a white man is, or has imagined himself to be in relationship to 'others' and his nation becomes the central question that James must face.

[10] *Giovanni* 3.

[11] Though there is very little discussion of it in Baldwin scholarship, I find it symbolic that Baldwin named his title character David. Baldwin described the bitterness of his stepfather, David Baldwin, as not only a reaction against white America, but also a testament to the self-loathing that that he had imbibed because of it. Additionally, his stepfather, like many African-American males was an extreme homophobe. It is as if Baldwin was attempting to free himself from the stigma of homosexuality, the weight of race, and the disapproval of his father figure, metaphorically, through this character.

[12] *Portrait* 6.

[13] Baldwin's inclusion of the passage has greater resonance given racial violence and American foreign policy during the first decades of the twentieth century, the beginning of the Cold War, and the normalization (and celebration) of whiteness in multiple arenas—from print to radio to television.

[14] *Giovanni* 4.

[15] Ibid. 4.

[16] Ibid. 4.

[17] Carter 1-41.

[18] *Giovanni* 6.

[19] See Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Culture* (New York: Rutgers, 1987) and Lefkowitz and Rogers, *Black Athena Revisited* (Chapel Hill, U of NC P, 1996). Since the publication of *Black Athena*, the debate over the "Afroasiatic" roots of Greek culture has been waged tirelessly by Eurocentrists and Afrocentrists in multiple disciplines (seemingly to no avail and with no compromise). What Baldwin likely would have been reliant upon (though questioning its validity) is that history which dominates the history books—the fact that in appearance, Hellenic Aryans were descendants of conquerors from the north, "Indo-European speaking Hellenes." "Hella" then, read here as a singular version of the word "Hellas" (or Greeks) is directly resonant of a culture famed not only for its decadence, but also for its prevalence of and use of homosexuality as an educational tool among young men. See Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1. and K.J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (New York: MJS Books, 1997). Additionally, though there is ancillary evidence of early Greek matriarchies, and while Greek goddesses such as Athena were revered, and women of royal blood may have been afforded limited rights because of it, women had relatively inferior social roles (at least as presented in the extant writings of males). See, for instance, Aristotle's *Politics*, Book I, in which he writes, "Again, the male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; and

the one rules, and the other is ruled; this principle, of necessity, extends to all mankind" (http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.1.one.html)

[20] *Giovanni* 6.

[21] Though the sexualized nature of this relationship is far removed from the Victorian silence of James, echoes of Warburton, Goodwood, Marcher, Winterbourne, Strether, even Mr. Brand and others of James's most "obtuse" male characters abound in Baldwin's treatment of David.

[22] *Giovanni* 4-5.

[23] Ibid. 9.

[24] At the suggestion of one of my colleagues, Dr. J. James Scott, I have deepened this portion of my reading of David; Dr. Scott felt that I gave David far too much credit. Incorporating the language in which Toni Morrison discusses Cholly in *The Bluest Eye* (New York: Plume, 1970), I have found it fruitful to examine the *type* of freedom that David is discussing. While Baldwin was clearly writing against the blind freedom that David points to, there is simultaneously something quite alluring in it. Morrison writes in her essay, "Home," "in all freedoms (especially stolen ones) lies danger" (4). It is as if by situating this tale in France, Baldwin took us through two of his own expectations in going to Paris: 1. That he would be so immersed in Parisian life that he would forget that which constricts him; or 2. That he would be able to escape the darkness that he saw in himself and *on* himself. Baldwin, like his character, found that the freedom that he experienced actually heightened his awareness of his difference, making him conscious of how fully he had imbibed others' expectations of him.

[25] I do not intend to suggest here that heterosexuality or homosexuality, in itself, is a role. There are biological factors underlying each. Moreover, David does not seem to be sharing a sexual connection with Hella only until something better comes along. Instead, because David is so bound by the heterosexual trap inherent in white masculine construction, I am suggesting that he is playing at masculine prescriptions wholesale because it is *expected* of him, particularly under the "freedom" of a "foreign sky."

[26] *No Exit and Three Other Plays* (Vintage, 1989). In the play, Garcin utters what may be his most famous line, "L'enfer, c'est les autres." Through it, Sartre revealed what he believed was the fundamental human sin—one with which James and Baldwin would seem to concur. When a man allows his vision of himself to be dictated by those who see him, his acceptance of their distortions signals that he relinquishes the power of self-definition completely. He consigns himself to a hell of his making and of his own propagation. David, as well as James's characters—save Ralph and Isabel—are perfect examples of this sin in practice. By setting his text in Paris—a place where he ran so that he might be able to "see" himself—Baldwin may have been responding to Sartre openly here. In Sartre's text, the individuals become mirrors for one another—conduits through which one character may recognize his/her flaws. In Joey, in Giovanni, in *Giovanni's Room*, David sees himself reflected through negative (in the sense that they are not normative) images; he feels that there is nothing, but darkness (the chasm). Both Joey and Giovanni are physically "darker," weaker, and therefore, physical metaphors for the ideological darkness in which David positions homosexuality; in projecting his visions of himself onto others, David believes himself dark and abysmal in his likeness to them.

Thus, to complicate things, his "hell" is not merely "other people," but also his assessment of their value.

²⁷ *Giovanni* 5

²⁸ Ibid. 6. This moment echoes Baldwin's own thoughts in *Nobody Knows My Name*. He wrote, "In America, the color of my skin had stood between myself and me; in Europe, that barrier was down. Nothing is more desirable than to be released from an affliction, but nothing is more frightening than to be divested of a crutch. It turned out that the question of who I was not solved because I had removed myself from the social forces which menaced me—anyway, these forces had become interior, and I had dragged them across the ocean with me" (135). In *Giovanni's Room*, Baldwin applied his realization to his study of homosexuality, indicating, as I suggest, that the alienation experienced by *any* othered being has its source in the same flawed dichotomy. I will explore the release of removing to Europe more fully in my third chapter.

²⁹ Ibid. 6.

³⁰ Ibid. 6-7.

³¹ Ibid. 7-8.

³² *Portrait* 329.

³³ *Portrait* 329. In chapter two, I discuss this instance in far more detail in relation to the twinning of Ralph and Isabel.

³⁴ *Giovanni* 8.

³⁵ Ibid. 9.

³⁶ Ibid. 9.

[37] *Between Men* 711, n1. Sedgwick suggests that the term "heterosexism" is a far better term for "collective, structurally inscribed, perhaps materially based oppression" than "homosexual," which is "etymologically nonsensical." She continues to use the term "homosexual" for a number of reasons, but makes a point to articulate this view. Additionally, I would be remiss if I did not mention the fact that throughout the early years of queer theory, the combination of racial and sexual identities was often overlooked or untouched because of the multiplicity involved in the exploration of both. I do not offer that the degree of alienation is the same: only that the source of the alienation is the same. Only recently with such texts as Dwight McBride's *Black Like Us* (New York: Cleis, 2002) and *Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality in America* (2005) have the intersections of the multiple identity spaces been explored more fully.

[38] *Between Men*, excerpts rpt. in *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2000), 711.

[39] *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness in the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 52. The term "American" when used by Morrison is rather simply defined. She writes, "American means white, and Africanist people struggle to make the term applicable to themselves with ethnicity and hyphen after hyphen after hyphen" (47).

[40] *Giovanni* 8.

[41] The use of darkness as metaphor for homosexuality is not unique to Baldwin. It is biblical—a fact that held great weight for Baldwin, who's writing communicated his training for the pulpit. Ephesians 5:11 talks of "judg[ing] acts of darkness" while Romans

I counts homosexuality among these acts. For the author, this was a heavy burden to bear. Because of it, he probed the margins of this "darkness" and "light," for its absoluteness rendered him a near non-entity. This theme recurs in Baldwin's works, for he reminded his readers frequently of the entwining of race and sexuality in America. Think again of Baldwin's southern, white male character, Eric, in *Another Country* (1962). The product of a wealthy southern family, there is the suggestion that in his first homosexual experience, ironically with a black male, not only his manhood, but also his racial purity is stained (see preface, n. 4).

[42] *Giovanni* 8.

[43] David Bergman, *Gaiety Transfigured*: *Gay Self-Representation in American Literature* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1991), 30.

[44] Bergman 30.

[45] Susan Sontag, "Illness as Metaphor" (1978). In chapter two, I discuss Ralph Touchett and Mr. Touchett within Sontag's paradigm; within *Portrait*, they are "in-valid[ated]" because they are "invalids." But, James questioned the validity of such an exclusive masculine model.

[46] *Giovanni* 10. The notion of "Rough[ness]," of taking no prisoners in this masculine war, is reminiscent of Theodore Roosevelt's rhetoric of masculine 'normalcy.' It is also significant in light of Joseph McCarthy's bulldog-like tenacity in overcoming what he perceived was an invasive communist threat.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid. 15.

[49] Ibid. 10.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid. 14-15. Reading this line, it seems a great irony that Baldwin was to be a preacher.

[52] Ibid. 15.

[53] Ibid. 10-11

[54] I use "hysteria" here in its etymological context, as in hysteros, or womb. That David later fears becoming feminine, fears becoming a "housewife," and likens his latent homosexuality to a disease festering within him, is indicative of a number of early diagnoses and treatments for homosexuality. Though the use of Freud's "Oedipal Complex" may seem a stretch, David's fear/desire for his mother's love takes on a very sexual bent within his dream. The ways in which he describes not only the "cavern [that] opened in his mind" during his episode with Joey, and the corridor leading to Giovanni's room are similar not only in content, but in intensity.

[55] At the end of the novel, Giovanni is sentenced and thrown into the dark on his way to execution by guillotine. Near the end of this chapter, I discuss the metaphorical significance of this moment in greater detail.

[56] *Matthew* 8:19.

[57] *Giovanni* 64.

[58] See *Giovanni* 10-11 for a review of the mother-dream sequence and its implications. See XVI of *Portrait*, as well as the scene where Isabel bids her "final goodbye" to Caspar Goodwood. Although I do not have room to discuss the media's

perpetuation of dominant ideology, I thought it worth noting that when the 2005

Academy Award nominees for Best Picture were revealed, and Ang Lee's *Brokeback*

Mountain was among them, Greg Jarrett, newscaster for the bastion of conservative

television journalism, Fox News, reported that the Best Picture nominees were "films

dealing homosexuality, homicide bombings, and political assassination." He went on to

say the words that scrolled below him on the screen, "Hollywood walks on the darker

side," that "Hollywood [was] going with a lot of darker themes this year . . . courting

some controversy" (*Fox News Live*, 5 Mar. 2006). That the "darkness" of homosexuality

is associated with "homicide bombings" and "political assassination" is telling, for it

signals the depths to which the "other" is relegated in a society dominated by the white

male psyche. It is almost as if Jarrett and the Fox News powers-that-be were discussing

homosexuality as the "homicide" or "assassination" of manhood.

[59] Ibid. 84.

[60] Some might find David's characterization more akin to James's John Marcher

in "The Beast in the Jungle" than to any character within *Portrait*. And, on the surface

this might be true, for David believes that his homosexuality is, in fact, the "beast" within

him. However, the structure of the novel, the way in which Baldwin unravels white male

consciousness so adeptly before even addressing David's homosexuality, the presence of

the framed gender space, the twinning between David's perceived aberrant side and

Giovanni, and the clear articulation of what must be sacrificed in order to uphold a male

ideal links this text far more deeply to *Portrait* than the surface suggests.

[61] *Giovanni* 88.

[62] See "Freaks" 819.

[63] Ibid. 138.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid. 139.

[66] Ibid. 140.

[67] Ibid. 141.

[68] In many ways, David's characterization is reminiscent of Eliot's Prufrock—the concern for appearance, the anxiousness over his performed self. I also see here that much like Gilbert Osmond is a consummate performer of high taste and manly dominance despite his exterior, David is attempting, at all costs, to act the man that his exterior implies.

[69] *Giovanni* 142. Giovanni is, in a sense, like Ralph, making Osmond uncomfortable with the transparency of his pretenses.

[70] Ibid. 141.

[71] David Adams Leeming, "An Interview with James Baldwin on Henry James," *Henry James Review* 8.1 (Fall 1986): 47. Full discussion of the "frozen place" may be found in the introduction.

[72] *Giovanni* 142.

[73] By allowing David, who is in some ways the purveyor of masculine ideology to voice these words, Baldwin tapped into feminist criticisms against the cult of domesticity. David equates his sexuality with womanhood (as conceived historically). He has shown that he likens female sexuality to an abyss. Here, he suggests that Giovanni wants to keep

him in a childlike state of dependence and reinforces his complete adherence to Western models of the masculine and feminine self.

[74] *Giovanni* 142.

[75] The same construct that others a whole segment of David's self, others those of different races. As Baldwin wrote in "The Crusade of Indignation" (1956), "a very crucial difficulty encountered in interracial communication [comes] in attempting to discover not *what*, but *who* the Negro is" (611). Racial ideology made Baldwin a "what," often negating the possibility that he could be a "who."

[76] Richard Dyer, *White* (New York: Routledge, 1997). Though Dyer's work deals more with filmic, cultural productions, his efforts to read white imagery in film, particularly, are quite helpful to me. He frequently points to the desire among white filmmakers to put forth the supremacy of whiteness—in every instance from having the othered character die while the white one survives to the need to eradicate the alternate presence so that purity remains in tact. His project opens quite a few doors, for as he notes in "The Matter of Whiteness," "as long as race is something applied to non-white peoples, they/we function as a human norm. Other people are raced; we are just people" (1). Coco Fusco echoes this point.

[77] I discuss this in detail in chapter two.

[78] *Giovanni* 168.

[79] Ibid. 168.

[80] Ibid. 10.

[81] *A Small Boy and Others* 101. I point again to the segment of the introduction in which I discuss this visit. See also Gandal 118.

[82] Ibid. 168.

[83] *Portrait* 441. I discuss this segment in greater detail in chapter two.

[84] I am reminded of Faulkner's dehumanizing, romantic depictions of African-Americans as symbols of nobility and endurance. But, I am also reminded of a larger tradition of authors in American literature who have both created and resisted the image of the figurative black/brown beings dying as a result of their roles as instructors to whites on what it means to be human, to what it means "to say yes to life" (*Giovanni* 5). With Giovanni (and Joey to a lesser extent), Baldwin both incorporated and resisted this image. Yes, Giovanni is the means by which another conception of masculinity is conveyed, and yes, if David accepts this gift, he could be whole. However, Giovanni will die tragically, and David still will not know how to live.

[85] Freud and Lacan suggest that an early fear of castration is an integral part of our childhood, psychosexual development. When a young child with "primitive desires," in comes face to face with the laws and conventions of society, he will tend to align prohibition from fulfilling these desires with castration. From Sigmund Freud, *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1953-74).

[86] *Giovanni* 169.

[87] James, "*The Portrait of a Lady*," *Complete Notebooks*, 216.

[88] "Home," *The House that Race Built*, ed. Wahneema Lubiano (New York: Vintage, 1998), 12. Morrison uses words from her work, *Jazz*, to articulate what it would mean to have a "home" that exists apart from racial binaries. I use it here because it so eloquently reinforces the need for open "doors."

[89] *Giovanni* 8.

[90] *Abercrombie* 48.

[91] Socrates, "The Apology of Socrates," in Plato *Dialogues.* Baldwin quotes Socrates in the "Introduction" to *Nobody Knows My Name* (1961), rpt. in *Collected Essays*, 135. Baldwin penned, "I know that self-delusion, in the service of no matter what small or lofty cause, is a price no writer can afford. His subject is himself and the world and it requires every ounce of stamina he can summon to attempt to look on himself and the world as they are" (135-36). In looking through and at David, Baldwin examined himself and the psychological fragmentation that accompanies subjectivity to a flawed model of racial and gendered identity.

Chapter Two

[1] "Matilde Serao" (*North Atlantic*, Mar. 1901), rpt. in *Critical Muse,* 346. In this review, James appeared to undermine his well-known "scribbling women" comment, insinuating that women writers in the 1890s were the authors who opened gateways to interrogating the softer side of the male sex. The balance of softness with the hard, adventurous masculinity featured in novels by male writers was precisely what James desired.

² See Sarah Wadsworth, "Innocence Abroad: Henry James and the Re-Invention of the American Woman Abroad," *Henry James Review* 22.2 (Spring 2001): 107-127. Wadsworth links Henry James's attention to the "International American Woman" to a revision of "a fictional form pioneered by European women such as Madame de Staël and Anna Jameson and subsequently adapted by three generations of American women writers, from Lydia Sigourney to Edith Wharton"—tales (some intensely melodramatic) of American women abroad that were geared toward a "predominantly female middle-class readership" (Wadsworth 108). Wadsworth argues that James's 1879 "Daisy Miller: A Study" is a masculine revamping of stories in the vein of Mary Murdoch Mason's 1875 "Mae Madden: A Story." In short, Wadsworth argues that it is James's eye for a marketable theme and his initial novelistic elitism that led him to this subject matter. She insists that James took it upon himself to fix that which was wrong with the tales being told by women, something that his early criticism of these tales clearly exposes. In a letter "To Edgar Fawcett" dated 7 June 1891, James seems to support her belief, for he wrote, "Women aren't literary in any substantial sense of the term, & their being 'fashionable' or 'stylish'—nauseating words—doesn't make them so" (*A Life in Letters* 240). Though his statement seems a direct contradiction of the earlier quotation included in this piece, I argue that in many instances, there is a tension between James's understanding of the force with which masculinity is wielded as a social and political power tool (and its lunacy) and the knowledge that this is the realm in which he had to exist, create and, hopefully, prosper. Additionally, much has been made of the fact that James criticism of texts written by women was often harsh and that by the mid-1860's,

much to his chagrin, he was enmeshed in a literary culture dominated by women authors (See Alfred Habegger's *Henry James and 'The Woman Business'* (1989) and Leon Edel's criticism). Clearly, James was well aware of the movement for women's suffrage and was not unaware of its powerful affect on America, seeing it as the defining social issue of the time. Of what would become *The Bostonians* (1886)*,* he wrote in his notebooks, "I wished to write a very *American* tale, a tale very characteristic of our social conditions, and I asked myself what was the most salient and peculiar point in our social life. The answer was: the situation of women, the decline of the sentiment of sex, the agitation on their behalf" (See *The Complete Notebooks*, "Boston, April 8th, 1883," 19-20).

[3] For a discussion of James's feelings about what George Frederickson has called "the inner Civil War," see Kim Townsend's *Manhood at Harvard* (1996). Think again of William labeling him "queer" and William's belief that he was the "superior" man; countless biographers and scholars help to prove that James was locked in a masculine "civil war" that it was neither in his power, or perhaps will, to win.

[4] See Kelly Cannon's *Henry James and Masculinity* (New York: St. Martin's, 1994).

[5] Henry James, "Preface," *The Portrait of a Lady* (New York: Modern Library Edition, 2002), xxvi.

[6] Ibid. xxiii.

[7] Ibid. xxiv.

[8] Ibid. xxviii.

<superscript>9</superscript> For further discussion of James's weighted silences, as well as a pointed treatment of the marriage between Isabel and Gilbert Osmond and its implications at the fin de siécle, see John Auchard, *Silence in Henry James*: *The Heritage of Symbolism and Decadence* (University Park: Penn State U P, 1986), 55-84.

<superscript>10</superscript> Ostensibly, James's consciousness of male experiences and his desire to see the mindset studied and questioned were clearly recognizable by this point. For instance, in an 1884 letter to Alphonse Daudet, James expressed his desire for the male partner in *Sappho* to be more "lit up" so that "what he went through—with regard to still more personal and intimate experience than his sexual adventures with Fanny", "to the softening of his resolution and the slackening of his spirit." We are struck by the fact that it is the male consciousness—in absence of his "[hetero] sexual adventures"--that James wished to see further developed. It is the reason behind the "softening of his resolution and slackening of his spirit"—both attributes seemingly rather unmanly—that James wishes to see more fully explained. Sappho herself is admirably rendered, but for James, there was a need to see the inner working of the male's psyche. He writes, "Je vous avouerai que je trouve le jeune homme un peu sacrifié—comme etude et comme recherché—sa figure me paraissant moins éclairé—en comparaison de celle de la femme—qu'il ne lae faudrait pour l'intérêt moral—la valeur tragique. J'aurais voulu que vous nous eussiez fait voir davantage par où il a passé—en matière d'expérience plus personelle et plus intime encore que les coucheries avec Fanny—en matière de rammollissement de volonté e de relâchement d'âme. En un mot, le drame ne se passé peut-être pas assez dans l'âme et dans la conscience de Jean Gaussin" (*Life in Letters*

159). Most notably, his complaint was that there was very little of the personality of Jean Gaussin, that the "drama does not happen, perhaps, enough in the psyche of Jean Gaussin."

[11] *The Trial of Curiosity: Henry James, William James, and the Challenge of Modernity* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991), 16.

[12] "To Jane Dalzell Finlay Hill," 15 June 1879, *Henry James: A Life in Letters*, ed. Philip Horne (New York: Viking, 1999), 105. In this response to a critic of the text, James wrote, Isabel "is intended to throw light on the American mind alone & its way of taking things." She is the vehicle through which we learn the American mind—primarily a masculine-inspired one.

[13] Just five years later in 1886, James would put the following words into *The Bostonians'* Basil Ransom's mouth: "The whole generation is womanized; the masculine tone is passing out of the world; it is a feminine, nervous, hysterical, chattering, canting age—an age of hollow phrases and false delicacy and exaggerated solicitudes and coddled sensibilities. The masculine character, the ability to dare and endure, to know and yet not fear reality, to look the world in the face and take it for what it is . . . that is what I want to preserve" (qtd. in Bederman 16). Ralph Touchett and Gilbert Osmond would appear to be James's precursors to this "womaniz[ation]."

[14] *Portrait* 4. All quotations in this paragraph come from this page.

[15] *Giovanni* 3-5.

[16] *Giovanni* 4.

[17] Leland S. Person. *Henry James and the Suspense of Masculinity* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2003), 88.

[18] I believe that arguably, while Warburton's lordship and Englishness are key to a certain extent, his radicalism, as well as James's intermittent descriptions of him, makes his nationality less important for my purposes than his gender. Because James associated himself with Anglo-Saxon norms and critiqued them, his identification of and undercutting of the quintessential British male type historicizes further critiques in the text.

[19] *Portrait* 5-6.

[20] Paul Keers, *A Gentleman's Wardrobe: Classic Clothes and the Modern Man* (New York: Harmony Books, 1987).

[21] *Giovanni* 3.

[22] Italics mine.

[23] *Portrait* 66.

[24] Ibid. 419.

[25] Ibid. 4-5.

[26] Ibid. 5.

[27] Ibid. 6.

[28] Ibid. 5.

[29] Ibid. 7.

[30] See Mary Chapman and Glenn Hendler, eds., *Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1999). In this

collection of essays, Chapman and Hendler work to decenter gender binaries by undermining the idea that sentimentality was only associated with women. More than a literary genre, they argue, sentimentality was central to the construction of American masculinity, for "structures of feeling" were designed around many aspects of the supposed male sphere (26).

[31] See E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993); Bederman; Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America*: *A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1997).

[32] In Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1823), though the transferred German tale is typically read as an examination of lingering anxieties from the Revolutionary War, what occurs in Irving's story is essentially a battle between male types. In it, a foppish, physically inferior man of culture and reason, Ichabod Crane, and the physically overpowering, intellectually underestimated, and calculating male, Brom Bones, vie for the affections of Katrina Van Tassel, and thus, the vast lands that she will inherit from her father; this is a battle of which *type* of man will be successful in the market economy—the neo-European and ostensibly 18th-century man of culture and reason *or* the "new" brusque, cunning, physical male specimen willing to win by any means necessary. In that text, if we believe as is suggested that the virile Brom Bones plots behind the scenes and dons the costume of the Headless Horseman deceptively to win the prize, then we can also read his ultimate victory symbolically within the context of the historical confusion over manhood. Bones goes on to marry Kristina Van Tassel

and, because a woman's property transfers to her husband, to gain her lands and wealth. Alternatively, the foppish, cultured, well-read and well-mannered, enlightenment English male disappears never to be seen or heard from again. In short, the shrewd, strong man, perhaps without conscience, is the successful male type of the market economy. and Brom's "victory" evidences a clear shift in the manly typology of the time period.

[33] The most obvious reference here is to Susan Sontag's landmark essay, "Illness as Metaphor" (1978) and her later book by the same name. Dana Luciano draws from Sontag to read Ralph Touchett's invalidism in the context of what she perceives as James's study of patriarchy and inheritance.

[34] *Portrait* 6.

[35] Note also that David perceives his homosexuality as an illness, something that "invalid[ates]" his manhood. The parallel is striking, for the manner in which David suggests that his aberrance is "in him," eating away at him inwardly in some unreachable, incurable place is resonant of the Ralph's slow, but inescapable, demise at the hands of disease (*Giovanni* 168). Because homosexuality is not an illness, and because David could revise his conception of himself to include it, Ralph's illness seems all the more tragic when read retrospectively; he, at least, recognizes and validates difference, although he does act conventionally in some instances.

[36] See James, "Preface," *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), rpt. in *The Art of the Novel* (New York: Scribner's, 1936); also quoted in Luciano below. In this "Preface," James discussed his affinity for "secondary physical weaklings and failures, one's accessory invalids . . . Ralph Touchett . . . for instance." James's own bouts with illness

are well documented, not only in scholarship, but also in his most personal letters to his brother William. From almost unbearable constipation to the myriad other ailments that seem to be side effects of it, *he* was well acquainted with the role of the "invalid." In part, it is what made him so "marginal."

[37] *Portrait* 10. Here, James evidenced the hierarchy, or degreed status, among even those outside the proposed ideal.

[38] *Portrait* 34.

[39] In my reading of David's dream of his mother's dead body in chapter one, I highlight David's fear of being swallowed whole despite his "screams" and "crie[s]" (*Giovanni* 10-11). Clearly, Baldwin adopted James's trope of the absent mother figure and increased the trauma of it—heightening its impact as he did with all else. Rather than a mother who has decided to live her own life elsewhere as has Ralph's, David's is deceased, and rather than a gaping "putrescent" womb-like figure, Mrs. Touchett is simply "the [less] motherly" of Ralph's two parents. A more masculine female usurps the traditional, nurturing, domestic angel (and subsequently, the traditional strength of the paternal figure is obliterated). The instances carry similar weight, for James, like Baldwin, queried the potential for alternate masculine expressions by pointing to the hysteria created over normative ones. In James's construction of their relationship, there is a death of old forms. In his longitudinal characterization (across characters), James suggested a fear of what precisely this gender reconfiguration would mean for all involved.

[40] Ibid. 186; Dana Luciano, "Invalid Relations: Queer Kinship in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*," *The Henry James Review* 23.2 (2002): 196-217, 198.

[41] Luciano 199.

[42] *Portrait* 197.

[43] *Portrait* 6.

[44] *Portrait* 7.

[45] Ibid. 9.

[46] "Women and Men: War Pensions for the Women," *Harper's Bazaar* (5 March 1887): 162. Higginson wrote several other pieces on "women and men," most notably "Woman and Men: The Victory of the Weak," *Harper's Bazaar* (26 Mar. 1887) and "Unmanly Manhood," *Woman's Journal* (4 Feb. 1882). Higginson is also believed to have written a scathing review of James's *Hawthorne* in *Scribner's* (Apr.1880).

[47] Recall David's railing against being a "little girl" or a housewife (for, in his perception, a real man is not a housewife) and his feeling that his playing of that role was akin to illness (*Giovanni* 88).

[48] *Portrait* 7; Bederman 7.

[49] "The Boy Who Could Not Become A Man," *Gender, Fantasy, and Realism in American Literature* (New York: Columbia UP, 1982), 267.

[50] *Giovanni* 14-15.

[51] Again, James "Preface" almost serves as an apologia, as if he had to explain his impetus to write about "a class difficult, in the individual case, to make a centre [sic] of interest"—"the Isabel Archers, and even smaller female fry, [who] insist on mattering"

(xxix; xxvi). He explained his reasons for "plac[ing] the center of the subject in the young woman's own consciousness" (though I argue with this notion). In *Giovanni,* Baldwin took an equally, if not more marginalized subject, the homosexual male, and attempted to make him "[matter]," both to himself and to his readers.

[52] *Portrait* 551. I refer also here to David's journey on the Paris-bound train early in the text. Each of these men, like the train passengers, is under a Jamesian microscope. See chapter one for further discussion of David's journey.

[53] *Portrait* 8.

[54] Ibid. 84. This moment is reminiscent of that between David's father and his sister, Ellen (discussed in chapter one). Like Ellen, Henrietta seems to question Ralph's "manhood and self-respect"—his sense of purpose (*Giovanni* 14-15). She deepens James's gender play, for she simultaneously plays the role of woman—to guide the man toward his purpose—and undermines it by outwardly and publicly criticizing his masculinity. He is *not*, in her estimation, what an American man should be, as the remainder of the paragraph shows. The moment is also reminiscent of Theodore Roosevelt's conscious construction of manhood after the turn of the century.

[55] Qtd. in Townsend, *Manhood at Harvard*, 100. Dudley A. Sargent was the leader of the physical education program at Harvard for more than 40 years during William James's tenure. He believed that men should be physically active and resolute, that activity bred "manly virtues." Compare his thoughts to those in Greenberg's *Manifest Manhood*.

[56] *Portrait* 8.

[57] Again, see Townsend, *Manhood at Harvard,* and the suggestion of homosexuality. In that study, Townsend also includes a rather in-depth reading of George Santayana and the import of the "unnatural" during the period; Santayana's homosexuality and fondness for Henry over William is well documented.

[58] *Portrait* 175. This moment comes after Ralph has asked his father to bequeath much of his inheritance to Isabel.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid. 88. I use the New York Edition of the text. The 1917 P.F. Collier version reads "too perverted a representative of human nature." This phrasing would appear to diminish the repeated allusions to manhood, particularly in reference to Ralph Touchett, that appear in the novel.

[61] I later discuss Ralph's refusal of his inheritance, his unwillingness to marry, and his 'inaction' due to his invalidism. Each diminishes his adherence to normative manhood, and he simultaneously accepts and fights the construction; Baldwin's David does not.

[62] Ibid. 9.

[63] James, "*The Bostonians,*" *Complete Notebooks,* 19-20.

[64] Ibid. 9-10.

[65] Alfred Habegger, "Henry James, Sr. and Sexual Difference," *Henry James Review* 8.1 (Fall 1986): 13.

[66] In *Giovanni's Room*, David's recognition of the "power in [Joey's] thighs, in his arms, and in his loosely curled fists" sparks his fear of the homosexual act. "Joey is a

boy," like him; their external sameness is far more menacing to David's psyche—just as later in *Portrait*, Ralph outward maleness and interior difference makes him a far greater threat to masculine power (*Giovanni* 9).

[67] James included a rather biting critique of English women in a letter to William dated 8 March 1870, ironically the day that Minny Temple died. The letter is included in *The Correspondence of William James*, Vol. 1, 149-50. James wrote, "As for the women I give 'em up, in advance. I am tired of their plainness & stiffness & tastelessness—their dowdy beads, their dirty collars & their linsey Woolsey trains. Nay, this is peevish & brutal. Personally (with all their faults) they are well enough. I revolt from their dreary deathly want of –what shall I call it?—Clover Hooper (wife of Henry Adams) has it— intellectual grace—Minny Temple has it—moral spontaneity. They live wholly in the realm of the cut & dried . . . What exasperates you is not that they can't say more, but that they wouldn't if they could. Ah, but they are a great people, for all that. Nevertheless I shd. Vastly enjoy half an hour's talk with an 'intelligent American.' I find myself reflecting with peculiar complacency on American women. When I think of their frequent beauty & grace & elegance & alertness, their cleverness & self- assistance (if it be simply in the matter of toilet) & compare them with English girls, living up to their necks among comforts & influences & advantages wh. Have no place with us, my bosom swells with affection & pride . . . But it is a graceless task, abusing women of any clime or country. I can't help it tho', if American women have something which gives them a lift" (149-150). Alexis DeTocqueville also noted the difference in the American woman

and her European counterpart. Some might argue that what makes Isabel "interesting" to Warburton is that she is simply far different from the European female mold.

[68] *Portrait* 10.

[69] Ibid. 11.

[70] Caspar Goodwood, Mrs. Touchett, and Mme. Merle tell her this.

[71] *Portrait* 13-14.

[72] Ibid. 18.

[73] *Giovanni* 142. In using "what" and "who," I refer to the final argument between Giovanni and David. See chapter one.

[74] James, Preface, *Portrait*, xxvi.

[75] *Portrait* 191.

[76] Ibid. 59; 323.

[77] Ibid. 38.

[78] Ibid. 13.

[79] The fact that Isabel's sex and Ralph's illness conjoin them is rather interesting given the tactics of scientific sexism during the time period. Natural scientists in fields such phrenology and internal medicine asserted female inferiority on the basis of brain weight and size, as well as the workings of the reproductive system—particularly the "leak" of "life force" associated with menstruation. The education of women, in fact, caused an additional leak in that force—nearly 20%; for that reason, only minimal education was recommended, if any. Female sexual identity, then, was an ailment. See

Zsuzsa Sztaray, *Scientific Sexism and Separate Spheres Ideology* (Staten Island: College of Staten Island/CUNY), 28 Jan. 2007. <http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu>

[80] Ibid. 172. Here again is a 'twinned' moment of sorts. In chapter VI, Isabel thinks, "if a certain light should dawn she could give herself completely" (49). For both, there is the conditionality of giving in to love, which amounts to relinquishing the self.

[81] Ibid. 132.

[82] Ibid. 323.

[83] Ibid. 329, italics mine.

[84] Ibid. See also *Giovanni* 7-8. In David's experience with Joey, he initially looks at him with love, feeling as if he is holding "some exhausted, doomed bird" in his arms, and they are both giving each other life. In the light of day, however, David's vision changes, as chapter one shows.

[85] Ibid. 59.

[86] Ibid. 141.

[87] Ibid. 140.

[88] Though I do not spend a great deal of time discussing Caspar Goodwood as a male specimen, he both physically and psychically typifies the new American man. James described him as "tall, strong and somewhat stiff; he was also lean and brown. He was not romantically, he was much rather obscurely, handsome; but his physiognomy had an air of requesting your attention, which it rewarded according to the charm you found in blue eyes of remarkable fixedness, the eyes of a complexion other than his own, and a jaw of the somewhat angular mould which is supposed to bespeak resolution . . . He was

not…a man weakly to accept defeat" (33). He is "stiff[ness]" and resolve incarnate, and his name alone screams not only solidity, or perhaps rigidity, but also sexuality. At the close of chapter XVI, when Isabel falls before the "looming four-poster bed," feeling overwhelmed by the sexual energies that surround her with Goodwood, she fears his effects on her and his threat to her independence. Isabel believes that "his passive surface, as well as his active, was large and hard…that he was naturally plated and steeled, armed essentially for aggression" (146). At the end of the novel, his movements and touch feel "like violence" to her, though they are not. His voice is "hard, deep," penetrating "deep into her soul" (660-61). He evokes an all-consuming passion that she cannot control. In the most erotic moment of the text, ironically at the end of the novel, James toyed with ideas of "aggression" and "submission" when Caspar kisses Isabel. For her, "[h]is kiss was like white lightning, a flash that spread, and spread again, and stayed; and it was extraordinarily as if, while she took it, she felt each thing in his hard manhood that had pleased her, each aggressive fact of his face, his figure, his presence, justified of its intense identity and made one with this act of possession" (564). If Warburton is the Anglo-Saxon archetype, then Goodwood is that archetype redesigned for the States—"lean," "tall," "strong," "firm as a rock" and infused with visible, raw masculine power (563). Their presence, moreover, is reminiscent of the "straight-backed, wooden" seats in which David feels so discomfited on his journey to Paris in *Giovanni's Room*. Evoking a sense of complicity in perpetuating normalized appearances, Baldwin, questioned metaphorically the socially constructed, insular, and discomforting models of manhood that both James's Warburton and Goodwood represent and Osmond psychically fulfills.

257

Isabel's likening the domination of the sex act to a blinding light, then, is akin to David's reading of his homosexuality (and Giovanni's room) as a dark, inescapable chasm; each is equally damaging, for in neither can a subject maintain one's bearings.

[89] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Screen 16.3 (1975): 6-18, rpt. in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989), 14-27.

[90] *Portrait* 42.

[91] Ibid. 58. See also Isabel's description of Mme. Merle as woman with "thick, fair hair, arranged somehow "classically" and as if she were a Bust . . . a Juno or a Niobe; and large white hands, of a perfect shape, a shape so perfect that their possessor, preferring to leave them unadorned, wore no jeweled rings "(166). Aestheticizing is a common practice in the novel, but it carries far greater weight across rather than within sexes.

[92] Kurt Hochenauer, "Sexual Realism in *The Portrait of a Lady*: The Divided Sexuality of Isabel Archer" *Studies in the Novel* 22.1 (Spring 1990): 19-25.

[93] *Portrait* 173; 104.

[94] Ibid. 175.

[95] Ibid. 176.

[96] The "old man" forewarns him, "Doesn't it occur to you that a young lady with sixty thousand pounds may fall victim to the fortune hunters?" (176). Touchett's mention of "fortune hunters" calls to mind the gender constructions central to "hunter-gatherer" societies. See Frances Dahlberg, ed., "Introduction," *Woman the Gatherer* (Rhode Island: Yale UP, 1983). In this collection of essays, Dahlberg reexamines the

aggression/submission model long privileged in describing "hunter-gatherer" societies. The theories of evolution and male/female hierarchical relationships in James's day would have relied heavily on the ideas that Dahlberg decenters. In that model, with her fortune, Isabel would have gathered sustainable resources as women would have gathered vegetation or less rapidly perishable food items; the hunter would seek meat, and in leaner hunting times, that which the female gathered would have sustained the family. In this instance, Osmond, in leaner times, turns his attentions as the hunter to Isabel.

[97] See Sara Blair, Beverly Haviland, or Eli Ben-Joseph, *Aesthetic Persuasion: Henry James, the Jews, and Race* (New York: UP of America, 1995).

[98] *Portrait* 248.

[99] Ibid. 5-6.

[100] Ibid. 248-49. In importing this final note, James alluded to that which his brother, William, so detested in the American man of his time—the idea of the too prominently sensate or passionate man. In "The Dilemma of Determinism," William demanded of the *men* of his time, "Hang your sensibilities! Stop your sniveling complaints and your equally snivelling [sic] raptures! Leave off your general emotional tomfoolery and get to WORK like men!" (qtd. in Townsend 100). By James's own design, Osmond's "sensibility had governed him—possibly…too much" (248). For William, therefore, Osmond's pretense, like Ralph's life, would have been unworthy manhood models. James consistently undercut his manhood at the same time that he showed how well he internalized masculine energy. In doing so, he again highlighted the fact that any manhood ideal was arbitrary.

[101] Ibid.

[102] *Portrait* 249.

[103] Ibid. 298.

[104] Ibid. 248-49.

[105] Ibid. 512. At this point, Isabel fully realizes the depth of Osmond's deception.

[106] Though James's novel predated *The Education of Henry Adams* (1915), what I suggest here is that for James, as for Henry Adams, there was an internal masculine force—a character-based model of masculinity—that was rapidly disappearing, as is the brand of manhood signified by Mr. Touchett. Particularly in the chapter "Quincy," Adams discussed the "silent force" that the elder Adams wielded; there was never a need for him to say a word or raise a hand; something in him just commanded respect, and others found themselves doing as he bade them. With Quincy, there was gentility and quietude that flew in the face of the raw power and force in manhood ideals of Adams's contemporaries (Teddy Roosevelt comes to mind). Osmond is not a remarkable physical specimen, but he wields his "silent force" with the accuracy and power of a master pugilist, bending Isabel and Ralph to his will.

[107] Ibid. 411.

[108] Ibid. 352; Izzo 178.

[109] Ibid. 347.

[110] Ibid. 239; 411.

[111] Ibid. 409; 375.

[112] Ibid. 351.

[113] *The Henry James Review* 25.2 (2004): 156.

[114] Ibid. 408. In chapter XLII, Isabel begins to contemplate the "vibrations" that constantly suggest something amiss in her life. Though she believed before her marriage that this "organism…had become her property," she begins to realize the "magnitude of his deception" (409). Though it is not voiced until far later, she must come to terms with the fact that "he was her appointed and inscribed master" and that in her blindness, she was complicity in making it so (441).

[115] Ibid. 332.

[116] Ibid. 377.

[117] "In Petto" means "in secret," yet "petto" is "breast" in Italian.

[118] *Portrait* 410.

[119] Though not an obvious contrast, James cast Osmond in opposition to the elder Mr. Touchett. The text begins with a marriage that defies the patriarchal model of the era. Described as "the more motherly" spouse, Mr. Touchett acquiesces to the "unnatural" wishes of his "gubernatorial" and "paternal" wife. He resides in England during the full year, while his wife, by her own design, spends one month per year with him at Gardencourt and spends the remainder of the year where she wishes (34, 20). He seems an afterthought in his wife's existence, for when she first returns to Gardencourt after being away for a full year, she neither greets him, nor calls for him. Instead, she summons Ralph. The Touchett's marriage, then, like Ralph's naming at the start of the text, positions Mr. Touchett as less than a man. In contrast, think of Osmond's statement to Isabel in chapter LI: "I've an ideal of what my wife should do and should not do. She

should not travel across Europe alone, in defiance of my deepest desire . . ."(512).

Osmond's dominance, though troubling, reinforces my claim that through him, James

exposed ingrained psychology of the masculinity. Like all other aspects of his life, his

marriage is ruled by a constructed "ideal."

[120] Ibid. 564.

[121] See introduction, William James, "Instinct"; recall William's suggestion of the
"unnatural vices" inherent in "queer[ness]."

[122] *Portrait* 514.

[123] *Portrait* 328.

[124] Ibid. 441.

[125] Ibid. 468.

[126] Ibid. 485.

[127] Kim Townsend's reading of the relationship between Ralph Touchett and

Caspar Goodwood is an interesting one. Following her insistence that men like Henry

James and George Santayana "were not manly presences," that they "made Harvard Men

nervous," she offers that both Goodwood and Ralph are "Harvard Men." Caspar serves as

the representative of the "New Harvard Man"—materially focused and physically strong.

Ralph, alternatively, epitomizes an older vision of a Harvard Man—sickly, physically

week, and highly philosophical/intellectual. I also must point out here that Osmond's

suggestion of Ralph's dependence is tremendously ironic. Though legally, Isabel's

fortune becomes his once they marry, he is, in fact, dependent upon her and it for the

continuity of his lifestyle (148-149).

[128] *Portrait* 330.

[129] In chapter one, I relate this moment to Giovanni's execution. Though both James and Baldwin desired hybridized gender space, it is clear that they recognized just how dangerous a concept was. Neither, if the deaths of Ralph and Giovanni are any indication, fully believed that such a departure could exist.

[130] Auchard, *Silence in Henry James*, 73.

Chapter Three

[1] James, "Preface," *The Ambassadors*, 39.

[2] Baldwin, "Notes for a Hypothetical Novel," *Collected Essays*, 230.

[3] See my discussion of masculine hell in the Introduction.

[4] I also reference Baldwin's "The Price of the Ticket" (1985), *Collected Essays*, 830-842.

[5] "Preface," *The Ambassadors*, ii.

[6] "The Art of the Novel," *The Critical Muse*, 37.

[7] I borrow this term from Baldwin's critique of Andre Gide's *Madeleine* (1951) entitled, "The Male Prison," rpt. in *Collected Essays*, 231-235.

[8] Resonating in his words is Frederick Douglass' insistence on his manhood and his unwillingness to be a thing; DuBois stating bluntly that the problem of the 20th century is that of "the color-line" and his rage at being asked, "how does it feel to be a problem?"; Dunbar in *The Sport of the Gods* (1902) and Martin Luther King, Jr. in "I Have a Dream" (1963), questioning the validity of an ideology that damns a man for his color rather than his character; and even James Weldon Johnson's tragic realization in

The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man (1912) that accepting one's blackness in America meant acquiescing inwardly to a damning state of nothingness, which Baldwin unequivocally refused to do.

[9] See Gene Jarrett, *African American Literature Beyond Race: An Alternative Reader* (New York: NYU P, 2006). In his study, Jarrett's focal points are texts by African-American authors featuring racially anomalous or otherwise ambiguous characters. He locates these texts as acts of "literary defiance"—of movement beyond the strictures of "racial realism" that govern popular understandings of African-American literature, largely because African-American authors do write other things. He argues that we must reimagine our notions of this literature and see them as a broader discourse on the human condition. I would argue, however, that though the aim should be getting "beyond race" to engage in this broader discourse, the authors who write the racially ambiguous subject recognize the need to remove the visual marker of race to have a true conversation about humanity; therefore, race as a construct is not directly addressed. Instead, they suggest in a nuanced way that even the "colorless" are raced in America, for there are expectations and prescriptions for any racial subject. They seem to argue that the ability to see the sameness of human experience in America requires those who have constructed racial difference as a signifier of humanity not only to reconceive themselves, but also to recognize others as fully human. The sense of despair that this often evokes is one thing that draws Baldwin to James, and so, while I agree theoretically with Jarrett that we must move "beyond race," I find his work problematic insofar as it does not address the fact that, as these authors often recognized, we are not in a place that allows

us to do this because American racial constructions are so insidious, destructive, and institutionalized despite our best wishes.

[10] "A Television Conversation: James Baldwin, Peregrine Worsthorne, Bryan Magee," *Encounter* 39 (Sept. 1972), rpt. in *Conversation with James Baldwin* (Jackson: U of Mississippi P, 1989), 123. Worsthorne, then deputy editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, was well known for his support of British re-colonization (particularly of disadvantaged countries in Africa), his adoration of McCarthy's anti-communist agenda, and his persistent High-Tory stance. In this interview, he contested Baldwin's view that the African American had always been a "slave to the West" and insisted that "black skin" was "something which" could be "got over"; at the same time, he was "indiscreet enough to mention, that white men don't really respect black men in the same way as they respect other skins" (123-124).

[11] Though Baldwin does focus specifically on blackness, I expand his rhetoric to include ethnic or racial otherness in all forms.

[12] Emma Lazarus' "The New Colossus" was not inscribed on the Statue of Liberty when James visited Ellis Island, yet its lines seem important in his rendering of the Island and New York as a whole. The "huddled masses yearning to be free," the immigrant as "wretched refuse" of "teeming [foreign] shores," suggests an alien invasion, if you will. This is precisely what James must come to terms with in his travels—the perception of *them* as other when he, himself, is so other.

[13] See epigraph.

[14] See Baldwin, "Notes for a Hypothetical Novel," *Collected Essays*, 230.

[15] "Stranger" 127; 124.

[16] "Preface," *The American Scene*, ed. John F. Sears (New York: Penguin, 1994), 4.

[17] *AS* 7.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid. 68.

[20] "Price" 841.

[21] *AS* 8

[22] "To William James," 15 June 1879, *HJ: A Life in Letters*, 108.

[23] I refer here to the Greek myth of Thetis' wedding to Peleus. Irate at not being invited to Thetis' wedding, Eris, Goddess of Discord (alternately hatred, strife, rivalry, and sorrow) and twin sister of Ares, the God of War, attempts to gain admittance only to be rejected. In retaliation, she casts one of her golden apples, inscribed 'to the fairest', into the ceremony. This apple, known as the 'Golden Apple of Discord' creates a heated disagreement between Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite, each of whom believes that she is 'the fairest' and each of whom represents an alternate aspect of the feminine self. This disagreement is reportedly settled by Paris, who rejects Hera's bribe of power and Athena' promise of wisdom, only to be swayed by Aphrodite's beauty and promise of the most beautiful woman in the word—then Helen; his choice not only speaks to his inability to suppress his lust, but also to his desire for a physical trophy marking his primacy as a male. His taking of Helen launches his people into the Trojan War with dire consequences. Eris is mentioned repeatedly in Homer's *Iliad*, particularly in relation to

her brother and their exploits to destroy peace among mortals. The reference here to the twinned feminine and masculine sides of strife, war, and discord seems no accident. More importantly, however, Paris' focus on a material marker of his success foreshadows James's discussion of the American focus on the material in *The American Scene*.

[24] If so, the mention of "home" here raises again the question of whether this is, in fact *their* "home" or his. See Toni Morrison, "Home," *The House that Race Built*, 3-12. See also Ross Posnock, *The Trial of Modernity*. In it, he writes, "What it means to be 'at home' is what James questions and redefines here. For an alien to be at home is as oxymoronic as calling oneself—as James does—a 'restored absentee.' James and the alien embody this paradox, which defies conventional understanding. 'Being at home' for James and 'his companions' is not to rest securely in the stable continuity of tradition but to embrace a 'strange' contradiction—that being at home and being an alien are identical" (278).

[25] *AS* 11; 18.

[26] Ibid. 11; James is actually referring to the Jewish infringement upon the area of NJ in which Grant and Garfield had lived—a place before of quiet grace and non-ostentatious luxury, but now of false grandeur. His views are typically read for their Anti-Semitism, but I believe that in light of his larger address of materialism, the segment is more symptomatic to him of the ideology taking over the country than simply a denunciation of the Jew. At the end of this chapter, I discuss James and the Jew in greater detail.

[27] James returns to locomotive imagery as the text draws to a close. In this instance, he foreshadows his reading of the Pullman in "The Last Regret" segment of the "Florida" chapter.

[28] *AS* 19.

[29] Later in the text, on his excursion to Harvard and Cambridge, James writes, "Nothing, meanwhile, is more concomitantly striking than the fact that the women, over the land—allowing for every element of exception—appear to be of a markedly finer texture than the men, and that one of the liveliest signs of this difference is precisely in their less narrowly specialized, their less commercialized, distinctly more generalized physiognomic character" (51). He further illustrates his identification with the feminine as something less economically driven, less 'grasping,' and less harmfully homogeneous. He would lament the absence of homogeneity when in the presence of the 'alien,' but his awareness on one part frees him to see the absences in conceptions of uniform racial composition.

[30] *AS* 8.

[31] Ibid. 334-335.

[32] Ibid. 335.

[33] Ibid. 49.

[34] Baldwin, "Freaks," 828-29; see chapter one, epigraph.

[35] *AS* 52.

[36] Baldwin, "Freaks"; see introduction, epigraph and n. 1.

[37] James, "Saint Beuve," *The Art of Criticism*, 27; See introduction, epigraph.

[38] *AS* 44. For more discussion of the economic boom during this period and James engagement of it, see Hsuan Hsa, "Post American James and the Question of Scale," *The Henry James Review* 24.3 (Fall 2003): 233-243.

[39] "Price" 841.

[40] *AS* 52. James continues, "There had been fifty *sorts* of persons, fifty representatives of careers, to whom the English, the French, the German universitarian of tender years might refer you for a preliminary account of him." His reiteration of automation here—the singularity of the American masculine vision when compared with that elsewhere in the world--underpins his growing discomfort. Though the "*sorts* of persons" to which he refers are dominantly Anglo-Saxon in origin, his inability to "sort" by national origin foreshadows the deeper questioning of ethnicity soon to come.

[41] *AS* 49.

[42] *AS* 50.

[43] "Price" 842.

[44] Sara Blair sees "appetency or consumption" as "James's most resonant trope." She writes, "Throughout the Ellis Island passages, three forms of appetite contend: that of consumer America, that of the aliens, and James's own" (172-73). I offer, however, that these are not necessarily contending forces. James, however reluctantly, is a product of a nation in which much of the foundation of whiteness and otherness is rooted in the market economy—the drive for wealth and the need for labor—whether that is the indentured servant, the native, the slave, or the immigrant. James is forced to come to terms with his own complicity in that system. He is "the hungriest of analysts," but what

he must ultimately digest is the 'alien' in his own history, the imbibed of modes of categorization that attended the whitening of his 'alien' past, and his role in the feeding of the "hungry 'machine' of American culture-building" (175). He labels himself not only a "hungry" analyst, but also a "restless" one—to which I argue that he is both "restless" because he is "hungry" for impressions and "restless" because those impressions are too much to digest.

[45] *AS* 50. Interestingly enough, because the immigrant presence is characterized as a force of usurpation, this instance could point to an inherent fear that whiteness is being feminized and overtaken by a far more powerful force. James's resistance, then, would evidence his position as both critic and beneficiary of whiteness; but, it would also point to a simultaneous desire to be a part of the very brand of masculinity that he critiques. The moment shows the extent of James's internal conflict.

[46] "Price" 836.

[47] *AS* 68.

[48] I use the word "chimera" with knowledge of its biological meaning. The importation of "foreign matter," as James terms it results in a potential mutation of the white self—a grafting of ethnic selves that could produce a hybrid outcome. The insularity of white identity is entirely unrealistic when met with what Ellis Island represents.

[49] "Affirming the Alien: The Pragmatist Pluralism of *The American Scene,*" *The Cambridge Companion to Henry James*, ed. Jonathan Freedman (London: Cambridge U P, 1998), 234.

[50] "Stranger" 129.

[51] See Emma Lazarus, "The New Colossus" discussed later in this chapter.

[52] *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 58.

[53] See Kelly Cannon, *Henry James: The Man at the Margins* (New York: St. Martin's, 1994).

[54] "The Last Regret" is not a chapter title. James names segments within chapters of his travelogue, placing the name as a header atop the page. This one appears above one of his final segments in "Florida."

[55] *AS* 42.

[56] Ibid.

[57] *Portrait* 239; 411.

[58] *AS* 43.

[59] Baldwin, "What it means to be an American," *Collected* Essays, 139.

[60] *AS* 66.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] "To William James," 15 Jun. 1879, *A Life in Letters*, 108.

[64] *AS* 66, 67; The fact that by the time that James visited Ellis Island, immigrants came to New York by the thousands on steam ships—almost like cargo in steerage— must have only added to James's sense of commercialization and his overwhelming mystification. Consider also his previous and subsequent discussions of the dwarfed

Trinity and "Fifth Avenue churches" (61; 72). They are "cruelly overtopped" and "menaced" by the "tall buildings" and developments around them. The churches offer "serenity of escape," a memory of "the modest felicity that sometimes used to be." Additionally, they speak to a power once thought greater than commerce.

[65] *AS* 67.

[66] David Roediger, *Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic, 2003), 121.

[67] Colin Hamblin, *Ellis Island*; Roediger, *Working Towards Whiteness*, 121. Hamblin's text, the official tourist's guide to Ellis Island, recounts the tagging and inspection to which the immigrants were subjected. He also points to the nebulousness of certain reasons for denial of citizenship. When, by 1917, literacy tests were added to immigration procedures at Ellis Island, the denial of citizenship to immigrants began to mirror the denial of African African-Americans' constitutional right to vote. Roediger's criticism delves further into the means by which access to whiteness was granted, pointing not only to immigration laws of the nineteenth century, but also to those in 1924, which, under the auspices of military protection, strengthened the legal claims of a nation wishing to deny citizenship to those deemed non-white. While "new immigrants, whose racial status was ambiguous in the larger culture" were "consistently allowed," the courts "almost as consistently turned down non-European applicants as nonwhite" (60).

[68] *AS* 67; see again Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property."

[69] Roediger 60.

[70] *AS* 66.

[71] "Preface," *Portrait*, xxvi.

[72] James, *A Small Boy*, 101.

[73] *AS* 67.

[74] Seshadri-Crooks 58.

[75] *AS* 50.

[76] Edward Said, "Orientalism," *Postcolonial Studies at Emory University* (Fall 1996), Emory University, Atlanta, GA, 29 Feb. 2008, <http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Orientalism.html>

[77] *AS* 67.

[78] "Stranger" 139.

[79] S. Folkman. R.S. Lazarus, C. Dunkel-Schetter, A. DeLongis, and R.J. Gruen, (1986), "Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50 (1986): 992-1003. The theory suggests that through avoidant coping strategies, either emotion-focused (involved in suppressing the emotional consequences of the stressor) or problem solving (involved in actively doing something to alleviate the stressor), the subject persistently finds a means of circumventing the stress-causing element rather than dealing with it head-on. This is in keeping with the distinction that Baldwin's epigraph makes. James's reversion to imagination, as well as his habit of distancing himself by focusing on theatricality or humor, fit into this category. Typically, avoidance only works to heighten anxiety to such

a point that the subject must eventually deal with the stressor at hand—unless he can convince himself that the avoidant lie is his actuality.

[80] *AS* 238; italics mine.

[81] *The Trial of Curiosity* 87. Posnock uses this phrase to describe James's project with Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors* only a year before *The American Scene*. Posnock positions James, and his brother William, in an internal battle over the "challenge[s] of modernity." The forces of modernity, of the progressive, disquiet James, but, unlike Posnock, I argue that this battle is symbolic of something far greater for the author: his ability to come to terms with a reimagination of his racial and gendered selves.

[82] *AS* 99.

[83] After the premiere of Israel Zangwill's play, *The Melting Pot* (1908), the term comes into vogue. Though it directly references the utopian need for all difference to melt away in the formation of American identity, it also hearkens back to J. Hector St. John de Crevecouer's *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782). In the letter entitled "What is an American?" Crevecoeur writes, "Here [in America], individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men." Crevecouer's vision of the American, however, is like James's initial one at Ellis Island, markedly absent of a non-Anglo-Saxon presence. For him, the American was a mixture of "English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes." <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/CREV/home.html>

[84] *AS* 95.

[85] James references DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folk* directly in chapter XIII ("Charleston"). Given the page heading "Feminization," the segment might at first suggest emasculation of the city because of the former slaves' presence. However, James intimates that it is slavery—its weight, its past, and its lingering ideology—that has robs Charleston of its impulse to be a "great political" society—perhaps a more masculine force to be reckoned with (307). James asks, "Had the *only* focus of life then been Slavery—from the point onward that Slavery had reached a quarter of a century before the War, so that with the extinction of that interest none of any other sort was left" (308). I discuss slavery and James's reading of the African American later in this chapter.

[86] *AS* 96.

[87] "Stranger" 124.

[88] *AS* 97; "Whitewash," defs. 1.a. and 2.a, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (1989) <http://dictionary.oed.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/>. James appears to marry dual meanings of the verb "whitewash," referring not only to the commodification of whiteness in America, but also the sense of consciously "whitening" the immigrant presence to fit a homogeneous racial mold. The obvious reference is to the painting technique—the literal whitening of a surface. This particular meaning alludes to commodity, for as Bridget T. Heneghan argues in *Whitewashing America: Material Culture and Race in the Antebellum Imagination* (Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 2003), by the Gilded Age, there had long been a fascination with the supposed "refinement, order and discipline" symbolized by the white material object (xii). Additionally, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the verb transitive form of "whitewash" means, "To give

a fair appearance to; to free, or attempt to free, from blame or taint; to cover up, conceal, or gloss over the faults or blemishes of" (2.a). In this sense, the immigrants' native, cultural traits are perceived as "errors" or "blemishes" to be masked in becoming American. However, by the time that James uses the phrase "white-washing brush," the term "whitewash" also had been used in terms of race—as early as 1833 in Frederick Marryat's *Peter Simple*. Marryat writes, in part XXXI, "A quadroon and white make the mustee or one-eighth black, and the mustee and white the mustafina, or one-sixteenth black. After that, they are whitewashed, and considered as Europeans." The visible signs of their blackness have been erased.

[89] *AS* 97.

[90] Ibid. 98.

[91] Ibid. 50.

[92] Ibid. 97.

[93] "Price" 842.

[94] *AS* 97.

[95] *AS* 67.

[96] Ibid. 97.

[97] Ibid. 98.

[98] Ibid. 97.

[99] Ibid. 98.

[100] "Price" 842. Years earlier, Baldwin had written something similar in "Sonny's Blues." Driving past the park in New York, both Sonny and the narrator seem to be

"seeking . . . that part of [themselves] which had been left behind. It's always at the hour of trouble and confrontation that the missing member aches" (112).

[101] *AS* 98-99.

[102] Ibid. 92.

[103] Ibid. 99.

[104] Ibid. 100.

[105] Ibid. The year 1904 was the first time that the "proboscis-fish" or "elephant-snout fish" was referenced in *Nature* (9 Jun. 1904): 130-132. James's allusion to both the aquarium and the "proboscis" is no accident.

[106] See Bram Dykstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siecle Culture* (New York: Oxford UP, 1986). Dykstra argues, in part, that between 1880 and 1914, the womanly presence was a force both feared and revered. She was always, however, a force to be controlled, if not destroyed. See also Eli Ben-Joseph, *Aesthetic Persuasion*.

[107] *AS* 101.

[108] Ibid. 104.

[109] This line calls to mind both Baldwin's and Dwight McBride's assertions that difference (blackness or homosexuality) do not matter; it is the system in place that makes them problems that need to be addressed. "Notes of a Native Son" 84; McBride *Abercrombie* 31.

[110] *AS* 284.

[111] *AS* 276. James's use of the word "type" does not seem untoward, for his emphasis in this text and others was carefully constructing psychologically realistic personas.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid. There seems an allusion to *Ragged Dick* here as well—not in terms of wealth, but in terms of the aspiring African American attaining his 'rights of man.'

[114] "Beast" 275. I use the story in my Introduction to discuss James's gender exploration, and several critics have read the story as a study of latent homosexuality. What is more important in this instance is the fact that the Marcher finally realizes that he has lived a flawed existence, robbing himself of the means by which he could have lived a full life and experienced self-realization.

[115] Ibid. 281

[116] Ibid. 281-282; 275.

[117] *AS* 276.

[118] By no means do I suggest that James's stereotypical, racially charged language should be ignored or, even accepted. It should not. What I suggest is what the final paragraphs of this section suggest; sure a "better James" would have been one who defied stereotypes at every turn, who never uttered a racist comment, but that is naïve. James is operating both within and without a system that each moment reveals to be false, and this travelogue shows him taking small steps toward full racial consciousness.

[119] *AS* 277.

[120] Ibid. 286.

[121] Kenneth Warren, *Black and White Strangers: Race and American Literary Realism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 113.

[122] Posnock, "Henry James and The Limits of Historicism," 276.

[123] Sara Blair, *Race and Nation,* 17 and "Response: Writing Culture and Henry James's," *The Henry James Review* 16.3 (Fall 1995): 281. Blair's piece is an open response to Posnock's claims that her arguments for James's "openness" in engaging racial otherness fall apart in the face of his failure to do such things as directly attack (or even comment upon) the "thousand things [the Southerner] would do to the Southern Negro" (*AS* 286).

[124] Buelens, *Enacting History in Henry James: Narrative, Power, and Ethics* (New York: Cambridge UP), 167-168. The passage reads, " . . . there is a distinctly gendered side to the unease some critics register over James. A closer look at *The Henry James Review*'s 'Race Forum' suggests that the key 'political' objection voiced against *The American Scene*, and Jamesian realism as in general, is actually that it is insufficiently masculine, and therefore immoral. Like the seductive snares of a wanton woman, . . . James's irresponsible prose [is] in need of correction by the critics."

[125] William James, "To Henry James," 4 Mar. 1968), *Correspondence*, Vol. 1, 37. I discuss this passage in detail in my Introduction.

[126] Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice* (New York: Delta, 1999), 134.

[127] Leeming, "An Interview with James Baldwin on Henry James," *Henry James Review* 8.1 (Fall 1986): 47. I discuss Baldwin's affinity for James in my Introduction.

[128] *AS* 342.

[129] "Stranger" 128.

[130] *AS* 339.

[131] *AS* 339.

[132] Ezra Pound, "Make it New" (1934).

[133] *AS* 339.

[134] Ibid. 340.

[135] "The Beast in the Jungle," *The Portable Henry James*, 262-263. See George Monteiro, "Henry James, Great White Hunter," *Modern Language Studies* 13.4 (Autumn 1983): 96-108. In it, Monteiro argues the importance of Frank R. Stockton's "The Lady or the Tiger" (1882) to James's "The Beast in the Jungle," among other texts. See also James's description of Mrs. Assingham in *The Golden Bowl* (1904). She is the "immemorially speechless Sphinx" whose "free orientalism of type" recalls her author's own "queerness." *The Golden Bowl* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 296.

[136] *Ambassadors* 256.

[137] A fusion of Aphrodite, Galatea, and Cleopatra—all beautiful, beguiling, and powerful—Mme. de Vionnet is alluring, and she believes that she should not be bound by the strictures of womanhood; she attempts to defy gender norms at every turn. James, once again, merges a discussion of gender with nation. Her elegance encourages Strether to see Chad in a positive light, as if by her association, he cannot be beneath her. She is a rewarding presence in the novel both for the negative and positive aspects of her social and legal status.

[138] Numerous critics have involved themselves in the debate over James's anxiety with modernism. Among them are Ross Posnock, *The Trial of Modernity*; Eric Haralson, *Henry James and Queer Modernity* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2005); Robert Pippin, *Henry James and the Modern Moral Life* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2000).

[139] *AS* 341.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Ibid. 342.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

[145] *AS* 129.

[146] *AS* 340

[147] Posnock, "Henry James and The Limits of Historicism," 276.

Conclusion

[1] Baldwin, "The New Lost Generation," *Esquire* (Jul. 1961), reprinted in *Collected Essays*, 668.

[2] Again, see Jarrett, *Beyond Race*. See also Paul Gilroy, *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color-Line* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000). In the latter, Gilroy calls for a 'radical planetary nonracial humanism' that does not reinforce racial terminology by acknowledging its falsehood, yet continuing its use.

[3] Noam Chomsky, *Knowledge of Language: Its Nature, Origins, and Use* (New York: Praeger, 1986), xxv-xvii. Initially, Chomsky identifies two contrasting problems—

"Plato's" and "Orwell's." "Plato's Problem," not discussed in my text, deals with the question of how we know so much innately, as if we are hardwired at birth. Just two years later, Chomsky further develops "Plato's Problem" and "Orwell's Problem" in *Language and Politics* (New York: Black Rose, 1988). He illustrates that the distinction between the two "Problem[s]" and alludes to the nature versus nurture argument in how we gain knowledge.

[4] In *Public Opinion* (1922), Lippman argues, "The creation of consent is not a new art. It is a very old one which was supposed to have died out with the appearance of democracy. But it has not died out. It has, in fact, improved enormously in technic [sic], because it is now based on analysis rather than on rule of thumb" (158). Though Lippman and Chomsky are addressing the use of the media to sway public opinion, their ideas may be applied to the process of racial and gender normalization. When contested, the ideology that privileges Anglo-Saxonism and masculinity is, through "analysis," refigured and reified; this has been the case historically, for though the idea that whiteness and maleness was the "rule of thumb" in establishing Americanness initially, immigration and the presence of the Native and African-American made it necessary to carefully construct what it meant to be a white man. Ultimately, Lippman concludes that "in the absence of institutions and education by which the environment is so successfully reported that the realities of public life stand out sharply against self-centered opinion, the common interests very largely elude public opinion entirely, and can be managed only by a specialized class whose personal interests reach beyond the locality. This class is irresponsible, for it acts upon information that is not common property, in situations that

the public at large does not conceive" (195). The few, in other words, dictate the standards for many, alienating and ostracizing those outside of their "self-centered opinion.

⁵ *AS* 68.

⁶ "Making Hillary Clinton an Issue," *Nightline*, 25 Mar. 1992, Transcript, 15 Mar. 2008, <www.pbs.org/wgbh>; Jennifer Parker, "Ferraro: Obama Where He is Because He's Black," *Nightline*, 11. Mar. 2008, *ABCNEWS.COM*, 15 Mar. 2008, <www.abcnews.go.com>; "Is Obama Black Enough?," *TIME*, 1 Feb. 2007, *TIME.COM*, 18 Mar. 2008, <www.time.com/time/nation>; Juan Williams, "Black Voters Aren't Fully Sold on Obama," *Morning Edition*, 19 Feb. 2007, *NPR*, 18 Mar. 2008, <www.npr.org>. Questions of Hillary Clinton's femininity have plagued her since her husband's first election. In 1992, she did not fit the popular image of a potential First Lady, who Ruth Mandel of Rutgers University suggested people expected "to stand at [her husband's] side, smile, look pretty, be quiet and say that everything he does is fine" (*Nightline*). Clinton was, then, a source of anxiety because she was not defined by her husband's career, and in fact, had been quite successful in her own. Her comment that she "could have stayed home and baked cookies and had teas, but . . . decided to fulfill [her] profession" sparked furious debates. While it was followed by a statement that a woman should be able to chose her path, that this was simply her choice, the perception of her as "an insult to most women" persists sixteen years later. Geraldine Ferrarro's comment indicated not only that Obama was lucky to be a Black man, but also that if he was "a woman [of any color]" he would not be in his position. Her words simultaneously speak

to the insidiousness of racial and gender ideology in America. Indicating that the nation is "caught up in the concept" of him, which is not entirely false, she grants privilege to his sex, but she also grants privilege to his skin that is intriguing and ironic. Arguably, however, if he was "a white man," Clinton might not be in her position. If history is any indicator and if Obama was a white man, Clinton might not have a chance with an America public that has been taught to believe that men make better leaders, and white men are the best of that lot. The political 'newness' of Obama's rhetoric, his charisma, and Clinton's departure from normative gender constructs might well be detrimental to her bid. Finally, questions of Obama's blackness abound; he is articulate, of mixed heritage, and defiant of both racial and cultural norms. People simply do not know what to make of him yet, but understanding what precisely one must be to be "black enough" is a troubling concept—one that I have dealt with firsthand.

[7] James, *AS,* 44.

[8] George W. Bush, 20 Sept. 2001, rpt. in "9/11 Remembered," *CNN Newsnight with Aaron Brown*, 11 Sept. 2003, Transcript, *CNN.com*, 18 Mar. 2008.

[9] "Freaks" 815.

[10] James, "The Art of the Novel," *The Critical Muse,* 37; Baldwin, "The Creative Process," *Collected Essays,* 672.

Bibliography

"American Manhood." *New York Times* (1 Aug. 1890): 4. 17 Mar. 2008. Proquest
  Historical Papers. College Park, MD. <http://proquest.umi.com.proxy-
  um.researchport.umd.edu/>

Aristotle. *Politics*. Book 1. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. *Internet Classics Archive*.
  http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.html.

Auchard, John. *Silence in Henry James: The Heritage of Symbolism and Decadence*.
  University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1986.

Baldwin, James. *Another Country*. New York: Vintage, 1986.

---. "Autobiographical Notes." 1952. *Collected Essays*. 5-10.

---. "The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy." 1954. *Collected Essays*. 269-285.

---. *James Baldwin: Collected Essays*. Ed. Toni Morrison. New York: Library of
  America, 1998.

---. "The Crusade of Indignation." 1956. *Collected Essays*. 606-13.

---. "The Discovery of What it Means to be an American." 1959. *Collected Essays*. 137-
142.

---. "Freaks and the American Ideal of Manhood." 1985. *Collected Essays*. 814-829.

---. *Giovanni's Room*. New York: Delta, 1956.

---. "The Male Prison." 1951. *Collected Essays*. 231-235.

---. "The New Lost Generation." 1961. *Collected Essays*. 659-668.

---. "Notes for a Hypothetical Novel." 1960. *Collected Essays*. 222-230.

---. "The Price of the Ticket." 1985. *Collected Essays*. 830-844.

---. "Sonny's Blues." 1957. *Going to Meet the Man*. New York: Vintage, 1995.

---. "Stranger in the Village." 1953. *Collected Essays.* 117-135.

---. "Take Me to the Water." *No Name in the* Street. 1972. *Collected Essays.* 117-135.

---. "A Television Conversation: James Baldwin, Peregrine Worsthorne, Bryan Magee."

    1972. *Conversations with James Baldwin*. Jackson: U of Mississippi P, 1989.

    113-126.

Barlowe, Jamie. "The AlwaysAlready Crisis of Male Subjectivity or, the Penultimate

    'Melodramas of Beset [Americanist] Manhood." Rev. of *Faulkner's Subject: A*

    Cosmos No One Owns by Philip M. Weinstein. *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 27.3

    (Spring 1994): 305-308.

Baym, Nina. "Melodramas of Beset Manhood: How Theories of American Fiction

    Exclude Woman Authors." *American Quarterly* 33.2 (Summer 1981): 123-139.

Bederman, Gail. *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in*

    the United States, 1880-1917. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1995.

Ben-Joseph, Eli. *Aesthetic Persuasion: Henry James, the Jews, and Race*. New York: UP

    of America, 1995.

Bergman, David. *Gaiety Transfigured: Gay Self-Representation in American Literature*.

    Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1991.

Bernal, Martin. *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Culture*. New York:

    Rutgers, 1987.

Blair, Sara. *Henry James and the Writing of Race and Nation*. New York: Cambridge UP,

    1996.

---. "Response: Writing Culture and Henry James." *The Henry James Review* 16.3 (Fall 1995): 278-281.

Brian, Denis. *Sing Sing: The Inside Story of a Notorious Prison*. New York: Prometheus, 2005.

Bush, George W. "Let's Roll." 20 Sept. 2001. Exc. in "9/11 Remembered." *CNN Newsnight with Aaron Brown*. 11 Sept. 2003. Transcript. *CNN.com*. 18 Mar. 2008 <www.transcripts.cnn.com>

Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. New York: Routledge, 1993.

---. *Gender Trouble*. New York: Routledge, 1989.

Campbell, James. *Talking at the Gates: A Life of James Baldwin*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1991.

Cannon, Kelly. *Henry James and Masculinity: The Man at the Margins*. New York: St. Martin's, 1997.

Caramello, Charles. "Duality in *The American Scene*." *A Companion to Henry James Studies*. Ed. Daniel Mark Fogel. Westport: Greenwood, 1993. 453-86.

Carnegie, Andrew. "The Gospel of Wealth." *North American Review* 148.391 (Jun. 1889): 653-665.

Carter, Julian. *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America, 1880-1940*. Durham: Duke UP, 2007.

Catano, James V. "The Rhetoric of Masculinity: Origins, Institutions, and the Myth of the Self-Made Man." *College English* 52.4 (Apr. 1990): 421-436.

Chapman, Mary and Glenn Hendler, eds. *Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1999.

Cheli, Guy. *Sing Sing Prison*. New York: Arcadia Publishing, 2003.

Chomsky, Noam. *Knowledge of Language: Its Nature, Origins, and Use*. New York: Praeger, 1986.

---. *Language and Politics*. New York: Black Rose, 1988.

Cleaver, Eldridge. *Soul on Ice*. New York: Delta, 1999.

Cobbina, Angela. "Blues for Mr. Baldwin." 1985. *Conversations with James Baldwin*. Ed. Fred L. Standley and Louis H. Pratt. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1989. 255-259.

Crevecouer, J. Hector St. John de. "What is an American?" *Letters from an American Farmer*. 1782. <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/CREV/home.html>

"Crime Against Nature." I: Crimes and Punishments. *Massachusetts General Laws*. Ch. 272.34. 1784. <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/272-34.htm>

Dahlberg, Frances, ed. *Woman the Gatherer*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1983.

Davis, Thulani. *My Confederate Kinfolk*. New York, Basic: 2006.

Dover, K.J. *Greek Homosexuality*. New York: MJS Books, 1997.

DuBois, Ellen Carol. *Feminism and Suffrage*. New York: Cornell U P, 1978.

---. *Women's Suffrage and Women's Rights*. New York: NYU P, 1997.

Dyer, Richard. *White*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Dykstra, Bram. *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siecle Culture*. New York: Oxford UP, 1986.

Edel, Leon. *Henry James: The Master, 1901-1916*. London: Rupert, 1972.

Fausto-Sterling, Ann. *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

Folkman, S., R.S. Lazarus, C. Dunkel-Schetter, A. DeLongis, and R.J. Gruen. "Dynamics of a Stressful Encounter: Cognitive Appraisal, Coping, and Encounter Outcomes." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50 (1986): 992-1003.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage, 1990.

---. *The Origin of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage, 1994).

Freud, Sigmund. *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Trans. James Strachey. 24 Vols. London: Hogarth, 1953-74.

Gandal, Keith. *The Virtues of the Vicious: Jacob Riis, Stephen Crane, and the Spectacle of the Slum*. New York: Oxford UP, 1997.

Gilroy, Paul. *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color-Line*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000.

Goldstein, Richard. "Go the Way Your Heart Beats: An Interview with James Baldwin." *James Baldwin: The Legacy*. Ed. Quincy Troupe. New York: Touchstone, 1989.

Goodwin, Joanne L. "Bigger than a Ballot Box," *Journal of Women's History* 11.1 (Spring 1999): 219-228

Greenberg, Amy. S. *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2005.

Gregory, Melissa Valiska. "From Melodrama to Monologue: Henry James and Domestic Terror." *Henry James Review* 25.2 (2004): 146-167.

Griswold, Robert L. Rev. of *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*. *Journal of Social History* 30.4 (Summer 1997): 999-1001.

Habegger, Alfred. "The Boy Who Could Not Become a Man." *Gender, Fantasy, and Realism in American Literature*. New York: Columbia UP, 1982.

---. *The Father: A Life of Henry James, Sr.* New York: Farrar, Strauss,and Girous, 1994.

---. *Henry James and the 'Woman Business.'* New York: Cambridge UP, 1989.

---. "The Lesson of the Father: Henry James, Sr. and Sexual Difference." *Henry James Review* 8.1 (Fall 1986): 1-36.

Haralson, Eric. *Henry James and Queer Modernity*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2005.

---. "James' *The American*: A (New)Man is Being Beaten." *American Literature* 64.3 (Sept. 1992): 475-495.

Harris, Cheryl. "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review* 106.8 (June 1993): 1714-17.

Haviland, Beverly. *Henry James' Last Romance: Making Sense of the Past*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1997.

Heneghan, Bridget T. *Whitewashing America: Material Culture and Race in the Antebellum Imagination*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 2003.

Higginson, Thomas Wentworth. "Woman and Men: War Pensions for the Women." *Harper's Bazaar* (5 Mar. 1887): 162.

Hochenauer, Kurt. "Sexual Realism in *The Portrait of a Lady*: The Divided Sexuality of

    Isabel Archer." *Studies in the Novel* 22.1 (Spring 1990): 19-25.

Holly, Carol. *Intensely Family: The Inheritance of Family Shame and the*

    Autobiographies of Henry James. Madison: Wisconsin UP, 1995.

"Hollywood Walks on the Darker Side." *Fox News Live*. 5 Mar. 2006.

Horne, Philip. "Henry James and 'the forces of violence': On the track of 'big game' in

    'The Jolly Corner.'" *Henry James Review* 27.3 (Fall 2006): 237-247.

Has, Hsuan. "Post American James and the Question of Scale." *Henry James Review*

    24.3 (Fall 2003): 233-243.

Izzo, Donatella. *Portraying the Lady: The Technologies of Gender in the Short Stories of*

    Henry James. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1993.

Jackson, L.P. "Virginia Negro Soldiers and Seamen in the American Revolution." *The*

    Journal of Negro History 27.3 (Jul. 1942): 247-287.

James, Alice. *The Diary of Alice James*. Ed. Linda Simon and Leon Edel. Boston:

    Northeastern UP, 1999.

James, Henry. *The Ambassadors*. 1903. Ed. Harry Levin. New York: Penguin, 1986.

---. *The American Scene*. 1907. Ed. John F. Sears. New York: Penguin, 1994.

---. "The Art of Fiction." *Critical Muse*. 186-206.

---. "The Art of the Novel." *The Critical Muse*. 37

---. "The Beast in the Jungle." 1903. *The Portable Henry James*. Ed. John Auchard. New

    York: Penguin, 2004. 236-282.

---. *The Bostonians*. 1886. Ed. R.D. Gooder. New York: Oxford, 2001.

---. "*The Bostonians*." *Complete Notebooks*. 19-20.

---. *The Complete Notebooks of Henry James*. Ed. Lyall H. Powers and Leon Edel. New York: Oxford UP, 1988.

---. *Henry James: Complete Stories: 1892-1989*. Ed. David Bromwich. New York: Library of America.

---. *The Critical Muse: Selected Literary Criticism*. Ed. Roger Martin Du Gard. New York: Penguin, 1988.

---. *The Europeans*. 1878. Boston: Houghton, Osgood, and Co., 1878. 22 Mar. 2003. 5 Jan. 2007. <http://www2.newpaltz.edu/~hathaway/european.html.>

---. "The Founding of the 'Nation.'" *Henry James: The American Essays*. Ed. Leon Edel. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1989. 285-288.

---. *Henry James: A Life in Letters*. Ed. Philip Horne. New York: Penguin, 1999.

---. *Notes of a Son and Brother*. 1914. *Henry James: autobiography*. Ed. Frederick W. Dupee. New York: Criterion, 1956.

---. *The Portrait of a Lady*. 1881. Ed. Anita Brookner. New York: Modern Library, 2002.

---. "*The Portrait of a Lady*." *Complete Notebooks*. 216.

---. Preface. *The Ambassadors*. 33-52.

---. Preface. *The American Scene*. 3-4.

---. Preface. *The Portrait of a Lady*. xix-xxxiii.

---. Preface. *The Wings of the Dove*. 1902. *The Art of the Novel*. New York: Scribner's, 1936.

---. "The Real Thing." *Complete Stories*. 32-57.

---. Rev. of "Matilde Serao." 1901. *Critical Muse*. 346.

---. *Roderick Hudson*. 1875. Ed. Geoffrey Moore. New York: Penguin, 1986.

---. "Saint-Beuve." *The Art of Criticism: Henry James on the Theory and Practice of Fiction*. Ed. William Veeder and Susan M. Griffin. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986. 24-47.

---. *A Small Boy and Others*. 1913. *Henry James: Autobiography*. Ed. Frederick W. Dupee. New York: Criterion, 1956.

---. "To Alphonse Daudet." 19 Jun. 1884. *A Life in Letters*. 158-160.

---. "To Charles Eliot Norton." 4 Feb. 1872. *A Life in Letters*. N. 570.

---. "To Edgar Fawcett." 7 Jun. 1891. *A Life in Letters*. 240.

---. "To Jane Dalzell Finlay Hill." 15 Jun. 1879. *A Life in Letters*. 105.

---. "To William James." 8 Mar. 1870. *Correspondence of William James*. 149-50.

---. "To William James." 15 Jun. 1879. *A Life in Letters*. 108.

James, William. *The Correspondence of William James: William and Henry*, *1861-1884*. Vol 1. Ed. Ignas K. Skrupskelis, Elizabeth M. Berkeley, Bernice Grohskopf, and Wilma Bradbeer. Richmond: U of Virginia P, 1992.

---. "To Henry James." 4 Mar. 1968. *Correspondence of William James*. 36-37.

---. "Instinct." *The Principles of Psychology*. Vol. 2. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1890. 383-441. Rpt. in *Classics in the History of Psychology Online*. Ed. Christopher Green (York University). Online Mirror (Arizona State University) <http://psychclassics.asu.edu/James/Principles/prin24.htm>

Jarrett, Gene A. *African American Literature Beyond Race: An Alternative Reader*. New York: NYU P, 2006.

Johnson-Rouiller, Cyraina. "(An)Other Modernism: James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*, and the Rhetoric of Flight." *MFS: Modern Fiction Studies* 45.4 (1999): 932-56.

Leeming, David Adams. "An Interview with James Baldwin on Henry James." *Henry James Review* 8.1 (Fall 1986): 47-56.

Lefkowitz, Mary R. and G. M. Rogers. *Black Athena Revisited*. Chapel Hill: U of NC P, 1996.

Levander, Caroline Field. "Much Less a Book than a State of Vision: The Visibility of Race in Henry James." *Henry James Review* 23.3 (Fall 2002): 265-272.

Little, Arthur. "'An essence that's not seen': The Primal Scene of Racism in *Othello*. *Shakespeare Quarterly* 44.3 (Autumn 1993): 302-24

Lipsitz, George. *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1998.

Luciano, Dana. "Invalid Relations: Queer Kinship in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*." *Henry James Review* 23.2 (2002): 196-217.

Keers, Paul. *A Gentleman's Wardrobe: Classic Clothes and the Modern Man*. New York: Harmony Books, 1987.

Kimmel, Michael S. *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*. New York: Oxford UP, 2005.

Lippman, Walter. *Public Opinion*. 1922. New York: Free Press, 1965.

"Making Hillary Clinton an Issue." *Nightline*. ABC. 25 Mar. 1992. Transcript. 15 Mar.

2008 <www.pbs.org/wgbh>

McBride, Dwight A, Donald Weise, and Devon Carbado. *Black Like Us: A Century of*

Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Fiction. San Francisco: Cleis Press, 2002.

---. *Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality*.

New York: NY UP, 2005.

Monteiro, George. "Henry James, Great White Hunter." *Modern Language Studies* 13.4

(Autumn 1983): 96-108.

Moon, Michael. *A Small Boy and Others: Imitation and Initiation in American Culture*

from Henry James to Andy Warhol. Durham: Duke UP, 1998.

Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Plume, 1970.

---. "Home." *The House that Race Built*. Ed. Wahneema Lubiano. New York: Vintage,

1998

---. *Playing in the Dark*: *Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. New York:

Vintage, 1993.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." 1975. *Visual and Other*

Pleasures. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989. 14-27.

Nelson, Dana. *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of*

White Men. Durham: Duke UP, 1998.

Newman, Charles. "The Lesson of the Master: Henry James and James Baldwin." *Yale*

Review 56 (1967): 45-49.

Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1989. <http://dictionary.oed.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/>.

Parker, Jennifer. "Ferraro: Obama Where He is Because He's Black." *Nightline*. ABC. 11. Mar. 2008. *ABCNEWS.COM*. 15 Mar. 2008 <www.abcnews.go.com>

Person, Leland S. *Henry James and the Suspense of Masculinity*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2003.

---. "In the Closet with Frederick Douglass: Reconstructing Masculinity in *The Bostonians*." *The Henry James Review* 16.3 (1995): 292-98.

Pippin, Robert. *Henry James and the Modern Moral Life*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2000.

Plato. "The Apology of Socrates." *Dialogues*. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. 10 Oct. 2007 <classics.mit.edu/Plato/apology.html>

Porter, Horace. *Stealing the Fire: The Art and Protest of James Baldwin*. Delaware, Ohio: Wesleyan UP, 1989.

Posnock, Ross. "Affirming the Alien: The Pragmatist Pluralism of *The American Scene*." *The Cambridge Companion to Henry James*. Ed. Jonathan Freedman. London: Cambridge UP, 1998. 224-246.

---. "Henry James and the Limits of Historicism." *Henry James Review* 16.3 (Fall 1995): 273-277.

---. *The Trial of Curiosity: Henry James, William James, and the Challenge of Modernity*. New York: Oxford UP, 1991.

Powers, Lyall H. "Henry James and James Baldwin: The Complex Figure." *MFS:*

Modern Fiction Studies 30.4 (Winter 1984): 651-67.

Roediger, David. *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. New York: Verso, 1999.

---. *Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs*. New York: Basic, 2003. 121.

Roosevelt, Theodore. "Citizenship in a Republic." 23 Apr. 1910. *The Man in the Arena: The Selected Writings of Theodore Roosevelt.* Ed. Brian M. Thomsen. New York: Forge, 2003. 1.

---. "To Henry L. Sprague." 26 Jan. 1900. Manuscript. *American Memory.* Library of Congress. 11 Nov. 2007 <http://www.loc.gov/>

---. "To Mrs. William Brown Meloney." 5 Aug. 1916. Typescript. *American Memory.* Library of Congress. 11 Nov. 2007 <http://www.loc.gov/>

Rotundo, E. Anthony. *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.

Said, Edward. "Orientalism." *Postcolonial Studies at Emory University.* Fall 1996. Emory University, Atlanta, GA. 29 Feb. 2008 <http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Orientalism.html>

Santayana, George. *The Genteel Tradition: Nine Essays by George Santayana*. Ed. Douglas L. Wilson. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1967.

Sartre, Jean Paul. *No Exit and Three Other Plays*. New York: Vintage, 1989.

Savoy, Eric. "Other[ed] American in Paris: Henry James, James Baldwin, and the Subversion of Identity." *English Studies in Canada* 18.3 (Sept. 1992): 335-46.

Sawyer-Laucanno, Christopher. *The Continual Pilgrimage: American Writers in Paris, 1944-1960*. New York: City Lights, 1998.

Schueller, Malini Johar. *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790-1890*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1998.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. From *Between Men: English Literature and Homosexual Desire*. 1985. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2000.

Seshadri-Crooks, Kalpana. *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Sontag, Susan. "Illness as Metaphor." New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1978.

Snyder, Katherine V. *Bachelors, Manhood, and the Novel, 1850-1925.* New York: Cambridge UP, 1999.

Standley, Fred L. and Louis H. Pratt, eds. *Conversations with James Baldwin*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1989.

Sztaray, Zsuzsa. *Scientific Sexism and Separate Spheres Ideology*. Staten Island: College of Staten Island/CUNY, 28 Jan. 2007. <http://www.library.sci.cuny.edu>

"Theodore Roosevelt: Icon of the American Century." *National Public Gallery*. Smithsonian Institution. <http://www.npg.si.edu/exh/roosevelt/>

Toibin, Colm. "The Henry James of Harlem: James Baldwin's Struggles." *The London Review of Books* (14 Sept. 2001). <http://books.guardian.co.uk/lrb/articles/>

Townsend, Kim. *Manhood at Harvard: William James and Others*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1996.

Troupe, Quincy, ed. *James Baldwin: The Legacy*. New York: Touchstone, 1989.

"Unnatural and Lascivious Acts." I: Crimes and Punishments. *Massachusetts General Laws*. Ch. 272.35. 1887. <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/272-35.htm>

Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson. Dir. Ken Burns. Washington, D.C.: WETA and Florentine Films, 2004.

Wadsworth, Sarah. "Innocence Abroad: Henry James and the Re-Invention of the American Woman Abroad." *Henry James Review* 22.2 (Spring 2001): 107-127.

Wagner, Sally Roesch. *A Time of Protest: Suffragists Challenge the Republic, 1870-1877*. New York: Sky Carrier, 1988.

Warren, Kenneth. *Black and White Strangers: Race and American Literary Realism*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1993.

Washington, Bryan R. *The Politics of Exile: Ideology in Henry James, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and James Baldwin*. Boston: Northeastern UP, 1995.

Watts, Edward and Malini Johar Schueller. *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies*. Piscataway: Rutgers UP, 2003.

Wiegman, Robyn. *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender*. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.

---. *Who Can Speak?: Authority and Critical Identity*. Champagne-Urbana: Illini Books, 1995.

Wonham, Henry B. *Playing the Races*. New York: Oxford UP, 2004.