OUTSIDE GARDEN GATES, INSIDE GARDEN WALLS : WOMEN WRITERS'PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN'S SENSE OF PLACE AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS IN AUSTRALIAN AND AMERICAN POST-FRONTIER-ERA LANDSCAPES

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Australia's and America's frontier spaces represented new opportunities for many of their immigrants. These landscapes also served as a focus for the desire to recreate society in a perfect harmony with the natural environment, thereby regaining what was supposedly lost in the Garden of Eden. When European culture adapted itself to these new landscapes, did these societal changes also allow women to redefine their position in society? In order to explore this question, I shall examine Miles Franklin's _My Brilliant Career_, Barbara Baynton's _Bush Studies_, and Willa Cather's _O Pioneers!_ and _My Antonia_. These Australian and American women wrote these works around the turn-of-the-century, when questions of national identity and frontier space were at the fore of debate.

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DEDICATION

To the countless, nameless women we will never know, those who never had a Franklin, Baynton, or Cather to record and tell their stories, but who made present-day women's existence possible.

To all women who have not yet found their own voice, but search to sing out about their lives with their own words.

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CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

Throughout their histories, Australia and the United States presented new opportunities, and perils, for their many immigrants. The feeling that these new countries represented some new opportunity arose in part from the "hard fact"[1] that both landscapes were vast tracts of so-called uncivilized land, untouched by European culture. These new and different landscapes allowed, and demanded, a different social structure from traditional European patterns to exist. Here was a unique chance to eliminate undesirable vestiges of European life and establish elements more suitable to the frontier environments of Australia and North America, especially during the end of the frontier periods in these countries, namely the 1890's and the turn of the century. The existence of a frontier in both countries gave an opportunity to focus the centuries-long quest to regain the lost Garden of Paradise. Here, perhaps, people could try again to establish a pastoral existence.

Frederick Jackson Turner argued in his 1893 essay[2] that the vast frontier that constituted the United States was directly responsible for the formation of its supposedly unique democratic principles, for razing European tyranny, hiearchy, and oppres-

sion, and for removing old European laws and customs that proved inappropriate. Did the existence of this frontier landscape also generate a sloughing off of old restrictions inherent in women's traditional positions in society, those of wife, mother, and servant? When a society falls apart, reshuffles and reconstructs itself, women, like other segments of the population, might be able to progress. Did women have a sense that these frontier landscapes provided them with their own physical, psychological and mental space? Or did these new landscapes merely require hard labor, restricting women's lives to child-bearing and drudgery-- a definition of themselves that was not based on the productivity of their bodies?

One way to explore an answer to this question is to examine the literature that the women wrote during the time periods when issues of a frontier space and national identity were at a forefront in Australia and America. Miles Franklin's My Brilliant Career (1901) and Barbara Baynton's Bush Studies (1902) were written within two years of Australia's political separation from England and the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia. Australians had spent the decades before, primarily the 1890's, trying to distinguish themselves from England. The discourse that arose in this process included the formation of a literary figure of the bush hero of the post-frontier outback. This post-frontier outback was a landscape that had already been explored and in which people were settling, but one in which new societal

structures were still in their formation. Part of the code of, and defense of,the "mateship" essential for the so-called national character and identity included these heroic wilderness males rejecting and separating themselves from women to the point of extreme misogyny. Franklin and Baynton both deal with the effects this code inflicted on women who lived in the New South Wales bush country. Franklin's work is especially germane as she wrote it during her teenage years, a time when young people try to begin forming their own identities.

While Willa Cather's _My Antonia_ (1918) and _O Pioneers!_ (1913) were written relatively later in the United States' history, they were drawn from her experiences while living in Nebraska from 1873 to 1896. The United States was experiencing the greatest influx of immigrants in its history from 1890 to 1910 and also experiencing the closing of their frontier era: there was no new land to the west to discover, explore, and initially settle. In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner had just presented his famous essay about the influence of the frontier in ostensibly creating democracy. Although by Cather's time, the American land was becoming less agrarian, less pastoral, and more urbanized and industrialized, there existed a greater consciousness about the landscape and the importance the closed frontier had in shaping American identity.

Two central issues will form a matrix by which to gauge whether or not, and in what way, women's lives changed upon con-

tact with the great expanses of Australian and American landscape. The first is the women characters' sense of place. In what physical landscapes, indoors or outdoors, dwellings, forests, or fields, uncultivated or tamed, do women feel the greatest expansion of their inner landscapes and opportunity of self-realization? To what extent are these women identified, by others and themselves, with particular landscapes? In what situations and environments do the female characters have the greatest, and poorest, senses of self-determination and individual power and expression?

The other major area of inquiry surrounds the manner in which the authors treat domestic situations and relations between men and women. Is the existence arising in adaption to the respective types of environment conducive to harmonious, healthy, female-male relations and an equal standing for women in that society? Is women's value in society determined on their own merit and not by their child-bearing capacity? Are the women relegated to a house or domestic situation, a particular envionment or landscape in which they feel trapped? Or do the women feel safety in the arms of the relative civilization and culture of a domestic situation, and feel fear in the natural environment in which they have to live? One reason to examine domestic relations along with women's sense of the place is that the home traditionally was women's primary sphere of activity. Thus, a mark of change for her would have to be felt here, at its most basic level, whether

the nature of domestic relations changed or she was able to remove herself from this realm altogether.

There are many reasons why comparing Australia and American literature makes sense. The two land masses are roughly equal in size, and the young nations that formed on them are roughly equivalent in age and share the same English background, language, and literary tradition. This shared literary and philosophical tradition includes centuries of writings on the pastoral ideal. This ideal outlined the way in which people could exist in nature without destroying it, but without the landscape overpowering them, for they had cultivated it to a suitable, yet not overly-industrialized degree. In living in such a state, people also could conceivably consciously regain the harmonious, paradisical existence they believed they had lost in the Garden of Eden. Here, on the frontiers of new continents the quest for a harmonious balance between civilization and nature could be manifested. America and Australia thus defined themselves in part based on their experiences with the landscape.

Leo Marx describes the pastoral garden myth as applied to American history, saying,

> ...all of these traditional gestures of the pastoral mode are present in new forms supplied by American experience. Instead of Arcadia, we have the wild yet potentially bucolic terrain of the North American continent, instead of the shepherd, the independent, democratic husbandman with his plausible 'rural scheme'...[3]

Henry Nash Smith also outlines the importance of the frontier as a practical channel for, and manifestation of, the many images of the landscape:

> The strongest appeal of the homestead system to the West, an appeal which touched the deepest levels of American experience in the nineteenth century, lay in the belief that it would enact by statute ...the agrarian utopia of hardy and virtuous yeomen which had haunted the imaginations of writers about the West since the time of Crevecoueur.[4]

The frontier landscapes may not have been responsible for modifying behaviors and social structures. The landscapes might instead have served merely as a touchstone for so many centuries of utopia-seeking. What people attributed to the landscape perhaps was merely their own permission to allow themselves to step out of old structures mentally. In both countries, the initial glowing reviews about the possibilities of Eden regained began to change as the realities of the environment became more painfully apparent to settlers. Kay Schaeffer describes this shift, saying, "The early aspirations of Empire would be sorely tested in the light of the actual experience of settlement. Increasingly, through the decades of land exploration and settlement, the imagery of the magical body gave way to the language of threat."[5] There was a vast difference between Europeans' imaginations of the New Worlds and their real experiences once they landed on new shores. These changes in literary and philosophical

thought reflect how the landscape was forcing immigrants to rethink their views about what kind of societies would be possible on these new lands.

According to Turner, the frontier landscape helped Americans develop a sense of national identity. The influence of the frontier landscape in establishing national identity was true of Australia as well. Jack Bennett says,"...as the frontier egalitarian spirit which insisted that in a land of new beginnings everybody was equal...so the Australian democratic tradition was established and defined."[6] Schaeffer also explains Australians' relation to the landscape:

> How has man as subject confronted this land as alien other and attempted to define himself through his attempts to understand his origins in the land; to come to terms with his experience of its space and boundaries; to assimilate its strangeness into himself and his symbolic order: These are theprocesses through which people who came to live on the land and fill in what Hancock called its 'vast, open spaces' have constructed their images of identity as Australians.[7]

Australians forged their identity on a particular kind of frontier landscape. Scaffer says, "The Australian tradition, constructed with reference to Lawson as founding father, registers the bush as the landscape on which Australian identity is constituted." [8]

Since European-based Australia and America share a common background, language, and literary and philosophical tradition in their English heritage, and since this similar culture was brought to two different continents of comparable size, the development of similar

cultures would be the reasonable deduction. However, differences do exist between the cultures. Thus, exact and truly accurate parallels would be nearly impossible to gauge.

This thesis is not intended for such a study. Although Australia and the United States do share some similarities, there are many factors that differentiated the two histories. America experienced intitial European settlement one hundred years before Australia. Australia, with its convict background, received more of a class delineation than did America: the children of the initial immigrants resented the fact that well-to-do Englishmen would immigrate to buy up land that they felt was rightfully theirs.[9] This points to another crucial difference: the way in which land was distributed through the American Homestead Act of 1862 and the Australian Robertson Act of 1861. One of the goals of the Homestead Act was to break a monopoly on land ownership and give as many people as possible an encouraging opportunity to settle it. The Robertson Act ostensibly had the same goal. Neither plan met expectations: only a small percentage of the expected population cultivated the land for the alloted amount of time in America. In Australia, squatters and upper class persons gained control of the land and actually maintained the monopoly on the holdings, further extenuating the class differences already so much more apparent.

Another factor that must therefore be included in this analysis is the specific kind of landscape and frontier in which the authors base their tales. Regional differences in the landscapes of the

frontier, and not just the factor of an existing frontier itself, makes possible different kinds of viable economic systems, and thus different kinds of societies. In the dry Australian country was not suitable to agri- culture, and so a culture of sheep shearers and cattle drovers arose instead. The nature of these jobs is solitary and nomadic. American land lent itself more easily to the lost garden image, and established itself on farming, a more rooted life-style. The United States, when severed from Great Britain,could sustain itself on its farming and was well into the industrialization process.

What this work does propose to show is exploration of the attitudes embedded in the landscape-related literature these women wrote. Women were faced with a dilemma: either embrace the new, open land- scape which was freer than the older restrictive society, or return to the amenities, such as art, music, and education, provided by European culture and relinquish any freedom the landscapes and new societies were able to give them. The title of this thesis points to the maddening bind in which women have been entrenched for centuries: women are left out of the decision- making process in creating a new society and their issues are left on the back shelf in favor of apparently more philosophical and worthy ones. At the same time that women are left outside the creation of the garden of paradise, if they even wished entrance into the male-defined world at all, they are kept locked inside another garden, the space in which patriarchal society would like to place and keep women, the

space that tells women that their role is within the walls for their safety and own good. Married life often appeared to be women's only socially viable option.

However, as these writers show, marriage, women's only "proper" space, did not allow them their own space and landscape of their choice. They are determined not to be penned up again within the garden of society and its expectations of marriage. Franklin, Baynton, and Cather show the frustrations of women's double bind, but also their opportunities to define space for themselves as they begin to create their own dreams of opportunity and their own gardens. Were these women able to break down the old garden gate at the beginning and begin cultivating their independence in a new way?

CHAPTER II : MY BRILLIANT CAREER

Australian Perspectives on Sense of Place and Domestic Relations

The two major landscapes in Miles Franklin's My Brilliant Career are those of the dry, hostile, and confining outback ranges and the cultivated, leafy green estates. The primary female character Sybylla Melvyn uses the descriptions of these landscapes to parallel her inner state of being and to make social commentary. The life-style created in each landscape offers either a bountiful reservoir of options or a constriction of these options for women. The dry, barren landscapes of Possum Gully and Barney's Gap represent a figurative and literal purgatory and hell for Sybylla. The lush landspape of Caddagat, neighboring Five Bob Downs, and Sybylla's childhood home represent Sybylla's visions of heaven on earth. The evil that mars this heaven is the threat of marriage and with it the possibility of being put back in a societal space equal to that of her purgatory and hell.

The landscape of most growth and self-enlightenment for Sybylla is that at Caddagat and Five Bob Downs, two refined, cultivated landscapes predominantly full of gardens and orchards and other forms of vegetation. Vast and wide Cadaggat functions as Sybylla's version of pastoral paradise, reflecting her inner state of joy. This joy arises in large part because of the presence of opportun-

ities for self exploration and mental expansion away from an environment in which she is restricted by what conventional society demands women should do. At these two adjacent, well-off runs no one is caught in the institution of marriage. Here, a new form of relationship between men and women, that of a chummy, intellectual friendship can be formed. She feels good to be alive when the landscape is as accommodating as these two places are to its inhabitants:

> It was sundown when I got in sight of Caddagat...Blue smoke wreathed hill and hollow like a beauteous veil, I had traversed drought-baked land that afternoon, but in the immediate vicinity of Caddagat house there was no evidence of an unkind season. Irrigation had draped the place with beauty, and I stood ankle-deep in clover (182).

Sybylla escapes into these gardens when she is troubled. After Frank Hawden has annoyed her, she

> ...sat in burning discontent and ill-humor until soothed by the scent of roses and the gleam of soft spring sunshine ...I reveled in rich perfumes, and these tempted me forth. My ruffled feelings gave way before the delights of the old garden (75).

In the midst of the garden, she feels comforted, and can vent her frustrations freely:

> ...brimming over with a mixture of emotions, [I] tore through the garden and into the old orchard...I stood ankle-deep in violets, where they had run wild under a gnarled old apple tree, and gave way to my wounded vanity (77).

Not only does the landscape soothe her inner wounds; it provides Sybylla with great joy at being alive and a sense of good existing in the world. This place is full of life, and she feels alive in it. Sybylla blooms literally and figuratively at Caddagat. The plant which she compares herself to that is stunted in growth at Possum Gully and Barney's Gap flourishes here.

> The graceful wild clematis festooned the shrubbery along the creeks with great wreaths of magnificent white bloom, which loaded every breeze with perfume; the pretty bright green senna shrubs along the river-banks were decked in blossoms which rivaled the deep blue of the sky in brilliance; the magpies built their nests in the tall gum-trees,...the horses were rolling fat, and invited one to get on their satin backs and have a gallop; the cry of the leather-heads was heard in the orchard as the cherry season approached. Oh, it was good to be alive!(86).

She describes Five-Bob Downs, Harold Beecham's estate, in a similar manner, though she prevents herself from completely romanticizing it. She says,

> It was sunset--most majestic hour of the twenty-four--when we drove up to the great white gates which opened into...beautiful far-reaching Five-Bob Downs! Dreamy blue hills rose behind, and wide rich flats stretched before, through which the Yarrangung river, glazed with sunset, could be seen like a silver snake winding between shrubberied banks. The odor from the six-acred flower-garden was overpowering and delightful. A breeze gently swayed the crowd of trees amid the houses, and swept over the great orchard....In the fading sunflight thirty iron roofs gleamed and glared, and seemed like a little town; and the help of many dogs went up at the sound of our wheels. Ah! beautiful, beautiful Five-Bob Downs! (104).

Sybylla finds joy and comfort in this landscape. While the rest of the people from Caddagat are fishing one day, Sybylla settles herself by the river bank and reads:

> I lay on the soft moss and leaves and drank deeply of the beauties of nature. The soft rush of the river, the scent of the shrubs, the golden sunset, occasionally the musical clatter of hoofs on the road, the gently noises of the fishers fishing,...came to me as sweetest elixir in my ideal, dream-of-a-poet nook among the pink-based, gray-topped, moss-carpeted rocks...I was a creature of joy in those days (118).

On her seventeenth birthday, Sybylla, settling herself on Caddagat's veranda, feels the world is heavenly:

> Copies of Gordon, Kendall, and Lawson were on my lap, but I was too physically content and comfortable to indulge in even these, my sworn friends and companions. I surrendered myself to the mere joy of being alive. How the sunlight blazed and danced in the roadway--the leaves of the gum-trees gleaming in it like a myriad gems! A cloud of white, which I knew to be cockatoos, circled over the distant hill-top...The gurgling rush of the creek, the scent of the flower-laden garden, and the stamp, stamp of a horse in the orchard as he attempted to rid himself of tormenting flies, filled my senses. The warmth was delightful. Summer is heavenly, I said-- life is a joy....Bright butterflies flitted around the garden, and thousands of bees droned lazily among the flowers. I closed my eyes--my being filled with the beauty of it all (154).

At Caddagat, Sybylla feels the world a place over which she has some control, a little fruit which she can hold in her hand:

> I was just seventeen,...and had a long, long life before me wherein to enjoy myself. Oh, it was good to be alive! What a delightful place the world was!--so accommodating. I felt complete mistress of it. It was like an orange--I merely had to squeeze it and it gave forth sweets plenteously. Summer is heavenly and life is a joy....The cool murmur of the creek grew far away, I felt my poetry books slip off my knees and fall to the floor, but I was too content to bother about them--to happy to need their consolation, which I had previously so often and so hungrily sought. Youth! Joy! Warmth!(155).

Part of the reason Sybylla is able to develop a deep love of the landscape at Caddagat is that she can remove herself periodically from the landscape there. She associates the life at Caddagat, and the part of the landscape that is the house, with available refinement and worthy companionship. She also is afforded the time by which she can enjoy it. She rides horses with vigor out on the run, but afterwards can return to the house to clean herself up and lounge on the veranda or walk in the garden. She has her private space, and time to indulge her intelligence in books, art, and thought, all of which are bountifully provided. Upon entering Caddagat and seeing the books and magazines and the pictures on the walls, and hearing the notes upon a piano, Sybylla recognizes that "Here were three things for which I had been starving. An impulse to revel in them immediately seized me." (51). Caddagat provides the mental freedom Sybylla had been craving:

> The pleasure, so exquisite as to be almost pain, which I derived from the books, and especially the Australian poets, is beyond description. In the narrow peasant life of Possum Gully I had been deprived of companionship with people of refinement and education who would talk of the things I loved; but, at last! here was congeniality, here was companionship (60).

Sybylla is entertained by the many visitors with music, piano playing, and dances. Even after she leaves Caddagat, however, what she most fondly remembers is not these society occassions or even her own private room, but the place itself. She thinks of its coolness, green

arbors, and well-watered, floral abundance. Shortly prior to her unwelcome departure from Caddagat, Sybylla reminisces:

> I suppose it is only a fancy born of the wild deep love I bear it, but to me the flowers seem to smell more sweetly there; ...as the great sun sets amid the blue peaks; and the never-ceasing rush of the crystal fern-banked stream-- I see and hear it now, and the sinking sun as it turns into a sheet of flame the mirror hanging in the backyard in the laundry veranda,before which the station hands were wont to comb and wash themselves. Oh,the memories that crowd upon me! Methinks I can smell the roses that clamber up the veranda posts and peep over the garden gate.(186).

As she is leaving and desperately gathering her memories in an effort to keep an image of Caddagat in her head, she notes again how dear this landscape is for her, saying

> We crossed the singing stream: on either bank great bushes of blackthorn-- last native flower of the season-- put forth their wealth of magnificent creamy bloom, its rich perfume floating far on the hot summer air. How the sunlight blazed and danced and flickered on the familiar and dearly loved landscape!...My pleasant life at Caddagat was going into the past, fading as the hills which surrounded it were melting into a hazy line of blue.(187).

She realizes that Sydney and its city life could perhaps provide her with even more of these refined qualities and mental companionship upon which she thrives. Although Caddagat is a veritable paradise, Sybylla recognizes that in order to attain her ambitions of becoming a musician or writer she must go to the big city of Sydney. She says,

> At Caddagat I was as much out of the full flood of life for which I craved as at Possum Gully, but here there were sufficient pleasant little ripples on the stream of existence to act as a stop-gap for the present.(86).

She recognizes that the ease of life at Caddagat has erased much of her drive in pursuing her goals, saying, "...life was a pleasant thing to me now. I forgot all wild unattainable ambitions in the little pleasures of everyday life.Such a thing as writing never entered my head."(181). She looks forward to the expected, but unmanifested, three months stay in Sydney, partly because of the excitement of a big city, partly because she can then possibly attain her dreams, and partly because attaining her dream could put her on an equal standing with Harold Beecham. She says that in Sydney,

> ...we were to see everything from Manly to Parramatta, the Cyclorama to the Zoo, the theaters to the churches, the restaurants to the jails and from Antony Hordern's to Paddy's Market. Who knows what might happen then?...Might it not be possible for me to attain one of my ambitions--enter the musical profession? Joyful dream! Might I not be able to yet assist Harold in another way than matrimony? (180).

Sybylla obviously feels that in Sydney she will be able to gather worldly experiences around her beyond what even her beloved Caddagat and Five Bob Downs could provide. As much as she loves it, Caddagat is a stepping stone, an intermediary place where she, at the many sociable gatherings, is able to start making the connections necessary for a city career. Her last statement also reveals her desire to

be able to contribute something to the life of her good male friend, but not just that which could be achieved through marriage. She wants to be able to support him in the same way he expressed a desire to support her.

In addition to functioning as Sybylla's haven, Caddagat's garden and orchard serve as places for her exploration of male-female relationships. She first meets Harold in the orchard as she is climbing down a lemon tree, and on his subsequent visits invites him into the garden:

> ...I was standing in a bed of violets in a tangled corner of the garden, where roses climbed to kiss the lilacs, and spiraea stooped to rest upon the wallflowers, and where two tall kurrajongs stood like sentries over all. Harold Beecham,...leaning over the fence, lingered with me.(93).

Harold's proposal to Sybylla takes place in the garden, and Sybylla receives her engagement ring while esconsced in the crook of a tree. Their lover's quarrels occur in the garden/orchard also. Harold angrily storms after with her into the orchard after she and aptly named Mr. Goodchum innocently carve their initials in a tree. The next time she sees Harold, "...There was a hammock swinging under a couple of trees in an enclosure, half shrubbery, partly orchard and vegetable garden, skirting the road." (169). All this implies that they must meet at a middle ground, away from the house and societal rules about male-female relations. This middle, pastoral ground serves as an almost magical world in which societal rules do not

necessarily automatically apply.

She herself associates Harold with the garden and abundance at Caddagat. As she reads Harold's letter later on at Possum Gully,

> he grew near to me as in the days gone by...I closed my eyes, and before my mental vision there arose an overgrown old orchard...A glorious day was languidly smiling good night on abundance of ripe and ripening fruit and flowers (238).

Their meetings at Cadaggat contrast sharply with their later ones at Possum Gully, which has no notable abundance. When Harold comes to Possum Gully to make a final attempt to convince Sybylla to marry him,

> The heat was intense...grasshoppers...had devoured all the fruit in the orchards about, and had even destroyed many of the trees by eating the bark, and now they were stripping the briars of foliage. In one orchard we passed, the apricot, plum, and peach-stones hung naked on their leafless trees as evidence of their ravages (250).

This suggests that any possibility of a friendly relation not based on marriage has died between these two.

Franklin also uses the landscape at Cadaggat to show women's true strengths and potentials. When the Caddagat contingency goes to the annual horse races at Wyambeet, Sybylla spiritedly urges the wagon horses on, with mixed reactions from her relatives: "Uncle first said he was glad to see I had the spirit of an Australian,... Grannie remarked that I might have the spirit of an Australian, but I had by no means the manners of a lady."(130). In the morning of her

birthday, Sybylla revels in riding out with the drovers to see their herds through the Caddagat estate and hearing their stories of life in the wide open bush country. When her grandmother invites girl visitors, the group of them take a hearty gallop to the river to skinny dip: they "plunged into the pleasant water. Then-- such water-fights, frolic, laughter, shouting and roaring fun as a dozen strong healthy girls can make when enjoying themselves."(117). At Caddagat, Sybylla reconnects with the same freedom she felt as a child on the equally vast, abundant, and accomodating landscape of her father's acreage of Bruggabrong and Bin Bin East and West in the Timlinbilly Ranges. She revels in the freedoms her father allows her in travelling about the runs with him, despite the cries of her more genteel, upper-middle class mother that she will become a hopeless tomboy. Significantly, here she is called "little mate" by her father, identifying her as an equal.

If the wide-open spaces combined with art, music, and companionable gatherings provides Sybylla her version of heaven, then the cramped, barren landscapes with no mental discourse beyond the livestock and weather entrap her in her hell. Franklin actually provides two varieties of this hellish landscape, or representative societally-defined women's space and they are not accomodating landscapes. One is the monotonous purgatory of Possum Gully, at which Sybylla lives before going to Caddagat. The other is the baked, insufferable hell of Barney's Gap,to which Sybylla is sent unwillingly

after her time at Caddagat. At Possum Gully and Barney's Gap, Sybylla cannot experience the genteel pleasures and life-style that allowed her to remove herself from the landscape at Caddagat. This inability to distance herself and gain perspective is perhaps another reason she does not view these places in a very positive light.

She describes Possum Gully, which functions as her purgatorial hell, in this way:

> My first impression of Possum Gully was bitter disappointment-- an impression which time has failed to soften or wipe away...How flat, common, and monotonous the scenery appeared after the rugged peaks of the Timlinbilly Ranges!... Our new house was...built on a barren hillside...Away from the front of the house were flats, bearing evidence of cultivation, but drop of water was nowhere to be seen.(6).

Here she is deprived of her wide, open spaces in which engaging in outdoor "tomboy" activities was more acceptable. This deprivation makes her feel "cramped on our new run. It was only three miles wide at its broadest point."(7). Conversely to being a more sociable place because it is closer to more people, Possum Gully is less so than when the Melvyn family lived in a more removed enclave. In response to a neighbor's question if they liked "being here near Goulburn, better than that out-of-the way place you come from...," Jane Haizlip, the Melvyn's servant, replies,"...Out-of-the-way place! There was more life at Bruggabrong in a day than you crawlers 'ud see here all yer lives." (11).

This monotonous landscape implies an equally monotonous life.

When Sybylla returns to it, after her lovely time expanding her mind and soul at Caddagat, "I remained at Possum Gully to tread to the same old life in its tame narrow path, with its never-ending dawn-till-daylight round of tasks..." (232). Here, life is nothing but an endless string of chores, milking cows, and rebukes from her mother all of which dull her mind and spirit. She recognizes her intelligence and how in this place it becomes a curse, especially if she does not posess societally standardized beauty to cover it. There is no time to think of any other things. Even when there is time for reading books and playing piano, those cultivated pursuits which Sybylla loves, they are considered highly impractical. Sybylla compares the lives of the people at Possum Gully to the lives of peasants, saying,

> But the life of a peasant to me is purgatory. Those around me had but two states of existence-- work and sleep...There was a third part in me which cried out to be fed. I longed for the arts. Music was a passion with me.I borrowed every book in the neighborhood and stole hours from rest to read them (19).

Her view of Possum Gully as purgatory is supported by her descriptions of the drought which harmfully, and hostilely, affects all life there.

> I was weary...all nature was weary, and seemed to sing a dirge to that effect in the furnace-breath wind which roared among the trees on the low ranges at our back and smote the parched and thirsty ground. All were weary, all but the sun. he seemed to glory in his power, relentless and

> untiring, as he swung boldly in the sky, triumphantly leering down upon his helpless victims....Weariness! Weariness! This was life--my life--my career, my brilliant career!(24).

The world becomes a place of restrictions, toil and confinement. Sybylla continues on in this vein, saying,

> Summer is fiendish, and life is a curse, I said in my heart. What a great dull hard rock the world was! On it were a few barren narrow ledges, and on these, by exerting ourselves so that the force wears off our finger-nails, it allows us to hand for a year or two, and then hurls us off into outer darkness and oblivion, perhaps to endure worse torture than this (25).

That "summer is fiendish, and life is a curse," is in direct opposition to her refrain at Caddagat that "summer is heavenly...life is a joy." In addition to all of the hateful chores in this landscape, people do not think of anything beyond this sphere: the landscape obviously stunts their growth. Sybylla compares herself to a plant that cannot grow, saying,

> I...drew back appalled at the spirit which was maturing within me. It was a grim lonely one. It was a climbing plant without a pole-- it groped about the ground, bruised itself, and became hungry searching for something strong to which to cling. Needing a master-hand to train and prune, it was becoming rank and sour (17).

Barney's Gap, where Sybylla is sent against her will to be a governess in order to pay off a family debt to the M'Swats, is a desolate landscape conveying Sybylla's version of utter hell. This place is the worst environment, even in comparision to the deadening

effects of Possum Gully. Even when Sybylla tries to see the good in the situation, these attempts are

> ...knocked on the head, like a dairyman's surplus calves, when on entering Barney's Gap we descended a rough road to the house, which was built in a narrow gully between two steep stony hills, which destitute of grass, rose like grim walls of rocks, imparting a desolate and prison-like aspect(192).

Other images also conjure up a hell-like environment. After a particularly trying episode with an unruly M'Swat child, Sybylla cries "How long, how long!"...as I walked out ankle-deep in the dust to see the sun, like a ball of blood, sink behind the hills..."(212). Her standing ankle deep in life-choking dust directly opposes her standing ankle deep in clover at Caddagat. Sybylla's first weekend at this place, unlike the social, active weekends at Caddagat,"was sickeningly hot and sultry, and...seemed like an eternity,..." (199).

The M'Swats dwelling in no way offers any alleviation or escape from this landscape. Sybylla calls herself "...a duck forced for ever to live in a desert, ever wildly longing for water, but never reaching it outside of dreams."(217). The one seeming vestige of culture to which Sybylla puts her hopes, their old piano, is painfully out of tune. The fact that the M'Swats do not even realize it is out of tune is what bothers Sybylla most. Sybylla must go outside under the evening stars to escape the suffocating house and regain any sense of private space and self-identity. Children overrun the place and Sybylla has no sense of private space. She is led

> through the dirtiest passage into the dirtiest room,to sit upon the dirtiest chair, to gaze upon the other dirtiest furniture of which I have ever heard. One wild horrified glance at the dirt, squalor,and total benightedness that met me on every side, and I trembled in every limb with suppressed emotion and the frantic longing to get back to Caddagat which possessed me. One instant showed me that I could never live here (193).

Their dwelling in fact accentuates the negative qualities of this landscape to painful proportions. Sybylla's description of this house reflects her own sense of entraptment in the life-style of the people who inhabit this landscape. Sybylla literally feels herself being cooked here:

> The house...with very low iron roof, and having no sign of a tree near it, the heat was unendurable. It was reflected from the rocks on either side, and concentrated in this spot like an oven being 122 degrees in the veranda now. I wondered why M'Swat had built in such a hole...(196).

The people who live here are slovenly, illiterate, and single-minded: Mr. M'Swat's journal of which the family is so proud contains misspelled, single-sentence entries solely of the events surrounding weather and livestock. When Sybylla reads Mr. M'Swats diary for diversion, "The little record was a perfect picture of the dull narrow life of its writer. Week after week that diary went on the same-drearily monotonous account of a drearily monotonous existence. I felt I would go mad if forced to live such a life for long."(201).

She does in fact suffer a nervous breakdown shortly afterwards. "This monotonous sordid life was unhinging me, and there was no

legitimate way of escape from it."(221). Barney's Gap has taken the life out of her. Sybylla here feels herself

> ...quite a different character to the girl who at Caddagat was continually chid for being a romp, a hoyden, a boisterous tomboy, a whirlwind, and for excessive laughter at anything and everything. I got into such a state of nervousness that I would jump at the opening of a door or an unexpected footfall (225).

Whereas at Possum Gully she hardened against life, here she begins to go mad. She decides to leave even if she has to walk out of there, and she would have been willing to marry Harold at this point.Possum Gully now seems refined in comparision to this place. Upon the official approval of her departure, she feels as if "I had a mountain lifted off me."(228).

Franklin deliberately sets up careful parallels between the constrictions of a landscape and the constrictions of society's prescription for women's roles. The landscapes in this work also underline Franklin's, speaking through Sybylla, distaste for married life. Sybylla realizes the limitations placed on women in different landscapes. Being married and having children are equivalent to places identified with hell, implying women's limitation to these spaces are hell for them. Sybylla says, "Possum Gully was stagnant--stagnant with the narrow stagnation prevalent in all old country places...Its residents were principally married folk and children under sixteen. Nothing ever happened there." (8). She regards marriage to be as societally limiting a role as Possum Gully

and Barney's Gap are cramping physically and mentally.At Barney's Gap when Sybylla tells the M'Swats about the reknowned Australian singers of the time, the children ridicule the notion of women being paid even one pound to sing. Music is Sybylla's dream and obviously in this environment, with these manner of people, she could not achieve it.

In places where Sybylla is free to roam the land and explore her various interests there are not any children to look after nor any drought-dicatated life to overcome. At drought-plagued Barney's Gap she realizes that this set-up is a possible extreme to which marriage and child-rearing could evolve. Mrs.M'Swat has had twelve children. Sybylla says,

> I made up my mind to conquer or leave. I would stand no more. If, in all the wide world and the whole of life this was the only use for me, then I would die-- take my own life if necessary.(209).

This suggests that those swept up in a dry land absorbed its monotony and hopelessness and confining rules and structures whereas those fortunate enough to live in a place with sufficient water and food resources are able to go a step further in self-exploration and not having the initial worries, break out of the confining structures and monotony of that society.

In keeping with Sybylla's identification of marriage with her purgatory and hell, at her heaven no one is married and there are no children. No one at Caddagat is involved in a marriage relation and

no children to take care of exist at this place either. Upon a landscape that does not contain children or marriage Sybylla finds her greatest freedom and self-realization. In other words, women can best find their self-identity in a space that does not require their roles as care-giver, mother, and wife and is separate from these societally-defined roles.

Sybylla shows the constrast between between Caddagat/non-married life and Possum Gully/married life with the shock she registers upon realizing that the beautiful people in the photographs at Caddagat are actually her parents. She says "...my eyes were arrested by a beautiful portrait hanging above the mantelpiece. it represented a lovely girl in the prime of youth and beauty." Sybylla mistakenly takes this lovely vision for her Aunt Helen, who corrects her, saying,"Do you not recognize it as your mother?... It was taken just before her marriage." (51). Her mother, who left for the landscape of marriage is much degraded. Sybylla sees another photo next to this one,

> ...one of my father...This, too, was a fine countenance, possessed of well-cut features and refined expression... I thought of a man and his wife at Possum Gully. The man was blear-eyed, disreputable in appearance, and failed to fulfill his duties as a father and citizen. The woman was work-roughened and temper-soured by endless care and an unavailing struggle against poverty. Could that pair possibly be identical with this?...It was for this that my mother had yielded up her youth, freedom, strength....(52).

Both parents, not only her mother, have been worn down by mar-

riage. Marriage has torn women away from close, life-long friendships with each other: Sybylla's mother's childhood friends, Harry's aunts, bemoan that they have never seen her after her marriage. Likewise, her father is no longer "Jolly" Dick Melvyn, reknowned host, after his stay at Possum Gully and subsequent debt, poverty, and alchoholism. Aunt Helen contrasts with both Sybylla's parents: here is the life that could have been for Sybylla's mother had she not married.

By following societal rules, women can expect this kind of life. Sybylla rejects this, saying, "This was life, my life and my parents' life, and the life of those around us, and if I was a good girl and honored my parents I would be rewarded with a long stretch of it. Yah!"(243). Sybylla bemoans her differences and a society that would not allow a female any actual ambitions:

> Did my mother understand me, she would know that I am capable of more depths of agony and more exquisite heights of joy in one day than Gertie will experience in her whole life....I certainly was utterly different to any girl I had seen or known. What was the hot wild spirit which surged within me?...Why was I not like other girls? Why was I not like Gertie? Why were not a new dress, everday work, and an occassional picnic sufficient to fill my mind? (33).

She is mad that they only expect her to marry, and marry for position rather than any conscious decision on her part. Sybylla is tired that people think she would marry only for a man's possessions. She says,

> ...I would not stoop to marry a king if I did not love him. As for trying to win a man, I would scorn any action that way; I never intend to marry. Instead of wasting so much money on me in presents...I wish you would get me something to do, a profession that will last me all my life, so that I may be independent. (132).

Why would she marry if she could make a living on her own?

When Sybylla's grandmother relays Frank Hawden's marriage proposal to her, Sybylla cries out "I would not marry him or any one like him though he were King of England. The idea of marriage even with the best man in the world seems to me a lowering thing..." and later thinks to herself, "No, I would never marry, I would procure some occupation in which I could tread my life out, independent of the degradation of marriage"(84). Sybylla refuses to ever marry, rejecting Everard, Frank, and even Harold Beecham.

Franklin, through Sybylla, also beomans why men and women can never be chums and friends. Sybylla underlines this statement about the space in which marriage puts women in her many comments, such as this one:

> Oh, what pleasure I might have derived from companionship with him![Everard Grey] I bit my lip to keep back the tears. Why did not social arrangements allow a man and a maid to be chums--chums as two men or two maids may be to each other, enjoying each other without thought beyond pure platonic friendship? but no; it could not be.(80).

In response to her grandmother's rebukes about her casual behavior with men, she says,

> Was I bold and immodest with men, as accused of being? It was the last indiscretion I would intentionally have been guilty of. In associating with men I never realize that the trifling difference of sex is sufficient to be a great wall between us. The fact of sex never for an instant enters my head, and I find it as easy to be chummy with men as with girls; men in return have always been very good, and have treated me in the same way.(149).

In disbelief at her aunt's accusations of acting "unwomanly," Sybylla, trying to balance out the double standard, says,

> Play with a man's heart!...Hurt their vanity for a few days is the most a woman could do with any of them. I am sick of this preach, preach about playing with men's hearts. It is an old fable which should have been abolished long ago. It does not matter how a woman is played with. (128).

Franklin's ultimate statement against women being caught in marriage comes from Sybylla's decision to reject Harold's marriage proposal and live at Possum Gully instead. Even a present-day reader might be surprised by her choice. Accepting his proposal could have provided her a life in the place she loved best, surrounded by art, music and culture.However, Sybylla feels a key element is still missing in this relation: "He offered me everything-- but control." (255). She throws back Harry's engagement ring that she had been wearing during the three months of their secret engagement:

> ...So you thought you had a right to lecture me as your future slave!...Marry you! Ha ha! Because the social laws are so arranged that a woman's only sphere is marriage, and because they endeavor to secure a man who can give them a little more ease, you must not run away with the idea that it is yourself they are angling for,...And you must not think that because some women will marry for a home they all will (163).

Even at Caddagat, and therefore potentially at Five-Bob Downs, class-conscious societal mores would have reared their ugly head. After a heady seventeenth birthday, which she spends helping drovers run the cattle, lounging on the veranda and perusing her favorite literature at her leisure, Sybylla's Uncle Jay-Jay gives her the very disappointing present of a doll: they not only want to encourage more "feminine" activities which would limit her exposure to the outdoors, but underlying this is society's desire to make women into dolls as well. Sybylla realizes the sacrifices and opportunities inherent in her decision and why she must make it. She watches as Harold "rode slowly down the road. I sat on the step of the garden gate...I could see my life stretching out ahead of me, barren and monotonous as the thirsty track along which Harold was disappearing."(259).

Franklin's choice to have Sybylla opt for an independent life, though in apparently worse and more confining circumstances, over married life points to a message that only having marriage as an option confines women. This is reinforced by the existence of married life in her purgatory and hell, and its absence in her heaven. This is more than a young girl afraid of sexuality: it is a young woman with observant eyes about the lack of options and actual down-grading in body, manners, and being that marriage brought women. In Franklin's landscape, there is no legitimate way for a woman to escape control of her parents, or the landscape, without marrying someone: the landscape and garden must be given to Sybylla. She

contains a determination to choose her own landscape, her own position in life forged on her own terms, hard and unforgiving as the circumstances might appear.

CHAPTER III : BUSH STUDIES

Australian Perspectives on Sense of Place and Domestic Relations

The landscape of the Australian outback Barbara Baynton creates in *Bush Studies* is a landscape upon which women have little place, time, or hope for any self-realization. Cultural adaptations to bush country life have not only perpetuated traditionally restrictive European roles for women, but also have spawned a tradition of male mateship. The society based on mateship may help people survive in the bush, but women are excluded from participating in it and are simultaneously subject to its codes. Far from vast amounts of land proving beneficial to women's freedom, it actually isolates, endangers, and restricts them. If women live in this landscape, they are expected to show an understanding of essential bush know-how and to keep up with the men's tasks, not show any fear or complain about the dangers their husband's absences can bring them, or be subject to men's violence and abuse in addition to a hard-working life of child-bearing and farm work. The women's role in this new culture is that of non-existent entity or sacrificial lamb, more to the men who inhabit the landscape than the difficult landscape itself.

This bush landscape is another world, one in which the land is a hostile agent, ravaged by drought, sun, and storms, and not easily

amenable to sustaining life-forms. The different culture this landscape engenders, the bush culture, is synonymous with mateship culture. Mateship culture has been defined as consisting of

> ...a great deal of...mutual regard and trust engendered by two men working...together in the otherwise solitary bush; habits of mutual helpfulness arise, and these elicit gratitude, and that leads to regard. Men under these circumstances often stand by one another through thick and thin; in fact it is a universal feeling that a man ought to be able to trust his own mate in anything.[10]

Mateship, a bond between males, must be established for survival and women are systematically treated poorly in the bush man's efforts to maintain his position in the bush hierarchy. The men who uphold this mateship tradition are also primary hostile agents to women. Miriam Dixson notes this phenomenon in The Real Matilda, saying that mateship

> automatically excludes women because it is based on the idea of men as workmates and companions, [while] the most important form of enduring relationship between the sexes is marriage, which conflicts directly with all-male relations.[11]

She underlines the nature of this system by quoting Judith Wright, who said," The 'mateship' ingredient in Australian tradition was always and is necessarily one-sided; it left out of account the whole relationship with woman."[12]

Baynton's understanding and use of the landscape in Bush Studies reveals and undermines all for which the celebrated national mateship system stood. Baynton presents a view of Austalian life

which for women consisted of nothing but isolation, despair, fear, and hard, unremunerative labor. Women are little more than slaves, or prey to lone wandering men, the solo shearers and celebrated heroes of 1890's Australian nationalist literature who roamed the bush country. Baynton portrays the bush-man types, who other authors would make into heroes, as do-nothing, almost inhuman, wife-beating rapists and murderers. Dogs make more trusty companions than these "heroic" and showy bush men. Baynton's scathing bush-man portrayals are no surprise to critic Dale Spender, who comments:

> If there is 'no nationalistic pride, no love of the bush and no feeling of mateship or affinity between the bush and its inhabitants as expressed by men, there is a realisation of the grim nature of the Australian setting and a harrowing understanding of the way it-and men-can inflict cruelty upon women.[13]

Women do not have a sense of safety or well-being, much less self-actualization, in any of the bush country landscapes in Baynton's tales. The environment is harsh and inhospitable, host to many storms, and the continually blazing, drought-bringing, unwelcome sun. Flies and mosquitoes swarm constantly, and few trees or watering places exist for shelter and sustenance. This barren landscape corresponds to lack of flourishing possibilities and an unsustainable,undesirable life for many women. The primary elements that characterize life for women on this dry and sterile landscape is isolation, from people as well as culture, and danger from the land if not from husbands and wandering men. Neighbors live far from one

another. This removal from any vestige of Western European middle class society does not serve to provide great freedom for the women, but often endangers them.

Women are left in isolation for most of the week while their husbands travel the area to work at shearing. The dwellings in which they are left are little more than crude, crack-ridden huts of wooden slabs, hardly a protective or reassuring environment. Taking care of children, women's role in this society, exacerbates their exposure and susceptibility to danger. In "Chosen Vessel," a woman left in such a manner contemplates her situation, the narrator saying, "She was not afraid of horsemen; but swagmen, going to, or worse, coming from the dismal, drunken little township, a day's journey beyond, terrified her." (133). When a swagman stops by the woman's shanty asking for food early in the day she pretends her husband is sick and therefore at home. Suspecting that this man might return upon nightfall, she constructs a barricade at the door. As she suspected, the swagman returns that night, circling the house to find an opening in the structure. While listening to this predator stalk her, the woman is trying to keep her baby from making any noise. When she finally hears the sound of horse hoofs, and thus the arrival of someone to save her from certain violence,she desperately tears down her barricade, her baby in her arms. The baby hinders any swift escape and also causes the possible rescuer to imagine the mother and child as an apparition of a Madonna with a baby Jesus. Feeling he has been the "chosen vessel" of an exalted spiritual

vision, he rides on without helping her. Now that the woman's only chance of rescue has gone, the swagman brutally rapes and murders her.

Baynton underlines, and makes valid for some who would not believe women's voices raised in terror, the true dangers presented by the bush to women by outlining a similar plot as "Chosen Vessel", but with a male protagonist. In "Scrammy 'And," an old, bush-wise rover and his faithful, companionable, almost human, dog Waterloo are placed in similar straits as were the woman and child in "Chosen Vessel." The man's boss has left with his wife to live in the "relative civilization" of town during her last days of pregnancy and childbirth. Left in complete isolation on the run, the old man converses with his dog, cursing the woman, even in her sewing-on of hat buttons, for causing him to be left in such circumstances. He also counts his hoard of money unwittingly before the hidden eyes of Scrammy, an old hand who the man mentions has "...gone along ways ter look fur work, cos 'e was stony broke after blueing 'is cheque at ther shanty sixty miles away." (80).

Though the man does not suffer rape, Scrammy circles and pens him in like an animal, brutally murdering him: the boss returns to find a grisly scene of the old man's bloodied remains. Scrammy, heavily in debt, has obviously murdered the old man for the few gold pieces he saw the old man counting. Had the boss and his wife returned just a few days earlier when the man expected them, the presence of additional humans,witnesses,may have prevented Scrammy's

attack.

"Scrammy 'And," although not containing any primary female characters, again shows the difficulties and dangers inherent in bush-life for everyone. If bush-knowledge and gender are no safe-guards to the dangers in this isolating landscape, the reader can surmise that this situation and landscape for women, who are left at home with children by their work-seeking husbands, and who are new and unaccustomed to the place, is rendered even worse. Had the woman in "Chosen Vessel" not been compelled to live in a place in which she was isolated and in a situation in which her husband was often gone and did not listen to her valid pleas to accompany him away from the house,she might have lived.

If the killer or violent agent in this isolating bush country is not a male, it is the unforgiving landscape itself. In "The Dream-er," the only story without bush men, a woman battles the wet and stormy night to see her mother after a long absence. She is familiar with this landscape, but a storm renders it into a new, threatening place, and she becomes lost in it, the narrator commenting that, "She stood in uncertainty, near-sighted, with all the horror of the unknown, that this infirmity could bring. Irresolute, she waited for another flash. It served to convince her she was wrong." (47). Even a familiar place can prove inhospitable : " The wind savagely snapped them, and they lashed her unprotected face. Round and round her bare neck they coiled their stripped fingers. Her mother had planted these willows, and she herself had watched them grow. How

could they be so hostile to her?" (50). This unforgiving land prevents her from reaching her goal, and her mother is dead upon her arrival.

The only way to survive and exist on this land is to labor excruciatingly hard, understand the bush ways, which are male ways, or become subordinated to them. Once a falling tree causes the woman in "Squeaker's Mate" injury and she can no longer carry out a man's work, she has fallen out of the mateship system. The nearest neighboring women are already isolated from her by their disgust at her "unwomanly" activities, the fact that she simply did the work of a man. The men with whom she commanded some respect because of the men's work she did do not know how or where to place her in relation to themselves. Therefore, everyone unfortunately avoids any contact with her and relegates her to Squeaker's so-called care. Squeaker's care consists of throwing this hard-working, now paralyzed, woman into a meager hut, providing her with barely a subsistence level of food,and procuring a new female companion from the nearest township.

While many women show strength and resistance to the perils that beset them in the Australian outback, the closest any female character comes to being able to explore her identity in this landscape and not have her life dictated by men is Jyne in "Bush Church." She is, not surprisingly, the only named female main character of all the tales, giving her even more of an individual identity. She herself, a mother of four, "was a power in the bush," (118) enjoying her reknown as the district "Rabbit Ketcher," or midwife. In payment

for her job, Jyne's "moderate fees were usually four-legged,"(118) denoting her understanding for the ways of bush life and what people were able to manage due to their circumstances. She also stands up to Ned, criticizing his extravagance of buying a fancy, useless coat instead of feeding his family, and decrying his physical abuse of his wife Liz and stepson Joey. Jyne obtains respect from the women and men in her skills and fearlessness: "There was between Jyne and Ned the opposition that is instinctive between commanding spirits. Liz yielded obedience first to Ned then to Jyne." (120).

Domestic relations between women and men reflect and reinforce the hostility of the landscape through mateship tradition. The men whom this landscape spawns are violent, without manners or consideration, and scornful of a woman's plight in bush life, much less helpful in any way.The position and treatment of women is abhorrent. This point Baynton assures no reader will miss, for she packs her tales with numerous examples of the woman's experience of the lauded, national symbol of the bush man and her portrayal of these bush men is definitely less than flattering. They consist of an unflattering array of brutish, violent, stupid males.

The bush men do not only expect women to serve them, but are lazy themselves. Squeaker in "Squeaker's Mate" is stupid, and inconsider- ate, treating his wife like a man when she can do man's work, but treating her worse than a dog when a work accident renders her paralyzed. She is the person who takes care of the sheep and the cares on the run. When the tree falls on her, "he was impatient,

because for once he had actually to use his strength. His share of a heavy lift usually consisted of a make-believe grunt..."(55). When she is confined to the hut, he gives her barely enough food and water to live, but throws fish tins to the dogs.

These bush men are also lecherous subhumans. "Billy Skywonkie" features a driver who has no culture or manners, and who ultimately rapes his woman rider. Along their long drive in the thirsty, land, the first man introduces her to another, who she feels is something less than human, saying "Never had she seen anything so grotesquely monkeyish. And the nose of this little hairy horror, ...blotted the landscape and dwarfed all perspective."(98). In this not so subtle way, Baynton shows that the existence of this kind of man constitutes the landscape. This monster is the kind of person with the passport to the foreign country of bush ways and mateship. She observes this "...hairy creature safely arranged a pair of emu eggs, slung with bush skill round his neck."(98).

The bush men are also blatant wife beaters. Ned in "Bush Church" proudly proclaims this as one of his skills and encourages other men to do so, saying "... it was the proper thing to hit a woman every time you met her, since she must either be coming from mischief or going to it." (115). However, he is "no favourite among the women, ...from his reputation for flogging his missus." (115), and can barely write, shown by his day-long exertions just to complete a check. This is the true picture underneath bushman "flash" Ned Stennard, who knows the outback and guides the preacher through it,

and helps the preacher to round up a congregration. He achieves this aim through bullying people to come, using cruel psychological tricks based on threatening his female neighbors about their rights to the land while their husbands are away.

The men show a severe lack of awareness about the realities of bush life for women. It does not even occur to the squatter in "Chosen Vessel" that a real woman with a real child could be screaming to be saved from an actually dangerous situation. The men of this landscape discount their wives valid experiences. When a woman dares protest to such an inhospitable living arrangement, such as in "Chosen Vessel," her husband ignores her pleas. "...when she had dared to speak of the dangers to which her loneliness exposed her, he had taunted and sneered at her. She need not flatter herself, he had coarsely told her, that anybody would want to run away with her." (134). She feels that her husband, "...in many things...was worse than the cow." (132).

Lack of awareness to the bush life, and consequently what it can do to women, is shown also in "Bush Church," by the forced, and very misplaced, transplanting of middle class values in the bush. The church, a vestige of civlization which would supposedly help women in their situation away from an actual town, actually compresses the problems and does them harm. The grazier's wife, hostess for the preacher's service, tries to point out the proper names of the flowers to Jyne, who later mocks these condescensions in her descriptions to Liz. (119). When the time for christening

arrives, parents cannot exactly place when their children are born, much to the consternation of the preacher. They are on bush time and place their children's births according to when they fall in relation to shearing season. Women's primary position, that of custodians for men's children, hinder their movement and freedom. Children outnumber adults eighteen to ten, and the women's looking after them prevents any information they may have gleamed from the sermon. In a town, the church could fulfill its purpose: it is the place that undermines its function. The distance taken to get there, the coercion needed to motivate people to go, and the exchange of news that ensues from such a rare gathering, undermine its purpose, and none but old man and grazier's wife, the hostess, pay attention.

As if making these crude portrayals were not sufficient to convey her point about the position of women in this bush landscape, Baynton shows dogs to be better friends than are humans. Women are treated worse than dogs, but men are those people who are the ones less human than dogs. "Scrammy 'And" shows the tradition of mateship between a man and his faithful dog, but a mateship that excludes and despises women. Dogs receive better treatment and more praise for their conduct and being in this tale. The dog in "Chosen Vessel" clues the woman to the continued presence of the man who is to kill her: "Hours after, watching intently for signs of smoke, she saw the man's dog chasing some sheep that had gone to the creek for water, and saw it slink back suddenly as if the man had called it." (134).

Dogs are portrayed as better, more intelligent, and more loyal

and trustworthy companions than men of the mateship mode. They would be better friends for women as they will actually listen to, defend, and help them in cases of danger. Squeaker's mate, whilst looking around her prison-hut sees " There was no bunk on the side of the hut to which her eyes turned, but her dog filled that space, and the flash that passed between this back-broken woman and her dog might have been the spirit of these slain tree folk."(66). The new mate, creeping into the hut to steal some of Squeaker's mate's water, is stopped by the dog from doing so, partly from her own estimation of the animal, saying " She rated this dog's intelligence almost human, from many of its actions in omission and commission in connection with this woman." (69).

As a symbol of the impossibility for women of an attainment of any kind of pastoral ideal upon this landscape, Baynton includes several images of the sheep, symbolic analogues to the women, being slaughtered. Sheep, or a lamb and ewe, are recurring symbols of women and their rapes and deaths in sacrifice to the land by the hands of the men, the drovers, shearers, and swagmen, who run the land. In "Scrammy 'And," a lamb and ewe traverse the hut and scene of murder, take a drink in the creek and then "joined the flock for the first time," (92) after which the man, wife and baby return to the hut. If this dangerous place is what humans flock to, they are as stupid as the sheep. The woman who is raped in "Billy Skywonkie" at the end "noticed that the sheep lay passive, with its head back till its neck curved in a bow, and that the glitter of the knife was

reflected in its eye." (109). Concurrent with the woman's rape and murder in a "Chosen Vessel," a boundary rider mentions the dingo feast of eight sheep, speculating that the lamb and ewe must still be alive, then comes upon the human lamb, the woman's child, who "after the manner of lambs of its kind did not know its mother when the light came... when it looked at the swollen disfigured face, it wept and would have crept away, but for the hand that still clutched its little gown." (137).

For Baynton, the vastness of Australian territory was not a saving catalyst, freeing women from old constraints, but was rather a frightening abyss into which they were thrown, alone, with only harsh bush men and a few companionable dogs. The new routes for societal survival that the Australian frontier demanded, that of the mateship tradition, only exacerbated hostility to women and their exclusion from an equal standing in society. Any hopes or chances for women to achieve a realization of themselves as individuals in this landscape would have to be forged later on in Australian history.

CHAPTER IV : O PIONEERS!

American Perspectives on Sense of Place and Domestic Relations

While the harsh Nebraskan, late-nineteenth century landscape in *O Pioneers!* is the downfall of some immigrant farmers, such as John Bergson, the Linstrums, Lou and Oscar, and Frank Shabata, it serves as the testing ground for the growth and development of the primary female character Alexandra Bergson. The importance of the landscape in reflecting the women's inner sense of freedom or constraint is also shown in the other primary female character Marie Shabata. These open fields do not constrict or threaten Alexandra, even though the hard work upon them might stiffen her mind and attitudes. The new, and in Cather's eyes, preferred mode for relations between genders that life on this new landscape enables should be that of friendship, for as she shows, relations of passion always bring sorrow and lack of freedom for women.

The landscape functions as a parallel to the development of the major female character, Alexandra. Her realization of herself arrives through her processes of dealing with the land and living in this landscape. Alexandra's comparison of her subconscious to an

underground stream aptly summarizes her character and accomplishments.

> ... her own realization of herself, was almost a subconscious existence; like an underground river that came to the surface only here and there, at intervals months apart, and then sank again to flow on under her own fields. Nevertheless the underground stream was there...(118).

After Alexandra's trying time where she has lost Emil to a big-city life and Carl to a prospector's life in Alaska in a single day, the landscape again reflects and highlights her inner state, this time full of despair and barren of emotion:

> The teeming life that goes on down in the long grass is exterminated...It is like an iron country, and the spirit is oppressed by its rigor and melancholy. One could easily believe that in that dead landscape the germs of life and fruitfulness were extinct forever (109).

Just as her unhappiest ties can find metaphors in the landscape, Alexandra's happiest moments and memories occur in outdoor settings in which she is able to feel a connection with the earth itself, at times when "she was close to the flat, fallow world about her, and felt, as it were,in her own body the joyous germination in the soil." (119). One particularly salient memory for her is that of a day in the dry year spent by the river with Emil.

> Under the overhanging willows of the opposite bank there was an inlet where the water was deeper and flowed so slowly that it seemed to sleep in the sun. In this little bay a single duck was swimming and diving and preening her

> feathers, disporting herself very happily in the flickering light and shade. They sat for a long time, watching the solitary bird take its pleasure. No living thing had ever seemed to Alexandra as beautiful as that wild duck (119).

The duck becomes an enchanted, timeless, mythic symbol for her joy in this landscape that she shares with Emil and to which she feels reconnected upon the mere mention of that day.

Another of Alexandra's happiest fancies is her unconcious participation in a sort of sacred marriage with the land via her dreamtime visions of a man with strong arms who swiftly carries her over the open fields below. When it appears to Alexandra that Carl, the one person with whom she contemplates marriage, is never to return to the Divide, and she is thus not to experience a marriage between humans, she has

> ...more vividly than for many years, the old illusion of her girlhood,of being lifted and carried lightly by some one very strong. He was with her a long while this time, and carried her very far, and in his arms she felt free from pain...for the first time in her life she saw him clearly, ...His shoulders seemed as strong as the foundations of the world. His right arm, bared from the elbow, was dark and gleaming, like bronze, and she knew at once that it was the arm of the mightiest of all lovers. She knew at last from whom it was she had waited, and where he would carry her. That, she told herself,was very well (165).

His shoulders are the earth itself and his bronze arms signify the plow upon the land. Her experience of overwhelming feelings in returning to the Divide from a short trip reiterates this sacred marriage theme. The land

> ...seemed beautiful to her, rich and strong and glorious.

> Her eyes drank in the breadth of it, until her tears blinded her.Then the Genius of the Divide, the great, free spirit which breathes across it, must have bent lower than it ever bent to a human will before (37).

Carl reinforces this description, saying to Alexandra, "You belong to the land...as you have always said. Now more than ever" (179). Just as in her dream, she belongs to this abstraction of land crystallized in a male figure. Although the landscape traditionally has been fig- ured as feminine, Cather's portrayal of the landscape as a masculine body is appropriate, underlining Alexandra's spiritual marriage with the land and the comforting companionship she receives from it.

The landscape also provides her with a source of immense strength after the numbing despair caused by Emil's and Marie's deaths. After walking outside the jail in which Frank is imprisoned, she feels her soul is just as confined as his body, imprisioned by the events that have cut off what she has put into her land, namely Emil. Her return to the homestead unleashes her chained soul. In relating this experience to Carl, Alexandra says,

> ...When...we got near Hanover, I felt something like I did when I drove back with Emil from the river that time, in the dry year.I was glad to come back to it...There is a great peace here...and freedom...I thought when I came out of that prison...that I should never feel free again. But I do, here,' Alexandra took a deep breath and looked off into the red west (179).

Her sense of freedom and peace of mind is vested in the expanse that lies before her in the sunset. She again compares her self to

existing as part of this larger framework in her evening repose the evening of the day she and Emil drove across the Divide and returned. She stands

> ...looking at the stars which glittered so keenly through the frosty autumn air. She always loved to watch them, to think of their vastness and distance, and of their ordered march. It fortified her to reflect upon the great operations of nature, and when she thought of the law that lay behind them, she felt a sense of personal security.That night she had a new consciousness of the country, felt almost a new relation to it....She had never known before how much the country meant to her... She had felt as if her heart were hiding down there, somewhere, with the quail and the plover and all the little wild things that crooned or buzzed in the sun.(40)

Although the land provides great freedom for Alexandra and she seldom if ever feels confined, she realizes the drawbacks of living on these homesteads and the need to leave from them, even psychologically to the greater opportunities in the world outside, and return. She feels the sting of lack of like-minded or accepting companionship with those around her. Her personal freedoms are limited by the isolation inherent in farm life and she only finds kinship in Emil, who is gone to Mexico, Carl, who is gone prospecting, and Marie. After Emil's and Marie's deaths, she finds loyalty in Ivar and Signa, but the lost companionship and craving for like-minded discussion only upon Carl's return. Alexandra, while being rooted in the land and having a place, feels she has no people, no companionable society. Her own experience and recognition of the limitations of this existence cause her to insist to Carl that she would, "...rather have

had your freedom than my land." (72).

Carl, having not having had to stay on the land and fight Alexandra's brothers and their obstinant, small-minded ways, is able to disagree with her, saying, " Freedom so often means that one isn't needed anywhere. Here you are an individual, you have a background of your own, you would be missed. But off there in the cities there are thousands of rolling stones like me...We have no house, no place, no people of our own." (72).

Alexandra maintains her point, refuting Carl's romanticization of freedom in her life, and shows, if not for herself, then for Emil, that after a taming of the land, the opportunities existing in city life, even with its drawbacks, is the direction to next pursue. She says,

> And yet I would rather have Emil grow up like that than like his two brothers. We pay a high rent, too, though we pay differently. We grow hard and heavy here. We don't move easily as you do, and our minds get stiff. If the world were no wider than my cornfields,if there were not something beside this, I wouldn't feel that it was much worth while to work...I would rather have Emil like you than them (72).

Alexandra shows her accurate observations here: although Emil has come from the land he is ever restless there and ready to move on to the city. He has gone to the university in Lincoln and has enjoyed it thoroughly, apparently not suffering the bad results of urban living as viewed by Carl. Alexandra has felt her own mind has stiffen and

has existed around more or less thick-headed people among whom she does not feel a kinship. She wishes an improvement upon this for Emil. In providing these elements, Cather prevents Alexandra from becoming the complete happy yeoperson and renders her love and connection with the landscape even more believable.

Part of the very reason that a woman's semi-autonomous life on this land is made viable is because the landscape, and the displacement it represented from an original society, is detrimental certain key people, opening a space for whomever could do the hard work. Alexandra's father tried to stick with a taming of the land when many had long given up, his younger brother to return to Chicago, and the Linstrums to St. Louis. However, he has been unable to make a human impact on the land and overcome the most "depressing and disheartening" of all the "bewildering things about a new country, the absence of human landmarks..."(13). In the eleven years of his settlement in this place, Alexandra's father has suffered withered, weather-beaten crops, injured animals, and heavy debts, eventually ending only with the land itself to show for his efforts. He "...had the Old-World belief that land, in itself, is desirable. But this land was an enigma.It was like a horse that no one knows how to break to harness, that runs wild and kicks things to pieces."(13). Alexandra's enterprising ideas and understanding of the land's potential, and willingness to try what has not yet worked paves the way towards proper cultivation to a bounteous existence.

The position in which Alexandra as a woman lives is enhanced and

improved by her connections with the lands. Her father recognizes her knowledge of, expertise in and natural ability at farming ways and so entrusts the farm, and his hopes for improvement, into her care after his death. The issue of gender is moot in this case, her father recognizing his daughter's

> ...strength of will, and the simple direct way of thinking things out, that had characterized his father in his better days. He would much rather, of course, have seen this likeness in one of his sons,but it was not a question of choice. As he lay there day after day he had to accept the situation as it was, and to be thankful that there was one among his children to whom he could entrust the future of his family and the possibilities of his hard-won land." (15).

Cather conveniently makes Alexandra oldest of the Bergson inheritors, staving off the issue until later in the work, that male siblings could attempt to take control over her life. It is her individual capabilities and hard work to create a living that count in her existence here. Her mind is full of "...clear writing about weather and beasts and growing things... she had never indulged in sentimental reveries. Even as a girl she had looked upon men as workfellows. She had grown up in serious times." (119). Her reknown at taking risks in her farming methods and guiding the creation of the finest farm around provides her a place in the community. She exchanges farming techniques with farmers and trades the innovative alfalfa and other produce with regional tradespeople. She has enough money to hire kitchen girls to keep her company and a foreman also.

Later, however, her brothers Lou and Oscar dispute her contribu-

tions to not only making, but running, the farm, using the argument of her gender to strip esteem from all of her accomplishments. She argues that she has worked just as hard as either of them, again using the landscape and conditions on it to support her defense. Incredulous and indignant of their accusations, she says

> Hard on you? I never meant to be hard. Conditions were hard. Maybe I would never have been very soft, anyhow; but I certainly didn't choose to be the kind of girl I was. If you take even a vine and cut it back again and again, it grows hard, like a tree (99).

Any personal freedom a woman would be able to accomplish and accrue upon this new landscape is constricted and cut short by marital ties, particularly those based on heedless romance and youthful passion. Alexandra rejects both. While Alexandra finds a certain degree of self-enhancement in this landscape, Marie, a city girl who marries handsome Frank Shabata on a romantic fancy, finds ruin and confinement in this same landscape as a result of her efforts to create a forbidden romantic relationship with Emil. Descriptions of the land in relation to where Marie is when she is thinking them reveals her inner state, that of being enclosed and stifled, like the geraniums and fuchsias she tends indoors during winter.

> She found more comfort in the Church that winter than ever before.It seemed...to fill an emptiness that ached in her heart...she sat sewing or chrocheting and tried to take a friendly interest in the game, but she was always thinking about the wide fields outside,where the snow was drifting over the fences; and about the orchard where the snow was falling and packing, crust over crust. When she

> went out into the dark kitchen to fix her plants for the night, she used to stand by the window and look out at the white fields, or watch the currents of snow whirling over the orchard (116).

Marie finds solace in a human-centered place rather than in the landscape, which reflects how hollow and cold are her insides. It is in the orchard to which she looks longingly that she and Emil meet their deaths.

Alexandra has focused her hopes for a better life on her younger brother Emil in the same way she has with the land entrusted to her, feeling "...no anxiety about Emil. She had always believed in him, as she had believed in the land." (139). Emil, who was to benefit from the feeling of belonging somewhere in the land, but expanding his mind in the city, is destroyed by his act of passion. With him dies Alexandra's work and hopes.

Passionate relationships are always punished as a viable means of livability between women and men, the earth devouring and absorbing the blood of the "best that we had," Marie and Emil. Places on the landscape where Marie and Emil meet portend death, destruction and unhappiness. The land is full of bounty in harvest time, but Emil stands scything a harvest in the graveyard, and this is the scene in which relations of Marie and Emil begin. Another time in which Emil and Marie are together are at a pond shooting ducks. After the first one is shot, however, Marie is horrified by the mangled and bloody sight, saying, "...Ivar's right about wild things. They're too happy to kill...They were scared, but they didn't really think anything

could hurt them." (76). What she says about ducks could later be said of her and Emil. Later, Emil looks into the earth, the grave of his young friend Amedee, and is shot full of energy as he gazes into it, the earth that will swallow him. The white mulberry tree in the orchard reminds Emil of Marie and it this place to which he is drawn to say goodbye and in which they both die. The earth swallows both of them up and metaphorically drinks their blood. When Ivar comes upon the two,

> the stained, slippery grass, the darkened mulberries, told only half the story. Above Marie and Emil, two white butterflies from Frank's alfalfa-field were fluttering in and out among the interlacing shadows; diving and soaring, now close together, now far apart;and in the long grass by the fence the last wild roses of the year opened their pink hearts to die. (157).

Even in cases when acts of passion do not exist, marital ties are anything but beneficial, as Frank and Marie's empty existence has already been shown. Marriage undermines the company and small community Alexandra has shaped on her farm. Alexandra's hired girls leave her one by one to be married. In Signa's case, Alexandra comments she probably fears the man she marries saying, "... I suppose she was too much afraid of Nelse to marry any one else... most of my girls have married men they were afraid of. I believe there is a good deal of the cow in most Swedish girls." (133). As all of her hired girls depart to marry, Alexandra is left with old Ivar and an occasional visit from Signa : the cozy society she has created for herself has

been wrenched apart.

Mrs. Bergson's only consolation after following her husband to the new country was in her garden, not so much in that is created a connection to the earth, but a reminder of the old country from which she has been displaced and transplanted. It is she of the Bergson family to demand on a log, not sod, house, for a certain distinction from life on and life in the land had to be made.

The mode of friendship Cather seeks to have emulated is possible when two people, namely Alexandra and Carl, feel a deep connection for the land in a similar way and are able to provide understanding companionship for one another. Alexandra observes the contrast between the friendships based relation in her situation and the passion based relation in Emil's saying, "I think when friends marry, they are safe. We don't suffer like-those young ones..."(169). Carl has proven himself her friend over many years, and even Marie says she would have never bought the old Linstrum homestead, and thus not have had Alexandra as her close friend, had it not been for the orchard Carl had carefully tended in his youth, again showing his matched sensibility to Alexandra's about the land. Carl fondly remembers the early mornings he and Alexandra shared together at the adjacent boundaries of their properties while milking cows. Even though Alexandra is eager to depart with Carl from the sad events around her,she makes him promise to return, asking "But you would never ask me to go away for good, would you?" to which he replies "Of course not...I think I know how you feel about this country as well

as you do yourself." (178).

While the land encompasses and overpowers many of the first homesteaders, Alexandra is strengthened by it. A somewhat pastoral vision can be achieved on these wide open plains, but only after they are fenced and put under care of human hands. Before this stage, these wild, unprotected landscapes are destructive. It is this threat of destruction,the "serious times" that require every person's help, that enable Alexandra and her well-matched abilites to come to the fore and flourish, as her farm eventually does. Alexandra Bergson's person is analogous to her flourishing farm, the most bounteous homestead on the Divide after her years of hard labor. She too recognizes the necessity for friendly human companionship and removal from the land at times: whenever she returns to it, it strengthens her, even in the times of deepest sorrow, and she finds contentment in it even more. The landscape, her personal acclimation to it, and the absence of a paternal figure, following her father's death, combine to allow her the freedoms she enjoys.

CHAPTER V : MY ANTONIA

American Perspectives on Sense of Place and Domestic Relations

While the austere, untamed, bleak Nebraskan landscape in My Antonia destroys many people, primarily men, including Mr. Shimerda, Russian Peter and Pavel, and Ambrosch, it serves as the initial place of self-development and identification for the primary female character, Antonia. She identifies herself, and also is identified by the narrator, most keenly with outdoor places. Antonia finds her favorite, most life-giving places, however, in those spaces of a tempered land- scape, where its more severe qualities have been tamed and definite human habitiations and marks on the land have been established. She appreciates also those elements in life which the landscape perhaps cannot provide. These pastoral places such as grandmother Burden's house, the Harling's home, the dance pavilion, and Antonia's farm, lend themselves to the most opportunity for Antonia's self-expression. Although she appreciates her time and experiences in the small town of Black Hawk, she feels constricted enough there that she must return to the open prairie landscape. In contrast to Antonia, the character Lena Lingard, a hired girl like the former, cannot wait

to leave even the small town that was her refuge from farm life. Lena also rejects married life and children completely, and serves as a voice for another side of Antonia's and the married woman's experience that might not be fully represented by the narrator Jim, who tends to romanticize and mythologize his and Antonia's lives. The women's experiences on the landscape serve to forge in them strength and motivation to decide themselves what to do with their lives. The women characters who have had this benefit of living on the land have the opportunity to remove themselves from their traditional place in a marriage, which is depicted in this work as less than ideal if not very unhappy.

The positive light in which Jim paints Antonia's life at the end of the work must be tempered with a knowledge of his perspective as narrator, for throughout the book he romanticizes events and people, including Antonia,and raises the conquering of the landscape to a heroic stature. It is easy for him to contemplate the friendliness of the landscape, fields, and stars of the western sky out his dorm window as he peruses poetry : he is at a university in a relatively large city, removed from an existence directly on the land.

Antonia's person and body are compared to the earth. She is described by both Jim and Frances Harling as if she was the soil and fruits of the land itself. Jim says, "Her eyes were big and warm and full of light, like the sun shining on brown pools in the wood. Her skin was brown, too, and in her cheeks she had a glow of rich, dark colour. Her brown hair was curly and wild-looking." (17). Francis

Harling compares her to the landscape also, saying that when they went out to the farm to pick her up, Antonia " was working in the garden... barefoot and ragged. But she has such fine brown legs and arms, and splendid colour in her cheeks-like those big dark red plums."(99).

The narrator identifies her energy and the motion and potential of the landscape together:

> As I looked about me I felt that the grass was the country,as the water is the sea....And there was so much motion in it; the whole country seemed, somehow, to be running.(12).

Antonia shares this quality of motion and undercurrents of potential energy :

> When we reached the level and could see the gold tree-tops,...Antonia laughed and squeezed my hand ...We stood panting on the edge of the ravine,looking down at the trees and bushes that grew below us. The wind was so strong...Antonia seemed to like it...She looked at me, her eyes fairly blazing with things she could not say (19).

Antonia herself realizes that the landscape functions as the place where she feels most herself. Even though her circumstances have led her to working outdoors, Antonia prefers this to being indoors, saying, " 'Oh, better I like to work out-of-doors than in a house!' she used to sing joyfully....She would toss her head and ask me to feel the muscles swell in her brown arm."(89). When Widow Steavens relates Antonia's attempted elopement to Larry Donovan, the first thing that troubled Antonia was Donovan's insistence on her coming to the city, "I'm a country girl,' she said, 'and I doubt if

I'll able to manage so well for him in a city." (199). Before Jim leaves for the university, Antonia tells him, "I'd always be miserable in a city. I'd die of lonesomeness. I like to be where I know every stack and tree, and where all the ground is friendly. I want to live and die here." (206).

Her tie with the earth and this wild prairie landscape, and her love for it, increases as she is able to tame the land and provide some elements of culture and cultivation in it herself. This energy and tie with the land arises again in the end when Antonia's many children burst forth from an underground cave and she compares her orchard to her children. Her new fruit cellar is full of pickled foods, including watermelon rinds, a sign of bounty: Russian Peter ate all he had stored when everything else of his had been taken. When Antonia's many children finish showing Jim this recent construction,

> ...they all came running up the steps together, big and little, tow heads and gold heads and brown, and flashing little naked legs; a veritable explosion of life out of the dark cave into the sunlight.(218).

The heads of her children are like colors of the prairie and the grain grown upon it. Thus, this landscape holds for Antonia a similar effect of fertility and bounty. The womb image the cave conveys also an idea of Antonia as the landscape: Antonia has given birth to her children just as the landscape has given life to the orchard. The important part of this event is not only from the children coming forth from the earth. It is also the jumping out of it into an

openness, something else, namely the cultivation of the landscape that Antonia has produced and the benefits that accrue from the best of this cultivation and still existing in a relatively unbridled landscape.

Despite the changes the years of hard work have wrought upon Antonia's frame, Jim still recognizes the unflagging essence of his friend that was there when they were children. He describes her as having grizzled hair and no teeth, and is at first startled to see these physical changes. The vital energy most central to her character still exists. Jim thinks,

> ...how little it mattered-- about her teeth, for instance. I know so many women who have kept all the things that she had lost,but whose inner glow has faded. Whatever else was gone, Antonia had not lost the fire of life (216).

Although it has taken many years of hard labor, Antonia's farm produces much bounty, both in children and vegetation. Her orchard, with hollyhocks, mulberry trees, and ash trees, which shelters the house from the wind, is another sign of her connection with the productive aspects of the earth.

> The orchard seemed full of sun...and we could smell the ripe apples on the trees. The crabs hung on the branches as thick as beads on a string, purple-red, with a thin silvery glaze over them (220).

Just as she has raised and tended her children, she cultivates this plot of land and cares for the trees upon it as if they were people. She tells Jim that

> ...'There wasn't a tree here when we first came. We planted every one, and used to carry water for them too-- after we'd been working in the fields all day....I couldn't feel so tired that I wouldn't fret about these trees when there was a dry time. They were on my mind like children...And now, you see, we have the good of them (219).

What Antonia has developed in the orchard and cave is a sense of the landscape as intrinsically tied to her body: just as her body has brought forth children, and just as she has raised them, the cultivated, humanized landscape produces an abundance of life for people to tend.

Various places serve as havens for Antonia, spaces which remove her from her existence in her family's squalid sod cave of a house, which functions as that part of the landscape which swallows and oppresses people The landscape functions as a place of freedom for Antonia, as opposed to the cramped existence in her family's sod cave and the restrictions to her behavior in town. Being out on the land rather than inside it gives Antonia a sense of relief and freedom from the oppressive sod house, her duties, and demanding mother. Their sod house, built almost underground, is described as "a sort of shed, thatched with the same wine-coloured grass that grew everywhere." (17). The Shimerdas live like badgers here, much to the father's despair: "The air in the cave was stifling, and it was very dark too." (49). Where Antonia sleeps "In the rear wall was another little cave; a round hole, not much bigger than an oil barrel, scooped out in the black earth." (50).

Antonia feels happier when outside the confines of this earth,

even if this means braving the bitter winter cold. "The two girls... were always ready to forget their troubles at home, and to run away with me over the prairie, scaring rabbits or starting up flocks of quail." (23). One winter day, Jim arrives to take the Shimerda girls on his rustic sleigh. Although Antonia and her sister Yulka are cold in their thin dresses,

> they were so glad to get away from their ugly cave and their mother's scolding that they begged me to go on and on, as far as Russian Peter's house. The great fresh open, after the stupefying warmth indoors, made them behave like wild things. They laughed and shouted, and said they never wanted to go home again (43).

Antonia also likes to go on Jim's excursions to watch earth-owls fly back to their nests under the earth, feeling sorry for them to have to go underground, but also that "winged things who would live like that must be rather degraded creatures."(21). She herself seems a winged creature degraded by her existence in her parents' hovel.

While the open, wild landscape seems to encompass and define Antonia's vitality, her most contented times find her in slightly more cultivated places, one step removed from the earth. Antonia appreciates those elements of life that the landscape by itself does not provide. This is seen first with her nostalgia, like her father's, for the music and dance of their Bohemian culture, and her eagerness and rapidity in learning English and going to school, at least until her father dies and Ambrosch recalls her to the farm to help with the work.

The restrictive Shimerda sod house from which Antonia seeks to

escape diametrically opposes life at the Burden's homestead, which for Antonia and her tired father, is a haven. She appreciates the time allowed in Jim's grandmother's kitchen and company of this household's society and storytelling. Antonia

> ... loved to help grandmother in the kitchen...she would stand beside her, watching her every movement... The basement kitchen seemed heavenly safe and warm in those days-like a tight little boat in a winter sea...(44).

When Antonia leaves to marry Larry Donovan, the Widow Steavens describes her as saying "'Good-bye, dear house!'...I expect she meant that for you and your grandmother, as much as for me...This house had always been a refuge to her." (199). Many years before she says this, she and Jim, on an evening during Antonia's tenure at the Burdens' farm, climb on top of the chicken shed to watch a storm. Antonia says "I like your grandmother, and all things here,...Things will be easy for you. But they will be hard for us." (90). Even at a younger age, she recognizes the greater opportunities that exist in such a relatively cultivated environment, and her preference for such a place.

The Burden's home is a favorite place for Mr. Shimerda also, who shares his daughter's sense of loss of their culture and the need to reclaim some kind of artistic pursuits. He is a skilled weaver with fine hands who brings his violin to this country, but does not possess any farming knowledge. The feeling of contentment and safety in the Burden house

> seemed completely to take possession of Mr. Shimerda. I

> suppose, in the crowded clutter of their cave, the old man had come to believe that peace and order had vanished from the earth, or existed only in the old world he had left so far behind.(57).

After Mr. Shimerda's suicide, Jim, left alone in the house as the rest of the household tends to the Shimerda's affairs, suspects that Mr. Shimerda's soul had returned to this place

> ...which had been more to his liking than any other in the neighbourhood. I remembered his contented face when he was with us on Christmas Day. If he could have lived with us, this terrible thing would never have happened... I knew it was homesickness that had killed Mr. Shimerda... Surely, his exhausted spirit, so tired of cold and crowding and struggle with the ever-falling snow, was resting now in this quiet house....the kitchen...tucked away so snugly underground, always seemed to me the heart and centre of the house. (66).

The heart and center of a society starts in the earth, underground, but is up to humans to work out from it to make it hospitable and even a place of joy.

The Harlings' house in the town of Black Hawk serves as another haven for Antonia. "After the long winter evenings on the prairie, with Ambrosch's sullen silences and her mother's complaints, the Harlings' house seemed, as she said, 'like Heaven' to her." (113). This house shares many characteristics with the Burdens' home. The Harlings, "...had been farming people, like ourselves, and their place was like a little farm, with a big barn and a garden, and an orchard and grazing lots-even a windmill." (96). Antonia loves living at the Harlings as their hired girl,telling stories to the children

in the evening, and participating in the family's pastimes of dancing and playing music and games. During the winters, "...Every Saturday night was like a party. The parlour, the back parlour, and the dining-room were warm and brightly lighted, with comfortable chairs and sofas, and gay pictures on the walls One always felt at ease there....." (113). To further augment this portrayal of the Harlings' house as sanctuary, Jim compares it's life-giving colors to the church stain-glass windows where, during the winter, color-starved people would gather to admire its light and warmth: "the lights in the Harlings' windows drew me like the painted glass...Inside that warm, roomy house there was colour too." (112).

There exists an affinity between Mrs. Harling and Antonia that likewise suggests that a space such as the Harlings' place is an optimum place for Antonia to develop and flourish. Like Antonia, Mrs. Harling has spirit: "Every inch of her was charged with an energy that made itself felt the moment she entered the room." Mrs. Harling, like Antonia, likes work in her garden. She is the person with whom Antonia, with the exception of her dead father, most closely identifies :

> There was a basic harmony between Antonia and her mistress.They had strong, independent natures, both of them. they...were not always trying to imitate other people. They loved children and animals and music, and rough play and digging in the earth....Deep down in each of them there was a kind of hearty joviality, a relish of life... [which was] very invigorating (115).

Antonia's adult homestead contains many of the qualities of her

two former havens, and is wide, expansive, and very tied to a life outdoors. Some of the best times at the Harling house were spend out working in the garden :

> The Harling children and I were never happier, never felt more contented and secure, than in the weeks of spring which broke that long winter. We were out all day in the thin sunshine, helping Mrs. Harling and Tony break the ground and plant the garden, dig around the orchard trees, tie up vines and clip the hedges. Every morning, before I was up, I could hear Tony singing in the garden rows (124).

Likewise, Antonia's homestead contained a magnficent orchard and many other forms of vegetation, all with which she finds great joy in living. Jim's first view of her house is "Ducks and geese...quacking across my path. White cats were sunning themselves among yellow pumpkins on the porch steps. I looked through the wire screen into a big, light kitchen..."(213). Antonia has hope that she can help make her children's lives better, if her own had not turned out as she had planned. Antonia's orchard is a place friendly to human beings. The school teacher has the school picnic in Antonia's arbor every year and Jim feels that,"There was the deepest peace in that orchard." (219).

Although Antonia's sphere obviously rests in the landscape, she is thankful for her town experience because it helped her create her own pastoral garden and helped instill her with manners which she feels proud and important to pass to her children :

> I'm glad I went. I'd never have known anything about cooking or housekeeping if I hadn't....I've been able to bring my children up so much better...If it hadn't

> been for what Mrs. Harling taught me, I expect I'd have brought them up like wild rabbits (221).

Jim reinforces the good in the cultivated habitat Antonia has created for herself. Upon his return to the Black Hawk area after a twenty year absence Jim sees the changes that have taken place on this landscape. The taming of landscape, such as Antonia has done, equates to success, abundance, and happiness :

> There were wooden houses where the old sod dwellings used to be, and little orchards, and big red barns; all this meant happy children, contented women, and men who saw their lives coming to a fortunate issue....all the human effort that had gone into it was coming back in long, sweeping lines of fertility. The changes seemed beautiful and harmonious to me (197).

Although the farms contain much life and vivaciousness, the town has not fared in the same manner. Upon his return to Black Hawk, he sees the Harlings' tree, a symbol of the good life that existed there, has been cut down to a stump.

> I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures where the land was so rough that it had never been ploughed up, and the long red grass of early times still grew shaggy over the draws and hillocks. Out there I felt at home again...I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns.(237).

Earlier in the book, the dancing pavilion which comes to the lifeless town serves as another beneficial sort of haven, an arena in

which Antonia can display some of her talents. She is one of the most spirited,energetic, exuberant,naturally talented and popular dancers.

> It was at the Vanni's tent that Antonia was discovered. Hitherto....her thoughts never seemed to stray outside that [the Harlings'] little kingdom. But after the tent came to town she began to go about with Tiny and Lena and their friends. The Vannis often said that Antonia was the best dancer of them all...(131).

However excellent she might be at dancing, Antonia still must help clear her family's land debt. Jim reflects that "if, instead of going to the end of the railroad, old Mr. Shimerda had stayed in New York and picked up a living with his fiddle, how different Antonia's life might have been!" (142).

This dancing pavilion also serves as a matrix against which to compare the the energy of Antonia and the other lively, robust country girls and the dull, lifeless town girls. Just as Antonia felt the sod house constricting her, Jim feels the same oppressive feeling in the overly sedate lives of the small town. The dances at the Firemen's Hall are the only events to look forward during the week. He says of the dancing pavilion,

> Now there was a place...where one could laugh aloud without being reproved of by the ensuing silence. That silence seemed to ooze out of the ground, to hand under the foliage of the black maple trees with the bats and shadows. Now it was broken with lighthearted sounds (126).

Antonia has too much independence to remain in this environment.

The narrator feels some justness that though these hired girls

are snubbed now for helping to work off their families debt to the land, by so doing they become beneficiaries of their hard labor and eventually more prosperous than any of the town girls. The country girls, who began on the prairie landscape, later become far more successful than the town girls, implying that this extra energy and different way of feeling themselves in a space that came from the landscape also helped them succeed.

At the dances, the town boys line up to dance with these hired girls : "... out-of-door work had given them a vigour which, when they got over their first shyness on coming to town, developed into a positive carriage and freedom of movement, and made them conspicious among Black Hawk women." (127). Whether in the cities, like Lena and Tiny, or on land, like Antonia and the Bohemian Mary's, the women who have first lived out upon the landscape are more sure of themselves and their space and their abilities to achieve their possibilities in life. In contrast to these are the town girls who were pitied if they had to walk more than half a mile to school :

> ...physical exercise was thought rather inelegant for the daughters of well-to-do families....they stayed indoors in winter because of the cold, and in summer because of the heat. When one danced with them, their bodies never moved inside their clothes; their muscles seemed to ask but one thing-- not to be disturbed....I remember those girls merely as faces...cut off below the shoulders (127).

These girls avoid exposing themselves to the landscape, and do not possess any great vitality. This would seem to suggest that living on the landscape, as the hired girls have done, is beneficial to a

greater exuberance in life, and maturity as well for the aging experiences they would have on a farm.

While the landscape appears to engender in the young hired girls a freedom and confidence in their actions, marriage, women's traditional role into which they were expected to adapt themselves, does not necessarily provide these women with their primary source of identity. Indeed it cannot, for although married life is not depicted as a dead-end experience for women, the examples provided show that marriage is certainly not optimum or even very happy, for both females and males. People such as Lena and Tiny, who opt not to marry, have just as interesting and full lives, and sometimes happier lives, than those who did marry.

Antonia's act of passion, following Larry Donovan to the city in hopes of marriage, results in her pregancy and subsequent return to Black Hawk in shame, much to everyone's surprise. Antonia has idealized this womanizing passenger conductor, talking about him, as Lena says, "like he was president of the railroad."(172). Antonia's marriage to Cuzak, apparently happy and bountiful, is still not a relationship of perfect marital bliss.Cuzak goes to the city to dance with young girls, and returns, surprised to see he is the father of so many children. Antonia had to help him stay on the land and make it through the hard years, for it is obvious he might be happier living in a city.

Mr. Shimerda would have loved to stay in his home country, but is urged to leave by his loathsome wife. Antonia says,

> He not want to come, nev-er!' she burst out. 'My *mamenka* make him come. All the time say:'America big country; much money, much land for my boys, much husband for my girls.' My papa, he cry for leave his old friends what make music with him...But my mama, she want Ambrosch for be rich, with many cattle...For Ambrosch my mama come here (59).

Her father's marriage has actually torn the family apart even before their arrival in the United States. Antonia says,

> ...my father was different from my mother. He did not have to marry my mother, and all his brothers quarrelled with him because he did...After my father married her, my grandmother never let my mother come into her house again. When I went to my grandmother's funeral was the only time I was ever in my grandmother's house. Don't that seem strange? (151).

When Mr. Harling returns to the Harling house, all the fun and games, and much of what makes the place dear to Antonia, must stop, for he demands a quite house. The implication exists that if Mr. Harling never came back to the house, if his rule as the father and husband did not exist, the happy times could continue. Mr. Harling also seeks to prevent Antonia from attending the town dances she dearly loves. He does this out of a sense of propriety, telling her to stop going to the dances or find another place to work. A place with children contains amenities, but contains restrictions from the male voice, foreshadowing her "being under thumb," if she herself married.

The Cutters maintain a brutal and sadistic relationship. Mr. Cutter brings his wife to Omaha on the train, only to dump her there and return to attempt to rape Antonia. Their house is a place that even Jim considers dangerous. They take pleasure in outraging the other, and finally, a Mr. Cutter desperate that her family does not receive

a third of their land, shoots her and then himself.

Other marriage relationships also are not viewed in a positive light. Lena says of Ole Benson, the man who married Crazy Mary and who watches Lena as she works tending cattle, that he "is one of the people I'm sorriest for." (181). The narrator himself has an unhappy marriage, which he mentions within the framing of the narrative.

Cather even attacks marriage as an abstract concept. Jim feels that part of the boredom that the dance pavilion helped dispel came from too much domesticity. He says,

> ...At last there was something to do in those long, empty summer evenings, when the married people sat like images on their front porches, and the boys and girls tramped and tramped the board sidewalks (125).

Although Antonia herself shows a great deal of promise and energy in staying in this landscape, it is Lena and Tiny Soderball who appear to represent the greatest freedom of movement for women. While that movement appears to be away from the rich land, it was their girlhood experiences on the landscape that provides them with a base of strength and determination from which to make decisions about the further opportunities in their lives. The women who don't marry succeed in life in other ways. The Widow Steavens sets herself up comfortably in the Burden's old farm. Tiny Soderball "achieves the most solid worldy success," in her gold mining and land ventures in Alaska (192). However, in contrast to Antonia, with whom after twenty

years Jim still feels a powerful life energy, Tiny "was like someone in whom the faculty of becoming interested is worn out." (194).

Lena does not marry, but goes on to become a very successful and respected dressmaker. The fact that she earns her own money changes the way in which she interacts with men. When Jim and Lena go out to theatrical productions in Lincoln, Lena " was inflexible about paying for her own seat; said she was in business now, and she wouldn't have a schoolboy spending his money on her." (174). Later she reiterates that this can, and should, be viewed as normal proceedings, saying to Mr. Ordinsky, " A girl who makes her own living can ask a college boy to supper without being talked about. We take some things for granted."(183). This shows the change existing between Mr. Ordinsky's first generations and what Lena's generation is able to gain.

Lena's success occured in part from her reaction against the landscape : "...the years when Lena literally hadn't enough clothes to cover herself might have something to do with her untiring interest in dressing the human figure" (179).She is more than glad to come in to town to work for Mrs. Thomas, the dressmaker, saying, "...I'm through with the farm. There ain't any end to the work on a farm, and always so much trouble happens," (104), "Tony knows I never did like out-of-door work." (105), and, "Ain't you crazy about town, Tony? I don't care what anybody says, I'm done with the farm!" (106). Unlike Antonia, who says, "I belong on a farm. I'm never lonesome here like I used to be in town,"(221) Lena feels that she will not be lonesome in Black Hawk. Antonia seems to be at home in places where there are

children, whereas this is anathema to Lena.

Lena craved privacy, and life on a farm did not provide her that. When Jim asks if she would be lonely without a husband, she says,"Not me. I like to be lonesome. When I went to work for Mrs. Thomas I was nineteen years old, and I had never slept a night in my life when there weren't three in the bed. I never had a minute to myself except when I was off with the cattle." (185). It is not the farming life or doing hard work that Lena objects to: it is the children and lack of autonomy that come with marriage.

She decides she does not want to marry ever, and rebukes Jim's assumption that every girl, especially a pretty one such as herself, would want to marry saying

> ...it's mainly because I don't want a husband. Men are all right for friends, but as soon as you marry them they turn into cranky old fathers,...They begin to tell you what's sensible and what's foolish, and want you to stick at home all the time. I prefer to be foolish when I feel like it and be accountable to nobody (185).

She reiterates this problem many times: marriage can be drudgery for women. On a certain night when she dwells upon her early years on the farm, as opposed to just making a sarcastic comment about it she tells Jim,

> ...she couldn't remember a time when she was so little that she wasn't lugging a heavy baby about, helping to wash for babies,...She remembered home as a place were there were always too many children, a cross man and work piling up around a sick woman (186). Lena declares, '...that was no life for a girl!...You can't tell me anything about family life. I've had plenty to last

me...It's all being under somebody's thumb.' (187).

Lena thinks not only of herself as an individual, but tries to remove her mother from an identification solely as a mother also. When Lena's younger brother comes to town for a Christmas present for their mother and is deliberately over initials on the hankerchiefs he intends to buy, Lena counsels, "I'd get the B, Chrissy. It will please her for you to think about her name. Nobody ever calls her by it now" (111).Lena wants her mother to be identified as an individual and not just for the function she serves in the family. Lena sees the difficulties in her mother's situation and is careful not to repeat it for herself. She says,

> Oh, the babies are all right; if only they don't come in winter. Ours nearly always did. I don't see how mother stood it....I'm going to get my mother out of that old sod house where she's lived so many years. The men will never do it....my oldest brother, he's wanting to get married now, and build a house for his girl instead of his mother (153).

What Cather shows in the the contrast between Antonia and Lena/ Tiny is that the wild frontier landscape, and even the more cultivated landscape of later years, would not be a suitable place for everyone. For Antonia, whose person has been compared to the landscape and who says she would feel stifled in the city, the outcome of staying on the land, for to do so was not entirely her own decision, is appropriate. Antonia contains a vital energy which she is able to utilize, put into the earth, and make it her own bountiful, pastoral

garden. To have moved on to the opportunities and independence afforded by the big cities such as Lena and Tiny have done would have confined Antonia's expansive spirit. Lena escapes the landscape around Black Hawk because she does not want to repeat her mother's life, which she identifies completely with the landscape. A cultivated homestead might have suited her, but still she would not have wanted to marry and have children. Lena leaves and is able to create her own space. Although Antonia may not have removed herself from what Lena considers restrictions, marriage and children, in her own way, Antonia creates a world in which she lives on the landscape she loves, does much of her work outside, and feels free and unconfined. She has been able to create her own space.

After surviving beyond the constant struggle against the land and after developing some cultural amentities, the new society forged on this American frontier landscape was one which freed women for more options. These women could choose to leave or stay on the landscape, and to marry or not marry. Whatever these women's choices, the initial formative experiences on the landscape give these women the vitality, strength, and motivation to go forth confidently in the world and create their own opportunities and their own spaces for themelves.

CHAPTER VI : CONCLUSION

A Comparision of the Materials

In the new societies forged on the Australian and American frontier landscapes, women progress by embracing the cultivated fertility of the land or their own imaginations and not the human fertility inherent in marriage. The physical labor needed to help combat the harsher aspects of the frontiers becomes a great equalizer of true abilities. In all of the works, the most harmonious relations with, and benefits from, the landscape occur when the women are one step removed from it by combining their existence on the landscape with some vestiges of culture in the form of havens or cultivated gardens. It appears more possible for women to attain the opportunities to develop these amenities in the American landscape. Women would like the cultural amenities, to get inside the garden walls, without being confined within the walls of the ostensibly genteel societally-defined female roles. All the writers make statements against the confining nature of women's position in society as only being related to marriage.

The works in this study indicate that the difference that the frontier landscapes made in women's lives partly arose from the

physical labor that had to be used to cultivate the land. This necessity to engage in physical, so-called "improper" or "unwomanly" labor would automatically distinguish these women from the Victorian middle class and its rules about women not working. The genteel society from which landscape-based women distinguish themselves is represented by Black Hawk town girls in My Antonia, Alexandra's sisters-in-law and brothers in O Pioneers!, and the grandmother, mother, aunt, and gorgeous, but lifeless, urban debutante in My Brilliant Career. Jim in My Antonia, comparing the genteel, but dull, town girls to the lower class, but more vivacious and interesting hired girls, feels that the girls who have lived on the land hold themselves with confident carriages and walk with a different stride. Baynton's women have no other options but hard, physical labor, for there is no art and culture in the bush country. When Squeaker's mate in Bush Studies is injured and can no longer do the work of a man, she is treated as if she were less than human.

Hard labor enables women to create a vision for themselves of something greater; they know they can do work equal to that of a man. Both Lena and Sybylla have hard experiences on the landscape which motivate them to remove themselves from it. Sybylla would not have been as independent starting in a city: while having access to art and music, she would not have experienced the freedom of movement outside and would have been stuck in middle class expectations. Franklin is searching to define her own space away from the only

option society could think of for her, and the landscape provides her with a means by which to do this.

Tiny, Alexandra,and Antonia also use their experiences on the landscape to remove themselves from traditional society. For Americans, those who are able to cultivate the wild land are those who prosper, and it is not necessary to do so as or with a man. Antonia must mature as Alexandra does in the circumstances of their fathers' deaths. They are the ones who understand and love the land and help bring it to life. Gender is not an issue in relation to their abilities. Cather feels that this landscape offers hard, but character-building experiences, and ultimately it offers choices to the women who have come from it.

Women are presented with a choice between civilization, art and rules, and the relatively unstructured frontier without any rules and also without art and familiar European culture. Conversely, they can choose a life on the rough landscape which exists without societal rules as yet. Women choose the former because at least in the cities women have opportunities to educate themselves, make their own money or even fortune, and negotiate with others about a freer existence. Sybylla realized that negotiating with Mr. M'Swat, a man of the back country, was quite useless if not next to impossible. Out on the uncultivated landscape, women are still confined by definition of their biology and have no opportunities to change this situation.The women realize the benefits of the landscape, understand its dangers,

and know that their best chances for survival and a good life would be creation of a space on the landscape that protects against the elements and also provides artistic and educational opportunities. If women are able to create their own gardens and havens, literally and figuratively, they can combine the best of landscape and culture.

Australia cannot provide the havens and removals from untethered frontier life in the same way as the American frontier. Baynton and Franklin portray the Australian landscape as hostile, unforgiving, and unyielding, as the society was to their desires to change. The open landscape does not appear to induce the creation of societies that liberate women, but confines them to lives of child-bearing and slaving work. Baynton's women are not even allowed a glimpse of any pastoral existence. There is not much hope for a better existence on this land, much less opportunities in the society providing independence and a life not under the control of men. The patriarchal mateship tradition, firmly entrenched, exacerbated women's dismal position. Baynton and Franklin show characters yearning for vestiges of European culture. Franklin's Barney's Gap is a small glimpse of the same unforgiving bush landscape as in Baynton's stories. Even inside a human construction there exists no escape from this encompassing and threatening landscape: Squeaker's Mate's hut and Sybylla's teaching hut at the M'Swats both have many cracks and let in dust and a view to the outside, but do not protect against its harsh elements.

Sybylla is not allowed to create her own garden: she can receive it only through the graciousness of relatives in bringing her to

Caddagat or in marrying Harold Beecham and living at Five-Bob Downs. In spite of this situation, Franklin contains a determination to choose her own landscape as challenging as the circumstances might appear. Of all the characers in all the works examined, Sybylla makes the most conscious efforts to remove herself from societal constraints, perhaps because she was in a position in which she most needed to do so. She does not want to be identified with the landscape in the same way she does not want to be solely identified with her body and what she is capable of "producing" in terms of children.

The American frontier landscape is portrayed as closer to the pastoral ideal. In both Cather novels, there are havens and gardens that women can establish. The havens are those houses made from wood, not the sod earth: as soon as they can remove themselves from the restrictive relationship of self to earth the better. These havens are important in works by women in both countries: a community life is important to lifting the boredom from life. Like Jim and Antonia's lives centering on "warmth, food, and the return of men at nightfall ...," the many shearers passing by make life more exciting and interesting for Sybylla. Cather feels that American women are able to have both the benefits of landscape and the opportunities in transplanted European culture. While Cather's frontier landscape encompasses and overpowers many of the first homesteaders, the women, once they are able to tame and cultivate the land, are strengthened by their connections to it. Alexandra and Antonia are analogous to

their luscious farms. They both recognize the need for elements of culture, human companionship, and removal from a direct existence on the landscape.

This importance of cultivated amenities in combination with the frontier is seen in the contrast of Antonia and Mrs. M'Swat, who do choose marriage and children. Although Antonia and Mrs. M'Swat might appear to be in similar situations, Cather sees Antonia with very different eyes than Franklin sees Mrs. M'Swat. This is because Antonia exists in a place in which she can put something into the landscape and gain something back. In Barney's Gap's rough, dry terrain, no return of vegetable abundance was likely to occur. Antonia also has integrated those qualities she learned in town and is proud to pass on these more genteel traits, whereas Mrs. M'Swat would be fortunate to know how to eat with a fork. Antonia embraces vestiges of culture and establishes her own pastoral garden whereas Mrs. M'Swat does not do these things, and perhaps would not even think of them.

Part of the reason for the differences in the possibilities available to women is reflected in the relation of landscape to human beings. Cather has her characters share an intense long-term bond with the landscape. The land itself is not a hostile agent for Cather, although it overpowers, shadows, and dictates life in small towns and has its detrimental effects. For Baynton and Franklin, however, the land itself can be a hostile agent and engender people who are dull and close-minded. The landscape reflects Sybylla's mind

and feelings about her opportunities, but the connection is not so transcendental as Cather's. While the environment is hard in Franklin's and Cather's works, there do exist areas of abundance and at times exists the possibility of moving to life in a big city. There is no way to conquer the land or leave bad domestic situations in Baynton's work.

Franklin, Baynton and Cather seem to share a keen dislike for one of the options presented to the women on these frontier landscapes, that of marriage. The question is whether each author believes women can break out of this and how they would do so. Baynton feels the landscape, besides being devoid of cultural amentities, does not offer a choice not to marry. Women did not have a sphere outside of marriage and appeared as slaughtered sheep, a destruction of the pastoral image. Franklin feels women can break out of marriage only with the most staunch stands, enduring many truly unnecessary sacrifices in other parts of their life to maintain this independence. Marriage and children are literally and figuratively portrayed as hellish ends. She sees marriage brings down-grading to women and takes them away, ultimately, from the garden: achieving the garden and marriage and children are not seen in the same place. Even with a background of refinements, a woman could be dragged down by the life around her and becomes unrecognizable to her former self, as did Sybylla's mother. Cather always punishes passion and offers alternatives to marriage. These women can choose not to marry, not to put themselves in a traditional female role. Lena is an individual

without children or marriage who can be successful. In _O Pioneers!_, living as a single woman is allright.

In both countries, the images of place and the so-called "effects" of the land really might not have been effects at all. The people projected their hopes of regaining a lost paradise onto the new lands and in turn felt affected by these hopes. Western European society could have changed before coming to these lands had they been able to see their own constraints. The unexpected harsh experiences provided by the new landscapes, those which the settlers had not included in their pastoral vision, were the needed elements which helped disrupt the status quo.

The depictions of landscape in these four turn-of-the-century works indicate that the frontiers of Australia and America, while not making gifts of a perfect paradise, did allow a gap in the traditional European mental structure, which enabled women to continue the search for a landscape, a garden, and a space of their own.

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