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Farmer's daughter, innkeeper's daughter, minister's daughter ;: young women of the early republic.

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FARMER'S DAUGHTER, INNKEEPER'S DAUGHTER, MINISTER'S DAUGHTER: YOUNG WOMEN OF THE EARLY REPUBLIC

A Thesis Presented

By

THOMAS PAUL SMITH

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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FARMER'S DAUGHTER, INNKEEPER'S DAUGHTER,
MINISTER'S DAUGHTER: YOUNG WOMEN
OF THE EARLY REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

Farmer's Daughter, Innkeeper's Daughter, Minister's Daughter: Young Women of the Early Republic

(April 1976)

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A study of three diaries written by young women between 1790 and 1837 provides a picture of daily life and an understanding of women's thinking in the early years of the republic. The three diaries offer a means of checking the validity of traditional assumptions and more recent generalizations about middle class women's roles and role consciousness in the period preceding the rise of feminism in the 1840's. These individual cases also provide the basis for tentative hypotheses about women's position during these years and the combination of circumstances that was prerequisite to the rise of feminism.

A number of conditions affecting women's role have traditionally been associated with the rise of industry, but are shown to have roots in rural, pre-industrial social patterns: the nuclear family; the belief that women are more delicate than men; female roles that restrict occupational, social and geographical mobility; and a political system that is unresponsive to women. But these conditions could
lead to a feminist movement only when three prerequisites in women's thinking were present: (1) consciousness of individuality and role, (2) a perceived conflict in role definitions, and (3) an understanding that the cause of result-frustration is an arbitrary, externally imposed role that conflicts with a more basic role definition.

The study also points to the town as an important consideration in all generalizations about women in the early republic. The town appears to be the primary unit in shaping role definitions of the inhabitants of New England towns. And the relative insularity of towns meant that significant differences existed between towns, making generalizations on a larger scale very tenuous unless similarities of social structures can be clearly demonstrated.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When the various strains of feminist dissatisfaction began to take form in the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, most of the support came from middle class women. Many of the supporters had been active in earlier movements, particularly in the antislavery movement.¹ Before that, many middle class women had been involved in missionary societies, though little is known about that involvement. And even less is known about the domestic life of the middle class women during the late 1700's and early 1800's, though it was largely that domestic life that they hoped to change through the movements they began in the 1840's.

Three diaries written by young, middle class women during the late 1700's and early 1800's provide valuable information about this relatively unstudied period of social history. First, these diaries provide a view of the daily life of young women in early America as they experienced it, without the emotional coloring that reformers

later attached to their memories of domestic life. Second, the diaries give us a window on the consciousness of these young women, allowing us to understand their responses to their daily experiences. Third, the diaries provide a basis for some generalizations about a particular segment of the social order. A fourth value, at least as important as the third, is that the diaries give us a unique opportunity to see the limits of useful generalization, the bounds beyond which serious inaccuracy results from the discussion of the collective, homogenized, American woman that historians are prone to expound upon.

The need for more study of the domestic life of this period has been felt by most scholars who have dealt with the position of women in American history. In fact, most female roles have been ignored by historians until recently. The more generous students of women's history, like Gerda Lerner, say that this deficiency is an unintentional product of the way historical thinking has developed. Most history, she notes, has focused on politics and business, arenas of activity from which women have traditionally been excluded. For this reason, Lerner's *Women in American History* is strongest in dealing with

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3Lerner, p. 5.
reform movements and later women's activities that are noted in newspapers, magazines, legislative and judicial records, and other sources that political historians have traditionally explored. Before women gained notoriety in the reform movements, these sources revealed little about them, and Lerner's history is correspondingly weak.

For earlier periods of American history, she, like Page Smith in his Daughters of the Promised Land, and others who have sought to trace the position of women in history, turned to non-political sources to fill in the hazy period before the 1840's. Lerner and Smith use four types of sources in writing about these periods: (1) descriptions of the lives of famous women, written in biographical or autobiographical form, (2) descriptions of America and American families provided by foreigners visiting America, (3) social histories, particularly those dealing with family, marriage and child-rearing practices, (4) colonial histories (with the implicit assumption that family life had not changed much from the first settlement to the early 1800's).

Each type of source helps shed light on the position of women in the early nineteenth century, but none eclipses the diary as a useful medium for study. The first type of source, writings by and about famous women, is useful to

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Gerda Lerner, whose partial purpose is to assemble a gallery of great women comparable to the set of great men the nation has long pointed to with pride. Mercy Otis Warren, Abigail Adams, Eliza Pinckney, Lydia Maria Child, Amelia Bloomer, and the others are, like the great men of American history, atypical by definition. Hence, these sources are more likely to confuse than to help the study of social history.

Descriptions of America written by foreign visitors, on the other hand, provide a very promising source for the social historian. Because they were foreign, these observers were more likely to notice the details of everyday life that were too commonplace for Americans to consider reporting. Therefore, Page Smith gives this set of sources great weight in his writing, finding "no reason not to take their accounts seriously," particularly since they agreed on so many points. For instance, Frederick Marryat, Harriet Martineau and Frances Wright described the great extent to which American women were indulged by their husbands. All three found this flattery patronizing and degrading to the wives. Though it was neither intended nor received in that spirit, it narrowly circumscribed women's roles with the implication that men did for women what they were too weak to do for themselves. On the other hand,

5Smith, p. 78.
Marryat noted, this universal deference made it possible for women to travel widely, unchaperoned, with no fear of harm.  

Alexis de Tocqueville found the same high respect for American women, but he did not interpret it as patronizing or degrading. Like Marryat, he was surprised by the great freedom young women had to govern themselves and by the innocent boldness with which they spoke and acted, though never with indiscretion. At marriage, knowing well what it entailed, American woman left the freedom and pleasure of her father's home for a life "in the home of her husband as if it were a cloister."  

In marriage, the American woman would have to constantly set aside her needs and interests to perform her duties in the home. Her life became narrowly confined to domestic interests, and she was forbidden to step beyond that realm. 

Tocqueville stressed the voluntary nature of woman's surrender of youthful pleasures, for the family he described, like the nation, was democratic. The American father exercised no more power than that which his age, wisdom and kindness earned. Similarly, it was affection, not the rigid familial relationships of aristocracy, that

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6 Smith, pp. 78-79.

held siblings together long after they were economically independent of the family, according to Tocqueville. 8

An earlier writer, J. Hector St. John Crevecoeur, was among the first to give America what has become a classic, romantic view of its own rural heritage. With the birth of his American Farmer's son, the Farmer forgot all ideas of wandering and became thoroughly content with the day-to-day work of his farm. He felt fulfilled even in the contemplation of his "wife, by my fireside, while she either spins, knits, darns, or suckles our child, I cannot describe the various emotions of love, of gratitude, of conscious pride which thrill in my heart, and often overflow in involuntary tears." Crevecoeur's Farmer was equally enthralled with most other aspects of American farm life and stressed the continuity of this lifestyle, which seemed to derive virtue from the soil itself. He placed his little boy on a seat that screwed to the beam of his plough "--its motion and that of the horses please him." The Farmer's father had done the same for him. 9

A balance to Crevecoeur's sentimentality about the American family can be found in Mrs. Trollope's Domestic Manners of the Americans. In her preface she encourages

8Ibid., pp. 202-208.

her English "countrymen to hold fast by a constitution that insured all the blessings that flow from established habits and solid principles," rather than the "jarring tumult and universal degradation which invariably follow the wild scheme of placing the power of the state in the hands of the populace." In the most rural sections of America she found that mothers and daughters lived lives of hardship and privation worse than those of English peasants. Their days were spent spinning, weaving and knitting. Neither time nor geography allowed them much contact with the outside world— they had no local church and shared in no town or tradition.10

In towns and villages Mrs. Trollope found life slightly more bearable for women. Like other observers of the 1820's and 1830's, she praised the education given to young women, deplored the silliness of their speech and conduct, and was surprised at the sudden loss of freedom that marriage brought them. In trying to find a servant, Mrs. Trollope discovered how bold American girls were and how unwilling they were to take a position as a servant. Attributing this to democratic impulses, she noted that American girls preferred factory work to a servant's position. She also noted their demand for short term agree-

ments, apparently holding themselves free to change positions or marry on short notice. ¹¹

At the infrequent social gatherings in American towns, Mrs. Trollope reported that all the women herded to one end of the room to talk of fashion, medicine and sermons, while the men gathered at the other end to spit and talk of elections. Mixing of the sexes occurred among the younger people, who often pursued their courting in a second room reserved for them. Such purely social gatherings were unusual though, and "were it not for public worship and private tea-drinkings, all the ladies . . . would be in danger of becoming perfect recluses." The prayer meetings were comparable to parties in some ways: "They eat, drink, pray, sing, hear confessions, and make converts." The confessions and conversions, tortuous processes, were especially common among young women, both in prayer meetings and church revivals. Once married, however, the women participated much less in the dramatic aspects of worship. Their society became almost completely female as socializing was confined to church activities and neighborly visits. ¹²

A number of similar impressions are echoed in Richard L. Rapson's study, "The American Child as Seen by British Travelers, 1845-1935." Almost all the travelers found

¹¹Ibid., pp. 74-82.

American schools excellent and American children detestable. The precocity of children was most offensive. They were bold and disrespectful to adults, and generally lacked the sense of play the visitors looked for in children. Likewise, they came from homes that lacked comfort, love, play, and the family atmosphere the English travelers expected. Most of the problems perceived revolved around the precocity of children and lack of parental authority. Rapson suggests that this may have resulted from the mobility of the American family and the greater ability of children to cope with and adapt to new situations, which might have put them in the position of helping parents to adapt. 13

Such theories must be made cautiously, with careful consideration of the quality of the data used. While the observations of foreign travelers are one of the richest sources of information about social life in the early republic, they are not without bias. Indeed, a work like Mrs. Trollope's Domestic Manners tells us a good deal more about her mental framework than about the thinking of Americans. A second, rather obvious reservation about the travelers' accounts is that they were travelers, not intimate members of the households and communities they observed. A third reservation involves the assumptions they made in approaching

their studies. Many of the travelers sought to explore the effect democracy had on American society. In this approach, they looked for signs of democracy at all social levels and may well have overlooked more important patterns. They also tended to assume a homogeneity of American society that glossed over regional and local differences.

Given the possible shortcomings of foreign observation, the study of woman's position in early nineteenth-century America turns to the last two types of sources, social history and colonial history. The areas overlap and are often inseparable; the latter is only mentioned separately because of the tendency for scholars to assume that a single, unchanging family pattern existed in America from the earliest settlement to the beginning of industrialization. This assumption is not surprising, since much of the early work in social history supported it.

The social history that illuminates the position of women in the late 1700's and early 1800's falls into three large categories that frequently overlap. First, a few early works and several in the last two decades attempt to place the American family in the more general perspective of Western history and the shift from medieval to modern institutions. Though these studies do not always deal directly with woman's role in the family, they do describe the institution within which woman's primary role was de-
defined during the first three centuries of American history; thus, changes in the structure or prestige of the institution unquestionably had significant ramifications for women. Second, a number of more detailed, sociological and historical studies, particularly studies of the social structure of New England towns, shed light on the family. Third, a number of monographs focusing on women's roles in social institutions, particularly the family, and the stresses inherent in those roles illuminate the position of American women. With the recent interest in women's studies, a number of works have focused specifically on women's roles, role conflicts, and responses to conflicts.

In all three areas, most work is based on the study of observations made by foreigners and observations left in the documentary records of the subjects themselves. Recently, however, several studies have made use of demographic analysis techniques, which allow the historian to analyze data for himself, rather than leaving the generalizations of contemporaries as the final word.

Among the general overviews of the American family, Arthur W. Calhoun's *A Social History of the American Family* (1917) long stood as the definitive work. The colonial society Calhoun presented is one in which people married young, had large, often extended families, and remarried quickly upon the death of a spouse. Life expectancy was short, and infant and maternal mortality were high. During
the nineteenth century, the existence of the frontier and the emergence of industry and cities were key elements in shaping the family. The availability of cheap land on the frontier put a premium on labor, which was sufficient reason for women and children to work, hence both groups became more important to the family, though the quality of their lives did not necessarily improve at all. In older, settled areas, the rise of industry and cities tended to weaken the family by removing many economic functions from the home and by removing the father from the home for extended periods, thereby weakening the patriarchal family system. Calhoun saw the position of women in the early 1800's about the same way many foreign visitors saw it: very free before marriage and virtually imprisoned after marriage. Though factory jobs were opened up to women, higher positions were not. The education offered to women was inferior to men's, and was generally aimed at preparing women for a successful domestic life. Thus, with the rise of industry, women were becoming more trapped as objects of their husbands' conspicuous consumption, whose value was primarily ornamental and symbolic.  

Much of Calhoun's scholarship has stood up through

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the years, but there have also been many revisions, and a number of erroneous scholarly opinions of the American family can be traced to this work. As recently as 1959, the historical chapters of works like Frances Jerome Woods' *The American Family System* were often paraphrases of Calhoun's history.15

More recent research has cast doubt on older analyses of the American family. William Goode's *World Revolution and Family Patterns* suggests that the gradual shift toward the modern, nuclear family was not a result of industrialization, but began much earlier and was a factor in allowing the rise of industry. Goode underscores the great complexity of the relationships between family and industry and calls for more scholarship in this emerging field.16

Feeling that such complexity can best be dealt with only by very close observation, several scholars have narrowed their focus from nations and regions to smaller social units. In 1966 David J. Rothman, testing broader theories against microstudies, pointed out the discrepancy between Bernard Bailyn's traditional view that the American family was breaking down during the colonial period and Phillipe Aries' theory that the family was just emerging as an im-


Rothman finds works like Edmund S. Morgan's Puritan Family useful in testing the broader theories. Morgan showed that the Puritan family was central to the social, political and economic structure of Plymouth, and that the family actually grew stronger during the next two generations. Virtually all social institutions were based on a model of Christ and his submissive followers; it was in such a relation that the minister stood to his congregation, the husband to his wife, the parents to the children.

Morgan's work is based largely on town records and literary sources. A radically different approach to the study of social institutions has developed through the demographic interpretation of statistics that have long been ignored by American historians. In a 1967 review of European demographic studies, Philip J. Greven urged that similar techniques be used to study American populations. He claimed that older theories could be tested and rich speculative veins might be opened by studying birth rate, age at marriage, family size, land tenure, inheritance

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18 Morgan, pp. 19-20.
patterns, family structure, and population mobility. Long term trends could be ascertained from such data, and unpredicted quantitative shifts should generate new and useful scholarship.19

By 1968, J.M. Bumsted and J.T. Lemon noted in a review the importance of demography as an instrument for the American historian.20 The statistical techniques of aggregate analysis and family reconstitution had dominated research so far. Using aggregate analysis J. Potter shows a fairly steady natural increase in the American population until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when fertility declined. The interpretation of such a shift is less certain, but this type of study at least points to a shift that historians must account for.21 More finely focused studies have been done by Lockridge on Dedham, Demos on Plymouth Colony and Bristol, and Greven on Andover.22 These studies have begun to correct many vague assumptions of earlier his-


22 These are discussed in Bumsted and Lemon, "New Approaches," pp. 102-110.
torians. John Demos, for instance, found the assumptions of an extended family, relatively low age at marriage and short life expectancy were substantially incorrect, and a number of other assumptions about early America required qualification.\textsuperscript{23} The excess of women and older people he found in Bristol's population would probably be characteristic of many older settlements for as long as cheap land lured young men to the frontier, and might well demand institutional adaptations to deal with the imbalance.

As scholars explore family and community structures, more and more light will be shed on daily life and on the position of women in colonial America. Demos, for instance, finds a sudden rise in the number of "premature" first children in the middle of the eighteenth century, suggesting a change in the sexual mores of courting couples.\textsuperscript{24} Undoubtedly, many other unexpected patterns will emerge and help to fill in our knowledge of colonial life. This knowledge, in turn, will give us a standard against which later periods can be measured to assess the nature of changes.

To date, very little demographic work has been done on early nineteenth-century America. The one major exception is Bernard Farber's study of Salem in 1800. Farber


\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., pp. 56-57.
tests Max Weber's theories of religion and capitalism and Phillipe Aries' ideas of family development against data from early nineteenth-century Salem. He finds the family to be an important social unit—the "glue"—that binds the religious and economic life of the commercial town. In the upper two classes of Salem, the merchant class and the artisan class, Farber finds that family ties were very important to economic success, either because of the favored positions given to trusted relatives or because of the transmission through the family and apprenticeship of skilled crafts. The importance of the family and apprenticeship for economic success contradicts Weber's theories, and the lack of economic success among the laboring class, which lacked family cohesion and apprenticeship, further extends the contradiction of Weber's belief that the nuclear family was much better suited to business than the extended family.25

Farber's study shows a strongly patriarchal, increasingly extended family pattern in the Salem of 1800. The differences between the rural colonial society of Andover, Plymouth, and Dedham, on the one hand, and commercial Bristol on the other, suggest the probable limitations on generalization from commercial Salem and suggest the need for more scholarship on other types of nineteenth-century

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tells. If Gerda Lerner and other scholars are correct in
their claim that women often held professional and business
positions of importance in the eighteenth century, studies
like Farber's should do much to illuminate woman's role
definition and the changes it went through. Even studies
like Farber's, though they do not directly deal with women's
positions, stress the importance of the family, suggesting
that, at least, the institution in which woman's role was
defined had economic, social and political importance. If
this institution is found to lose its prestige and women's
roles are not extended in other directions, serious discon-
tent and an attempt at redefinition of role might be ex-
pected from women. Apparently something like this happened
in the nineteenth century.

Though far more scholarship is needed to establish
the subtle changes in woman's role, it is certain that the
role had become unsatisfactory to many women during the nine-
teenth century. Antoinette Brown Blackwell, Susan B. An-
thony, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and many others would
complain that woman had been forced to be dependent on man
and confined to the stultifyingly narrow sphere of house-
work, which left "woman a social idiot,"[26] who was

[26] Charlotte Perkins Gilman, excerpt from The Home
(1903) in O'Neill, Woman Movement, p. 131. For similar
excerpts from the writings of Susan B. Anthony and
Antoinette Brown Blackwell, see Kraditor, Up From the
Pedestal, pp. 150-151, 159-167.
of little use to society, her family or herself. Similar complaints still resound today, suggesting the need for more research in the family and in the role definition assigned to women.

The call for more study of the American family has become stronger in proportion to the strength of the feminist movement, for the nature of the early American family has come to have political as well as historical significance. In *Everyone Was Brave* William L. O'Neill points to woman's defined role in the family as one of the chief obstacles to female equality.²⁷ That role definition is far more vulnerable to attack if it can be shown that it is a relatively new structure, not an ancient institution of important tradition and possibly biological origin, that is being assailed. While the American man has had roles defined for him in various institutions, the American woman has been defined almost exclusively in a family role, hence the mutability of this role has crucial importance. Arguments for a change in role definition hinge on proof of two theses: (1) that the role is a relatively new adaptation in the social order, and (2) that this adaptation is not in the best interests of the social order.

The work most often cited to support the first thesis

is Philippe Aries' *Centuries of Childhood*, in which Aries uses non-literary sources to create a very new model of family evolution in Western society. Aries revises the traditional model in which the Western family is seen degenerating from the warm, secure, stable, traditional, extended medieval form to the cold, insecure, unstable, litigious, nuclear modern form. For lack of historical record, Aries studies the visual depiction of families in paintings, particularly the depiction of children, to observe changing social attitudes and concepts. In medieval societies he finds not a family, but an amorphous throng in which there was no concept of a child except as an unmatured adult. Gradually, the concept of childhood emerged and parents came to have primary responsibility for socializing children. The family, then, has not declined since medieval times, but taken a clearer form and become an important part of the social order. For women's studies, it is significant that the family structure of the early nineteenth century was relatively new and still changing.

In *The Making of the Modern Family*, Edward Shorter argues along similar lines, documenting a shift in the function of the family during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. While the family had served as an important political, economic and social unit during earlier periods, it became a unit of emotional support during the nineteenth century, serving the internal needs of family
members. Richard D. Brown considers such recognition and valuing of the individual as a key factor in the modernization of society. Brown claims that England was already relatively modernized when America was settled, and the availability of cheap land led to social, economic and political leveling that allowed the development of nuclear families and mass society. There is no need to go into all of the other modern reassessments of the family here.

There is no common agreement on the broad outlines of family evolution, but there is much to suggest that the family roles defined in the early nineteenth century were relatively new and untried, at least in the circumstances peculiar to nineteenth-century America.

While studies based on Tocqueville and other travelers tend to focus on the discontinuity between women's freedom before marriage and total subordination after, most


29 Now that industrialization has been questioned as a dominant cause of change in family structure, the term "modernization" commonly denotes the set of processes that produced the modern family structure.


32 For instance, Frank F. Furstenberg, Jr., "Indus-
modern scholarship on the period has dealt with three aspects of the adult woman's role: (1) the displacement of economic functions that had been attached to the role, (2) conflicts within the role definition, and (3) woman's responses to these problems in role definition.

Gerda Lerner, Carl Degler and Sidonie Gruenberg all see woman's domestic role in the eighteenth century as a relatively satisfactory one in which girls were treated much like boys, being apprenticed or trained in the home in specialized skills that prepared them to make a significant economic contribution to the support of their families. During the early 1800's, however, increasing professionalization and licensing laws forced women out of some professional roles, particularly the roles of doctor and midwife, and many business positions. At the same time emerging industrial technology replaced many home industries. In only a few areas, such as lower level factory work, did women retain roles outside the home. As roles confined


women more and more narrowly to the domestic sphere, the economic importance of work done within that sphere declined sharply. The declining birth rate of the early 1800's further reduced the work assigned to women. This modified role, in which women had little economic importance and a good deal of leisure time, was rationalized in the cult of true womanhood.

According to Barbara Welter, the true woman of this period was identified by her piety, purity and domesticity. She was submissive to her husband, sympathetic to his problems, and especially supportive in troubled times. She had the responsibility for teaching moral conduct in the family and holding her husband to the same moral codes, for he was of a coarser nature than she and more given to transgressions. The true woman was too pure and delicate to contaminate herself with the activities of business, hence her role confined her to the home and to religious activities, in which groups of women could work to moralize male society, just as wives worked to reform their husbands.  

William R. Taylor and Christopher Lasch have gone beyond the stultifying effects of the pedestal that Welter described and show the conflicts between the role of the true woman and the role of the homemaker, and women's re-

sponses to those conflicts. Unfitted for the drudgery of housework and the coarse world of men, the true woman was delicate and pure; herein Taylor and Lasch find an implicit rejection of domesticity and heterosexuality itself. This rejection was manifested in women's church and mission societies, in which they used their energies for the highest goals and turned to sororital contact for emotional fulfillment, while the male population turned to the growing fraternal organizations of the early nineteenth century to satisfy their emotional needs.

While Taylor and Lasch see women's religious and literary impulses in the early nineteenth century as excuses for establishing emotionally fulfilling sororital contacts, William E. Bridges sees the religious movements as strivings for power in which women used their families as vehicles for social reform. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, on the other hand, sees frustrated, powerless women, who were not yet ready to challenge their role definition explicitly, turning to reform movements in which they find a compensatory sense of superiority and righteousness.


37 Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Beauty, the Beast, and the Militant Woman: A Case Study in Sex Roles and Social
This role in a religious society provided one of the few avenues for women to actively participate in a society that viewed the true woman as too delicate to function in a man's world. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg have studied the nineteenth-century medical rationale for this attitude. Women, it was said, had only a limited amount of vital force; if expended on intellectual or worldly pursuits, too little would be left to produce strong, healthy children.38 Hysteria was one result of the consequent restriction of women's roles and the internal contradictions of a role definition in which women were told to be dependent, submissive and loving—in a word, childlike—toward men, but to be strong, self-reliant, protective, and efficient in managing their homes. For the woman who found the constriction or internal contradictions of the role too stressful, hysteria was a frequent, if unintentional, response which required others to organize their lives around the victim's and to do the chores she resented.39 This


illness gave women a sense of power they could not find elsewhere. The hysteria, of course, also confirmed suspicions of women's frailty and strengthened arguments for keeping women in very constricted roles. Thus, middle class women were left with the non-competitive, economically insignificant, religious societies as almost their sole channel for social organization and social control.

Smith-Rosenberg, Taylor and Lasch, and Bridges, unlike Welter, see reform movements as the beginnings of positive assertion of women's ability to shape their world. Though these movements were not radically feminist, Smith-Rosenberg points to parallels with more radical movements: the rejection of passive roles, assertion of female worth, and creation of a sense of feminine loyalty. Without this prerequisite climate, she says, the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 could not have come about. In hindsight, students of women's history generally see a progression of women's societies in the nineteenth century beginning with missionary societies and moving through moral reform and antislavery societies to a culmination in women's rights groups.40

Other scholars have viewed the missionary societies from different, though not necessarily conflicting, perspectives. Richard D. Brown sees the emergence of religious

40Occasionally steps are missing in this progression, but the shift from local women's societies to radical feminist groups is generally recognized. For instance, see O'Neill, Everyone, p. 5, and Lerner, Woman, p. 71.
societies and other voluntary organizations as essential prerequisites for the growth of urban society and modern industry. The voluntary associations stressed individual assent to special-purpose organizations whose scope often transcended the family and even the town, thus breaking down the insularity of those institutions, if not directly competing with their positions.41

Joseph F. Kett has not dealt primarily with women's societies, but his studies of adolescence in the early nineteenth century shed light on the societies. In adolescent religious groups, Kett found the religious excitement and conversion experiences to be something like initiation rites marking the line between childhood and adult status. For boys, this initiation was followed by a crucial period of making decisions and adjusting to adult life. This period, "youth" is Kett's term for it, was widely recognized in literature as well as in society, but no such period of adjustment was assigned to girls.42

Kett does not deal with the reason girls did not have a recognized period of youth. It is not clear whether there was no need to adjust to adult life, either because society

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41Brown, pp. 36-43.

would never treat them as adults, or because they would be
given so few choices that their adult role was not expected
to produce stress. Or, women's personalities may have been
regarded as extensions of their husbands' identities, thus
adolescence was what Erik Erikson has called "a psychological
moratorium, a sanctioned period of delay of adult function-
ing," after which marriage provided an instant identity, one
which men struggled through youth to establish.\textsuperscript{43}

These questions, as well as those suggested by the
preceding survey of scholarship on women in the nineteenth
century, make it clear that woman's role and the forces that
shaped it are complex and often subtle. The writings dis-
cussed help clarify that role, but each has its shortcom-
ings. Writings by and about famous women always leave
questions about which qualities of their lives were repre-
sentative of other women and which were the unique attributes
that led to or resulted from their celebrated positions.
The writings of foreign visitors to the United States provide
a significant body of information on women of the early nine-
teenth century, but even this rich source has serious draw-
backs, as noted above. Recent scholarship in literary sources
has provided useful information about ideal roles and women's
responses to these role definitions, though it is not clear

\textsuperscript{43}Erik H. Erikson, "Inner and Outer Space: Reflections
on Womanhood," in \textit{The Woman in America}, ed. Robert J. Lifton,
p. 19.
how representative these intellectual models and responses are. Demographic studies have barely touched on the early nineteenth century, but they promise to provide new insights into family structure and the forces that bear on it. As subtle and productive as statistical models have become, they are limited in subject to the quantifiable. Therefore, they can say little about women directly, though their analyses of family structure are useful.

While the observations of foreigners provide a significant outside view of early nineteenth-century America, and recent scholarship provides an intellectual framework and statistical base, the social historian always hopes for confirmation from a more direct source--the people he studies. Taylor and Lasch's perceptive analysis of the correspondence of two middle class women in the early nineteenth century suggests the great insight that can be gained from close scrutiny of personal correspondence.

Another form of personal expression that should be equally revealing is the diary, which is central to this study. Like Taylor and Lasch's work, this study does not deal with generalized, homogenized women, but with a few specific women, preserving their unique and individual qualities and even using their words where possible.

Diaries written by three young women between 1790 and 1837 form the core of this study. These young women were all members of upper-middle class families--two fathers...
were Harvard graduates and the third a prospering innkeeper—in rural Massachusetts towns. The extant portion of Elizabeth Fuller's diary covers most of 1791 and all of 1792. In it she depicts everyday chores along with the joys and troubles of life on a farm in Princeton, Massachusetts. The second diary, written by Jerusha Leonard, an innkeeper's daughter, is primarily a record of her travels, the weather, and guests at her mother's inn, but also includes an interesting perspective on the social divisions she observed in Sunderland, Massachusetts, in 1791 and 1792. From 1816 to 1837, Sophronia Grout, a minister's daughter, kept a diary that differs from the others in that entries were not made regularly and often did not record external events. It is reminiscent of and probably modeled on Puritan diaries; in highly introspective entries this young woman of Hawley, Massachusetts, tried to interpret the condition of her soul from signs she found in her feelings and actions.

It is already evident that the diary is a unique and varied medium, presenting the historian with detailed but highly selective information. In some ways it is comparable to the modern picture album, which has largely replaced it. Special events, vacations and leisure time activities are so predominant in photo albums that we must acknowledge the existence—even if unconscious—of a mental template through which experiences are filtered before they are recorded. Common events are often filtered out: few pictures show
someone dusting, washing dishes, bathing, or spanking a naughty child, though these events are far more common than those recorded in photographs. Likewise, many details are lost in a diary. But a few incidental details suggest that many like them probably went unrecorded. There would have been no way of knowing the Grout family had a garden had Sophronia not described herself as so weak with illness that a walk in the garden exhausted her. And only Elizabeth Fuller's comparison of herself to the family's pesty white hen indicated that the Fullers raised chickens. But a sufficient number of such details can help us piece together a larger picture of life styles, just as a foreigner might piece together our life style by carefully studying the background of photographs in our album.
This type of study often reveals patterns that the diarist or photographer was unaware of when making individual recordings. Just as two photographers at the same scene may record very different images, two diarists will differ in details recorded and attitudes toward them. Hence, the photo albums or diaries often tell us more about the recorder than what is recorded. The choice of detail is significant not only for what is in focus, but for what is out of focus or entirely omitted. From a series of photographs or diary entries a pattern emerges, reflecting the mental template through which the recorder filtered his experience. This template reveals much about the recorder and about the world that provided the patterns by which he lived.

So this study will not only investigate the topics selected for recording by the diarists, but the mental templates—the attitudes, priorities and organizing principles—that led to their selections and the various forces that influenced the formation of those templates. Wherever possible, the words of the diarists are used to preserve the flavor of the diaries, while information from town histories and other sources is freely added to help put the diaries in context.

Only after examining the diaries individually will some generalizations and tentative hypotheses be discussed.
CHAPTER II
ELIZABETH FULLER

Elizabeth Fuller was almost fifteen when she began her diary on October 4, 1790. Her sister, Sally, was three years older and her brother, Timmy, was three years younger. A much younger sister, Patty Williams, was only three. Another brother, Holten, would be born the following year on the Fuller farm in rural Princeton, Massachusetts. The town of Princeton, located fifteen miles north of Worcester in central Massachusetts, had been incorporated in 1770. Elizabeth's father, Reverend Timothy Fuller, had been called a few years earlier, in 1767, to become the town's first minister. For his congregation the church service was more an educational exercise—an interpretive lecture—than a ritual, and they sternly warned Fuller that they were "not fond in general of having the Scriptures read in public, because their time is taken up in that part of the service that may as well be performed at home." Fuller apparently


2 Quoted in Blake, 1:48, from a letter sent to Fuller when he was called in 1767.
Heeded the warning, for the town seemed content with his preaching until 1775, when he was driven from the pulpit because of his political cautiousness, which was interpreted as Toryism. During the next few years Fuller read law and prepared to sue Princeton for back wages and his former position as pastor. He was unsuccessful on both counts. Surprisingly, the case left little bitterness on either side and Fuller returned to his farm in Princeton to become an active member of the community.³

On that farm Fuller's fourteen-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, began her diary with a simple passage, dated October 4, 1790,

Mr. Pope here, bought a pair of oxen of Pa. Mr. Keys at work here.  

"Mr. Pope" was probably another farmer in the rural town of Princeton, Massachusetts, and Mr. Keys, as appears in Elizabeth's October 5 entry, was hired to build a lean-to on the Fuller house. Mr. Keys, like most other men of the period, was not a jack-of-all-trades, but was master of a few trades besides the primary business of farming. "Pa," the Reverend Timothy Fuller, was also familiar with several occupations, and had turned easily to farming when he lost his pulpit. After losing the pulpit, he also studied law, an occupation that gave him additional income in Princeton.

In Princeton, Fuller's relationship with the church remained cool, as indicated by a December 19, 1790, entry in his daughter's diary,

Pa went to meeting, got there time enough to hear three hims and the prayer, but it was as much as ever he did.

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4Elizabeth Fuller, "Diary Kept by Elizabeth Fuller, Daughter of Rev. Timothy Fuller" is chapter 12 in Blake's History of Princeton (1:302-323). Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations in this chapter are taken from Elizabeth Fuller's diary. In most cases the date given in the text accurately locates the entry. Where the date of an entry is not indicated in the text, the page on which the entry appears is cited in parentheses.
Another entry shows that "Ma" attended church no more than "Pa." (p. 308)

Though Timothy Fuller's affection for the Princeton church was not strong, he did not insist that his children refrain from church activity, nor did the children's common sense often hold them back, but sometimes their mother did. On the same morning Pa "got there in time to hear three hims and the prayer," Elizabeth recorded,

Sabbath cold enough to freeze fools but I was so wise I would have gone to the meeting had not Ma kept me at home. I had not sense enough to more than balance my folly.

A month later Elizabeth revealed that her desire to attend church meetings was not based wholly on religious fervor. She recorded, "Sabbath very warm and pleasant," but there was no meeting that day because Reverend Crafts was sick. Elizabeth showed little sympathy for him, but did wish Mr. Crafts Brains would make haste and grow stronger for I really hate to stay at home such fine sleighing riding and walking as 'tis now. (p. 305)

When Mr. Crafts asked a dismissal from his post after two more months of illness and inability to hold meetings, Elizabeth almost celebrated the fact that he "had his request granted without the least difficulty, so now we are once more a free people ha ha." (p. 307) This unsympathetic observation is less a comment on Mr. Crafts' ministering than a reflection of the congregation's frustration at the lack of meetings. In this rural town the sabbath meet-
ing was not only important for its religious and educational value, but as a social event, one of the few that drew many townspeople together. It was probably even more valued during winter months when there was little farm work to be done and the threat of bad weather left few good excuses to get out of the house and visit.

This same need for social interaction may well account for the great interest rural New Englanders have traditionally taken in politics as well as church affairs; both provided good reasons to visit with friends at the meeting house. But politics largely excluded women, so sabbath meetings and church-related activities were even more important to young women like Elizabeth. The important role of sabbath meetings as agreeable diversion, though serious in nature, equally explains why Reverend Fuller was driven from the pulpit when his preaching became disagreeable to the local militia, and why Reverend Crafts' request for dismissal was so readily granted.

Before Reverend Crafts' dismissal, most sabbath entries in Elizabeth's diary were brief and without comment, such as "Sabbath Mr. Moore preached," or "Sabbath, no preaching in town." (p. 302) But after Crafts left, when the town was seeking a new minister, she showed far more interest and her diary shows that she looked for much more than piety in the local minister. On one Sunday, "Mr. Thurst...
when he was at Fullers "a visiting he is an agreeable Man appears much better out of the pulpit than in." (p.310)

In March of 1791

Mr Rolph preached half of the day & Mr. Saunders the other half. Mr. Saunders is a very good preacher and a very handsome Man.

As good a preacher as Mr. Saunders was reported to be, even his sermons fell victim to Elizabeth's wit,

Sabbath. I went to church in the A.M. Mr. Saunders preached from Matthew 15th Chap 28th verse. "Then Jesus answered and said o woman great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.--Exceeding Hot to-day. (p. 315)

The text, as well as the heat, may have provoked a bit of the rebelliousness she displayed. But the church had a significant and serious meaning to her as shown in her diary on her sixteenth birthday, October 13, 1792,

I am sixteen years old How many years have been past by me in thoughtlessness & vanity

While church meetings provided the main focus for town gatherings, a few less frequent events such as elections and house or barn raisings also required large numbers and were welcome opportunities for social interaction. Records of house raisings were not generally kept, but the raising of a meeting house in 1796 is a matter of Princeton town record. Aside from the const of materials, the town purchased 560 pounds of meat and over $200 of "articles of the West India kind" to give participants both the strength and the spirit they needed to raise the most important build-
ing in Princeton.\textsuperscript{5}

On a smaller scale, visiting was a common diversion that provided a vehicle for news as well as a pleasant opportunity to see friends. This entertainment was less open to women than men, however, as shown in a count of the visitors Elizabeth mentioned in her diary during various months of 1791:

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There are a number of reasons for the proportions in this table. One is the courtship convention that had the boy go to the girl while forbidding the reverse, but this is less important than other conventions of the community. The table reflects social patterns that were organized around the seasons. The weather itself was a significant controller of most farm and community activities, but it had a greater impact on the lives of women, who apparently were regarded as more delicate than men in the 1790's; this was evident on the "Sabbath cold enough to freeze fools," when Elizabeth's mother kept her home from church while her

\textsuperscript{5} Blake, 1:164.
father attended the meeting. The female visitors during February were unusual; the previous year there had been none. Elizabeth's January 31 entry explains the unusual phenomenon, "Warm and Rainy; thaws a good deal." Only during such warm spells did women have the very welcome opportunity to go out and visit during the winter. During the cold months men conducted most of the outside work and business. Some of their chores were even restricted to the winter: on January 6, 1792, "Mr. Mirick & John Brooks got wood here today. very cold." Though the wood might have been cut earlier, the job of hauling it could be done efficiently only by sled when the roads were smoothed with snow; rough toads and rickety wagons were not even considered for the job. Other kinds of business were largely responsible for the number of male visitors during the winter months, though Elizabeth only recorded their visits as "here to-day on business" on a few occasions. Many of the visitors probably were not at Fuller's for business, but en route to other destinations. The cold New England winter forced them to stop frequently to warm up at the hearths of hospitable farmers like the Fullers.

As the days became longer there was less need for the men to stop and more need for them to be home planting crops, so the number of male visitors decreased during the spring months, while the warm weather allowed more of the women to visit. On June 17, 1791, "Ma, Sally and I spent
the afternoon at Mrs. Miricks," and on the twentieth, "I went to Church. wore my lutestring, Sally wore hers we went to Mr. Richardsons & dined."

The standard fare a visitor received was tea, but occasionally it was better: on one visit "to Mr. Perry's . . . had an excellent dish of tea and some shortcake . . . Had a sociable afternoon." (p. 304) One noteworthy visit during the summer showed that when Timothy Fuller voted against ratification of the Constitution because it recognized slavery, his stand was based on the conviction that blacks were equal to whites,

Mr. Adams here a visiting this afternoon. he is a very sociable agreeable Man & a very black Man (p. 317)

Another entry showed that Fuller's negative vote was representative of the community, for Mr. Adams preached to the Princeton congregation later that summer.

By August the crops were planted and cultivated and there wasn't much to do but wait for them to grow and ripen, so visiting increased considerably. Then came the busy harvest season when the weather was fine, but there was less time for visiting, particularly for men. The fall months--during and especially after harvest--were times of visiting and celebration for the Fullers, as they had been for farmers of many earlier ages. It was during this season that Elizabeth's mother and father finally had time to renew her mother's family ties. The annual hundred-mile trip to Sand-
wich in a horse drawn carriage testifies to the strength of the family relations. On October 17, 1792,

Pa & Ma set out for Sandwich broke the chaise before they got to Lieut. Miricks but got it mended & pursued their journey.

While Pa and Ma were away, "Miss Eliza Harris came here, she is to keep us company whilst Ma is gone." The responsibility for the family was clearly Ma's, as Pa required no replacement. But Miss Brooks apparently did not have the same control over the family as Ma—and besides, it was harvest season. During the three weeks the parents were absent the number of young visitors at the Fuller farm soared. Often they played music, sang, and danced all evening. The petty jealousies and squabbles of teenagers are revealed by one entry from this period in which "Anna took offense at something & went away about eight o'clock," but her date, "David stayed and sung with us an hour after she was gone."

There were fewer visitors to the Fuller home after the parents returned, but still enough to make it clear that harvest time, not Christmas, was the holiday season in the town of Princeton. Thanksgiving was the principal holiday, in both the modern sense and the original sense of the word, "holy-day." In 1790 the original sense was already losing some of its significance, however; Elizabeth did not lament the lack of a religious service, but its absence was enough for her to make note of it,
25 November—Thanksgiving to-day we baked three
ovensfull of pyes. There was no preaching so we
had nothing to do but eat them. The pyes were
a great deal better than they were last Thanks-
giving for I made them all myself, and part of them
were made of flour which we got of Mr. H. Hastings
therefore we had plenty of spice.

The visiting and holiday spirit held out as long as the
warm weather.

As the cold set in and natural refrigeration became
possible, several visits were paid to the Fullers by Mr.
Gregory, who "came here to kill a cow for Pa" on one
occasion, but more often "killed hogs for us." (p. 321)
Hogs were probably more important to Fullers' economy
since the meat preserved so well when salted and smoked.

Before the coldest part of winter set in, there were
a number of other visitors who came to settle business with
Pa or the women in the family, who also had wares and ser-
vices to sell or exchange with other townspeople, as is
indicated by the last few entries of December, 1792,

28--Rebecca Hastings here to get Sally to make a
Gown for her.
29--Parmelia Mirick came here to get Ma to cut out
a lambskin Cloak for her.--Sally & I went to Mrs.
Miricks on a visit staid the afternoon and evening.
30--Ma went to Mrs. Eveleth's to carry home some Yarn.

Soon snow would fly and the cycle would begin again with
wood hauling and other winter chores.

Just as Elizabeth's mention of visitors reflects
seasonal patterns, her references to family members reflect
domestic patterns that also varied with the seasons. Her
diary entries suggest the highlights of each day or, sometimes, in a mildly complaining way, summarize the housework she did. But many of the everyday jobs went unrecorded as did the persons who performed them. Because her father's activities were more varied and more interesting to her, they received more note than Elizabeth's in some months.

By the time Elizabeth was keeping a diary, her "Pa" was primarily a farmer, as were his neighbors, so references to farming were common, such as the December 28, 1790 entry,

Cold and pleasant to-day. Pa sold his mare, is to have eleven dollars and a cow. Pa and Timmy went to Mr. Holden's in Westminster to drive the cow home. She behaved so bad they did not get her farther than Mr. Dodd's.

Other entries, such as "John Brooks here killing our sheep," (p. 304) show that livestock was important to Fuller's livelihood. The livestock was not only good for meat, as Elizabeth noted on March 11, 1791, "Mr. Parmenter here, bought two calf skins of Pa, gave him ten shillings apiece." Likewise, the sheepskins and particularly the wool were important to the Fullers.

In Elizabeth's October 12, 1790 entry, "Pa got in his corn. Mr. Joseph Eveleth died last night," she unconsciously revealed something of her mental priorities, which put family interests before the community. The concentric circles of family and community were the guidelines of her life. There is very little introspection to suggest
that she saw herself as a central point, and there is little awareness of circles beyond the community. The neighbors and Pa's corn covered the normal range of her diary entries.

Pa's corn was probably more for feed than human consumption, but the late date of harvest suggests that another crop was planted in the spring, and that may well have been for family use. But, since much of the farmwork was routine, Elizabeth mentioned her father and his work much less during the summer than other seasons. Novel chores, not common work, caught the attention of the teenager.

Mr. Fuller, like many men of his age, though primarily a farmer, engaged in a few other enterprises, particularly during the fall and winter. His legal studies of the 1770's proved useful in later years; on October 5, 1790, "Pa went as clerk to the vendue of the estate that was Mr. Josiah Miricks." Mr. Fuller was also asked by Mr. Brooks and Mr. Hastings "to do some writing for them." (p. 308) Fuller also drew up wills and performed other legal services for his neighbors. His legal writing probably led him to an interest in real estate, which was noted on April 15, 1791,

Pa went to Mr. Matthews to write his will and some deeds. He has sold Dr. Wilson 20 acres of land & given Sam a deed of some I believe about 25 acres.

Fuller also preached occasionally in neighboring communities
and made many short journeys on various kinds of business.
The novelty of these trips always interested Elizabeth, who recorded,

Pa went to Daniel Cheever's & got a rope made. Pa stopped to see Mr. Saunders drank tea with him. (p.316)

On another occasion, Pa performed a community service when he "went to Worcester to get the newspaper," (p. 310) for Princeton was not on a main stage route, so all news and mail had to be picked up in Worcester.

Despite Elizabeth's interest in her father's journeys, she rarely accompanied him, though her brother Timmy, who was three years younger, often traveled with their father, learning the duties that would be his in a few years. But Elizabeth showed no resentment, and her affection for her father was clear when he became ill in December of 1790,

Pa is very poorly having a very bad cough. I am a good deal afraid he will go into a consumption.
Oh! if my soul was formed for woe how would I vent my sighs
My grief it would like rivers flow, from both my streaming eyes.
I am disconsolate to-night.

In an age when medical care was unable to cope with many diseases like "consumption," Elizabeth's fears were well warranted, but fortunately incorrect.

Elizabeth worked much more closely with her mother, but mentioned her far less than her father. Her mother's work was probably so routine and her company so frequent
that Elizabeth failed to consider it noteworthy. While this does not suggest any less affection for her mother than her father, it does show which role appeared more interesting and noteworthy to Elizabeth. During March of 1791 Elizabeth recorded her mother's work more frequently than usual, perhaps because the fourteen-year old was learning the home industries she had taken for granted during her younger years. On March 1, 1791, "Ma began to spin the wool for Pa's coat. I card for her and do the household work." Ma's spinning was noted in seven other diary entries shortly after this one. With such repetitious entries it is easy to see why Elizabeth mentioned her mother so infrequently. Only once in March was Ma described when she was not spinning; on the twenty sixth she "went to Mrs. Miricks to get a slay Harness." Less common activities were as noteworthy for Ma as they were for Pa. Even the less common home industries were worth mention; on May 14 and 15, 1791, she recorded, "Ma is making soap," and "Ma finished making soap and it is very good." Elizabeth admired and respected the work her mother did and the special attention she paid to her husband's needs, as on July 12, 1792, when "Ma began to spin blue wool for Pa's coat." Making clothes for Pa was a chore that Ma reserved almost exclusively for herself, though the work of breaking or spinning the wool occasionally went to others. The making of clothes was an important means for the women of
the Fuller family to express their affection. Scattered entries show Ma's care for other members of the family: on June 16, 1791, "Ma cut out a coatee for me," and it was doubtless her mother's inspiration to bring Elizabeth the cloth for a gown when returning from her relatives in Sandwich.

Beyond the few occasions mentioned and a few visits to neighbors, Ma hardly appears in Elizabeth's diary. Two other family members received even less note, however. One is Holten, who was only mentioned in the July 1, 1792 entry, "Holten is a Year old." The portion of Elizabeth's diary covering July 1, 1791, is missing, so her reactions to his birth cannot be assessed. The fact that he is not mentioned at any other time suggests that his mother had full care of him, unassisted by either of her daughters, while the daughters probably filled in for her on the housework. Had Elizabeth had much to do with Holten, she surely would have made more mention of him in her diary, as she did of siblings closer to her age.

Elizabeth's sister, Patty Williams, also received only one brief mention on her fourth birthday in 1792, and no mention on her fifth. Like Holten, Patty was probably too young to be of much interest to a teenager who was trying hard to be an adult.

Elizabeth was, however, very close to her younger brother, Timmy, and her older sister, Sally. She showed a
special pride in her twelve-year-old brother's beginnings in society, "David Perry here to get Timmy to go to singing school," (p. 305) and his gradual assumption of a man's role in the world, "Pa & Timmy gone to Hubbardston after Rye," (p. 306) or "Timmy cut stalks today." (p. 318) And the proud sister probably embarrassed the young man by paying too much attention to his birthday, which she carefully recorded each year. Timmy, no doubt, paid her back, for it is only with the background of a younger brother's antics that some diary entries can be understood. For example,

April 1--I wove two yards and three quarters & three inches to-day & I think I did pretty well considering it was April Fool day. (p.308)

While Timmy was three years younger than Elizabeth, her sister, Sally, was three years older and suffered all the trials of an older sister; when Sally returned from a lengthy stay with her aunt and uncle, Elizabeth recorded,

I did not do much, spent chief of my time with Sally very much against her inclination, for she sent me out of the Room fifty times in a minute but I did not care any more than our white chicken does when we drive it out of the house. (pp. 317-318)

Elizabeth's sister was probably not so angry with this attention as she pretended. Many of the most touching entries in Elizabeth's diary relate to work done with her mother and Sally's help or company. Diary entries for June, 1791, suggest the warm relationship of the two
sisters and their mother,

9—.. . I helped Sally make me a blue worsted Gown.
10—I helped Sally make me a brown Woolen Gown.
12—Sally cut out a striped lutestring Gown for me.
... 
15—I cut out a linnen Gown.—Sally finished my lutestring.
16—Rainy weather. Ma cut out a coatee for me ... 
17—Ma, Sally & I spent the afternoon at Mrs. Miricks.
18—Cool. Sally finished my Coatee.
19—I finished my striped linnen gown ... 
20—Sabbath. I went to Church. wore my lutestring, Sally wore hers we went to Mr. Richardsons & Dined.
...
22—Capt. Moore here to-day. Put in my dwiant Coat & Sally & I quilted it out before night.
23—Sally put in a Worsted Coat for herself and we quilted it out by the middle of the afternoon.

These June entries testify to Sally's importance to the economy of the family. The amount of work she did in this month suggests that she was pressed for time and probably lived with other families, like her Uncle and Aunt Dwight, during a good part of the year, while she earned her keep by sewing for them and their neighbors. Long periods of time without mention of Sally in Elizabeth's diary also support this conjecture.

Sally had learned to sew from her mother and during this June was helping Elizabeth to learn. But sewing was only one of the jobs that fell to Elizabeth. Doubtless many went unrecorded, but she tended to note those chores that were seasonal, and therefore somewhat novel, or so time consuming that she could summarize them easily in a daily entry like that of October 11, 1790, "I washed to-day."

Most of Elizabeth's work came during the late winter and
the spring. On three successive days of February, 1791, she "began to break the blue wool for Pa's coat, broke a pound & three quarters in the P.M.," "broke four Pounds of Wool to-day," and "finished breaking wool."

Spinning wool was a simple occupation, well known to the women of the Fuller family, as it was to women in most of the country. Sewing clothes was a specialty Mrs. Fuller had taught to Sally. Weaving was an art unknown to the Fuller family until Elizabeth learned this special occupation. She learned it not from her mother, but from another weaver in the community. On March 29, 1791, Mrs. Garfield came to show me how to draw in Piece did not stay but about half an hour." Mrs. Garfield visited again on May 20, "to show me how to make a harness." From such entries, it can be seen that the women of Princeton, like the men, had specialized skills that complemented the skills of other members of the community. Though the work of men and women was generally different, the patterns of specialization, home industry, and interdependence of skilled workers in the community were very similar. Like men, the women played significant, specialized, visible roles in the community.

Elizabeth appears to be the only member of the family who learned to weave, so she had to weave constantly in the spring. From early March through May, 1792, she recorded almost no other work, and for days at a time her diary
entries were identical, "I wove eight Yards." On May 3, she felt she had finally come to the end of this tedious task,

I wove two & a half Yards. Got out the Piece, there is thirty one Yards & a half; have finished my weaving for this year I have woven a hundred and forty Yards since the ninth of March.

Her relief was premature, however, as she was still weaving six to eight yards a day at the end of May, but on June 1, she declared,

I wove five yards to-day got out the Piece, there is thirty six yards of it. Welcome sweet Liberty, once more to me. How have I longed to meet again with thee.

Some of the woven material was used for barter or sale; on April 14, 1791, "I got out the Piece in the A.M. Pa carried it to Mr. Deadmans." The excess in 1792, when Elizabeth did far more weaving, was probably sold, and at the age of sixteen Elizabeth became a part of the economic community and a financial asset to her family.

Her other household chores continued but were less of a burden since she shared them with her mother and sister. Unlike weaving, many household chores were not permanently assigned to family members, so any of the three women might have been found doing the wash, scouring a floor, making candles, scouring the pewter, or quilting. Picking, breaking, carding and spinning wool were common, and received special note only when the product was to be Pa's coat. The only work that approached the tedium of weaving was spinning,
and for days on end Elizabeth entered little more in her diary than "I spun 21 knots," or "I spun two double skeins of linen." (p. 309) But Elizabeth kept her sense of humor despite all her work; after a week of nothing but spinning, she complained good naturedly,

I spun two double skeins. O dear Quadville has murdered wit & work will do as bad, for wit is always merry, but work does make me sad. (p. 309)

The following year's spinning earned a similar comment; after spinning two skeins a day for three weeks, she declared, "I should think I might have spun up all the Swingling tow in America by this time." (p. 313)

Despite the tedium of spinning and weaving, Elizabeth seems to have taken some satisfaction from such chores, in which her work could be measured and seen and appreciated by others. As any housekeeper, then or now, could tell, the dirt in a house shows, but the hours of cleaning go unnoticed. The less visible jobs are mentioned very infrequently in Elizabeth's diary, but in those that were appreciated by others, she took pride. Special note was made of work that had economic value in the community and of domestic chores that received praise, such as the making of a cheese, mincing link meat for sausages, and particularly of making "pyes" for Thanksgiving.

Less appetizing chores were often lightened by the company of her mother or sister, and on a number of occasions Elizabeth appears to have continued her work while
neighbors visited. If she did stop working to greet them, it could not have been for long, since her daily productivity was unaffected by neighborly visits. On June 28, 1792, "Anna Perry here I scoured the keeping room floor," and on December 21,

Mrs. Garfield & Miss Lucretia Mirick here a visiting. Silas Perry here most of the afternoon. I spun two skeins.

Some kinds of work were made more pleasant by sharing them with her neighbor-teacher; on April 6, 1791, Elizabeth "got out the white piece Mrs. Garfield warped the blue." And, by convention, some work became the occasion for social gatherings of women; on November 30, 1792,

... Sally & I went to Lieut. Miricks on a visit Quilted on Miss Eunice's bed-quilt there was a number of Girls & Women there. --We spent the evening at Widow Miricks.

Though much of Elizabeth's time was taken up by work, there was still time for some diversion and for education.

A few entries like "I am a studying today" and "I am a Passing Grammar" (p. 305) show that there was adequate time for the schooling she received from her father. Visiting and a number of other diversions were also available. On November 18, 1792, she began "to work me a sampler." On another occasion she noted, "Trooping and training in this Town to-day.--Sally and I went to see them." (p. 318)

But the most common of Elizabeth's diversions was singing, and the diaries of contemporaries testify to the fine sing-
ing they heard in the Fuller home. In April, 1791, Elizabeth noted, "Leonard Wood here all this forenoon, brought Holyokes singing Book. Left it here." The Fullers apparently had a stringed instrument to accompany singing, for Elizabeth "Pricked some Tunes out of Holyokes singing Book" at least twice during the week following Leonard Wood's visit.

Entertainment, like worship and work, was the result of a cooperative effort within the family and the community. And, like work, it often followed a schedule set by the weather and the seasons. Only religious services were beyond the control of weather and seasons, but they depended on the health and availability of the minister. Thus Elizabeth Fuller's world ran on a schedule that is hard to appreciate in our age of time tables, punch clocks, central heat and air conditioning, and technological insulation from the elements and the seasons. Elizabeth's world had a more natural schedule, as dependable and rhythmic as the sunrise and seasons, but as fickle and unpredictable as weather or health.

Within Elizabeth's world her role was well defined in the family and community. It was different from the role of a man, but equal and parallel in many ways. Both roles required specialized skills; most work was done at

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6Shipton, p. 605.
home or on the farm surrounding; specialized goods and services commanded respect and economic value in the community and were traded for complementary goods and services. The community was the basic unit for most social, religious, and economic life, though men, and occasionally women, like Elizabeth's sister Sally, went beyond the community in the course of social or economic activities.

Beyond the few years covered by her diary, little is known of Elizabeth Fuller, but the vital statistics offered by genealogical records. Reverend Timothy Fuller moved his family to Merrimac, New Hampshire, in 1796, where he died in 1805.7 Elizabeth died at age 80 in Augusta, Maine—still unmarried—in 1856.8

One intervening incident is described in a history of Princeton. A Mr. Loring gave an address on the death of Henry Holten Fuller, in which he provided a very touching picture of

the ten children of Rev. Timothy Fuller, who, some quarter of a century after he had gone to his rest, and long after the family dwelling in Princeton had passed away, visited its site together. Nothing remained but its cellar, which time had partially filled, whose rounded excavation it had carpeted with greensward. Here the children gathered and, seated in the charmed circle of what once was their home, sang again together the

7Blake, 2:106.

sweet hymns to which their tongues had been attuned in childhood. 9

9 Blake, 1: 322–323.
CHAPTER III

JERUSHA LEONARD

Elizabeth Fullr's life was spent largely at home with her family; she sometimes visited neighbors—more often in the summer months—but recorded no long journeys at all in her diary. The diary of a slightly older girl, twenty-one-year-old Jerusha Leonard of Sunderland, Massachusetts, provides many contrasts. The town of Sunderland, just across the Connecticut River from Deerfield in western Massachusetts, was older than Princeton by half a century. In 1715 Jerusha Leonard's great grandfather was among the first settlers of the town, and his holdings were passed down through the family to Jerusha's mother. In 1757 Jerusha's mother married Noadiah Leonard, who had come from Springfield a year earlier.

An industrious man, Noadiah Leonard worked as a farmer and kept a store in which he probably sold crockery, china and other dry goods; by 1769 he was also licensed to sell "strong drink." His hard work paid off, for in 1783 he was wealthy enough to purchase a long established inn. This purchase carried not only economic promise, but the prestige of being among the most important members of the community; the fact that he could make such a purchase
also suggests that he was financially ahead of most of his neighbors.¹

His neighbors' respect was not bought, however, but earned over the years. When General Gage closed the port of Boston, Noadiah Leonard was chosen by the town to collect whatever specie the inhabitants of the town were willing to give to the poor people of Boston, and also to convey said collection to the town of Boston.²

And in 1775 he was captain of the Sunderland company that marched to Boston on the "Lexington Alarm;" once there, he with several members of his company enlisted for eight months. It is not known how long he served, but he was back in Sunderland in 1780 when the town again chose him to procure beef and help find men for the American forces.

After the war Leonard worked as an innkeeper until he died in 1790, leaving his wife, Jerusha, and seven children, Electa, 28; Rebecca, 25; Jerusha, 21; Tabitha, 19; Noadiah, 15; and the twins, Mary and Moses, who were 11. Leonard's widow continued to run the tavern after her husband's death and received official recognition of her position when she was licensed as an innholder each year from 1790 to 1800. This was the situation when his daughter,


²Quoted from town records by Smith, p. 124.
twenty-one-year-old Jerusha, began her diary in January of 1791.

In sharp contrast with Elizabeth Fuller, who recorded no long journeys, Jerusha's diary begins with a record of her January trip to Boston. It was clear and cold the day she set out for Boston with her sixteen-year-old brother, Noadiah. 3

A Journal on the Road to Boston

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stops made on the Road</th>
<th>the number of miles to Boston</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to Capt Allens at Shutesbury</td>
<td>Miles 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 To Mr Cooks at Newsalem</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where we slept started about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 January, 1791 sunrise</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mr Winslows Petersham</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 at Mr Wrights Templeton</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 At Mr. Bigelows Westminster</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jerusha did not think to mention the means of transportation—their own, neighbors' or public. The only stage known to have operated in the Sunderland area was the Boston-Northfield stage, which began in 1789, but that stage followed a route through Warwick, Orange, Athol, Petersham, Barre and Holden to Worcester. Elizabeth and Noadiah would have to have used private transportation at least as

3 The "Diary of Miss Leonard of Sunderland, January 1, 1791 - March 31, 1792" is an unpublished manuscript in the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association archives in Deerfield, Mass. In most cases a date given in the text accurately locates the entry referred to. Where the date of an entry is not indicated in the text, the page on which the entry appears is cited in parentheses.
far as Petersham to catch that stage. But from Petersham they swung north to Templeton, from which there might well have been another stage to Boston, following what would soon be the "Fifth" Massachusetts Turnpike. Since snow inevitably covers western Massachusetts by January, Elizabeth and Noahdiah probably began the journey in a sleigh of their own and later switched to the stage sled when they could. When they ran out of snow in the eastern part of the state, the stage lines changed from coaches on runners to coaches on wheels.

They stopped at inns and houses of friends which were separated by two to fifteen miles. Most stops were just long enough to have some hot tea and a bite to eat.

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The journey was cold and slow, a good three days each way—and longer if weather interfered, as it often did in January.

On January 16, the Leonards

Started 10 o'clock. Through Roxbury At Harvard Mr. Curtis. At Leominster Mr Kendalls we slept, in the night a Very tedious storm of snow began. started between 10 & 11 0 Clock.

With thoughts of the next day's travel, if any travel were possible, Jerusha even described the snow as "tedious."

The inconveniences of the long winter trip were not unexpected and therefore not very noteworthy for Jerusha, but other, less experienced travelers of the period described the constant necessity of trimming and balancing of the stage wagon by all the passengers leaning to one side to prevent it from overturning in the deep
ruts which abounded.\textsuperscript{5}

One uninitiated traveler

left . . . with about fifteen passengers closely packed in a stage with wheels, and a very neat coach, and so foolish was I and ignorant (never having traveled on land) I thought the same fine carriage would go through thick and thin with me all the way to Albany: in two short hours my eyes were opened. We stopped . . . at a tavern grocery grogshop and post-office all under one roof, for we carried Uncle Sam's Letter bags, which was another grievance, as we had to stop every few miles to exchange the mails.\textsuperscript{6}

But this traveler had only begun to know the problems of winter travel. They soon came to a stop from which the wagon could not proceed and to which winter stages (with runners) did not come, so local farmers carried him and the other passengers in sleds

without covers. It now commenced raining, and by the time we get to the next stage, we looked like moving pillars of salt, our hats and coats being covered to the thickness of an eighth of an inch with ice . . .\textsuperscript{7}

After the next town the sleighing got better and they were "accommodated with a covered box and runners" but they soon found that the roof boards had been green when nailed on, so they shrank, leaving spaces between. As the trip continued through the night, the weary traveler wondered if he was really on the stage that "the horse-flesh fraternity in New York advertise as their safe, cheap, comfortable, and


\textsuperscript{6}Ibid., p. 362. \textsuperscript{7}Ibid.
expeditious winter establishment for Albany."

Though Jerusha Leonard's journey was not so hectic, it is not likely that a midwinter trip would be taken for pleasure in 1791, nor is it likely that a pleasure trip would involve six and a half days of uncomfortable travel for only a day and a half of "walking Boston." Jerusha was probably in Boston on business related to her mother's inn, and she was accompanied by her brother so that he might learn the business.

Jerusha's mother, along with her children, ran the inn from 1790 to 1800. The licensing of Mrs. Leonard as an innkeeper is significant in that a woman could be recognized as head of a business concern. In 1800, her surrendering control of the inn to her son, Moses, would suggest that her licensing was a temporary and emergency procedure that allowed a son, when he reached age, to take over the father's business. But Moses was not the next son. In 1796 Noahdiah was twenty one and could have legally become an innholder; he chose the life of the farmer, however. Had there been doubt about the renewal of his mother's license, it is likely he would have become an innkeeper in 1796. But he did not, for apparently no urgency existed; In the 1790's a woman could run an inn without violating the business or community conventions of Sunderland.9

8Ibid., p. 363. 9Smith, p. 192.
When, in 1801, Moses and his wife assumed responsibility for the inn, it must have been a relief to Mrs. Leonard. Even with the children to help out, keeping an inn required a great deal of work. Aside from cleaning and maintaining a very large house, she had to provide meals and pleasant conversation for the guests. There were frequently two or three lodgers at the inn, but a much greater number of guests came during the day, most of them from Sunderland and adjoining towns. For local people the inn was the center of most business and social activity. When neighbors were unable to settle a disagreement by themselves, an "arbitration" was held at the tavern. They also went there to catch up on news, to gather for social events, to hold public sales or "vendues," to wet a parched throat, and to chat with neighbors. Pleasant enough for the neighbors, but a great deal of work for Mrs. Leonard to keep up with. Moses' assumption of proprietorship in 1801 gave Mrs. Leonard a new degree of freedom, and soon after she married Colonel Stevens of Claremont, New Hampshire.

It was during the time her mother ran the inn that Jerusha Leonard wrote the extant portion of her diary, which begins in January, 1791, and ends early in 1792. The diary, which is primarily a record of weather, guests at the inn, and visiting ministers at church, contains little information about family members and daily life except when their activities were out of the ordinary, as when "people
collected for an Arbitration between Mother & Major Montague," or when "Mama, Moses & Mary gon to Springfield." (pp. 4-5) This is one of the very few references to her youngest brother and sister, twelve-year-old twins; the difference between their age and hers suggests that they operated in mutually exclusive circles of friends. Jerusha's oldest sister, Electa, aged twenty eight, probably was not living at home or near by when the diary was written, for she was not mentioned at all. Like Elizabeth Fuller's sister, Sally, Electa probably spent much of her time with friends or relatives in other towns where her specialized skills were more in demand. Jerusha's other older sister, Rebecca, had married Ebenezer Stebbins of the neighboring town of Deerfield six years earlier in 1785. Jerusha often recorded pleasant walks to visit the Stebbins in Deerfield. Such visits were sometimes as little as two days apart, which testifies to the close family ties that existed.

Aged twenty two, Jerusha was closest to her twenty-year-old sister, Tabitha, and her sixteen-year-old brother, Noahdiah. The three often traveled together to visit relatives or drink tea with friends in neighboring towns. Though little emotion shows in Jerusha's brief entries, the frequency with which she mentions Tabitha and Noahdiah, and the context in which she mentions them suggest the same sisterly affection Elizabeth had for Sally and the pride she had in Timmy. Even after Tabby was engaged to keep school
in April of 1791, Jerusha recorded frequent visits to and from the new teacher in the nearby town of Whately. When Tabby was sick, Jerusha stayed with her and cared for her. But when she was married, Jerusha apparently felt some jealousy, for she made no mention of the preparations for the marriage; the only reference to it was on February 16, 1792, "This day pleasant Tabitha married & wedding at Doct'r Arms." The groom, Eliakim Arms of Deerfield, was not even named. But visits between the sisters continued.

The paucity of information about her family results from the mental template through which Jerusha's life was filtered before it was recorded in her diary. Routine matters were excluded and, except when they traveled, the family apparently followed very regular patterns in work and in leisure time. Taking care of the inn was so routine that we only realize she had responsibility for it when her diary shows that all other members of the family were out of town. Normally Jerusha seems to have done her chores in the morning, since her entries nearly always describe afternoon and evening activities. Only on rare occasions, when there apparently was little else to record, did housework creep into her daily entries as it did in November, 1791, "Monday pleasant Graves Eliakim & others here in the evening scoured." And one April entry says she "began to weave," but she never mentioned it again, nor had there been any mention of spinning or other related
tasks. She must have done far less of this work than Elizabeth Fuller, for she had much more free time for socializing, but she was of a more prosperous family and could better afford to have others perform such services for her. One other entry also suggests that the women of the Leonard household had the same kinds of specialized skills that were evident in the Fuller diary, "Hannah Harris here to have a gown made." (p. 4) Clearly some member of the family sewed to supplement the family income, but there is no indication who was to make the gown, nor is there any other mention of similar work.

Jerusha's own work, like her sister's, included teaching, though she did not even find this work noteworthy enough to describe. It is only mentioned in three brief passages on July 15, September 20, and October 22, 1791:

after school went to Mr. Smiths.

after school went with Mr. G to Mr. Smiths drank some tea.

some rain dismist my school.

Only the last entry is conclusive, and it may be significant that the closing of school was more noteworthy than the opening. Jerusha found work much less interesting than socializing.

Work that involved friends and visiting was more worthy of note. On June 21, 1791, Jerusha recorded, "Lydia and her set of girls here a quilting the bed quilt." Other
references to quilting and sewing bees suggest that Jerusha was well acquainted with these home industries, even if their value to her was primarily social.

The reflection of Sunderland's social structure in Jerusha's writing is probably the most notable feature of her diary. Having grown up in the Leonard Tavern, Jerusha was very much a part of the social life of the town and had a perspective on local society that allowed her to see clear social patterns. The clientele of many early American taverns was determined by political allegiance, and this had certainly been true at an earlier time in Sunderland. In 1774 one of Sunderland's three taverns was run by Lt. Fellow Billings, a man of loyalist persuasion. The whig-dominated town, however, voted that they were unwilling to have Lieutenant Billings keep tavern any longer. Made more than a little uncomfortable by the revolutionary fervor of his neighbors, Billings soon moved out of town. In 1791, however, Jerusha revealed no awareness of the tavern as a political center of town, though the number of regular customers suggests that the political nature of the tavern may have endured.

A different pattern of social division may have accounted for the formation of tavern clienteles in the 1790's, however. A Sunderland town history notes that

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10 Smith, p. 193.
Major Hubbard's tavern was a favorite place of resort for the old people who enjoyed stories of the "Major."\(^{11}\)

While veterans of the Revolution told and retold their war stories at Hubbard's Tavern, apparently the younger people in Sunderland gathered at the Leonard Tavern.

Jerusha's diary reflects similar patterns. A number of informal social groups distinguished by age and marital status were common in Sunderland and other towns in the area, as suggested by entries like,

Leverett young fellows here; I spent the evening at Mr. Benony Graves with the young people of this town. (p. 7)

On other occasions she recorded, "Young people from Hadley here upon a Visit," (p. 35) and "the young people of this town here." (p. 8) Other entries show that such social groups were not confined to young people; in February, 1792, "the Married people went to Greenfield," and in the same month "the old people from Deerfield came." These were not formal groups, but their membership was sufficiently defined for Jerusha to recognize them and use the labels "young people," "married people," and "old people" with some consistency. A November 18 entry, "spent the evening agreeably with the young married people," shows that the groups were not exclusive, but were defined clearly enough to retain their identity even when outsiders were among them.

As social mechanisms these groups were useful to young

\(^{11}\)Smith, p. 195.
men and women for diversion and courtship. They apparently traveled without chaperones and often visited the young people of other towns. They were especially beneficial to young women in allowing them to travel without specific escorts. In March of 1792, for instance, Jerusha

went to Leverett with Noad Cynthia & Polly. Slept at Mr Seth Fields . . . Fryday Stormy returned to Leverett.

Some groups were even used by young women in what was apparently an early version of hitchhiking; in early 1792 "the old people of Deerfield came from the Mill River and left Tabitha," Jerusha's older sister.

Within the town young people visited more frequently, occasionally spending the night at a friend's house. Many entries in Jerusha's diary record visits to friends in which, unlike the girls of Princeton, Jerusha and her friends were not held back by the cold or bad weather. On a "very rany" February 8, 1791, "myself sisters & Sally Porny made an evening visit at Mr. Hunts." Such visits and small excursions, like one in January when Jerusha "went to Greenfield for a ride," (p. 3) took up the greater part of her leisure time. Shorter trips were very common; one pleasant February day in 1791, she "went to Mill River with Mr. Graves Fist & Field, Miss Electa Graves & sisters."

Though many rides to the river and other destinations are mentioned, Jerusha never explained why they were undertaken; apparently the fresh air, scenery and company were
the main reasons. The birth of her sister Tabitha's first child less than six months after her marriage suggests that some young people enjoyed more than the fresh air and the scenery.

When Jerusha was not visiting, she was often visited, sometimes because a legal action at the tavern provided entertainment for those who were not involved; on September 1, 1791, she recorded:

an arbitration Graves Warren Field here at night Loggan came spent the evening here very agreeably eating watermelon slept here.

Indeed, much of Jerusha's social life revolved around the inn and she made special note of prominent or unusual guests like "governor Marshes sons," and "President Wetherspoon from New Jersey," "Mr. Wells and wife from Hartford," and various other visitors from afar. (pp. 5, 12, 14)

Jerusha's fascination with travel was heightened by the possibilities for her own ventures. Her community's standards were liberal enough and her family's pocketbook full enough for her to travel often. In fact, business might require it as it had required her January trip to Boston. The following January she traveled to Hartford. Though she did not record the purpose of that trip either, it is hard to imagine a pleasure trip that involved most of a "rainy" Tuesday and a "cold windy" Wednesday in the New England winter. (pp. 38-39)

At least one trip during 1791 appears to have been
purely for pleasure, however. The eighteenth of August, 1791, was pleasant when she set out for Dartmouth College with a neighbor and her brother and sister, Noahdiah and Tabitha. They attended the commencement, which probably included Tabitha's future husband, and took no small pleasure in visiting old friends and making new ones along the way. At Dartmouth Jerusha mentioned concerts, lectures, and a number of visits. The excursion took a month. The cost of such a trip and the loss of three family members' work at home were luxuries the Leonard family could afford.

Though nothing in Jerusha's diary indicates a consciousness that she was better off than most girls in town, it is doubtful that more than a few traveled so widely just for pleasure.

For the others, visiting and riding to the river, two of Jerusha's chief pleasures, were probably the economic limits of social freedom. But more organized social affairs like the dances held at the Leonard Tavern, provided some diversion from their tedious daily chores. And sometimes even the chores were made into social events for the women of Sunderland as they were for the women of Princeton. On March 15, 1791, "myself with sisters & the Ladies of this Town went to Widow Graves to assist Mrs Graves in sewing." Reference to quilting bees also suggests that sexual dividing lines were more important than age groups in specialized forms of industry and the socializing that
surrounded them.

The tradition of combining work with visiting was not exclusively women's, and in April, 1791, despite "cold and squalls of snow" it is likely that whole families showed up to help get "Mr. Gr. Barn raised." And there is no reason to think it was much less of an occasion than the meeting house raising in Princeton, for if a family ever expected help again in raising a building, they had to provide plenty of good food and probably an adequate supply of "articles of the West India kind."

But such diversion was infrequent and something more regular was needed in Sunderland, so a singing school was formed. In November and December, after the 1791 harvest, the singing school practiced at the Leonard Tavern, and on December 21 Jerusha recorded the first Public singing School at the school House." The performance must have been inspiring, for in January Jerusha attended singing school.

A less important, but very regular event in Jerusha's life was attendance at church. During early 1791 when the church was seeking a new minister, she took greater interest in the preaching than usual. In February she wrote,"Cloudy; been at meeting heard Mr. Minor Preach Exceedingly well; from J 8.20." (p. 5) The abbreviation "J" suggests that she knew little about the books of the Bible or cared little about her own records. At any rate, her taste coincided
with Sunderland's, and in March the town called Mr. Minor to be pastor. More typical Sunday entries are "Sunday pleasant went to meeting no preaching went to the River at Night," and "Sabbath dry pleasant went to meeting Mr. Smith preached AM from Heb. 10.39 PM Rom 1.28 walked to the River with Polly." (pp. 9, 18) Though Jerusha regularly attended church meetings, these entries suggest that Sunday was equally important as a day of recreation. Occasionally visiting was combined with religious duty when Jerusha attended church meetings in Leverett or other nearby towns. But the church was less important socially than it was for Elizabeth Fuller in Princeton, for Sunderland had two taverns and liberal visiting conventions.

The most striking features of Jerusha's life were the amount of leisure time she had and the remarkable freedom to use it as she pleased. It was probably such a girl who prompted Tocqueville's surprise forty years later,

nowhere are young women surrendered so early or so completely to their own guidance.
Long before an American girl arrives at the marriageable age, her emancipation from maternal control begins; she has scarcely ceased to be a child when she already thinks for herself, speaks with freedom, and acts on her own impulse. Tocqueville went on to say that although young women were far more free in America than elsewhere, "a wife is subjected to stricter obligations" than the European wife. At

12 Tocqueville, 2:209.
marriage "the independence of woman is irrecoverably lost." If Tocqueville's observation was applicable in 1802, Jerusha must have changed her life style considerably when she married Captain William Ashley of Hudson, New York.

But the meetings and travels of the "young married people" Jerusha described in Sunderland show that women were not suddenly imprisoned in their husbands' homes as Tocqueville suggests, though he claimed that women "attach a sort of pride to the voluntary surrender of their will" and "bend themselves to the yoke." What confined women to their homes was not their husbands, but their children. The children had to be cared for and watched over by someone; since by convention the father had to be out at work, this job always fell to the mother, who was then constantly needed by the family. This accounts for the obvious lack of one group-category in Jerusha's diary; though the young people, young married people, and the old people had some visible social cohesion and freedom to travel together, there was no group labeled "young parents," for having children restricted both social activity and freedom to travel.

It was in this category that Jerusha began marriage,

13 Tocqueville, 2:212.
15 Tocqueville, 2:223.
for Captain Ashley had four children by a previous marriage, and she soon added two more of her own. But her life was not suddenly devoid of all social activity, for her husband kept a country store at his house until his death in 1847. The atmosphere in the home must have been much like that in which Jerusha grew up, when her father kept store at their house before he purchased the inn. But the details of that time cannot be known, for Jerusha's diary ended in 1792, ten years before her marriage, and genealogical records make no mention of her beyond the birth of her second child in 1806.16

16 Trowbridge, p. 113.
CHAPTER IV

SOPHRONIA GROUT

The diaries of Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard reflect cheerful, energetic lives that make it tempting to romanticize and idealize the position of young women in the early republic. An antidote for this urge is the diary of Sophronia Grout, which reveals an emotionally, physically and socially troubled young woman. In many ways she fit the stereotyped image of the inhibited, frail, religiously obsessed Victorian woman. Sophronia was born and raised in Hawley, Massachusetts, a rural hilltown in the Berkshires, which was incorporated in 1792, almost eighty years after the fertile land of the river valleys of western Massachusetts had been taken up by early settlers like Jerusha Leonard's ancestors in Sunderland. Less than a year after incorporating, the congregation of the hill town called Jonathan Grout to be minister.¹

Born in Westborough, Massachusetts in 1763, Jonathan Grout had served as a chaplain in the Revolutionary army before completing his education at Harvard and accepting the

¹William Giles Atkins, History of the Town of Hawley, Massachusetts, from its First Settlement in 1771 to 1887 with Family Records and Biographical Sketches (West Cumington, Mass.: n.p., 1887), pp. 8-9.
pastorate of Hawley in 1793. There he married Polly Taylor from the neighboring town of Buckland in 1795.²

Sophronia was born July 12, 1800, the second daughter of Jonathan and Polly Grout. Sophronia's older sister Polly had been born two years earlier in 1798, and other brothers and sisters were added every other year up to 1812—Jonathan, Samuel, Esther, Joseph, Henry, and Sarah.

Sophronia Grout, who was born in 1800, began her diary in 1815 during a period of religious revival in Hawley. The first entry records her experience at a small religious gathering, one of many weekday gatherings that were held during the revival,

I went to conference Thursday evening I stepped in the house several come to me and asked me it I could not rejoice. I almost sunk. Then I thought there was no pardon for me If anyone spoke to me my distress seem to increase I thought probably I had committed the unpardonable sin. (41.1)³

Though she never specified the nature of her "unpardonable sin," she described her distress vividly. As the others


³Fourteen manuscript segments of Sophronia Grout's diary-(MS 41-53, 58) are in the Hawley box of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association archives, Deerfield, Massachusetts. In this citation and those that follow, a manuscript number is given in parentheses. Where pages are numbered in the manuscript, a page number is given after the manuscript number. Dates are indicated in the text where available and appropriate, but the diarist herself often left dates unclear in her sporadic entries.
rejoiced in God's grace, she only felt "cold. I felt that God would be entirely just did he caste me off." (41.1)

After an hour she began to be caught up in the revivalistic spirit of the meeting,

I heard a psalm read it appeared very different the singing appeared beautiful It sounded remarkable sweet everyone seemed to be a praising God. The character of Christ appeared lovely the people all looked a very different countenance I felt myself in a new world I thought I had not an enemy in the world. I could truly say it was a heaven upon earth I longed to leave this world and go to Jesus. (41.1)

But she only left the conference and went home. The social setting, in which others helped her find God, was an essential part of her religious experience at this time, for when she returned home she already "felt a less degree of love to God." (41.1) This waning spirit allowed for another conversion experience at Friday night's conference, where

Six found Christ. It was a rejoicing evening some were one moment wringing their hands despairing of mercy and the next as it were, rejoicing in God . . . I was raised above this world in imagination . . . I thought I was wholly cleansed from sin and would no more be troubled with it. I thought I could never wander from God. The Bible appeared like a new book.

Not surprisingly, the spirit had again fled by Saturday, when she took up her Bible and found that it did not appear so lovely I thought of my state for a moment and was much worried thought I had rejoiced when had no reason to I retired to my chamber mourning the loss of God's presence.

On this occasion her father, the minister of Hawley, comforted her by reading from the Bible.

It can be seen from these entries that Sophronia
Grout's diary was essentially a self-portrait, a portrait that she apparently modeled on the lives she had read about in publications of the American Tract Society. Such external influences are obvious in the abrupt stylistic changes in her diary, like the sudden and frequent use of "ah" and "alas," and in the heavy use of Biblical language and allusion. The parable of the prodigal son provided the most important archetype for Sophronia's self-portrait. The pattern had four distinct stages: (1) self-doubt, (2) self-abasement and despair, (3) guidance and encouragement from an external source, leading to a conversion experience, and (4) exhilaration. This recurring pattern had two distinct roles, the "prodigal son" and a father-confessor type of authority figure.

This pattern was central to the teenage life of Sophronia and provides a key to her later life. Though self-doubt and despair were a part of the pattern, other stages were sure to follow, thus the conversion cycle provided great stability and security for Sophronia. When she "strayed from the flock," was "lost in stupidity," "wandering in this waste and howling wilderness," she knew that she could "like the prodigal son fall down before his face" and expect God to put her on the right path. (41.35) From the first step in the cycle she knew what the outcome would be. The use of another metaphor also shows that, despite the despair and self-abasement, there was no ques-
tion where the sequence of events must lead. She recorded, "I am still in darkness seeking after my Beloved but alas cannot find him. I have been much in darkness this day." (41.5) But, just as surely as night alternates with day, "the sun of righteousness again shown in my soul." (41.5)

Though it was probably unconscious, especially in her moments of despair, the metaphors she chose usually incorporated patterns that fit her conversion cycle and inevitably led to salvation. The apparently sexual metaphor--"in darkness seeking after my Beloved"--was never continued in sexual terms, but often ended, as this sequence did, with a more subdued statement that she "enjoyed real comfort this evening." At other times she described this fourth stage of the cycle in euphoric--but not sexual--terms,

How pleasant it is to draw near to God I have taken my bible and walked the field to behold the works of God I have enjoyed sweet communion with a holy God . . . The frogs were a peeping seemed to praise God the trees, the grass and even the stones seemed to praise the blest Redeemer (41.7)

The cyclical nature of the pattern is clearly shown in one entry that began with a similar view in which "all nature seem united together speaking forth the praises of the Almighty." But even the apparent purity of nature was deceptive. In the midst of her celebration of God's nature, Sophronia caught herself,

O how can my mind be so much upon the things of the world I have set my affections too much upon this world O when shall I be free from sin. Can there be any room for grace in my heart? (41.11)
Thus she began to set the stage for a new conversion from her backslidden state. It was just as sure that darkness would follow light as night would follow day.

The roles in the conversion cycle are as important as the stages. In the role of prodigal son, Sophronia had to be heard by someone and she had to feel that the listener was convinced of her sincere humility and repentence as she moved toward conversion. At first her friends filled that role during the frequent religious conferences as she opened her heart and confessed her sinfulness to them. Other times her father tried to console her. But friends and family must have tired of Sophronia's frequent conversions.

Sophronia, however, had become involved enough in the two-role pattern, or "game" in modern behavioral terms, \(^4\) that she could not relinquish easily, so she sought others to fill the complementary role. When friends and relatives were exhausted, she spoke to her diary or spoke through it to God. In the diary she created a role player with whom she could isolate herself and play ideal games, uninterrupted by the usual human complications of disagreement and apathy. One day in 1816 she

\[
\text{again retired to my beloved chamber where I frequently retire from the bustle of the world and enjoy sweet communion with God here I have spent my happyest hours}
\]

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here I have many a time wept and mourned over my past life and here I have often supplicated the throne of grace and poured out my soul to God in prayer. Many a time have I taken my book my pen and paper and while employed in the delightful task of writing I have enjoyed that peace of mind which the world can neither give nor take away. (41.28)

Though secluded, she filled the confessor-authority role with God and communicated to him through the diary.

At other times, using apostrophe, she managed both the sinner and authority roles herself,

Why O my soul hast thou left thy God? Why hast thou wandered from thy God? Why hast thou wandered thus far from him? didst thou expect such comfort in the world as thou hast enjoyed with God? (41.37)

Thus, even when she had no one to assume the other role in her game, in seclusion Sophronia could create it in herself.

In doing so she began to make a transition of great importance in her life. The role of repentant sinner might have been appropriate in the revivalism of Sophronia's teenage years, but it alone was not enough to meet the demands society put on her throughout life. Though the role was in some ways untenable, the pattern was not, and she preferred switching roles to surrendering the familiar pattern. If one role was impossible to maintain, the security to be found in another role within the same pattern was preferable to completely abandoning the pattern. After a four-year gap in her diary, twenty-year-old Sophronia announced on May 15, 1821, "This day have commenced my school." (41.52) At first the pattern looks new, but it is soon apparent that she only switched roles and became the authority figure who helps
others on the road to salvation,

I look around on 30 children whose minds are susceptible of any impression either good or bad and I almost shrink at the task that devolves upon me. (41.52)

In Hawley, as in many Congregationalist towns, education was regarded as a prerequisite for salvation. Those who could not read the Bible could not hope to understand it and live by it. It was the teacher's job to see that children learned how to read the Bible. Always awed by the role, Sophronia, like many teachers before and since, "felt very anxious for my little flask this day. How great are the duties incumbent on an instructor of youth." (41.52) The role that seemed new to this twenty-year-old woman had actually been anticipated in her teens in the interest she took in the salvation of others. She felt righteous when she "understood that the young people in Goshen collected together and danced. I tremble for them." (41.13) She was shocked "that beings of rational powers can go on careless and heedless for their immortal soul—the young people in Ashfield last week attended two balls." (41.50) But later she felt more responsibility when she visited Ashfield and found some

to be deeply engaged in the vanities of the world and unconcerned about their immortal part. O how anxious do I feel for them particularly for . . . my dear cousin O why will she not attend to these important things . . . O Lord I will commit her to thy care for thou canst do far better for her than I. (41.32)

Apparently fearing that the Lord had not yet succeeded, the
next day Sophronia "conversed with her she appeared much affected she seemed very desirous of obtaining religion."

This missionary interest was not new to Sophronia, who had long been a member and officer of the Hawley Female Charitable Society, which supported missionary efforts, such as the payment for the "education of a Heathen child in Ceylon to be named Jonathan Grout." Like other members of the society, she was impressed with the missionary zeal of her father, who had gone on missions to the Indians in Maine, and in his preaching in Hawley had attempted to show that it was only through the medium of missionary labors that God's word could be spread. "Without the outward means of light and instruction from gospel truths, fallen man will never be reclaimed." The value of missionary work was further impressed upon her by her readings. In an undated fragment of her diary, she recorded

reading the memoirs of Catherine Brown. I think she was a lovely example of true religion. Who can read her writings & doubt the practicability of trying to civilize the Indians. (MS 42)

For Sophronia, trying to civilize the children in her own class was a job, but it was an almost ideal task in many


ways, giving her a role in which her students depended upon her for advice and direction, but she in turn depended upon God. The interdependence of her two roles was apparent in her diary entry for June 18, 1830, she

had more perplexity in school to day than usual. Much of the evil however originated in myself. I did not feel so much solicitude for them as usual . . . I did not feel my dependence [on Go... ] so much and it seemed as if my scholars were united in idleness. my patience was extremely tried & I feared I should lose my calmness. (51.3)

It was only when she felt her weakness that God gave her strength. But when she felt that she could control the school without God's help, "I attempt in vain, disorder ensues, the pupils are slothful, inclined to play &c." (51.3)

On one occasion she reprimanded one of her "large pupils," who responded with very abusive language. Such discipline problems with "large pupils" were common during this period, when boys in their late teens often worked for a living and were treated as men during the summer, but were sent back to schools and treated as children during the winter months. The tension and frustration created by the disparity of roles frequently surfaced in unbecoming conduct in the schools. 7

But Sophronia was unaware that the problem was common to so many schools. In frustration, she even swore not to teach again,

should my life be spared to finish this season I never should dare commence so great a task again . . . Scarce can I handle my pen if tears could guide it, it would

In times of stress like this, it is interesting to note that as Sophronia grew older, she occasionally abandoned her habit of explaining all that happened to her in entirely religious terms, believing events reflected God's approval or disapproval. She assigned the cause of the events not to herself but to another—her "large pupil"—and saw the consequences in social terms, greatly fearing that her teaching would be "censured by the neighborhood." (41.54)

As Sophronia matured, her idea of God's will and the good of the community blended, leaving her in awe both of God and "the neighborhood."

Sophronia apparently was not censured by the neighborhood, nor did she give up teaching, nor did she long view her classroom in other than religious terms. Before the school term was over she recorded,

This is the 3rd school I have had the care of—two seasons I pondered much upon the propriety of a female erecting an altar in her school but now my doubts are removed. I think it duty—I feel it to be my duty. (41.53)

She drew no sharp lines between religious and other training, for all schooling was for the same purpose in the long run, the saving of souls—her mission. Ideally, her students would not only save their souls, but would also make the role shift from repentant sinner to missionary as Sophronia had.

When she was in her early thirties, Sophronia often
held "sabbath school" classes for a few children in her father's study during the winter months. She urged her students to contribute one cent on the first sabbath of each month for the Bible Society. But one 1830 passage reveals that she expected more than financial support for missions; she discussed her own responsibility for "souls minds under my care soon to affect society & probably become Sabbath School Teachers. What can I do for them?" (49.3) The comment echoes the theme of a composition she wrote earlier in 1830, while a student at Mary Lyon's Buckland Female School. In loosely structured verse she described a sabbath school teacher, who, in "thoughtlessness, her given task rehears'd. "She instructed "those whose morn of life was yet in bloom," of an awe inspiring God and

Of him
Who died for sinful man, and how they must
Ere long appear before the dread tribunal
Of God Almighty. And while awful truths
Were gliding o'er her lips, her eye display'd
A vacancy, that told her heartlessness,
And through each pupil's breast a chill diffus'd

Seeing her error, the teacher returned the following Sunday
"with an eye / That had not lost the lustre which it caught /
While at the altar knelt," and then "Not one among her charge presum'd to wear / A look of thoughtlessness." Her teaching was successful because she spoke "with such a holy

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warmth, that it could ne'er / Congeal, 'till it should reach
the inmost heart." The poem then moves ahead several years
to a female missionary about to leave

For Burmah's clime as her best earthly home,
The weary hands of Christ's ambassador
To stay, and lead deluded females to her God.

But before leaving, she clasped the hand of another, saying,

To you, my Sabbath teacher, sure I owe,
Through Christ, my willingness to sacrifice
My earthly ease, salvation to diffuse.
And ah, if Burmah's daughters ever rise
From their degraded wretched sinful state,
If ever I lead one wandering soul to Christ,
I'll teach that sable sister your fond name,
And we united, will adore that God,
Who moved a heart to form the Sabbath School.

This poem, a mixture of autobiography and fantasy, most
clearly depicts the model Sophronia tried to emulate during
most of her adult life.

One of the most striking features of the poem is the
stress on intensely personal, heartfelt communication. For
Sophronia, that communication flowed most easily when those
involved were isolated from the rest of the world. And in
1822, though she could say that she had never taught "a
more agreeable school" and never resided "in a neighborhood
where the situation was more favorable to a school teacher,"
it still was not ideal; she would,

delight, when engaged in the important task of in-
structing the tender minds to be retired from the
bustle of the noisy world, I would have the little dome
in some obscure valley where lofty summits rise irregu-
larly around I would have lofty sturdy trees . . .
surround me shoot their spreading branches so around as
to seclude us from all that is calculated to attract
the attention of my pupils and lead their minds from
their books (43.3)
In seclusion, whether imagined with her class or in the "sweet retirement" of her room that she enjoyed so much, she could play out the roles of her game as she knew they should be.

Had the world conformed more closely to her ideal, she probably would have placed less value on seclusion; in 1823 she wrote,

I would not always be alone if I could— I delight to converse with a pious friend & am assured that if christians spent more of the precious time allotted them in pious intercourse they would be more useful. (43.14)

There is strong emphasis on using all time profitably, but for Sophronia the consequences were spiritual. In one entry she called herself a "wretched creature" and resolved not to leave her father's house for any reason but worship because

when I see my friends and the theme of religion so seldom the subject of my conversation that a retrospect is generally painful. I visit, then retire and wet my couch with tears. Such is my life— I am unhappy because I do no good. I cannot see that I am useful to any fellow creature. (43.11)

In the events of her life she found confirmation of her belief that frivolous use of time was sinful. Returning from a journey to New York in 1823 she was "animated with the idea of again seeing my friends recounting to them various scenes" and experiences she had had,

but I dared not amuse myself in this manner long . . . We soon called at a friends the last house which we expected to call at before we reached our own Intelligence was soon brought that Joseph my beloved brother was drowned. I could not say what doest thou? I saw
I deserve afflictions. It is perfectly right seemed to be impressed upon my mind . . . The stroke is heavy but not undeserved. (43.16)

She recognized the message God sent her through this event, but, in her egocentricity, she failed to note the heavy and apparently unwarranted toll paid by the messenger, her brother.

With such interpretations of events, it is not difficult to see why Sophronia often preferred seclusion and prayer to the company and entertainment that tempted her. But there were other factors that led to her isolation, not the least among them was chronic illness. There were several periods of long illness in her life when she was both pained by disease and frustrated by her inability to be useful. Early in 1832 she was quite ill and felt sorry that

Mother had no daughter at home to relieve her of her cares & assist her in the hardest part of the work. Now she must do alone. I had engaged a school that must be relinquished. (49.13)

She had frequently seen apparently healthy young people grow suddenly ill and die, and she often expected death to follow her own illnesses; during an earlier period of extended illness in 1823, she wrote,

I am yet an earthly inhabitant--am still wandering in this wilderness of tears. When will the employments of the heavenly choir be mine? . . . I feel I am a dry fig tree. I see mountains rise before me The path of life looks dark, extremely dark blocked with thorn the valley of death I have the cheering reflection that I shall not always live on this globe . . . soon this
clayey tenement will be relinquished by me forever. (43.13)

Unfortunately, the jumble of metaphors and allusions cannot be attributed to her illness, but the effects of the illness must have been great if we can judge by one of the few descriptions she gave,

Have been enabled to complete more work this day than for more than three years before & am less fatigued than I have been daily a great part of the time for three years. How often has my strength been so exhausted after a walk in the garden that I was obliged to repair to my bed ... I wish not to forget those seasons of affliction. They were as much from the hand of God as the prosperity which I now enjoy ... The first season I was deprived of health, so frequent was my bleeding at the lungs that I suffered much after an interview with friends ... I sometimes had to use great exertion to converse. (47.4)

Often her eyes were too weak to read, food gave her severe indigestion and she was too pained to sleep. Her severe and chronic distress made her think often of death, but even suffering and death fit into a larger pattern of her conversion cycle. For her sinful life, she felt she might have to suffer until the day of death, a thought which fascinated her and even demanded versification,

That awful day will surely come
The appointed hour makes haste
When I must stand before my Judge
And pass the solemn test (41.31)

"Awful" should be understood as "awe-filled," for Sophronia did not fear death, indeed, she often wished to be "weaned from this vain this transitory world." (41.27) She even lamented, "but I will wait Gods time." (41.14)

Though Sophronia's own physical condition forced her
to be a recluse for long periods of time, even during the long illnesses some friends came to visit and, apparently following custom, often brought gifts. Early in 1833,

Two friends called this morning and presented me with several yards of cloth, another sent by them half a dollar. This evening another friend left half a dollar in my hand . . . I have received about four dollars from benevolent friends within five months. (49.18)

On another occasion she received "a present from Mrs L" and commented, "God is opening the hearts of Many to add something to my comfort." (46.1) It is not clear whether these gifts were the product of friendship or an obligation felt by the members of Jonathan Grout's congregation. By 1833 Grout was growing old and infirm, but the congregation felt obligated to follow the convention which gave a minister life tenure. When a minister of such a congregation became too feeble or cantankerous to serve them properly, they hired an assistant pastor, as Hawley had done many years earlier, to take over most of his functions; but the congregation continued to assume responsibility for supporting the older minister and his family. 9 This was the situation in the early 1830's when the septagenerian Reverend Grout was clearly declining in health and ability to function as minister.

By this time Sophronia was in her thirties and had

mellowed considerably. There were far fewer diary entries like, "Let others serve whom they will I am determined that I will serve my God." (41.36) More often her diary reflected concern over the difficulties she had in establishing and maintaining friendships. Apparently criticized for gossiping too much, she made a resolution in 1830 "not to speak of the faults of others the ensuing week," but left a loophole, "without duty requires it," and continuing in the style of Ben Franklin as he strove for moral perfection, she resolved "to keep an account of the number of times which I violate this resolution." (49.4) The resolution apparently did not hold up, but the criticism did, for she made the same resolution several times more during the following year. Other resolutions met with about the same success, but a year later, in 1832, she put her resolutions into a form that suited her better; acting more like Franklin than Franklin himself, she resolved

To write down all those defects of character I see in others conduct & examine my own character to see if I do not possess the same. (49.9)

Naturally, she did not often find much fault in her own social graces, and even had difficulty finding fault when others pointed to it,

I find I want meekness. My feelings naturally ardent. When a subject has occupied my attention considerable I perhaps too often speak to others of it when it would be more prudent to confine my views to my own bosom, & it cuts my heart to be accused of pretensions to more wisdom than others. I find I cannot bear inconsistency of reasoning in others . . . (49.9)
She was just as mystified at the suggestion of another fault a week later,

I believe there is something in my demeanor that indicates a self-righteous spirit. I know not what it is, but I have no reason to think I should so often be accused of this if there were not some of it lurking within . . . For one who is constantly doing something wrong and wondering at her own conduct, to have the appearance of egotism when with others, is strange. (49.11)

The problem Sophronia could not find lay in patterns that were so much a part of her life that she could never see the situation in perspective.

During her life the applications of the two role pattern (repentant sinner and missionary) broadened considerably, expanding into education and a general belief that she should "never ask, how I can get to Heaven the easiest; but how I can do the **most good** on my journey there." (58.20) But a key factor was present in almost all her relationships, whether spiritual or temporal: the presence of two unequal roles roughly fitting the missionary pattern. There was no provision for the relationship of peers. In her spiritual relations she wished "to have my will wholly swallowed up in God's will." (58.15) In her relation to the church she was "glad to be under the watch and care of the church that they might reprove me when I get out of the way of my duty." (41.6) During the revivalism of her teenage years her father or friends played the role of missionary as Sophronia was helped toward heaven. In the classroom
and fantasized missionary work the pattern is obvious, though Sophronia had changed to the role of missionary. When she was ill and in need, she was glad to have friends bring presents and minister to her. But when she was well and tried to meet them as equals, she could not cope with the situation, which did not have superior-inferior related roles; she awkwardly adapted her missionary role, leading others to accuse her of righteousness and pretentiousness.

The role of teacher suited Sophronia best, and in it she found the happiest and most vigorous moments of her life. It both fit the missionary pattern that was so basic to her social relations and met with approbation in society. Without it she felt despondent and often tried vainly to create a similar role. In August of 1830 she felt unusually stupid . . . do not so much feel my dependence on God as I did when surrounded by young minds susceptible of being guided . . . But no excuse, I have duties to perform, to my fellow creatures, in our own family I have something to do. (49.1)

The something she had to do was probably work on her brother, Henry, and he provided quite a challenge, for a year later she still reported, "My brother H remains yet an enemy of God, professes to believe that this revival is principally the excitement of the passion & will soon subside." (49.6) If Sophronia diverted her missionary zeal to her brother, his home life must have been trying.
But for Sophronia home was a wonderful place,

If there is a spot on earth which I can say I love it
is within those walls where peace has ever been my
pillow where parental care has screened me from the
ills of life, yes the dearest place on earth is home.  
(43.12)

The resemblance of this passage to the description of an
ideal school, "in some obscure valley" surrounded by tall
trees, is striking, and suggests that the teacher-student
relationship she constructed in the classroom was based on
the parent-child model she had had at home. Sophronia said
little about her family in diary entries, but some know-
ledge of her father's personality can be gleaned from ac-
counts of contemporaries. A neighboring minister reported,

Mr. Grout was a diligent, laborious and successful
minister. He loved his people and his people loved
him. He was emphatically sociable, hospitable, kind-
hearted ... 10

A member of Grout's congregation, P.L. Page, remembered the
minister for his stern manner when he visited every family
and made a point of speaking to each member of the family
"concerning his spiritual condition," and before leaving,

standing at the door, would give some words of gen-
eral exhortation to all. This custom, though some-
times distasteful, making the minister's visits
dreaded, especially by the young, was, I think, on
the whole, beneficial for those times.11

10 Johnson, p. 12.

Another member of the congregation remembered the minister as he appeared in the church,

a large, robust, rotund personage, to my eyes the perfect embodiment of all that goes to make a man and a hero. Even to day I can in fancy hear his round, sonorous voice, as from the immensely high pulpit he read the hymns and invoked God's blessing or expounded the scriptures to his flock. 12

The picture that emerges from these descriptions is of a kindhearted but forceful man who could make his warmth felt but still maintain a distance from his congregation. The distance was literally vertical in the symbolic height of the pulpit, and figuratively so in visits to church members. This image, remarkably like the teacher in "Sabbath School," with warmth extended across a vertical distance, makes clearer the means by which "parental care ... screened" Sophronia "from the ills of life," and the reason "the dearest place on earth is home."

But the security of home could not last forever; Reverend Jonathan Grout, who had been declining for years, died in his seventy-third year on June 6, 1835. A few months earlier, with her father's death imminent, Sophronia saw that she

must now commence a new era in my life. Yes now in my thirty fifth year; with a slender impaired constitution. I must go abroad in the wide world & seek employment. (46.2)

In doing so she felt sure that God, more and more often re-

12Quoted in Atkins' History of Hawley, p. 122.
ferred to as "my father in heaven," could as "easily find me employment as he can support those who sit in the midst of luxurience & grandeur." And if God did not provide it, it would be because "he sees that I need to suffer for want of such things." (46.2)

Following this her diary entries were far less frequent. March 29, 1836 found her in Williamsburg, Massachusetts, where she asked God's assistance in relieving the conditions under which she worked,

My mind is much tried. I have such an aversion to the room where I work that I cannot bear the thought of going to my daily task. The air is so oppressive that we find it necessary to open the windows, which at this season of the year is not conducive to my health. (46.5)

She apparently worked in one of the factories in Williamsburg in a system of labor management that was generally regarded as enlightened. In this system, farmers' daughters were employed for the lowest ranks of production, at once making them economically useful to their families and saving the community the problems involved in having a permanent lower class, since it was assumed the farmers' daughters would soon marry, thereby creating a continuous turnover in the work force.13

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The farmers' daughters, who had first done piece work at home for the emerging entrepreneurs, and later had moved to the factories, were not to be left unattached when they finished work. Their supervision was the responsibility of the matrons of their boarding houses. Sophronia had apparently taken such a position by June of 1836, when she complained of

*a severe trial with a little girl under my care. The history of her life thus far I cannot satisfactory learn, but she appears to have learned not much that is praiseworthy. With a naturally bright intellect, her temper is violent.* (46.6)

Later in the month she had a "severe trial with the little girl. She evidently has been in some corrupt place . . . " (46.6) Characteristically, Sophronia made plans for her instruction, but in her only later report, Sophronia remained unsuccessful.

Sophronia received the new environment of Williamsburg with shock, humility, and a sense of challenge, all tempered by a perspective formed on her periodic visits to her home in Hawley. In visits home to the fruit trees her father had planted and other nostalgic scenes, she felt grateful that she had grown up in such a religious environment and had the benefit of her father's and other minister's teachings in the rural town of Hawley. That life contrasted sharply with the one she found in Williamsburg,

*To mingle daily with a crowd to be almost stunned with the noise of machinery day after day week after week & month after month is something I could not submit to*
did I not view this a place designed me by one who is omniscient. (46.7)

Sophronia found the place designed for her as a supervisor of younger girls in a boarding house. The six or eight girls she governed came from varied religious and educational backgrounds,

some of their minds destitute of culture & so habituated to the use of low vulgar words, that I am often disgusted & cannot refrain from reproving them. (46.8)

The girls in her care needed "a mothers guidance," said Sophronia in a very rare positive reference to her sex, and she asked her "father in heaven" to help her to give it. (46.8)

The final entries in the extant diary of Sophronia Grout reflect the same shock at the women she met in Williamsburg and her attempts to cope with them. How long she remained in Williamsburg is unknown. Later references by her sisters to comments Sophronia made and ideas of an "older sister" are very few and trail off quickly after 1837. Thus the complex fabric of Sophronia's life as depicted in her diary dwindles to a few stray threads and then nothing. But the diary fragments she left, like those of Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard, help us picture the rich and varied lives of young Massachusetts women during the early years of the republic.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The diaries of Elizabeth Fuller, Jerusha Leonard and Sophronia Grout make it clear that generalizations about young women of the early republic—even the small-town New England girl—must be made with great care. Young women of the period from 1790 to 1830 may be even harder to stereotype than their counterparts today. Individual differences exist in both periods, but mass communication has glossed over many sharp sociological differences that once existed between communities. These differences have too often been forgotten by modern scholars who have frequently discussed middle class women of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a homogeneous group. Consequently, it is not surprising that the three young women in this study do not fit neatly into the image depicted by the cult of true womanhood or the image scholars ascribe to her precursor. The causes modern scholars ascribe to women’s role tensions also seem in need of qualification.

Elizabeth Fuller, a happy, well adjusted young woman living in Princeton, Massachusetts, during the 1790’s, defined herself in concentric circles of family and commu-
nity. Her range of activities was further determined by the season, her age and her sex. Within the family there was a division of labor based on sex, in which men and boys handled most outside chores while women and girls took most of the inside chores on the farm. Here it is evident that the delicacy ascribed to women by the cult of true womanhood had roots in rural traditions of an earlier period and was not the result of industrialization or increased leisure time.

One scholar has complained that despite the economic importance of women's positions in rural America, women were still regarded as "daughters and wives, not as individuals."¹ But to some degree the same argument can be made for sons and husbands, whose lives also centered on the farm and related chores. Domestic chores and industries such as baking, brewing, cheese-making, soap-making, candle-making, spinning, and weaving were as diversified and respected as the work handled by the men of the Fuller family, and it was there on the farm that all family members spent the greatest part of their time. The jack-of-all-trades image was equally erroneous for men's and women's work. Timothy Fuller farmed, as did most of his neighbors, and he provided the specialized services of a lawyer. Likewise, his daughter, Elizabeth, knew household chores well,

¹Lerner, "The Lady and the Mill Girl," p. 84.
and worked at the specialized craft of weaving, while other family members specialized in other home industries. Thus Elizabeth's diary confirms the economic importance of women in their rural, pre-industrial family roles, but assigns nearly equal prestige to male and female roles.

Men and women in Princeton also had parallel roles in social relationships. Both sexes visited freely when work and weather permitted, and the very few social relationships that extended beyond the circle of the community were based on family ties. These family ties were primarily emotional connections between nuclear families that settled in different areas. This nuclear family structure confirms the scholarship of Laslett, Goode, Furstenberg, and others who have argued that the nucleation of families was not caused by industrialization, but rather, preceded it and helped create the climate for urban, industrial growth.

The family ties that led to the long journeys mentioned in all three diaries testify to a continuing emotional cohesion in the extended family, confirming Shorter's analysis in *The Making of the Modern Family*, but the infrequency of visits suggests that in times of stress an individual could derive little emotional support from the extensions of his family. Likewise, there was little economic connection in evidence among extensions of the family. The only economic significance discernable in any of the diaries was in Sally Fuller's extended stay with an
aunt and uncle during which she apparently worked as a seamstress. The pervasive economic connections Farber found among Salem's extended families of 1800 could not be found in the rural towns of Princeton, Sunderland, and Hawley.

The mobility to visit relatives in other towns belonged to both male and female members of the family. The freedom to travel on business was confined to the male roles in Princeton, however. Here again, a facet of the role constriction that would seem so oppressive in the 1830's and 1840's was clearly present before 1800 and industrialization, and, though she made no explicit complaint about her role, Elizabeth Fuller showed a great interest in the mobility that was denied her. Her diary shows that she found her father's business trips very noteworthy. If frequency of notation is a sign of prestige, it was Timothy Fuller's short business trips that made his role more prestigious than that of his wife. No doubt, he was more involved in political activities than his wife too, though Elizabeth never mentioned the political involvement other historians have noted in writing about Fuller. Apparently unable to wield any political power, or even hope to, Elizabeth, like Jerusha Leonard and Scphronia Grout, completely overlooked it in her diary entries. It was the small fraction of Timothy Fuller's time that he spent traveling on business that seems to have made the greatest impression
on his daughter, Elizabeth.

Otherwise, the different roles assigned to men and women were not unequal, but simply different in Elizabeth's eyes. Both sexes spent most time on the farm, working or playing with the other family members. Respect and economic value were attached to specialized work done by both sexes. Church-going and social visiting in Princeton were generally the limits of social interaction and were equally enjoyed by both sexes. These were the important facts of Elizabeth Fuller's life. The family and community were her reference groups. If anything political or military went on beyond Princeton, it must have seemed distant and had little bearing on community life, for Elizabeth recorded no such occurrences. She had been born the year the British marched on Concord and Lexington, so war stories of the older generation were too common to be noted in her diary. And current political situations apparently were not the concern of women in Princeton, for a teenager trying to act the part of an adult woman would surely not have omitted all mention of politics if the women of her town took much interest in the field.

Only the men traveled much for business purposes in Princeton and that gave them an edge on prestige as reflected by Elizabeth Fuller's diary. But Jerusha Leonard's diary, which begins with a description of a 1791 business trip from the Connecticut River Valley town of Sunderland
to Boston, reveals no more interest in men's roles than women's. Her position was somewhat unusual in that her family was well off and Jerusha's mother had been licensed to run the Leonard Inn since her husband died in 1790. This case seems to support the argument that women held a wide variety of business positions before licensing laws, professionalization and other pressures constricted their role choices in the nineteenth century. Beyond this one case, however, there is little evidence in any of the diaries to support the thesis. On the other hand, Jerusha Leonard showed no consciousness of being in an unusual situation. When her father died in 1790, his wife and children assumed the work of managing the inn, with few distinctions made on the basis of sex. Though Jerusha and the women in her family seemed well acquainted with home industries, they also traveled a good deal on business. Such trips seemed as noteworthy to Jerusha as they did to Elizabeth Fuller, but Jerusha had at least as much opportunity to travel as her brothers. Consequently, the roles of women in Jerusha's family seem as prestigious as the roles of men.

Though in the long run the trend would diminish the role of women, the fact that men visited the Leonard Tavern much more often than women did not lead Jerusha to any higher regard for their role than hers. She defined herself in terms of social and business relationships that were
quite unlike Elizabeth Fuller's in some ways. While Elizabeth's life centered on the home and family, Jerusha's centered on the inn and its customers. Her references to guests at the inn are far more numerous than references to her family, again emphasizing the prestige of those who were mobile. Her position in the inn stretched her social and business relationships to all parts of New England, making her life far more cosmopolitan than Elizabeth Fuller's. But, despite her worldliness and her mother's involvement in occasional legal disputes, Jerusha apparently took no more interest in politics than Elizabeth Fuller.

Jerusha Leonard was very much a part of Sunderland, the community in which she had grown up. Like Elizabeth Fuller, Jerusha attended church regularly and socialized frequently with community members. But, half a century older than Princeton, Sunderland had evolved a more sophisticated system of subgroups. For Elizabeth in Princeton, the family and community were the only clearly identifiable groups she belonged to, though informal gatherings at harvest time involved other combinations of community members. Jerusha, perhaps because of her perspective in helping her mother keep the inn, recognized a number of distinct social groups in her community. The groups were based on age and marital status—the young people, the young married people and the old people—and each group had sufficient cohesiveness and mobility to inter-
act with its counterparts in surrounding communities. Married people with children were more restricted and had no recognizable social group, for the responsibilities of parenthood apparently restricted both young mothers' and young fathers' social activity in Jerusha's town.

Though Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard both lived in rural Massachusetts towns and wrote diaries during the 1790's, the differences in the communities they lived in are striking. Princeton, though farther east, was the younger town by half a century and had not evolved such complex economic or social structures as Sunderland. Princeton was also well away from main arteries of travel. Church meetings there were still the most important social gatherings, while Sunderland had two taverns that afforded social interaction any day of the week. In both towns singing schools relieved some of the boredom of the winter months, but in general, both family and community conventions allowed Jerusha Leonard far more freedom and mobility than Elizabeth Fuller. And social life was far more important to Jerusha, who barely mentioned she was running a school—and then only when she was dismissing it for the term, than to Elizabeth, who faithfully recorded every skein she spun and regarded any socializing as eventful.

While Elizabeth Fuller defined herself within circles of family and community and Jerusha saw herself in more complex social patterns relating to the community and more
distant connections she made as an innkeeper's daughter, Sophronia Grout had far more trouble finding a satisfactory reference group. In the first entries of her extremely introspective diary, dated 1816, she defined herself within a circle of friends who were also finding God during a period of revival, and beyond this circle of Christians in Hawley, Massachusetts, she defined herself directly in relation to God. In less revivalistic times she measured herself primarily in relation to God, while her social relationships were awkward and were almost always characterized by two vertically connected roles, not peer relations. Her social relations in Hawley were based in religious activities during her teenage years, though adjoining towns clearly had groupings more similar to those in Sunderland and Sophronia trembled at the very thought of the young people in Goshen dancing or the young people in Ashfield attending two balls in one week.

Sophronia's righteousness, need for vertical social relationships, and need to pay her own room and board led her to become a school teacher. The role suited her well, though it did not provide all the intellectual stimulation she might have liked. Yet that was the most intellectual position open to women at the time. Periodic attendance at schools like Mary Lyon's Buckland Female School, which she attended at age thirty, helped fill the gap. And even teaching was quite satisfactory in comparison to the last
position she held while keeping her diary--matron in a girls' boarding house in the mill town of Williamsburg, Massachusetts.

The troubles of Sophronia's social life and the vertical relationships that became such an integral part of it were partially due to the relationship she had with her father, but other young people in the town seem to have been similarly affected, and the phenomenon appears to go well beyond the Grout family to many of the people who joined the church in the periodic revivals. One explanation for this phenomenon comes from an understanding of Hawley's economy and demography.

Unlike the growing, prospering towns of Princeton and Sunderland, Hawley, whose population had soared from 22 in the 1770's to over a thousand in 1810, proved to have poor, rocky soil, and many of its farmers were ready to move on as better land to the west opened up. Hawley's population had already begun a long decline when Sophronia began her diary in 1816. In fact, that year was said to be "the Year of Two Winters . . . when snow fell a foot deep in June," helping thousands of Yankees decide to go west. 2 Most went west to find the level, rockless, farmland of Ohio that was competing so favorably with New England soil.

Still others left in that year of "Eighteen Hundred and Froze to Death" in fear of the wrath of God which seemed to be upon New England. By 1817 Joseph Smith had moved his family from New Hampshire to Palmyra, New York, where his son would later become a prophet and continue the westward movement.  

For the Grouts and others who remained in Hawley, the prospects for the town were not good. There were sound economic reasons for departing. The rich farming land in western New York and Ohio drew much of the population away and the produce from their farms undercut the market for New England's staples. Towns in the fertile Connecticut Valley, like Sunderland, easily shifted to dairy products and perishable produce that was demanded in the emerging mill towns, but poor land and the distance from markets put Hawley and similar hill towns at a distinct disadvantage. At the same time, the emerging mill towns offered more rewarding employment. Hawley lacked good soil, proximity to markets, proximity to major trade routes and the water power needed for industry, hence its population dropped as more and more of its inhabitants sought better economic situations in the West, in the rich farms of New England valleys, and in the mill towns.  

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3 Ibid., pp. 33-36, 48.

4 In addition to Holbrook's Yankee Exodus, a number of
The conditions in Hawley in 1816 are surprisingly similar to those that James C. Davies defines in his J-curve theory of violence and revolution:

a prolonged period of rising expectations and rising gratifications . . . followed by a short period of sharp reversal, during which the gap between expectations and gratifications quickly widens and becomes intolerable. 5

According to Davies, violence is likely to occur under such psychological conditions. In Hawley, there was no violence, perhaps because the more aggressive members of the town left, seeing the promise of gratification in the West. Those who remained in Hawley, the Grouts among them, displayed a second kind of response to the J-curve pattern of frustration,

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a response Davies did not consider. They turned to God. With no reasonable economic grounds for optimism, the town turned almost violently to God in a series of revivals, the largest of which was in 1816, when one hundred sixteen wandering souls of Hawley found God. Sophronia Grout was among them. Swept along with the fervor of the movement, she saw all ills that befell her as just retribution for her sins, but always hoped for a greater final reward. Such a religious reference frame gave those who stayed in Hawley both an explanation of their hard times and reason to hope for better. Those who lacked the courage to pull up roots and seek their fortune elsewhere were satisfied that no move they made could change the plans God had for them. Sophronia probably echoed the feelings of many in wishing "to have my will wholly swallowed in God's will."6

The religious reference frame not only explained Hawley's hard times, but made economic gains seem a temptation of Satan. Sophronia reflected,

Do I desire to feed on the pleasures of the alluring world rather than drink of the streams of sacred devotion? . . . I value the cheering rays of the Sun of Righteousness more than any worldly emolument.7

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6 Sophronia Grout, Diary, 58.11
7 Ibid.
Any time Sophronia gave in to the "pleasures of the alluring world," later reflection grieved her "to the heart—I feel that I have been feeding upon wind." The shunning of economics as a measure of success led Hawley to face hard times as if they were invigorating and the town even formed charitable societies to support missionary work in less fortunate areas. Revivalistic religion gave meaning and coherence to the dwindling town of Hawley.

For many of those who found God, as Sophronia did, a religious frame of reference became central to life. The doubters, like Sophronia's brother, Henry, moved on to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Henry studied law and set up a practice in Philadelphia.

Though the imprint of the larger community is most obvious in Sophronia's diary, the unique conventions and expectations of Princeton and Sunderland must have had an equally strong effect on Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard. The community was the universe in which each girl developed her value system and the mental template through which she interpreted the world around her.

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8Ibid.

The community was such an important social unit that generalizations based on the three diaries may have limited validity when applied to any fourth community, but a few generalizations about women's life styles do emerge. The three young women in this study lived in nuclear families with emotional ties to geographically remote family extensions. The care of small children in the family was apparently the responsibility of their mother. Formal schooling normally ended when a girl was in her mid teens, though later education, like thirty-year-old Sophronia's attendance at Buckland Female School, was not unheard of and allowed some access to an intellectual atmosphere for those who were not tied down by family commitments. As girls reached their mid teens they also expanded their work from simple house chores to specialized skills learned from parents or other members of the community, skills that would produce income for the family. Elizabeth Fuller learned to weave, while Jerusha Leonard took a greater part in the keeping of her mother's inn and, like her sister, taught school. When her health permitted, Sophronia Grout taught school too, and when her health was poor, she may well have helped her younger sister, Esther, who supplemented the family income by making bonnets and occasionally taking

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10 Catalogue of the Teachers and Pupils of the Buckland Female School for the Term Ending March 2, 1830 (Greenfield, Mass.: n.p., 1830).
odd sewing jobs.\textsuperscript{11} Though all three became economic assets to their families, their attitudes toward work differed greatly. Elizabeth Fuller took pride in her weaving, despite her mild complaints. But Jerusha Leonard barely mentioned her work as a teacher, for in the worldly town of Sunderland it meant far less to her than socializing at the inn. Sophronia's teaching, on the other hand, was of the greatest significance to her and she regarded it as a way to lead minds and souls to a path of righteousness. Likewise, religion was far more important to Sophronia than the other two, who attended church regularly but saw it much more as an opportunity for socializing than worshiping.

One surprising feature of two diaries, Sophronia's and Jerusha's, is the freedom to travel that young women had in the early years of the republic. Though some of Jerusha's travel was on business, some was also for pleasure, such as her extended stay at Dartmouth. Sophronia traveled to Saratoga Springs for her health and made a few trips to Hamilton, New York, where she stayed with relatives. While Elizabeth Fuller recorded no journeys of her own beyond Princeton, her sister and parents traveled periodically, usually with plans to stay with relatives. Such travel for pleasure and business modified the insular qual-

\textsuperscript{11}Esther W. T. Grout, MS account book, 1830-1838, MS 59 in Hawley box, archives of Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, Mass.
ity of rural towns in early America, but often, as in Sophronia Grout's case, confrontation with other life styles only confirmed her allegiance to her home town and its conventions.

The conventions of the three towns seem most different in their social arrangements. Visiting friends and attending church were common forms of social participation in all three communities, but only in Hawley did a pervasive religious spirit dominate other social activities. Perhaps because of this religious orientation, or maybe because she was the minister's daughter, Sophronia Grout took far less notice of the seasons than the farmer's daughter, Elizabeth Fuller. The slack time between planting and harvesting, and the harvest season socializing stand out far more clearly in Elizabeth's diary than any church activities. Princeton and Sunderland had even organized singing schools that provided diversion during the weary winter months. And in Sunderland, the church had lost much of its interest as a gathering place to the taverns in town, which fulfilled many of the sociological functions that the meeting house provided in Princeton.

Visiting friends in their homes was an important informal use of leisure time for all three girls, but only Jerusha's diary indicates much socializing out of doors. Walks to the river were apparently a standard activity for young people in Sunderland and gave them considerable free-
dom to socialize without adult supervision. It may have been on one of these walks that Jerusha Leonard's sister, Tabitha, became pregnant a few months before her marriage. This fact does not suggest promiscuity, but a community whose conventions allowed sexual relations between betrothed members. Birth and marriage records for Sunderland show that fully a third of those who married during the period 1780-1800 had "premature" first children. In the case of some girls like Tabitha, whose older sister, Jerusha, would ordinarily have married first, the pregnancy may even have been intended to precipitate the marriage. In Princeton, the statistics for "premature" first children are similar to Sunderland's, but statistics of Sophronia's time in Hawley, a generation later in a far more religious town, show only about one first child in ten to have been "premature," though the number of public confessions of fornication (confessions apparently expected of married people whose first child was more than three months premature) during the period before 1816, the year of the first revival, suggests that Hawley's conventions became more strict with time.\textsuperscript{12}

This again points to the community as the most impor-

\textsuperscript{12} Data compiled from Blake, History of Princeton; Smith, History of Sunderland; Johnson, History of Hawley; "Marriages in Hawley, 1793-1834," and "Records of the Church at No. 7 now Hawley from Sept. 16, 1778 to 1809," MSS in Hawley box, archives of Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, Mass.
tant social factor in determining the mental templates formed by young people within it. The relative uniqueness and insularity that Sumner Chilton Powell found in New England towns of the seventeenth century apparently still persisted in the early nineteenth century. Each community had its own character though that was clearly flexible. The adaptations made by the community to cope with economic and psychological problems had profound effects on the mental templates of its younger members.

This observation, in turn, suggests that our understanding of woman's role in early America is still vague and may have to be approached by studying groups of towns with similar sociological patterns. The women's roles depicted in the three diaries in this study have already cast doubt on some assumptions about industrialization as a cause of role constriction. Woman's role in the rural, pre-industrial family Elizabeth Fuller described in the 1790's already contained several facets of the role rejected by feminists since the 1840's, but Elizabeth Fuller, an apparently cheerful, well adjusted young woman, did not complain about her role definition as women would a half century later.

It is instructive to explore women's roles in the

Fuller family to see why those roles were acceptable and hypothesize about what changes would have made them unaccept-able. The women in the Fuller family performed most household chores and, other than teaching, had no occupa-tional options beyond home industry. Most men's work was on the farm and equally routine, however, therefore there was hardly more reason for women to complain than men. Women were considered more delicate than men, which meant that men did most traveling on business. During the winter months women could hardly find this a great disadvantage. Occasionally Elizabeth Fuller seemed slightly jealous of this freedom in the male role, but men's trips away from the farm were too infrequent to cause her much role dis-content. Had her father or brother worked away from the farm and enjoyed far more community contact than she, Elizabeth might have felt more strongly about the role differ-ence.

In Jerusha Leonard's family, women could and did travel on business trips. It is not clear whether this was permissible only because the father of the family had died. But when the first son reached twenty one, he did not take over the inn and relieve the women of this obli-gation, indicating that there was no strong pressure for the women to relinquish their position. Instead, the women of the family continued to be central to the opera-tion of the inn. There is no evidence that the role was
improper for women or that Jerusha felt pressure because of the way she contributed to her family's support.

Through home industries, the women of the Fuller family made an economic contribution to the support of their family. It is not clear how their portions compared to those of men, but there is no indication whatever that they felt their contributions to be superfluous in any way. Beginning in their early teens, all children were expected to work for the family. A similar expectation was evident in Jerusha Leonard's family, which continued to run the inn successfully after Jerusha's father died. Judging by Sophronia Grout's feelings of guilt when she could not work, she too was expected to contribute to the family by teaching and by doing household chores.

Though women did work comparable to men's, their political power was not at all comparable. None of the three women in this study expressed any interest in politics, however, or any frustration at her lack of political power. Apparently the later call for women's political power could come only after an awareness of an unfairly constricted female role was established. Of the three young women in this study, Sophronia Grout is the only one who displayed any of the anxiety or role discontent that eventually led to the feminist movement of the nineteenth century. Sophronia's anxiety may indicate some circumstances that would precipitate the later feminist move-
ment, circumstances that were lacking in the lives of Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard. First, Sophronia's extended illnesses may have been directly responsible for some of her anxiety. And the illnesses made it painfully clear to her that she was very dependent on her family though she was not contributing much to it. She apparently was quite uneasy about this dependence, just as she was uneasy about her dependence upon God, though her conflicting religious definition of herself led her to wish she could feel more dependent upon God. In both cases an ethic of individual autonomy conflicted with a role definition in which dependence was the norm.

Sophronia's role was further diminished by contrast with her father's. As minister he performed most of his role functions publicly, or at least outside of the home. His occupation brought him into frequent contact with members of the community and with ministers in other towns and other regions. His position in the community and his contacts beyond it gave his role prestige that far overshadowed the roles of the women in his family. Similar differences in prestige of roles were discernable in the Fuller family in 1792, but the gap between the importance of the roles was small enough to go unobserved. The consciousness of the gap was not present, or was not deemed significant by Elizabeth Fuller.

A third aspect of the anxiety Sophronia felt came from
her membership in a community with serious economic problems that resulted in the exodus of many of the more enterprising individuals and families of Hawley. This emigration left an excess of women and older people in Hawley, focusing more attention on those roles. The decreasing population also brought some social disruption and disillusionment to those who remained in Hawley. Their response was primarily religious. At once they saw their economic hardship as just punishment for sin (thereby leaving hope for better rewards when the sinning stopped), and rejected worldly goods as having any true value anyway. While many farmers made the agonizing decision between staying with friends and relatives in Hawley and going west to seek better economic prospects, those who stayed made the choice between focusing their lives on the vanities of this sinful world and forsaking those vanities for a more important world to come. This decision was crucial to the conversion of each individual soul. Initially, these decisions seem to have little bearing on woman's role in society, but it is only in a society that demanded such decisions that the importance of the individual and his role choices were raised to the level of consciousness and community interest. One of the main contrasts between Sophronia Grout and the other two women in this study is Sophronia's awareness that she was making important decisions about the role she would play in society. Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard were
more or less thrust into roles, and they accepted them, partly because the roles were not objectionable and partly because there was no other choice of which the young women were conscious.

From the very beginning of Sophronia's diary in which she struggles with the forces of sin and salvation, her individuality is stressed and she is acutely aware of the choices she must make about her future. Her importance as an individual was further emphasized in her participation in the Hawley Female Charitable Society, a voluntary organization. She, in turn, emphasized the individuality of her students when she asked for their one-cent contributions to the Bible Society. This emphasis on the individual, which many sociologists consider the primary characteristic of modern or urban society, was an essential prerequisite of the feminist movement. Until the concept of the individual emerged, woman's role was inextricably entwined with the family, as was man's role, and no conscious comparison was made.

As man's role moved him beyond the home, both his role and woman's role became more clearly defined. Sophronia's consciousness of this difference is very evident in her doubts about the propriety of a female erecting an altar

in her school. Her consciousness of differences in sex roles could only have been heightened by her experience in the mill town of Williamsburg. In a letter probably written in 1837, she complained,

I take off buttons, make boxes &c told Mr Hayden
I did not like to work for a dollar and a quarter
a week, he said we would not disagree about the price.  

And with that he apparently ended the argument. Even in the "ideal" mill town of Lowell, women only earned $1.75 a week while men earned seventy cents a day.  

And the women had no hope of moving beyond the lowest level of wage earners.

In these economic terms it is not hard for the historian to find a reason for nineteenth-century women's complaints about their role definitions. But such a simplistic explanation makes it easy to overlook more subtle developments in women's thinking. The emphasis on the individual, rather than the family was new in the nineteenth century, and Tocqueville's comments on American individualism did not refer so much to the frontier heroism with which we have associated the term as to the American pressure on the individual to choose a role and assume responsibility for defining his own position in society. In the twentieth century, this is taken for granted, hence we can easily

15Sophronia Grout to family, MS in Hawley box, archives of Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, Mass.

16Scoresby, Female Operatives, pp. 32-33.
overlook it as a major new force in the shaping of the nineteenth-century woman's identity.

The conditions that emphasized individuality and the differences of sex roles were not nearly so evident in Elizabeth Fuller's Princeton or Jerusha Leonard's Sunderland. Neither young woman mentions a conversion process or any voluntary society beyond the singing school. And neither lived in a town with an economic situation that encouraged the decision to emigrate. Both Princeton and Sunderland's populations grew steadily until 1850, while Hawley's population had already begun a long period of decline by 1820. Thus, neither Elizabeth Fuller nor Jerusha Leonard was acutely aware of her individuality or the limits her sex put upon her role.

One more role pressure clearly separated Sophronia Grout from Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard, though all three were subject to it. It was the ethic of individual work and usefulness, which found its clearest embodiment in Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*. That particular work was probably unknown to Elizabeth Fuller and Jerusha Leonard as they wrote their diaries, but very little in it would have made them feel any uneasiness about their roles, for they each worked to help their families. Sophronia Grout, on the other hand, was often too ill to do household chores or to work outside the home to contribute to her family. Her own sense of guilt clearly reveals her belief
that she did not meet the expectations of her role. Her frustration and sense of uselessness could be traced to her incapacitating illnesses, but these responses seem remarkably similar to those women later felt as a result of the role confinements of marriage.

Sophronia's responses suggest that the ethic of work and usefulness is an important key to understanding the role frustration that led to the feminist movement. Sophronia had no one but God to blame for the illnesses that constricted her role (and He must be doing it because it is right and just, she told herself), but her responses suggest which kinds of role constriction could provoke such frustration in a woman, whether married or unmarried.

As far as we know, Sophronia never advocated any feminist movement; her most radical action was erecting an altar in her school. But her life, when contrasted with Elizabeth Fuller's and Jerusha Leonard's, helps us to understand the changes in women's roles that were leading to the feminist movement. First, there had to be a consciousness of an individual role, distinct from the community and the family. Second, there had to be a conflict involving role definition; this could take the form of an internal conflict in role definitions the individual accepted, or a conflict between the individual's self definition and a role definition imposed by society. Third, the frustrations resulting from that conflict had to be understood
in terms of arbitrary, externally imposed role definitions assigned to women, that conflicted with more basic role definitions they already held.

Within each of these three prerequisites for the feminist movement there are many complex and interrelated facets. Only when this complexity is fully appreciated can we begin to make useful generalizations about young women in the early republic. And even these generalizations will gloss over many differences. First, such generalizations obscure the differences between towns, which were the primary units in determining cultural patterns for their inhabitants. Elizabeth Fuller, Jerusha Leonard and Sophronia Grout matured in the matrix of conventions and thought patterns of their individual towns and recognized these as distinctly different from those that formed the character of other towns. During the 1790's and early 1800's the emerging stage lines had barely begun to break down the insular quality of the towns.

No less important than the differences between towns are the differences between individuals, which are also obscured by generalizations. The rich individuality mirrored in each diary reminds us that young women of the early republic found the meaning to their lives in the joys and troubles of everyday life. Though fragmentary, the diaries of Elizabeth Fuller, Jerusha Leonard, and Sophronia Grout each provide details of a young woman's life and a window
on her consciousness, revealing the perceptions, attitudes and priorities that shaped her life.
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