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Nation, Miscegenation, and The Myth of the Mulatta/o Monster 1859-1886

par
Jessica Alexandra Maeve Murphy

Département d'études anglaises
Faculté des arts et des sciences

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présentée par:

Jessica Alexandra Maeve Murphy

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Résumé de synthèse

"Nation, Miscegenation, and The Myth of the Mulatta/o Monster, 1859-1886" considère la présence des mulâtres(ses) dans quatre oeuvres littéraires par Harriet Wilson, Harriet Jacobs, Mary Elizabeth Braddon et Robert Louis Stevenson. Cette thèse examine la manière dont l'Angleterre et les États-Unis du dix-neuvième siècle représentent ces individus comme étant monstrueux quand, en effet, le vrai monstre est la société anglaise et américaine de la période. Ce projet étudie aussi la façon dont la représentation du corps de la personne hybride dans Our Nig, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, The Octoroon et The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde est une métaphore pour deux nations qui sont composées de plus en plus de gens noirs-et-blancs. Les textes qui font partie de cette étude observent le traitement des noirs et des femmes (ou de ceux qui sont perçus comme étant noirs et féminins) dans la culture patriarcale anglaise et américaine où les hommes blancs et riches ont beaucoup plus de pouvoir que toutes les femmes, particulièrement celles qui sont noires.

M'inspirant des travaux de Nancy Stepan, cette œuvre illustre comment l'existence des mulâtres(ses) montre l'instabilité de tout système qui essaie d'établir une hiérarchie entre les noirs et les blancs, les femmes et les hommes, les pauvres et les riches. Tandis que plusieurs scientistes du dix-neuvième siècle croyaient que les mulâtres(ses) étaient incapables de procréer et de survivre, le nombre de personnes de sang-mêlées augmenta et non diminua durant cette période. Cette réalité et le fait que le rôle des femmes noires et blanches, des hommes noires, et des personnes la classe ouvrière était en train de changer durant ce temps préoccupaient certains victoriens et américains qui, pour leur part, craignaient perdre leurs positions dans la société.

Pourtant, malgré ces craintes, l'Angleterre et les États-unis, voulant chacun se définir comme pays avec des peuples distincts, se sont servis de ces changements pour se délimiter l'un contre l'autre. Pour cette raison, des écrivains américaines comme Wilson et Jacobs ont saisis cette opportunité pour critiquer et pour essayer de changer l'avenir de leur pays tandis que des écrivain(e)s anglais(es) comme Braddon ont voulu célébrer leur pays ou, dans le cas de Stevenson vers la fin du dix-neuvième siècle, montrer à quel point le peuple anglais était devenu multiculturel.

Mots Clés : Mulâtres(ses), Race, Sexe, Monstre, Nationalisme, Angleterre, États-Unis, Transatlantique, Dix-neuvième Siècle

Abstract

"Nation, Miscegenation, and The Myth of the Mulatta/o Monster, 1859-1886" examines how Harriet Wilson, Harriet Jacobs, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, and Robert Louis Stevenson use the trope of the mulatta/o monster only to subvert it by showing readers that the real monster is white, hegemonic culture. More specifically, it deals with how Our Nig, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, The Octoroon, and The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde depict the interracial body as a gothic house, one which is a microcosm for an increasingly hybrid and un-homely nation. The four texts under consideration in my thesis all explore what it means to be black and female (or dark and feminized) in the United States and Britain where to be white, male, and affluent is to have virtually limitless power over the bodies of women, particularly black ones.

Drawing upon Nancy Stepan's notion of "proper places," this dissertation looks at how interracial individuals challenged existing hierarchies in the mid-to-late nineteenth century by defying racial, gender, and class norms nationally and transatlantically. While many scientists of the period believed that mixed-race people were infertile and headed for extinction, the proliferation of such individuals attests to the fact that the number of racially hybrid people was increasing, not decreasing. For many Victorians and their American counterparts, the rise in this population as well as the shifting roles of black and white women, black men, and the working class compelled them to label these groups. It also heightened their concern with degeneration and their need to polarize black/white, female/male, and rich/poor. Yet, as this project shows, while such binaries are necessarily porous, England and the United States both made use of them to establish and define their national identities

vis-à-vis one another. Whereas American writers like Jacobs and Wilson relied on such constructs to shame their country and to shape its future, British ones like Braddon used them to allege national superiority or, like Robert Louis Stevenson, later on in the nineteenth century, to reveal the changing face of the nation.

Key Words: Interracialism, Race, Gender, Monstrosity, Home, England, America, Transatlantic, Nineteenth Century

To interracial couples and people, past, present, and future,

and to all those who have fought and continue to fight

to end racial and gender inequality,

I dedicate this work to you.

"We have to do with the past only as we can make it useful to the present and the future."

Frederick Douglass

"We Abolition Women are turning the world upside down."

Angelina Grimke

I would like to thank my parents, Carl Murphy and Catherine McIninch, for their love and support and for an upbringing full of books and liberal thinking. I am also lucky to have two sisters, Emily and Alexandra Murphy, who have consistently stood by me, listening tirelessly to both my success stories and my tales of woe. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Michael Eberle-Sinatra for always seeing the merit in my work and for giving me the opportunity to work, on several occasions, as his research assistant. I am equally indebted to Dr. Caroline Brown for helping me become a better writer and thinker by encouraging me to polish my prose and to deepen my analysis in each of my chapters. Finally, I want to express my gratitude to all my friends, those who are part of the Département d'études anglaises and those who are not, for all the pleasant conversations and coffee/lunch breaks. Such diversions enriched my time as a graduate student and gave me the energy and strength to carry on with my thesis. Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank my partner, Rolf Crepsac, for bringing love, laughter, and light into my life.

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Introduction

In 1859, Charles Darwin published On The Origin of Species, a book that revolutionized how Victorians saw themselves and the world in which they lived. Challenging previous assumptions on race and shattering those on religion, Darwin's theories led the British in the mid-nineteenth century to question their place within a rapidly changing, increasingly industrial society by demonstrating that human beings were just another species vying for survival. In addition to proving that humankind was monogenic, not polygenic as Dr. Samuel George Morton and Dr. Robert Knox believed, Darwin's work discredited the notion of biblical time by showing that the planet was, in fact, much older than the Bible suggested. He also linked humans and apes in his writing, contending that both shared a common ancestor. In making this argument, Darwin not only went against Christian precepts, which posited humans' descent from Adam and Eve, but he showed that the gap between humans and animals was closer than was previously supposed. For some Victorians, the idea that all of humanity shared the same genus in spite of national and cultural differences was particularly threatening. Furthermore, the mere suggestion of a missing link between human beings and primates not only destabilized notions of fixed racial hierarchy, but also threatened the eighteenth-century concept of the Great Chain of Being in which white, upper-class males ranked higher than all other life forms (Stepan 105).

The emergence of sciences like anthropology and pseudo-sciences like craniology and phrenology in the early-to-mid nineteenth century curtailed this problem as it created new ways for scientists to assert hierarchical relationships between groups, thus allowing for the innate superiority of one race, gender, or class

over another: whites over blacks, men over women, rich over poor, etc. Unlike Darwin, the Swiss-born anthropologist and ethnologist Louis Agassiz believed in polygenesis. Eventually relocating to the United States and witnessing the enslavement of black people firsthand strengthened his conviction that the master/slave relationship reflected the fact that not all God's creations (for his investment in science did not negate his faith) were equal. Disseminating his scientific racism in America, he argued that slavery was the natural outcome of the alleged inferiority of certain races and of the inability of Africans, whom he saw as capable of surviving only in Africa, to flourish in the United States as it fell outside of their "'natural racial zones'" (Stepan 100-101). Others, like Samuel Morton, an American who studied in Scotland, collected and examined skulls to prove that whites had bigger skulls than non-whites and were thus superior beings. Similarly, the Scottish anatomist and surgeon Robert Knox, who later moved to London, had both a regressive and extreme stance when it came to questions of race. Believing in polygenesis, he alleged that mulattoes would eventually face extinction if they did not "inter-marry with the pure races" (Knox 90). Clearly, notions of race or racial classification, along with concerns regarding racial hybridity, existed on both sides of the Atlantic. Indeed, as the nationality of these men and their travels attest, pseudoscientific conceptions of race in the nineteenth century were not confined to a specific country or continent, but rather crossed national and transatlantic borders much like the scientists themselves.

With such theories on race and evolution circulating widely in continental Europe and America by the early-to-mid eighteen hundreds, it is not surprising that

the notion of degeneration preoccupied Victorians and their American counterparts from the mid-century onward. The fear that human beings could revert back to apes and the apprehension surrounding the shifting roles of black and white women, black men, and the lower classes compelled white, patriarchal society in Britain and America to try to label or categorize each group. Especially threatening and confounding to such a system of categorization was the presence and prevalence of interracial people in the nineteenth century. As Sander Gilman has shown, "sexual norms become modes of control [in society]. Thus deviation, either in the nature of the sexual act or in its perceived purpose, becomes 'disease' or its theological equivalent, 'sin'" (Difference and Pathology 25). Consequently, the existence and proliferation of interracial individuals challenged the black/white and healthy/diseased divide because it illustrated the fluidity of race and racial identity, simultaneously crediting monogenesis and countering the notion of miscegenation as an unnatural union that would ultimately lead to annihilation. Yet, despite the reality of black and white unions and the fact that the number of mixed-race people was increasing, not decreasing, many individuals believed that interracialism referred not only to a relationship between two human beings of a dissimilar complexion, but to ones with different blood.

"Miscegenation" is a nineteenth-century, pseudo-scientific word, which comes from the Latin *miscere* and *genus* and which means "to mix races" (Ings 649). Two Democratic and anti-abolitionist journalists coined the term in 1863 when they anonymously put out a pamphlet called Miscegenation. Issuing this booklet was an attempt on their part to prevent President Lincoln from being re-elected by making it

seem as though the Republican Party advocated interracial unions, particularly those between white women and black men (Ings 648-649). Although the concept stems from racist and pro-slavery propaganda, American society on the whole sought to discourage mixed-race unions in order to hinder white men from having legitimate black heirs and to prohibit white women from controlling their own reproduction by potentially choosing black men over white ones. Unlike in Britain where interracialism was taboo, but not against the law, the United States had numerous anti-miscegenation laws geared chiefly towards making it illegal for white women to engage in sexual intercourse with black men. Although white, American men put white women on a pedestal and urged them to exercise control over their sexuality, many of these men preyed upon black, female slaves and denied paternity of their offspring. Moreover, while simultaneously infantilizing black males and labelling them as dangerous, sexual predators and innately depraved criminals, white, hegemonic culture in the United States barred black women from the Cult of True Womanhood by failing or blatantly refusing to see them as women, regarding them instead as sub-human or chattel. Whereas the notion of black males being prone to crime appears in the work of Cesare Lombroso (Lombroso-Ferrero 125, 140), the idea of these men as dangerous due to their lack of sexual restraint figures in Dr. Louis Agassiz's letters in particular as well as in pseudo-scientific discourse in general (Washington 45). As for black women, the fact that they were denied protection under the law, forced to copulate with black and white men alike, and subjected to brutal medical experiments attests to society's refusal to acknowledge their humanity. Ironically, though, black women's labour sustained white, female

privilege. Because of this, many white women were directly responsible for the social and sexual degradation of their black counterparts, sometimes refusing to acknowledge their own husbands' transgressions and other times perpetuating violence themselves, whether physical, verbal or psychological, on women of colour.

This doctoral dissertation examines how interracial individuals transcend racial categories by collapsing the black/white divide, thus redefining moral, sexual, and societal norms in four British and American texts published between 1859 and 1886. Building upon Jennifer DeVere Brody's Impossible Purities, which complicates the concept of Paul Gilroy's black Atlantic by considering how gender and sexuality affect race, and upon Anne McClintock's Imperial Leather, which explores the performativity of identity in Victorian England, this study looks at how Harriet Wilson's Our Nig (1859), Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861), Mary Elizabeth Braddon's The Octoroon, or, The Lily of Louisiana (1861), and Robert Louis Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1886) use the literary trope of the mulatta/o monster only to subvert it by showing that the real monster is white, hegemonic culture. More specifically, this project deals with how these books depict the interracial body as a gothic house, which is, in turn, a microcosm for an already increasingly hybrid and un-homely nation.

In the above-mentioned texts, those seeking to exploit interracial people and to minimize their visibility in the United States and in England force the hybrid body to retreat into the home, the female-identified sphere of the time. The reason for this is two-fold. On the one hand, they wish to deny or downplay the existence and proliferation of interracial individuals by attempting to restrict their involvement in

the public sphere and to limit their protection under the law. On the other hand, they seek to control and profit from mixed-race people's bodies and labour by trapping, seizing, and treating them as objects of exchange, labour, lust, desire, taboo, and monstrosity. Forcing such bodies to conceal themselves in the home and denying their agency and subjectivity, tyrannical individuals in both nations attempt to keep them weak and dependent, incapable of surviving and thriving outside the domestic realm. Furthermore, in seeking to destroy the health and the very lives of hybrid people, oppressive people in Britain and America wanted to preserve and perpetuate white, patriarchal privilege at all cost.

Yet, in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, both England and the United States made use of the hybrid body and the home to speak to each other around the issues of race, gender, and class as well as to define themselves against one another. No longer trading and trafficking in slaves by mid-century, Britain alleged its national superiority over America because slavery as a sexual system no longer corrupted its homes, destroying its families and degrading its women. For its part, the United States dubbed itself the land of liberty during the same period. Despite its ongoing practice of slavery and racial segregation, it portrayed itself as a hybrid country where people of all nationalities could escape Europe, with its rigid class system, and start anew without the shackles of the Old World. However, in their desire to see themselves as free and progressive nations and to paint one another as corrupt or regressive, the two countries, instead of depicting themselves as different from or more civilized than their rival, actually bridged the gap between one another. For, in claiming the importance of the home as a refuge and a prison from the outside world

and as a locus of white femininity, these nations converged, thus demonstrating how both were products of a transatlantic world in which people (bodies) and ideas (bodies of knowledge) circulated freely.

Throughout their respective works, Wilson, Jacobs, Braddon, and Stevenson show that what happens in the home extends beyond the private realm, reaching out and affecting the public one. For this reason, all four writers emphasize and exploit the notion of the home, much like the hybrid body, as a space that is part of the community but hidden from view. Indeed, just as the house is visible yet the violence within it remains unseen, the miscegenated body is discernable as a physical entity though its racial makeup is not necessarily perceptible upon first (or even second) glance. This is the case in Wilson's text where the Bellmont home conceals Alfrado's abuse and Mrs. Bellmont's transformation from church-goer into she-devil. However, in making Frado's school a place that promotes racial and gender equality, the writer creates an alternate space where the interracial girl can escape the dysfunctional household. As for Jacobs, it is evident in the various homes in her narrative— ones such as her grandmother's, Dr. Flint's, the Bruces', and the kind mistress'— all of which either hide her from view or facilitate her exploitation, functioning either as refuges or prisons (or, more often, both). Braddon's novel, for its part, underscores the link between the home and the mixed-race body in that Cora is just another one of her father's possessions. Moreover, in showing the connection between seemingly private places like Silas' secret chamber and public ones like the gambling house, the author stresses the interconnectedness of all domestic and communal spaces. Finally, in Stevenson's work, the writer conflates Jekyll's home and his laboratory as well as

the doctor's public and private self by housing both within the same body. Clearly, in all four works, the corruption that occurs in private spaces mirrors and affects that which exists in public ones. Just as it is impossible to completely separate the home and the nation or the private and the public realm, it is not possible to effect a complete separation between black/white or female/male and to house each in its "proper" place.

In drawing upon Lewis R. Gordon's contention that to be black is to be feminized and vice-versa, this thesis also explores how conventional society in the second half of the nineteenth century ostracized the black and mulatta woman and, in The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, feminized the mulatto man. The concept of monstrous mothers and motherhood, whether biological or surrogate, is significant as it underpins the four texts under consideration in this study, suggesting that the mixed-race body is like a legacy (or the mark of Cain), which is passed down from one generation to the next. This dissertation considers as well how the generic hybridity of these works highlights the racial hybridity of the figures within them. In order to understand the hybrid culture that we now live in, we must re-visit and re-assess this period in history. This examination is crucial in order to comprehend the radical ways in which writers like Wilson, Jacobs, Braddon, and Stevenson were already challenging and subverting notions of race, sex, and class in their respective works. Ultimately, I chose Our Nig, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, The Octoroon, and The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde because these four works reflect the preoccupation with the hybrid body as well as its precarious

position in the home and in the nation in England and the United States in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

Robert Louis Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde posits Hyde within Dr. Jekyll's world, one in which white, affluent, British males dominate. The narrator's bias in the book is the same as that of all the characters: in Jekyll's favour and at Hyde's expense. This is because Jekyll is the normative ideal, and Hyde, the abnormal pariah. The reasons why society embraces the former and rejects the latter are skin colour, for one, since it valorizes white complexions over black ones, and, secondly, the fear of miscegenation, which Victorians saw as a menace to the survival of the British Empire as they knew it— namely, as a supposedly uniform and fixed entity with a "pure" racial front.

Closely linked to this dread of the mixed-race body in particular and amalgamation in general is the threat of degeneration and of colonization in reverse in the late-nineteenth century where the (partly) black, feminized, and lower-class Other moves from the margins to the centre and assumes control. With the increasing spread of democracy in England and the emancipation of the enslaved, black population in the United States roughly twenty years prior to the book's publication, there is growing preoccupation over the role of women, the working class, and people of colour at home as well as the status of freed slaves across the Atlantic. Boundaries that previously seemed impervious begin to appear increasingly porous. This translates into heightened concern with shifting racial, gendered, and class norms nationally and transatlantically. The notion that someone of a different race, gender,

and class could pass for one of his "betters" and reap the benefits is one of the central anxieties in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

While Stevenson never explicitly states in the novel whether Hyde is black or white, he posits the latter somewhere between the two. This explains why every character finds him both unmistakable yet indescribable. He strikes them as both odd yet somehow eerily familiar, probably owing to the parts of him that remind them of themselves. For this reason, in spite of the fact that Hyde's physiognomy is racialized in a stereotypic fashion, he nevertheless does not fully belong to any racial category. Instead, he could be a part of any category, but what is more likely is that he defies categorization itself.

This suggests that Hyde is a hybrid, comprised not only of both black and white features, but of female and male ones as well. Whether it is his face, suddenly becoming black, its features melting and altering, or his hand, with its blend of dark hair and light skin (Stevenson 76-77, 84), it is clear that Hyde operates outside the hegemonic framework of the time. According to Daphne Brooks who examines the performativity of racial identity in Bodies in Dissent, this is mainly because "Hyde's figure, like that of a tragic octoroon, remains an unreadable or misread text to those who encounter him in the novel" (53). He is an outsider, a freak, since he is not your "typical" black or white person. In fact, he is your atypical black-and-white person, which makes him more threatening than if he were simply one or the other. Much in the same way that American characters in Braddon's text try to expose and label Cora as an octoroon, British men in Stevenson's novel obsessively seek to detect and identify the marks of blackness on Hyde's body, marking it— and, by extension,

him— as "racially transgressive" (Brooks 53). Like Toni Morrison who contends that critics tend to overlook the Africanist presence in many literary works and Celia D. Daileader who maintains that white privilege does not exist in a vacuum but rather is tied to the literature(s) that societies read and produce, I underscore the black and female presence in a text that is, on the surface, exclusively inhabited by white, propertied males.

Published anonymously between November 1861 and March 1862, Mary Elizabeth Braddon's The Octoroon; or, The Lily of Louisiana is the second serialized novel that the author wrote for the Halfpenny Journal; A Magazine For All Who Can Read. As the title of this journal suggests, its target audience was the newly literate as well as members of the working classes in England. Unlike Lady Audley's Secret, which Braddon wrote while working on the serial and which she geared toward middle and upper-middle-class readers, many of whom were part of Mudie's circulating library, The Octoroon was written for John Maxwell's penny press to provide inexpensive fiction to the masses. Drawing upon melodramas and anti-slavery novels of the period, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, the text encourages its lower-class readers to identify and to sympathize with the plight of slaves across the Atlantic (Carnell XI-XIII; Harrison 212-213; Brooks 30-31).

With her novel The Octoroon already in print by the beginning of the American Civil War, Braddon counted on her British readers' Northern sympathies to generate interest in her tale. As Kimberly Harrison contends, "[t]he novel capitalized on the public's interest in abolition and . . . [its] support of the North" (212-213). In a

clever marketing ploy, Braddon tells her audience that, by reading her novel and by the latter urging their acquaintances to do the same, they are helping enslaved blacks by becoming "convert[s] to the cause of freedom . . . and friends for the great cause of Liberty *versus* Slavery" (211). Besides demonstrating her business savvy as a young writer eager to succeed in the writing and publishing world, the manner in which Braddon attempts to forge a brother or sisterhood between her readers and American slaves hints that both are products of their environment: in the case of the underprivileged, they face a rigid social system which prevents class mobility; in the case of the enslaved, they are at the mercy of a failed democracy which condones systemic violence and injustice against blacks, denying them a home and protection under the law while exploiting their labour. Assuming a paternalistic attitude towards its audience, The Octoroon suggests that social change— be it the emancipation of slaves or the franchise for the working classes— is a gradual process that takes time, energy, patience and commitment. By viewing the abolition of slavery, much like the improvement in the condition of the lower classes, as a slow but foreseeable event in the not-too-distant future, Braddon participates in the transatlantic dialogue which compared the condition of slaves in America and that of the proletariat class in Britain (Harrison 213-214).

Similarly, Jacobs refers to the condition of the working classes in England and the enslaved in the United States. In doing so, Jacobs participates in the contemporary debate as to whether the condition of the poor in Britain was similar to that of the slaves in America. According to the writer, there is a vast difference between poverty in England and slavery in the United States. She argues that, unlike the slaves, the

working men and women earn their own wages and have their own small cottages (Jacobs 184). For a fugitive slave like Jacobs who does not even own her own body or those of her children, the thought of possessing a home, any home, seems like an intangible dream. Here, Jacobs shows how owning a home is one of privileges of whiteness. Like in Wilson's work where she explicitly mentions the "white house" in her title and links it to the politics of the nation, Jacobs too highlights how her country restricted access to property just as it denied blacks the right to claim their own bodies, offspring, and labour.

In Wilson's Our Nig, the "white house" of the subtitle stands for both the Bellmont home and the presidential house or the nation at large. Consequently, the epigraphs of British poetry open up a kind of transatlantic appeal from the United States to Britain. As the voice of the American dispossessed, Wilson's text publicizes not only the Bellmonts' mistreatment of her, but her country's exploitation of her as well. She thus collapses the white house in which the Bellmonts inhabit and the one in which the president resides into a single residence. What goes on in the homes of the nation as well as the nation itself is not a private matter; rather, the author exposes it to the scrutiny of other nations like England. Much in the same way that she divulges Mrs. Bellmont's villainy, she unmasks the American dream to reveal its ominous double, the American nightmare. Slavery, both the plantation kind in the South and the indentured variety in the North, are the sinister sources of the nation's wealth and prosperity. In a gothic twist, it is slavery itself which haunts the entire country much in the same way that Mrs. Bellmont haunts the Bellmont dwelling. Although, unlike Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, there are no

records of Wilson ever publishing her narrative in England, her use of British poetry seems to be an attempt to shame her country. By using the English literary tradition as a stand-in for England— a nation that had, notably, rid itself of slavery by the time Wilson penned her book— the author offers an alternative to the American dream/nightmare.

The notion of hybridity is clear when one looks at the books that form the corpus of this dissertation. Although considering two American slave narratives alongside two British novels might seem like an unlikely coupling at first, it is logical when one considers how Gothic monsters such as Mrs. Bellmont, Dr. Flint, Silas, Augustus, and Dr. Jekyll figure in these texts as well as how these works depict the hybrid body and the home/nation in particular. While the above-mentioned characters all figure differently in each text, what makes them similar, not to mention monstrous, is their need— like Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's work of the same title— to create monsters and to mark racially hybrid bodies as grotesque in order to conceal their own monstrosity. The fact that three of the writers are female and one is male and that two are black and two white shows how the miscegenated body and the private/public divide preoccupied people as distant and diverse as Wilson, Jacobs, Braddon, and Stevenson. This focus on racial hybridity and on figuring out the place of biracial people in the home/nation also reveals how widespread this concern was from the mid-nineteenth century (when Wilson, Jacobs, and Braddon published their respective works) until later on in the century (when Stevenson's book appeared). While the respective works by these four writers signal the prevalence of this anxiety at the time, there are other examples in the literature of the period that demonstrate

this obsession with mixed-race body: namely, Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights and, later on in the century, H. G. Wells' The Time Machine and Bram Stoker's Dracula. Moreover, since this preoccupation with race and racial identity existed on both sides of the Atlantic, these four works illustrate how this issue was not only about defining the role of interracial people in a national context, but within a transatlantic one as well. Since individual (whether black or white, female or male, lower or upper class) and collective identities (whether British or American, free or enslaved, progressive or regressive) are never formed in isolation, but rather in relation to other identities or through what Pascale Casanova calls "literary rivalries" (36), having these texts engage in a dialogue parallels the transatlantic crossing of nineteenth-century ideas on race, gender, and class. It also illustrates how these notions allowed Britain to define itself and its position on contemporary issues, such as slavery, miscegenation, and mixed-race marriage, vis-à-vis America.

Recent publications like Vanessa D. Dickerson's Dark Victorians and Laura Doyle's Freedom's Empire aim to "answer Paul Gilroy's call in Black Atlantic" to approach the Atlantic as a whole, thus underscoring the ways in which nations and identities overlap and extend beyond national and transatlantic boundaries (Doyle 5). Dickerson's work explores how British Victorians influenced their American contemporaries and vice-versa. In order to do so, she emphasizes the importance of the crosspollination of cultures and ideas, looking at "black America's romance with Victorian Britain" (4) and stressing the manner in which "Victorian Britain is deeply and complexly implicated in the lives of nineteenth- and twentieth-century black Americans" (9). Laura Doyle, for her part, focuses on what exactly freedom, nation,

and race meant for individuals like slaves and women in light of the emergence of print culture in the eighteenth century and of the predominance of the novel as the most popular literary genre by the mid-nineteenth century. In crossing the Atlantic and in breaching the gap between different people (black/white and slave/free) and systems (aristocracy/democracy and emancipation/slavery), the novel, according to Doyle, reconfigured how individuals thought of themselves, of distant others across the ocean, and of what it ultimately meant to be free. While both Dickerson and Doyle's books influence my own dissertation in their emphasis on transatlantic exchange and in their understanding of the complexity of racial identity, neither focuses specifically on the interracial body or how society attempts to render this body monstrous.

Although Hazel Waters examines the depiction of slavery as well as black and interracial characters within a transatlantic context in Racism on the Victorian Stage, she concentrates on how both figure within drama. While her writing informs my own in demonstrating the prevalence of such stereotypes on the stage and how they then infiltrated other genres, it does not address the four texts in my corpus and, consequently, does not delve into how the mixed-race body figures in them. In Bodies in Dissent, Daphne Brooks looks at both the portrayal of interracial characters in plays and in novels, focusing, like Anne McClintock in Imperial Leather, on the performative nature of race and racial identity. Yet while Brooks analyzes the racially hybrid person in Stevenson's novel, she focuses mainly on Dion Boucicault's play, only briefly alluding to Braddon's novel, thus missing the opportunity to compare Boucicault and Braddon's respective works in greater depth. Arguably the most

thorough exploration of interracialism is found in Werner Sollors' Neither Black Nor White Yet Both, An Anthology of Interracial Literature, and Interracialism. Whereas the first two titles look at interracial unions and characters in literature, highlighting common themes in such literary works and establishing a canon comprised of texts that feature mixed-race figures or unions in them, the third title is a collection of essays, both old and new, by historians, writers, and literary critics. Sollors, though, does not analyze Jacobs' narrative and Wilson's novel nor does he include them in his anthology; moreover, he dismisses Braddon's novel as a plagiarized version of Boucicault's play, a claim which I refute in my third chapter.

Equally invaluable to my project are Eve Allegra Raimon's The "Tragic Mulatta" Revisited, and Cassandra Jackson's Barriers Between Us: Interracial Sex in Nineteenth-Century American Literature because, like Sollors, they focus on interracialism, especially the plight of the tragic mulatta/o in literature. Raimon and Jackson look at "the threat of contamination by black 'blood'" (Raimon 3) and society's fear of blurred racial boundaries, which mixed-race figures embody. Both Patrick Brantlinger's and Douglas Lorimer's work are relevant as well since they delve into England's attitude towards the United States, black people, and slavery by the mid-nineteenth century. Whereas Brantlinger simultaneously considers Britain's rampant imperialism at the time and its treatment of Africans in its colonies in "Victorians and Africans," Lorimer looks at, among other things, English opinions on the American Civil War and the British analogy of race abroad being alternately similar or dissimilar to class inequality at home in Colour, Class, and the Victorians. Other works that have enriched my understanding of race in the Victorian period are

Shearer West's The Victorians and Race, Christine Bolt's Victorian Attitudes to Race, and Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina's Black Victorians: Black Victoriana. These books have helped me realize that the Victorians' conception of themselves as a virtuous, civilized and progressive nation sprung from the fact that they defined their personal and national identity vis-à-vis an often invisible, usually imagined Other onto which they projected the negative aspects of themselves. For this notion of the imagination in particular, I am indebted to Debbie Lee's emphasis, in Slavery and the Romantic Imagination, on the role that it played for Romantic writers like Mary Shelley when conjuring up distorted visions of the racial Other. Whether this Other was the black slave in America, the black person in the colonies, or the one in their own midst, considering him or her allowed Victorians to establish their own identity in opposition to that of other people and nations. Indeed, as Simon Gikandi affirms in Maps of Englishness, "any sustained contemplation of blackness is also an act of self-reflexivity," enabling Victorian England "to gaze at its self in crisis" (69).

In reflecting on the connections between Victorian Britain and America, Audrey Fisch's writing has led me to think critically about "the relationship between Victorian society and the variety of peoples originating in the African continent and living variously in the West Indies, in the United States, in Africa, and in England proper" ("Black British Studies in the Victorian Period" 353). Although I touch upon colonialism in my fourth chapter, my main focus in this dissertation, as it pertains to transatlanticism, is to explore the rapport between England and the United States in the nineteenth century around issues of miscegenation, slavery, and national identity. In this respect, Joel Pace and Robert Weisbuch's work on transatlantic scholarship

and the relationship between England and America is pertinent to my research. Pace's mention of the literary rivalries between both nations and his emphasis on the importance of women's writing are particularly useful as three of the four writers under consideration in my thesis are women, both British and American. Weisbuch's concept of cultural time (or, more specifically, of how various nations see their place in history) underpins my own analysis of the tensions between England and the United States, particularly his idea of British cultural lateness and American cultural earliness. Similarly, Claudia Stokes' "Copyrighting American History" has made me see conflicts between these two nations in light of the frequent lack of copyright laws protecting writers' intellectual property overseas. Finally, Joseph Roach's Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance and Laura M. Stevens' "Transatlanticism Now" stress not only the extent to which the "ocean offers a pliable metaphor . . . [for] permeable boundaries, uncertainty, or flux" (Stevens 93), but how the modern world is essentially the product of a circum-Atlantic in which different individuals, ideas, literatures, and cultures touched and merged, creating hybrid people and nations (Roach 4).

The fact that England abolished the slave trade in 1807 and emancipated the slaves in its colonies in 1833 did not hinder this cross-cultural exchange. Rather, it allowed Britain to assume the moral highground by 1859 when it came to the issue of slavery. By the mid-nineteenth century, as Patrick Brantlinger observes in "Victorians and Africans," England could blame slavery on the United States by viewing the latter as responsible for trafficking in human flesh (192). Moreover, the fact that England never had any anti-miscegenation laws enabled it to see itself as more

tolerant and progressive on the topic of race. It is one of the American— and not British— writers in this study that lends the most credence to this idea in her narrative. Jacobs strengthens this notion in Incidents in that she portrays the time she spent in England as being free from the racial persecution and prejudice that she experienced at home in America. However, as both Braddon and Stevenson's novel (unintentionally) illustrate, Britain's conception of itself as more open-minded and forward-thinking was not necessarily accurate. In Braddon's novel, there is a strong jingoism when it comes to how the author mentions and depicts her native land as well as more than a hint of anti-Americanism in her portrayal of Louisiana natives (or, South Americans, as she calls them). Furthermore, although the author openly supports the abolitionist cause and mixed-race marriages in her novel, her book is not without its failings when it comes to its depiction of interracial unions in particular and blackness in general. This is evident in her sanctioning an interracial union between two characters who appear white while conveying the absurdity of the visibly black character's passion for a white woman. Similarly, in Stevenson's novel, although the Jekyll/Hyde transformation allows Jekyll to transgress racial, gender, and class hierarchies, it causes the doctor to degenerate or go (for the) native. Hence, as H. L. Malchow notes in "The Half-Breed as Gothic Unnatural," it is responsible for his decline "into the more primitive side of his own duality" (107); it also leads to his untimely death.

As Malchow's work on racial hybridity in Gothic literature suggests, many nineteenth-century writers depicted gothic monsters, explicitly or implicitly, as racially ambiguous. In "Frankenstein, Racial Science, and the Yellow Peril," Anne K.

Mellor views the monster in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein as embodying an Asian Other owing to descriptions of his skin and eyes. Other scholars like Debbie Lee, Celia D. Daileader, and, most recently, Elizabeth Young agree that he does not seem to be racialized as white, but rather as physically or metaphorically black. Literary critics have also read Hyde in Stevenson's novel either as representing ethnic whiteness, alternately standing for the Irish hooligan, as Patrick Brantlinger and Richard Boyle contend in "The Education of Edward Hyde," or the East-End Jew, as Sander Gilman claims in "'I'm Down on Whores': Race and Gender in Victorian London." Others, like Judith Halberstam and Daphne Brooks see him as typifying certain black stereotypes prevalent at the time in Skin Shows and Bodies in Dissent, respectively. My interpretation of Hyde resembles Halberstam's and Brooks' in that I consider him as embodying blackness; however, I differ from them in seeing him as personifying the interracial person in the late-nineteenth century.

In reading Victorian novels closely, one frequently detects what Toni Morrison calls an Africanist presence. Whether it is Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre with its portrayal of Bertha Mason, the Jamaican Creole, or Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights, with its depiction of Heathcliff's handsome, dark looks and his gipsy ancestry, or Bram Stoker's Dracula, with its Transylvanian count of dubious racial extraction, racialized villains or hybrid monsters abound in gothic texts. Yet, as I illustrate in my thesis, although society tries to portray them as monstrous, the real monster is the white, hegemonic culture that attempts to render them so. Like in many Victorian novels, American slave narratives also portray black figures as racial outcasts; in these works too, individuals reclaim their own humanity by showing how

the true "fiend" is the slaveholding, patriarchal society that deems them chattel. Teresa A. Goddu's "Haunting Back," Julia Stern's "Excavating Genre in Our Nig," and Kari J. Winter's Subjects of Slavery, Agents of Change highlight the inherent gothicness in American writing, portraying not only how writers employ this genre, but how they appropriate and alter its conventions.

In the four texts under consideration in my thesis, the writers make use of the trope of the mulatta/o monster to demonstrate how the hybrid body is trapped within the house and within the nation. The fact that three of these four works are canonical and that one— Braddon's The Octoroon— is not illustrates how this preoccupation with interracialism extends beyond texts that students and scholars generally study. It also attests to the importance of expanding the canon to include more obscure books while continuing to revisit and re-examine the classics. Despite being the product of very different pens, Wilson's, Jacobs', Braddon's, and Stevenson's texts demonstrate how England and the United States sought to erase or minimize biracial people's visibility by forcing these individuals to retreat into the home and by seeking to limit their involvement in shaping the laws and politics of the nation.

As these works evince, the interracial person's presence clearly destabilizes and threatens both the domestic and the social order. This is evident in Jacobs' narrative in that, as Linda Brent, she poses a particular threat to the Flints because she is able to successfully navigate or travel between black and white societies. Whereas she manages to rely upon the help and support of her friends and family in the black community to hide from Dr. Flint and to ultimately escape to the North, she is able to use the white community to meet other needs such as physical and financial security.

This is clear in her strategic alliance with Mr. Sands to fend off Dr. Flint's advances and in her ability to secure a job from Mr. and Mrs. Bruce when she goes to the Free States. Furthermore, Jacobs' apparent advocacy of an interracial or supra-racial woman's movement is yet another way that she uses her book to cross and break down barriers between herself and her readers while nonetheless signalling to her white, female readership the inherent privileges of whiteness in the anti-black, slaveholding culture of the period. Likewise, Eve Allegro Ramón contends that the mulatta narrative enables readers to sympathize with the interracial woman on issues of gender while limiting identification on those tied to race (26-27). The time that Linda spends hidden in the garret underscores the ways in which both the house and the nation crippled black, female bodies, forcing them to contort, to shrink, and to hide themselves in order to survive.

Similarly, in Wilson's text, Alfrado dwells in the Bellmont home, which, like her country, has a vested interest in keeping her small and feeble lest she get too big and outgrow her place in it. Yet, although harsh treatment and lack of nourishment render Frado's body weak and sickly, this does not affect her spirit. Like Brent, she is both strong and assertive— the very opposite of the conventional mulatta figure in literature. In Our Nig, the house stands in for the nation in that black, working-class, female drudgery sustains white, middle-class privilege. While Frado ultimately escapes the Bellmont house, Wilson is economically crippled when she struggles to support herself and her son in a country that seeks to keep black people, especially black women, dependent upon white women and men.

Braddon's novel also deploys the conventions of the tragic or monstrous mulatta only to subvert her readers' expectations. In her book, the hybrid body is a direct extension of the house in that the slaveholding South in mid-nineteenth-century America deems it a material possession. This is obvious when Gerald goes bankrupt as both Silas Craig in particular and slaveholding culture in general consider Cora's interracial body an object of exchange, one that goes toward paying her father's debts. On the other hand, Cora's assertion of herself as more than barter and as someone whose fate is to survive and thrive— not perish— designates her as a triumphant figure. Moreover, her insistence on her subjectivity when faced with individuals and a society that seek to turn her into a commodity aligns this fictional heroine with the real-life heroines in Jacobs' and Wilson's texts.

Jekyll as Hyde must also increasingly shield himself in the house in Stevenson's novel. As in the other works that I discuss in this dissertation, the house in Stevenson's book becomes a kind of gothic prison— one which metonymically stands for the nation— where the mixed-race body must retreat from the company of others in order to protect itself. Just as Jekyll must avoid his friends by confining himself to his abode, so too must he, as Hyde, seek out a safe haven in Soho where he attempts to go undetected or to pass in an area where his presence might seem less suspicious than it would in the West End. It is worth noting that it is in the laboratory that Jekyll drinks the draught that enables him to shapeshift into his black-and-white nemesis. This transformation never occurs in public for it is conditional upon the secrecy and the seclusion that the house provides. Similar to the figures in the other texts, Jekyll as Hyde is a monstrous presence in nineteenth-century culture,

something which society must contain and something which it fears might contaminate its other members if not restricted to its "proper place" within the cultural hierarchy of the time (Stepan 99). Nineteenth-century society tries to force Hyde— as it does Jacobs as Linda, Wilson as Frado, and Cora—to accept his designated place within the social order; like the others, Hyde resists restrictive categories that seek to polarize members by forcing them to pick one facet of themselves (i.e., whiteness) and deny another (i.e., blackness).

The concept of motherhood is important in these nineteenth-century texts since the interracial body inherits its legal and social standing from the mother. All four works deal with the racial legacy that one generation bequeaths to the next and how this inheritance, in turn, affects the social and economic conditions of those inheriting it. Lineage explains a person's position in a hierarchical culture that uses arbitrary markers like race, gender, and class to determine where one falls on the ladder. Yet, as Stephanie Li asserts, motherhood can also be a source of agency and power in that it is a way for female slaves to resist patriarchal oppression by reclaiming their own sexuality— at least in Jacobs' text (15). Paradoxically, though, it is also a way of transmitting their slave status to their children, thus signalling the limits of its emancipatory power.

Unlike Linda, Frado, and Hyde, who are all outcasts from the onset, society initially welcomes Cora. The white characters in the novel ultimately reject her, though, when they discover her racial identity as they feel that fraternizing with her will compromise their social standing. Consequently, she faces ostracism and must reconcile her previous conception of herself as white in Britain with her realization

that, in America, she is black. In Cora's case, much like in Linda's, her mother's status as an enslaved, black woman renders her a commercial good that can be bought and sold. For Frado, her white mother's lower-class origins and her involvement with a black man negatively affect her reputation. Similarly, in Stevenson's novel, Jekyll is a kind of mother to Hyde in that he creates or gives birth to the racialized, feminized, and lower-class Other. Clearly, in both Wilson and Stevenson's texts, the parent's association with the lower classes as well as with real or metaphorical blackness makes this individual's whiteness questionable.

In Stevenson's book, Jekyll functions as both a biological and surrogate mother in that Hyde is literally an extension or a distortion of his physical self as well as a schizophrenic projection of himself into another body, one that he disowns by referring to it as "he" and not "I" (90). Jekyll's use of the first and the third-person pronouns here to dissociate himself from Hyde illustrates how the doctor attempts to use language to house his nemesis in a separate body and thus contain or salvage the self. Ultimately, though, language signals both its limits (in that it cannot keep the Other at bay) and its limitlessness (in that words themselves and their meanings often merge and overlap). Furthermore, the manner in which Jekyll takes care of Hyde by financially subsidizing him and by shielding him from his ever-intrusive circle of bachelor friends suggests that he has assumed a kind of maternal role in protecting him from the danger of detection. Although the doctor tries to separate himself from his darker nemesis, he discovers that he can no longer keep him at a distance: the Other is the self. What Jekyll initially views as a harmless dalliance across colour, gender, and class lines rapidly becomes a permanent part of himself that he can no

longer divorce from his white, male, upper-class identity. Jekyll's inability to effectively split the black/white, female/male, lower-class/upper-class binary attests to the slippery nature of such divisions in the first place.

Jacobs' narrative contrasts biological and surrogate mothers as well. In focusing on how the slave inherits her status from her birth mother owing to the matrilineal nature of slavery, the writer demonstrates how slaveholding culture perverts familial bonds by making the mother's legacy one of bondage. What is more, while substituting natural kinship for an unnatural one, slaveholders often likened the institution of slavery to a family where they acted in loco parentis to their slaves. Clearly, slave masters' use of the word "parent" was selective in that it allowed them to use the analogy to describe slavery as natural while, as Werner Sollors contends, denying the parentage of their own mixed-race offspring by considering them "as belonging to a different race . . . and therefore not . . . 'family'" (Neither Black Nor White Yet Both 44). If one extends this warped logic to Jacobs' text, Linda's master and mistress also become her surrogate father and mother. However, Jacobs uses this faulty parallel in order to expose its failings. She illustrates repeatedly throughout the book how dysfunctional the families of the nation truly are in sanctioning the physical and sexual abuse of black women. In showing what she endures in the Flint household, she draws attention to the horrors perpetrated on black, female bodies in the nation at large.

Wilson's text also compares natural and unnatural mothers. Mag, Frado's biological mother, behaves in an unnatural manner by abandoning her daughter to the monstrous Mrs. Bellmont. Hence, birth and surrogate mothers are both monsters in

their own right. Yet whereas Mag's abandonment of her daughter is due largely to penury and selfishness, Mrs. Bellmont's treatment of Frado stems from her need to assure her social rank at the interracial girl's expense. Thus, in this book, white women's social ascendancy is simultaneously dependent upon and threatened by mixed-race women. The hybrid body is too close for comfort as it signals not only alienating difference, but dangerous sameness. As David Theo Goldberg mentions in Anatomy of Racism, the category "women" and "lower classes" "were analogically and routinely joined in the anthropological, biological, and medical literature in the 1860s and 1870s . . . [resulting in] a complex system of implications about similarity and difference" (45). Thus, while white women must keep black women at bay to maintain their already precarious position in the social order, white females cannot keep black ones too far away since they depend on the latter to do the manual labour that ensures their middle-class respectability.

In Braddon's novel, Cora essentially has two sets of parents, one black and the other white. Although Francilia, Cora's biological black mother, and Toby, the latter's partner, are slaves, they differ substantially from Gerald, their master, and his unnamed wife. Cora's birth mother and her surrogate father are better parents than her biological father and his wife who keep the young woman at a distance. Through Toby, Cora discovers that her mother was a slave; this knowledge permits her to understand her origins as well as to gain a more complex awareness of her racially hybrid identity. Hence, whereas her white, biological father obscures her ancestry, her black, adoptive father reveals the truth to her about her birth. Once again, this incident highlights not only how slavery reconfigures families, but also how it forces

those vested in it to perpetuate deception by obscuring facts rather than bringing them to light. Dishonesty is at the heart of the institution of slavery, as Braddon demonstrates, because it forces slave owners to lie to their slaves, to their families, and to themselves.

The generic hybridity in Jacobs' Incidents resembles Linda's hybrid identity as the writer makes use of the conventions of different literary genres to recount the events of her life. While the book is first and foremost a slave narrative, it also draws upon the gothic and sentimental novel as well as testimonial literature, thus blurring, as P. Gabrielle Foreman points out in "The Spoken and the Silenced," "the parameters of fiction and slave narrative" (315). Jacobs' text employs gothic tropes like the mad woman in the attic in describing how Linda must hide in the garret to escape the clutches of Dr. Flint. From this vantage point, she enacts a reverse haunting in that she is able to spy on the doctor. Hence, there is an inversion of power in that, making use of the panoptical gaze, she can see him, but he is oblivious to her presence. In recounting Linda's imprisonment in the garret, her text is similar to Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. Yet, in Jacobs' narrative, her alter ego reclaims the gothic space of the attic, not to mention Bertha's subjectivity, by speaking back to the centre or to the hegemonic, white world. It is the black woman, not the white one, whose voice we hear in Jacobs' Incidents. She uses this voice to eschew the traditional marriage plot in sentimental fiction while nevertheless directly relying on sentimental tropes to address her predominantly white, female audience. In other words, while Jacobs draws upon the language of sentiment, she rejects the more typical features of this genre, ones that run counter to her abolitionist aims or to her

own lived experience as a black woman in the slaveholding South. Finally, her narrative fits squarely within testimonial literature in that she uses it as a way of testifying to the injustices that she suffered under slavery. Her text becomes a court of law where she, as an eyewitness, can testify to the crimes that Dr. and Mrs. Flint have committed not only against her, but also against other black people. In this manner, Jacobs demonstrates how the depiction of the mulatta in testimonial literature differs from her portrayal in novels. Whereas testimonial uses of the mixed-race female draw attention to social injustice in order to denounce it, novelistic ones depict her as a foil who serves mainly to reinforce the centrality of the white female protagonist and to emphasize the latter's virtues.

Wilson's Our Nig is also a generically hybrid work. Called a "fictional third-person autobiography" (xi) by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and considered the first novel published by an African-American woman, it is nonetheless fitting to see it as a slave narrative as well as a gothic text. The reason why the first label is apt is because, as an indentured servant, she must do menial labour for a family of professed abolitionists who mistreat her and ruin her health. What is more, in demonstrating the paucity of employment opportunities for blacks in the North, Wilson implies that black and mixed-race women who are free in mid-nineteenth-century America are only nominally so. Thus, her book reads like a slave narrative or an "allegory of a slave narrative," as Foreman affirms ("The Spoken and the Silenced" 315), in that it suggests that she herself and others like her are trapped within a system that benefits from exploiting black workers. Her text employs the trope of the mulatta monster only to subvert it by demonstrating to readers Frado's humanity and Mrs. Bellmont's

inhumanity. In this manner, the text exposes the real monster in the house, namely the white woman who is intent upon subjugating the young, mixed-race person in her midst. Like Linda in Jacobs' narrative, Frado must dwell in a room in which she barely fits, underscoring the unnaturalness of her position in the house and the stark circumstances that compel her to remain there.

Although it is a sensational novel, Braddon's The Octoroon borrows from the gothic tradition in its depiction of race and from abolitionist writing in its anti-slavery agenda. Besides having a mixed-race heroine, it contains other elements that are typically gothic: obscure parentage, lustful patriarchs, and secret passages, to name a few. The main gothic feature of the book, though, is its use of race and slavery to create an effect of suspense, mystery, and impending doom. As for Braddon's abolitionist stance, it is evident in her direct appeal to her lower-class, penny press readers to think of their "oppressed brothers and sisters" across the Atlantic (210). It is also apparent in her repeated comparisons between England, the land of the free, and America, the land of the enslaved. In comparing both nations, the author frequently draws her readers' attention to how British characters and institutions differ from American ones to signal her belief in the superiority of her native land. Likewise, in "Political Persuasion in Mary Braddon's The Octoroon; or, The Lily of Louisiana," Kimberly Harrison observes how the author "cultivates British nationalism by building upon the anti-Americanism that was prevalent in Britain at the beginning of the Civil War" (217). To this end, she portrays slavery as an outmoded practice rooted in American greed and opportunism. In doing so, she

conveniently ignores Britain's involvement in slavery in the not-so-distant past and its rampant imperialism in the mid-nineteenth century.

Combining gothic, sensation, and detective fiction, Stevenson's Jekyll and Hyde is a generically hybrid text that underscores the ways in which genre, like race or racial identity, is a construct which, upon further inspection, is more heterogeneous than it appears. The description of Jekyll's home and of Hyde's racialized body mark it as gothic. Furthermore, the fact that Hyde inhabits Jekyll's home without the latter's servants ever getting a glimpse of him suggests that he haunts the domestic sphere. For, like a ghost, his servants can hear his voice and his comings and goings, yet they never see him. The fog, too, adds to the gothic dimension of the novel in that it is something that keeps transgressions that happen in the city as well as Hyde's racial identity shrouded in darkness. The mention of blackmail, murder, and suicide are typical elements of sensation fiction. Similar to Braddon's The Octoroon, Stevenson creates suspense in his text by relating a sensational tale filled with criminal activity and urban vice. By using the word "case" in the title of his novel, the author anticipates detective fiction, which Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories popularized (Hirsch 228). Since the case in Jekyll/Hyde is never fully resolved, this gives readers and critics alike the chance to speculate on the mystery in question. This interpretation reads the Jekyll/Hyde enigma as racial and sexual in nature, seeing it as a dalliance across the black/white and female/male divide. As in Stevenson's novel, Wilson also challenges narrow conceptions of race, gender, and genre in Our Nig, as the next chapter demonstrates.

Chapter One:
Making and Unmaking Monsters in Harriet Wilson's Our Nig

Determining Alfrado's proper place, as an interracial female, in the home and the nation is a pervading anxiety in Harriet Wilson's Our Nig. Likewise, establishing the role of free blacks in an increasingly industrialized North was a contested issue in mid-to-late nineteenth-century America. Before the Reconstruction, many whites not only restricted who had access to civil liberties such as marriage, citizenship, and suffrage, but perpetuated a worldview that considered whiteness as normal and any other race or racial configuration as unnatural, deviant or degenerate (Carter 29, 124; Gilman Difference and Pathology 81-83; Sollors Neither Black Nor White 242). This obsession with preserving a whitewashed nation led to a preoccupation with naming various social groups and designating their proper places to ensure that "natural" boundaries between white and non-white individuals were respected (Stepan 98-99).

Wilson, for her part, underscores the need to polarize blacks and whites in the subtitle of her book when she mentions "the white house." The fact that the house and virtually all of its inhabitants— except for Frado— are white highlights the importance of racializing not only people, but also spaces, be they domestic, regional, or national. This is worth noting as Wilson wrote and published her text before the start of the Civil War and thus before Jim Crow-era segregation even though it seems to anticipate the latter in terms of the tasks the Bellmonts assign Frado and her general living conditions. Dubbing the Bellmont residence "the white house" also alludes to the extent to which the politics of the home mirror those of the nation. Besides suggesting a political system or domestic reality that is inherently flawed in sanctioning systematic abuse against people of colour, it also hints at how inequality is a lived experience that transgresses the public/private schism. While the

eponymous house in question is the Bellmont home, seeing this as an allusion to the president's abode is useful, as R.J. Ellis points out, for examining the situation of free and enslaved blacks in mid-nineteenth century America.[1] It is also a particularly valuable starting point for my discussion of the novel because it is Frado's status as a mixed-race female that seals her fate in a home/nation which seeks to profit from her labour and to deny her legal/human rights in both the private and the public sphere.

Like house slaves on plantations in the South, one of the supposed privileges of Frado's light skin is that it gains her admittance into the home, the female-identified sphere of the time. However, as Wilson repeatedly shows readers throughout the narrative, this seeming privilege is in fact a curse as the home, much like the nation, is a place of unspoken terror. Julia Stern and Teresa A. Goddu discuss how Wilson and Jacobs' texts portray life under slavery and domestic violence against the black body in a way that stresses the inherent gothicness of both. As Stern and Goddu suggest, Wilson and Jacobs use conventions from Gothic literature to speak of the unspeakable (i.e., the abuse that black women suffered) as well as to highlight the dark underpinning of the sentimental mother and the home as a safe haven (i.e., the devil in the house and the home as prison respectively). Thus, while I agree with Henry Louis Gates that it is useful to consider Wilson's novel[2] in light of the conventions of sentimental fiction, it is also valuable to examine how the text engages in a dialogue with British Gothic fiction to forge the American Gothic, a genre that is largely indebted to and that draws from the actual lived experience of slavery. P. Gabrielle Foreman's concept of the spoken and the silenced, like Freud's

notion of the heimliche/ unheimliche, is a Gothic device that both Wilson and Jacobs rely on to convey to their readers the actual horror they endured while enslaved.

The Bellmont home closely resembles the Flint household where Harriet Jacobs as Linda Brent is held against her will. Furthermore, like the nation, there is nothing sacred or assured in these homes except for the abuse and exploitation of the mixed-race female. As both Jacobs and Wilson's texts evince, the angel in the house is most likely a she-devil and the benign patriarch either a corrupt and depraved tyrant or a detached and indifferent "good antislavery friend" unwilling to put his politics into practice. Clearly, the violence that Frado faces is both gendered and racially-coded. In fact, it occurs owing to the tripartite configuration of colour, gender, and class. Like Mrs. and Dr. Flint, Mrs. Bellmont reads her ward's race and class markers as signs that designate her indentured servant's body as her possession.

This chapter looks at how the interracial female, Alfrado, dwells uncomfortably in the home, which is a microcosm of the nation in Harriet Wilson's Our Nig. Forced to live with cruel mothers and indifferent fathers, belittled by ineffectual brothers and pitied by "true women" who reside somewhere between this world and the next, Frado is trapped in a dysfunctional family where some are abusers and the rest are enablers. However, all are culpable by failing to ensure that democratic idea(l)s of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are available to all. Wilson's narrative illustrates the undemocratic principles at work in nineteenth-century America by demonstrating how violence and oppression towards people of colour haunted the homes of the country, both in the North and in the South, rendering them gothic sites of horror and brutality.

Before moving on to a discussion of domesticity and the nation, the following analysis begins by examining Wilson's appropriation and reworking of the trope of "the tragic mulatta." It then delves into the various interracial relationships in the text: the white Mag's union with her black husband, Jim; then, upon the latter's death, her relationship with his black business partner, Seth Shipley; finally, Frado's bond(age) to the white Bellmonts, particularly Mrs. Bellmont, the "she-devil" herself. In tracing Frado's relationships with diverse members of the Bellmont household, my aim is to show how these relations involve a denial of the mixed-race person's subjectivity. Whether it is in stressing a spiritual self instead of a material one or in objectifying that self owing to existing hierarchies of race, class, and gender, Frado's bondage to this Northern, white family costs her not just her health, but her subject status. Finally, the chapter ends with an exploration of the narrative's generic hybridity and its transatlantic gestures evident in Wilson's use of British writers' works as epigraphs at the beginning of several chapters in her book.

In her text, Wilson challenges conventional depictions of race and gender by destabilizing the notion that there is an *innate* difference between black and white or, for that matter, between female and male.[3] As the author demonstrates throughout her fictionalized autobiography, the only real— albeit significant— disparity that exists is how society limits the freedom of and exploits those whom it marginalizes. In the nineteenth century, individuals who were relegated to the margins were enslaved and free black women and men as well as members of the lower classes. While the text deals with the plight of a poor, white woman via the character of Mag Smith, its main focus is on the condition of the impoverished, indentured, mixed-race Alfrado.[4]

Although Wilson avoids essentialist notions of race, she nonetheless illustrates the brutal conditions and racist treatment of those who are *deemed* black in an antiblack culture.[5] Her narrative is progressive because, while it focuses mainly on the plight of the eponymous mixed-race "nig," it also rejects simple binaries by demonstrating the fallacy of equating whiteness with good or blackness with evil.[6]

In doing so, Wilson demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of interracial relations that avoids not only the ideological pitfalls of her time, but those of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as well. In her refusal to merely invert the white/good and black/bad polarity and in her championing of the interracial Frado, she not only writes herself from the margins into the centre but, through her fictionalized self, she becomes that centre. By occupying a central place between black and white, she is literally (though not legally), to use Werner Sollors' phrase, "neither black nor white yet both."[7] Thus, Wilson collapses both "races" into one single race while focusing on the particular hardships of black people in a white supremacist world.

The tragic mulatta in fiction is generally a young, vulnerable, light-skinned black female who is an orphan and/or a slave. Furthermore, as Eva Allegra Raimon states, "the very tragedy of the figure's fate depends upon her female gender" (5). The mulatta endures particular hardships that the tragic mulatto, her literary counterpart, does not: she risks sexual harassment or exploitation which threatens to destroy her and, frequently, results in her untimely death. Moreover, in her portrayal, she often lacks the subjectivity and intelligence of her male equivalent; hence, she is more of a flat or two-dimensional character meant to serve a political end, namely the

abolition of slavery. Indeed, the "tragic mulatta" plot suggests that only the eradication of slavery will assure the mixed-race heroine's survival (Raimon 5-6). Consequently, her demise is a sign of her refinement in that she is too genteel to endure the brutality of slavery— not to mention that her death also makes her a martyr for the abolitionist cause, one who dies and will keep on dying, in literature, until the nation outlaws the slave trade. This is the case in James Fenimore Cooper's The Last of the Mohicans (1826), Lydia Maria Child's "The Quadroons" (1842), and Dion Boucicault's The Octoroon (1859). In all three works, the mixed-race heroine's death attests to the violence that the slaveholding nation perpetrates on interracial individuals who are trapped between two worlds, one black and the other white, and thus destined to be part of neither.

Wilson's Alfrado matches the description of the tragic mulatta in many ways: she is a young, abandoned, mixed-race woman forced to live in slave-like conditions whose health severely deteriorates over the course of the narrative. However, although the Bellmonts physically and economically exploit her, they arguably never sexually abuse her.[8] Moreover, unlike the stereotypic, fictional mulatta, Frado manages to stay alive due to the fact that she is a highly subjective, intelligent, and introspective person who is strong, determined, and somewhat unruly.[9] In other words, she is far from being a stock and largely passive figure intended to serve a purely political purpose; instead, she is complex and serves the author's various purposes— social, political and economic. Owing to this, Wilson envisions her character as triumphant. For, not only does the writer as Frado refuse to die, she also insists on living inside and outside of the text.

Furthermore, in writing her autobiography, the author ensures her survival not only during her lifetime, but in the immortal realm of literature or, as she describes it, "beyond mortal vision" (131). Thus, she creates her own immortality by structuring her fictional world— unlike heaven, which Frado fears is only for whites— as a space of inclusion and as a locus of black empowerment where she can control and shift the gaze to track down her white oppressors. This is similar to how Harriet Jacobs uses her narrative to expose the hypocrisy of Dr. and Mrs. Flint and to challenge their version of events as well as their vision of her as chattel. By writing down her story, Jacobs, like Wilson, creates a historical account that validates her experience despite the fact that pre-Civil War era America sought to dismiss it. In taking up the pen, both writers refused to let the outside world define them, choosing instead to leave behind a written testament of their lives for posterity.

Wilson's novel, like Jacobs' narrative, casts its own moral judgments rather than mirror worldly values or conventional pieties like the Christian version of the afterlife. The realm of the text creates a place where the author can right/write the injustices of this world.[10] In this sense, the text converts us to its side of the story; it enacts its own conversion by encouraging readers to consider, if not adopt, the author's way of seeing and evaluating this world.[11] It urges its readers to ground themselves firmly in the here-and-now by focusing first on its wrongs, before even entertaining otherworldly consideration. In this way, the text stems from Wilson's material reality: first, by being the by-product of her own financial hardships and, second, by exposing the economic motives of her oppressors. After all, although the Bellmonts are professed Christians with strong ties to the abolitionist movement, they

exploit Frado financially and otherwise.[12] In highlighting this fact, the narrative seeks to divert readers' focus away from the next world and convert them into disciples of this world.

Wilson's decision to portray herself as the mixed-race Frado does not stem from a desire to pander to the tastes of white readers, which is "[o]ne assumption of the "Tragic Mulatto[/a] convention" (Sollors Neither Black Nor White Yet Both 237); instead, it reflects her need to accurately portray her own lived experience.[13] It testifies to the complexity of racial identity, one that the writer chooses to highlight in her own story. It is misleading to look at this narrative choice as a way of reaching a happy medium between black and white or of courting the favour of both groups.[14] Certainly, the author wished to appeal to the largest segment of the population for monetary reasons; however, she avoided writing the kind of the work that would deny her own family history or omit the full nature of her experience. As a result, her text did not find a place within even the most liberal, white circles or activist, black ones of the period.[15] Choosing to denounce abolitionists, probably the most progressive—albeit still racist— group of whites at the time and phony fugitive slaves, her book ran the risk of alienating the very individuals, anti-slavery proponents and real fugitive slaves, who would most likely have been drawn to her work. After all, the latter, some of whom became politically active in the abolitionist movement, did not perhaps relish reading about fake runaway slaves.[16] The very presence of such impostors on the lecturing circuit might seem like a trivialization and dismissal of their hardships and of their working towards abolition and other ends.

Indeed, rather than being an attempt to bond with blacks or a ploy to interest whites in her story,[17] Wilson's depiction of herself as an interracial individual adds to the realism and poignancy of her text. Hence, I agree with Sollors when he asserts: "by saying 'Tragic Mulatto[/a]' and thus devaluing much nineteenth-century interracial literature we may also be supporting racial essentialism, or advocating as 'normal' a view of the world that divides people first of all into 'black' and 'white'—and hence ridicules intermediary categories as 'unreal'" (Neither Black Nor White Yet Both 242). Unlike (white) anti-miscegenation advocates of her time and (white and black) racial essentialists of the twentieth and twenty-first century, Wilson is radical when it comes to both her stance on and her depiction of the interracial other in particular and interracial sex in general. In fact, her revolutionary views make her avant-garde not only in 1859, but in 2009 as well. While her book has finally received the scholarly recognition that it deserves, the views disseminated in it are still struggling to find acceptance in practice both inside and outside the academy.

The writer stresses her dual heritage by beginning her book not by recounting her earliest childhood memory, but by relating her mother's "fall" and her parents' meeting. The fact that she is the product of an interracial union is neither shocking nor particularly unheard of, considering the existence of slavery in the United States in the early-to-mid nineteenth century and its legacy of mixed-race individuals; what is unconventional and modern about the narrative is the author's comfort with such relationships. This acceptance is obvious when she writes: "You can philosophize, gentle reader, upon the impropriety of such unions, and preach dozens of sermons on the evils of amalgamation. Want is a powerful philosopher and preacher" (Wilson

13). In this passage, it is the "gentle" reader who is too inexperienced to realize or impractical to face the existence of and the motives for inter- or, for that matter, intra-racial love. The author places all the unease with and disavowal of such relations onto her readers. It is they who fear and condemn "amalgamation"; she neither judges nor disapproves of such liaisons.

This is perhaps because the two factors that lead to her parents' coupling, poverty and alienation, are wants that she felt keenly throughout her lifetime. In real life, Harriet Wilson struggled to support herself and her son, George, and to find a niche in society. Like other notable, nineteenth-century Spiritualists such as First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln and Isaac and Amy Post who became involved in the movement after losing a child, Wilson eventually turned to a career in Spiritualism a few years after George's death (Foreman "Chronology" x and "Introduction" xli). She also wound up marrying John Gallatin Robinson, a white apothecary who was eighteen years younger than she was, after her first husband, Thomas Wilson's death (Foreman "Introduction" xxiii-l). This suggests that not only was Wilson a progressive and unconventional individual, but a resilient woman and an active member of society as well. Like Frado, her fictionalized self in Our Nig, she was able to overcome adversity not only by leaving the Hayward (Bellmont) household, but by making a name for herself as a Spiritualist who addressed issues such as the education of children and labour reform (Foreman "Chronology" x). [18]

In the narrative, Frado's eventual marriage to Samuel, the professed fugitive slave, demonstrates the author's awareness of how want and need are inextricably linked. The relationship between the protagonist and her husband follows a similar

trajectory as that between her mother and father. In both instances, want is dominant. Like her father, Frado wants and enjoys being needed by another; like her mother, she simply wants (i.e., she is destitute). This is evident in the following quote: Frado "realized for the first time, the relief of looking to another for comfortable support" (Wilson 127). In this excerpt, the writer is referring not only to the support that comes from companionship, but also to that which comes from financial assistance. Hence, like her mother, Mag, whose decision to marry Jim stems from economic hardship and social ostracism, Frado looks to another to ease her monetary trouble and social isolation. Owing to this, Wilson acknowledges not only how need is more powerful than want, but how real life trumps fiction when it comes to depicting the reasons why people enter into relationships.[19]

Furthermore, this suggests that, despite Frado's ambivalent feelings towards her mother throughout the book, the author understands what drives the character of Mag in her quest to survive. However, in Frado's case, just as in Wilson's, this struggle is compounded by the fact that she must also face society's racism and find a way of supporting herself in spite of it. Owing to this emphasis on inequality and poverty throughout the text, her treatment of courtship and marriage differs from Mag's in that it chiefly foregrounds material motives (hers) and racist motivations (others) that make unions like marriage such desirable options. For, instead of facing destitution and injustice alone, one can form an alliance. Unfortunately for Frado and for Mag (in the case of her affair with the white man who leaves her), this alliance ends in betrayal.

Ultimately, both Frado's status as a mixed-race individual and her parents' interracial marriage enable Wilson "to explore the proscribed social and sexual relations between the races" (duCille 7). Frado's presence within the text forces readers to acknowledge that slavery alone cannot entirely explain the proliferation of biracial individuals in the nineteenth century.[20] Furthermore, it encourages contemporary critics and historians alike to look at personal histories like Wilson's, ones that offer other explanations, besides plantation slavery, to account for the existence of interracial people. In this writer's work, the white Mag and the black Jim unite as alienated members of the working class. Hence, it is mainly the issue of class oppression that brings about their union. While Jim is more financially stable than Mag, they are nonetheless both outcasts. Whereas the latter is a pariah because of her seduction and desertion by a white man, the former is an outsider because of his skin colour and, arguably, his condition as a free, black man in a slave-holding nation.[21] The two come together, however, owing to their financial circumstances as well as their need for companionship, thus illustrating how not all instances of interracial contact at the time were the result of coercion or rape.

As she does in her portrayal of mixed-race unions and people, Wilson also subverts readers' expectations in how she uses and revises the marriage plot. She does this in two ways: first, by presenting readers with the unconventional— by nineteenth-century standards, that is— black male/white female matrimonial union, and second, by opposing the prevalent idea(l) of marriage as a remedy to all social ills popular in (white) women's literature at the time. Noting this, Ann duCille contends:

> Harriet Wilson uses both material considerations and racial ideology to turn the marriage ideal in on itself. Like Jane Austen and numerous white women writers, Wilson exposes the valorized institution of marriage as an economic arrangement, but she also expands and particularizes their critique by showing that, when complicated by racial difference, holy wedlock becomes a source not of redemption or social legitimacy but of disgrace and truly unpardonable sin. (5-6)

Not only does Mag's marriage to Jim push her "another step down the ladder of infamy" (13), it also enacts nineteenth-century society's worst fear: an interracial marriage between a white woman and a black man. In the narrative, this "unpardonable sin" justifies exiling the offenders. While it might seem initially to readers that Mag's choice of a partner attests to her progressive views on race, it only serves to temporarily mask her own deep-seated prejudice. Indeed, society's rejection of the couple does not appear to reconcile Mag to her lot. Instead, having internalized and accepted her culture's racism, she treats her husband as an object and her children as sub-human. For Mag, marriage is a contract: her husband exists merely "to subserve her own comfort" and she, to ease his struggles "till death released her" (15). Consequently, Wilson's depiction of the relationship between these two characters highlights the contractual nature of marriage in that this interracial couple enters into it for the sake of convenience. It is prompted by penury, but also by selfishness and opportunism.

For equality and mutual respect to exist in a relationship, Wilson suggests that it be present in the dominant social order. Living in a culture that is hierarchically-structured by race, gender, and class, Mag uses the only social advantage at her disposal: her white skin. Her peripheral position in her society does not sensitize her to the suffering of others; rather, it makes her cold and calculating. Hence, at the heart

of Wilson's portrayal of this union is a cutting critique of a racist and economically-exploitative culture that forces its members to prey upon one another, by objectifying and by demeaning this other, in order to survive. When characters do come together, it is usually at the expense of another. Mag and Jim's union affects the material conditions of Frado's life in that she inherits her mother and father's disgrace because of the narrow-minded and prejudicial views that limit her potential. Similarly, Frado's abandonment results from Mag and Seth's alliance. In both instances, it is the interracial individual who must bear the brunt of the parents' transgression and society's intolerance.[22]

When Mag leaves Frado at the Bellmont home, she not only abandons her child, but also her maternal role, thus passing it on to Mrs. Bellmont. For this reason, in the narrative, Frado has two white mothers: the first is Mag, her biological mother, and the second is Mrs. Bellmont, her surrogate mother.[23] Wilson, however, refutes racist assumptions that suggest that white women were naturally more maternal than their black counterparts by depicting these women as failed or unnatural mothers, thus shattering the nineteenth-century myth of the angel in the house. In Incidents, Jacobs also criticizes the prevalent notion of white women as innately kind or maternal in her portrayal of Mrs. Flint's violent behaviour and erratic temper. As the writer illustrates, Dr. Flint's wife is hardly a sympathetic individual; in fact, she is an abuser in her own right. Her treatment of Linda indicates paradoxically her own powerlessness to prevent her philandering husband from cheating on her as well as her limitless power to inflict verbal and mental abuse on those, like Linda, whom slaveholding society has put under her control.

Like Jacobs, Wilson portrays white mothers "as cruel, lustful, and unmotherly— the opposite of the nineteenth-century ideal of women as nurturing, gentle, kind, and chaste" (Breau 460). Both figures are flawed, but to different extremes and intents. Whereas Mag is negligent and self-centered, Mrs. Bellmont is ruthless and cruel. Consequently, while Mag is a lapsed angel who might have been a good mother had she not been poor and exiled, Mrs. Bellmont is a she-devil whose temper and violent behaviour designate her as hopelessly fallen. Moreover, unlike Mag whose fall is publicized, Mrs. Bellmont is able to maintain the appearance of "true womanhood," all the while carefully concealing her devilish actions from public scrutiny. As a result, these white mothers of the black Frado replicate the violence and/or racism found outside the home within it.

Mag's negligence as a parent is a sign of racist neglect on her part rather than a manifestation of outright violence. When her financial circumstances become dire, it is clear that she suffers no pangs of guilt at the prospect of leaving Frado and her other daughter and running off with Seth Shipley. She abandons her children so that she can flee her relentless persecutor, poverty, despite the fact that it will compromise their welfare.[24] Consequently, her abandonment of them is an assertion of her own rights at the expense of her daughters'. In other words, in seeking out a better life for herself— the one that she feels she deserves— she is ready to increase their suffering in order to decrease her own. Implicit in this is the notion that her circumstances warrant improvement while those of Frado and her sibling can withstand significant deterioration.

Echoing Frado's first mother's justification for abandoning her is her second mother's rationale for her abusive treatment. This is evident when Mrs. B asserts "'you know these niggers are just like black snakes; you *can't* kill them'" (Wilson 88). At the heart of this statement lies an adherence to the racist assumption that the black body can endure greater physical toil and hardship than the white body.[25] This clearly demonstrates that the politics within the home, the female-identified sphere of the time, closely mirrored those of the nation, the male-dominated sphere. Consequently, the home becomes not a refuge from worldly affairs but rather a site that replicates and re-enacts existing power struggles as well as race and gender politics.

On the other hand, unlike Frado who, as an interracial minor, dwells securely in neither the home nor in the nation, white mothers take up so much space in the house— their sole sphere of direct influence— that they literally encroach upon that of the other occupants. As a result, their very presence in the homestead renders it unhomely for others who must reside in it. Likewise, Jacobs indicates that motherhood has not made Mrs. Flint more caring, but more cruel and cunning. In her narrative, she demonstrates that, because Mrs. Flint denies her slaves' humanity, the latter is incapable of seeing black women with children as mothers and of viewing motherhood as a common experience that they share. Instead, considering her female slaves as chattel, Dr. Flint's wife sees their children as a source of added revenue and labour (as well as an indication of her husband's infidelity). Hence, what P. Gabrielle Foreman notes in her introduction to Wilson's Our Nig also applies to Jacobs' text in that it too "emphatically rejects many aspects of domestic ideology: [such as] the

redeeming power of motherhood" (xxxi). Desperately seeking power in the domestic sphere, white mothers in both works exploit those who are even lower than themselves on the totem pole: children, particularly black and mixed-race ones. Intent upon subjugating others to wrest some kind of power for themselves within the home, these women enact their oppression by subduing those who are even more exploited than themselves.

Mrs. Bellmont is a tyrant, one who is paradoxically so out-of-control yet controlling that she dreads losing jurisdiction over Frado even as she beats her. Forcing this child to do all the housework, Mrs. Bellmont's tyranny is a manifestation of white female boredom. Having found someone who is able to meet all her unreasonable demands and to do the labour of two workers, the mistress of the house has nothing to do but bark orders and beat her indentured servant. This is evident in the following passage where Mrs. B. inflicts "sudden blows to quicken Nig's pace, then return[s] to the sitting room with *such* a satisfied expression, congratulating herself upon her thorough housekeeping qualities" (Wilson 66). Acting out her aggression becomes not only a twisted sign of power, but also an occupation as it is the sole way she can channel her frustration at having nothing else/better to do. Like Mrs. Flint, Mrs. Bellmont is trapped in the home, her ruthless ambition and materialism confined by its walls and subsequently unleashed upon the other inhabitants.

Everyone under her roof is liable to become a victim; this, in turn, may explain why Mr. Bellmont frequently leaves— because he can. Unlike his children or Frado, his nominal position as adult head of the household gives him the freedom to

come and go when he pleases. All the minors of the house, on the other hand, must endure its matriarch's reign of terror. This manifests itself in Mrs. Bellmont's habit of manipulating her children and their respective partners and in her relentless abuse of Frado to release her pent-up rage.[26] Thus, it is not surprising that both her biological children and her indentured one are bidding their time in the house as minors. They are awaiting the termination of their sentence: for the Bellmont children, this means either marriage or death; for Frado, it means waiting until her eighteenth birthday to flee her tormentor.

The tension between Mrs. Bellmont and Frado illustrates, as Xiomara Santamarina notes, the "interrelatedness of white privilege and black inferiority" (64); it also demonstrates the interconnectedness of middle-class ease and working-class drudgery. White middle-class women's respectability in the eighteen hundreds resulted from black and lower-class women's labour. Barred from the cult of true womanhood by the white hegemonic culture of the time, free black women were denied the kind of class mobility that marriage promised their white counterparts. Instead, many had to perform menial tasks that perpetuated the dominant order. At the heart of the friction between Mrs. B. and Frado is the latter's rightful indignation and resentment of the former and of the system that she represents. Frado resents the tripartite structure of race, gender, and class-based discrimination that enables Mrs. Bellmont to use her as capital and as a status symbol to secure her own position in society. This configuration not only allows but facilitates her exploitation. In fact, Frado's indentured servitude bolsters the Bellmonts illustrating how the white

family's elevation comes at the expense of the black individual's poverty and degradation (Santamarina 64-68).

Frado's tormentors assault her sense of self-worth by physically, verbally, and emotionally abusing her. As a poor, abandoned, mixed-race, female child, she occupies virtually the lowest position in the social order in general and in the Bellmont family in particular. In fact, her standing in the house is even lower than that of her dog, Fido.[27] However, Frado directly challenges this hierarchy in the text as does Wilson in writing it. When Mrs. Bellmont forces the child to eat from her plate after the former has finished dinner, Frado gets her dog to lick it clean before she begins her meal. In this example, Frado undermines her oppressor by letting her know that she esteems her dog more than she does the matriarch. Similarly, Wilson inverts the power scheme by writing that Fido is "a more valuable presence [to the child] than the human beings who surrounded her" (Wilson 62). Hence, the writer imbues the dog with more humanity than Mrs. Bellmont.

For Frado, worth and rank should be synonymous. In other words, those that are the worthiest, that is, the most humane and sympathetic, should receive recognition by society in the form of material wealth and social respectability. Yet, as Joyce W. Warren writes, "Frado works hard and perseveres, but she is *not* successful; the American Dream does not work" (18). Consequently, as Wilson illustrates, it is those who are able to fake these attributes and to capitalize on the misfortunes of others who tend to reap all the benefits. Whether it is Mrs. Bellmont, the fake Christian, the Bellmont family, the pseudo-abolitionists, or Samuel, the phoney fugitive slave, the survival of the fittest means honing the "skill" of exploiting and

deceiving others to promote a fraudulent self. As a result, playing the part or looking good matters more than being good. Moreover, as Frado discovers, society is so corrupt that it has already decided who will prosper and who will fail. In a white supremacist culture, this places the odds squarely in Mrs. Bellmont's favour— in this lifetime at least and, Frado fears, in the next. Thus, Frado wrests not only with who her culture deems good/powerful/successful, but how deeply invested it is in pitting white against black in a seemingly irreconcilable manner. As an interracial "other" in the society of her time, Wilson as Frado struggles not only to depolarize or to merge black and white identity, but to complicate and to challenge the understanding of what whiteness and blackness supposedly mean.[28]

Another source of conflict in the black-white relationship between Mrs. Bellmont and Frado stems from the issues of gender and sexuality.[29] Mrs. Bellmont perceives the young girl's appearance as a threat to her own standing in the household. In chopping off Frado's hair and preventing her from shielding herself from the sun, the she-devil attempts both to unsex and to racialize her ward. By downplaying Frado's feminine attributes and overemphasizing the racial markers that strip the child of her rights, her oppressor seeks to place a comfortable distance between herself and the interracial youth. Clearly, Frado intimidates the matriarch not owing to her difference, but owing to her similarity. Furthermore, Mrs. Bellmont seeks not only to dissociate herself, but her own daughter Mary as well. This suggests that the mother fears that Frado will be mistaken for one of her own daughters.[30] Hence, this desire on Mrs. Bellmont's part to create no room for confusion highlights her own anxiety about the child's parentage. Although Mrs. B. knows that the child is

not her own, she wishes to make this clear to the rest of the community; consequently, she uses the girl's mixed-race body as a visual signpost on which she can erase her femininity and exaggerate her race.

Mrs. Bellmont's constant belittling of the child is an attempt on the former's part not only to teach the latter her place, but to anchor her firmly there. However, as the mistress realizes, the physical and mental confines that bind Frado cannot contain her forever. As the exchange between Jack and his mother illustrates, the house can only restrict her as long as she physically and psychically remains indentured there. Even at the age of six, Frado barely has space to move in the ell that she occupies and has to stoop to avoid bumping her head (Wilson 27-28). Thus, the child's body must already contort itself to accommodate her surroundings, which highlights the fact that her very presence in the dwelling is precarious and unnatural. The fact that Frado must twist herself to fit into a place that progressively weakens and disables her signals her mistreatment. The manner in which the house restricts her movements foreshadows the way in which the Bellmonts hold her captive and abuse her. Once Frado is no longer exploitable— that is, when she no longer fits in her L-shaped room— she will, as Mrs. Bellmont asserts, have "outgrow[n] the house" (Wilson 28). In other words, her body must grow bigger than the space that she occupies before her servitude can end. Hence, adulthood means leaving the shackles of servitude behind; on the other hand, it also signifies trading her status as an indentured servant for that of town pauper. In the text, the interracial body must warp itself to find a place in a warped culture that seeks to polarize its members along the colour line.[31]

Frado is further alienated because she has neither a solid foothold in white culture nor a solid standing in the black community.[32] Unlike Linda Brent in Jacobs' Incidents, her geographical isolation from the latter denies her the opportunity of forming affective bonds with other black or mixed-race individuals. Instead, she must attempt to befriend the kinder members of the Bellmont family in order to try to find a sense of belonging. Yet, befriending these Bellmonts provides her with little comfort as these individuals do nothing to redress the injustices that the young child faces. Rather, they turn a blind eye and offer her metaphysical solutions to her problems— the belief in God, abolitionist rhetoric, etc. Although it is within their power, they do not attempt to improve her material conditions. This immobility and indifference on their part designates them as the "good antislavery friends" of the preface. While these individuals are not Frado/Wilson's tormentors, they are complicit in her degradation as they fail to put their precepts into practice. For her part, Wilson presents readers with the problem of Northern racism more to expose the structures and the people that oppress her than to offer strategies of resistance to others. Nonetheless, by proposing that people buy her book, she offers a practical solution to racial/gender oppression: namely, investing in works like hers that redress injustice. While she insinuates that this cannot right the wrongs she has suffered, it can alleviate her other tyrant, poverty.

Unlike Frado's relationship with Mrs. Bellmont, the one that she has with Mr. Bellmont is more ambivalent; however, it is crucial in the narrative as it is a source of conflict between husband and wife, thus increasing the tension between Frado and Mrs. B. While Mr. Bellmont appears to treat the young girl better than his spouse

does, he in fact uses her to shield himself from his wife's fury. Hence, although he does not beat the child himself, he silently condones Mrs. Bellmont's treatment of her, making him equally complicit in her abuse. The reason for his inaction is perhaps because it allows him to have the kind of relationship that he wishes to have with his partner. By letting his wife beat Frado, her rage is spent. Consequently, she has less energy to berate her husband and their children. While it is unacceptable for the she-devil to assault Mr. Bellmont, he has given her license to unleash her pent-up fury upon one more vulnerable than himself.[33] Mrs. Bellmont uses Frado as a whipping post, yet she maltreats her only after receiving her husband's silent endorsement. Clearly, the child is the scapegoat in these situations. Mr. Bellmont would rather sacrifice Frado to his wife's wrath than be subjected to it himself. This choice is more than weakness or selfishness on his part; rather, it stems from an inherent belief that his position as the man of the house should exempt him from such treatment. As a result, he uses his rank as white male head of the household to ensure his own welfare. Furthermore, he permits his wife to enact her frustration towards him on the lowest ranking member in the house: the indentured, mixed-race female youth with no rights in the culture of the time.

Owing to this, Our Nig is not solely about vicious white mothers; it is also about merciless and absent white fathers whose indifference and feigned impotence masks their own neglect. Although he is no Dr. Flint, Mr. Bellmont is not the weak figure that he portrays himself as being. Instead, he has the power to affect his wife's actions; he simply chooses not to exercise it. Consequently, it is wrong to read him as an impotent character. It is important to recognize that his exiting the house whenever

his partner's anger surfaces is a choice, one with consequences that he is well aware of. His decision to disappear at key moments, right before his spouse abuses Frado, underscores his own racist adherence to notions of white superiority and black inferiority. Furthermore, his dismissal of the brutal treatment of "nig" attests to his belief that what goes on in the home between Mrs. Bellmont and Frado falls under his wife's jurisdiction. Thus, his claim that "[w]omen rule the earth and all in it" rings false (Wilson 44). Instead, it translates as follows: namely, that his wife governs that which he has decided falls squarely out of his sphere of control or influence. When it comes to the managing of household affairs, he *chooses* not to interfere. In this manner, he is a negligent man who sanctions Frado's abuse because he is unable to view her as an equal. Clearly, living in the same dwelling as Frado does not sensitize him to her suffering nor predispose him to behave in a fatherly way towards her; rather, it makes him cold and detached. Moreover, his helplessness is merely a veneer that enables him to shirk his own obligation to intercede on the girl's behalf. In fact, Mr. Bellmont is arguably even more dangerous than his partner as he and those like him create environments where violence is perpetuated and the perpetrator is left unpunished. Although he does intervene on Frado's behalf on a few occasions, such as when it comes to her allowing her to go to school or preventing his wife from skinning her alive, the rest of the time he is quite content to feign powerlessness.

In Wilson's text, white children serve white hegemonic culture by denouncing those who deviate from standard values and sanctioned identities. Like adults, children target and punish those who differ from the majority by ostracizing these deviants for their deviancy from the purported norm, thus paradoxically creating this

norm at the same time. Consider the following: "As they [Seth, Mag, and Frado] neared the village, they heard the merry shouts of children gathered around the schoolroom, awaiting the coming of their teacher. 'Halloo!' screamed one, 'Black, white and yeller!' 'Black, white and yeller,' echoed a dozen voices" (Wilson 20-21). In this instance, the children make fun of the family for defying the status quo. Acting as judges and overseers by exposing those who have transgressed socially acceptable norms, they taunt the interracial couple and their mixed-race infant because their presence blurs the colour line. The children are well aware of this transgression, as they have been socialized to guard and to perpetuate mainstream values. Moreover, this passage highlights the manner in which children act in ways that are hurtful and humiliating. Instead of being purer or less corrupt than adults, minors take their cues from them, modeling their own bigotry and narrow-mindedness after them. As a result, Wilson depicts children as very much cognizant of and influenced by the world they inhabit. Thus, childhood for the writer is not a time that is divorced from adulthood and its concerns; rather, it is a phase of existence that has the same hardships and that in many ways prefigures the hardships to come for the interracial person.[34]

The black/white enmity that exists between Frado and Mary mimics the antagonism between Frado and Mrs. Bellmont. In following her mother's precedent, Mary's treatment of Frado illustrates how she structures her world on the basis of inclusion and exclusion. Mary, who is her mother's favourite, learns at an early age how to mistreat the interracial servant. Yet this is not only a behaviour that she has acquired from watching her mother, it is also a way of courting her mother's

favour— even, I would argue, of bonding with this parent. In other words, Mrs. Bellmont and Mary not only resemble one another in their treatment of "nig," they bond over their abuse of her. Just as the rest of the Bellmont family avoids abuse because of Frado's presence in the house, the latter's existence enables the two white females to forge a closer affective bond at the girl's expense. Mary pleases her mother by being cruel to Frado because she knows that it is a way of strengthening her own relationship with her parent. Furthermore, she has seen Mrs. Bellmont's rage whenever any family member sides with the girl instead of the matriarch. Consequently, Mary is a threat to Frado not only because she has learnt to copy the she-devil, but because she threatens to surpass her in violence and cruelty. Despite the fact that Mrs. Bellmont tells her husband that she could kill Frado, it is Mary who virtually succeeds in doing so by hurling a huge cutting knife at her head (Wilson 64). [35] Like her mother, who fears being exposed to the community for what she truly is, Mary is not afraid of killing Frado; rather, she is scared of her actions being discovered. In the narrative, the interracial other is subject to unrestrained violence because her position in society allows white individuals to indulge their unbridled emotions while restricting black and mix-raced individuals from having rights and being protected by law. Owing to this, the author suggests that absolute power corrupts absolutely and that, if unchecked, this power only strengthens from one generation to the next. Both power and its abuse are the products of an undemocratic society that fails to treat its members in an egalitarian manner. Moreover, Wilson's text illustrates how the most dangerous members in society are ultimately those who are the most abject and dependent (i.e. white women and children).[36] These

individuals, in turn, enact their brutality on those who are even more socially and legally marginal than themselves: black and mixed-race children.

Jack is perhaps the most conflicted figure in the narrative. Although he is the character who sympathizes the most with Frado and her plight, he nonetheless treats her as more of a pet than an equal. Moreover, he is the one who nicknames her "nig," thus echoing, "in condensed form, the 'black, white, and yeller' racial mapping" of the school children" (Bassard 195). This underscores how he not only assumes the power to rename her, but how he also attempts to incorporate her into the family by subjugating her. Unlike his mother, who seeks to subjugate the girl through violence, Jack does not intentionally try to subdue her. However, both his words and his actions bring about this outcome. Like his father, he is a dangerous figure because he is unaware of how he is responsible for Frado's degradation. By looking at her as a novelty and a distraction, Jack regards her as an object of interest, one that makes his life more amusing. Consequently, Frado's position in the household is not worthwhile to him in and of itself; rather, it is valuable only to the extent that it provides him with a sense of duty and ownership. After all, in renaming her, he does not just call her "nig"; instead, he dubs her "*our* nig". While the "our" stresses that she belongs to the Bellmonts rather than joining their ranks, it also foregrounds how he is the first to designate her as a possession.

Frado appeals to Jack not only because he considers her a favourite, but also because he appreciates her wit, charm, and beauty. As a result, while he nominally confers her inferior status upon her, he is drawn to her because she is "'real handsome and bright, and not very black, either'" (Wilson 25). Besides underlining Jack's own

racist assumptions of what constitutes attractiveness, this excerpt illustrates that he not only notes her attributes when the two meet, but that he comments freely on them in front of Mrs. Bellmont and Mary. Clearly, despite Jack's relegating Frado to the subordinate role of pet (or maybe because of it), he increases his mother and his sister's jealousy as they now must rival with the girl for his affection. Thus while both these women attempt to un-sex and hyper-racialize the interracial person's body, their brother insists on her identity as mixed-race female; this, in turn, suggests that the "sexual theme is not absent [in Our Nig], but rather alluded to in subtle ways" (Krah 467). It is obvious that Jack never loses sight of Frado's gendered and racial self. Yet while this self may prevent him from acknowledging her entire subjectivity, it nonetheless does not prevent him from seeing her as he wishes to rather than the way the Bellmont women would like him to see her. While his view of Frado comes closer to grasping who she truly is, it still falls short of recognizing her humanity. In other words, whereas mother and daughter both feel the need to strip the mixed-race youth of her femininity as well as to overemphasize her blackness, Jack neither needs nor wants to see her as a black boy. Owing to this, while the she-devil fears that Frado will be mistaken for one of her own children, the prospect of one of her sons falling in love with her is even more frightening.

If this interracial marriage were to occur, not only would it taint the matriarch's own racial and gendered identity, it would threaten her class-based one as well. Throughout the book, Mrs. Bellmont comes across as a deeply insecure woman who dreads losing face in the eyes of the community. Her children's marriages are her last hope at (class) ascendancy, having spoiled her own prospects by marrying

slightly beneath her upper-middle class origins. The idea of Jack taking such a keen interest in Frado's well-being and looks is a source of great anxiety for Mrs. Bellmont. Over the course of the narrative, readers witness her repeated attempts to literally crush Frado by turning her into an asexual being. While Wilson does not insist on Frado's sexuality— in fact, she downplays it— it is clear that the author counters Mrs. Bellmont attempt to neuter the girl by reconfiguring/re-appropriating female selfhood. While Mrs. B presents Frado as less than human/female because she performs manual labour without perishing from the task, Wilson presents this ability as that of a re-imagined black femininity.[37]

Aunt Abby and Jane occupy uneasy positions in the Bellmont household, which, in turn, affects their relationship with Frado. Since they are forced to submit to Mrs. Bellmont's tyranny, neither one can truly bond with the interracial youth. Whereas Jane is literally an invalid, it is Aunt Abby's status as persona non grata in the house that metaphorically paralyzes her. Moreover, the matriarch's gaze and limitless power in the dwelling cripples these two figures, turning them into virtual spectres of themselves rather than actual bodies with the power to act. Incapable of fully inhabiting the home, much less of securing Frado's space within it, they resemble ineffective spiritual beings in that they guide Frado and offer her kind looks or words of encouragement without ever managing to affect the material circumstances of her life. As incarnations of true womanhood, they prove how dangerous this embodiment is. The presence of these "angels" in the house haunts the interracial person; indeed, this model of femininity becomes a living nightmare. Furthermore, the vulnerability and passivity of these ghostly, white women render the

mixed-race person even more wretched. Far from excusing their behaviour, the author illustrates how Frado's oppression is the result not only of Mrs. Bellmont's abuse, but of these two female Bellmonts' useless goodwill and complacency. Owing to this, Wilson's critique of abolitionists extends to characters like Aunt Abby and Jane whose hearts are in the right place, but who nevertheless steadily pave the way to hell-on-earth with good intentions that never materialize.

Similarly, when James is on the verge of death, he offers Frado the promise of joining him in "a *heavenly* home," rather than taking her away from the Bellmont home to live with him in an earthly one (Wilson 95).[38] In a noteworthy inversion of the "tragic mulatta" trope, it is James who, in Wilson's narrative, is fated to die while Frado is destined to keep on living. Moreover, his dying speech transforms him into the passive figure who, in turning his attention away from this world and focusing instead on the next, is a tragic figure. His impracticality— not in envisioning heaven for himself, but in telling Frado to let the same vision guide her on earth— makes him unfit for this world. Hence, as Aitor Ibarrola-Armendariz contends, "Frado's connection with James is . . . more subtly detrimental to her own interests" (31). This is due to the fact that the advice that he offers her marks an inability on his part to do more than proselytize. James' religiosity, like that of the other, kinder Bellmonts', differs markedly from Mrs. Bellmont's crass materialism. While the son believes that spirituality will offer Frado the subjectivity in heaven that she has been denied on earth, the mother is convinced that the girl is a material object in this realm with no prospects of immortality in the next. For Frado, the challenge lies in situating herself in between these two extremes: that is, somewhere in between the spiritual negation

of the worldly and the worldly dismissal of the interracial self as object of exchange/capital.

Our Nig frustrates attempts to label it— much like Frado herself— occupying that space between fiction and autobiography, making it neither/nor yet both simultaneously. As P. Gabrielle Foreman writes in "Recovered Autobiographies and the Marketplace," "the text functions as an autobiography characterized by its complex novelistic qualities just as surely as it can be considered a brilliant novel that makes substantive autobiographical claims" (125). Hence, while it is autobiographical, the narrative often reads like fiction.[39] This is not to question its generic classification as an autobiography, but to emphasize how the writer appropriates, only to re-work, different kinds of fictional genres. Wilson's text, which Henry Louis Gates, Jr. authenticated in 1983,[40] utilizes fictional techniques in order both to reveal the author's life and to keep it hidden from view; to expose pseudo-abolitionists and fake runaway slaves and to conceal their real identities by giving them pseudonyms. The precarious balance between, what P. Gabrielle Foreman calls, the spoken and the silenced[41] parallels that between reality and fiction. Thus silence in this text, like in Jacobs' Incidents, manifests itself in choosing to hide the names of the real people whom the characters are based on.[42] It is also evident in Wilson's decision to divulge the brutality that exists in the Northern, white "Bellmont" home.

Frado's identity as a mixed-race person clearly mirrors the narrative's own hybridity. Much in the same way that Wilson blurs the colour line in the depiction of her protagonist, she borrows from different literary conventions to create a work that refuses to situate itself firmly in a narrow, generic category. Besides incorporating

aspects of the slave narrative as well as the sentimental, the seduction, and the conversion novel, the writer also incorporates features of the captivity and the gothic novel. By drawing upon both the slave narrative, which was initially seen as the province of black, male fugitive slaves in the nineteenth century, as well as the sentimental and the seduction novel,[43] both of which were deemed to be the realm of white women in the eighteen hundreds, Wilson weaves these literary genres together to tell a story that refuses to adhere strictly to any genre in particular.[44] This is perhaps because, as Jill Jones point out, neither one is able "to deal with the complexity of Wilson's plight" (39). The shift between the first person of the slave narrative and the third person of the sentimental and the seduction novel illustrates how the writer both approaches and distances herself from the story that she is telling. Owing to this, the author gets to assume both the empowerment that comes from the subjecthood of a first-person "I" account and the omniscience of a third-person "bird's eye" view. This provides Wilson with a way of both asserting her subjectivity and exercising control over her own (fictionalized) world— two things that she lacked while living under the Bellmonts' roof.

The gothic feature of the text is evident in the depiction of the Bellmont home,[45] its inhabitants, particularly Mrs. Bellmont and Frado herself. The mistress' acts of violence towards the young, indentured servant as well as her ability to squelch all opposition to her reign of terror haunt the house, rendering it a terrible place.[46] Everyone in the dwelling is a prisoner who must deal with the she-devil's unpredictable bouts of fury. Outside of the domestic realm, Mrs. Bellmont is a woman who is afraid that the community will uncover who she truly is and condemn

her. Hence, whereas the home is where she derives her power, it is also where she can vent her anger without facing public censure. Thus, the matriarch is a kind of gothic monster; the house she inhabits feeds her monstrosity, allowing it to grow and thrive. Her duality lies in the fact that there are two different facets to her being: her true self, which only those in the house are privy to, and her feigned self, which she reserves for those who dwell beyond her direct control (i.e., those whom she has no power over).

There are literary precedents for Mrs. Bellmont in gothic novels. Mrs. Bellmont is akin to Bertha in Jane Eyre, the mad woman in the attic whose madness is owing to her racial identity; she is also comparable to the Marquis Phillipe de Montalt in The Romance of the Forest, the evil patriarch whose lust for his own niece designates him as fiendish and depraved. The she-devil resembles Bertha in that the former is confined to a particular space, frightening everyone else in the residence; unlike her, however, she is not restricted to attic and she has more access to the other household residents. Mrs. Bellmont is like the Marquis in that her quest for power and dominance knows no bounds: she too will resort to violence in order to get her way. Yet while Brontë's novel pathologizes a black woman due to her race, Radcliffe's portrays a white man's sexuality as a type of sickness. As for Wilson, her villain is a white, middle-class woman with abolitionist connections and religious propensities. Consequently, Mrs. Bellmont is Wilson's inversion of the typical gothic villain in that neither her whiteness nor her femininity designates her as good. On the contrary, both make her evil because they give her the power to prey on Frado, an individual who is even more marginal than she. In other words, it is not Mrs.

Bellmont's white skin or female gender that indicate her as monstrous per se; rather, it is how she uses both to prop herself up at the expense of another. Thus, for Wilson, good and evil are not discernable by race, gender, or class; instead, the two terms are distinguishable by whether or not individuals use these attributes to oppress and to demean others. While the author makes the monster of her narrative a white, middle-class woman and makes the heroine a mixed-race, lower-class female, she nonetheless appears to understand that good and evil do not have a readily identifiable appearance. On the other hand, the writer shows that they do have an easily discernable character: namely, one that seeks to dominate and exploit others for its own benefit.

Wilson's text exposes the myth of the "mulatta monster" as the construction of individuals like Mrs. Bellmont. Seeking to hide her own monstrosity, the mistress of the house tries to turn Frado into a monster. She attempts to physically transform the girl by giving her a strange haircut, forcing her to wear rags, and trying to darken her skin by making her to go outside without a bonnet. While the above-mentioned are all efforts on her part, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, to un-sex and hyper-racialize the youth, they also reflect Mrs. Bellmont's need to create a hybrid monster. Creating this creature allows her to conceal her own monstrous self and deeds. It also enables her to project them onto Frado whom she repeatedly tries to dehumanize. Yet as DoVeanna S. Fulton affirms, Wilson reverses this by using her "subject position . . . to unmask Mrs. Bellmont and her aberrant conduct in opposition to the Cult of True Womanhood" (49). In writing this book, Wilson forces the monster of the house out of it by exposing her to public scrutiny.

Another hybrid feature of the text is its intertextuality. Wilson begins each one of her twelve chapters with an epigraph from British and American writers such as Lord Byron, P.B. Shelley, and Eliza Cook, to name a few.[47] This invocation of renowned nineteenth-century poets serves a similar function as the letters by Allida,[48] Margaretta Thorn and C.D.S. as they attest to the author's identity and the truth of her claims. For, just as Wilson inserts paratextual sources to bolster her assertions, the excerpted poetry that she uses signals that she is a writer amongst writers.[49] Hence, these passages are instances of Wilson using the dominant discourse as a kind of intellectual currency to purchase a space or a home outside of the Bellmont one for her text to occupy. As a result, she not only creates a counter-discourse which talks back to the dominant one, but she also invents a new discourse, one that builds upon existing discourses or genres to create something innovative and unique. While Wilson shows readers her knowledge of literature and her ability to weave other literary works into her own, she also points out a lacuna in early-to-mid nineteenth century: its failure to recognize and to celebrate the literary endeavours of black, female writers. In other words, the writer appears to be highlighting the importance of her contribution to the hybridization of literature, both generically and culturally.

In a literary tradition filled with white males and, increasingly, with white females in the eighteen hundreds, Wilson pens a place for herself and her hybrid fictionalized autobiography. While the literary world chose to ignore texts that were too radical and perhaps too threatening for comfort, black women authors like Wilson dared to defy cultural and literary conventions not only to shape new texts, but to shape new readers. Using the black-authored, white-sanctioned slave narrative but

incorporating numerous other genres, the author writes a narrative that pushes the boundaries of literature while exposing its shackles— i.e., that a black author should have to please white abolitionists or imitate black runaway slaves-turned-activists in order to be heard. Wilson refuses to appease anyone, white or black. Indeed, the author does not assuage her contemporaries: she exposes pseudo anti-slavery proponents and phoney fugitive slaves, showing that deceit and corruption cross and blur the colour line. Ultimately, Wilson's use of other texts is a scathing critique not only of literature, but of the tension and the tyranny every author faces between telling her story and telling the one that readers want to hear.

Our Nig exposes how race determined one's social standing in mid-nineteenth-century America. In privileging white over black, American society sought to polarize the two, pitting them against each other. Yet both blackness and whiteness merge in Alfrado who occupies a neither/nor position: she is dark and young enough for Mrs. and Miss Bellmont to force her to do menial work (a type of slavery in and of itself), yet light enough for both women to perceive her as a threat and a potential rival for the Bellmont men's love and attention. To further stress Frado's own hybrid identity and unstable place in the Bellmont home and in the nation, Wilson creates a generically hybrid text, one with many instances of gothic doubling. For her part, Jacobs also fuses together various literary genres, including the Gothic, in order to write a narrative that accurately reflects her life during and after slavery. The following chapter looks at how doing so enabled her to broach the topic of interracialism and regain control over her own mixed-race body in the face of Dr. and Mrs. Flint's repeated attempts to render it monstrous.

Chapter Two:
Sexual Propriety and Racial Transgression in Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

In Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Linda Brent chooses to be with Mr. Sands rather than fall prey to Dr. Flint's advances. This union parallels Harriet Jacobs' choice as a writer to merge her autobiographical narrative with the name and clout of Lydia Maria Child by having the latter act as her editor.[50] These interracial "marriages" are more than survival tactics enabling the narrator to escape the clutches of Dr. Flint and the bonds/bounds of slavery, or permitting the writer to enter into the predominantly white literary market of the time; they are articulations of Jacobs' vision of an already existing interracial world. In order to discuss racial hybridity and to share aspects of her own sexual history with readers, Jacobs creates a generically hybrid text; she also employs and revises the cult of true womanhood to reflect her own lived experience as a black woman in the home and in the nation in mid-nineteenth-century America.[51]

In her autobiography, she portrays herself via Linda as a decorous and "pure" female to counter prevalent racist stereotypes of the period, which depicted black women as overl(t)y sexual beings. However, the inherent conflict between vowing her own purity and protecting it by running recourse to its very opposite, interracial sex, highlights the kind of dilemma Jacobs faced in using the cult of the true woman to connect with white female readers. The contradiction of claiming to resemble readers who have never found themselves in a similar situation further demonstrates the difficulty Jacobs confronted in trying to forge an interracial bond with her audience based on similarity in the face of overwhelming difference. Nevertheless, this does not seem to have deterred her from envisioning the *potential* for a friendship across the colour line— one based on empathy and action rather than on identical

circumstances. Ultimately, in depicting the sexual dimension of her experience as a slave, Jacobs seeks to arouse an emotional response from her readers and, more importantly, to incite them to act.

Throughout her narrative, Jacobs relates white domesticity— i.e., Mrs. Flint's, the Bruce women's and the readers'— with black concerns on a larger scale— i.e., Brent's condition as well as that "millions of women at the South, still in bondage" (1). For the writer, the public and private realm are interconnected and reflected in one another. Hence, Jacobs' decision to publicize the violence that she endured in the Flint household by publishing Incidents demonstrates her belief that the politics of the home mirror those of the nation.[52] Thus, in drawing attention to the dysfunctional domesticity in the Flint house, Jacobs seeks not only to right the wrongs she faced, but to redress injustice on a national scale. As Sterling L. Bland, Jr. observes, "Brent's decision . . . to follow the description of her mistress's domestic activities with a passage indicting the Fugitive Slave Law indicates the way she sees the domestic sphere as having larger, public ramifications" (134). The fact that this law advocated kidnapping slaves from their newfound dwellings in the North back to slaveholders' plantations in the South indicates not only the arbitrariness of the Mason-Dixon Line, but the corruptibility of domestic space. Instead of being a feminine sphere divorced from national concerns, it is inextricably linked to the male sphere of politics and legislation. Jacobs' entrance into the public realm as a writer and an abolitionist is a reaction to politicians, legislators and slaveholders' encroachment on the private one. This chapter focuses on how interracial unions within and beyond the narrative shape Jacobs' text. It also examines the tension

between sexual purity and racial/ generic "impurity" by showing how Jacobs' need to legitimize interracial unions creates and maintains a kind of unresolved conflict throughout the book. Looking at Incidents' generic hybridity, it delves into how the writer employs the tropes of the true woman and the marriage plot from sentimental fiction as well as, to a lesser extent, the madwoman in the attic and the tragic/monstrous mulatta from gothic novels only to subvert them. Finally, this chapter explores the manner in which Jacobs engages in a transatlantic conversation on the situation between the poor in England and the slaves in America.

Slavery and miscegenation were both seen as social diseases in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, albeit by different groups of people with different political agendas. Abolitionists referred to slavery as a social illness that corrupts the individual, the nation, and the home. Mary Titus notes, "Illness was a favorite abolitionist trope; typically, abolitionist writing describes slavery as a poison or a disease that affects both the body and politic of the nation and the body natural of each citizen" (200). Equally hazardous to the health of both blacks and whites, anti-slavery advocates portrayed it as something that renders the healthy diseased, the pure body and body politic impure, the home un-homely. They also showed how it rendered marriage or monogamy polygamous and how it made the brotherhood of man more than nominal by turning it into a visible reality on the plantation.

Similarly, those who feared miscegenation depicted it as a socio/sexual practice which could harm the body of the nation during the period, viewing it as a monster with tentacles that would outstretch to grasp and contaminate not only the two bodies "committing" the miscegenous act, but all their descendants and the entire

region in general.[53] Thus, what happened in the bedrooms of the nation instantly became not just a private act between two consenting individuals, but a public and criminal act that affected a whole country. For, as Eva Saks states, not only could the children of an interracial couple be denied property as well as the right to pick the partner of their choice in marriage, their mixed race was also seen as a sign of their moral identity (70, 74). Interracial sex and mixed-race children were deemed "deviant from and inferior to the black, who was already defined as deviant and inferior. The mulatto monster was therefore doubly deviant, the other of the other. Indeed, to a century in which pollution theory underwrote escalating public health regulation, he was virtually *an infection*" (Saks 77). Clearly, the use of medical discourse by both abolitionist activists and anti-miscegenation proponents was a manner of engaging with the prevalent notion of personal illness and of private acts being directly correlated to social illness and public acts. Consequently, just as the onus was on white women to preserve their chastity or purity so that their husbands' health and that of the nation would remain intact, so too was each and every individual responsible for not "corrupting" their own body by crossing the colour line and thus "polluting" the bodies of the nation with biracial individuals.

Anti-miscegenation laws of the period further reflected slaveholders' hypocrisy. Hazel Carby states: "Ideologies of white womanhood coalesced and became more rigid at the same historical moment that the miscegenation laws were extended, laws which, in practice, were primarily directed toward relationships between black men and white women" (30). Yet, because importing slaves became illegal by the mid-nineteenth century, it was increasingly common for white men to

forcibly impregnate black female slaves (Carby 31). Since there were no laws in place to forbid the act or to treat it as a criminal offence, rape was an acceptable way of multiplying the number of slaves on a given plantation. In other words, systemic violence towards black women was not a punishable offence. Moreover, slaveholding society blamed these women for their masters' wrongdoings and depicted them as temptresses who deserved their respective lot in life.[54] The onus of sexual purity, on the other hand, fell on white women who were somehow supposed to compensate for their husbands' transgressions by stifling their own sexuality and remaining impossibly chaste.[55] This created a lot of needless jealousy, where white women resented their husbands' female slaves, faulting the latter for seducing their partners instead of recognizing the situation for what it was: a one–sided extramarital affair in which slave women were prey to the sexual predation of their white masters.

Jacobs applies the concept of bodily health versus sickness in talking about her own body in relation to slavery and to Dr. Flint. She describes how her seven-year confinement in the garret restricted her movements and virtually paralyzed her even after she had abandoned her hiding spot.[56] Slavery is the sickness that weakens her once healthy body, forcing it to contort itself physically and morally.[57] Whereas Jacobs notes the physical toll when writing about how she had to lie down most of the time and how she could only crawl in her crawl-space, she comments too on how her moral self became prematurely cognizant of social evil and how she relied on cunning to evade her master. Similarly, in Harriet Wilson's Our Nig, Alfrado's body must warp itself in order to fit in the "white house" as the Bellmont family, much like the nation, has a vested interest in keeping her small and dependent. Her

precarious position in this dwelling and, more specifically, her brutal treatment at the hands of Mrs. Bellmont progressively destroy her health. Much like Jacobs later on in life, Frado/Wilson's situation in the home prefigures her eventual economic instability in the Northern states where she must repeatedly reinvent herself to survive as a free, black woman.

In the text, Jacobs portrays Dr. Flint as an illness that preys upon her, sickening her physically, socially, and morally. Ironically, the doctor, whose job it is to cure physical ills, perpetrates them upon the bodies, minds, and souls of others. Like the snake that bites her when she takes refuge in Snaky Swamp, the doctor and the whole medical establishment that he represents is one that specializes in biting and bleeding bodies, particularly black bodies.[58] In the early-to-mid nineteenth-century South, whether it is from the medical practice of bleeding patients or from the social practice of whipping or beating slaves, mainstream institutionalized procedures are ones that Jacobs views with a certain amount of caution and a large degree of suspicion. When Brent does seek treatment— not for the bite on her ankle, but for her feverish condition— she looks to a homeopathic doctor to treat her (Titus 206). Owing to this, it is obvious that Brent/Jacobs looked outside of conventionally available "cures" to remedy bodily and societal ills.

Jacobs directly links snakes to slavery as well as to the doctor, both serpents that rely on duplicity and cunning. Slaveholders' deceit manifests itself in the lies they tell their slaves about the condition of fugitives who escape North. In presenting the situation of these runaways as being far worse than it actually is, masters like Dr. Flint attempt to dissuade others from trying to run away (Jacobs 43). Snakes also

"signal the ubiquitous sexual threat of the slave owners and the complicity of the institutions that support them" in the narrative (Wesley 60). Dr. Flint is slippery in that he tells Linda that, if she agrees to be his mistress, he will treat her like a lady. Yet, as she discovers, both slavery and the doctor are dishonest: the runaway slave is far happier than she ever was while enslaved and Dr. Flint is only too willing to sell his mistresses once he tires of them (Jacobs 13).

In drawing a parallel between the experience of slavery and that of sexuality, Jacobs depicts the acquisition of sexual knowledge as one that is unwanted and one that arrives prematurely for enslaved women. The writer suggests that it is unnatural to force a young girl into womanhood too soon, arguing instead that one should let a woman's sexuality take its own course, unhampered by external forces. Jacobs articulates this when discussing the fate of the female slave. She writes that this youth "will become prematurely knowing in evil things. Soon she will learn to tremble when she hears her master's footfall. She will be compelled to realize that she is no longer a child. If God has bestowed beauty upon her, it will prove to be her greatest curse" (28). Here, the writer presents black femininity as something that slaveholders use against young black women; yet, while the female slave is in a hazardous position, she is not powerless. The narrative attests to an inner strength that falls outside of white people's reach. Even though she undergoes years of uncertainty and terror, dodging her "master" and fighting for freedom, Linda achieves it in the end.

In her writing, Jacobs repeatedly broaches the topic of interracialism. As Linda Brent, she emphasizes her moral integrity and sexual propriety, yet it is through a mixed-race union with Mr. Sands that she asserts her subjectivity.[59]

Clearly, miscegenation is not just a choice that Linda makes when choosing to be with Mr. Sands; it is also a legacy passed down from grandmother to daughter to granddaughter.[60] Most of the Brent family is the result of some sort of racial mixing.[61] Hence, in the same way that slavery is the mother's— not the father's— legacy, so too is a past involving interracial unions. This not only underscores how prevalent amalgamation was in Linda's family and in the early to mid-nineteenth century, but also how slavery as an institution facilitated interracial contact even though it sought to discourage it (outwardly, at least). Like slaveholders' professed Christianity, their sexual practices differed markedly from their precepts.[62]

Jacobs addresses the notion of hybridity as well when she asks: "And then who *are* Africans? Who can measure the amount of Anglo-Saxon blood coursing in the veins of American slaves?" (44). In this passage, she underscores the plurality of race and identity since all people are the result of some kind of miscegenation. Slavery, on the other hand, works under the opposite assumption: it relies upon the myth of "pure blood" and on the status of the mother as free or bound to determine whether one is entitled to liberty or to death by enslavement. The writer, however, complicates this opposition by suggesting that such a polarity is necessarily faulty. As Michael Bennett observes, Jacobs foregrounds the impossibility of invoking "the binary logic of Anglo-Saxon versus African characteristics on the basis of purity of blood" (138). She rejects essentialist notions of race, which place restrictions on who has access to power and (legal) representation, opting instead for strategic constructions of race with more egalitarian or democratic aims.[63] Jacobs constructs herself as a black woman to struggle for the abolitionist cause.[64] Paradoxically, just as

she builds this identity, she also works to dismantle the notion of race since it is this construct that legally binds and strips people of their individual and collective rights. In other words, she fights for black women by fighting against the idea that freedom should be limited because of skin colour.

In focusing on the sexual dimension of slavery, Jacobs' narrative contests the slaveholding culture of 1861.[65] By reworking the male slave narrative genre to include a discussion of her own sexual history, she stresses the wrongs of slavery as an institution in terms of how it affects black women and their offspring as well as the families of the nation. Because of this, her text extends beyond the acceptable boundaries of womanhood even though she emphasizes domesticity and motherhood throughout.[66] This preoccupation with women's role and space within nineteenth-century society is a strategy that Jacobs deploys to increase the likelihood that her audience will hear and accept what she has to say instead of dismissing it and, by extension, her. By painting herself as a paragon of femininity, Jacobs manages to avoid seeming like an "unnatural" or "unwomanly" woman, one more concerned with the public than the private sphere.[67] Despite the fact that she writes about her own experience, she does so in a way that politicizes the personal, thus entering the political realm.[68]

Although Jacobs' text focuses on (stereo)typically female concerns like motherhood and family, it is radical because it fuses "the traditionally male adventures of the slave narrative with the white middle-class femininity of the domestic novel" (Sánchez-Eppler "Righting Slavery and Writing Sex" 87). In mixing literary genres and in making her own flight from slavery to freedom public, the

writer creates a text that is full of action and suspense. This is evident in her depiction of her initial escape from Dr. Flint's depraved and despotic home, which involves a somewhat elaborate plan, followed by its successful execution (Jacobs 95-97). Refusing to stay in Dr. Flint's corrupt home and to submit to the laws of the land which view her body as property, she leaves the plantation (the traditional, patriarchal home) only to conceal herself in the womb-like space of her grandmother's garret (an alternate, matriarchal abode). As demonstrated in the narrative, her flight is not an act of female docility, but one of daring resistance. Even the seven years she spends in the garret of her grandmother's home are an active part of the story since Dr. Flint is in close proximity to the house and is constantly combing the area in search of Linda.

From her hiding spot, Brent can see her children while remaining hidden; this gives her a distinct advantage over Flint in that it allows her to make use of "the power of the voyeur— the person who sees but remains herself unseen" (Smith 215). As a result, in giving the escaped slave a sense of control over her oppressor and in granting her a kind of second sight, the home becomes a source of strength and salvation. Indeed, the house here is both a sanctuary and a prison in that it provides the runaway slave with information on Dr. Flint as well as shelter from this tyrant and his warped conception of domestic bliss while simultaneously trapping her by restricting her movements. Although it confines her body, the time spent hiding liberates her mind, enabling her to reflect on what matters most, namely, securing her freedom and that of her children. Being trapped for years in the top story of her relative's dwelling only increases her desire to own her own home, one where she can provide her children with the comfort and safety that she was denied while growing

up. Despite this and other portrayals of selflessness, the book revolves around the right and the need to build an independent self by describing the protagonist's physical and mental journey from slave to free, black woman.[69]

In the Preface, Jacobs writes "be assured this narrative is no fiction" to underscore the factuality of her narrative even though she relies on certain fictional genres like the gothic, the sentimental, and the seduction novel (1). Brent's hiding place in the garret has a precedent in the gothic novel: it resembles Bertha's attic in Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. Like Bertha, Brent enacts what Teresa A. Goddu calls a "haunting back," in that, like a spectre, she hovers over those who have physically and psychologically terrorized her. Unlike this character, Jacobs as Brent revises and resists gothic conventions while defying "the gothic's dematerializing effects" illustrating how "history invents the gothic, and in turn the gothic reinvents history" (Goddu 148, 132). For the writer, slavery itself, much like the sexual abuse that it implicitly sanctions, is the gothic, for, as an unheimlich institution, it haunts homes of the United States.

Jacobs relies upon the generic conventions of sentimental fiction to discuss domesticity and motherhood. However, by exposing how slavery and Dr. and Mrs. Flint pervert both, the writer transgresses the boundaries of the sentimental genre, thus moving into the realm of the gothic. Denied a home of her own, prevented from caring for her children and forced to spend seven years hiding in the garret of her grandmother's house, Brent occupies a marginal position in the domestic sphere and in the nation. Like a ghost, she hovers over other members of the community, including her own children, able to see, but remaining unseen. Ironically, while mid-

nineteenth-century America insisted on the hypervisibility and hypersexuality of black, female bodies, it also marginalized black women to such an extent that they became both invisible and invalid. Living in a society that permits violence against women of colour, Jacobs, like Wilson, occupies an unnatural position in the home/nation which threatens to break her spirit much like it cripples her body. Yet, while both writers address the effects of this imprisonment on their physical selves, they ultimately survive the experience and escape from their prisons, thus rejecting the roles of the madwoman in the attic from sentimental fiction and the mulatta monster from gothic literature.

In refusing to let Dr. or Mrs. Flint transform her into the tragic or, for that matter, the monstrous mulatta, Jacobs not only rejects both labels, but she illustrates the Flints' own monstrosity. Attempting to turn her into a monster, the doctor reveals himself to be the tyrannical or depraved patriarch of gothic fiction. His evil schemes to possess her sexually, just like he owns her body and her labour, further attest to "the gothic horror of slavery as a sexual system" (Daileader 77). Jacobs repeatedly compares Dr. Flint's plantation to a harem which he presides over. Jennifer Rae Greeson likens this scenario to urban gothic fiction in which Northern brothel owners and procurers threaten the heroine's chastity by seeking to turn impoverished and orphaned young women like her into prostitutes (278, 292-293). However, while Linda is a poor and parentless, she is far from being the naïve and helpless young woman who is tricked (or forced by penury) into prostitution in the urban gothic. Furthermore, like Wilson's Alfrado, she is neither the tragic mulatta destined to a miserable existence and an untimely death in sentimental works nor the monstrous

mulatta of gothic novels. Instead, Jacobs portrays her narrator as a clever and resourceful individual who uses the garret in her grandmother's house as a coffin-like retreat to escape her tormentors. By enacting a kind of living death for the seven years that she spends in hiding only to be "reborn" in the North, the writer as Brent exploits the home both as a safe haven and a prison, underscoring how, in the nineteenth-century society and writing, it functioned as both (i.e., the refuge of sentimental literature and the dungeon of gothic fiction) (Daileader 131-132).[70]

Many of Jacobs' appeals to readers are ones where she is desperate to link her desires and her suffering with her white female readership. Looking to bridge the gap with this audience, she portrays her values as being similar, if not the same, as theirs; however, the difference between the situations of black and white women at the time compels the writer to portray realities like interracial sex which may have had the unintended effect of alienating her from her readers.[71] Nonetheless, she constantly tries to draw parallels between her situation and that of white women to assert her right to freedom.[72] Despite the fact that "Jacobs is exempted from the myth of the lady, or 'true woman,' she makes use of this cultural construct to reach her audience" (Johnson 18). This tactic on her part is a strategic deployment of gender to further the interest of race in that she shows her equal right to share the privileges granted to those deemed white in the antiblack culture of the time. This narrative choice is not a decision to pander to the taste of white readers by likening herself, as a lighter-skinned, black woman, to her audience to gain their approval; instead, her text is a cry to rally white women to assert their humanity not merely with a show of proper emotion but by displaying proper action. Consequently, she summons her readers to

demonstrate their sense of outrage at the wrongdoing suffered by millions of black women not by fighting *for* these women, but by fighting *with* them. While, as Eva Allegra Raimon notes in The "Tragic Mulatta" Revisited, the "sexual vulnerability of a female light-skinned slave is essential . . . to generate the reader's sympathy and outrage" (5), Jacobs relies not on her skin colour, but rather on her own conception of herself as a person who deserves to be free to rouse readers. For Jacobs, liberty belongs to all who reject an abject/object position: that is, it is for all who consider themselves citizens of the United States with the treatment and rights that this word entails, despite the existing restriction placed on citizenship at the time. The institution of slavery revolved around the white supremacist belief that equated whiteness with personhood and personhood with privilege. In challenging this false assumption, Harriet Jacobs takes giant strides towards overthrowing the dominant racist ideology.

By refuting the notion of racial homogeneity, Jacobs shows that, for her, "purity" signifies morality, not race. Thus, she challenges the need or even the existence of racial purity while asserting, to a certain extent, the importance of sexual restraint for women. Consequently, she appears to re-inscribe patriarchal paradigms while seeking to liberate herself and other slaves like her from racist tenets. In doing so, she attempts to depict herself via Linda Brent in a manner that desexualizes the hypersexualized black female body of the time.[73] For mid-nineteenth-century society, purity carried racial, sexual and moral connotations in that it described a chaste, white female body that existed to nurture others rather than to nurture the self.[74] Jacobs takes this model and tailors it to fit her circumstances as a black woman and her

purposes as an abolitionist writer. Reworking the concept of purity and expanding the category of femininity to encompass black women, she demonstrates her maternal nature and her sense of propriety to readers while showing them that both these aspects of her person do not prevent her from being socially and politically active in the public sphere. In other words, being a mother and a good Christian need not hinder her from taking part in the antislavery movement.

Writing Incidents becomes a way for Jacobs to work within an abolitionist framework while defying some of its racist and sexist tenets.[75] Sterling Bland asserts, "Implicit in the antislavery agenda was the understanding that although the system of slavery was inherently wrong, this did not imply a belief in either racial or gender equality" (121). In her narrative, Jacobs challenges racism and sexism in key ways. When Linda remarks to Dr. Flint, "'Don't you suppose, sir, that a slave can have some preferences about marrying? Do you suppose that all men are alike to her?'," she hints not only at her capacity to pick a black man as a lover, but to pick *any* man, even a white one like Mr. Sands, as a companion (Jacobs 39). This is a very revolutionary attitude for a young woman growing up in a society that seeks to limit black individuals' power over themselves, particularly their power to choose whom they desire as sexual partners. Throughout the text, Jacobs repeatedly questions existing hierarchies which placed white women above black women and men above women. In doing this, the writer demonstrates her commitment to abolishing, as Shirley Samuels puts it, not only women's "'equal right' to servitude, but also the eradication of natural hierarchical differences between male and female spheres and, indeed, the abolition of the difference between male and female" ("The Identity of

Slavery" 162). This is not to suggest that Jacobs was more committed to eradicating sexist oppression than racist domination. On the contrary, her priority was to draw attention to the particular institution of slavery as lived by black women as well as to sensitize white women to atrocities that, for the most part, they could not even fathom.[76]

In representing the sexual nature of Brent's struggle with Dr. Flint, Jacobs highlights a tension that occurs both because of race and gender inequality. In other words, race and racial difference is what places Linda in a subservient position to the doctor, her master, but gender and gender difference is why this contest of wills between the white male owner and the black female slave exists in the first place (Fox-Genovese "My Statue, My Self" 191). The writer's depiction of sexual incidents between her pseudonymous self and Dr. Flint, even though they are veiled in silence, is a strategy to link the gendered aspect of her suffering with that of her white, female readers. As Ann duCille observes, "[n]ineteenth-century black women activists, for example, were the vanguard embodying a sophisticated interpretation of power relations that recognized— decades before it became intellectually fashionable to do so— the insidious interplay and interdependence of racism and male supremacy" (11).While white women could only imagine what Jacobs endured, the writer counts on a certain amount of imagination and empathy from these readers when sharing the painful incidents in her past. Jacobs tries to make white females emotionally and psychically experience racism and slavery even though, in doing so, she runs the risk of having the latter appropriate black women's struggles and subsume these hardships within their own.

Just as Jacobs deliberately deploys race as a construct, so too does she employ gender by encouraging white women to apply the male/female power struggle to the white/black one. Despite the fact that the analogy is faulty, she strategically uses it to further the antislavery movement.[77] Paradoxically, although the writer avows identification by using the cult of true womanhood to address her white female audience, she simultaneously distances herself from them by relating her experience as a black woman in the slaveholding South. Ultimately, though, in trying to create an interracial bond with these readers, Jacobs depends upon showcasing the similarities (woman/woman) that exist in difference (black/white or enslaved/free) to add more support to the abolitionist cause.

However, the manner in which she appropriates the cult of the true woman also subtly underscores its impossibility, even as a remote ideal, for both black Southern and white, Northern women alike. Exploring the construction of womanhood during the period also allows her to voice her indignation at being, biologically, a woman, yet socially not recognized as such owing to her skin colour. Once again, she offers up her motherly instincts and her sense of right and wrong as proof that she deserves to be included in this category by illustrating that the supposed virtues of white women are really characteristics of all women, if, in fact, they characterize any at all. Instead of apologizing for being black in a racist culture that deemed blackness to be a criminal offence, she fights for equal treatment and opportunity in the society of the time and demands that her readers do the same.[78]

Implicit in the critique of white, female complacency and inactivity is the idea that readers who do nothing in the face of injustice are guilty of following, as Sandra

Gunning puts it, Mrs. Flint's "model of white female ineptitude" and cruelty (143). Furthermore, they are complicit in the sexual degradation of the slave girl by not doing their part to put an end to it, thus condoning or hastening her disgrace through their silence. Mrs. Flint and those who follow her example are to blame not only for idly standing by or averting their eyes from the shame that the enslaved, black female experiences, but for playing their part as seducers and corrupters of this woman's purity. In the text, when Mrs. Flint finally listens to Linda's account of the sexual abuse that she endures from Dr. Flint, the former groans and cries, yet it is clear that this is because the doctor's wife feels that she, not Linda, is the real victim of her husband's wrongdoing (Jacobs 33). In other words, Linda's account of the mistreatment that she suffered does not generate sympathy or understanding from Mrs. Flint; instead, it incites the latter to mourn her fate and the desecration of her marriage. As a result, Mrs. Flint demonstrates her deficiency as a genteel or true woman in that she misreads Linda's character and motives while embodying the type of flawed woman that Jacobs feared would comprise the bulk of her readership. Like Mrs. Bellmont in Our Nig, Mrs. Flint is the opposite of the angel in the house, being a kind of she-devil or monstrous, maternal figure. Rather than help the mixed-race person in her midst, she persecutes her, rendering the latter's time in the Flint home one of unspeakable terror.

Because Mrs. Flint believes that Linda attempted to seduce her husband, she tries to trick her by pretending to be him and by whispering into her ear at night in order to make the latter utter something incriminating.[79] Acting out the part of seducer, Mrs. Flint repeats the abuse that Linda suffered at the hands of Dr. Flint.

Once again, she not only imitates his brutality, but she acts out her own particular brand of physical and verbal aggression. This passage indicates that Jacobs is not the only one whose morality is subject to scrutiny. Just as she is aware that readers might judge her, she demonstrates that she too can assume the position of moral arbiter. In other words, she illustrates that, where morality and slavery are concerned, every woman's honour is at stake.[80] Each person is accountable for what she does and what she fails to do as well as for what she says and what she leaves unsaid. Just as Jacobs incriminates Mrs. Flint by exposing her deficient morality and her sadism in the narrative, she places readers in the precarious position of always being on the verge of revealing their own shortcomings, ones that will divulge not just their own integrity or lack thereof, but their own inner philanthropist or sadist.[81] Thus, she urges them to position themselves vis-à-vis the text by signalling whether they are reading it for titillation with respect to its detailed description of Linda's repeated "seductions" or as an incentive to change a society that sanctioned such liberties in its failure both to read its own culpability and to understand its own perversions. Here, the transgressions that occur in the home reflect those happening in the nation at large. Jacobs, like Wilson before her, suggests that the only way to prevent domestic violence is to eliminate systems like slavery and indentured servitude which give white women and men license to abuse the black people under their roofs.

Jacobs offers readers an alternate, yet only slightly more positive, version of white feminine conduct in the characters of both the first and the second Mrs. Bruce. While the relationship that Jacobs' pseudonymous self has with these women is not an equal one (and thus does not ultimately fit the writer's vision of the potential for

an interracial sisterhood among black and white women), it nonetheless provides her readership with a more sympathetic kind of white womanhood upon which to model its behaviour. Jacobs encourages white, women readers to emulate the Bruce women's progressive actions while simultaneously dissuading this audience from imitating their seemingly benign, but more subtly detrimental, thoughts and deeds. Clearly, the rapport between Linda and the Bruces is unequal because the former works for the latter and because the second Mrs. Bruce ultimately purchases her against her will. In buying Linda in order to free her, Mrs. Bruce wishes to put an end to the fugitive's persecution, yet she ends up depriving her of the opportunity to make a more radical statement: namely, that she is not an object to be bought and sold. Also, in purchasing Linda, Mrs. Bruce makes her feel forever indebted to her benefactress. This feeling is antithetical to a sense of true freedom as it creates a kind of obligation that is paralyzing.

Living in the Bruce household— a house which mirrors the uneven power distribution between whites and blacks in the country as a whole— Linda assumes a subordinate position as a black woman because she depends upon her white employers for economic survival. Rather than have a home of her own, she, like other black women at the time, must work in that of others simply to subsist. What is more, just as the home replicates the politics of the nation, it is also a space that nineteenth-century Americans, like their Victorian counterparts, saw as feminine. Race further complicates this gendered conception of the home as female because of the then-prevalent view of it as being the locus of white, middle-class respectability. As a metonymy for the nation and for white femininity, the home takes on added

significance as the dwelling place of the angel in the house or the true woman. Clearly, this conception of womanhood serves to polarize Linda and the Mrs. Bruces since the former ensures the latter's comfort and respectability in mainstream culture in general and the home in particular, thus revealing "the more subtle operations of . . . [the] Northern class system" (Skinfill 74). In the narrative, these barriers exist not only because the Bruce women are unaware of how their good intentions strip Linda of her agency, but also because the nation sanctions treating black and white women differently based on race and class.

The female slave owner who conceals Linda in her house for a time represents yet another positive model of white femininity. Although she owns slaves and thus is not beyond reproach, she nonetheless risks her reputation in the community to help Linda escape the clutches of Dr. Flint. Like Linda's grandmother, she opens up her house to the fugitive slave, thus turning it into a transgressive space that benefits, rather than hinders, the enslaved black woman. In doing so, this benevolent, white woman reconfigures the domestic sphere— at least, as far as it concerns Linda— because it becomes a refuge, not a prison. Unlike Mrs. Flint and Mrs. Bellmont in Wilson's work, this unnamed, white woman uses the home's potential as a safe haven not to further her own material comfort or social standing, but to promote the welfare of another. Through this anonymous character's benevolent act, Jacobs demonstrates how one can use the home to subvert the politics of the nation by using it not to thwart, but to assist blacks in their journey to freedom.

In presenting readers with different models of feminine conduct, Jacobs' narrative resembles Wilson's text. Our Nig also portrays two opposite types of female

behaviour. The first is that which Mrs. Bellmont and her daughter, Mary, embody. Much like Mrs. Flint's deportment, this kind of femininity is dangerous and detrimental to both black and white females. In fact, women like Mrs./Miss Bellmont and Mrs. Flint are monsters in their own right. Since they are both victims of their own viciousness and victimizers of black women, forming an interracial sisterhood with these individuals is neither possible nor desirable. The second type of woman is that which Aunt Abby and Jane represent. Like the ideal of true womanhood, both these figures are weak and submissive. While they certainly do not harm Frado, they do not hinder others from doing so. Like the first and second Mrs. Bruce, Mrs. Bellmont's sister-in-law and her invalid daughter mean well, yet their good intentions fail to materialize because they are literally and/or metaphorically paralyzed. Wilson, much like Jacobs, calls upon these women to either put their principles into practice or to acknowledge their own complicity in the institution of slavery. Although the second Mrs. Bruce does act upon her beliefs in temporarily handing over her baby to Linda so that the latter can flee her persecutors, in buying the latter in order to free her, she nonetheless fails to see her infant's nurse as a subject and not an object of exchange.

The character of Miss March in Our Nig arguably represents the most redemptive model of femininity in both works. This grade school teacher functions as an antidote to both the monster and the angel in the house and thus does not fit either of the two above-mentioned categories. Her role as a teacher is significant since it underscores not only her capacity to shape the minds of future generations, but the potential for women to bring about social change in the community and in the nation

at large. By urging the children at school to see and treat Frado as an equal, Miss March insists on respect and equality inside and outside of the classroom. In doing so, she creates an alternate space where the mixed-race female can escape the domestic sphere and the violence found in it while simultaneously offering an intellectually stimulating environment that does not exist in the home. Furthermore, in instructing her pupils on the importance of not discriminating against others due to colour or class, Wilson's Miss March embodies not the ideal woman of the home, but the *real* woman of the public realm: one who is prepared to cast conventional notions of female propriety aside in order to act on her beliefs.

Because the home fell under white women's jurisdiction in the nineteenth century, Jacobs calls upon these women to preserve its inviolability, yet she also addresses black women by appealing to their desire for liberty and domestic comfort.[82] Although many black women did not own their own homes and were barred from the cult of domesticity, Jacobs suggests black emancipation and homeownership as well as political activism as remedies to the violation of black female body and the fragmentation of the black family due to slavery in America. Hence, she appeals to black women's desire for freedom and proprietorship while appealing to white women's need to preserve the sacredness of the home as solutions to a divided nation. In proposing that Jacobs seeks to create an interracial women's movement, I do not suggest that the writer is unaware of the importance of recognizing black identity, especially black femininity, as different from but equal to white identity.[83] Instead, I argue that Jacobs was conscious of the need for solidarity

among progressive women of all colours seeking to put an end to slavery and racial oppression.

Jacobs' righteous indignation that she should be a fugitive slave— one forced to flee her home and children in order to reach a place where she could have both— is articulated in her refusal to compromise on her right to freedom and equality. Recognizing that she deserves both, her entire text is a testament in which she states her entitlement to liberty and justice.[84] Yet, while Jacobs' narrative is autobiographical, she is clearly concerned with the plight of all enslaved black women.[85] After all, upon securing her own freedom and that of her children, the writer could have simply contended herself with the improvement in her own condition and carried her story, untold, to the grave. Instead, she chose to be active in the abolitionist movement and to become an educator in her own right. Owing to this, Jacobs resembles Wilson's Miss March in that she plays an active part in the struggle for human rights. Also, in deciding to become a teacher, the writer, like Miss March, goes beyond the private realm by taking part in shaping the future of the nation. By educating young blacks, she gives them the tools necessary to change their material and social circumstances for the better, thus working toward racial uplift. Furthermore, in publishing her book, Jacobs' draws attention to the situation of other enslaved black women "suffering what I suffered, and most of them far worse" (Preface 1). In this manner, she links her struggles with that of others like her while joining forces with black and white women committed to eradicating slavery and white supremacy.[86]

In addressing her black and white female audience, she rejects the notion of different or preferential treatment according to race or sexual "purity" choosing instead to emphasize gender as a shared characteristic of all women.[87] However, in highlighting the difference between the situations of black and white women during the period, she stresses to the latter their racially privileged position. Furthermore, by advocating an interracial women's movement within and beyond the narrative, one which emphasizes how racism affects or complicates sexism, Jacobs demonstrates a more sophisticated understanding of race and gender relations in America.[88] By rejecting Western binaries that white dominant culture depends upon, she illustrates to what extent race and racism operate in a more insidious manner: by pitting white women against black ones in ways that benefit not only whiteness as a cultural institution, but patriarchy. In her narrative, Jacobs proposes two solutions to this problem. First, she demands that black women be recognized as people and, more specifically, as women (and not as chattel) by having access to the same legal and social privileges granted to their white counterparts rather than being forced to serve these women's comfort and bolster their social standing. Second, she urges white women to denounce racial inequality by refusing to be passive observers of enslaved women's plight or, worse, victimizers of these women. For her part, the fact that Jacobs forged friendships across the colour line with Lydia Maria Child and Amy Post attests to her rejection of racial essentialism and to her willingness to put her own politics into practice.[89] Also, her decision to write her life's story and to improve the lives of other blacks, whether free or enslaved, demonstrates both a social conscience and a willingness to change existing laws and conditions.[90]

For this reason, it is somewhat misguided to claim, as Fox-Genovese does, that Jacobs' "sense of herself in relation to the other slaves leaves something to be desired for an opponent of slavery; worse, it reflects either her assimilation of 'white' values or her determination to play to the prejudices of her audience" ("My Statue, My Self" 191). This is problematic for it suggests that Jacobs should have broken away from the conventions of the time to embody "black" values or to play to the prejudices of a different audience. This simply was not feasible for someone, who, like Jacobs, was trying to affect change in the white supremacist society of the period. To accomplish this goal, she attempted to make her text reach a broad audience and serve the aims of the abolitionist movement of the pre-Civil War era. As Lori Merish states, "the self-representations of African Americans in these texts, for particular historical reasons, would have been formulated in dialogue with the conventions and expectations of antebellum white literary culture" (193). It is unrealistic to expect a single, black woman to operate outside of the white-dominated society of the time in order to change the status quo. Rather, it is more realistic to expect Jacobs to do what she could and what she did do: namely, align herself with more progressive— i.e., abolitionist— groups of the time that sought to put an end to slavery but that were not without their failings and oversights. It is also worth noting that, because certain topics, like sex and teenage pregnancy, were taboo, Jacobs had to write between the lines by hinting at, rather than explicitly relating, aspects of her life and her political agenda that nineteenth-century society would have deemed either too controversial or simply improper.

Because of these restrictions, Jacobs continually negotiates a space where the unspoken becomes spoken, or, where the unspeakable is alluded to, hence, in a certain manner, articulated.[91] While cautious in mentioning taboo subjects, she nonetheless does broach them with courage and candour.[92] She does not shy away from the truth or from confronting Dr. Flint, but from the words themselves which she fears might alienate an audience that she seeks to draw closer. Defying the notion of what is spoken and what is kept silent as well as who does and who does not do the speaking, Jacobs depicts speech and silence as subversive acts. Carla Kaplan mentions: "Whereas white silence is presented as shameful and cowardly, black silence is valued, privileged, and protected" (64). While the silence of white women is reprehensible, as it shows their complicity with the institution of slavery, Jacobs' own silence or reluctance to tell her story signals her feminine modesty and restraint. It is a sign that she deserves to be treated with dignity since she understands the conventional attributes thought to define "genteel" womanhood at the time.

This choice she makes to align herself with female mores is in keeping with her desire to desexualize her own body/story and that of other black women during the period.[93] This is a strategic move on the writer's part to show that she is just as "pure" as her white female readers because she understands and exemplifies, if not as Brent, then as Jacobs, "proper" female behaviour. Thus, her use of a pseudonym is simultaneously a way of telling her story but also a way of keeping a safe distance between herself and her narrated self. Like Wilson, who changes the names of actual people to shield herself and others from public scrutiny as well as to have the freedom to relate autobiographical incidents without constraint, Jacobs does the same

for similar reasons. While the two women's conditions were different owing to the fact that Jacobs was a Southern slave who fled North and Wilson was an indentured servant in the "free" North, both felt it necessary, in defying their supposedly proper place in the nation, to begin with their given names. In renaming themselves and others, Wilson and Jacobs challenge the very way in which their country perceived and designated them while simultaneously gaining a sense of control and power over their own lives and over those who mistreated them.

For Jacobs, adopting a pseudonym displaces the sexual dimension of her life onto her alter ego. While Brent may have a sexual history owing to the fact that she was born and raised in slavery, a system that forces one to consider safety above chastity, Jacobs, writing years later, does not. In displacing the incidents of her life onto her slave girl self, Brent, she creates a kind of psychic schism between the bound and the free individual. However, it would be a mistake to assume that because Jacobs chooses to write silence into her narrative, she condones patriarchal views or definition of feminine etiquette and decorum. Instead, she challenges both patriarchy and slavery by inverting certain existing stereotypes.[94] According to Jacobs, black and white women must challenge the status quo by subverting the stereotypic expectation of mid-nineteenth-century society. While she urges the former to embrace silence and the status quo, via traditional feminine conduct, in order to take part in the world and be considered women by the same, she calls upon the latter to transgress traditional codes of female behaviour by speaking out against slavery as well as by becoming active in the abolitionist movement.

Throughout the narrative, Jacobs explores the assault upon the worthiness of black females. This is evident when she discusses the two children— one white and the other, black— whom she sees playing together (Jacobs 29). The writer begins by mentioning sisterhood; yet from the onset, it is evident that the basis of this relationship is inequality or, more specifically, slavery. Whereas the "fair" (white) sister is free, the "other" (black) sister is a slave. This choice of words is telling for it reveals much about value judgments— not to mention beauty standards (where fairness has everything to do with skin colour and attractiveness, and nothing to do with actual justice)— prevalent at the time. As Jacobs illustrates, whereas the white child occupies a central position in an anti-black society, the black child occupies a marginal one, hence becoming the racial other. As Jacobs shows, this "othering" works in a variety of ways. For one, it serves to reconcile the slave girl to her lot in life, one which slaveholders determined. It also sets her apart from her white peers early on by showing her that antiblack culture works against her by working for mainstream whites. Finally, it hints at the limits of sisterhood, ones that Jacobs fought hard to counter during her lifetime.

In mentioning the two sisters, it is clear how race operates within the female realm to segregate black and white females as soon as the two groups reach womanhood. The challenge that Jacobs poses her readership is to find creative ways to surmount this systematic divide. She declares: "But, O, ye happy women, whose purity has been sheltered from childhood, who have been free to choose the objects of your affection, whose homes are protected by law, do not judge the poor desolate slave girl too severely" (Jacobs 54). She states the different hardships that black

women in the South endure to demonstrate to white women in the North that she does not enjoy the same benefits as they do. In spite of this, she professes wanting these comforts as well as sharing the same code of ethics. Her narrative highlights the frustration that she feels at repeatedly being denied what should rightfully be hers.

Witnessing the different treatment accorded to the white child and the black one prefigures the inequality that she encounters when she goes to the North. The disillusionment that she experiences later on in the narrative is due to the fact that the racism that she encountered in the South appears to be following her. For instance, when she discovers that she cannot ride in the first-class cars because she is black, she claims: "It made me sad to find how the north aped the customs of slavery" (Jacobs 163). Similarly, when Linda goes to Pavilion hotel and the servants there refuse to bring her her meals, she says, "the colored servants ought to be dissatisfied with *themselves*, for not having too much self-respect to submit to such treatment; that there was no difference in the price of board for colored and white servants, and there was no justification for difference of treatment" (Jacobs 177). Both these examples illustrate how slavery and discrimination are not just regional problems, but national ones. Furthermore, these instances indicate how the injustice that Jacobs witnessed in a domestic or private setting in the South resurfaces, albeit in a different guise, in the public sphere in the North.[95] Yet, just as she responded to Dr. Flint's verbal assaults earlier on in the text, she reacts to these inequities and demands that others do the same. As a result, Jacobs is not merely after freedom from slavery, but social equality as well. Since no logical explanation justifies why black and white people should pay the same price and not get the same services, Jacobs declares that

the problem lies in mid-nineteenth-century America's legal and social privileging of white over black.

The freedom to choose one's identity, just as one chooses freedom itself, is at the heart of the book. Linda Brent picks blackness first yet she does not deny that whiteness is a part of her being.[96] The narrator avows, "In complexion my parents were a light shade of brownish yellow, and were termed mulattoes" (Jacobs 5). In making this assertion, Jacobs describes her parents and the naming process that occurs in an antiblack society. By stating that her parents were "mulattoes," she creates an identity for herself and for her readers but does not necessarily appropriate the term itself. Hence, she strategically positions herself as black or black-and-white while refraining from labelling herself "mulatto," thus retaining the power to name or un-name herself. Her son, too, resists antiblack culture's tendency to label him. Jacobs writes about the time that Benny came home indignant because a stranger called him a Negro (137). While this may appear to be a rejection of blackness in favour of whiteness, it is more of a rejection of racial discourse in favour of positive self-affirmation. In this manner, Benny resembles his mother in his refusal to let the outside world determine who he is. Cassandra Jackson asserts, "[m]ulatto figures represented the ultimate threat, a blurring of social divisions in an already hazy world" (Barriers Between Us 34). The reason such figures are threatening in nineteenth-century society is because their very presence refutes the notion of black and white being mutually exclusive. The existence of interracial people signals not just a threat, but a possibility: namely, freeing identity from the clutches of the antiblack dominant order by collapsing black and white rather than pitting them

against one another. Doing so creates a space where individuals themselves, not social or institutional systems, opt to flout conventional hate by embracing black-and-whiteness. The fact that individuals like Jacobs and her son attempted to define and reclaim their identity also attests to certain positive changes taking place in the nineteenth century such as the newfound sense of agency and empowerment experienced by some members of the black community.

Through the character of Linda Brent, Harriet Jacobs demonstrates that identity, though fluid, can be performed as something static for political and personal motives, such as the abolition of slavery.[97] The writer shows the necessity of strategically positioning one's self as a black female abolitionist to change the laws and discrimination against all black people. This is evident when Brent dresses up as a sailor to prevent herself from being captured and returned to her master. After a friend provides her with the clothing and tools necessary to avoid detection, Brent assumes the disguise and successfully performs her designated role. In choosing to dress like a sea-faring man and to darken her skin with charcoal, she illustrates that race and gender are performances whose success depends on the performer's ability to play the part convincingly. Significantly, cross-dressing and darkening her skin enable her to escape Dr. Flint and slavery while simultaneously allowing her to step outside of her reality as a light-skinned black woman. Whereas her male attire enables her to escape the private realm of women by entering the public sphere dominated by men, her blackened face permits her to exaggerate the racial signifiers used to enslave her.[98] Thus, she parodies how race is something visible that paradoxically renders one invisible, certainly with respect to the law and to

citizenship. Skin colour is, to a large extent, increasingly arbitrary in the mid-nineteenth century when it comes to whether or not one is a slave. This is due to the lightened face of slavery resulting from years of interracial unions between slaves and masters and to the longstanding practice of determining the offspring's "right" to freedom or to servitude by referring to the condition of the mother as free or enslaved.

Jacobs devotes the chapter, "A Visit to England," to showing the ways in which the United States differs from England. After Mrs. Bruce's death, Mr. Bruce asks Brent to travel with him to Britain as his infant's nurse and she consents, chiefly for financial reasons (Jacobs 183). Arriving in Liverpool and then heading to stay at a hotel in London, Brent compares not only the food and the lodgings to that of the United States, but also the treatment of black people. As John Cullen Gruesser observes, "it is not until she leaves the United States that she truly feels free" (112). Unlike when she arrives in the Northern States, she claims that in London she feels, for the first time in her life, "the delightful consciousness of pure, unadulterated freedom" (Jacobs 183). Even after ten months of residing in England, she declares that during her stay she "never saw the slightest symptom of prejudice against color" (Jacobs 185). Here, besides showing readers a different model of societal organization than the one in her native land, Jacobs uses the time that she spent in Britain to shame her country for its treatment of blacks and for its ongoing practice of slavery. Whereas England had outlawed the Atlantic slave trade in 1807 and had abolished slavery throughout the British Empire in 1833, the United States' economic

and social organization still relied on and legally sanctioned slavery. As Patrick Brantlinger notes:

> The abolition of slavery in all the British territories did not eliminate the concern about slavery elsewhere, but the British began to see themselves less and less as perpetrators of the slave trade and more and more as the potential saviors of the African. The blame for slavery could now be displaced onto others—onto Americans, for example. ("Victorians and Africans" 192)

Similarly, in Incidents, Jacobs depicts England as a safe haven. She does not acknowledge Britain's involvement in slavery earlier in the nineteenth century. Instead, she portrays this nation as a place where the slave, hounded mercilessly in her own country, can experience much-needed refuge and respite from the thirsty bloodhounds trailing her every step.

Jacobs places the full brunt of responsibility for slavery onto America's shoulders by holding it accountable for its slaveholding practices when other lands have already managed to do away with these same customs. She refers specifically to the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in the United States in 1850 as a sign of regression in that her country is becoming more entrenched in slavery. By implicating the Northern States further in the entire slavery debacle in forcing them to return slaves to the South and consequently to the very condition of enslavement from which they were attempting to flee, slavery as an institution still firmly gripped the nation. Furthermore, in rendering it illegal to harbour and assist fugitive slaves in their escape and in penalizing those who sought to help those fleeing slavery, the passing of this law was an indication, certainly for Jacobs, that slavery's grip was strengthening rather than weakening its stronghold on the country. The numerous

references to the passing of this law in the text attest both to the hardships and the struggles that Jacobs and other runaway slaves were subject to. Besides affecting the material conditions of her daily life by forcing her to always look over her shoulder, to scan the newspapers every day to discover which Southerners were journeying North and to avoid going out at night, Jacobs as Brent remarks that she felt like she was being persecuted for a crime that she had never committed (191-194).[99]

In her narrative, Jacobs explores the differences between the poor in Britain and slaves in America. She writes:

> The people around me were, many of them, among the poorest of the poor. But when I visited them in their little thatched cottages, I felt that the condition of the meanest and the most ignorant among them was vastly superior to the most favored slaves in America. . . . Their homes were very humble; but they were protected by the law. (Jacobs 184)

The notion of (home) ownership as well as of protection under the law is one that preoccupies Jacobs throughout the course of her narrative. As stated above, the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law alienated runaway slaves further from the law in that it made the latter something that works against them rather than working for them.[100] This sense of being at the mercy of the legal system and its bloodthirsty legislators is one that Jacobs counters by showing how in England, for instance, there are no such laws.

Also, in alluding to the poor in Britain, she states that there is no law that prevents them from having access to literacy. She uses the example of learning to spell from the Bible to illustrate how even the poorest individuals have access to the sacred text. The fact that she chooses this specific text to make her point is not

random; instead, it contributes to her on-going argument on the hypocrisy of Southerners who own slaves and yet profess to be good Christians. Wilson, for her part, makes the same argument about professors of religion in the North. She too underscores the disparity between those, like the Bellmonts, who claim to be religious, yet fail to put their beliefs into practice. Instead of adhering to the religious precept that charity begins at home, these so-called believers turn the house into a living hell for the female, mixed-race servant. As for Jacobs, further on in her narrative, she contrasts the religious beliefs and practices of the clergyman and his family in Stevenson with those of men like Dr. Flint in the South. Perhaps the most compelling part of this chapter on England is the appeal that she makes to Hon. Miss Murray, an English visitor who saw and praised slavery when she visited America. The writer enters into a transatlantic dialogue with this woman by stating that, were the latter to live on some plantation in Louisiana or Alabama as a governess, she would paint a very different picture of slavery in the States (Jacobs 185). Thus, in this chapter, Jacobs contributes to the on-going discussion at the time on the parallel between poverty in Britain and slavery in America by denouncing American laws as well as British or other individuals who seek, in their speech or in their writing, to keep black people in chains.

At the end of her text, Jacobs demonstrates an awareness of the literary conventions of sentimental fiction. Echoing the famous ending of Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre, "Reader, I married him" (552), Jacobs writes, "Reader, my story ends with freedom; not in the usual way, with marriage" (201). Here, the writer shows that she is familiar with the typical marriage plot. This appears to be the writer's way of

signalling to her readers her knowledge of literature and her own habits as a reader which she likens to those of her white, female audience. As a writer, however, Jacobs takes the traditional ending and alters it significantly by declaring that her text ends with freedom.[101] In doing so, Jacobs "is able to link the bondage of slavery with the bonds of marriage and childbearing" (Mullen 249). Besides valuing freedom above and beyond marriage, she appears to be suggesting that matrimony itself is a kind of enslavement where women place their husbands' comfort above their own. Like Harriet Wilson, Jacobs presents readers with a more independent and progressive type of womanhood than was typically available in most white women's writing. Instead of seeing marriage as necessary to a sense of fulfillment, both writers depict liberty and autonomy as well as social involvement as being far more liberating.

Unlike what occurs in Bronte's novel where Jane's employer, Rochester, becomes her husband, Brent's master does not succeed in making this transition. Instead of becoming, as Jane does, her employer's wife and nurse, Brent becomes her own master and is free to care for her children. As she writes, being "free from the power of slaveholders . . . is a vast improvement in *my* condition" (Jacobs 201). This is a strong statement of the extent to which she cherishes her own liberty and independence. Although she mentions her children and clearly holds their freedom dear, her book ends with a passage where she refers to the hardships that she suffered in bondage as well as to memories of her grandmother.[102] As a result, her ending is one that affirms her own strength and determination as well as that of her grandmother and one that, ultimately, celebrates the fortitude of other black women forced to live under slavery. Like many of these women, Jacobs experienced

economic hardship and forced separation from her children as a result of slavery. Consequently, her situation is more complicated than Jane's owing to race. Because of how the United States at the time restricted black women's liberty and severed physical ties between mother and child, the nation prevented these women from living together with their offspring in their own home.

Yet, anticipating Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own, the writer claims that her ultimate dream is to share with her children "a home of my own" (201). Thus, Jacobs, as a nineteenth-century black woman, does not reject domesticity, rather she challenges the convention of marriage as a way of achieving a sense of completion. As Ann duCille argues, "Jacobs identifies two issues with which black women writers were to be preoccupied throughout her century and ours: the pervasiveness of patriarchal power and the struggle of black women to claim political freedom and female authority" (5). For Jacobs, owning her own house rather than being owned by a man is the ultimate sign of freedom and personhood.[103] However, it is not just white men whom she must free herself from, but white women who depend on her labour to promote their own social standing. The latter also attempt to make her subservient and financially dependent on them for survival. Consequently, she looks forward to taking her place in a capitalist economy, not as an object to be bought and sold, but as a person to buy and sell material possessions.[104] To a large degree, owning a home would enable her to exercise her rights as a free and equal person.[105]

This desire to possess her own home and to be the head of the household also indicates Jacobs' rejection of the popular notion of the relationship between slaves

and their masters being a familial one. For the writer, it is wrong to portray slavery as a kind of natural or pre-ordained family where slaves are infants whose survival depends on the careful supervision of their adult overseers whose job it is to act in loco parentis. As Donald B. Gibson notes:

> Slavery was defined as an extension of the traditional patriarchal family. . . . Despite the peculiarity of the slave's status as property and family member, during the nineteenth century the analogy-to-family argument became one of the chief and most frequently employed to justify slavery. (158)

In wanting her own home as well the opportunity to preside over it, Jacobs subverts not only the patriarchal structure of marriage or of home-ownership, but that of slavery where slaveholders function as supposedly benevolent paternalists who instruct their "children" in the ways of the world and protect them from themselves in exchange for their labour and obedience. Instead, Jacobs depicts this naturalization of slavery as the sanctioning of rape as well as physical, verbal, and economic abuse. Furthermore, as she illustrates, if slaveholders stand in a parental relationship to their slaves, then the families of the nation are wrought with incest and other perversities. What is more, these families are among the most dysfunctional and depraved in forcing their daughters and sons to dwell in a state of perpetual infancy as well as in depriving them of the right to legal representation and to social standing.

Marriage, as duCille suggests, was increasingly seen as a way for black emancipated slaves to declare their own right to enter into legally binding unions after the civil war, thus to assert equality and personhood. For Jacobs, who was writing before 1861, liberty is preferable to matrimony (14). The writer's aim is to reach a place where she will be physically safe from harm and legally recognized as a

person. Thus, the quest for personhood takes precedence over contracts, like marriage, with their own implicit hierarchy which bind people to other people in an unequal manner. Jacobs' desire to maximize her own individual potential as a writer, abolitionist, and mother prevents her from valuing dependence before independence. Having been enslaved and forced to hide for so long, the chance to develop her own skills and to have her own career are opportunities that she is eager to explore. In her writing, the idea of completion as something that results from getting married is simply not present. Incidents "eschew[s] the 'standard' marriage plot developed in the English novel" (Jennifer DeVere Brody 19). This is evident in Jacobs' text not only by the ending, but by her assertion that her unfulfilled dream is to own a home, not, as discussed above, to be married. Similarly, Wilson's novel also stresses family instead of marriage. Like Jacobs whose narrative exposes the atrocities the country perpetuated on the domestic sphere and the family, Wilson, in publishing her book, connects the violence against the black female body in the white, Bellmont home with that in the nation at large. Furthermore, like Jacobs, who wished to be reunited with her children in the North, Wilson sought to be able to live with and to support her son, George, without having to turn to the poor house for relief. As a result, both Jacobs and Wilson emphasize the importance of building a nation which treats black people as equals by allowing them to have homes of their own rather than forcing them to work— whether owing to slavery, indentured servitude, or simply, penury— in the homes of whites.

The afore-quoted passage also highlights the different status of the black and mixed-race woman in England and her counterpart in America. In English novels, as

Brody illustrates, characters like Rhoda Swartz, the wealthy, "mulatta" woman in William Makepeace Thackeray's Vanity Fair, can wed white men (19). While such marriages are still viewed in a contemptuous and scornful manner in Britain, they can nonetheless occur because "England never had antimiscegenation laws" (Brody 18). In the United States, on the other hand, "black female subjects rarely marry at the conclusion of their texts" (Brody 19). Besides highlighting the difference between the two countries in question, it also contrasts the lived experience recounted in American slave narratives with the fictitious one found in British novels. While these differences are partly generic, they also represent two distinct views of both race and interracial marriage. Although Jacobs never got married, Wilson did— twice— though neither one lasted. Whereas she mentions her first marriage in her book, she does not refer to the second one since it took place years after the publication of her novel. In spite of this, Wilson, like Jacobs, focuses on the importance of family and home as well as economic survival instead of idealizing marriage like fictional heroines in Victorian novels. Since both of these women ultimately refused to be confined to the home and since they sought to have a career and an income of their own, they rejected white notions of domesticity, choosing instead to reconfigure the private sphere and to take part in the public one.

While Jacobs' narrative focuses on dismantling race as a construct, it also creates and celebrates black womanhood. For, although Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl problematizes racial identity, it nonetheless demands that readers identify themselves and their position vis-à-vis slavery as candidly as the writer does. Although Jacobs frequently complicates and blurs the black/white binary, she does

not do the same for the freedom/slavery issue. Instead, she asks her readers to take a stand and lend not just their ears, but also their voices to the cause. The subsequent chapter indicates how Mary Elizabeth Braddon too, like Jacobs, urged her readership to sympathize with the plight of slaves and to side with liberty rather than slavery.

Chapter Three:
The Transatlantic Gaze in M. E. Braddon's The Octoroon

The fact that Britain had already abolished slavery by The Octoroon's publication— unlike the United States, which was embroiled in the Civil War— enabled Mary Elizabeth Braddon to display her fervent nationalism in her novel. It also allowed her to evoke the notion of England/Queen Victoria "as the great Britannic mother, ruling with maternal severity and sympathy her own eminently respectable large family, her own British subjects, and her own subjugated natives" despite the loss of her American colonies (David 6). Rejected and rebuked, Britain, for the author, nonetheless casts its gaze (and its motherly censure) across the Atlantic to chastise its former colony for disrupting familial bonds due to its declaration of independence on the one hand and its continued practice of slavery on the other. Braddon deliberately employs and exploits this notion of the motherland by describing the climate in the United States as dangerous and by having all the "good" or redeemed characters return to Europe in general and England in particular at the end of the novel. However, as Wilson's text shows, the white mother(land), much like the white house itself, does not always have the interests of her children at heart. In other words, like Mrs. Bellmont who hides her violence towards Frado in order to appear respectable in her community, mid-nineteenth-century England masks its own implication in slavery in the past as well as its colonial activity in the present to depict itself as a virtuous and principled nation.

Throughout the book, Braddon uses the mixed-race Cora's situation in the States to discuss racial, gender, and caste or class-based inequality as well as to voice her belief in the inherent superiority of her native land in particular and the old world in general. In order to highlight certain national differences in the treatment of

interracial unions, this chapter begins by comparing the British Braddon's novel and American Boucicault's play of the same title.[106] The purpose of this is to exonerate Braddon's work from the taint of plagiarism that other scholars have levelled at it as well as to show how geography, in both Braddon and Boucicault's case, affects their depiction of race, sex and class— particularly, in terms of the portrayal of the mixed-race female. In order to emphasize the continuum between my two previous chapters on Jacobs and Wilson, and the following one on Stevenson, the current chapter delves into nineteenth-century Britain and America's need to create and to perpetuate the myth of a hybrid monster when, in fact, the true monster is the white mother/father figure (the Flints, Mrs. Bellmont, Gerald Leslie, Dr. Jekyll) who attempts to render the mixed-race person monstrous. It also looks at the transatlantic exchanges in the text between British and American characters and, ultimately, between Braddon's conception of nineteenth-century Britain and America. Like Paul Gilroy, who explores the link between black identity, hybridity and transatlantic travel in The Black Atlantic, I examine the ways in which blackness and whiteness merge in the interracial person by looking at interracial characters and unions in the novel as well as the book's generic hybridity.

According to Robert Lee Wolff, Braddon based The Octoroon "without acknowledgment on Dion Boucicault's successful play" (119). Similarly, Werner Sollors asserts that the author "plagiarized from Boucicault" (Neither Black Nor White Yet Both 373). Both of these statements are, in my opinion, inaccurate. While Braddon was familiar with the American dramatist's work and even acted in one of his plays, it is more likely that she sought to capitalize on its success in the United

States by giving her British text a similar title and theme rather than to actually duplicate its plot.[107] As Jennifer Carnell claims in the introduction to the book, "Braddon's Halfpenny Journal serial was designed to coincide with the opening of Boucicault's play; in fact, it preceded it, the serial began on 11 November, the play opened at the Adelphi on the 18 November" (xiv). Although there are undoubtedly similarities between Braddon's novel and Boucicault's drama, there are also many noticeable differences. What is more, the similarities that exist between both works do not constitute plagiarism.[108] Instead, they demonstrate the popularity of the theme of miscegenation, the public fascination with interracial characters, and the English preoccupation with America during the early-to-mid nineteenth century, one that, according to Vanessa D. Dickerson, began "[w]hen the American colonies broke away from British rule in the 1780s" (14). This interest, for its part, likely stemmed from British travel narratives by Harriet Martineau, Frances Trollope, and Charles Dickens before the middle of the century and personal accounts like Fanny Kemble's Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation published in 1863. All of these texts generated curiosity about the United States and its ways by describing American habits and institutions (Waters 90). Besides recounting the manners and customs of Americans, a work such as Kemble's focuses not only on slaves' quarters and living conditions, but also on the presence and prevalence of interracial individuals in the United States due to slavery.

What is most striking about Braddon's text is the ways in which it differs from her American counterpart's. Not only is the cast of characters different, the plot itself is not the same. For one, the British novelist gives Cora and Gilbert the happy

ending that the American playwright initially denied Zoë and George in its 1859 debut in the United States. Whereas Braddon ends her novel with Cora's marriage to Gilbert, Boucicault finishes his play with Zoë's suicide. In 1861— incidentally, the year Braddon published The Octoroon — Boucicault rewrote his ending to suit British tastes since many people who saw the play in Britain were upset with the fact that Zoë kills herself. The British audience saw no reason why the two characters should be kept apart. Braddon, for her part, never had to rewrite her ending because it originally included Cora and Gilbert's union. Hence, while she allowed the mixed-race union to take place from the onset, Boucicault rewrote his to pacify the British public's dissatisfaction with what they perceived to be Zoë's senseless death (Brooks 43).

Other than demonstrating Braddon and Boucicault's different treatment and tolerance of interracial couples, both endings shed light on mid-nineteenth century attitudes towards mixed-race individuals in England and in the United States respectively. In Britain, where there were no anti-miscegenation laws, a relationship between Cora and Gilbert can take place. This is evident throughout the entire novel as well as in the following passage where Braddon writes "in free England there is no barrier to separate an honourable man from the woman of his choice" (141). Throughout the book, Braddon ultimately proves this notion by demonstrating that Cora and Gilbert are only truly safe and happy in Britain. On the other hand, in America, where interracialism was banned, Boucicault's Zoë must die since the act of coupling her with the white George would not only have been scandalous, but it would have been criminal. Since there were a number of laws in that country

forbidding black-white unions, depicting the outcome of this type of relationship in a positive manner on the stage would have been not only an immoral act, but a virtually illegal one as well. Boucicault presents Zoë's suicide as a viable solution for dealing with the social and cultural taboo of black/white desire. In this case, as Eve Allegra Raimon argues in The "Tragic Mulatta" Revisited, the interracial female character comes "to literally personify the anxieties and the fantasies about the nation's interracial future" (8). Having Zoë kill herself perpetuates the fantasy of auto-genocide to preserve the racial "purity" of the country since, as the black-identified female, she sacrifices herself so that George can live and marry the Southern belle, Dora Sunnyside. As the one with the supposed curse of Ham,[109] Zoë dies in order to facilitate the "completely" white characters' union. This is troublesome because it depicts only the (partly) black female body as racialized while simultaneously perpetuating the notion of the white body as race-less.[110] This blindness fails to take into account the fact that both are racial constructs that are largely the product of a culture that seeks to polarize people. In other words, both are the invention of a sectarian and hierarchical society that seeks to divide and stratify its members.

For the New York newspaper, the Herald, the focus on the racialized body in Boucicault's play was just one "example of the 'rise and progress of the negro worshipping mania' in the United States" in 1859 (Kaplan 548). Furthermore, the fact that Boucicault's wife played the part of Zoë highlights the fluidity of racial categories, inviting spectators not only to look at the hybrid body, but also to consider that some of the audience members "might 'really' be [racial] Others. They [too, like the actress] might even be exposed as octoroons" (Sonstegard 381). That a white

actress could pass as black or, conversely, that a black woman might pass as white feeds into a general anxiety in both America and Britain regarding race as an increasingly unstable category. Since skin colour was no longer seen as a clear or reliable indication of racial identity, whiteness and blackness became highly performative and performed identities on stage or, as Daphne Brooks puts it, race became "an elaborate stunt, a construction of gargantuan and highly spectacular proportions" (32). On the other side of the Atlantic, in mid-nineteenth-century England, the obsession with and commodification of blackness was evident in that it was not uncommon for "white itinerant street musicians and white mendicants to 'black up'"— that is, to stage a minstrel act— in the hope of getting money (Fisch "'Negrophilism' and British Nationalism" 21). Furthermore, as Laura Callahan notes, since race was "a flash point for many social questions" (14), it appealed to Victorians and their transatlantic contemporaries in America who used it to discuss other dissolving barriers, such as those pertaining to gender, class, and even nationhood.

Besides allowing readers to question their own marginal position in society, Cora's mixed-race status gives Braddon the opportunity to link the abuse of power under slavery with that under patriarchy, especially as it pertains to the notion of property, and to voice some of her progressive views on race, gender and class or caste. As Kimberly Harrison notes in "Political Persuasion in The Octoroon," Braddon "offers a challenge to dominant ideologies of race and conceptions of difference, hinting at the potential for racial equality" (222). Afterall, if Cora is a slave as well as her slaveholding father's possession, how can she legally wed and

become Gilbert Margrave's wife? Since being chattel in the United States prohibits one from entering into a legal marriage, Cora's status is tricky because it makes the transference that happens in a patriarchal culture— where she would go from being her father's property to that of her husband's— difficult. By underscoring Cora's particular situation as a black woman in the slaveholding South, Braddon draws attention to the ways in which slavery and patriarchy overlapped in mid-nineteenth-century America.

By having her character grow up and into a more complex racialized and gendered self, the author also urges readers to challenge their own understanding of race, gender, and class as rigid categories. For the author, black and white, female and male, poor and rich are not set up as polar opposites; instead, there is a contact zone where they touch and overlap.[111] The novel, for its part, reflects this preoccupation with fluidity and heterogeneity in that characters move from unchanging and seemingly uniform identities to changing and hybrid ones. In fact, it is not the characters' selves that undergo a significant transformation per se. Rather, it is their consciousness of these selves that alters over the course of the narrative.

Throughout the novel, this growing awareness is obvious in that characters not only travel from Britain to America or from whiteness to blackness, but from the centre to the periphery. Cora's emigration from England to the United States physically and psychically transforms her from a white-identified woman into a black-identified one. In Harriet Jacobs Incidents, Linda Brent crosses the Atlantic in the opposite direction, a journey which transforms her from a chattel to a person. Significantly, as Douglas Lorimer suggests in "Reconstructing Victorian Racial

Discourse," this voyage is one that Jacobs uses in her narrative— like other African American fugitive slaves and abolitionists would in their works— to advance the notion of early-to-mid nineteenth-century Britain as relatively free of colour prejudice (192).[112] Whereas Jacobs as Brent discovers how it feels to go from slavery to (temporary) freedom, Cora experiences, albeit briefly, what it is like to go from being a person to being a thing. For Cora, traveling to America allows her to unearth secrets that, while she was in Britain, remained a mystery. Hence, she must cross the Atlantic to learn about herself and the world around her. For this character, a geographical relocation must occur before a more profound internal change can take place. In this manner, Cora's travels serve as a catalyst in that they precipitate her from a state of innocence into one of knowledge. She goes from being a girl schooled in England to one who acquires real-life experience in the United States. Learning her place in a society that is rigidly structured by race, gender, and class divides, Cora nonetheless incorporates some of the more egalitarian principles that she learnt in England to her every day adventures in America. Thus, although she finds out that she is both her father's daughter and his slave in the States, she nonetheless clings to the belief in racial and gender equality throughout the text.

Clearly, traveling functions as a metaphor for the growth of racial awareness in the novel. In Cora's case, crossing the Atlantic represents not only a spatial shift but a cognitive or psychical one as well. In Playing in the Dark, Toni Morrison also discusses "[t]he flight from the Old World to the New," seeing the latter not only as a place which offered immigrants greater opportunity, but also as " a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity not only to be born again but to be born again in new clothes, as it were.

The new setting would provide new raiments of self" (34). For Cora, arriving in the United States requires that she trade in her British identity for an American one because she can no longer play by the old (world) rules in the new world. Moreover, the nature of the game itself is different as Cora goes from being identified as white in England to being seen as black in the United States. Owing to this, Braddon depicts race as being crucial in America, for not only does it determine who one is (i.e. black or white), it also determines what one is (i.e. master/slave or person/ chattel).[113]

Cora's transformation from who to what or from subject of discussion to object of exchange is evident in the following conversation between Gilbert Margrave and Mortimer Percy: "'Can you tell me who she is?' 'No. But I can do more. I can tell you *what* she is.' 'What do mean?' 'I mean that your angel, your nymph, your goddess, your siren is— a slave'" (Braddon 4). While this dialogue reveals that Mortimer, the American, sees Cora's slave status as a problem, it also shows how he semantically strips her of her subjectivity and turns her into a thing. Mortimer's speech attempts to knock Cora off the pedestal that Gilbert has placed her on— to no avail. Although readers later find out that Mortimer has good intentions, he initially fails to see who Cora is because of his preoccupation with what she is.

On the other hand, Gilbert never loses sight of Cora as a subject even though he paradoxically pursues her as the object of his affection. She sparks his interest from the moment that he sees her despite the fact that he knows nothing about her. His attraction to her in the text is due to his reverence as an artist and as a poet for all that is beautiful. Thus, while Gilbert does not deny Cora's subjectivity, his romantic

and poetic sensibilities make the young woman the subject of his gaze as well as a kind of artistic muse. This in and of itself arguably involves turning a real person into a remote ideal. In other words, it entails turning a subject into an object: in valuing Cora for her appearance or her aesthetic value, Gilbert overlooks her intrinsic worth. Hence, whether for the sake of painting, poetry or simply love, Gilbert's feelings as an artist inevitably precede his sentiments as a man.

While Gilbert is free from the narrow racial prejudice that rules Mortimer, both men are nonetheless guilty of looking at women as lovely acquisitions, thus confirming Shirley Tyler's assertion that patriarchy, in Braddon's fiction, "is ultimately inescapable" (59). Mortimer suggests to Gilbert that Cora is more accessible than she may appear. According to his logic, her race affects her social standing in society; it also makes her particularly vulnerable as a woman in a patriarchal culture. Mortimer insinuates that because she is part black, she is not worth any romantic consideration— much less, wooing. Furthermore, Mortimer feels a kind of superiority and power over the girl because he knows that she is an octoroon, i.e., one-eighth black, while she is oblivious to this reality.[114] This is evident when he thinks to himself that "'one word from me, and my cousin [Adelaide] would shrink from this lovely and innocent creature with loathing and disdain'" (Braddon 10). However, what ultimately redeems him is his restraint: he resists telling Cora and he urges Gilbert to tell no one.

For Gilbert, Cora's racial identity does not make her any more obtainable than she was before; instead, she remains an unattainable ideal, one that he continues to strive for. Unlike what P. Gabrielle Foreman notes as the tendency in white

characters and audiences to try to identify the marks of blackness on the mulatta's body in order to claim it as property, Gilbert does not use Cora's race to turn her into his possession ("Who's Your Mama?" 520). Instead, he focuses on her femininity in order to do so. In other words, he hopes that marriage will provide the means of possessing her, showing how "sex replaces slavery as the way [black, female] others are seen to belong to the white man" (Brooks 46). Yet in contrast to the other characters in the book, Gilbert continues to call Cora "miss," much to the shock and dismay of the Southern slaveholders whom he meets. The alarm and fear that this occasions in these men is due to the fact that their bourgeois status not only depends on Cora's subordination and that of others like her, but on the reality that ensuring a clear distinction between masters and slaves or whites and blacks sustains white superiority or privilege in a white supremacist culture (Hartman 62). White men's social standing, much like that of the white women in the novel, depends upon such a racial hierarchy, one which benefits whites as much as it hinders blacks.

Mortimer is no exception to this rule. Much like other American male characters in the book, though to a lesser extent, he is incapable of overlooking race. Although he is much more tolerant in his opinions and his treatment of Cora than the other American men in the text, he is uncomfortable with her racial identity. Consequently, the difference between Gilbert's view of Cora and Mortimer's indicates that race, for the American man, is much more of an obstacle and even an obsession than it is for the British man. Whereas Mortimer views Cora in a contemptuous manner after finding out that she is black, Gilbert's is perfectly at ease with the discovery. For the latter, race is not an obstacle in and of itself; rather, it is

only a barrier to the extent that it prevents two people who are in love from marrying one another in certain states in America.[115]

As for Cora, discovering that she is one-eight black makes her question her identity as well her supposedly natural racial allegiances. She begins to feel a kinship with the other black characters as well as an occasional sense of misgiving or discomfort when she is with the white ones in certain social settings. Furthermore, she starts to believe that she belongs in the company of the black characters and not the white ones even though she spent her whole life believing herself to be "entirely" white. Besides making her rethink her place in a polarized society, this discovery also forces Cora to address the fact that her status and her rights as a mixed-race individual are largely conditional on geography.[116] While in Britain she is a lady, in the United States, she is a slave: in the former, her pale skin makes her white whereas, in the latter, her mother's position as a quadroon slave makes her black. Owing to this, Braddon fully underscores how race and rank are social constructs that largely depend not only on where one happens to find one's self, but also on the values and the prohibitions of a given place.

In addition to drawing attention to the importance of location (and nation), the author, true to her past as an actress, stages race as a social/ theatrical performance that can easily shift depending on the part, whether black, white or both that a character must perform (Paulin "Performing Miscegenation" 72). Cora goes from England where she is a white woman to America where she is a black slave. Consequently, her entire conception of herself alters dramatically based on how society views her and how she sees herself and her position within the nation.

Similarly, for Linda, in Harriet Jacobs' Incidents, crossing the Atlantic— albeit in the opposite direction, from the United States to England— allows her to rethink her own identity, particularly as it pertains to race and class. Temporarily fleeing the Fugitive Slave Law not only gives her time to rest from her persecutors, but it also allows her to compare her own country to Britain. Through Linda, Jacobs is able to contrast the condition of members of the lower class in England with black slaves in America as well as to reflect on the condition of black people on both sides of the Atlantic. In this manner, like Braddon, she is able to stress how race, class, and even gender are constructs that are bound up with performativity and space.

As an octoroon, Cora is a stereotypical figure because many of the character traits commonly attributed to the tragic mulatta in literature also apply to her.[117] Yet while she initially seems passive and even resigned to her fate, she eventually asserts herself by boldly speaking out or by taking action. Hence, Celia R. Daileader's mention of Linda's outspokenness in Jacobs' narrative also applies to Cora who voices her concerns repeatedly in the book and acts on them (129-130). When she discovers that her father has been wounded in the slave revolt, she insists on sailing from England to America to comfort him despite his orders to the contrary. Determined and stubborn, she does not let any of the other characters' opposition interfere with her plan. This demonstrates her fearlessness in that, rather than avoid a dangerous situation, she is prepared to face it head on for her father's sake. Hence, while embodying the stereotypic portrayal of the tragic octoroon and the docile female, she also simultaneously defies both depictions by being assertive, strong-willed, and outspoken.

In spite of Gerald's desire that she remain oblivious to her origins, Cora actively seeks to resolve the mystery of her birth. To this end, she even sees Augustus when he arrives alone and unannounced regardless of Toby's apprehension on the issue (Braddon 51-54). Unafraid of this gentleman, she does not see herself as a victim, but rather as an actor or an agent in her own life. Furthermore, even when Augustus assumes a kind of inappropriate familiarity with her because of his knowledge of her racial identity, she re-acts to this insult in a dignified yet outraged manner by kicking him out of the house and by telling him never to return (Braddon 54).[118] After telling Toby to conduct Augustus off Gerald's property and deny him admittance in the future, Cora tells him, "'I am but a stranger in New Orleans, and you have done much to enlighten me as to the character of its inhabitants. You have done well to choose the hour of a father's absence to insult his only daughter. Go!'" (Braddon 54). Clearly, she does not passively accept any kind of treatment (or, for that matter, confine herself to the sidelines); rather, she demands respect and will not tolerate anything less.

Later on, when Augustus purchases her, she briefly contemplates suicide, but ends up rejecting this course of action. Instead, she plans and succeeds in escaping his house by tying a rope to the railing of the balcony and lowering herself to the garden below (Braddon 171-174). Like Alfrado in Wilson's novel and Linda in Jacobs' work, Cora manages to flee her oppressor and the corrupt domestic sphere that he represents. Yet whereas Frado is only capable of escaping the Bellmont home upon her eighteenth birthday, Linda, like the fictional Cora, must run away immediately to free herself from her tormenter. Clearly, the threat that each villain poses the woman

in question is different in kind: for Frado, the danger is physical (i.e., violence), for Linda and Cora, it is sexual (i.e., rape). In spite of this (or, perhaps, because of it), Frado endures Mrs. Bellmont's violence in the matriarchal, Bellmont abode until the end of her indentured servitude while Linda and Cora do not delay in leaving the degenerate patriarch and the immoral system/nation he stands for. Besides showing Cora's resourcefulness and wilfulness, the above-mentioned incidents show that she does not meekly await her destiny. Instead, she chooses to risk running away in order to remain in control of her own fate. By having Cora repeatedly speak up and out against slavery and patriarchy, Braddon underscores the agency and the ingenuity of her mixed-race heroine even while simultaneously noting the limits of both. The author suggests, though, that the restrictions that Cora faces are due to a slaveholding and patriarchal society, not to an innate deficiency in women, whether black, white, or mixed-race.

Unlike her mother who kills herself to avoid rape, for Cora, suicide is not a viable option. The daughter's unwillingness to kill herself demonstrates not only her desire to live, but also her faith in "a woman's *power* in the moment of desperation" (Braddon 174; my italics). Clearly, unlike her parent, she is able to see the glimmer of hope and even empowerment in a seemingly hopeless situation. In this manner, the author contrasts the behaviour of mother and daughter in that the former admits defeat while the latter sees the window of opportunity in it (which, in her case, literally happens to be the window itself). In this instance, Cora is not a tragic octoroon because she refuses to let tragedy define and constrain her.

However, Braddon implies that this is because of her privileged existence. After all, Cora never truly discovers what it is to be a slave or, for that matter, what it is to be black because, for most of her life, she has lived as though she was free and white.[119] Thus, while legal and social considerations render her enslaved and black, her pale skin and her education[120] abroad ultimately prevent complete identification with her brethren in slavery. For this reason, the writer hints that her positive outlook is the result of only knowing hardship for a relatively brief period of time. Unlike Francilia whom the novel suggests Gerald may have raped and who faces a similar threat from Silas, Cora never knows this kind of abuse. At the most, she experiences the threat of sexual violence, yet she ultimately avoids this danger. Likewise, she has not lived her entire life as a slave nor has she ever endured the pain of being separated from her child or her lover in the way that her mother has.

In fact, it is how Cora differs from other slaves rather than how she resembles them that is her salvation. This is problematic because, although Braddon depicts slavery as a social and moral evil, she suggests that only exceptional individuals like Cora or, for that matter, Paul are capable of extricating themselves from or simply avoiding enslavement in the United States. The trouble with this line of reasoning is that it privileges certain characters' lives over others. Despite her repeated mention of humanity as a brotherhood of equals, it is only interracial characters that look white that are capable of avoiding slavery. All the dark-skinned characters are slaves. In other words, appearing white is a prerequisite in the novel for having the same privileges as those who are legally and socially deemed white in nineteenth-century American culture. All the visibly black characters in the book remain in the same

situation at the end of the text as they were in the beginning. In fact, for some of them, their fate is actually worse as the novel progresses.

This is Tristan's case where his infatuation with Camillia, his master's white daughter and his former playfellow, leads to a confrontation with Paul, the hero of the subplot. For an individual who is visibly black as opposed to one who is invisibly so, loving a white woman is presumptuous and even crazy in the novel. Thus, while Braddon has no objection to her lily-white but black-identified heroine's marriage with a white, British gentleman, she prevents Tristan and Camillia's union which she presents as inconceivable. In other words, as long as both people look white enough, the author does not seem to be opposed to pairing them up; yet if one individual appears considerably darker than other, the idea of their union is an aberration of the laws of nature.

This is obvious in the chapter entitled "Tristan" where the eponymous figure's love for the white Camillia designates him as dangerous and mad. Sander L. Gilman, for his part, notes the link between blackness and madness in the nineteenth century in Difference and Pathology, stating that art from the eighteenth century onward alluded to deviant sexuality usually by pairing a black individual, whether male or female, with a white individual of the opposite sex (81). In the book, Braddon pairs Tristan and Camillia to illustrate how the former's interracial love for Juan's daughter is an illness from which he must be cured in order to reintegrate into society.[121] Rather than deeming society's prohibition of interracial unions insane, he is the one who is crazy for even thinking about crossing the colour line.

Unlike the other slaves in the novel, Tristan refuses, at an early age, to accept his position in life. From childhood onward, he resists the appellation and the role of slave as this identity is one that society has thrust upon him and not one that he has freely chosen. He is unwilling and unable to think of himself as a slave for this line of reasoning goes against his concept of logic and of justice. Owing to this, his madness in the novel is not simply his love for Camillia, but also his refusal to define himself according to nineteenth-century racial and societal norms. Tristan's supposed insanity recalls census data from the 1840s which suggested that free African Americans were more susceptible to health issues, particularly mental health problems, than enslaved ones. Hence, American society, especially Southern slaveholders as well as many medical practioners, lawyers, and spiritual leaders, had a vested interest in claiming that supposedly healthy, i.e., sane, black individuals knew their "place". On the other hand, many whites implicated in slavery or simply those wanting to perpetuate the status quo with regard to the alleged inferiority of blacks suggested that black individuals who sought freedom and equality were somehow insane or delusional (Washington 145-146). [122]

This is Tristan's lot in the book as society eventually punishes him for not knowing his supposed station. Like William Shakespeare's Caliban who declares the island to be his own, Tristan claims his identity and his soul as his own unalienable possessions:

> "How clever they are! How powerful— how great! They can set their names upon our tortured flesh and mark *that* as their own; but they cannot brand our souls, slaves as we are; pitiful wretches as we may be, *those* are our own! Let them beware the hour when they come to learn the secret workings of those silent depths." (Braddon 34)

Clearly, for him, it is not what slaveholders can seize and control that is the focus, but rather what they cannot. Besides focusing on the liberty that he does have instead of dwelling on that which he does not have— i.e. his soul's freedom versus his body's enslavement— he cautions enslavers not to overstep their bounds by attempting to govern that which falls outside of their jurisdiction.

The manner in which he does this is both somewhat prophetic and foreboding in that it signals the coming of the end in this world and the next.[123] Just as slavery and slaveholders' power is on the verge of disappearing in the 1860s, he suggests that the hour of reckoning may be closer than it seems. Hence, his desire for earthly and divine retribution and his conviction that God punishes the wicked for their crimes prompt his speech. Thus, in this passage, Tristan not only defies his station in society, but he urges slaveholders to rethink theirs. In this way, he not only declares his own independence and equality with those who undermine him; he challenges them to question the sustainability of their role as self-appointed gods on earth. As he states, the time may come when a higher power crushes such false gods underfoot and punishes them for presuming to be its embodiment on earth.

Tristan functions as a Caliban, an Aaron, and even an Othello in The Octoroon. Braddon's previous career as an actress, her reverence for William Shakespeare, and her involvement with an acting company that staged many plays that looked at race and interracialism no doubt explain the presence of this type of character in the novel.[124] In addition to being part of an acting troupe that performed theatrical versions of Othello as well as Uncle Tom's Cabin, Dred, and The White

Slave numerous times between 1852 and 1859, Braddon took part in a drama entitled Othello Travestie on Monday, May 9th, 1859 and one called The Slave on Tuesday, September 27th, 1859 (Carnell 287-364). Moreover, as Carnell notes, Braddon "acted with [Ira] Aldridge a number of times. Although almost forgotten now he was the most famous black actor of the age, and was acting at the Surrey as early as 1833 after his arrival from America, when and after he was often billed as the 'African Rosicus'" (41).[125] By modeling Tristan on the afore-mentioned Shakespearian characters, some of whom she had seen Aldridge depict on stage, the author not only inspires herself and pays homage to one of the great playwrights of the English language and one of the most successful black actors of the period, but she also chooses an appropriate venue for exploring the theme of interracial unions and tensions in her work.

In defying his role as slave as well as the social prohibition of interracial desire, Tristan is the ideal character for exploring the master/slave relationship and for questioning the existence of slavery itself. While Braddon condones a relationship between a white-identified individual like Gilbert and a black-identified one like Cora, presumably because there is no visible difference, she appears to be uncomfortable partnering a *visibly* black character, Tristan, with a white one, Camillia. Consequently, although she challenges certain racist and sexist practices such as the subordination of blacks to whites and that of women to men, she is unwilling or unable to challenge the ultimate racial taboo in the nineteenth century: a romantic union between a black man and a white woman. Whether this is due to ideological reasons (i.e., being unable to conceive of a happy union between two

people of a different complexion) or financial reasons (being afraid of alienating potential readers and of negatively affecting her commercial success as an author) is unclear. What seems clear, though, is that there are limits to the author's radicalism despite her strong critique of slavery and patriarchy and her evident desire to promote human rights.

As for the mixed-race Paul, it is his relatives who disown him for most of his life and not one of the interracial Cora's family members. While the latter's father embraces her as his own flesh and blood, Don Juan denies that Paul is related to him or his brother, Don Tomaso. Hence, unlike Cora, whose father acknowledges her as his offspring, Paul's uncle, Don Juan, robs him of his family name and gives him that of Lisimon.[126] Owing to this, he must make a name and a place for himself in the world by getting a job and trying to accumulate his own wealth rather than relying on his kin. Consequently, Paul grows up with certain disadvantages that he attempts to overcome. While both Paul and Cora receive an education, it is the young man who fraternizes and bonds with the slaves in his midst. This is deliberate on Braddon's part as she posits Paul as both a credit to and a potential leader of black people. However, as argued earlier, this is problematic because the author makes the shining star of dark-skinned individuals an invisibly black person, one who, incidentally, spends his whole life believing himself to be white.[127] Once again, the prerequisite for being an inspiration to one's "race" requires that one appear and believe one's self to be white.

Other than enabling him to pass, Paul's white skin gives him access to the kind of jobs and education that American society frequently denied black people in

mid-nineteenth-century America. It also permits him to accumulate knowledge and experience that he can then transmit to the black slaves on Don Juan's plantation. His interest in the law, in particular, may seem haphazard at first, yet it appears to be intentional on the author's part. Indeed, there is a hint in the novel that he will use his training as a lawyer to promote "the EQUAL RIGHTS OF THE GREAT BROTHERHOOD OF MAN" (Braddon 37). In other words, Braddon suggests that his background in law will be useful in that it will assist him in working towards the goal of racial equality.

In the chapter entitled "Paul Lisimon," the writer repeatedly shows the eponymous character's respect for and identification with the slaves in his midst. In fact, this is what prompts him to impart his learning to them. However, it is the slaves' regard for the young man that makes them not only willing to learn from him, but simultaneously admire him and consider him one of their peers. It is noteworthy that Paul reads them the gospel instead of teaching them Latin, Greek, and mathematics like he was taught. In privileging a religious as opposed to a secular education, he does not give them the same kind of schooling or, for that matter, the same kind of opportunities as he had. Instead, like a missionary heading overseas to convert the natives, he makes the conscious decision to give them a spiritual rather than a practical education. This type of thinking is in line with what Harrison calls Braddon's Victorian liberalism where "social advancement is shown . . . as the product of *gradual* education and individual progress" (214), instead of giant strides or changes in the system, educational or otherwise, happening immediately. How this prepares the black people on the Moraquitos plantation for the end of slavery and the

prospect of entering the work force is unclear. Worse even, it sets them up for a future that far too closely resembles their present state.

On the other hand, perhaps the reason that he gives the black people in his midst this kind of religious training is because he does truly believe that religion is more important than education (Braddon 38). This is certainly the justification that Braddon provides for his behaviour in the text, which is in keeping with Tristan's prophetic belief that God punishes the wicked for their misdeeds. The fact that Braddon has two of her characters express this kind of faith-based conviction suggests that she wished to impart this view to her readers. In The Octoroon, she repeatedly asserts that there is a kind of earthly and divine punishment for those who ignore and impede the rights of others. Ultimately, though, the fact that Braddon intercedes in the novel and punishes characters who commit crimes against humanity demonstrates how the book itself is a tribunal where the author tries and ultimately sentences the guilty to death or to disgrace.

This is Gerald's fate in the novel. Although Braddon does not portray Cora's father as a villain per se, his previous involvement in slavery is a flaw that leads to his (economic) downfall. Furthermore, the very existence of his child attests to his flawed nature and questionable past in that she is the product of his affair with Francilia, his quadroon slave. Even though he eventually sells the latter and sends his daughter to study overseas, he cannot escape his sense of guilt and wrongdoing. While he is able to escape Francilia's reproach in selling her to Silas, he is ultimately incapable of avoiding Cora's censure. Cora's reprimand of her father's behaviour in getting rid of her mother and in contributing to the latter's death demonstrates how

the "sin" of miscegenation affects not just the child of this union, but how it revisits the "perpetrator"— in this case, the father. Thus, in a noteworthy inversion of the matrilineal nature of slavery— and of the Hawthornian notion that the sins of the father revisit the son[128]— it is the father's shameful secret that seals the daughter's fate.

Although it is actually Gerald's bankruptcy that leads to his daughter's sale on the auction block, it is the secret of his interracial relationship that brings about his child's misfortunes. Hence, despite the fact that it is Cora's mother who transmits her slave status to the young woman, it is her father's sexual and financial liability that brings disgrace upon her head. In other words, Cora is liable for his transgressions because of his obligation yet inability to pay both in monetary and non-monetary ways for his indiscretions. Yet for the mixed-race female, it is her body that functions as compensation for her father's offences. Furthermore, while its blackness makes it sellable, its whiteness makes it alluring to slaveholders in the racist economy of slavery. This is evident when the auctioneer sells Cora to the highest bidder as a reward, one that notably recompenses the buyer, Augustus, who can afford her, as much as it punishes the offender, Gerald, who no longer can.

Family is an unstable entity in the novel since slavery perverts its structure and its unity.[129] The peculiar institution affects Cora's relationship with both her father and her mother, thus demonstrating how, in the nineteenth century, "[t]he perversions in the patriarchal family reflected and reproduced perversions throughout society" (Winter 68). Clearly, Cora's bond with her father suffers because of his involvement with slavery. As for her mother, having been separated from her as an

infant, Cora is ignorant of this woman's origins and of the very identity of this parent. All that the former remembers about the latter is that she was young and beautiful and that she once held her closely in her arms while crying unrestrainedly (Braddon 12). For his part, Gerald distances himself from his past and from his daughter by sending her to England where she can no longer remind him of his transgression. Although his decision to send his child abroad partly demonstrates his desire to shield her and to give her a better life, it is also stems from his guilt and selfishness. To hide his own secret and to prevent his daughter from discovering it, he is willing to ship her to England and to sell Cora's mother to Silas, whom he knows to be unscrupulous and callous. Hence, Gerald's role as slaveholder takes precedence over his position as family man. In this manner, Braddon, like Wilson and Jacobs before her, illustrates how the slave trade warps family dynamics in that it corrupts even well-intentioned men and it destroys natural ties of kinship.

Furthermore, the slaveholder's actions affect more than just mother and daughter; they impact the entire slave community. In other words, the master's deeds not only ruin his own family, but they also ruin the lives of black families living on the plantation. As Kimberley Harrison writes, "the most sustained critique of slavery in Braddon's novel comes through her description of what bondage does to families" (217). Thus, the dysfunctional family is a metonymy for slavery in that it is an aberration of nature. Gerald's relationship with Francilia impacts Toby, the former's slave and the latter's love. In making Francilia his mistress, Gerald not only wrecks her life, but Toby's as well. The latter's chance for happiness is over when he finds out that the woman whom he loves is pregnant with another man's child. However, as

Braddon shows, in disrupting familial and affective bonds, slavery also creates its own surrogate families. This is clearly the case with Toby who becomes a kind of surrogate father for Cora. He considers the child to be his because it is Francilia's in spite of the fact that he is not the biological father. As he tells Cora, "'I bestowed upon you all the deep devotion that I had felt for her— forgive me, Miss Cora, I loved you as if you had been my own child'" (Braddon 56). In having Toby relate this to the young woman, the writer illustrates how she essentially has two sets of parents: Gerald, her biological father, and his wife, and Francilia, her biological mother, and Toby.

In making the latter tell Cora about her mother and about his commitment to both of them, Braddon contrasts Cora's biological father with her surrogate one. The notion of surrogacy or "of multiple levels of substitution in representations— white bodies standing in for black ones, romantic relationships standing in for social conflicts or even the past standing in for the present" (Paulin "Representing Forbidden Desire" 417-418) is relevant to Braddon's novel. In The Octoroon, the author uses representational hybridity to show how certain characters or countries extend beyond themselves only to denote or represent other selves or nations. Indeed, not only does Cora's white body stand for or embody blackness, it also suggests substituting America for England as well as a biological parent for surrogate one and vice-versa. For, although Cora is British in terms of her values and upbringing, she is American by birth. Her father lives and owns property in the United States, and, as it happens, Cora is part of that property due to her mother's status as slave. Cora's need to substitute her father for Toby, her surrogate one, and her legal mother for Francilia,

her biological one, demonstrates her desire not only to choose her own kin, but to step outside of a system in which she is chattel— even if, in order to do so, she must oppose her father and ultimately reject his ownership of her body.

Whereas Cora's father, Gerald, keeps her past a secret from her and does not appear to have cared for the mother of his child, her surrogate parent, Toby, reveals her origins to her and his fondness for his former partner. Furthermore, while Gerald would rather keep Cora immature and uninformed, Toby reluctantly gives her the information that she needs to truly know and accept herself. Just as the two fathers are compared, the two mothers are as well. Braddon portrays Gerald's wife as "a vain and capricious woman," one who, as the text suggests, is incapable of having children, suggesting that she is both self-centered and frigid (Braddon 56). On the other hand, the author depicts Francilia as a caring and sympathetic woman who is deeply invested in her role as a mother. Besides suggesting that Francilia and Toby are better suited to the role of parents than their counterparts, this description illustrates how slavery reconfigures the nuclear family. Moreover, it shows how slavery forges its own emotional bonds, ones that are not necessarily conditional upon biology.

Besides displaying the horrors of slavery as they pertain to family and patriarchy, Braddon also uses Cora's situation at the slave auction to shed light on the marriage market, where eligible young woman are offered up on the altar of matrimony to the wealthiest suitor. As Tyler notes, "[d]eprived of the ability for self-protection and financial independence, women [in the patriarchal society of the nineteenth century] were taught to expect that their lack of real power would be offset

by [the] male protection and financial provision" that marriage provided (61). Just as for Wilson/Frado men fail to offer any real financial assistance or succour, Cora too finds herself initially incapable of depending upon a man to help her avoid her fate. Indeed, Gilbert cannot prevent Cora's sale to Augustus, due not to a lack of love or reverence on his part, but to a lack of funds. Having (conveniently) left most of his money at home in England, he does not have the pecuniary means of preventing his beloved's sale to another man. In this instance, Braddon problematically parallels buying and selling slaves with buying and selling women. Thus, much like Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill had done earlier on in the century, Braddon compares the situation of white women with that of slaves at the time.[130] While there are certainly some parallels to be drawn between the two, this kind of comparison ignores and trivializes the hardships of black people, particularly black women, in the mid-nineteenth century. To overlook the ways in which race and class affect gender is to perpetuate a kind of feminism that is race and class-blind, hence inherently flawed and ultimately ineffective.

While many commentators likened the situation of women in the nineteenth century to the predicament of slaves and characterized the working class and the Irish [131] "in terms of the 'child/savage' imagery," these analogies fail to take into account how race, class and gender create a kind of tripartite structure of oppression (Takaki 115). As Jacobs points out in Incidents when describing the condition of the working-class individuals whom she encountered in England, even the poorest of them had their own homes, however humble. She also mentions that, unlike slaves, the poor in Britain did not have to worry about their children being taken from them and sold to

someone else. Hence, she suggests that the lower class had an easier life than that of slaves for the law protected their homes and their families. Furthermore, in the excerpt in which she talks about the white and the black sister growing up side by side, Jacobs illustrates how the white one did not face certain hardships that the black one, owing to slavery, endured (29). Similarly, Wilson underscores how being poor, black, *and* female involved dealing simultaneously with class, race, and gender discrimination. In Our Nig, white middle-class women wield more power and influence than black women because the former's race and class exempt them from dealing with racial and class-based inequality.

Towards the conclusion, there is also an inversion that occurs in the power dynamic: corrupt characters like Silas and Don Juan lose their power and their position in society and other characters gain power and ascendancy. Cora and Gilbert go from being outcasts in America— the former owing to her racial identity and the latter owing to his progressive views on race— to being a happily married couple secure in the knowledge that British law recognizes and protects their marriage. Paul goes from a penniless no-name to a man who inherits wealth and rank. This, in turn, represents a reversal of the female octoroon's fate where she goes from "riches to worse than rags" (Zanger 288). Clearly, Paul's destiny is the opposite in that he regains all that he has lost and more (i.e. Camillia's love). The way in which his own kin cheats him out of his property also hints at the ways in which slaveholders in particular and white America in general stripped African Americans of their names, their earnings, and their land. In having Pauline force Silas to produce the real will that proves that Paul is Don Tomaso's son and heir, Braddon rights Paul's financial

and social standing in a way that anticipates America writing black people into the constitution via two amendments, the thirteenth, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, and the fourteenth, which recognized them as citizens of the United States. When Paul finally lays claim to his family name, money, and estate, Braddon redresses the wrongs that he has endured and, in so doing, suggests that America do the same in giving black people back what is rightfully theirs. In giving Paul the opportunity to take possession of his estate, the writer grants him legal and social recognition. Hence, in allowing him to reclaim what belongs to him, Braddon gives him a home that the law sanctions and protects— something that, incidentally, both Jacobs and Wilson were still seeking when they wrote and published their respective works.

Much like Paul, Pauline goes from a poor and orphaned governess with a child-like demeanour into a woman who has control over two of the most powerful men in the book, Silas and Don Juan. This demonstrates how Braddon shifts the master/slave dichotomy as the work comes to close. By inverting the male/female power imbalance, the author is denaturalizing white, male privilege by stripping these two men of their authority, thus subverting "the subordination of woman to man and child to adult [which] was deemed a natural fact" during the period (McClintock 357). In having the masters become slaves and vice-versa, Braddon, via the character of Pauline Corsi— who is remarkably similar to Lady Audley in Lady Audley's Secret, which Braddon happened to be writing at the same time as The Octoroon— destroys Silas and Don Juan by making their corruption known. Consequently, these men assume the position of slaves in that they are at the mercy of Pauline in

particular and the public in general. The French woman makes both men grovel at her feet declaring: "'*I have waited my time*! I knew that this secret would bring me wealth and power whenever it was told'" (Braddon 168). Moreover, the influence that she yields at the end not only makes her the master of the two men, but becomes intoxicating in and of itself. As someone whom men have always controlled, Pauline delights in having the opportunity to make Silas and Don Juan obey her every command. Drunk on her own power, Braddon even has her claim: "'[t]hose two men are my slaves!'" (168). Besides demonstrating her awareness and her joy at being in charge for once in her life rather than having to take orders, this excerpt also paradoxically highlights the powerlessness that drives a woman to want to dominate others.[132] Whereas Silas and Don Juan derive their influence through dubious means to compensate for their own character deficiencies, Pauline seeks to triumph over others to make up for her separation from her parents and her lover. Unable to significantly alter her social standing outside of marriage or to channel her energy and ambition in a positive manner, Pauline resorts to trickery and deception to empower herself and to attempt to change her material circumstances. Hence, her desire to be in control of others stems not from a personal flaw; rather, it is largely circumstantial. In other words, it is due to her lack of agency owing to her dependent position in a male-dominated society.

This, in turn, sheds light on the master/slave relationship in that it shows that the need to tyrannize over other human beings does not empower. Instead, lusting for power over others eventually leads to the tyrant's demise. This is certainly the case with Silas, who is publicly disgraced, and Don Juan, who shoots himself. Braddon

does not punish Pauline or Augustus because neither of these characters is inherently tyrannical. Instead, unlike Silas and Don Juan who are innately depraved and corrupt, the writer portrays Pauline and Augustus' misdeeds as the natural outcome of their having to live in a patriarchal, slaveholding society. By the end of the book, Braddon strips them both of their avarice and deception, demonstrating, not so much a change in society, as a transformation in the respective characters' situation— chiefly, in their interpersonal relationships— which makes greed and dishonesty no longer viable. Reunited with her lover, Pauline no longer feels the need to be cunning and domineering. As for Augustus, he is the dupe of every other character in the book, even his own sister, and he does not get the revenge that he seeks. In the novel, Braddon punishes despots like Silas and Don Juan and neutralizes the power of those lead astray like Pauline and Augustus in a manner that enables her to champion the victory of the oppressed over the oppressor or "the great cause of Liberty *versus* Slavery" (Braddon 211).

The description of the above-mentioned characters reflects Braddon's views on and representation of the United States, particularly the inhabitants of the Southern States. Not only does the author designate this part of America as South America repeatedly throughout her novel, she also attributes much of these individuals' behaviour to the heat in general and to slavery in particular. Nancy Stepan remarks on the link between the environment and people's conduct in "Biology: Races and Proper Places" commenting on the prevalent, nineteenth-century notion that each race supposedly belonged in a given "place," this word here signifying both geographical location and social rank. Those who ventured outside of their proper place were likely

to become tropicalized— that is, to degenerate or "go native" (Stepan 99). Likewise, in Braddon's book, it is the heat that makes people rash and impulsive, greedy and ambitious, power-hungry and libidinous. Indeed, for the writer, the climate itself is an explanation for moral laxity and, even, slavery in the novel.[133] As Diane Roberts notes, this is not unusual considering that "early European accounts of southern colonies from Virginia to Guiana toy with theological imagery crossed with anxiety over what passions such warm climates might enkindle in their inhabitants" (26). Although Braddon never traveled to the United States, in The Octoroon, she depicts slavery as a natural outgrowth of the South, almost likening it to natural produce.[134]

When mentioning Louisiana, Braddon reminds readers that:

> there is much in this chief city of Louisiana, which resembles a French rather than an English town. The inhabitants are many of them of French extraction. The coffee houses— or cafes as they are called— resemble those of Paris; the gambling houses and theatres are Parisian in arrangements, and the young men of the upper classes have much of the polish of our Gallic neighbors, mingled with not a little of their frivolity. (65)

In this way, Braddon further distances Louisiana as a microcosm for the United States from Britain by likening it to Paris, France. In suggesting that Louisiana is like Paris, the author implies that its inhabitants' behaviour and customs (ones like attending the theatre, going to cafes, and owning slaves) are attributes that also characterize the French. In describing Louisianans as resembling Parisians in their frivolousness, the writer depicts both as thoughtless, idle, and irresponsible. Moreover, the references in the novel to gambling saloons, gamesters, ill-gotten money, debt, and vengeful creditors as well as to racial prejudice and to plantation slavery suggest that these activities or traits are typically un-English. In referring to plantation slavery and

gambling saloons in particular, the novelist insinuates that these places are antithetical to the lawful, staid British home/nation in that they are dens of vice that stand for the lawless, dissipated, unhomely spaces/country. Throughout her novel, the author makes what goes on in these private establishments public, thus revealing, like Wilson and Jacobs before her,[135] the corruption that occurs behind closed doors. The writer uses this depravity, in turn, to intimate that Louisianan or New Orleansian transgressions mirror those of the French.[136] Hence, for Braddon, the European equivalent or counterpart to Louisiana, New Orleans is Paris, France.[137]

Later on in the novel, Braddon states matter-of-factly: "[t]he reader is already acquainted with the laxity of Louisianian morals" (72). For the author, this moral laxity is evident in Augustus' desire to make Camillia his wife and Cora his mistress, showing yet again the corruptibility of the home in a nation which publicly sanctions slavery. This questionable morality is also obvious in the inhabitants' willingness to settle legal matters not in "the established courts of New Orleans," but by running "recourse to the horrors of Lynch Law" (73). What these excerpts convey is that Louisiana in particular and New Orleans in general is a lawless place where the mob takes justice into its own hands. Much like the French Revolution in which the lower and emerging middle-class citizens punished the wealthy or upper classes for their corruption and decadence by beheading its members, Louisianans are people who act according to their own notions of right and wrong without relying upon the legal system to issue its verdict of guilt or innocence in the book. All this is meant to surprise and stun British readers and perhaps even to conjure up some ghosts of revolutionary events that happened in France in the late eighteenth century. By

making these remarks on Louisiana contrast sharply with what she believed to be inherently British ways or manners at the time, the author adds to the sensationalism of her text by situating it in what is, for her readers, an exotic locale across the Atlantic, far from the everyday lives of her working-class, British readers. Also, in referring to the Southern States as South America, Braddon further renders the setting of her novel foreign and thus strange to readers.[138]

Clearly, Braddon makes certain stereotypic assumptions when it comes to national or regional characteristics as well as to nations themselves.[139] As Hazel Waters notes, "[m]uch contemporary journalism and commentary on America portrayed it in terms of comic stereotypes: the roads, the manners, the food, the lodgings— and those who inhabited them, the alarmingly boastful backwoodsman, the calculating Yankee, the stolid Dutch American" (90). For this reason, it is not surprising that The Octoroon, despite its progressive stance on some aspects of racial and gender equality, nonetheless accepts and reinforces some of the stereotypical depictions of American culture that were in circulation at the time. In the novel, Braddon conveniently ignores England's slaveholding past by depicting it as a utopia and by representing its abolition of slavery as "a reflection of the humaneness of English culture" (Gikandi 60). She presents her country as a place that looks down upon nations that practice and condone slavery even though it was only abolished in 1833 throughout the British Empire, twenty-eight years before the publication of The Octoroon. In the book, she portrays Britain as a virtuous and principled nation where the young men are honest and gallant and the young women are modest and chaste. In contrast, Braddon describes the United States as a land where greed and opportunism,

not to mention men's libido, run rampant. Men like Silas and Augustus frequent gambling saloons and prey upon other people in one way or another. Whereas for Silas it is men that are his victims, for Augustus it is women. The former seeks money and power; the latter seeks sexual gratification and control. The text represents these two men as readily identifiable kinds of Americans: Silas is the self-made man and Augustus, the corrupt and libidinous slaveholder.

As for the state of Louisiana, Braddon describes it as a hedonistic place where white men are overly ambitious and sensual and where white women are petty, cunning and somewhat lazy. Early on in the novel, the writer compares Silas' sensuality to animals such as a bull and a rat. This description serves to present him as a certain type of American, one who has accumulated rank and wealth in society without the kind of class or breeding necessary in Britain. The comparison between him and the two above-mentioned animals highlights his baseness and his lack of refinement. In Robert Louis Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Hyde, who, as I argue in my next chapter, is a racially hybrid figure, is also likened to a monkey as well as a rat and porcupine. This depiction of him serves to align him with lower-class and racial others. The portrayal of Hyde and Silas' animal-like behaviour or attributes anticipates the idea of degeneration where, as J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander L. Gilman argue in Degeneration, an individual "decline[s] to a lower type . . . to dust, for instance, or to the behaviour [and the appearance] of the beasts of the barnyard" (ix). Furthermore, in Silas' case, it is an implicit criticism of a place (Louisiana) and a country (the United States) that would not only permit such hypocritical and criminal behaviour, but that would reward such a dishonest and

dangerous man. Essentially, it is a pointed critique of what it takes to be part of the nouveau riche in America.

Like Silas, Augustus' desire to marry a white woman, Camillia, and to court a black-identified woman, Cora, on the side shows his lustful and domineering nature.[140] He is willing to enter into a marriage for the sake of keeping up appearances in society while pursuing another woman as a mistress to satisfy his own desire and greed. Similar to Dr. Flint, who pursues Linda despite being married, Augustus' lust is not only a character flaw; rather, it is an indication of the flawed nature of slavery as an institution. In permitting married men to act on their licentiousness and overstep their boundaries, slavery is dangerous because it gives slaveholders unlimited power over and access to female bodies, particularly black female ones. Hence, as Jacobs and Braddon show, the plantation owner is, simultaneously, the lord and overseer of his own home-turned-harem with a white wife for respectability in a white supremacist culture and black women as forced concubines. Here, the domestic sphere becomes a brothel because the politics of the nation fail to see and treat women as equals, keeping them in a state of abject poverty and dependence. In this manner, Braddon, like Jacobs, criticizes that peculiar, patriarchal institution by linking its abuses and excesses to those of patriarchy. However, whereas for Jacobs, slavery is wrong in and of itself because it is the institutionalization of racism and violence, for Braddon, it is a malignant outgrowth of patriarchy, one which permits her to demonstrate the gothic horrors that she feels exist in a male-dominated society. In The Octoroon, even the best intentioned men—ones like Cora's own father, Gerald Leslie— experience lapses of virtue and fail to

live up to their own moral standards. Ultimately, this demonstrates the failure of both slaveholding and patriarchal culture, particularly as the two relate to the sanctity of family and marriage as national institutions.

At the end of the novel, the individuals who remain in America are those tied to slavery as slaves or as slaveholders, or those awaiting retribution like the novel's villains. Indeed, near the conclusion, the United States resembles a penal colony like Australia in that all the evil characters must pay for their corruption. In this instance, the New World is an innately criminal place as well as one where Britain and other European nations can send their criminals and other rejects rather than being "a second chance [where these outcasts] could benefit from the mistakes of the first" (Morrison 34). Furthermore, those seeking fortune and fame with no regard to the law, whether first-generation Americans or not, quickly find out that, while they do not have to contend with the Old World preoccupation with class, they must grapple with the legal and social anarchy that is democracy in the United States, as Braddon portrays it. This is evident in Silas' case when readers find out that "the bloodhounds of the law are on his track" (Braddon 210). The legal system, in the form of an angry mob set on revenge, hunts him down. This outraged crowd posits itself as judge, jury, and executioner in that it pursues Silas with the goal of "dragging him to justice" (Braddon 210).[141] Clearly, American justice, as the writer depicts it, is a more than sufficient punishment for those who have strayed from the path of virtue.

Toward the end of the book, remaining in the United States seems like a curse in and of itself, for Braddon uproots all the main characters from its soil. All the newlywed couples move to Europe, which gives them the opportunity to begin anew,

for only by moving to this continent can the two interracial couples find refuge from racial prejudice.[142] Rather than remain where they are and face discrimination or worse, Cora and Gilbert move back to England whereas Paul and Camillia move to France in order to be close to their friends, Armand and Pauline, as well as to their native Spain. Hence, both pairs must cross the Atlantic in order to be free. Here, Braddon subverts the notion of individuals' proper places to the extent that she allows the interracial couple to marry, thus breaking the taboo of mixed-raced unions. Paradoxically, though, she re-inscribes the same idea by making the couple relocate to Britain, thus failing to envision them ever being able to be free and happy in America. Consequently, she suggests that the potential to start afresh exists in the old world in a way that it does not in the new one. While there is a strong patriotic strain throughout the novel that suggests that Britain is *the* land of liberty,[143] the author nonetheless moves the other two sets of characters to France. Although the latter is an acceptable alternative to England, it is nonetheless a lesser option to, as Braddon refers to her country, "our own native land" (210). Yet despite comparing Louisiana to Paris, France is still a more liberal country than the United States in the book. Consequently, for the novelist, the old world is more tolerant than the new one; yet even among the European nations, there are degrees of open-mindedness that designate certain countries as more progressive than others.

Depicting slavery and its social ills also has the effect of distancing the British audience and England itself from the events and the country in which these events take place. As Pamela Gilbert contends, "[m]id-Victorian imperial Britain often constructed its identity as active, healthy, and masculine versus foreign identities

which were passive, fevered, or feminine" (2). While this quote refers to Britain's view of itself vis-à-vis its colonies, it also applies to the United States (a former colony) as Braddon describes it throughout her novel— namely, as a socially and morally diseased national body. American democracy in the book is virtually indistinguishable from American slavocracy. The unique paradox of the United States is its claim to be founded on principles of equality, liberty, and democracy for all while the majority of the characters' wealth in the novel comes from their direct involvement in slavery or the slave trade. All the well-to-do characters are involved in some way with that "hateful barter" (Braddon 6). Like in Wilson's Our Nig, where Frado's labour ensures the Bellmonts' respectability, the wealthy figures in Braddon's novel are all reaping the benefits of other people's hard work. According to Jennifer Carnell, Braddon presents the debauchery and decadence of these wealthy individuals to make her working-class readers in England sympathize and identify with American slaves (209). This is logical considering that Augustus, Silas, Gerald, William, Don Juan and Don Tomaso all own slaves and/or traffic in human flesh. Four of these men— Augustus, Gerald, Don Tomaso, and Silas— either had or sought to have an affair with a female slave or mixed-race woman. William, as the former captain of a slave ship, procured slaves for other men. These men— with the exception of William, who derives much of his money from bribing Silas— owe their ongoing financial prosperity and social standing to the fact that they possess slaves. Their liberty and their position in society come at the expense of the enslavement and the social degradation of others. Furthermore, their status as men of rank and fortune derives from their adherence to undemocratic principles and from their promotion of

their own welfare instead of that of their fellow beings. Braddon undermines the portrayal of the United States as the land of opportunity for all by illustrating that it is a myth. Instead, for her, it is the land of opportunism for those who are cunning and unscrupulous enough to trample over the rights of others in order to take care of their interests first.

Throughout the novel, race is a much more delicate issue in America than in Britain. Braddon contrasts taboos surrounding mixed-race marriages in nineteenth-century America with the more liberal views and practices that she believes exist in England. What is more, she informs British readers of their relative privilege since, unlike in America, they can legally marry whomever they please, regardless of race.[144] Consequently, the author depicts America's ban of interracial unions as something that designates it as barbaric and archaic as well as decidedly un-British. Indeed, as Audrey A. Fisch notes in "'Repetitious accounts so piteous and so harrowing'," "English nationalism thrived on competition with America" (25). By looking down on the United States for its outmoded laws and practices— ones like slavery that the British had formerly taken part in— England could exorcise its demons by projecting them onto another nation while concealing its own concerns over the shifting definition of Englishness (Fisch 25).

Furthermore, this allowed Britain to focus on America's divisiveness rather than its own social and political conflicts around class and gender roles. Gazing across the Atlantic enabled the British to see the United States as a nation of divided states, torn by pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces, threatened by its own looming self-destruction. Thus, for the British as for many Americans, the United States was not a

unified front; rather, it was a fractured entity composed of pro- and anti-slavery advocates. Much in the same way that Cora is neither entirely black nor white but both in the novel, the United States was a mixed nation since it was made up of both black and white individuals, of slaveholders and abolitionists, of North and South. The difficulty, though, is that these categories were not (always) polar opposites. Black and whiteness could reside within the same individual as well as in the same country. Slaveholders and abolitionists could be working towards different ends while both adhering to racist principles and practices. What is more, the North did not necessarily signify freedom and the South, enslavement. As I demonstrated in my previous chapters in my readings of Harriet Jacobs' Incident in the Life of a Slave Girl and Harriet Wilson's Our Nig, the North could and did hide its own kind of enslavement in its discriminatory attitudes and practices towards black women. Despite Braddon's apparent awareness of the complexities and contradictions that can exist within one individual as well as within one nation, her novel ultimately fails to underscore these subtle nuances as fully and as powerfully as Jacobs and Wilson's texts highlight them.

In spite of the imperfect analogy between black American slaves and white working-class British men or white middle-class women, Braddon attempted to make her lower-class readers identify with the position of slaves across the Atlantic. Writing The Octoroon in serialized instalments for John Maxwell's Halfpenny Journal, the author geared her novel towards the lower-classes whom she hoped would relate to the plight of slaves, as Carnell and Harrison have observed. For her part, Braddon counted on having her readers identify with the plight of slaves across

the Atlantic— despite the fact that the differences, as Jacobs' Incidents demonstrates, are far more glaring than the similarities— to mobilize sympathy as a way of affecting gradual change in society. For, as Michelle Burnham contends, "the 'moving' effect of novelistic and nationalist discourses results from a dialectical movement of identification across the gap or border between resemblance and *its failure*" (54; italics mine). While Braddon likely sought this kind of identification between her readership and enslaved Americans for commercial or financial reasons, her preoccupation with the condition of enslaved black individuals in the United States also appears to stem from a basic belief in human equality. Braddon articulates repeatedly throughout the novel the notion that every living being deserves to be free. Clearly, freedom from tyranny is one of the main concerns in the text, particularly as it pertains to gender, but also, to a lesser extent, as it relates to race and class.

As the author demonstrates throughout The Octoroon, it is an individual's character and integrity that determines her worth— not her race, gender, or class. Moreover, in Braddon's text, unlike in Wilson's, hard work is not only its own reward, but it is ultimately rewarded. Paul's dedication to his own improvement— both personally and professionally— as well to the general uplift of his race[145] pays off in the end: Pauline helps him clear his name of any wrong doing; he marries Camillia; he inherits a large amount of money. For the other characters in the book, it is their commitment to justice and equality that constitutes the work or the purpose of their lives. Gilbert Margrave, for example, dedicates himself not only to protecting and to defending Cora's rights as a mixed-race woman, but also to improving the lives of black slaves. Besides being a "determined . . . abolitionist," he plans on

sailing to the United States in order to introduce his invention, a cotton-spinning machine, which he hopes will render slavery obsolete (Braddon 6).[146] In New Orleans, his very gallantry and egalitarianism are set up as a precedent for the American men despite the fact that most of them reject it. Gilbert tries to make the Southerners whom he meets accountable for their thoughts and their actions by challenging their racist attitudes and assumptions on the innate inferiority of the black people in their midst. Yet whenever he ventures to tell them his views on racial equality, they are quick to retort that Louisianans frown upon such notions. Furthermore, the Louisianans warn him to keep such radical ideas to himself for the sake of his own well-being. Hence, his words are met not only with resistance, but the threat of violence. As for Cora, her abolitionist zeal manifests itself when she confronts her father on his involvement in the slave trade in general and his treatment of her mother in particular. Through her chastising words, she serves as his dormant conscience in that she attempts to make him accountable for his extramarital relationship with, and for the subsequent sale of, his quadroon slave. In trying to hold him responsible for his misdeeds, she seeks to come to terms with her own racial identity and past as well as to force him to grapple with his own conflicted relationship with her mother and with slavery itself.

While showing Gilbert and Cora's commitment to ending racial discrimination, these excerpts also reveal how Braddon uses Britain and British nationalism to chastise America's practice of slavery.[147] For, although Cora is not of British birth, she has spent most of her life in England, where she has lived and studied since the age of five. For this reason, she identifies more with Britain than

with America. This is evident in the book when Braddon writes that the United States seems "strange to her after her long residence in England" and that she feels like "an utter stranger in her native land" (22). Thus, besides being simultaneously black and white, Cora also serves as a bridge in that she is an American with British sensibilities or abolitionist leanings. Owing to this, she signals the fluidity not only of racial boundaries, but national or transatlantic ones as well.

Although slavery adds and furthers the novel's sensational plot, The Octoroon engages in the larger debate surrounding abolitionism. Furthermore, Braddon's sympathies are clearly with the North or the anti-slavery advocates rather than with the South or the slaveholders. The fact that all of the villains traffic in slaves is an indication of the author's overarching message, namely that slavery is wrong. In other words, evil characters stand in and for an evil system, one that, like these figures themselves, is on the verge of destruction. The following passage is worth quoting in its entirety because it highlights Braddon's broader social aim as well as her abolitionist stance:

> Our story is finished. We have not been dealing in vain with the shadowy woes of fiction, but with the real sorrows that have wrung and tortured human hearts, the hearts of our oppressed brothers and sisters [across the Atlantic]. If any line which we have written has gained one convert to the cause of freedom, we have not written in vain . . . we have made friends for the great cause of Liberty versus Slavery, as well as for CORA, the OCTOROON. (Braddon 210-211)

While the anti-slavery strain may be secondary to the novel's sensationalism, it is nevertheless woven into the book— not as an afterthought, but rather as a subtle undercurrent that runs throughout the entire text. For, although the author gives precedence to the plot instead of to her abolitionist agenda, her commitment to the

eradication of the slave trade is what fuels both. Similarly, as Braddon states, she based her fiction, albeit very loosely, on the condition of real people, Britain's oppressed brothers and sisters in America awaiting freedom.

Other than being both a sensational text with traces of anti-slavery propaganda typically found in abolitionist literature, Braddon's novel itself is a hybrid mix of genres.[148] Taking its cues from the stage as well as sensation fiction, the language and sentiments of many characters in the book are highly theatrical. As Carnell notes, the Pavilion Theatre, Whitechapel "must have had some kind of arrangement with the *Halfpenny Journal* [where Braddon published her serial] as their play Cora; or, The Slave of Louisiana . . . provided the inspiration for Braddon's The Octoroon; or, The Lily of Louisiana (200). The influence of melodrama on this narrative is clear in that many of the events in it are improbable and exaggerated, such as Silas' secret passage, hidden behind a map of the United States in his office, which leads to the gambling house (Braddon 42-43). The fact that Silas accesses this corrupt public space via a long corridor concealed behind a map of the country parallels the way that he is able to secretly infiltrate and ruin the sanctity of Cora's home by claiming it and her as his possession. This further underscores the interconnectedness of the private and public realm, effectively showing how what happens in the nation affects what occurs in its homes.

Besides the secret passageway, the novel is sensational because it includes numerous crimes, like murder, abduction, attempted rape, and bribery, to name a few as well as an inordinate amount of secrecy and deception, death and two suicides (Francilia's and Don Juan's). The book also draws upon the penny bloods or reading

designed for the working class in its aim to entertain readers with shocking subject matter and educate them at the same time (Carnell 203). The type of education that Braddon wished to impart to her audience is not only about the possibility for gradual social improvement, but also about the need to think about the universal brotherhood of man. Finally, owing to the writer's appreciation of French Literature, she inspired herself from her reading to shape her own fiction. As she admitted in a letter written to Edward Bulwer Lytton in 1864, "I have read Soulié, at least many of his stories, and have helped myself very freely to some of them for my Anonymous work. He is certainly magnificent for continuous flow for invention— incident arising out of incident" (Carnell 220). This propensity for French writing might explain her depiction of Louisiana, a place that she had never seen, as being like Paris, France as well as her characterization of Louisianans as imbued with a "'foreign' sensuality" (Carnell 211).

Braddon's The Octoroon shatters the notion of an essential self. While certain characters believe their racial identity to be static and homogeneous, they quickly discover that it is, in fact, much more fluid and heterogeneous than they previously supposed. For Cora Leslie and Paul Lisimon, this process of self-realization involves the unveiling of a "dark" secret: namely, that beneath the surface of their white skin, they are of African ancestry. As a result, both their understanding of themselves and of their place in society undergoes a radical transformation. The topic of drastic changes also figures in my final chapter on Stevenson's novel since Jekyll attempts to suppress his darker, feminine half in order to conceal and to distance himself from the deviant Other within.

Chapter Four:
Mr. Hyde as Hybrid in Robert Louis Stevenson's
The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Throughout Robert Louis Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, no one who sees Hyde is able to describe him at great length. Instead, most people's comments resemble Enfield's, who remarks:

> "He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something down-right detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarcely know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. . . . I can't describe him. And it's not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment." (35-36)

This description is odd for a number of reasons. First, Enfield is convinced that he saw Hyde and yet, for someone who is so sure of himself, he is remarkably vague. If Hyde's appearance is appalling, why can he not specify what exactly makes it so? What possible deformity could Hyde have that is both obvious yet unspeakable? Moreover, how is it possible to intensely dislike someone whom one has never met? True, Enfield does see Hyde in the act of committing a horrific crime, but, as the above passage illustrates, it is not so much the crime that makes the man "displeasing" or "down-right detestable" (35) as his appearance.[149] Why is this the case? What could be so loathsome about Hyde that he inspires instant hatred in men like Enfield? Why does everyone react similarly? While they are responding to his aggressive nature, something more insidious or deep-rooted is at play here.[150]

In the novel, virtually none of the characters are either (overtly) black or feminine. This is noteworthy since "[d]esire is normatively constituted as avoiding *being* black and feminized [in an antiblack world]. What this means is that in such a world it is best to be the white and masculine" (Gordon 123). Though this logically

entails that women (especially black ones) are not desirable and that men (especially white ones) are, and that white men are attractive to other white men, this chapter does not flesh out the homo-social/sexual aspect of this argument.[151] Instead, it concentrates more particularly on the racial side of this contention by focusing on the anxiety surrounding racial hybridity and degeneration in the late Victorian period. More specifically, it looks at Hyde as a hybrid who is black and white, hence a threat to the perceived homogeneity of Victorian culture in England at the time.[152] The apparent lack of black and female individuals in the text paradoxically signals their presence in the figure of Hyde who functions as both the dark outsider and the feminized freak. This chapter also examines how Stevenson's work blurs national boundaries in focusing on tensions between Britain and the United States as being like that between Jekyll and Hyde, with the former representing the older, more established nation and the latter, the younger, newer one in the midst of establishing its own manners and customs. Finally, it explores how the text crosses literary genres, thus creating its own hybrid form that merges Gothic, sensation, and detective fiction.[153]

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde highlights the manner in which both the home and the body as home figure in the Gothic tradition (Seed 182-183). Throughout the novel, Jekyll uses the home as a hideout and as a way of shielding his racialized body from others. However, Jekyll's need to withdraw from society, by hiding in his residence and by housing himself in Hyde, signals how the home becomes a site of secrecy and alienation rather than of comfortable domesticity. In having Jekyll increasingly retreat into his house and into Hyde's body over the course of the

narrative, Stevenson's work reconfigures the home in that the white, affluent male appropriates this traditionally female space in order to transgress the black/white and female/male divide.[154] Whereas earlier in the century, when Wilson, Jacobs, and Braddon wrote their respective works, the domestic sphere was the locus of white, middle-class femininity, by the late 1880s, Stevenson claims it as a haven and a prison for wealthy, white men looking to escape the scrutiny of the outside world.

For Jekyll, the home is a place of safety and concealment as well as a dangerous and crippling space. While it allows him to transform into Hyde, a change which Jekyll initially experiences as liberating, this transformation ultimately threatens his survival. Similarly, in Jacobs' Incidents— albeit for very different reasons— for Linda Brent to dwell comfortably within her own body without relinquishing it to Dr. Flint, she conceals herself in the garret of her grandmother's house because her race and gender put her at risk for sexual exploitation under slavery. Yet, for her, the home is also a prison in that her seven-year confinement in it puts her physical and emotional health in jeopardy. Likewise, in Wilson's Our Nig, Frado retreats into the Bellmont home in order to survive (financially) in a culture that makes it difficult for free black people, women in particular, to support themselves outside of it. However, in this instance, the house offers no protection from the outer world; instead, it hides the abuse that the young girl faces in it from others. Hence, the home in Wilson's text is a site of horror where Mrs. Bellmont, a professed Christian woman, transforms into a She-Devil, terrifying all the inhabitants, but none more so than Frado. Yet another example, this time in Braddon's The Octoroon, is when Cora travels to the United States to be re-united with her father.

Not only does her father's house go up for sale, but so too does her racialized body, which becomes, much like the house itself, a possession that Silas Craig claims as payment for an unpaid debt. Viewing her as chattel, Silas, much like Augustus, pursues her and tries to exploit her.

Similarly, in Stevenson's novel, characters such as Utterson use Hyde's difference to justify pursuing him and stripping him of his rights. Yet in hounding the latter mercilessly and in repeatedly seeking to prove that he is a monster, they bridge the gap between themselves and him, thus revealing their own monstrosity to readers.[155] As is the case in Wilson's novel where Mrs. Bellmont seeks to distance herself from Frado by accentuating the latter's race and deemphasizing her femininity, individuals in Stevenson's work have a vested interest in seeing Hyde as a monstrous figure and in trapping him like a caged animal. In doing so, they not only perpetuate their privileged position in society, but they ensure that the other remains inferior. Much like Frado, Linda, and Cora, Hyde challenges his proper place in society, refusing to let others dictate his behaviour and define his identity. As a result, Hyde is dangerous not only because of what he embodies or represents for others, but because of what he makes other characters do and realize about themselves. While on the surface he disgusts other individuals in the book, he nonetheless simultaneously draws characters like Utterson in, altering their identity and compelling them to becoming Mr. Seeks. His power to alter these men by enabling them to tap into their own sinister desires and bestial urges suggests the collapse of binaries such as black/white, female/male, master/slave or civilized/primitive as well as self/other (because white self and dark other are embodied in the same form).[156] For this reason,

Hyde signals to them what is both alluring (civility) and repellent (savagery) in themselves.[157]

This is clear when Poole confesses to Utterson that he has seen Hyde skulking about. He declares:

> "He looked up when I came in, gave a kind of cry, and whipped upstairs into the cabinet. It was but for one minute that I saw him, but the hair stood upon my head like quills. Sir, if that was my master, why had he a mask upon his face? If it was my master, why did he cry out like a rat, and run from me? I have served him long enough. . . . that thing was not my master, and there's the truth. My master . . . *is* a tall, fine build of a man, and this was more of a dwarf." (63-64)

Along with other passages in the book that characterize Hyde as a racial and gendered Other, this description emasculates him in referring to his diminutive size and his rodent-like shriek while it simultaneously racializes him in mentioning his veiled features and his criminal desire to flee the scene. In Criminal Man According to the Classification of Cesare Lombroso, Gina Lombroso- Ferrero, disseminating her father's theories, reports: "if we study minutely the customs of savage people, past and present, we find that many acts that are now considered criminal by civilized nations were legitimate in former times, and are today reputed such among primitive races" (125). Furthermore, citing another one of his hypotheses, she relates that "[t]he frequency of homicide in Calabria, Sicily, and Sardinia is fundamentally due to African and Oriental elements" (Lombroso-Ferrero 140). Since, according to the science of the time, Hyde's race signals that he is an atavistic being, the other characters see and associate him with criminality.[158] For these individuals, his primitiveness is discernable upon close inspection of aspects such as his height, his voice, his face, etc.

Furthermore, in likening Hyde's demeanour to that of a rat, this passage hints at the threat of infection or disease as well as racial contamination by implying that, like vermin, Jekyll's nemesis is running rampant, infesting the city like the plague. Ultimately, though, the danger is not just the doctor's transformation from an affluent and respectable gentleman into a dangerous dwarf, but the risk of contagion that this poses to those who come into contact with this degenerate type.[159] As a member of the working class, Poole's aversion to Hyde is not due to class since it is the latter's appearance that proves most unsettling to Jekyll's servant. Rather, this discomfort is attributable to another factor, namely Hyde's dubious racial make-up, which renders it difficult to pinpoint what makes him so singular yet nondescript. However, in describing Hyde's physiognomy and his own reaction to it, Poole inadvertently displays his own animalistic nature, closing the gap between the two. Consider his reaction to Hyde: "the hair stood upon . . . (his) head like quills" (64). In this excerpt, Stevenson's depiction is suggestive of a porcupine, more particularly of the latter when it is either defending itself or gearing up for an attack. Here, the portrayal of Hyde as an animal that debases those around him, animalizing and cannibalizing their identities in turn, furthers the notion of miscegenation and degeneration as gothic twins that threaten to alter the very face of the British home and nation.

As an interracial figure, Hyde is a throwback to an early age whose "type" is virtually extinct; besides resembling a rat, various descriptions throughout the novel liken him to an ape, whether it be the hand on his knee, "corded and hairy," or his "apelike tricks" and "apelike spite" (Stevenson 89, 92). The notion of the white ape figured increasingly at the end of the nineteenth century owing to the dissemination

of theories of degeneration.[160] According to Tim Youngs, these theories "combine[d] with political fear of the socially repressed [blacks, women, the poor, etc.] and a growing obsession with the psychological unconsciousness to effect agitated inspections of the subterranean and the interior" ("Stevenson's Monkey Business"163). In Jekyll's letter to Dr. Lanyon, the former uses language that simultaneously feminizes and darkens Hyde. Whereas the doctor's nemesis is a smaller, slighter version of himself, "knit closer to him than a wife" (Stevenson 81, 91), his hand is "of a dusky pallor and thickly shaded with a swart growth of hair" (Stevenson 84). This indicates that his physical features are not only a mix of both male and female attributes, but black and white ones as well.

This account resembles that of the "white negro," in that the author, whether consciously or not, echoes the description of interracial individuals found in nineteenth-century medical and scientific texts. Although these "white negroes" were sometimes people suffering from "albinism, vilitigo (also called leukoderma), genetic mosaicism, and other medical conditions that whiten the skin," the prevalence of mixed-race unions undoubtedly explains the existence of such individuals (Washington 94-95). As Washington notes, while some scientists attributed this type of physiognomy to "the 'civilizing' influences of Western, European cultures," numerous whites were in "denial about the degree of black-white mating" (95). In the novel, Jekyll protects Hyde, not only burying his dual self/life from view, but covering up his shame for his dalliance across the colour line. As for Hyde, he uses Jekyll as a front to elude authorities and to resist arrest. Though his name suggests that he is hiding, readers only discover that he is doing so within the person of Jekyll

as the story progresses. Moreover, by concealing himself in Jekyll's body, Hyde forces the former not only to shield him from view, but to hide his own inherent blackness and femininity. In other words, he compels Jekyll to hide the fact that his double is a racial and gender deviant who is neither fully black nor female, but one who resides uncomfortably between black/white and female/male divide.

Considering Hyde as a hybrid, the positive aspect of his person is his maleness and the negative one is his blackness. Furthermore, Hyde's (partial) blackness (which many descriptive passages in the book allude to by drawing upon the existing racial discourse of the time to describe him as primitive and degenerate) feminizes him in the novel. As an effeminate figure, Hyde lacks virtue, decency, and control. This lack of propriety and restraint is obvious when Utterson meets Hyde for the first time and the latter flushes with anger and snarls "aloud into a savage laugh" (41). Yet whereas his small stature and his pallor, both attributes of the ideal Victorian woman, cast him as typically female, his odd behaviour, with its strange "mixture of timidity and boldness" (41), and his hairy hands (89) render him atypically female, hence freakish and strange. His violent excesses can be viewed both as emotional outbursts that characterized women and their perceived irrationality during the period or as bodily fluids seeping from the unrestrained female body to the restrained male one.[161] This is in keeping with "the general anxiety [in the nineteenth century] concerning *female* sexuality as the origin of *male* disease" (Gilman Difference and Pathology 56). In the text, Hyde is responsible for Jekyll's diseased body and mind to the extent that the latter eventually dies after the infectious Other has contaminated him. Stevenson, for his part, suggests Hyde's infectiousness by underscoring his femininity, describing

him as "so much smaller, slighter and younger than Henry Jekyll" (81).[162] Moreover, Hyde, as a womanish man, is a kind of Eve, in that he introduces evil into Jekyll's otherwise blameless existence. Like Eve, he brings about the downfall of man, or, in this case, Henry Jekyll.

Although Hyde repulses all the other characters, he does not revolt Jekyll. In fact, not only does Jekyll sympathize with Hyde and see his humanity when everyone else denies it, but he prefers his nemesis' image to his own.[163] The doctor voices this opinion as follows: "This, too, was myself. It seemed natural and human. In my eyes it bore a livelier image of the spirit, it seemed more express and single, than the imperfect and divided countenance I had been hitherto accustomed to call mine" (81). The reason why Jekyll identifies so strongly with Hyde is because the latter is the embodiment of his dark side, which he struggled to suppress in his youth.[164] The livelier image that Jekyll attributes to Hyde is probably owing to the "impatient gaiety of disposition" (78) or the wild, carefree impulse that he felt he had to stifle in order to be a distinguished member of society. Furthermore, although he deems this natural proclivity towards wildness to be evil, Jekyll prefers it. Thus, to a certain extent, he favours the black, female (and youthful) side of himself over the white, masculine, and older one. This attraction is puzzling to every other individual in the text who thinks that Hyde stakes his claim on Jekyll through extortion or blackmail (34). Little do they imagine that it is the other way around.

After all, Jekyll is the one who initially seeks out Hyde to escape his mundane life. It is only later on in the narrative that Jekyll's nemesis takes over, refusing to relinquish his identity and submit to another's will. Sensing this shift in power, the

doctor increasingly avoids others by shunning the public sphere and retreating into the private one. This hints at the constraints that he is under as well as the sense that, since he cannot control himself or when the change occurs, he does not belong outside the domestic realm. Hence, whereas in the mid-nineteenth-century works of Wilson, Jacobs, and Braddon, the mixed-race female must flee the home to free herself from the tyranny of the monster within, for Jekyll, as a white male in the late-nineteenth century, to tap into the dark and female side of himself, he must retreat into the domestic sphere. The transformation depends upon on secrecy— that is, upon hiding sexual and racial transgressions behind closed doors.

In The History of Sexuality, Volume One, Michel Foucault, discussing sexuality in the Victorian period, writes:

> Sexuality was carefully confined; it moved into the home. . . . A single locus of sexuality was acknowledged in social space as well as at the heart of every household . . . The rest had only to remain vague; proper demeanor avoided contact with other bodies, and verbal decency sanitized one's speech. And sterile behaviour carried the taint of abnormality; if it insisted on making itself too visible, it would be designated accordingly and would have to pay the penalty. (3-4)

The same is true of miscegenation, which fuses both race and sex, thus challenging and complicating the permissible "single locus of sexuality" (3). If we look at hybridization in light of this passage from Foucault, the following fragment, "*proper demeanor avoided contact with other bodies*," is loaded because it connotes interracialism (3; italics mine). The "other bodies" (3) that Foucault refers to arguably suggest ones that are other-than-British. This is logical considering Hyde's reception and treatment by others, whose "proper behaviour" (3) dictates that they shun him, which is exactly what they do. Furthermore, the "verbal decency" (3) that Foucault

alludes to is generally absent from Hyde's vocabulary. He usually grunts or emits other odd noises, and, when he does speak, he is curt and indignant. Consider the following exchange between Utterson and Hyde, when the former states that Jekyll had described the latter to him: "'He never told you,' cried Mr. Hyde, with a flush of anger. 'I did not think you would have lied.' 'Come' said Mr. Utterson, 'that is not fitting language'" (41).

As for "sterile behaviour" (Foucault 3-4), Hyde is the perfect example of someone who neglects to think about reproduction. He does not view it as his duty to society; in fact, the thought does not even cross his mind. Hence, the reason that Hyde strikes those he meets as abnormal is two-fold: first, he fails to adhere to its sexual norms by not assuming procreation as a social responsibility; second, considering that Hyde is a hybrid, the science of the period would doubt his ability to have children in the first place.[165] Hyde's lack of social conscience or restraint manifests itself in his refusal to consider the values of the outside world, one which expects him to conform though it is unwilling to admit him into its sphere. Although Jekyll, too, is an unmarried man, his excuse is that he is the quintessential bachelor; moreover, he has contributed to Western culture in other ways, namely, by being a man of science. Hyde, on the other hand, is the product of science, its experiment, and its freak. He has not given back to civilization; he has simply taken from it. Consequently, his punishment is to remain on its fringes in Soho and, at that, usually after dark.[166]

Owing to his racial hybridity, Hyde resembles the creature in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Whereas Anne K. Mellor sees the monster in Shelley's novel as

representing the Asian Other in "Frankenstein, Racial Science, and the Yellow Peril," Elizabeth Young contends that he represents blackness and invokes the nineteenth-century fear of interracialism in Black Frankenstein. Furthermore, as Debbie Lee asserts in Slavery and the Romantic Imagination, it is likely that "Shelley drew on attitudes toward Africans and slaves in her depiction of the monster" (173), using terms from ethnographic writing of the period to describe Victor's conflicted relationship with the creature (177). For Celia Daileader, in Racism, Misogyny, and the *Othello* Myth, Frankenstein's creation is feminized and racialized, making it appear "indisputable that he is not white" (90). For his part, Hyde, too, suggests the proliferation of mixed-race individuals as well as monstrous "mulattoism" (Young 27, 41). However, unlike the creature in Shelley's work, Hyde makes no provisions for the future in that he does not seek a mate.[167] This is because there is no future for hybrids like Hyde in the late Victorian period: his fate, like that of Frankenstein's creation, is extinction.

Paradoxically though, Hyde lives on, not through Hyde himself, but through other racial mixtures that bring about new Hydes. Indeed, he embodies one of the central anxieties in the text: the inability to prevent people of different ethnicities from having sex. The apprehension surrounding miscegenation itself was closely linked to the British Empire's powerlessness to restrict its progeny at home and abroad in the 1800s.[168] (This dread is obvious in Thomas Carlyle's "The Nigger Question," for instance, when he refers to the birth of "progenies and prodigies; dark extensive moon-calves, unnameable abortions, wide coiled monstrosities, such as the world has not seen hitherto" (354) to describe racial hybridity). That a man like Jekyll

could give birth to one like Hyde indicates the extent to which phobias surrounding interracial sex were magnified and warped in the Victorian mind. Indeed, that a man could contain another within him and expulse this other, using chemistry while disregarding biology, hints at the severity of the distortion itself. It also alludes to beliefs on hybridity, which swelled and assumed fictitious proportions in the nineteenth century. Considering the fact that knowledge of the Other was limited and stereotypic images abounded at the time, it is easy to understand why Stevenson's text emerged when it did and how it found its niche in the society of the 1880s. It bred terror just as it exploited that of the Victorian period. Conversely, in calling attention to and acquiring popularity for itself, apprehension generated interest as well as desire. Owing to how Stevenson depicts Hyde, it is evident that there exists a connection between fear, longing and miscegenation in the text.

Attributing Hyde's infertility to the fact that he is both black and white is a useful way of understanding how Stevenson's text reflects certain tenets of Victorian anthropology and biology. In "Nineteenth-Century Anthropology," Thomas F. Gossett contends that, though different race theories were circulating in the 1800s, a common belief was that of Dr. Samuel George Morton (1799-1851), a researcher and physician, who maintained that black and white people were of different species.[169] He argued that "crosses between whites and Negroes indicated that mulatto women bear children only with great difficulty. If these women mated only with other mulattoes . . . the descendents of this union would be even less fertile and the progeny would eventually die out" (59). That Jekyll and Hyde should die at the end of the novel is logical according to this belief, for they are both irrevocably linked to one

another and, consequently, subject to the same punishment: extinction. Hence, here is Charles Darwin's precept in practice: only the fittest survive and, to be fit, one must have offspring or else face complete obliteration.

Unlike Morton, Darwin held, in On the Origin of Species (1859), that the human specie was monogenic, not polygenic. Though his doctrine revolutionized science, racism did not disappear; rather, it merely changed. Gossett writes:

> Despite the fact that he destroyed the basis for much of the old racism, Darwin provided a new rationale within which nearly all the old convictions about race superiority and inferiority could find place. Darwin's influence upon race theory arose not so much from anything specific which he himself said on the subject . . . as from certain analogies which his followers drew between relationships among the lower species in the animal world, on the one hand, and among men in human societies on the other. The idea of natural selection was translated to a struggle between individual members of society, between different nations, between different races. (145)

This struggle to assert one's supremacy is visible in the novel, whether it is between Jekyll and Hyde, Empire and colonies, or "pure" and "impure" blood. Compare this idea with the following quote from the novel: "The powers of Hyde seemed to have grown with the sickliness of Jekyll. And certainly the hate that now divided them was equal on each side. With Jekyll, it was a thing of vital instinct" (91). Readers are not told what exactly drives Hyde onward; however, it is likely the same force, i.e., "the vital instinct" (91) or the will to live. Hence, within the novel, there is a certain kind of warfare among competing nations, yet it is one where an individual stands for a nation and what is at stake is survival. While in Jacobs' narrative as well as in Wilson's and Braddon's novel, the interracial female's survival ultimately depends upon fleeing the home, in Stevenson's work, the white male relies on the home to

change into his darker, slighter nemesis and to save himself both from the public sphere (the "proper place" of white masculinity) with its strict code of conduct. Even though clinging to the home is futile, he continues to do so in his desperate need not only to pick or alter his identity, but to survive the Jekyll/Hyde transformation. In this respect, the novel is not only about asserting supremacy over another, but control over life and death.

Clearly, Stevenson's novel revolves around notions of power. Jekyll's capacity to transform himself illustrates his mastery over Hyde, the racial Other, as well as, ultimately, his mastery over himself.[170] Even though Jekyll seeks to distance himself from this other, asserting near the end of the novel "He, I say— I cannot say, I" (Stevenson 90), he nonetheless feels responsible for his nemesis' actions since he not only created him, but actually becomes him. The physical transformation blurs the lines between Jekyll/Hyde while blurring the Hegelian dichotomy between master/slave since, as the story progresses, Jekyll is not choosing when to be Hyde anymore, but Hyde is choosing when to be him.[171] Indeed, Jekyll goes from being a respectable, self-possessed individual to inhabiting a foreign body, which has both racial and feminine traits. For, as the doctor increasingly loses himself, so too does he forfeit his dominant status by assuming a subservient position, the one that his doppelganger previously assumed. As a result, Hyde becomes Jekyll's master and is free to use the latter's exterior whenever he needs to escape culpability by feigning innocence.

In the novel, the breakdown of biology is clear as it is coarse, imprecise, and imperfect; hence, its demise is inevitable. Furthermore, as Kevin Miles notes in

"Body Badges: Race and Sex" with regard to this science and race: "the racialized body does not depend upon biological science for its identification because what is at work is not something wholly discursive. The image of the black body is signified, it is something *signed* and is, at least in this society, a sign of pollution evoking a response that is more visceral than rational" (138). What begins as Jekyll's entry into another's black body turns into a venture with consequences beyond his grasp. As readers discover, he is incapable of determining the purity of the powder; consequently, the Hyde side of himself increasingly takes over. As a result, biology and chemistry fail and signal their own limitations. For, just as the chemicals that are responsible from the Jekyll/Hyde transformation are mixed, so too is the racial mixture that occurs. Jekyll, much like Victorian England, cannot contain the seepage that is occurring and blurring the supposedly set boundaries of race.

Adding to this notion is the sense, throughout the book, of losing one's self to science and one's body to others.[172] It is as though the forces that Jekyll feels taking hold of him are not only happening from the inside out but from the outside in. In this respect, it is almost as if Jekyll's body is being colonized, yet the process is one where the colonized are coming to colonize the colonizers, i.e., a kind of colonialism in reverse. As illustrated in previous chapters, just as it is impossible to prevent the politics of the country from infiltrating and affecting those of the home, it is ultimately impossible to confine bodies or nations to their "proper places" or to completely separate blackness from whiteness or femaleness from maleness since the gap, in each case, is not as far as it seems. Not only does this suggest apprehensions about the limits of the Empire, but about the limits of the body as well.[173] It hints at a

dread of contamination that no existing science can avert or eradicate as well as a fear of the dilution of European-based purity, privilege and power (Goldberg Racial State 26).[174] This terror is noticeable when Jekyll mentions: "that insurgent horror was knit to him closer than a wife, closer than an eye; lay caged in the flesh, where he heard it mutter and felt it struggle to be born; and at every hour of weakness . . . prevailed against him, and deposed him out of life" (91). Jekyll's alarm is unmistakable as is his feeling that the only child Jekyll and Hyde can give birth to is death.

Death, in this instance, is the result of miscegenation.[175] It is the outcome of tampering with biology. Moreover, it is a punishment for playing with the laws of nature, one of these being the long-held assumption that white and black people were not meant to mate with one another: biracial people were thought to be infertile from the beginning of the nineteenth century onward, hence, a threat to human survival, or to their own, at least (Gossett 58-59). Thus, the novel is a cautionary tale, for the Jekyll and Hyde scenario need not apply solely to doctors who dabble with chemicals, but to all people who challenge the supposed natural order of things.[176] Jekyll's statement that "he thought of Hyde, for all his energy, as of something not only hellish but inorganic" (91) attests to this. Focusing on what is or is not organic, this quote highlights the importance of purity, particularly racial purity, in the text.

The notion of racial hybridity or doubleness figures as well when Jekyll claims: "It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognized the thorough and primitive duality of man; I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both" (79). The duality that he sought, not

only by becoming another individual, but also by ignoring the black and white divide, challenges the notion of identity as something uniform, stable, and, ultimately, governable by the self as well as by society. As Miles writes, "this preoccupation with a lack of control [or with miscegenation] . . . implicates a good deal more than white people, it implicates every aspect of the metaphysical machinery driving the Western tradition" (140). Society is unwilling to let the typical black person— one who, as shown earlier, is the atypical white person— defy the very boundaries that its existence depends upon. Consequently, it demonizes and ostracizes him in attempt to preserve Western tradition at the expense of all others.

In such a tradition, Hyde can only do wrong by not conforming to society's norms and defying its expectations. He could not have been a typical Victorian even if he had never committed a single crime. Since he cannot get people to look at him without generating their disgust, the idea of him gaining their respect and approval is unfathomable. Society has no place for a man like him except at the margins, living with other marginalized people in Soho. Hyde is an outcast owing to the fact that he occupies, like the exile, "the perilous territory of not-belonging" (Said 287). As Hazel Waters demonstrates in Racism on the Stage, it was common, by the mid-nineteenth century, for mixed-race male characters in drama to be marked as "bitter outsiders, hostile and seeking vengeance" (143). Conjuring up this stereotypic figure from the stage, Hyde functions as an outsider as well since his racial difference prevents him from being part of the nation and makes him take out his rage on its legitimate children. Furthermore, because the only position available to him is a subsidiary one, he is as much a victim and a scapegoat as he is a criminal. He is in a no-win situation,

for whether he is virtuous or not has little bearing on how others treat him. As Hyde, he cannot access Jekyll's spotless reputation; it is only in relinquishing the self that he can enjoy any such reverence and admiration, if he does enjoy it at all. It is unlikely that he does, however, since he only likes and thinks of himself. He regards Jekyll solely as a safe haven, a manner of escaping accountability for his misdeeds.

Hyde's feelings for Jekyll exceed contempt, as the following passage illustrates:

> The hatred of Hyde for Jekyll was of a different order. His terror of the gallows drove him continually to commit temporary suicide, and return to his subordinate station of a part instead of a person; but he loathed the necessity, he loathed the despondency into which Jekyll was now fallen, and he resented the dislike with which he was himself regarded. (91-92)

In choosing to become Jekyll, Hyde is not choosing his alter ego but himself, as he obviously has his own interests at heart. Furthermore, Hyde's self-control is more marked than Jekyll's, for the former can pick when to use his alter ego whereas the latter can only hope that, upon awaking, he will still be himself. This tug-of-war between who is and who is not powerful is significant because it highlights the reality that for an individual or a group to be potent another must be impotent. Hence, for Hyde to acquire strength, Jekyll must lose it.

Throughout the novel, Hyde is a stereotype of the black and white other. The fact that he is both the embodiment and exaggeration of every possible human foible is worth noting. Why is Hyde pure evil? One likely hypothesis is because his identity is barred. His existence is forbidden and yet he lives on, for a while, at least, in spite of this prohibition. When he does die, he does not do so alone; instead, he condemns

Jekyll to suffer the same fate. This is telling for it reveals much about colonialism: both the colonized and the colonizers are doomed, albeit in different ways, under the colonial regime. Whereas the colonized lives with the discrepancy between the image versus the reality of who he is and struggles with the ensuing frustration and anger as best he can, the colonizer remains in a state of perpetual ignorance never venturing beyond a false conception of the other to truly know him. As Homi K. Bhabha has shown, ambivalence is central to the unchanging stereotype, for, ironically, it is this driving force that ensures that the myth of the other's fixed identity endures over the time (66). This assertion explains how Hyde's nature can be both rigid and elusive. Every character that he encounters responds to him as type while recognizing that he is also an anomaly who is "type-less", i.e., the freak or the outsider. The type is familiar and describable; the anomaly is foreign and indescribable. Hyde is a stereotype just as he defies stereotyping: whereas society imposes the former upon him, the latter leads to his destructive rage, which he, in turn, inflicts upon the world.

This anger is more a part of Hyde than Jekyll is. It is what fuels the former and what sets him apart from the latter. He vents his fury on random strangers, almost as if he expects everyone to pay for the alienation and discrimination that he has had to endure. This representation, too, invokes conventional depictions of blackness that existed in drama in the 1850s in works such as Charles O'Bryan's Lugarto the Mulatto (1850) and Johnson and Nelson Lee's The Mulatto Murderer (1854) where the "deep and malicious hatred of the mixed-race male is his most abiding figure" along with "his cunning and cruelty" (Waters 146-147). That his first victim should be an innocent, young girl of eight or ten is significant, for this illustrates how his

own hurt has made him insensitive to the pain of others. He knows no mercy because no one ever showed him any; thus, he is simply not aware that such a sentiment exists. As for Jekyll, Hyde cannot help but resent him. Hence, preying on a child is in many ways the best revenge for an outcast like him. Who could be more vulnerable than a youth? What better way to threaten the Empire than to attack its members, especially its children, who symbolize its prosperity and its posterity? In destroying idle pedestrians, Hyde attempts to collapse the socio-economic hierarchy. In this respect, the war that he fights is financial, since it is only by challenging the status quo, as well as those who benefit from it, that Hyde can invert the order of things and change his own situation within the world.

In spite of this, it is the social aspect that poses an immediate threat to him.[177] He simply cannot remain who and how he is in society nor can he integrate within it. In order to survive in a culture that shuns him and seeks to annihilate him, Hyde resorts to violence. The society that he is a part of will not accept him for who he is, yet he cannot and will not become what he is not. Thus, he struggles to assert his identity in a world where it is a crime. Jekyll, however, is more of a criminal than Hyde because he creates the latter and uses him as a way of expressing his own immorality. In his statement of case, Jekyll admits that the drug "shook the doors of the prisonhouse of my disposition; and like the captives of Philippi, that which stood within ran forth. At that time my virtue slumbered; my evil, kept awake by ambition, was alert and swift to seize the occasion; and the thing that was projected was [Hyde]" (82). This avowal illustrates that Jekyll's suppressed self is only able to surface when he is in the body of Hyde. In other words, the former's passive

aggressiveness becomes active when he turns into the other.[178] This foreign self, in turn, is accountable for the transgressions of another. To draw an analogy: whereas Jekyll is the plotter or mastermind, Hyde is the hired assassin whose payment from the former fails to adequately compensate him for the use of his services.[179] In this instance, one of the services in question is a temporary relinquishment of self. Hence, the geographical boundaries of colonialism extend to Hyde's body, which, as a result, is not simply fragmented or displaced, but completely lost for a certain period of time.

Hyde's experience is the most violent one of all: the "temporary suicide" (91) that he continually commits attests to the exterminating aspect of colonialism, for he must repeatedly relinquish his being and his desires, subordinating both to that of another. Yet Hyde has not resigned himself to die alone, Jekyll must die too, if only to atone for his crimes against his other half. After all, Hyde did not seek out Jekyll; it was the other way around. The Jekyll and Hyde situation is telling as it discloses the imperial project itself. There is no indication in the text that Hyde necessarily wished for Jekyll to find him. It is the latter who uncovered him by tapping into his "sinister" side and succeeding in making it manifest itself. In this sense, the doctor victimizes Hyde using the latter's body as part of an ongoing scientific project whose main purpose is expressing the former's rage.[180] Though he has been misused, Hyde is not a victim, for this would be to portray him as something that he is not, i.e., powerless. On the contrary, he is quite strong and uses this strength to be everything that Jekyll, in the eyes of society at least, is not: aggressive, unattractive, short, devious, etc.

Jekyll's identity is also a construct, one which directly benefits him and others like him in a white, male-dominated society.[181] As Vron Ware affirms in "Defining Forces: 'Race', Gender and Memories of Empire":

> It is important to recognize that racial domination is a system that positions or constructs everyone that falls within its orbit. Focusing on ideas about whiteness and the various constructions of white racial identity can offer new venues of thought and action to those working to understand and hopefully dismantle systems of racial domination. (143)

This applies to Jekyll who represents all that white, patriarchal culture values: power, prestige, wealth, and good looks— at least, according to Western norm. Furthermore, the doctor is not only well-regarded, but deemed irreproachable. Unlike most members of society who adhere to its regulations, Jekyll goes even further by surpassing its expectations. For this reason, his society sees him as an exemplary human being and rewards him monetarily for his accomplishments. Looking at his nature as being extrinsic, not intrinsic is useful, for it highlights that Hyde is not the only one whose identity is artificial. For years, Jekyll fought to hide his forbidden yearnings only to succumb to temptation once he had discovered an appropriate front in Hyde. Although he asserts that he is "in no sense a hypocrite" (78), he later contradicts this statement by espousing his moral vision, one that would exempt him from his share of the blame.[182] Reflecting on the duality of man, he hopes to be able to completely split and polarize the just and the unjust. For his part, he claims: "If each . . . could be housed in separate identities, life would be relieved of all that was unbearable; the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely" (79). Here,

it is obvious that he desires to escape all accountability. What he fails to acknowledge, though, is that he is responsible for the misdeeds of his other half because he ultimately performs both parts, re-enacting his wayward past (via Hyde, his younger, darker side) to understand and tolerate his staid present (as the older, white Jekyll).[183]

Jekyll and Hyde's sense of self is conditional upon what Judith Butler dubs the "*regulatory practices* of gender formation and division [that] constitute identity, [or] the internal coherence of the subject" (23). Moreover, such (gendered) conceptions of selfhood "are not logical or analytical features of personhood, but, rather, socially instituted and maintained norms of intelligibility" (Butler 23). Whereas Jekyll gets his validation from the approval of others, which, in turn, assures him that he is valued according to societal norms, Hyde allows these normative practices to govern him, for it is by seeing how others view him that he discovers that he is abhorrent to them. Both figures understand what is and what is not normative behaviour— even Hyde, who has not been taught the wisdom and confines of conventional morality. The two men (re)act very differently, yet each fulfills his designated role: Jekyll is the good guy and plays the assigned role throughout; Hyde is the villain and he, too, does not disappoint.

As far as what Butler calls "internal coherence" (23), Jekyll is not nearly as coherent as Hyde if one considers uniformity of thought and action. Whereas the former is two individuals and constantly vacillates between them, the latter is more of an independent entity. Though he occasionally picks the person of Jekyll as a decoy, he would gladly do away with the man if he could. In fact, he eventually does, though

he has to pay for it with his own life. Jekyll and Hyde are equally unpredictable. As for Jekyll, he becomes a recluse, only to rejoin society, and then to withdraw from it again. According to his friends and servants, his behaviour is increasingly erratic. As for Hyde, his bad temper makes it is unclear when exactly he will lash out and strike someone dead.

As in Braddon's work, characters in Stevenson's novel are products of their environment, both influenced by and influencing it in turn. When Jekyll becomes Hyde, he chooses to live in Soho as though it fits or mirrors his racial hybridity. As in Wilson's book where the writer underscores Frado's marginal place in the home/nation, white hegemonic culture literally pushes Hyde to the fringes of society, thus compelling him to seek a dwelling in this area. In the 1880s, this part of town was a crowded, lower-class region with a sizeable immigrant population. Owing to its diverse populace, the possibility for cultural exchange and interaction as well as for cross-cultural and interracial unions was naturally greater there than in a more socially homogeneous area lacking this type of diversity. For George Augustus Sala, a novelist and journalist who described various parts of London in his writing, it consisted of a "maze of sorry thoroughfares, a second-rate butcher's meat and vegetable market, two model lodging-houses, a dingy parish church, and some 'brick barns' of dissent . . . No lords or squires of high degree live in this political Alsatia" (qtd. in Danahay 169). Later on in the same excerpt, he characterizes Soho as a "'back slum'" (qtd. in Danahay 170). Although Sala's description focuses on the area's relative poverty by alluding to its inhabitants' lower-class origins, other representations of the region viewed its inhabitants— many of whom were non-

whites or perceived as such owing to their ethnicity— as being part of a different species. J. Miller Fothergill, a medical writer, contended that many of those who lived in places like Soho were "smaller and darker, showing a return to the Celto-Iberian race. . . . In the true bred cockney of the East End, the most degenerate cockney, we can see a return to an earlier archaic type of man" (113). Fothergill's portrayal here, though still about class, shifts to encompass not only ethnic whiteness (i.e., the Irish or the Jew), but blackness and effeminacy in its mention of physical darkness on the one hand and diminutive stature on the other.

Although Hyde was not born in Soho, Jekyll-as-Hyde gravitates towards it, only to ultimately take up a dwelling in that region. Besides using it as a hideout, this area enables Hyde to lead a double life without seeming out of place because, whereas the West End is "the place of social elegance, prosperity, and domesticity," the East End is "the place of guilty pleasures," (Seed 183). This explains why, as David Seed contends, Soho is "socially alien . . . to Jekyll" (183). Consequently, in order to go slumming in this part of town and keep up appearances in his own social circles, Jekyll must literally change his appearance or, rather, physically adapt by becoming the racial, gender, and class Other— in this case, Edward Hyde.[184] Here, Stevenson takes the Lamarckian theory one step further in that individuals not only adapt to their surroundings, but are drawn towards particular locations that are somehow apt for them. As an interracial other with a propensity for crime, Hyde is (stereo)typically attracted to a place which, for the late Victorian reader, would connote both racial mixtures as well as, more broadly, vice.[185]

Similar to Braddon who shows the interconnectedness of the public and private sphere by linking what happens in corrupt spaces like Silas' gambling den to what occurs in the home/nation, Stevenson illustrates the interdependence of people and place by demonstrating how Jekyll and Hyde share the same body just as East and West are different facets of the same country. Also, like in Braddon's The Octoroon, geography is an explanation for characters' attitude and behaviour in Stevenson's novel. However, whereas Braddon contrasts the Southern States and its inhabitants with Britain and its residents when it comes to individuals' views on race and slavery, Stevenson distinguishes the East and West End of London as well as the respective dwellers in each area to first polarize and subsequently collapse the black/white, female/male, Hyde/Jekyll dichotomy.[186] In other words, while the author initially seeks to geographically separate the two figures by associating them with different parts of the city, the fact that they are inextricably bound to one another conflates both places, effectively demonstrating the extent to which all spatial and bodily boundaries are fluid.

For its part, Stevenson's text looks at how to control the uncontrollable Other and how to refrain from "going native" or going for the native.[187] As Hyde increasingly becomes Jekyll rather than the other way around, the latter discovers that transforming into his nemesis— something which he previously controlled— increasingly entails not only relinquishing power over himself, but handing it over to the Other. In no longer being able to rely on the purity of the powder that he takes to summon Hyde at will, Jekyll is losing mastery over Hyde and his being as well as his own body and its racial purity. The preoccupation in this novel with purity versus

impurity has racial connotations. In particular, it hints at the ways in which nineteenth-century culture used blood to determine one's legacy on issues of race (i.e., whether one was black or white) and of freedom or lack thereof (i.e., whether one was a slave or free, at least in the United States).[188] Although slavery no longer existed in England or in America when Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde was published, the novel— in connoting racial purity and in emphasizing the importance of inheritance, be it monetary or hereditary— speaks to master/slave, colonizer/colonized, and black/white tensions that existed in the mid-to-late eighteen hundreds.[189]

It also alludes to the manner in which "the crisis of social authority at home is closely linked with the question of imperial authority abroad" (Youngs "Stevenson's Monkey Business" 162). Just as Jekyll's body metonymically stands for Britain, Hyde's represents one or more nations under (former) imperial control, thus underscoring how Englishness "was itself a product of the colonial culture that it seemed to have created elsewhere" (Gikandi x). As a result, the notion of the safe British home, protected by law, which Jacobs looks at in her 1861 narrative and which Braddon exploits in her novel, largely depends on the existence of the corrupt American home, haunted by the slavery in the mid nineteenth century. By the time that Stevenson published his novel in the late nineteenth century, this corruption or haunting still exists, but the shadow that is cast over the United States is no longer slavery, but segregation and racial inequality. For Britain to see and posit itself as the land of liberty and racial equality, it must define itself in relation to its former colony, America. Doing so allows England to state what it is and what it is not while simultaneously disavowing its own involvement in slavery and colonialism. Yet as

Stevenson's novel unwittingly illustrates, national identities, like bodily ones, are porous constructs. Just as countries manipulate their conception of themselves to suit their own political agenda, Jekyll fabricates Hyde to tap into his own dark side while absolving himself of the blame.

Considering the fact that nineteenth-century England kept a close eye on what was happening across the Atlantic, it is clear that Victorians saw a connection between their own identity and that of Americans, using the latter in turn to highlight national differences and, when it suited their purposes, to point out similarities.[190] Douglas Lorimer writes:

> Victorian observers kept a careful watch on developments in the United States. In the aftermath of emancipation and through the trials of Reconstruction and then the newly constituted South under Jim Crow legislation, the United States conducted an experiment in the governance of a new kind of multiracial society. British observers differed in their responses to the American experiment, but some saw it as a model to be emulated elsewhere, chiefly in South Africa. ("Reconstructing Victorian Racial Discourse" 190)

Viewing the tensions between the doctor and his double as a manifestation of those between Britain (with its antiquated system of aristocracy) and the United States (with its emerging system of democracy) makes sense owing to the fear of democratization and of reverse colonialism in England. Furthermore, since the word "nation" itself had racial connotations in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, serving "sometimes as a synonym for, and sometimes as a subcategory of, race" (Doyle 15), seeing Hyde as an emblem of the United States, a country which had only one hundred years earlier shed the shackles of Britain, is a useful way to see the Jekyll/Hyde relationship.[191]

With the Civil War in the States ending in 1865, the period known as the Reconstruction began. During this time, the United States abolished slavery and gave black people (nominally, at least) citizenship. This led to the establishment of black schools where the aim was to teach former slaves, ones whom the nation had denied an education under slavery, to read and write.[192] Much like Hyde's scribbling in Jekyll's book, which terrifies the latter, and Hyde's literacy in general, the idea of educating the formerly oppressed was as frightening a prospect for conservative Americans with respect to blacks as it was for traditional Britons in regard to the lower classes.[193] Furthermore, in witnessing the spread of literacy in the United States to include black people, England felt pressure to give its working class (whose situation many individuals compared to that of the former slaves in America) access to schooling.[194] And yet as Patrick Brantlinger and Richard Boyle contend, the "fear of mass literacy was powerful in late-Victorian England" (269). The reason being that to educate the lower classes in Britain (like educating slaves in America) involved relinquishing a certain amount of power since an educated populace is one that is empowered with the knowledge that comes from having access to information circulating in print.

What is more, there was a rivalry of sorts between England and America in the nineteenth century. As Vanessa D. Dickerson notes, between the two nations, "there was literally and figuratively blood, both good and bad" (13). This competitiveness extended to the realm of literature with Britain suggesting that the United States did not have any real body of literature worthy of notice (much less, of praise or admiration) and the U.S. always feeling that it had to prove itself to

compensate for a perceived deficiency.[195] This struggle between the two nations—one older and more established, the other, newer and still in the midst of creating its own traditions and institutions— is another way of seeing the Jekyll/Hyde opposition.[196] In Stevenson's novel, it is Jekyll's tale that we hear while Hyde's side of the story is suspiciously absent from the narrative. Like Hyde, the United States is a younger and livelier Jekyll or Britain, which is still in its (literary) adolescence struggling for recognition.[197] Furthermore, what with the U.S. forging, like Hyde, its own scribblings in its own hand or brand of Americanized English, the very language itself was undergoing a kind of bastardization or contamination from an English perspective.

Paradoxically, though, owing to copyright laws not yet being firmly in place, British authors inspired themselves on the work of their American counterparts (and vice-versa) without having to formally acknowledge the sources of their inspiration.[198] One example, as stated in the previous chapter, is Mary Elizabeth Braddon's own tale of miscegenation and the mixed-race body, which preceded Dion Boucicault's successful drama on the same topic.[199] Another instance, perhaps more apropos here, is Stevenson's unacknowledged debt to Edgar Allan Poe and a number of the latter's short stories, which revolve around gothic doubling. Stevenson admitted in a letter addressed to Andrew Lang in early December 1885 that he knew Poe's "William Wilson," a "story of a man with a double" (Booth and Mehew 158). Moreover, as biographers J. A. Steuart and, more recently, Claire Harman point out, American reviewers like R. H. Stoddard and journals, much like British ones,

frequently mentioned the similarities between the American Poe's "William Wilson" and the British Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (Steuart 67; Harman 301).

Splitting from England only to go on to forge its own national identity and literature, the United States also posed a threat to Britain in the late nineteenth century in that it threatened to eventually match and ultimately surpass the latter as the most powerful nation on the globe. Struggling to retain its place as *the* world power in the face of a younger nation that was still in the midst of resolving its own racial conflict at home and trying to build a veritable democracy, England no doubt witnessed signs of America's mounting strength. Owing to its military and industrial power, the United States was increasingly becoming a major player on the international stage. Moreover, due in large part to immigration from the 1870s onward, the American population was on the rise.[200] Toward the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States experienced an influx of Irish, Italian, German, Scandinavian, and Jewish immigrants. Thus, the fear of a nation where Europe's rejects could establish themselves and proliferate only to become part of an ethnically hybrid nation like America and call themselves American might also have seemed like a dangerous omen to a country like Britain where being Anglo-Saxon was not only a birthright but something of a privilege, one which was not easily conferred upon ethnic others.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, much like the eponymous double itself, is a hybrid text made up of different literary genres. While being firmly rooted in the Gothic tradition, it is an outgrowth of sensation fiction while simultaneously anticipating detective fiction, a genre that Arthur Conan Doyle went on to popularize with his

now-famous Sherlock Holmes stories (Seed 228-229). Merging the generic convention of all these types of literature, Stevenson, in writing a book that refuses to adhere to one single genre, creates a new literary specimen composed of older genres (Gothic and the sensation fiction) as well as a newer one (detective fiction), much like the Jekyll/Hyde experiment in the novel. In this manner, the author, like the doctor in his text, is dabbling in his own type of experiment. However, in this instance, the project is one that seeks to transgress the confines of generic purity only to bring about a work that is as much a product of impurity as the powder which ultimately gives Hyde free license over Jekyll.

As mentioned earlier, the novel's inherent gothic-ness manifests itself in how the novel depicts the house, much like the body, as a racialized dwelling, one that "situates him [Jekyll] in a context that suggests illicit activity" (Lisa Butler).[201] It is worth highlighting, though, that it is not only Jekyll who is confined within the house (although he is the only one who is ultimately trapped within the gendered, racial, and class-inscribed body of Hyde). Just as Jekyll must retreat into his home and shun his friends, his servants, like Poole, must endure a kind of haunting. Consequently, though Jekyll becomes Hyde's prisoner and vice-versa, the other individuals, those forced to obey Hyde's bequests, are hostages since their position as domestics forces them to endure the strange and mysterious events taking place under the doctor's roof. Other gothic features of the text would be the London fog, which casts a shadow[202] over the city, obscuring not only transformations like that of Jekyll into Hyde, but lending an ominous feeling to the novel.

In darkening the metropolis, the fog also hints at the manner in which the presence of foreign, feminized others like Hyde affects the region in general altering the physiognomy of its inhabitants and threatening the dominance of affluent Anglo-Saxon males. Once again, there is the threat of colonization in reverse as well as, more broadly, of impending doom for white, upper-class, patriarchal society. Furthermore, in referring back to the gothic trope, the Jekyll and Hyde relationship suggests a kind of incest as much as it intimates interracial sex. The fact that both are essentially the same person, knitting the doctor and his double together closer than brothers, clearly demonstrates this. As a result, the impure liaison that occurs is troublesome, for both individuals are not only too different (black/white) as opponents of interracial unions in the nineteenth century argued, but too similar (brothers), suggesting the incest taboo.

Published at a time where there was "a moral panic about sensational literature and delinquency," the novel adheres to the conventions of this genre in that it involves a shocking story of urban vice and criminality (Reid 103). Much like the sensation fiction that was popular in the 1860s, the book revolves around a number of crimes, whether real or inferred: blackmail, forgery, suicide and murder, to name some of the more obvious ones. Like Braddon's The Octoroon, which features murder, secret identity, robbery, gambling, etc., Stevenson's novel also contains the elements of a shilling shocker geared towards a mass readership. However, unlike Braddon's book, Stevenson's was a great commercial hit. This, in turn, made the writer uncomfortable because, while it catered to his desire for financial success (the Hyde side of himself), he felt that he had earned it by letting his own literary

respectability and seriousness (the Jekyll side of himself) degenerate. Writing to Edmund Gosse on 2 January 1886, Stevenson asserts, "I do not write for the public; I do write for money, a nobler deity; and most of all for myself, not perhaps any more noble but both more intelligent and nearer home" (Booth and Mehew 171). Later on, in the same letter, he claims, "There must be something wrong with me, or I would not be popular" (Booth and Mehew 171). Clearly, the tension between writing a pot-boiler like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, which earned him fame and money, and feeling as though he had given in to his baser urges by catering to the supposedly indiscriminate tastes of the lower and middle classes haunted Stevenson in his desire to be taken seriously as a writer.

The novel anticipates detective fiction because it is a "case," as evinced by the title.[203] In addition, other than turning Utterson into a sleuth or a Mr. Seek, the entire book revolves around the mysterious Jekyll/Hyde relationship (Hirsch 228-229). Why is Jekyll so protective of Hyde? More to the point, the other characters seem to wonder, where did the doctor meet him? The text compels both those within and outside of the narrative to ask themselves about Hyde. Who is he? What accounts for his strange appearance? How has he found his way into the life and wallet of Dr. Jekyll? The Jekyll/Hyde mystery, though, is an open-ended one. For, although both the characters and the readers themselves discover that Jekyll is Hyde, the latter's crimes and identity are still unresolved at the end of the narrative. The fact that who and what Hyde represents is vague leads the audience and the literary critic alike to ponder his significance in the text and to attempt, as many critics have, to resolve the secret of Hyde as a signifier and signified. This analysis is yet another attempt to

solve the Hyde enigma by arguing that he stands for the interracial individual, one who, as a member of the lower classes, is both racialized and feminized.

Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde focuses on power while illustrating that, though people can manipulate it to a certain degree, it is largely outside human jurisdiction. The novel also highlights the limits of biology and anthropology and demonstrates the confines that these two sciences placed upon non-white and non-British individuals during the mid-to-late Victorian period. Furthermore, since sexuality was strictly monitored in the nineteenth century, society regarded hybrids as visible transgressions of the supposedly separate race/sex boundaries, signs that accepted norms had been defied and that interracial sex had occurred. It is obvious that both Jekyll and Hyde must atone for this indiscretion; what is more startling is that they must pay for it not just in life, but in death.

Notes

[1] Moreover, in "Our Nig: Fetters of an American Farm Girl," Ellis contends that "not only the White House but also Monticello, where Jefferson kept his slaves, is invoked" (78).

[2] In 1983, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. designated Harriet Wilson's Our Nig as the first *novel* published by an African American woman and he still stands by this generic designation. See foreword in Harriet Wilson's New England.

[3] As Elizabeth Fox-Genovese affirms in "My Statue, My Self," race and sex "are socially learned and result from acts of (re)cognition" (179-180).

[4] John Ernest notes in "Economies of Identity": "Wilson deliberately and forcefully conflates the economic situations of working-class whites and culturally enslaved 'free' blacks" (428).

[5] I write "deemed" not only to underscore how race is now, as it was in Wilson's time, a social construct, but also because the social and legal definition of who was considered black varied from state to state in the nineteenth century. In certain states, blackness was defined as being 1/8 black; in others, it was 1/16 and so on.

[6] In "Marks of the Slave Lash," Florence Marfo comments on the use of colours in Our Nig to symbolize racial prejudice (83).

[7] Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature is the title of a book by Sollors published in 1997 by Oxford University Press.

[8] Contrary to my argument, Ronna C. Johnson maintains that "Our Nig says figuratively through narrative structure what cannot be confessed in speech: the sexual transgression against the black female" (96). In "Subtle Resistance in Our Nig, Incidents, Behind the Scenes, and Reminiscences," Johnnie M. Stover also writes about the possibility of "sexual abuse suffered by Frado at the hands of the Bellmont men" (115). More recently, Cassandra Jackson proposes in "Beyond the Page" that the silences in Wilson's book suggest rape.

[9] Elizabeth Fox-Genovese observes in "'To Weave It into the Literature of the Country'," that "Frado represents the inversion of the 'tragic' mulatto convention. Where the tragic mulatto is patient and long-suffering, Frado is angry and rebellious" (42).

[10] For David H. Watters, Wilson's novel does this by functioning as a "'two-story white house' museum'" where Frado's body and the abuse it has endured subvert the historical narrative that white abolitionists are attempting to leave behind for posterity (85).

[11] See Elizabeth J. West's "Reworking the Conversion Narrative" for an exploration of how Our Nig draws upon the conventions of the conversion narrative to depict an "anti-conversion experience" (3).

[12] As Barbara A. White discovered while looking into Wilson's personal history, it is likely that "one or more of the Haywards [the Bellmonts] was an abolitionist" suggesting that "[t]he principal omission [in the text] may well have been the abolitionist views of the Bellmonts, our bad antislavery friends" (38). For further information on the Haywards and Wilson herself, see "'Our Nig' and the She-Devil."

[13] I agree with Hazel V. Carby's assertion in Reconstructing Womanhood that Wilson "sought her patronage not from a white Northern audience but from her "colored

brethren" (43); however, I think that the author's financial circumstances were such that, despite her intended or ideal readership, she would have gladly accepted being patronized by anyone who would support her literary endeavour.

[14] In "'This Attempt of Their Sister'" and "Of Bottles and Books," Eric Gardner shows that, based on the existing copies of the book that have been found so far, its audience consisted of white, middle-class individuals, many of whom were children who lived near Milford, New Hampshire. This is perhaps due not so much to white taste in literature as to geography as well as the fact that the town had a very small black community.

[15] As Gardner suggests in "'This Attempt of Their Sister'," abolitionists may have known about Wilson's narrative; nonetheless, "they may have consciously chosen *not* to publicize it" (227).

[16] Claudia Tate also mentions the possibility that the title of the work "may have given them [black people] cause to question the racial identity of the book's author, and they may have erroneously concluded that Our Nig was a masked white story about black inferiority" (114). See "Allegories of Black Female Desire" in Changing Our Own Words.

[17] For the assumption that biracial characters appeal to white readers because of their partial whiteness, see Sterling A. Brown's "Negro Character as Seen by White Authors" in Sollors Interracialism 274-280.

[18] See Eve Allegra Raimon's "Miss March's Uncommon School" for a discussion of the common school movement in New England as well as Wilson's involvement in Boston's Lyceum movement.

[19] Debra Walker King contends that conventional sentimental fiction "would never allow a mother to succumb to the fate of Mag Smith, nor would it allow her to enter into an interracial marriage" (35).

[20] Reginald H. Pitts' genealogical discoveries confirm this assertion. As Pitts states in "Surviving and Thriving in Nineteenth-Century Milford," Peter Greene, the man whom Alfrado's father Jim works for as a hooper of barrels was most likely a free black man named Timothy Blanchard. Blanchard, like Jim, married a white woman (41, 46).

[21] In "Not Somewhere Else, But Here," JerriAnne Boggis exposes the myth of the North being more welcoming or less biased than the South towards blacks in Wilson's time (228). Similarly, John Ernest notes in "Losing Equilibrium" how New England "tried to contain or, in various ways, eliminate African Americans as a significant presence in the region (206).

[22] Similarly, in "'Nothing New Under the Sun'," Karsten H. Piep writes: "in the face of overbearing racism, the hope for genuine interracial cooperation remains limited" (186).

[23] Julia Stern and Ellen Pratofiorito both note the presence of these two mothers in "Excavating Genre in Our Nig" and "'To Demand Your Sympathy and Aid'."

[24] In "By Dint of Labor and Economy," Thomas B. Lovell states that "Mag's self-sufficiency is threatened by what many of her contemporaries called 'white slavery,'

the employment of predominantly immigrant workers in the North to perform menial tasks at or below subsistence wages" (20).

[25] For an analysis of how Wilson depicts the black female body in Our Nig, see Diane Prince Herndl's "The Invisible (Invalid) Woman."

[26] In "Dwelling in the House of Oppression," Lois Leveen argues that Frado "protects the white children from their mother's abuse and eventually liberates them from the house while remaining trapped there herself" (572).

[27] As Cynthia J. Davis mentions in "Speaking the Body's Pain," Mrs. Bellmont "justifies her own *inhuman* actions by declaring 'our nig' *subhuman*" (400); however, Frado's act of defiance in this passage inverts this order by showing the mistress of the house who the dog truly is.

[28] I agree with John Ernest when, in "God's Economy and Frado's Story," he asserts: Wilson "appeals to an understanding generated by one's confrontation of the complex relations that have been reduced to the simple dichotomy of white and black" (60).

[29] Lisa E. Green notes this as well in "The Disorderly Girl". However, for Green, "Frado's sexuality suggests not power but vulnerability" owing to race and, later on, motherhood (150).

[30] Mary Louise Kete also comments on Mrs. Bellmont's desire to emphasize Frado's blackness because she senses that the young girl's skin tone is virtually the same as that of her daughter's in "Slavery's Shadows" (118)

[31] Gretchen Short views this polarization as one that determines whether individuals are natives or aliens in the domestic space of the nation in "Harriet Wilson's Our Nig and the Labor of Citizenship."

[32] For more information on the history of black people in nineteenth-century New Hampshire, see Valerie Cunningham's "New Hampshire Forgot."

[33] Similarly, in "Body Politics and the Body Politic in William Wells Brown's Clotel and Harriet Wilson's Our Nig," R.J. Ellis observes how Frado's body is "the field of dispute between male and female Bellmonts" (112). Laura Doyle notes this as well in Freedom's Empire (175-176).

[34] For an exploration of the figure/ function of the child in Our Nig, see Karen Sánchez-Eppler's Dependent States: The Child's Part in Nineteenth-Century American Culture.

[35] As Kyla Wazana Tompkins writes in "'Everything 'Cept Eat Us'," in the Bellmonts' eyes, Alfrado is nothing but meat. Hence, according to Tompkins, the struggle for Frado is to avoid being eaten alive (216).

[36] However, Silvia P. Castro Borrego argues that Mrs. Bellmont and Mary's treatment of Frado illustrates "the strength and power allowed to women" in "Harriet Wilson's Our Nig" (52).

[37] In "Black Womanhood in Nineteenth-Century America," Beth Maclay Doriani understands this new definition of black femininity as "one that portrays black women as shapers of their own identities and destinies, and as individuals who need not meet the standards of whites and males to achieve their own personhood" (202-203).

[38] Similarly, Doyle notes that while Frado serves James' material comfort, he continually defers hers (178).
[39] Phyllis Cole, likewise, remarks in "Stowe, Jacobs, Wilson" that the author speaks from her own "'true' life sources in the language and forms of fiction" (26-27).
[40] See Gates' introduction to Our Nig published by Vintage Books.
[41] P. Gabrielle Foreman discusses both terms in "The Spoken and The Silenced."
[42] Carla L. Peterson contends in "'Forced to Some Experiment'" that this forces the fictional protagonist to carry the burden of Wilson's anger while enabling the latter "to redirect the burden of this anger against fictional characters rather than historical persons and actual readers" (152).
[43] For more information on the sentimental and seduction novel, see Nina Baym's Woman's Fiction.
[44] In "Parallel Discursive Universes," Henry Louis Gates, Jr. notes this generic fusion as well seeing it as "a synthesis at once peculiarly black and female" (138).
[45] Angelyn Mitchell also mentions the gothic aspect of the house, particularly the L-chamber that serves as Frado's room in "Her Side of His Story" (17).
[46] Mrs. Bellmont also resembles the evil stepmother in many fairy tales as Helen Frink contends in "Fairy Tales and Our Nig."
[47] Yet, as Margaret Lindgren asserts in "Harriet Jacobs, Harriet Wilson and the Redoubled Voice in Black Autobiography," two of the epigraphs have not been attributed to any known writer, suggesting that "Wilson claims that even the obscure or invisible can speak with authority" (26).
[48] For more information on Mrs. Walker, whom Allida mentions in the appendix, see Barbara A. White's "Harriet Wilson's Mentors."
[49] Similarly, R. J. Ellis notes in Harriet Wilson's Our Nig that the epigraphs "serve notice that she is affiliated to but distinct from a literary tradition encompassing, amongst others, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron and Eliza Cook" (175-176).
[50] For a discussion of the relationship between Harriet Jacobs and Lydia Maria Child as well as an exploration of the tensions and problems of an interracial sisterhood, see Deborah M. Garfield's "Vexed Alliances."
[51] As Frances Smith Foster contends in Written by Herself, in addressing herself to the "women of the North," Jacobs needed "new strategies of authorship" to reach her audience (83).
[52] In this manner, as Bruce Mills points out in "Lydia Maria Child and the Endings to Harriet Jacobs's Incidents," Jacobs follows in the tradition of Child and Stowe in maintaining "that threats to the home were not a private concern but a national one" (267).
[53] Aliyyah I. Abdur-Rahman also highlights the manner in which homosexuality, much like interracial unions, was seen as a threat to the health and the propagation of the white, hetero-normative family in mid-nineteenth-century America. Furthermore, the two practices were considered aberrant and both were punishable in the same way: namely, by castration. See "'The Strangest Freaks of Despotism'."

[54] In Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South, Deborah Grey White notes how slaveholders used the image of black women as Jezebels to explain the rise in the mixed-race population rather than acknowledge their own unbridled lust (31).
[55] Randall Kennedy examines the burden that racial regulations placed on white women and how these same regulations pitted not only blacks against whites, but women against men in "The Enforcement of Anti-Miscegenation Laws" (140-162).
[56] Gloria T. Randle looks at how Linda Brent uses the garret as a physical and psychical safe haven in "Between the Rock and the Hard Place" (50-54).
[57] For Patricia Felisa Barbeito, Jacobs' narrative portrays slavery "as a particularly feminine and feminizing disease" in "Making Generations" (367).
[58] An instance of using blacks for medical procedures would be the experiments that J. Marion Sims, M.D., conducted on the fistulas of female slaves in Alabama between 1845 and 1849. See Terri Kapsalis' "Mastering the Female Pelvis."
[59] My contention is similar to that of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese who remarks, in "My Statue, My Self," that the narrator presents "her resistance to her master as a defense of her virtue, even though that defense leads her into a loss of "virtue" by another route" (190).
[60] For an in-depth look at how the word "miscegenation" entered the lexicon of American English, see Katharine Nicholson Ings' "Between Hoax and Hope."
[61] For this reason, as Albert Tricomi contends in "Dialect and Identity in Harriet Jacobs's Autobiography and Other Slave Narratives," the writer's decision to depict herself as light-skinned is not a literary choice, but a reflection of her own identity (624).
[62] See Geneva Cobb Moore's "A Freudian Reading of Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl" for a discussion of how religion figures in the text.
[63] Kevin Thomas Miles also refers to race as a "strategically deployed 'construction'" in "Body Badges" (142).
[64] See David Theo Goldberg's "Made in the USA" and Stuart Hall's "Minimal Selves" to read more on how "black" constitute a necessary imagined community.
[65] Karen Sánchez-Eppler also claims in "Righting Slavery and Writing Sex" that "the story Jacobs has to tell may well be unique among slave narratives in that it describes slavery primarily in terms of sexual experience" (84).
[66] Caroline Levander demonstrates how Jacobs uses motherhood as an idiom to show the precariousness of her situation as a female slave in "'Following the Condition of the Mother'."
[67] Douglas Taylor contends in "From Slavery to Prison" that "[b]y the time Jacobs comes to use it . . . virtue [was vacated] from the public sphere and relocated . . . within the separate, 'feminine' sphere of the domestic" (440).
[68] Ann Gelder looks at the inherent difficulty Jacobs faced in representing her "experience" in the text considering the fact that "*experience* is a linguistic signifier of antilanguage" in "Reforming the Body" (254).
[69] In "Domestic Travel," John D. Cox contends that Jacobs' Incidents maps Brent's inner and outer journey from slavery to freedom.

[70] Krista Walter notes the home's dual function as a haven/prison in the North and South as well in "Surviving in the Garret."
[71] As Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham argues in "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," the "discursive gap between the races was if anything greater between white and black women than between white and black men" (103).
[72] However, Hazel Carby states in "White Woman Listen!" that "[t]he fact that black women are subject to the *simultaneous* oppression of patriarchy, class, and 'race' is the prime reason for not employing parallels that render their position not only marginal but also invisible" (62).
[73] In Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness, Sander L. Gilman describes at length how black women were overly and overtly sexualized in the nineteenth century by referring to the medical establishment in general and to Saartje Baartman, the "Hottentot Venus," in particular (81-101).
[74] Ian F. Haney López explores whiteness as a racial construct/category and looks at the privileges (legal, social, etc.) that tend to go to those deemed white in Western culture. See the following chapters: "White Race-Consciousness" (155-196) and "The Value to Whites of Whiteness" (197-202).
[75] Unlike my interpretation of Jacobs' decision to write her life's story as stemming from her commitment to eradicating racism and sexism, Julia Stern sees it as an "act of meta-mourning" through which she grieves the trauma of slavery in "Live Burial and its Discontents."
[76] For an analysis of how Jacobs tries to make her white, female readers experience a biblical/sexual "fall" from innocence to experience, see Holly Blackford's "Figures of Orality."
[77] For an exploration of the imperfect analogy between race and gender, see Lewis R. Gordon's "Race, Sex, and Matrices of Desire in an Antiblack World."
[78] Sander L. Gilman notes how, in the nineteenth century, the "primitive is the black, and the qualities of blackness, or at least of the black female, are those of the prostitute," thus demonstrating how black women's sexuality was deemed deviant to the point of criminality in "Black Bodies, White Bodies" (248).
[79] P. Gabrielle Foreman views the ear of the slave as a locus than can be penetrated by the verbal/sexual abuse of white men and women alike in "Manifest in Signs" (78-79).
[80] Minrose C. Gwin also notes in "Green-eyed Monsters of the Slavocracy" how "Jacobs has a strong sense of the moral responsibilities of women in an immoral society" (46).
[81] Holly A. Laird articulates a similar idea in "Black/White, Author/Editor Friction" when she states: "Jacobs and Child show these anticipated women readers the choices involved between acting like Mrs. Flint or Mrs. Bruce (76).
[82] In "Black Women Writers and the Trouble with Ethos," Coretta Pittman states: "Understanding the domestic sphere as the place where elite white women gained credibility, black women writers turned to the home as the place where they could acquire a positive ethos" (49).

[83] Stephen Matterson, likewise, asserts in "Shaped by Readers" that "one explicit aim of Incidents is a supraracial woman's movement" (86).
[84] Christina Accomando sees Jacobs' narrative as a lawsuit in which she sues for her freedom and charges slavery for the wrongs that she has endured in "'The Laws were Laid Down to Me Anew'."
[85] Bland, Jr. also sees Brent's description of herself as having "much less to do with Jacobs as an individual self as they do with all the slave girls who have had similar experiences without the opportunity to write those experiences" (121).
[86] Similarly, in Killing Rage, bell hooks states: "Historically, bonding on the basis of skin color was a useful survival strategy. The institutionalization of white supremacy created a structure of racial apartheid that was rooted in a binary division that separated and divided" (240).
[87] This remark is similar to the following claim by Franny Nudelman in "Harriet Jacobs and the Sentimental Politics of Female Suffering": "Jacobs is effectively caught between a sentimental politics that takes the sexual suffering of the female slave as the occasion for an imaginative identification between black and white women, and the politics of true womanhood that distinguishes between women on the basis of [race and] sexual purity" (952).
[88] Likewise, Bland affirms: "In 'seeing' both the margins and the center, Jacobs is able to authorize her 'voice' in the space between these extremes" (126).
[89] See Jean Fagan Yellin's Harriet Jacobs: A Life for a detailed account of how cross-racial friendships influenced the writer and Grace McEntee's "The Ethos of Motherhood and Harriet Jacobs' Vision of Racial Equality in Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl" for an analysis of how such relationships figure positively in the text.
[90] For an analysis of how writing functions in Jacobs' text, see Daneen Wardrop's "'I Stuck the Gimlet in and Waited for Evening'."
[91] In "The Spoken and the Silenced in Incidents in the life of a Slave Girl and Our Nig," P. Gabrielle Foreman explores Lydia Maria Child's role in what is deemed speakable and what, unspeakable.
[92] For a comparison between Harriet Jacobs and Walt Whitman's use of sexual discourse, see Ryan Dillaha's "Urge and Urge."
[93] Similarly, Stephanie Li declares in "Motherhood as Resistance in Harriet Jacobs's Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl", "Writing amid stereotypes of black women as licentious and morally suspect, Jacobs presents Linda as strictly asexual" (21).
[94] Jacqueline K. Bryant contends in "Rhetoric of Freedom" that Jacobs' work "demands revision of nineteenth-century women's social and literary stereotypes as well as stereotypes of the black woman" (54).
[95] Mark Rifkin also explores the link between the home and the nation in "'A Home Made Sacred by Protecting Laws'."
[96] My argument here is similar to Dana Nelson's assertion in "'Read the Characters, Question the Motives'" that "Incidents repeatedly documents that the perceptual opposition of black and white is unreliable and ultimately invalid" (135).

[97] As Peter Reed contends in "'There Was No Resisting John Canoe'," Jacobs' text "reveals black identity *performed* within and against the circulating cultural forms of the Atlantic world" (83; italics mine).
[98] Siobhan B. Somerville contends in "'The Prettiest Specimen of Boyhood'" that in "pointing out the arbitrariness of racial signs, Jacobs [as Brent] also darkens her skin, exaggerating the supposedly biological feature that commits her to slavery in the first place" (204).
[99] In contrast to this notion of the slave as criminal, Jeannine DeLombard underscores how abolitionists saw slavery itself as a crime with the slaveholders as victimizers and the slaves as victims and eyewitnesses in "Adding Her Testimony."
[100] Jeanne Perreault likewise observes in "Mary Wollstonecraft and Harriet Jacobs" how Jacobs' conception of herself is at odds with her legal status as a non-entity.
[101] For a different interpretation, see Hazel V. Carby's Reconstructing Womanhood (48).
[102] To read about how Jacobs depicts her grandmother and the latter's commitment to purity and chastity, see DoVeanna S. Fulton's "Speak Sisters, Speak," particularly pages 31-32.
[103] Carla Kaplan also links Jacobs' desire to own her own home to her need to have "access to personhood—through possession and possessive individualism" in "Recuperating Agents" (48).
[104] See Virginia H. Cope's "'I Verily Believed Myself to Be a Free Woman'."
[105] In "Gender-Related Difference in the Slave Narratives of Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass," Winifred Morgan stresses that women narrators more frequently claim to want their own home than their male counterparts; however, reconciling this desire with the economic and social realities that they faced at the time highlights the difficulty of turning this dream into a reality.
[106] Harley Erdman mentions in "Caught in the 'Eye of the Eternal'" that the question of whether or not this is, in fact, an American play is subject to scrutiny in light of "Boucicault's disputed nationality— was he Irish? English? French? American?" (333). However, like Erdman, Heinz Kosok and other scholars, I consider Boucicault's play to be a nineteenth-century American drama. The reason for this is because, like many Irish people who immigrated to the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, Boucicault made America his home and wrote about typically American issues such as black/white tension in the pre-Civil War Southern States.
[107] Braddon played the part of Estelle in Boucicault's The Corsican Brothers on Wednesday, September 15th, 1858 (Carnell 342).
[108] Although American copyright laws were in place by the late-eighteenth century in America, they only protected American writers from piracy in the United States. It took until after the Civil War for the copyright movement to become fully organized as a campaign (Stokes 23).
[109] The curse of Ham refers to "the view that the Africans' skin color was a result of Noah's curse on Canaan" (Sollors Neither Black Nor White Yet Both 92). Moreover, many religious figures, like the Reverend Jeremy Taylor argued that slavery could be

understood in light of the biblical story of Ham. According to this tale, Ham, having sinned against his father, Noah, by seeing him naked, sealed his son, Canaan, and all the latter's descendants' fates, condemning them to servitude (Jordan 54). See Werner Sollors' chapter entitled "The Curse of Ham" and Winthrop D. Jordan's White Over Black, particularly "Unthinking Decision: Enslavement of Negroes in America to 1700," for more information on this topic.

[110] Ian F. Haney López focuses upon this "tendency among Whites not to see themselves in racial terms" (22) all the while stressing the ways in which white is a racially-constructed category in White by Law.

[111] Whereas I use the term "contact zone" to describe where binaries converge, R. Mark Hall uses it to interpret Braddon's Lady Audley's Secret "through Imperial Eyes . . . [in order] to further examine and test [Mary Louise] Pratt's underlying assumptions and claims" (23).

[112] Douglas Lorimer makes a similar observation in another chapter, "Race, Science and Culture," affirming that, "[f]rom the 1840s through the 1860s, African-American fugitive slaves played a particularly prominent part in bringing this theme before their audiences as they contrasted their reception in Britain with their experience of prejudice in the United States" (29).

[113] As David Delaney affirms in Race, Place, and the Law: 1836-1948, "[i]n a very real sense 'freedom' and 'bondage' were actual places in the world" (42).

[114] Eva Saks mentions in "Representing Miscegenation Law" how the notion of "individual identity and subjectivity . . . [being] constituted by fractions of blood" was introduced in the nineteenth century (65).

[115] See Randall Kennedy's "The Enforcement of Anti-Miscegenation Laws" for how such regulations varied from one state to another.

[116] For an exploration how geography affects race, see Delaney's book.

[117] See Jules Zanger's "The 'Tragic Octoroon' in Pre-Civil War Fiction" for a summary of the characteristics of the tragic octoroon. Since these attributes are virtually the same as those of the tragic mulatta mentioned in previous chapters, I will not repeat them here.

[118] This incident, Zanger suggests, is typical of pre-civil war abolitionist fiction (288).

[119] In certain respects, the plot of Braddon's The Octoroon resembles, although it predates, Frances E. W. Harper's Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted. Like Cora, Iola's father is a white slave owner and her mother, his mixed-race slave. Both young women are initially oblivious to this fact, and both ultimately refuse to pass as white once they know the truth about their racial heritage. Furthermore, the two characters receive a good education: Cora, in England, and Iola, in the North of the United States.

[120] In "The Espaliered Girl," Jeni Curtis cites the part that an English education presumably played in the nineteenth century in curtailing any strong female emotions, most notably desire (78-80).

[121] For more information on the pathologizing of black male sexuality in the mid-to-late nineteenth century in general and the lynching of black men during the

Reconstruction in particular, see Diane Miller Sommerville's Race and Rape in the Nineteenth-Century South.

[122] Nancy Stepan also reports in "Biology: Races and Proper Places" that many Americans, particularly scientists, in the nineteenth century believed that slavery was the proper environment for black people and that freedom was an unnatural state that would surely lead to degeneration (101)

[123] Although Jennifer Carnell claims in her introduction to The Octoroon that Braddon does not "promote a religious agenda" (xiii), certain passages in the book directly invoke God and religion. For instance, besides Tristan's invocation of a divine judge who disapproves of slavery, in Juan Moraquitos' suicide letter, he writes that he seeks "mercy from a higher tribunal than those which meet on earth" (Braddon 196).

[124] In "Electra-fying the Female Sleuth," Heidi H. Johnson comments: "Braddon's debt to Shakespeare . . . through frequent Shakespearean allusions and plots is a fascinating and underexamined facet of her fiction" (273).

[125] In Racism on the Victorian Stage, Hazel Waters devotes an entire chapter to the American Ira Aldridge's acting career in England. Arriving in Britain at the age of eighteen, never again to return to the United States, he landed a number of important parts playing in Othello, Titus Andronicus, and Oroonoko. In addition to working as an actor for forty years and performing throughout Europe, he went on to marry a white woman (58-88).

[126] As H. L. Malchow writes in "The Half-Breed as Gothic Unnatural," this type of "denial of paternity and responsibility . . . recalls precisely the dilemma confronting Mary Shelley's Frankenstein vis à vis his Creation" (101). In my next chapter, I elaborate further on this idea by likening Frankenstein and his monster to Jekyll and Hyde.

[127] Yet, in Barriers Between Us, Cassandra Jackson points out how sometimes writers used nearly white characters as "agents to dramatize cultural conflict between black, middle-class leaders and the black masses" (98).

[128] This Hawthornian idea also suggests that institutions such as slavery are (trans)national legacies that are passed down from father, Britain, to son, America, much like other "ills of European history" (Weisbuch 122). In this manner, as Robert Weisbuch states in "Cultural Time in England and America," the United States, for Hawthorne, is not "a new start but . . . the final fatal outpost of a decrepit Euro-American civilization" (122). See also Joel Pace's "Introducing Transatlantic Romanticism" for a discussion of Hawthorne's reception in Britain and the latter's reliance on a British or Godwinian gothic to depict "the terror of tyranny."

[129] As Harrison asserts, unlike the United States, England is "a nation in which families can thrive" (217). This, in turn, deliberately reinforces the notion of British national superiority.

[130] Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill express these views in Vindication of the Rights of Woman and The Subjection of Women respectively.

[131] Patrick Brantlinger explores how "the wild Irish" were associated with cannibalism and savagery in the nineteenth century. Moreover, he looks at how the

Irish famine itself reflected the prevalent notion of the "evolutionary unfitness of the Irish" in Dark Vanishings (94, 100). See the chapter entitled "The Irish Famine."

[132] Pauline is like Lucy Audley in Lady Audley's Secret in that she too is "a prisoner, as much as a manipulator, of the stereotype she so successfully exploits" (Tyler 63)—i.e., that of the seemingly helpless and child-like woman who is content to remain passive.

[133] This, in turn, resembles M. G. Lewis' The Monk where the author uses the heat of Spain to explain Spaniards' temperaments.

[134] Nancy Stepan, for her part, refers to nineteenth-century concept, put forth by Van Evrie, that black people were essentially products of their (originally tropical) environment like goods such as bananas or oranges. Moreover, he and others like him believed that, due to this, they were incapable of assimilating in the United States, much less of residing there as free individuals (100).

[135] Despite the many parallels between Wilson's, Jacobs', and Braddon's texts, there is no record of Braddon having read the other two women's writing.

[136] Harrison observes that there is an anti-American sentiment or strain throughout the book. However, she sees this as a deliberate attempt on the author's part to further "the narrative's abolitionist and domestic political views" (217).

[137] Linking New Orleans to France is logical considering that the French colonized Louisiana and "relocated a significant number of West Africans . . . into an area already possessing highly developed Amerindian performance culture" (Roach 9). Despite, as Roach contends, Louisiana's increasing Anglification after the Purchase of 1803, the French presence was visible from the nineteenth century onward through Mardi Gras, which reflects not only Latin and European influences, but Caribbean and Africanist ones as well. While performing and drawing upon racial hybridity, this carnival and the attending festivities are manifestations of a circum-Atlantic culture both past and present (Roach 9-10).

[138] As Laura Stevens suggests in "Transatlanticism Now," "American and British authors experience the uncanny as they read each other, seeing a culture that resembles but reconfigures their own, and their writing is often a meditation on the distorted reflection they see" (97). This is certainly the case with Braddon, though she more often seeks to distance her nation and its practices from the United States and its customs.

[139] Harrison also notes the presence of stereotypes in Braddon's book (219-222). However, whereas she concentrates on racial stereotypes, I focus on national and regional ones.

[140] As Jennifer DeVere Brody maintains, "the dominant (and dominating) ideology of the day allowed Englishmen to populate and maintain power over most women, black and white" (8), thus highlighting how these individuals used sex as a means of exercising control and ownership over women's bodies.

[141] This portrayal of the United States is in keeping with some of the more stereotypic assumptions put forth in Britain in the early eighteen forties and fifties by Punch in which slavery "along with American avarice . . . dead-level democracy, [and] the

settlement of legislative disagreements with the bowie knife" are inextricable from the Yankee, whether from the North or the South (Maurer 6-7).

[142] As Katharine Nicholson Ings points out in "Miscegenation and Nineteenth-Century Interracial Romance," this is also the case in Louisa May Alcott' s story, "M. L.," published in 1860, in which the interracial couple finds refuge, though not social acceptance, in Europe (651).

[143] Harrison remarks that whenever Braddon mentions England in the novel, the word "free" precedes it (217).

[144] Likewise, Harrison comments that the author promotes "England as a land of opportunity and individual freedom, in contrast to America" (217).

[145] I use the word "race" here with the understanding that there is only one race: the human race. As for the idea of miscegenation, it is in and of itself fraudulent in that there are no "pure" racial categories. Owing to this, when I refer to race and, for that matter, to interracial relationships, I am referring to both as social constructs or myths perpetuated to help people identify with as well as against other members in society.

[146] Christine Bolt highlights Britain's role in perpetuating the slave trade owing to its reliance on cotton imported from the South of the United States (48-49). As Bolt reports, "in 1861, approximately one-fifth of the entire population of England lived directly by the cotton industry, and the South provided four-fifths of the raw material" (51).

[147] For his part, Patrick Brantlinger suggests in "Victorians and Africans" that, by the mid-nineteenth century, Britain could blame slavery on America holding this nation accountable for it (192).

[148] Yet, as Brantlinger remarks in "What is 'Sensational' about the 'Sensation Novel'?," sensation fiction itself was generically hybrid, being a "unique mixture of contemporary domestic realism with elements of the Gothic romance, the Newgate novel of criminal 'low life,' and the 'silver fork' novel of scandalous and sometimes criminal 'high life'" (1).

[149] For Mark Currie, however, "outward appearances clearly function [in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde] as a metaphor for the soul's moral character" in "True Lies" (127).

[150] Valdine Clemens also comments on people's reaction to Hyde as being "psychological and emotional rather than logical" in "The Descent of Man and the Anxiety of Upward Mobility: The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" (140).

[151] For an analysis that delves into the homosexual dimension of the Jekyll/Hyde union, see Elaine Showalter's "Dr. Jekyll's Closet."

[152] As Christine Bolt affirms in Victorian Attitudes to Race, "[r]acial mixing and miscegenation . . . aroused alarm and controversy in Britain" (22).

[153] Unlike Vladimir Nabokov in "A Phenomenon of Style," I wish to underscore not forget the ways in which the author's novel functions as both a mystery and a detective story (as well as sensation fiction).

[154] For her part, Ruth Robbins notes in "Reading the Boys' Own Stories" how Stevenson's novel reveals the crisis caused by shifting gender roles in the late-nineteenth century (222).

[155] Peter Garrett voices a similar idea in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" when he asserts that other characters justify their actions against Hyde by viewing the latter "as completely other, deserving no mercy"; yet, in acting the way they do, these individuals actual bridge the gap between themselves and Hyde (115).
[156] Michael Kane, for his part, asserts in Modern Men, "there is a clear, if threatened, border [in Stevenson's novel] between the good, white, upper-class male ruler of the earth and the world of the bad, degenerate, probably foreign and female lower orders" (18).
[157] As Toni Morrison argues in Playing in the Dark, "the subject of the dream is the dreamer. The fabrication of an Africanist persona [like Hyde] is reflexive; an extraordinary meditation on the self; a powerful exploration of the fears and desires that reside in the writerly conscious" (17).
[158] Yet, as Marie Hélène Laforest rightfully notes in "Black Cultures in Difference," "there is a constellation of blackness, different ways of being black. This was as true in the past as it is today" (115).
[159] For an exploration of the link between affluence and savagery, see Tim Young's "White Apes at the Fin de Siècle."
[160] In the chapter entitled "Gothic and Decadence," David Punter also looks at how Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde broaches theories of degeneration and notions of infection or contamination.
[161] In The Ivory Leg in the Ebony Cabinet, Thomas Cooley comments on how "[m]etaphorical association gave the cognitive faculties of the reasoning intellect a 'masculine' and 'white' valence, whereas the feelings and emotions of the appetitive faculties took on a 'feminine' or ''black' valence" in the nineteenth century (xvi).
[162]Patricia Ferrer-Medina attributes the fact that Hyde is smaller than Jekyll to evolution, viewing his evil side as more underdeveloped than his good side in "Wild Humans" (76).
[163] H. L. Malchow remarks in Gothic Images of race in Nineteenth-Century Britain that "intense, contradictory forces of same-sex repulsion and attraction are a hallmark of many of the classic works of gothic fiction: Frankenstein and his creature, Jekyll and Hyde, Wilde's Dorian . . . and Basil" (140).
[164] As Stephen Heath remarks, Jekyll struggles to suppress his sexuality as well. In "Psychopathia Sexualis," he writes: "[t]he negation of male sexuality goes along with the exclusion of a woman" or women from the text (69).
[165] This strain of scientific thought is evident in the writing of Josiah C. Nott in the first half of the nineteenth century. In "The Mulatto a Hybrid," he argues that mulattoes had more trouble procreating than black or whites. Although other scientists like J. C. Prichard refuted Nott's theory, the notion that "unions between allied races are fertile, those between distant [ones] either are infertile or tend to degeneration" remained well until the 1930s (Robert J. C. Young 18, 126-127).
[166] Clemens, too, states how Hyde belongs to "the 'night side' of London life" (129).
[167] Gordon Hirsch mentions the similarities between the monster and Hyde as well in "Frankenstein, Detective Fiction, and Jekyll and Hyde." See, in particular, pages 223-228.

[168] As Sander L. Gilman asserts in "Black Bodies, White Bodies," "[m]iscegenation was a fear (and a word) from the late nineteenth-century vocabulary of sexuality" (256).

[169] Werner Sollors, too, observes how "miscegenation [in the nineteenth century] had literally become identified with extra-species relationship" (Neither Black Nor White Yet Both 102).

[170] This observation is in line Douglas Lorimer's contention that "the subject of race is at root a question of power" in "Race, Science and Culture" (12).

[171] As Julia Reid claims in Robert Louis Stevenson, Science, and the Fin de Siècle, Stevenson "destabilized the hierarchical vision of savagery and civilization" (9). This is evident throughout Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde as this chapter demonstrates.

[172] My argument here vis-à-vis Stevenson's text is similar to Christopher Clausen's in "From The Mountain to the Monsters" with regard to Frankenstein. Clausen states that, in Shelley's novel, "science is not the cure for this nightmare [of repression] but, on the contrary, is one of its sources" (241).

[173] Likewise, Jason Marc Harris asserts that Stevenson's South Sea stories demonstrate the writer's preoccupation with the porousness of the boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized in "Robert Louis Stevenson: Folklore and Imperialism" (162).

[174] This feeds into what Lucie Armitt dubs '[t]he Victorian obsession with outsiders as symbols of bodily contamination" (129) in "The Body in the House of the Closeted Text: Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper'."

[175] Similarly, Nancy Stepan observes in "Biology: Races and Proper Places" that, according to nineteenth-century scientists, transgressing racial boundaries was seen as a kind of degeneration "that could be so extreme as to cause racial extinction" (99).

[176] This is in keeping with, as Grace Moore observes in "Something to Hyde," the "policing of sex and sexuality . . . which coincided with the rise of the new middle class" (147).

[177] This is ironic considering that the "figure of the 'Negro' became a symbol for an array of social issues . . . including labor relations, immigrations, class definitions, and emancipation" (Callahan 8-9).

[178] In "Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, and Count Dracula," Douglas S. Mack argues that "Hyde is the Darwinian ape within Jekyll, and within humanity" (152).

[179] Gail Turley Houston explores Stevenson's novel from an economic standpoint viewing the relationship between Jekyll and Hyde as it relates to capitalism and the Great Depression from 1873-1893 in "'Bankruptcy at my Heels': Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, and the Bankerization of Identity."

[180] As Harriet A. Washington affirms in Medical Apartheid, performing medical or scientific experiments on African Americans is nothing new; rather, this type of exploitation had been occurring since the eighteenth century (7). In Britain, arguably the most infamous instance of this kind of abuse involves Sara Baartman, whose body was exhibited as that of the Hottentot Venus (82-86).

[181] In The Heart of Whiteness, Julian B. Carter notes how, in the late-nineteenth century, mainstream society constructed whiteness as weakness in order to gloss over the ways in which white people benefited from white supremacy (12). This appears to be the case with Jekyll who uses his gentility and wealth as well as Hyde to his advantage by blaming his double for his misdeeds rather than take accountability himself.

[182] Similarly, in "'Compose Yourself' Through Impatient Gaiety'," Bryn Gribben illustrates how "Jekyll creates Hyde in order to displace unconventional longings and to preserve his desirable, respected social standing" (20).

[183] My idea here stems from Joseph Roach's notion in Cities of the Dead that societies, much like people, invent themselves by recreating their pasts in front of others to define who they are and who (they think) they are not (5).

[184] In Imperial Leather, Anne McClintock underscores the link between race and class or race and place by noting that "T. H. Huxley compared the East London poor with the Polynesian savage, William Booth chose the African pygmy, and William Barry thought that the slums resembled nothing so much as a slave ship" (54).

[185] Whereas my analysis of Hyde focuses on him as an interracial Other, Sander Gilman draws a parallel in "'I'm Down on Whores': Race and Gender in Victorian London" between Jack the Ripper, a kind of real-life Hyde, with the stereotype of the Eastern Jew in the late-nineteenth century (154-156).

[186] Stephen Shapiro locates London's East End as being on the semi-periphery and regards it as one of many contact points or places of transculturation in which both goods and people circulated (141).

[187] Nils Clausson alludes to the connection between degeneration and "going native" in "Degeneration, *Fin-de-Siècle* Gothic, and the Science of Detection," citing examples of late-nineteenth-century works to prove his point (64).

[188] Citing Michel Foucault, Diane Long Hoeveler observes in Gothic Feminism that "[w]hereas 'blood' was the source of the aristocracy's power, 'sex' and its control and regulation became the predominant characteristic of the newly professional middle class, both for men and women" (21). In this manner, Hoeveler highlights the association between blood and class, on the one hand, and the policing of sexuality in the nineteenth century, on the other.

[189] In "Piracy, Slavery, and the Imagination of Empire in Stevenson's Pacific Fiction," Roslyn Jolly explains how important it was for Victorian England, in its "imagining of empire, to oppose imperialism [or colonialism] to slavery" (159).

[190] In "'Punch' on Slavery and the Civil War in America 1841-1865," Oscar Maurer shows how "Punch" shaped the British public's opinion in the early-to-mid nineteenth century on America and slavery itself, noting that, for literary figures such as Henry James, it was England (5). Maurer also notes how the paper liked to satirize America and Americans via colourful descriptions and comic illustrations intended to mock, as one sketch referred to it, "the land of liberty" (6-7).

[191] It is perhaps no coincidence that, as Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd remark in Saving Souls, the publication of Adam Smith's The Wealth of Nations in England which "categorized slave relations as less productive and more expensive than those

found in free labour systems" coincided with England's loss of the United States, a colony which, incidentally, relied economically on slavery and the slave trade for its wealth (45).

[192] For more information on the education of black people from the Reconstruction period onward, see Booker T. Washington's "Afro-American Education."

[193] Douglas Lorimer underscores the link between race and class in Colour, Class and the Victorians. He writes that, by the mid-nineteenth century, "[b]lacks became associated with labouring tasks and the lower social orders, and in the process respectable people extended conventional attitudes toward their social inferiors in England to all Negroes" (92).

[194] As Jennifer DeVere Brody points out in Impossible Purities, "tensions between class and race are apparent even in abolitionist discourse, which often analogized class and race, and therefore made 'blacks' stand-ins for the more pressing national concern of *white* slavery" in Britain (80).

[195] My contention here is like that of Pascale Casanova, who, in The World Republic of Letters, opines: "Literatures are therefore not a pure emanation of national identity; they are constructed through literary rivalries, which are always denied, and struggles, which are always international" (36).

[196] For this idea, I am indebted to Robert Weisbuch's Atlantic Double-Cross for his discussion of the struggle between British lateness and American earliness.

[197] Yet, as Joel Pace comments in "Introducing Transatlantic Romanticism," recent work in transatlantic studies indicates that the British public read the works of American writers like Hawthorne earlier than scholars previously supposed. This proves how the influence between Britain and the United States went both ways.

[198] As Stokes writes, "copyright activists generally appointed American writers as unambiguous victims of a British publishing industry that belittled American literature even as it brazenly pirated it" (25). Yet, as Judy Cornes contends in "Madness and the Loss of Identity in Nineteenth Century Fiction," The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde "was subsequently pirated in America, where British copyrights were not protected" (123).

[199] For a study that explores the adaptation of Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr.Hyde for the stage, see Martin A. Danahay and Alex Chisholm's Jekyll and Hyde Dramatized.

[200] In "History and Degeneration: Of Birds and Cages," Modris Eksteins remarks on the rapid rise of the United States' and the world's population, noting that this is "[p]erhaps the most consequential feature of the nineteenth century" (1).

[201] Seed remarks on how "Stevenson draws on the traditional trope of the house as body" (181). Hirsch makes a similar contention as well, observing how buildings are like faces that can be read or interpreted (237).

[202] In "The Half-Breed as Gothic Unnatural," H. L. Malchow discusses how the interracial Other is cast as a shadow in Gothic literature, one unable to cast a shadow, i.e., to reproduce.

[203] On the other hand, Anne Stiles alleges that Stevenson's novel "resemble[s] contemporary medical case studies in its form and structure," arguing that "its core idea may also have originated from medical literature" (879).

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