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Domesticity, Manhood, and the Natural Environment in Antebellum American Literature

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DOMESTICITY, MANHOOD, AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN ANTEBELLUM AMERICAN FICTION

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty
of
Purdue University
by
Matthew M. Bastnagel

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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For my wife
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ABSTRACT

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Discussions of masculinity, the natural environment, or domestic culture are relatively common in antebellum literary scholarship, but this dissertation explores the less commonly discussed connections among these three areas of study. Likewise, ecofeminist scholars have done groundbreaking work describing the relationship between gender and the environment, but, with some exceptions, descriptions of male identity and the environment most often reference an ecologically-destructive patriarchal mode. In the American antebellum period, the figure of the frontiersman best represents this patriarchal view, and his effortless mobility, self-possession, and mastery over the landscape form a dominant understanding of manhood and nature in the decades before the Civil War. This study argues for the domestic man as a positive alternative to the patriarchal frontiersman. The fictional texts that are the subjects of this dissertation’s analysis emphasize the relevance of the home in their descriptions of men’s relationship with nature. A man inside the household, however, occupied an anxious position within an antebellum domestic culture that associated the home with femininity. For some of the texts in this study, engagement with local outdoor environments allow men to contribute
to the home without risking a loss of manhood, while other texts highlight the domestic failure of the frontiersman’s individualistic approach to the landscape. Despite their different approaches, for all of the authors of these texts, a domestic approach to the environment, one that attends to its role within the home and community, forms an essential aspect of ideal masculinity.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This project is a study of the intersection of manhood, the natural environment, and domesticity in antebellum American fiction. Scholarship on any one of these topics is a wide and varied field, but there have been no extended studies that examine the essential connections between and among them. In grouping these subjects together, I hope to reveal, in the context of the fictional works that I study, how conceptions of manhood inform the depiction of the natural environment and the home, how domestic culture shapes authors’ views of masculinity and the environment, and how the natural environment acts as a space in which male characters can express both a masculine and domestic identity. While these intersections play out in different ways for each of the texts I study, I am particularly concerned with the relationship between manhood and the home and the relevance of the natural environment as a space in which authors explore the conflicts and common ground between masculinity and domesticity. Specifically, I examine these intersecting issues in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The House of the Seven Gables*, William Gilmore Simms’s *The Partisan* and *Woodcraft*, Herman Melville’s *Typee*, and Caroline Kirkland’s *A New Home: Who’ll Follow?*. Each of these texts has a unique perspective on the role of manhood in the home, but all of them share a fascination with the fundamental relationship among male identity, domestic culture, and the natural environment.
I have chosen these particular texts because their overlapping concerns reveal different aspects of the relationship I describe above. Nathaniel Hawthorne’s text depicts a sunny and romantic natural environment of the Pyncheon-garden that contrasts with the darker spaces inside a household. In Hawthorne’s text, there are few opportunities to express or perform manhood in the interior of the home. While Hawthorne relies on middle-class domestic ideology to articulate and resolve the central conflict of the text, he is concerned about how its feminizing effects detract from the individual and self-possessed elements of his masculine ideal. The garden compensates for this effect by allowing men to showcase their masculine industry, contribute to the well-being of the home, and retain a portion of their individuality. In Simms’s fiction, the domesticated local environment of the swamp functions as a similarly romantic landscape in which his male heroes exercise their masculine energies and domestic attachments. Unlike Hawthorne, Simms is relatively unconcerned about the influence of the home on male identity; rather, he is more concerned about how masculine qualities can disrupt the home. In Melville’s text Typee, the environment punishes men who assume that they can easily master the landscape, and his male protagonist Tommo is in a subordinate position throughout the text. At certain points in the text, Tommo adopts a male identity more accommodating toward the home, but he eventually flees from the influence of domestic culture exemplified by the inviting and affectionate islanders who share their home with him. Kirkland is more optimistic about the potential for men to become involved in domestic life, but she is far more critical of actual male characters she depicts in her text. While Simms’s and Hawthorne’s fictional environments where mutually beneficial for the men and homes in their texts, the male characters in Kirkland’s text use the
environment to distance themselves from domestic life. To a far greater extent than the male writers I study, Kirkland sees little contradiction between male identity and domestic labor and calls for men’s involvement and attention to the household itself.

While this project may have some relevance outside the study of my chosen texts, the ideas I generate are primarily a result of close readings. I utilize some historical scholarship, primarily in the chapter on Simms and to a lesser in my Hawthorne and Melville chapters. Given my focus on fictional works, literary criticism has been a valuable means of support for my arguments. For my work with Hawthorne, T. Walter Herbert’s account of domestic ideology in *Dearest Beloved* and his article on deceptive masculinity in *The House of the Seven Gables* are particularly useful sources. In my Simms chapter, Renee Dye’s article on Simms’s social theory explains the system of complementary social classes is the basis for my analysis of the domestic community for which Simms’s ideal male figure is responsible. My analysis of Melville’s *Typee* is indebted to John Bryant’s *Melville and Repose*; Bryant describes the development and ultimate failure of Melville’s digressive protagonist that helps to explain his unique relationship with domestic culture. The final chapter on Kirkland’s text is informed by a wider group of scholars, but Annette Kolodny’s reading in *The Land Before Her* identifies a crucial aspect of romantic culture as an earned product of domestic labor in the frontier, and my argument both builds on and updates Kolodny’s claims.

The antebellum culture of the home is a common and unifying element in all of the fictional works that I analyze. I will address the relevance of gender in antebellum domestic culture shortly, but it is important to establish a working definition of domesticity that applies to this project. Marian Rust effectively distinguishes this concept
from the sentimental mode with which it is commonly associated. Whereas sentimentality refers to expressions of emotion that are distinct from any specific place, domestic life is concerned primarily with how emotional exchanges shape and are shaped by the specific environment that one calls home. Put another way, domesticity, in a general sense, refers to the physical state of the home, the physical and emotional state of its residents, and one’s responsibilities and emotional attachments to the objects, environments, and individuals within the home.

The above definition depends on the meaning of the home, which varies according to its context. “Home,” as Lora Romera has explained, can be used to describe areas as large as a nation as a way of distinguishing between local and foreign entities, but for the writings I examine, the home is most often envisioned as a combination of a household and its surrounding natural environment. While the scope of the term can change, in my chosen texts, home refers to the environment where one most often eats, sleeps, and lives. In the antebellum context of this project, this environment is often opposed to the workplace, where one acquires the money and resources needed to maintain the home, but this is not a fixed opposition, especially for the male plantation owners in Simms’s fiction who work within the home. Some of the writings covered in this project question how long one needs to live within a certain environment before it can function as a home. Kirkland, for example addresses the lack of domestic attachments for men who have recently moved to the frontier, and Melville’s protagonist is anxious about the domestic influence of a community after living there for several months. Instead of providing a concrete answer to that question, these texts raise the issue in order to emphasize the unavoidable influence of the home on one’s individual identity.
Many of the male characters in my chosen texts try to separate themselves from domestic culture, but the social and physical influence of one’s living space takes hold quickly and is impossible to deny.

The fictional works I analyze respond to a specific formulation of the home and domesticity within the broader conceptual limits that I have established. Specifically, the authors of these texts are most concerned with the domesticity associated with white, middle-class, American culture. While I examine and illustrate this notion of domestic life in more detail below, for now I want to emphasize that it refers, in general terms, to situations wherein men leave the home for the workplace and return to the home when their work is done. Women’s activity is largely limited to the household itself, as there is little need for their wages to support the home. Without invoking a strict standard, scholars of this time period describe a number of cultural and economic forces that shape this understanding of domesticity. Unlike the agrarian economy that combined the home and the workplace, this 19th-century middle-class development emerged in the wake of the greater productivity associated with the industrial and market revolutions. While middle-class home life in this period is understood as a product of a culture that often viewed its experience as universal, it was based on a far more narrow set of economic and social conditions. Slaves, free blacks, and ethnic minorities were largely absent from this view of the home. Likewise, the middle-class home was premised on a class-specific economic development in which men, working apart from the domestic sphere, earned enough money to support the household without requiring wives, mothers, or children to enter the workforce. Women and children were an assumed presence in a middle-class vision of the home that often neglected the experience of lower and working-class
families in which all members often labored, with many of these families living and working in the same place.

Scholarship on white, middle-class domesticity has moved beyond a prescriptive understanding of the separate spheres that place women within the home and men in the realm of politics and the marketplace, and my project largely follows this crucial work. Scholars such as Romero, Amy Kaplan, and Katherine Adams have shown how, for example, women’s roles as consumers and authors reach far beyond the individual homes within which they are presumed to be limited, which Kirkland ably illustrates in her fiction. Additionally, examinations of domestic culture show how the conception of the home is an important factor in shaping larger political and national discourses more commonly associated with masculinity. Even accounting for all of these processes that undermine the strict association between the home and womanhood, in the texts I examine, the home remains a dominantly feminine space. While there are a number of antebellum guides that describe the proper conduct for young men seeking to display the correct etiquette for social advancement and to win the affections of a woman, there are few if any antebellum texts that describe the kind of work that men can do to contribute to life at home.

Similar to the specific antebellum understanding of the home, most of the writings I analyze address a specific form of white, middle-class manhood. Notably described by Dana Nelson, antebellum middle-class manhood functions to unify white men under a common understanding of individualism. These are individualistic men with a shared sense of self-definition and economic independence that reflects the development and articulation of the competitive world of market capitalism, and in the
texts I have chosen from Hawthorne and Melville, the conflicts between individualistic manhood and the more communal space of the home are a major subject of my analysis. While this project is most focused on the conflicts between male individualism and the influence of domestic culture, the authors that I study respond to a specific combination of qualities associated with male identity. These texts are most concerned with a form of masculinity associated with economic autonomy, physical strength, independence from external influences, and a fear of feminization understood as a loss of manhood. This last aspect of antebellum manhood is particularly relevant for my project. By defining themselves in opposition to womanhood, men’s attempt to live up to an impossible masculine ideal is coupled with an anxiety over their own feminization.

For middle-class men, success in the marketplace was a difficult proposition. David Anthony provides a compelling account of young men in the professional world whose debt and lack of control over their employment and financial well-being led to persistent insecurities about their masculinity, a condition he links to Holgrave in *The House of the Seven Gables*. In its ideal formulation, the antebellum home functions as a comforting space for men apart from the competitive marketplace, but domestic environments have a more complicated relationship to male identity. This commonly understood feature of the domestic home, its ability to revive male identity and restore the confidence of men through the support of women, is a useful point of departure for my approach. Specifically, I argue that the home’s masculine-restoring function conflicts with the feminine character of the home, and I have chosen a series of texts that attempt to resolve his conflict in different ways. With femininity understood as a failure of masculinity, the home is a particularly tense environment for the men in my chosen texts.
David Greven’s description of a male figure unfulfilled by male fraternity or the interests of women, while not completely applicable to the male characters I study, describes many of the fundamental anxieties of men pulled between different and contradictory value systems. Melville’s Tommo indulges in his sexual desires, but his shifting attitudes toward manly individualism and domestic culture reflect the conflicting values that Greven examines. As I noted earlier in my discussion of domesticity, the home is an inescapable conceptual space. As such, it is a fundamental aspect of male identity that runs counter to older readings of antebellum literature that privileged men’s flight from the home into the frontier. As my texts emphatically demonstrate, no amount of running can separate male identity from the culture of the home.

One of the reasons I include Simms in this project is because his views of male identity are based on a different relationship between class and the home when compared to those of Hawthorne, Melville, and Kirkland. His Southern, upper-class manhood places less emphasis on economic and professional life than emotional control and social success. Although individuality plays a small role in this male identity, it is more important for men to recognize their place in the social hierarchy of the South and act responsibly toward the community and space of the home. Elaborating on this idea, John Mayfield describes the patrician masculinity associated with Simms’s Southern male heroes as consciously defined by its close relationship to the home. These Southern men do not fear the feminizing potential of domesticity, and they actively seek out ways to contribute to the home and act upon their domestic attachments. The major concern here is not a loss of manhood through association with the home but a domestic disruption caused by masculine energies that have no place in the gentler space of the home.
Manhood in the South may be more amenable to domestic culture, but the South’s vision of the home shares the same aspects of virtue and repose associated with Northern domesticity. With physical and emotional control a significant element of Southern masculinity, Simms, as I will explain shortly, resolves men’s problematic status of the home describing an environment where they can best express their masculine and domestic emotions. For Simms and Hawthorne, the natural environment functions as a space with the potential to resolve conflicts between manhood and the home, but Kirkland and Melville are more critical of men’s relationship with the landscape in their fiction.

Scholarship on the environment is perhaps the broadest area of study relevant to my work, but these writings provide crucial theoretical support that informs my approach to the fictional environments depicted in my chosen texts. Ideas from ecofeminist scholars have a particular bearing on this project. Annette Kolodny’s work is both particularly relevant to the texts I study and represents a crucial early description of the relationship between gender and the natural environment. While her interpretation of Simms’s landscapes as feminine differs from my reading of their domestic and masculine qualities, her explanation of Kirkland’s stance toward romantic fantasies is a critical element of my own reading. In addition to the specific relationship between femininity and ecology, scholars such as Greta Gaard provide a general methodology for examining the relationship between identity and depictions of the physical environment that helps explain how, for instance, Simms’s fictional swamps conform so closely to his manly ideals. Val Plumwood describes how a patriarchal perspective on the landscape neglects unknown or impractical aspects of the environment, and in the texts that I cover, the
masculine identities of the authors and/or the characters within the text have a clear effect on the aspects of the natural environment that they emphasize.

My own approach follows Lance Newman’s ideas about depictions of natural landscapes. Newman shows how some authors construct their fictional landscapes as a concrete physical record of human and nonhuman activity, while others use the concept of nature to express an abstract and ideal relationship. Lawrence Buell is similarly attentive to the sometimes blurred relationship between human built environments and the natural world while insisting on the distinct presence of the physical environment as a founding element of human identity. The fictional environments that I examine have a measurable influence on the identity of male characters, and for all these texts, ignoring this influence leads to a loss of manhood. Timothy Sweet’s conception of a georgic approach to nature helps to explain the implicit connections between the landscape and the individual, a kind of relationship that Holgrave cultivates in Hawthorne’s Pyncheon-garden and Simms’s militiamen find in the swamp. Instead of a pastoral mode that views the natural world as a distinct space from human culture, a georgic perspective acknowledges the constant presence of the natural world and its proximity to everyday experience. The texts I examine emphasize the domestic elements of the natural environment to varying degrees, but all of them acknowledge the fundamental connection between the home and the natural world.

My first chapter, on Hawthorne’s *The House of the Seven Gables*, establishes many of the issues of manhood and domestic life that are found in the following chapters. I draw from the text of the romance as well as several sketches in his collection *Mosses from an Old Manse* to argue that the garden functions as a physical and conceptual space
that falls within the larger space of the home but is less associated with femininity. Using passages taken from Andrew Jackson Downing’s work on landscaping and home planning as supporting material from the period, I claim that the garden, and specifically the vegetable garden, is associated with a vigorous and productive masculinity that is able to contribute to the home without sacrificing its masculine character.

As an example of the ways in which domestic culture can lead to a feminized failure of manhood, I read the passive and overly sensitive character of Clifford Pyncheon as an exaggerated statement on how domestic culture inhibits the necessary activity and independent mindset required to make a successful masculine contribution to the home. In contrast, Jaffrey Pyncheon represents a manhood that is far too independent and disconnected from any other influences than his own selfish desire. Hawthorne’s description of Jaffrey Pyncheon uses architectural imagery as well as a brief reference to natural processes to describe the deadening self-possession that consumes his identity. While his deceptive outward identity is a palatial image of “splendid halls and suites . . . [and] ceilings gorgeously painted,” an exaggeration of the home, his authentic inner-self takes the form of “a stagnant water-puddle” where his identity is “half decayed, and still decaying, and diffusing its death-scent all through the palace!” (CE 2: 229, 230). In the logic Hawthorne establishes here, Jaffrey’s guilt and extreme self-possession comprise a putrefying force that prefigures his death later in the romance. Hawthorne’s ideal domestic male, Holgrave, is far more amenable to the influence of domestic life. His character is a significant presence in the Pyncheon-garden, and Holgrave’s domestic attachments grow alongside the natural life that he cultivates in the garden. While Holgrave may begin with “black, rich soil . . . fed . . . with the decay of a long period of
time,” his willingness to match the labor and influence of the home with his masculine individuality creates a “perfect verdure” in the garden and more youthful sensibility that “he sometimes forgot, thrust so early, as he had been, into the rude struggle of man with man” (CE 2: 86, 285 213).

The second chapter on The Partisan and Woodcraft, two novels from William Gilmore Simms’s series of Revolutionary War romances, centers on his depiction of the swamp as both a domestic and masculine space for the militiamen he uses as his male exemplars. Drawing on the social theories found within Simms’s extensive nonfictional work, I argue that the swamp is the ideal environment for the combination of manly discipline, vigor, and upper-class domestic values that form Simms’s vision of ideal masculinity. In The Partisan, the earlier of the two texts I examine, I introduce the friendly and welcoming elements of Simms’s domestic swamp as a striking and original perspective on the natural environment that is unmatched by any major author from the time period. The protagonist in this early romance, Robert Singleton, exemplifies Simms’s vision of manhood in his upper-class bearing, his firm leadership of his men, and his constant concern for the domestic attachments represented by the plantation estate of his uncle.

Simms’s later romance is more complex assessment of manhood in the home and better illustrates the social hierarchies crucial to his social vision. Simms’s depiction of the swamp, I argue, illustrates the same upper-class values that inform his vision of manhood and the home. In one telling example, Simms describes “aged oaks, that spread themselves out like great green canopies,” with references to “Druid Bards” along with “the much undervalued ode of [Thomas] Gray,” and he follows these signifiers of upper-
class education by noting how, for the unperceptive, lower-class villain of the romance “as with most of the ignorant, a tree is a tree only” (Woodcraft 239, 240). While the hero of this text, the comical and philosophic Porgy, attests to the emotional benefits of this kind of artistic perspective, Simms links it to a specific form of cultivation less accessible outside the social circles of the planter elite. In addition to the social hierarchies of Simms’s domestic vision, his depiction of the female slaves in Woodcraft, I argue, is a dramatic example of the racist views that shape his views of the home. For the white women in Simms romances, the swamp is an uncomfortable environment that they take pains to avoid. Simms gives only the briefest mention of how the black women in Woodcraft survive in the swamp for years during the Revolutionary War. Additionally, when the elderly Sappho, Porgy’s nursemaid, returns to the plantation, Porgy’s does not recognize the black woman who raised him. Just as Porgy cannot identify her, Simms fails to address the impressive masculine fortitude of this frail woman who survived in the swamp for many years. For Simms, the masculine domesticity that the swamp affords is only available to white male planters.

My third chapter’s reading of Melville’s Typee begins a more critical and complex look at the relationship between manhood and the home. Tommo, Melville’s protagonist pseudonym, approaches the kind of positive vision of male identity in the home that Hawthorne and Simms achieve in their respective writings, but is unable to realize a balance between his manly individuality and domestic culture. Early in the narrative, Tommo’s experience in the jungle demonstrates Melville’s critical attitude toward middle-class masculinity’s assumption of mobility within and authority over the natural environment. Before entering this rainforest, Tommo dreams of lazily eating
plantains and passing through the landscape without trouble. Moments after he sets foot in this environment, Tommo is un-manned by a bamboo grove: “Half wild with meeting an obstacle we had so little anticipated, I threw myself desperately against it, crushing to the ground the canes with which I came in contact; . . . Twenty minutes of this violent exercise almost exhausted me” (51). Tommo’s difficulty here continues for some time. His poor preparations of sea biscuit and tobacco mix together in a barely edible mash, his crude shelters leave him cold and miserable, and he develops a leg infection that leaves him incapacitated for the duration of the narrative. In my reading, the environment discourages Tommo’s assumptions of masculine dominance over the landscape, and his physical difficulties only end when he grows more receptive to the influence of the environment and the domestic community of the Typee islanders.

My readings show how Melville maps the bachelor’s vexed position within domestic culture onto Tommo’s complicated relationship with the Polynesian islanders that he encounters in Typee. With Tommo introducing these islanders as tattooed cannibals, their capacity for violence should constitute the greatest danger in the narrative. I follow most of the scholarship on Typee in recognizing the threat of identity-compromising tattooing as his greatest anxiety in the text, but my claims of the domestic implications of this fear depart from most scholars’ attention to relevant imperialist issues. Tommo, who spends most of the narrative creating an image of the Typee community as a domestic paradise of loving neighbors and family, is, I argue, as afraid of his own desire to join the community as he is of being coercively enlisted. As Vincent Bertolini explains, the bachelor is a male figure especially vulnerable to sexual temptations outside normative domestic sexuality. Tommo, as an unmarried male within an island community
with a far more permissive attitude towards sex, is endangered by his sexual desire as well as his affections toward the benevolent Typee community that threatens to compromise his manly individualism. Ultimately, I read Tommo’s escape from the islanders as a function of his need for self-possessed masculine identity over the domestic culture that the Typees represent.

Caroline Kirkland’s take on life in the frontier is the subject of my final chapter. Many scholars have examined this text for its early realist perspective, and several articles address the text’s humorous critique of the frontiersman figure. Mine is a more sustained examination of the wide range of male characters that Kirkland depicts in her many sketches of her neighbors in the frontier town of Montacute, Michigan. My central claim is that Kirkland’s narrator Mary Clavers privileges men’s industrious contribution to the home to a far greater degree than Hawthorne’s circumscribed gardening or Simms’s swampland reveries. Clavers needs men to work inside the home, and she has little patience for the men who do not meet her standards. As a secondary argument, I explain how the natural environment leads the men in Kirkland’s text to stray from the home more than it encourages their domesticity. While upper-class layabouts watch their homes and communities dissolve around them because they trusted that hunting and fishing would sustain their households, lower-class men value their drunkenness over the safety and well-being of their family.

The most pervasive male shortcoming in Kirkland’s novel is a middle-class view of the frontier landscape as an abstract commodity rather than the specific site of the home. These aspiring men pursue a romantic vision of frontier wealth and are so caught up in their fantasy that they neglect the real struggles of women isolated within cramped
and sparsely furnished cabins. While most of these men do little to improve their home life in the course of the narrative, Clavers’s account of the Hastings family shows how there is indeed room for a romantic perspective. The Hastings begin as a young couple who have eloped and travelled away from their wealthy New York City parents to a wooded rural area in the southwest part of the state. Mistakenly romanticizing the natural environment, they settle in a “wild and mountainous and woody spot” that would be rejected by “any common-sense settler” but is deemed perfect “for a pair who had set out to live on other people’s thoughts” (161). Soon, the realities of their surroundings set in, and illness as well as the birth of their child lead them to reassess their earlier visions of the wilderness. In the conclusion of the tale, the Hastings are rescued by their parents and are gifted a “fine large fertile tract” of Michigan farmland, where the husband, “[v]isionary still,” works hard as a “practical farmer” to support his family (169). Clavers, I argue, frames this outcome as an example of the correct balance between romance and realism. Where romantic notions have no place in men’s professional life and distance them from the home, the Hastings’s romance is a visionary domesticity, a luxury purchased with their realistic awareness of the landscape and the labor required to live within it.
CHAPTER 2. HOMEMAKING IN “A FRATERNITY OF BEANS AND SQUASHES”: NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE’S THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES AND DOMESTIC MANHOOD IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

One of the most recognizable associations between nineteenth century manhood and the environment, the frontier myth, posits a single, liberated frontiersman who is able to traverse varied landscapes with relative ease. Yet, the frontier vision of man and landscape does little to capture the variety of either, especially when it comes to the roles of men and environments that are not easily classified as frontier spaces. For my own work, the roles, conditions, and values of antebellum domestic ideology are a crucial unifying context for the study of masculinity and the environment, and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The House of the Seven Gables is a particularly fitting example of the ideological effectiveness of a home-like natural landscape. By placing a local natural space within the context of the home, Hawthorne works toward a less fraught sense of domestic manhood by using natural processes of growth and decay as a model for a masculine identity renewed by the culture of the home. Specifically, Hawthorne uses the Pyncheon-garden as a more inviting domestic space for masculine identity, a manhood that is not present inside the walls of the house of seven gables. For Holgrave, Hawthorne’s ideal male figure in the romance, gardening is a unique opportunity to establish himself as both domestic and a man and to secure his success and future happiness with Phoebe Pyncheon.
The House of the Seven Gables depicts the resolution of a centuries-long conflict between two families, the aristocratic Pyncheons and the outcast Maules. Hawthorne begins the book in Puritan Salem, Massachusetts. The progenitor of the Pyncheon clan, a powerful Colonel, is greedy for lower-class Matthew Maule’s land and its fresh-water spring called “Maule’s Well,” so the Colonel accuses Matthew Maule of witchcraft and has him executed. Matthew Maule’s son actually builds the titular house on his father’s old land, and while he does a fine job on the construction, he hides a Pyncheon deed to vast and valuable lands in Maine behind a portrait of the Colonel. Deed or not, Colonel Pyncheon dies from a congenital medical condition before he can formalize his ownership of the lands, and his son, as the inheritor of the newly-built house, begins generations of Pyncheons occupation on Matthew Maule’s former garden grounds.

In the present-day of the novel, Hepzibah Pyncheon is an older, less wealthy, but far kinder descendant of the Colonel who lives in the house of seven gables and fends off the greedy advances of her cousin, Judge Jaffery Pyncheon. Like many Pyncheon men before him, Jaffery searches for the hidden deed to the territory in Maine. Having framed her beloved brother Clifford for murder thirty years prior, Jaffery is the object of Hepzibah’s unmitigated scorn. Ultimately, Jaffery dies of the same ailment that ended Colonel Pyncheon’s life, and Clifford is both absolved of his past crime and inherits the wealthy estate of his late cousin in the closing moments of Hawthorne’s romance. This general narrative of guilty Pyncheon men does not wholly characterize the text, and Hawthorne uses the attachment between Phoebe Pyncheon and Holgrave as a sunny, hopeful contrast to the dark history of the Pyncheon family.
In part as a way of resolving the Pyncheon-Maule feud and modeling a more acceptable form of family life, Hawthorne describes the growing relationship between two of Hepzibah’s house guests, the young Phoebe Pyncheon and the itinerant boarder, Holgrave. Though unknown to the Pyncheons, Holgrave is a descendant of Matthew Maule, but instead of having Holgrave plot revenge for the wrongs against his family, Hawthorne makes Holgrave into a more productive and domesticated masculine figure by describing the man’s engagement with a specific natural environment. This place, the Pyncheon-garden adjacent to the house of seven gables, is the environmental focus of this chapter. The garden is a bright and inviting place that stands apart from the darker rooms of the house. Phoebe lifts Clifford’s spirits by spending time with him in the garden, Hepzibah enjoys afternoon meetings there with her small group of family and friends, and most importantly, Holgrave first meets Phoebe Pyncheon in the garden. Phoebe and Holgrave’s shared garden labor and mutual appreciation of romantic natural scenes within it strengthen their bonds toward the Pyncheon home and toward each other, which build to their loving domestic partnership at the end of the text.

Like William Gilmore Simms, whose work I will cover in the next chapter, Hawthorne has a romantic perspective of the emotionally and spiritually uplifting aspects of nature. In Simms’s and Hawthorne’s fiction, outdoor, nonhuman environments have a purifying and elevating effect on the men who engage with them. Physical presence within these places is important, and in Hawthorne’s romance, this engagement involves working with the land and being open to the domestic attachments that form between a man and the local natural space of the garden. It is important to note that Hawthorne privileges a local environment, the garden, over the distant natural landscape of the
frontier. In *The House of the Seven Gables*, the romantic benefits of the natural world are best realized in close proximity to the home, and a man’s interest in distant environments signifies his lack of interest in his home and the people within it.

Hawthorne’s Pyncheon-garden works differently for each character in his romance, but as it applies to all the residents of the house of the seven gables, the garden represents the possibility of growth and renewal through domestic culture and shows how the ideology of the middle-class home can purify the sins of an aristocratic past. Hawthorne uses the garden both as a physical record of the past and an ideal model for middle-class domestic values. Specifically, he uses its physical openness and space apart from the interior of the home as a place for a masculine presence in domestic culture that does not compromise male individualism. As I will demonstrate in my close readings, Holgrave acts as this domestic male figure by finding a productive middle ground between Clifford Pyncheon’s overly sensitive personality and Judge Jaffery Pyncheon’s extreme self-possession. Most importantly, Hawthorne frames Holgrave’s growing connection to domestic life as the result of his engagement with the natural environment. The garden, then, is a place where his male, manual labor complements female labor. Working alongside Phoebe Pyncheon, Holgrave creates and maintains a domestic physical environment outside the home and produces the inner, emotional attachments to domestic life that are an important part of Hawthorne’s masculine ideal in his text. Hawthorne’s Pyncheon-garden does not radically alter the rules of domestic life, and, as I will explain later in the chapter, his views about the garden’s relationship to gender share many features with other antebellum writings on gardening. He makes a far more original
contribution, however, in his consistent emphasis on this environment as a space where men can gain entry into domestic culture without sacrificing their masculine identity.

While the Pyncheon-garden is the focus of this chapter, the titular house is the most significant physical environment in Hawthorne’s romance. It is “a specimen of the best and stateliest architecture of a long-past epoch” with “oozy,” breathing timbers “full of rich and sombre reminiscences,” but the scope of *The House of the Seven Gables* is slightly larger than its floor plan (*CE* 2: 10, 27). For the residents of the house of seven gables and for the character Holgrave in particular, the Pyncheon garden is the place where the sins of the past can be used for positive growth:

The black, rich soil had fed itself with the decay of a long period of time; fallen leaves, the petals of flowers, and the stalks and seed—vessels of vagrant and lawless plants, more useful after their death than ever while flaunting in the sun. The evil of these departed years would naturally have sprung up again, in such rank weeds (symbolic of the transmitted vices of society) as are always prone to root themselves about human dwellings. Phoebe saw, however, that their growth must have been checked by a degree of careful labor, bestowed daily and systematically on the garden. (86)

In these, the first few lines of the first extended view into the Pyncheon garden, Hawthorne outlines several important aspects of both the place and the characters within it. Most important is the idea that something detestable and corrupt can be the source of new and better things, and Hawthorne’s connection between the ecology of the garden and the social development of the Pyncheon family is a repeated motif throughout the
romance. This first lesson applies to all residents of in Hepzibah’s house, but the latter part of this passage presents a related message that is crucially important for one character in particular.

These lines introduce Phoebe Pyncheon to the character of Holgrave Maule. He does not actually appear until later in the chapter, but it is his “careful labor” that enlivens and marks the garden with his influence, just as Phoebe’s “gift of practical arrangement . . . give[s] a look of comfort and habitableness” to the interior of the Pyncheon home (Hawthorne, CE 2: 71). When Holgrave presents himself later in this garden scene, he displays “an odd kind of authority . . . rather as if the garden were his own than a place to which he was admitted merely by Hepzibah’s courtesy” (93). On one level, Holgrave’s authority derives from his ancestry. The Maules are the rightful owners of the land, and Holgrave is the family’s youngest descendent. Yet, Holgrave’s status as a Maule is not revealed until much later in the narrative. Another more immediate source of Holgrave’s authority comes from his domestic engagement with the features of this environment, “the recent amputation of several superfluous or defective limbs . . . [and his] love or curiosity . . . to bring them to such perfection as they were capable of attaining” (87). Holgrave has a place in the garden because he cares about it and cultivates it, and Holgrave finds a place within the Pyncheon home because of his work in the garden. As I will explain later, the garden is not completely free from the gender roles associated with antebellum domesticity, but Hawthorne’s garden and his use of the environment more generally function more as a way to include male identity within domestic ideology and less as an outright rejection of a domestic life associated with female identity.
Earlier, mid-20th century literary critics like Leslie Fiedler describe a recurring narrative wherein male authors or characters flee from the confined space of “feminized” society into the frontier (76). More recently, Lora Romero notes how the threat of women’s “invisible” power produces a need for a space outside the home in the frontier, which subsequently produces a need for Indian removal (49). In examining the narrative in which this “invisible” domestic power usurps the more physical, masculine form of coercion, Romero distinguishes herself from Fiedler: “Momist imagery of the loss of autonomy resulting from this feminization of power expresses nostalgia for a form of power whose lack of psychic consequences guarantees that it does not compromise the autonomy of the male subject. Yet neither this subject nor this form of power ever existed” (Romero 49). Fleeing to the frontier will not alleviate men’s sense of powerlessness and lack of self-made autonomy because men are striving for a condition of male power that never existed.

My reading of The House of the Seven Gables emphasizes the importance of domestic spaces outside of the home, but it is important to note that these are local spaces, physically close to the home with which they are associated. Instead of fleeing to the frontier, Hawthorne posits a different, more local space where men can resolve the tensions between domestic life and masculine self-possession. Hawthorne’s depiction of the garden pushes against what Val Plumwood describes as a rationalizing, patriarchal perspective that sees the “biospheric Other as passive and without limits,” and in attending to both the natural and homelike qualities of the garden, Hawthorne moves toward a view of the natural world as “more equal, continuous, and overlapping” (Plumwood 16-17). Hawthorne’s depiction of nature does not avoid all of the human-
centered rationalism that Plumwood critiques, but he takes an explicit stance against fantasies of environmental possession that are not informed by actual contact and engagement with the land.

Hawthorne critiques the concept of the frontier through his depiction of generations Pyncheons pining after a missing deed to lands that “comprised the greater part of Waldo County,” and, “[y]ears and years after their claim had passed out of the public memory,” can be found gazing greedily at an a map “which had been projected while Waldo County was still an unbroken wilderness” (CE 2: 18, 19). When Hepzibah Pyncheon gives a tour of the house to her newly-arrived cousin Phoebe, she ends the tour at the “ancient map of the Pyncheon territory to the eastward,” noting the existence of a “silver mine” as evidence of the wealth these lands would grant the family (83). For Hepzibah and for those who came before her, this map does not depict the physical place of Waldo County as much as it inspires Pyncheon fantasies of wealth and social status. In a remark that presages the importance of the local natural environment within the space of the home, Hawthorne describes how the “actual settlers” of Waldo County “would have laughed at the idea of any man’s asserting a right—on the strength of mouldy parchments, signed with the faded autographs of governors and legislators, long dead and forgotten—to the lands which they or their fathers had wrested from the wild hand of Nature, by their own sturdy toil” (19). For Hawthorne, the Pyncheon family’s claim to these lands, even if supported by an actual legal document, confers far less ownership than the physical presence and “sturdy toil” involved in making a home there, and for Pyncheon men in particular, maintaining this fantasy comes at the expense of their home and their relationship with those within it.
The story of Gervayse Pyncheon, one of these Pyncheon patriarchs chasing the lost deed, provides a specific example of how focusing on distant landscapes comes at the expense of the people closer to home. Gervayse Pyncheon is the grandson of Colonel Pyncheon. At the beginning of the tale, Gervayse summons Matthew Maule, the grandson and namesake of the man accused of witchcraft by the Colonel, to the house of seven gables. Gervayse guesses that Matthew Maule’s father hid the Waldo County deed during the construction of the house, and he calls on Matthew to negotiate for the secret location of the document. At first, Matthew agrees to divulge the information in exchange for the stolen Maule lands and the house built upon it, and Gervayse has no problem accepting the bargain. Later, however, Matthew claims to need Gervayse’s daughter Alice to act as a kind of mesmeric conduit to the spirits that have hidden the deed. Moved by his desire for the faraway lands, Gervayse again consents, and as Gervayse looks away, Matthew puts Alice under his spell. Instead of revealing the location of the missing deed, Matthew makes the young woman a servant to his hypnotic commands forever after. Gervayse’s interest in a distant territory leaves his daughter vulnerable, and later, after suffering the accumulated indignity of Matthew Maule’s many embarrassing commands, Alice grows sick and dies.

Gervayse Pyncheon not only “look[s] contemptuously at the House of the Seven Gables,” he has no intention of even staying in the country (Hawthorne, CE 2: 198-199). For all the evil that has occurred within it, the house of seven gables is still a home, with “that pleasant aspect of life which is like the cheery expression of comfortable activity in the human countenance. You could see, at once, that there was the stir of a large family within it” (191). Gervayse’s neglect of this bustling home life destroys the well-being of
those within it. In a dramatic tableau, Hawthorne describes how Gervayse, gazing intently at a painting by “Claude,” is “full of imaginary magnificence” and is consumed with thoughts of acquiring a large tract of land “worth an earldom, and [which] would reasonably entitle him to solicit, or enable him to purchase, that elevated dignity from the British monarch” (204, 199). Claude Lorrain, the 17th century landscape painter to whom Hawthorne is likely referring, is known for his pleasant, pastoral landscapes. These paintings often include male or female laborers in a moment of leisure, and, as Clair Pace notes, “the sense of ease and freedom is an essential attribute” (128). The immediate effects of Gervayse’s reverie of leisure show the destructive results of an interest in far-off places that leads a man too far from home. As Gervayse dreams of this territory miles away, he neglects the well-being of his daughter who is in the very same room as him.

While Gervayse turns his back to his daughter and dreams of the wealth and status conferred by these distant lands, his daughter is mesmerized and falls under the hypnotic spell of Matthew Maule’s “triumphant power” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 204). Gervayse hears his daughter’s “call for help . . . his conscience never doubted it . . . [b]ut, this time, the father did not turn.” Gervayse may reassure himself that “Alice’s own purity would be her safe-guard,” but it is his greedy vision of frontier wealth that fills him with the “imaginary magnificence” that crowds out his concern for his daughter. Gervayse does not obtain the Waldo County acreage, and his inappropriate interest in the map’s abstract, faraway space separates him from life at home and creates a “sense of remote, dim, unattainable distance, betwixt him and Alice.” In *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne shows how a patriarchal concept of the frontier relies on a destructive fantasy, and he turns to the garden as a space where men can resolve their domestic anxieties by
complementing and contributing to the interior life that emerges within the home. Later analysis of some of Hawthorne’s earlier sketches in *Mosses from an Old Manse* will establish Hawthorne’s conception of the vegetable garden in particular as a space where men can make a material and masculine contribution to the home, putting food on the table and cultivating an attachment to the garden that extends to the home itself. Like Hawthorne’s narrator in *Mosses*, Holgrave finds a masculine place in the home by positioning his labor as both leisurely and productive.

In Hawthorne’s text, the garden does not function as an escape into a new set of domestic rules as much as it is an extension of those rules, with the hope that changed conditions might ameliorate the tensions between male identity and the middle-class ideology of the home. On one side of this conflict is the masculine ideology of the “self-made man.” Exemplified by figures like Andrew Jackson and the bombastic antebellum actor Edwin Forrest and articulated early on by Ralph Waldo Emerson, the concept of the self-made-man ignores factors of circumstance and cooperation to emphasize individual will as the primary agent of success. Michael Kimmel sees the development of this male figure as an economic complement to America’s “political autonomy,” in which a colonial-British narrative of “superior breeding” gives way to a narrative of “self-reliant struggle from humble origins to high position” (140, 142). Yet, alongside the promise of “individual achievement, mobility, and wealth,” the self-made man risks “anxiety, restlessness, and loneliness” (140). Self-determination offered men an opportunity to succeed coupled with the acknowledgement that any man’s failure is his own fault.

Scholars of antebellum masculinity describe a number of ways that white, middle-class men responded to the problems and anxieties of manhood. David Greven writes of
the “inviolate male” and withdrawing from compulsory homosociality, Paul Gilmore of identifying with the racial others white males have excluded, and David Anthony of the racially-marked “sensational” fantasies that emerge in response to financial uncertainty and economic panic. Among these recent studies of masculinity, Maura D’Amore provides the most sustained discussion of manhood in the context of domestic ideology. D’Amore’s article on Donald Grant Mitchell addresses his “characterizations of woman’s rule over the home space [and] fears [of] being constrained within a regime that leaves no time for self-definition, no space for artistic play,” and her article on Henry David Thoreau posits similar ideas on how “suburban spaces . . . offer opportunities to theorize and practice new form of domesticity grounded in self-nurture and inner cultivation rather than in the Christian benevolence and moral inculcation of children” (“‘A Man’s Sense of Domesticity’” 141, “Thoreau’s Unreal Estate” 59). Without discounting D’Amore’s thorough account of men’s alternative domesticity of self-definition, my own examination of Hawthorne’s writing focuses on his depiction of manhood in the garden as a complement to domesticity rather than a separate conception of the home. In my reading of The House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne is concerned about more than self-fashioned manhood, and he uses the garden to establish a male presence within domestic ideology that is better able to make emotional and physical contributions to the home while also preserving male identity.

Domestic ideology represents the other side of the tensions I examine in Hawthorne’s romance. Broadly conceived, domesticity is the set of activities, relationships, and values associated with home life. Specifically, I will be dealing with white, middle-class conceptions of home life in the decades before the Civil War.
Contemporary scholarship on antebellum domesticity, most notably Lora Romero’s *Home Fronts* and in the similarly-titled collections *Separate Spheres No More* and *No More Separate Spheres!* persuasively refute the concept of separate gendered spheres that dominates common understanding of domesticity. This revised look at separate spheres, however, does not deny their influence in literature as much as it reveals the shared ideological undercurrents beneath domesticity’s surface-level separation between men and women. This chapter focuses on the male perspective on these blurred ideological lines, how men worked in local outdoor environments to find a place within a domestic ideology traditionally associated with womanhood and household interiors.

Domestic life comes with its own set of anxieties. In professional life, masculine self-determination is difficult to reconcile with the fact that most men had to subordinate themselves to their bosses or customers in order to earn a living. The gendered roles of domesticity partly arise from this contradiction between self-determined manhood and the need to submit to the laws of the nation and the demands of the market. White, middle-class men claim the market and politics as masculine domains, but for an individual member of this group, the market was where he went to do another man’s bidding. Ideally, the home should function as a renewing sanctuary from the vicissitudes of the marketplace and male competition, but beyond using the home to passively restore himself, a man has narrow range of meaningful labor that he can undertake without risking effeminacy, given that the majority of household labors and environments are commonly associated with female identity. Put another way, he moves from a work life where he is dependent on his employer or customer to a domestic life that has (ostensibly) been ceded to women.
An 1841 article in the Philadelphia *North American and Daily Advertiser*, titled “The Domestic Man,” partly illustrates the difficulty of living up to both masculine and domestic values:

There is no being of the masculine gender whom ‘the sex’ so heartily despise[s] as the domestic man. He is an anomaly—a sort of half-way house between the sexes—a consideration of weakness—a poor driblet of humanity—a vile caudle drinker—an auditor of laundress’s bills—an inquisitor of the nursery—a fellow that likes his bed warmed, and takes note of the decay of carpets—a reader of works on cookery, and a treatise on teething—a bill bolter—a man that buys his wife’s gowns and his children’s dresses—a scolder of maid-servants—a frequenter of the kitchen—a person who can tell you the price of a treacle, and how long a mop should last—a gazer at butchers’ windows—a consumer of ginger wine—a slot eater—a market visitor—a tea maker—Faugh! (“Domestic Man” 1)

For the most part, these insults center on the *productive* work and knowledge that helps to maintain the household and the family within it, with references to drinking and crime as an indication of the domestic man’s moral decay and lack of discipline. Granted, this article cannot be taken as representative of American culture, but it does suggest that a man seeking to avoid a dismissive “faugh” from others would have a difficult time contributing to life at home. Hawthorne’s challenge then, is how to fashion a form of masculinity that does not serve as a tacit rejection of domestic life.
Finding a place for traditional manhood within the ideology of the home is crucially important in *The House of the Seven Gables* because Hawthorne posits domesticity as the redemption and solution to the central conflict between the Pyncheons and the Maules. Keiko Arai describes how, through the success of feminized Maules and feminine, “Maulized” Pyncheons, Hawthorne’s romance “submits a new model of family/nation whereby the feminine has more dominant power and the notion of class itself transforms from older forms of ‘aristocracy’ and ‘plebian’ to a new model based on domesticity” (Arai 40). As the victims of Judge Pyncheon’s paternalistic legal maneuvering, Hepzibah and Clifford Pyncheon are more closely aligned with the Maule family, and through the domestic accomplishments of Phoebe Pyncheon, “who becomes ‘no Pyncheon’ from her maternal blood,” Hawthorne celebrates these feminine characters and “displays a new, democratic and partly sentimental idea of family, or nation, which is based not on genealogy but on sympathy” (Arai 46, 56). Although Hawthorne works hard to elevate domestic ideology and sympathy, he does not completely abandon traditional masculinity. While Arai groups Holgrave with Clifford as feminized victims of patriarchal culture, Clifford’s character, who is described as “a ruin, a failure, as almost everybody” and is apt to “burst into a woman’s passion of tears,” exemplifies the need for a more assertive masculinity within the text’s vision of a sympathetic, domestic family and nation (Hawthorne, *CE* 2: 158, 113). Holgrave distinguishes himself as a masculine domestic presence by his active labor and greater self-possession in the garden paired with a real emotional attachment to the space.

Of all the men in Hawthorne’s romance, only the newly-returned prisoner Clifford Pyncheon, the unfortunate man framed for a murder committed by Judge Pyncheon,
shares Holgrave’s zeal and imagination in the garden. Hawthorne’s chapter “The
Pyncheon-Garden” distinguishes Clifford’s masculinity from Holgrave’s in a description
of how the former relates to the garden:

Clifford’s enjoyment was accompanied with a perception of life, character,
and individuality, that made him love these blossoms of the garden, as if
they were endowed with sentiment and intelligence. This affection and
sympathy for flowers is almost exclusively a woman’s trait. Men, if
endowed with it by nature, soon lose, forget, and learn to despise it, in
their contact with coarser things than flowers. (CE 2: 147)

Clifford has the correct appreciation for “life, character, and individuality,” but his is a
narrow and circumscribed perspective. Hawthorne singles out Clifford’s love of flowers
as overly feminine, but he does not deny its presence within men who are “endowed with
it by nature.” Clifford retains this quality because he is confined, first in prison and then
voluntarily within the Pyncheon home. Further, the feminizing effect of Clifford’s lack of
“contact with coarser things” suggests that masculinity is at least partly a product of
learning and experience, which supports Holgrave’s engagement with a home-like
environment as a way to produce his own domestic manhood. Even before being
imprisoned, Clifford’s aristocratic upbringing shelters him from the “coarser” world of
competitive labor, which leaves him with less opportunity to shape his own identity.
After years of being shut inside the prison, Clifford is easily overwhelmed by new
experiences and has difficulty making his own decisions.

Clifford is out of place because he has all of the appreciation but none of the
power. Clifford does not work in the garden; he merely enjoys its benefits. It is Holgrave,
we learn two paragraphs after the above passage, who, “[b]y way of testing whether there was a living germ in such ancient seeds, . . . had planted some of them; and the result of his experiment was a splendid row of bean-vines, clambering early to the full height of the poles” (Hawthorne, *CE* 2: 148). Holgrave is interested in the garden’s expression of life and individuality, and he actually does something to bring this life about. Clifford is trapped by a vibrant inner life that is too disconnected from external reality. Looking in Maule’s Well, he sees a “constantly shifting phantasmagoria of figures . . . beautiful faces, arrayed in bewitching smiles,” but this intense imagination proves a less manageable faculty when a “dark face” emerges as evidence “that his fancy—reviv[es] faster than his will and judgment, and always stronger than they” (153-154). Consumed by his imagination, Clifford lacks the “will and judgment” to distinguish fact from fancy. As I will demonstrate later in the chapter, Holgrave is receptive to the garden’s domestic influences, but as the product of physical labor and active engagement with the land, Holgrave’s receptivity does not overwhelm him or prevent him from taking meaningful action.

Referencing the connections between Scottish Common Sense philosophy and antebellum sentimentalism, Marianne Noble links Clifford’s “skeptical doubt” about reality to his isolation from “encounters with the real outside the mind, encounters that are most fully available in sympathetic extension of the self to others” (274). Clifford has been a prisoner for many decades before his return to the house of seven gables, and his seclusion within the house is similarly confining. It is telling that Clifford’s most powerful and energetic moment occurs on a train riding away from the house: “[T]he farther I get away from it, the more does the joy, the lightsome freshness . . . —yes, my
youth, my youth!—the more does it come back to me” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 262). Clifford needs to get away from the home before he can exercise the sympathetic connection that Noble explains. In this way, Clifford’s situation can be read as a critique of a domestic life that, while allowing for a great deal of interiority, grants too little opportunity for men to participate in the physical world and too little room for “encounters with the real outside the mind.” Clifford, having missed his education with the “coarser things” associated with masculine relations and competition in the market, is soon drained after his frenzied discussion with a male passenger on the train, and it does not take long before he looks to Hepzibah and back to the home for a source of stability he cannot find in the train-ride’s shifting scenes and crowding passengers (147, 266).

Alternatively, Milette Shamir views Clifford’s problems as the effects of his “private mental sphere refus[ing] to expand into domestic privacy” (165). To Shamir, the home is a space where one can safely engage with the world without the loss of identity, and she links this domestic privacy to manhood: “Hawthorne instructs Clifford throughout the course of the novel that proper masculine identity is residential, that a man without a home is a potential criminal.” Readings in this chapter share Shamir’s view of Clifford’s “lack not only of privacy but of personhood” but place greater emphasis on the malleability of Clifford’s inner life. Instead of being totally shut off from the world around him, Clifford lacks a stable interiority and is far too susceptible to the influence of his social and physical environment. As such, Hawthorne endorses a form of domesticity that is focused less on personal, internal privacy and is more concerned with protecting the privacy of all household members. Holgrave is open to domestic influence, but he acts as a male presence in the home by retaining a stable portion of his individual identity.
Elsewhere in her thorough account of the conflicting ideas and ideals attached to the “overflowing conceptual space” of the private sphere, Shamir writes of the “privatized masculine ideal” of Henry David Thoreau, in which “the antebellum home” protects “manly independence” from the social sphere of “domestic womanhood” within and from the influence of “homosociality” outside (178). While Shamir’s ideas here emerge from her analysis of Thoreau’s writing, she describes a significant function of domestic life that Hawthorne counteracts in his romance. Holgrave’s gardening is driven by a different view of the home than Thoreau’s “privatized masculine ideal.” He preserves his selfhood from the influence of other men in the public sphere, but in the garden, Holgrave shows himself open to the influence of the “select party” that comprises his intimate, domestic community. Christopher Castiglia describes the garden as “a location . . . apart from the conventional division of public and private life . . . that anthropomorphizes the characters’ queer transformation of shame into sociability,” a place where conflicted interiority brings people together (224). Far from a site of solitary contemplation, the garden is a place where others’ influence rejuvenates a masculine identity implicitly fragmented by the ideologies of self-made manhood and the home. As a space where men receive moral guidance and affirm their gender identity, the garden has the same function as the domestic sphere, but, whether due to the stifling history embedded within the house or the lack of fulfilling male domestic roles inside it, Holgrave’s experience in this outside, almost-home-like space is framed as an opportunity for growth that does not exist within the walls of the house of seven gables.

Less burdened by the guilt that haunts the Pyncheon family, Holgrave is most concerned with his own identity and how to reconcile his masculine, Maule identity with
the domestic life in the home of the rival Pyncheon family. Neither the passive, sensitive Clifford Pyncheon nor the conniving Judge Jaffery Pyncheon provide adequate models of manhood, but the villainous Judge looms much larger than Clifford as the greatest threat to Holgrave’s identity. As T. Walter Herbert writes, “[T]he innermost man crumbles when Holgrave enters the gloom that surrounds Judge Pyncheon’s demise, because the demon-ridden nonselfhood of the judge and the consummate self-reliance of Holgrave are fundamentally akin” (“Masks” 278). Just like the judge, the daguerreotypist’s selfhood is based on deceptions and self-deceptions, but, as Herbert notes earlier in his essay, “Hawthorne makes a decisive thematic investment in Holgrave as Pyncheon’s opposite number.” Yes, Holgrave conceals his ancestry from Phoebe Pyncheon, and one can interpret the judge’s rich inheritance as “[t]he prize for the confidence game Holgrave has been playing” (“Masks” 279). In this chapter’s examination of outdoor domestic environments’ purifying effects on male identity, the questions of Holgrave’s selfishness and dishonesty are less relevant than the ways in which he can be read as an authentic, moral figure.

Like Holgrave’s work in the garden, Phoebe’s arrival and presence in the house of seven gables revitalizes the home’s dusky interior and counteracts years of inattention. Phoebe, not Holgrave, Clifford, or Hepzibah, infuses this space with warmth and comfort. Although Holgrave takes up residence in the same house as Phoebe, he does nothing to improve the place, and he is only described inside the house at the very end of the narrative. Holgrave does not possess Phoebe’s innate “gift of practical arrangement” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 71). Unlike Phoebe, Holgrave’s masculine identity is not essentially associated with domestic life, but, through his labors outside in the garden, he is able to
earn the sense of comfort and community that Phoebe so effortlessly evokes. Herbert uses the easy coincidences of the end, which leave Phoebe and Holgrave with the entire wealth of the Pyncheon family, to call attention to the idea that Holgrave could be performing his domesticity in the same manner that the conniving Judge Pyncheon performs his own amiable demeanor, but Holgrave’s warm and welcoming behavior in the garden is a more optimistic sign of his alignment with the domestic values that Hawthorne promotes in the text. Regardless of whether his initial actions are deceptive or not, Holgrave’s use of the garden to enter into the middle-class domestic culture produces legitimate emotional attachments to the home and lasting changes to his inner-self.

Reading Hawthorne’s romance alongside Andrew Jackson Downing’s books on homes and landscaping helps to explain how Holgrave’s behavior in the garden is understood as less odious and despicable when compared to Judge Pyncheon’s actions throughout Hawthorne’s text. Andrew Jackson Downing was a prominent landscape architect and a prolific writer on country homes, and his professional life provides a useful context for the kind of cultural work Holgrave performs in the garden, especially as it pertains to domestic manhood’s relationship with class. Downing was dedicated to the benefits of a home life that is removed from the city and gains a sense of taste and refinement through its rural surroundings. As George Tatum explains, in 1841, the twenty-six-year-old Downing drew from English landscape designers like Capability Brown and John Loudon in publishing A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, which “soon established itself as the most popular treatment of the subject ever published” (Tatum, “Introduction” 1). Underlying a strategy that “intensified the essential qualities of nature by eliminating . . . extraneous” elements in
favor of “harmonious additions” is Downing’s attempt to “convince the average man that taste was not the exclusive property of the rich” (Tatum, “Nature’s Gardener” 65; “Introduction” 2). By organizing their homes and outdoor surroundings according to Downing’s definitions of “natural” and “picturesque” beauty, middle-class Americans had a physical, environmental outlet for their class-based anxieties.

Downing was a very successful horticulturalist and landscape architect, but he was far less wealthy than the gentlemen whose estates he describes in his books on rural homes and gardens. Dolores Hayden writes of how Downing “had to sell his tree nursery to settle his debts[, and h]e had a secret door constructed in his library so that he could slip away to another room to write or design while guests never suspected his long hours of work, straining to pay the bills” (Hayden 35, 34). Downing’s books guide his audience of white, middle-class men and women to similar ends, presenting ideal, upper-class estates with the promise that less wealthy middle-class audiences could benefit from implementing some of their features. Downing’s books are filled with suggestions that can be easily and inexpensively implemented, but there is a significant gap between these accessible aspects and the stunning mansions he uses as many of his examples.¹

Middle-class Americans may follow Downing’s advice in order to project a potentially artificial image of upper-class refinement, but Hawthorne’s text frames such domestic improvements as far more wholesome and honest than an artificial personality. For the most part, the Judge is most active in the public spaces of politics and the market, and he projects a good-natured identity that contradicts his sinful inner character. Inside the home, if one can infer from the multiple wives who have died underneath his private rule, Jaffery Pyncheon cannot so assiduously maintain the falsely-benevolent appearance
he presents to the outside world. If, as Hawthorne emphasizes throughout his romance, the “woman’s, the private and domestic view” provides the most honest assessment of character, then Holgrave’s growth as a domestic man can be read as an authentic change to his identity (CE 2: 122).

Hawthorne associates Holgrave’s interactions with the Pyncheon family with the authentic virtues of domestic life in order to separate his actions from the false benevolence of Judge Jaffery Pyncheon. As Kenneth Aames has identified, Downing’s writings share a similar audience with the etiquette manuals that appeal to ambitious, middle-class young men and teach them “how to know a system and how to manipulate that system for their own social success” (Aames 211). These etiquette manuals and Downing’s books on country homes operate under the assumption of the deeper morality behind one’s behavior or home environment. In this formulation, proper etiquette within the home can lead to a legitimate change in a man’s identity. Ken Parille finds a similar link between behavior and interiority in books on raising boys: “These writers believed . . . that mothers could learn to generate sympathy, that it could be authentically performed if mothers recognized its disciplinary benefits” (44). In the same way that mothers sought to produce internal affection for their unruly sons through external behavior, Downing and the authors of etiquette books believe that men’s external cultivation, both of the home and of their own conduct, can create a substantive change to the “innermost man” that Holgrave so effectively preserves in his professional life (Hawthorne, CE 2: 177). Reading these etiquette books as a guide to inauthentic external performance ignores their moral appeal, and Parille’s description of mothers’ relationships with their sons helps explain how Hawthorne separates a man’s self-
interested deception from Holgrave’s legitimate domestic labors in *The House of the Seven Gables.*

The presence of Judge Pyncheon is an undeniable example of how one can create the appearance of morality without accepting change. Holgrave lies about his Maule ancestry for the majority of the text, but Hawthorne does not condemn this deception like he does for Jaffery Pyncheon. Even so, understanding how Holgrave’s character can be read as a selfish deceiver helps to illustrate the purifying strength of domestic culture in Hawthorne’s text. In the midst of his sunset meeting with Phoebe, the newly warm and effusive Holgrave, wishing that he “could keep this feeling that now possess me,” complains of “this garden, where the black mould always clings to my spade, as if I were a sexton, delving in a grave-yard” (Hawthorne, *CE* 2: 214). Later, Hawthorne writes that “the weeds had taken advantage of Phoebe’s absence . . . to run rampant over the flowers and kitchen-vegetables” (299). No longer driven by the promise of nature’s rejuvenating effects, it seems that Holgrave’s gardening is best enjoyed when Phoebe is there with him. These two small details support Herbert’s darker reading, suggesting that Holgrave wins Phoebe’s affection, and eventually, the Pyncheon family wealth, because he could maintain his masculine performance both at home and in the sphere of male competition. When his audience is gone, he does not need to keep up the act. Hawthorne, however, pays very little attention to the darker aspects of Holgrave’s character. Like Downing and the authors of the etiquette books that Aames describes, Hawthorne depicts Holgrave’s external domestic labor in the garden as a way to produce a substantial change to his inner self.
In a similar process to the one that Herbert identifies between Sophia and Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables* uses domestic ideology to prove the essential goodness of Holgrave’s character, with Phoebe in place of Sophia as “the domestic angel [who] redeems the self-made-man-in-the-making . . . [and] ‘believes in him’ as he wishes to believe in himself” (Herbert, *Dearest Beloved* 86). Instead of a typical union between self-made man and the true woman who believes in him, Holgrave’s development as a character—the identity that grows alongside the vegetables in the garden—is a movement towards the private, domestic sphere. In this reading, the judge functions less as a double to Holgrave’s self-making and more as an example of the evils of a masculinity so self-possessed and un-domestic that it collapses under its own weight.

The villainous Judge Jaffery Pyncheon, then, is the active, selfish, and externally-focused counterpart to Clifford’s submissive openness. Jaffery’s political power, elevated social status, ample wealth, and considerable bulk complement a personality that is adept at using both flattery and intimidation for personal gain. To create a portrait of this man, Hawthorne turns not to natural imagery but to “a tall and stately edifice” as the most appropriate symbol, with “splendid halls and suites . . . [and] ceilings gorgeously painted” (*CE 2*: 229). To be sure, this is not the typical construction associated with antebellum domesticity, but this “palace,” for all its ornamentation, functions as a residence—a home. For all this outward beauty, however, the core of Jaffery’s character exists “in some low and obscure nook,—some narrow closet on the ground-floor, shut, locked and bolted, and the key flung away,—or beneath the marble pavement, in a stagnant water-puddle, with the richest pattern of mosaic-work above” (230). Hawthorne’s images of the nonhuman
life in the garden support the positive influence of a stable male identity open to the
garden’s renewing domestic influence, but Hawthorne uses the language of living
processes much differently to express the “nature” of Jaffery Pyncheon’s closed mind.

More precisely, Hawthorne’s image of stagnant water represents the corrupted,
neglected remainder of too-forceful attempts to block out those forms of nature that
signify an active interior life open to growth. In the specific context of the passage,
Hawthorne uses this image to represent the guilt and malevolent intentions that Jaffery
hides beneath his pleasant appearance. By pairing the image of the puddle with the stately
castle, this passage also suggests how the Judge hides behind the walls of his home.
Unlike Holgrave’s engagement with the house of seven gables, Jaffery Pyncheon does
not use his palace to enrich his inner life. He follows the same course that Shamir
ascribes to male heroes in antebellum literature—“not escaping from but escaping into
the privacy of the home” (15). Most relevant to the socially-ascendant Jaffery Pyncheon,
Shamir notes that “[t]he intrusion against which the middle-class home shut its doors was
not only that of the government but also that of what Hawthorne habitually called ‘the
multitudes,’ revealing privacy to be a specifically middle-class privilege, shaped by
anxieties of intrusion from the top and the bottom of the social spectrum” (150). The
would-be Governor Pyncheon manipulates the privacy of the home to harbor his selfish
motives and preserve his social standing, and Hawthorne shows the effects of this in
natural, biological terms. Jaffery Pyncheon’s private evil is “half decayed, and still
decaying, and diffusing its death-scent all through the palace! The inhabitant will not be
conscious of it, for it has long been his daily breath” (CE 2: 230). In the garden, the
natural process of decay feeds and nourishes the soil, but to a man who neglects his inner
life for the sake of external success, to a man who does not cultivate himself and exploits the privacy of home life instead of being receptive to domestic values, decay is an invisible and destructive force. Holgrave does share some of Jaffrey’s guarded inner life, but the young daguerreotypist is crucially open to the greater influence of the home, with Phoebe Pyncheon as its ideal representative.

Phoebe Pyncheon proves herself particularly suited to Holgrave’s growing self-awareness and openness. Although she is nearly hypnotized after Holgrave tells her the story of Alice Pyncheon, Phoebe has her own influence on Holgrave, one that is rooted in her perception of his interiority: “‘You talk as if this house were a theater; and you seem to look at Hepzibah’s and Clifford’s misfortunes, and those of generations before them, as a tragedy, such as I have seen acted in the hall of a country-hotel; only the present one appears to be played exclusively for your amusement! I do not like this’” (CE 2: 217). Holgrave, in turn, is “compelled to recognize a degree of truth in this piquant sketch of his own mood.” A completely self-made man would not likely acknowledge the truth of another person’s negative reading of his character, but Holgrave’s acceptance of Phoebe’s statement is evidence of his growing openness to the influence of others.

Hawthorne’s life and writings outside of The House of the Seven Gables help to illuminate the stakes of Holgrave’s relationship with Phoebe and her impact on his masculine identity. A biographical reading of Hawthorne’s writing falls outside the scope of this chapter, but a brief account of Hawthorne’s married life provides a useful model for the domestic values that inform Holgrave and Phoebe’s pairing.

Herbert’s narrative of the domestic partnership exemplified by the Hawthornes begins with the domestic angel ratifying the constructed identity of the self-made man,
with women’s power rooted in their moral purity and “their appeal to the conscience of men, presumed to be a guilty conscience” (Dearest Beloved 15). Whereas Herbert’s account implies the concurrent operation of identity affirmation and moral appeals, in The House of the Seven Gables, Holgrave’s ability to acknowledge and internalize Phoebe’s influence is the prerequisite to Phoebe’s support of his masculinity. Phoebe, who does not have the morbid “‘twist aside, like almost everybody’s mind,’” is initially suspicious of Holgrave, a lawless man who, in Phoebe’s words, “‘may set the house on fire!’” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 218, 84). Hawthorne’s depiction of domestic union gives Phoebe a power over Holgrave that Holgrave does not have over her. More accurately, their relationship here is indicative of the “restricted exchange of alliance,” that Teresa Goddu describes as the “mode of circulation [of women]” who are best suited to Hawthorne’s “conservative vision of social change” (120, 126). Domesticity starts here with a man’s willingness to accept the influence of a true woman, and while the resulting alliance preserves the Pyncheon family’s wealth and status from social upheaval and debilitating insularity alike, Hawthorne still preserves a degree of manly self-determination from the potentially feminizing influence of a domestic partnership.

Despite Hawthorne’s emphasis on the redemptive power of domesticity, a sphere of thought, action, and feeling identified with femininity, his vision of the home preserves and seeks to justify the inclusion of traditionally male qualities. Writings from Hawthorne’s 1846 collection Mosses from an Old Manse provide some insight into the male domestic anxieties that inform his later romance. Among these earlier collected works, “Fire-Worship,” Hawthorne’s sketch about the decline of the open fireplace and the rise of the stove, signals a masculine concern about domestic subordination. The
sketch bemoans the imprisoning associations of masculine flames trapped within a kitchen stove and references a nostalgic past when the flames of masculine power were not confined but willingly made gentle within an open hearth. The central charm of the fireplace lies in its ability to effect a genial and willing abdication of power: “The domestic fire . . . seemed to bring might and majesty and wild Nature, and a spiritual essence, into our inmost home, and yet to dwell with such friendliness, that its mysteries and marvels excited no dismay” (CE 10: 139). Later in his sketch, Hawthorne praises the fire’s raw power and its implicit connection to the open hearth, and he is dismayed at the fire’s unwilling confinement within the iron stove: “He drives the steamboat and drags the rail-car. And it was he—this creature of terrible might, and so many-sided utility, and all-comprehensive destructiveness—that used to be the cheerful, homely friend of our wintry days, and whom we have made prisoner of this iron cage!” (139-140). These attributes of strength and versatility, as well as the industrial functions Hawthorne describes, link the flames of the fireplace to the employments and qualities of traditional masculinity, a strength and passion voluntarily controlled.

*The House of the Seven Gables* does not include such an expansive commentary on bygone masculinity, but a similar kind of nostalgia marks Hawthorne’s description of Pyncheon family history:

In almost every generation, nevertheless, there happened to be some one descendant of the family gifted with a portion of the hard, keen sense, and practical energy, that had so remarkably distinguished the original founder . . . At two or three epochs, when the fortunes of the family were low, this representative of hereditary qualities had made his appearance,
and caused the traditionary gossips of the town to whisper among themselves, “Here is the old Pyncheon come again! Now the Seven Gables will be new-shingled!” (CE 2: 19-20)

In his romance, Hawthorne looks to pacify and domesticate a form of manhood associated with “hard, keen sense, and practical energy” in the same way that the genial fireplace creates a benevolent warmth out of flames that could destroy a city. Yet, as “Fire-Worship” demonstrates, this process of domestication carries a risk of confinement.

In describing the downfall of the fireplace as a symbol of charming, comfortable masculinity, Hawthorne’s sketch parallels the changing functions of domesticity that T. Walter Herbert describes: “[O]nce manly self-making is complete, the [domestic] ideal loses its imperative urgency and its power to hold conflicts in abeyance . . . [T]he accustomed comradeship decays and symptoms of alienation mark the ordinary business of the household” (Dearest Beloved 209-210). In the older hearth, the fire’s signs of male strength are quieted without conflict, but once the stove is installed in the home, the fire’s friendly dwelling becomes a space of external confinement rather than internal control. Herbert describes an initial function of the domestic angel, as exemplified by Sophia Hawthorne’s relationship with Nathaniel, to “give firmer credence to the dangerously frail belief that his identity was alive and real and not the delusion of a demon-haunted dreamer” (77). Once this stage has passed, and a husband believes that the raw power of his manhood can move ships and trains, he becomes less satisfied with his gentle contributions to the home. These circumstances, when the identity-restoring function of domestic space loses some of its power and begins to conflict with the manhood it once
supported, drive Hawthorne’s call for a genial, self-disciplined masculine presence in the home.

The stove takes this steam-driving power and contains it, holding it inside a cramped interior. Instead of a focused heat “delights to singe a garment,” the fireplace diffuses and domesticates the “all-comprehensive destructiveness” of flames (Hawthorne, CE 10: 144, 140). Strikingly similar to Hawthorne’s opinions here, Downing deviates from his usual outdoor focus in Rural Essays to devote an entire chapter to the stove as “The Favorite Poison of America.” Downing shares Hawthorne’s nostalgia toward “that genuine, hospitable, wholesome friend and comforter, an open wood fireplace,” and he shows similar resentment toward “a little demon—alias a black, cheerless close stove” (280). To Downing, the stove is a sign of a growing disconnection from outdoor life, which he frames as a source of healthy masculinity: “Certainly the men, especially the young men, who live mostly in the open air, are healthy and robust. But the daughters of the farmers—they are as delicate and pale as lilies of the valley, or fine ladies of the Fifth Avenue. If one catches a glimpse of rose in her cheeks, it is the pale rose of the hot-house, and not the fresh glow of the garden damask” (281-282). Delicacy, even in the “ladies of the Fifth Avenue,” is seen as a sign of unhealthiness and confinement that contrasts with the ruddy-faced young man outside. The strong, vigorous man benefits from the freedom and openness of outdoor spaces where he can more fully exercise his masculinity. For Downing as well as Hawthorne, the stove represents a level of domestic confinement antithetical to men’s health and sociability. As an alternative, Hawthorne uses the outdoor environment of the garden as an open domestic space where manly energy is willingly
expended in the service of the home and where women’s presence is collaborative, not morally corrective or restrictive.

The interior of the house is less open to manhood. In place of the hearth’s “warmth of feeling,” the stove puts manhood in an “iron cage. Touch it, and he scorches your fingers. He delights to singe a garment . . . and shakes the iron walls of his dungeon, so as to overthrow the ornamental urn upon its summit” (Hawthorne, CE 10: 144). Once the domestic angel solidifies the self-made man’s confidence in his self-definition, his masculine attributes become a source of discord and destruction in the house. While “Fire-Worship” looks into the past to resolve these conflicts, in *The House of the Seven Gables*, like Downing’s *Rural Essays*, Hawthorne looks to the garden as a place where a man might exercise both masculine and domestic desires without compromising either. With the same level of voluntary domestication and acknowledged masculine power that the open fireplace represents, Hawthorne’s Pyncheon-garden is an attempt to articulate a manhood that willingly enters into a home that allows men to actively improve domestic life and revitalize their identity without sacrificing their masculinity.

Although Hawthorne does not try to completely rework the gender expectations of antebellum society, Holgrave’s presence in the garden is far from normative. For one, the Pyncheon-garden is a potentially feminizing space associated with the flower language found and explicated within flower dictionaries popular with antebellum women. Women’s writing about flowers, however, was often distinct from conceptions of submissive and dependent femininity. Dorri Beam shows how texts like Sarah Josepha Hale’s *Flora’s Interpreter* (1832), which encourages women “to cultivate flower-like qualities—essentially to be a flower,” also represent “attempts to push beyond the
semiotics of floral appearance” that Beam links to the ways in which “women’s highly wrought writing [works] as a dressing, a poetics, that is in many ways an end in itself” (40, 42, 50). Similarly, Paula Bennett shows how flower language allowed authors a means of describing an autonomous “clitoral based female sexuality . . . that nature, not one’s husband, ‘teaches’” (246). More than a simple connection to the female body, Bennett’s work shows how nineteenth-century writing on flowers could encourage a form of female experience and desire completely independent from the marital bond between men and women that supports domestic ideology. While Hawthorne does not revise the accepted understanding of womanhood quite so radically, his Pyncheon-garden is the site of a more open and equal domestic partnership between men and women.

Other texts from the period show a clearer link between the garden, flowers, and the home. At the beginning of his 1839 book on flower gardening, Edward Sayers includes a letter from statesman Henry Alexander Scammell Dearborn, who writes, “The culture of ornamental plants, is the most conclusive evidence of an advanced state of civilization. So unerring is it, that in passing through the country, I should have no hesitation in pointing out the relative moral condition of each family, from the plants which surround the house, or appear in its windows” (vi). Dearborn’s strong connection between the quality of the garden and the moral state of the household points to the responsibilities of the virtuous domestic angel.

While the antebellum garden was largely associated with women, this space was not governed by the same gender expectations that structure interior domestic life. In using the outdoor garden as a way for men to enter into feminine domestic life, Hawthorne’s writing mirrors the efforts of women seeking entry into male-dominated
activities and discussions. Nina Baym writes of the connection between femininity and flowers, explaining how women like Almira Phelps used this association as an entry point into scientific disciplines that commonly excluded women (20). While gardening, through botany, allowed women an avenue into scientific pursuits, the ideology of the home could place a strong limit on these kinds of studies. Tina Gianquitto writes of a sketch by Catharine Maria Sedgwick, in which the fate of a would-be female botanist articulates this tension: “Botanical study has neither trained her eye to observe accurately her surroundings nor taught her the proper role and duties for women in the home” (19). The danger here is that, in entering into traditionally male endeavors, women stand to lose their domestic abilities.

This relative lack of distinction between male and female activity, with feminine flower gardening blending into masculine scientific study, could explain the ready connection that Downing and Dearborn make between the home and the garden. Emphasizing the domestic benefits of gardening helps to allay fears that the gardener may neglect the inside of her home. Just as women use the garden as an avenue into more masculine scientific pursuits, Hawthorne’s Pyncheon-garden is Holgrave’s opportunity to enter into more feminine areas and establish a place within the home without great risk to his own gender identity. On one hand, this outdoor domestic space could be viewed as Hawthorne’s contribution to the ideology of the home, a place where men and women can make a shared contribution to domestic life with less concern for the gendered qualities of their work and their environment. The writings from male gardeners and female botanists, however, suggest that men and women were already utilizing the garden’s ambiguous relationship to gender and domestic culture. Hawthorne’s Pyncheon-
garden may not be a completely novel conception, but his romance heightens and 
dramatizes this environment’s role as a masculine entry point into the feminine culture of 
the home.

Additionally, the physical aspects of garden spaces evoke a degree of openness 
that could help to ameliorate the gendered qualities of domestic life and create room for a 
male presence. Edward Sayers alludes to the garden as an inclusive space in his remarks 
about the arrangement of its paths: “The walks should, if possible, be wide enough for 
two persons to walk abreast, in order to give a social effect, which should always be the 
first consideration in the flower garden” (15). The “social effect” of the garden is slightly 
different from the private life and interiority associated with the household. The garden is 
not a public space like a park, but it is outside, and its physical openness is a crucial 
element for the kind of ideological breathing room Hawthorne constructs in the 
Pyncheon-garden. For Sayers in this passage as well as in Hawthorne’s romance, the 
garden is not a place for solitary contemplation or exclusion from the outside world as 
much as it is a place to form and cultivate the relationships within an intimate, domestic 
community.

In claiming the garden as a space of masculine domesticity, Hawthorne does not 
push women out as much as he includes men as fellow laborers. Holgrave and Phoebe’s 
joint work together in the garden also marks the start of a relationship that culminates in 
their marriage, and their exchanges there are motivated by the rejuvenating inclusiveness 
that Hawthorne later uses to justify a transition from the Pyncheon’s outdated aristocracy 
to a more dynamic middle-class domesticity. Holgrave playfully comments on Phoebe’s 
easy relationship with the garden-fowl: “Miss Hepzibah, I suppose, will interweave the
fact with her other traditions, and set it down that the fowls know you to be a Pyncheon!” (CE 2: 90). Phoebe flatly denies this aristocratic notion, but she is aware that Holgrave’s assertions were not meant to be taken seriously: “‘The secret is,’ said Phoebe, smiling, ‘that I have learned how to talk with hens and chickens.’” The power of a family name is nothing compared to Pheobe’s knowledge and ability to make even these chickens feel at home, and Phoebe smiles at the idea that these animals respond to something as irrelevant as family reputation. Along with a feminine, maternal locus of identity, which critics like Keiko Arai use to describe Phoebe’s ideological distance from the patriarchal Pyncheons, Phoebe’s connection to Holgrave develops from their shared work in the garden and their awareness of the importance of that specific space to life in the house of seven gables as a whole.

In contrast to Phoebe’s sunny presence inside the home, Holgrave’s domestic labors are almost exclusively limited to the garden adjacent to the house. But Phoebe’s work with the flowers and chickens shows that the garden is a space for feminine contribution to the Pyncheons’ home life as well. In her first act to enliven the house, Phoebe “gather[s] some of the most perfect of the roses” from the garden, and Phoebe is about to return there before running into Hepzibah, who has misgivings about the young lady’s presence in the home (Hawthorne, CE 2: 71). Just as the garden first attracted Phoebe’s attention, she first justifies her usefulness in the house by telling Hepzibah “[t]here is the garden—the flowers to be taken care of” (75). Phoebe is interested in the garden, but she far more closely linked to the inside of the house. Later in the chapter, she makes a more compelling display of her domestic talents and her value to Hepzibah by working in the kitchen, serving breakfast, and acting as a pleasant and efficient
shopkeeper. Brief as they are, however, Phoebe’s early thoughts of the garden testify to that space’s importance as an entry point into the ideology of the home. While the narrator does not draw on Phoebe’s “gift of practical arrangement” in describing her activity among the flowers and weeds, Hawthorne associates her revivifying housekeeping with the life in the garden: “[W]hether it were the white roses, or whatever the subtile influence might be—a person of delicate instinct would have known at once that it was now a maiden's bedchamber, and had been purified of all former evil and sorrow by her sweet breath and happy thoughts” (71). Phoebe effortlessly brightens both the house and the inner lives of its residents, but the garden is inherently more inviting, even in the overgrown state that she finds shortly after her arrival.

The Pyncheon-garden allows Phoebe and Holgrave an opportunity to work together to improve the house of seven gables, but Hawthorne preserves some gender distinction in describing their different roles in this place. Near the close of the first meeting between Holgrave and Phoebe, Hawthorne makes one of the most explicit claims about the garden’s potential to preserve the young artist’s manhood. Turning to Phoebe, Holgrave asks Phoebe to take on some of the labors in the garden:

“If agreeable to you,” he observed, “it would give me pleasure to turn over these flowers, and those ancient and respectable fowls, to your care. Coming fresh from country air and occupations, you will soon feel the need of some such out-of-door employment. My own sphere does not so much lie among flowers. You can trim and tend them, therefore, as you please; and I will ask only the least trifle of a blossom, now and then, in exchange for all the good, honest kitchen vegetables with which I propose
to enrich Miss Hepzibah's table. So we will be fellow-laborers, somewhat on the community system.” (CE 2: 93)

Of the notable claims that Holgrave makes here, the strongest and most relevant involves his gender-based division of labor. He will do all of the vegetable gardening, and she will tend the chickens and the flowers. Interestingly, Holgrave does not appeal to Phoebe’s sense of domestic womanhood as motivation for her gardening and instead references her rural upbringing that makes her so different from the higher-class urbanite Pyncheons. Holgrave’s reference to his “sphere,” however, is a more direct gender distinction, and his inclination towards vegetables instead of flowers follows Downing’s advice in *Cottage Residences*: “The master of the premises we shall suppose capable of managing the kitchen garden, . . . [and t]he mistress and her daughters, we shall suppose to have sufficient fondness for flowers . . . to spend three times a week . . . planting, . . . picking off decayed flowers, and removing weeds” (49). Hawthorne marks a similar division when Phoebe observes that Hepzibah “had no taste nor spirits for the lady-like employment of cultivating flowers, and, with her recluse habits . . . would hardly have come forth under the speck of open sky to weed and hoe among the fraternity of beans and squashes” (CE 2: 87). In these passages, Hawthorne establishes a space for manhood within the garden, intermixed with areas and activities marked as feminine. In *The House of the Seven Gables* and in some of his earlier writings, Hawthorne allows for a manly presence in the garden by showing how men can use this place to make a physical and economic contribution to the home and cultivate the domestic attachments that develop through their labor.
In “The Old Manse,” the preface to his short story collection *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Hawthorne elaborates on the values and benefits of a garden in a far more direct way than in his later romance. In statements repeated throughout this preface, Hawthorne asserts that gardening is like raising a family. While the following passage could be written from the perspective of an unmarried or “childless” man in search of a family, Hawthorne also addresses fathers and husbands who are searching for a meaningful family position:

Childless men, if they would know something of the bliss of paternity, should plant a seed—be it squash, bean, Indian corn or perhaps a mere flower or worthless weed—should plant it with their own hands and nurse it from infancy to maturity altogether with their own care. If there be not too many of them, each individual plant becomes an object of separate interest. (*CE* 10: 13)

Hawthorne’s garden shows reproduction through masculine labor—without a mother in sight. More than reproduction alone, Hawthorne’s sketch connects the gardener’s role with the role of a father inside the home. Hawthorne is the only person raising these plants, but just as the budding plants stand in for children, he “claim[s] a share with the earth and the sky” in place of the maternal force inside the home (15).³ Hawthorne’s gardening evokes a number of features of home life, but the garden is a distinctly different space than a household interior. In this well-tended plot of land, outside the home yet crucially close to it, Hawthorne imagines new ways for men to contribute to domestic life without rewriting established values. Hawthorne has an impulse to move away from domesticity, but the garden’s physical and ideological proximity to the home
is evidence of his attempt to work within traditional values in his search for a meaningful masculine role.

While the male gardener in “The Old Manse” works alone, Hawthorne’s romance makes room for “fellow-laborers” in the garden while still trying to preserve enough gender distinction to maintain Holgrave’s sense of manhood (CE 2: 93). Phoebe and Holgrave coexist in this place. They share the labor in the garden far more than they do inside the home, but they have defined duties based on their gender. In the “The Old Manse,” Hawthorne shows how this masculine labor in the garden fosters his emotional attachment to the home. On the one hand, a form of domestic affection for the garden allows men to imagine their work as a pleasant activity, but on the other, local natural spaces must first become domestic through the physical labor and involvement of humans: “He loved each tree, doubtless, as if it had been his own child. An orchard has a relation to mankind and readily connects itself with matters of the heart. The trees possess a domestic character; they have lost the wild nature of their forest-kindred, and have grown humanized by receiving the care of man as well as contributing to his wants” (CE 10: 12). Orchards are not gardens, but Hawthorne uses a similar logic for both: These are places where men’s labor acquires the character of paternity—where men’s labor produces material benefits as well as a connection to an environment that itself grows closer to the emotional space of the home.

The garden changes alongside the men within it, and it exists as a space with different rules about labor and leisure. Leisure has its own complicated relationship to manhood, but it is a crucial marker of the middle-class social position associated with the domestic culture that Hawthorne privileges in his romance. In her article on “the writer
who reinvented ‘trifling’ for the Jacksonian generation, Nathaniel Parker Willis,” Sandra Tomc describes the mid-nineteenth-century middle class’s rearticulation of an earlier, aristocratic sense of leisure understood as “the given . . . of an implicitly established social rank” (782, 784). In its newer formulation, leisure is understood as a reward for hard work and “an available commodit[y] . . . that anyone can desire and gain,” but it is also paradoxically associated with a lack of industry, such that “the idle author is also in the position of always being kept from the accomplishments he seems already to have achieved” (784, 789). Tomc effectively describes how Willis struggled with the demands of a leisurely identity and occupation that required so much work to maintain, referencing “the fractured, uncertain, confused subject projected in the paradox of leisure,” the same male subject that Hawthorne depicts in The House of the Seven Gables (Tomc 795). As I have described earlier, the antebellum home is traditionally understood as a space where men could rest and refresh themselves from the trials of the workplace. A leisurely rest, however, could undermine a masculine identity associated with strength and industriousness. Adding to manhood’s precarious position in the home, there were relatively few areas of domestic labor that were not associated with womanhood, leaving men with little opportunity to illustrate their hard-working masculinity.

Broadly considered, a man’s responsibilities in the home covered the discipline of his children, financially supporting the home, and acting as the overarching authority and head of the household in large domestic decisions. Outside of his role as disciplinarian, itself a small subset of the childcare mostly undertaken by women, the domestic man had little opportunity for productive daily work in the home. The home, then, was largely a place of leisure for men and was accompanied by the same mixture of success and idle
failure that Tomc finds in Nathaniel Parker Willis’s work. As Downing writes, “In Landscape Gardening the country gentleman of leisure finds a resource of the most agreeable nature[,] . . . unembittered by the after recollection of pain or injury inflicted on others, or the loss of moral rectitude” (Downing, Treatise ix). Gardening has the same identity and moral restoring function of the home, but as Tomc has shown, such relaxing employments risk the loss of the industrious character that both confers and advertises successful masculinity. Hawthorne addresses the leisurely labor of the male gardener by aligning it with the veiled domestic labor of women inside the home.

While part of a man’s relationship to the home involves his material and economic considerations, the female domestic ideal is driven by intrinsic morality. Gillian Brown explains how the housework of a domestic exemplar like Phoebe Pyncheon is depicted as “labor and play . . . distinguish[ed] . . . from ordinary human work” by the innate, angelic virtues flowing from her character (Domestic 77-78). For men in the garden, instead of being motivated by their inherent affection for the space and its vegetable residents, they must labor before “each individual plant becomes an object of separate interest” (Hawthorne, CE 10: 13). The material benefits of an orchard or vegetable garden further separate these spaces from the ostensibly market-insulated interior of the home. Quite different from the assumed motivations of women that posit domestic labor is its own reward, Hawthorne’s male gardener begins with a more economic model, working for physical rewards until his vegetables become “object[s] . . . of interest.” Although Holgrave is past the stage of boyhood, his personal and environmental development follows the same course that Parille describes in antebellum pedagogical texts for boys, in which “[p]lay . . . [is] an explicitly coded form of work,
and true pleasure is reimagined as an affect produced solely by a nexus of production and obedience” (8). In other words, the garden is not devoid of affection, but men must work to earn it.

As I have described earlier, men’s work in the garden, though used as an analog and entry-point into traditional domestic culture, is not guided by the same assumptions about women’s motivation to work inside the home. In The House of the Seven Gables as well as in “The Old Manse,” Hawthorne’s male gardener finds a place in domestic discourse by contributing to what Lori Merish calls “pious consumption,” a process that “encouraged an emotional rather than a narrowly utilitarian relation to objects, and marked the very form of domestic artifacts” (90). By elevating the civilizing virtues of certain luxury items over others, a pious consumer participated in “constructing class as a malleable domestic identification” (91). The process Merish identifies here is not making money for its own sake but acquiring those objects that, through their aesthetic qualities and emotional attachments, contribute to the imagined ideal of a tasteful, comfortable home. Holgrave’s sweaty work in the garden cannot produce intricately carved furniture within the house of seven gables, but his outdoor labor and his changing attachment to his surroundings both touch upon the kinds of economic and emotional attachments that Merish describes. As Downing writes, “A collection of pictures, for example, is comparatively shut up from the world, in the private gallery. But the sylvan and floral collections,—the groves and gardens, which surround the country residence of the man of taste,—are confined by no barriers narrower than the blue heaven above and around them” (Downing, Treatise ix). Downing points to landscaping as a way to publicly display one’s upper-class taste and refinement without disrupting the boundaries of domestic life.
Likewise, Holgrave’s gardening changes the landscape to better advertise the elevated status of the seven gables’ residents and to illustrate his elevated sensibility.

As an aspiring member of the middle-class home, Holgrave advertises his social position by describing his work in the garden as his own version of labor and play. He tells Phoebe, “‘I dig, and hoe, and weed, in this black old earth, for the sake of refreshing myself with what little nature and simplicity may be left in it, after men have so long sown and reaped here. I turn up the earth by way of pastime. My sober occupation, so far as I have any, is with a lighter material,’” (Hawthorne, *CE* 2: 91). Holgrave asserts that he is doing all of this digging and weeding as a leisurely activity, suggesting that he is interested in the place itself and has enough free time to devote to its improvement. With the same kind of virtues that flow from the practice of pious consumption, Holgrave’s motivating attachment to the garden places it in the realm of domestic artifacts. While Holgrave’s attachment to the place can be described as domestic, the garden is a more economically productive source of domestic virtue than a fancy couch or a rug. Indeed, when Hepzibah first opens her cent shop, some of the first items she sells are “some white beans and split peas” (35). Holgrave’s gardening produces some of the same vegetables that Hepzibah sells, conveying the practical and masculine qualities of his labor that are not found in Phoebe’s flower gardening. Yet, Holgrave attests that he gardens “by way of pastime,” and the leisure associated with this place is just as important for Holgrave’s middle-class masculinity as is its saleable produce.

Instead of a form of domesticity confirmed by the purchase of fancy chairs and home decor, Hawthorne posits a domestication that begins with a leisurely interest in the romantic natural features of the garden. Initially, Holgrave does not claim to be working
to improve the house of the seven gables as much as enjoying the abstract benefits of nature. As I have noted, Holgrave is quick to inform Phoebe that gardening is not his job and that he has the time and money to work in the garden without needing payment. Uncle Venner, on the other hand, is in a less favorable circumstance, and the odd jobs and “essential offices” upon which he depends for income are, “in summer, to dig the few yards of garden ground appertaining to a low-rented tenement, and share the produce of his labor at the halves” (CE 2: 60-61). While Venner is bound to neighborhood gardens as a means of sustenance, Holgrave’s work in the garden proves his independence and financial self-sufficiency.

Given the precarious relationship between leisure and industrious masculinity, Holgrave must balance the practical benefits of the garden with his leisurely enjoyment to inhabit a masculine position in domestic culture. In the same chapter where Holgrave first comments on his interest in gardening, he mentions “the good, honest kitchen vegetables with which I propose to enrich Miss Hepzibah's table” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 93). While slightly mitigated by a sense of goodness and honesty, Holgrave’s conception of these as-yet-nonexistent vegetables is significantly economic. They are a “good” and “honest” product, but a product nonetheless. More important than providing these practical and material contributions, Holgrave’s early conception of the garden lays the groundwork for his growing emotional attachments to the place. He clearly sees and describes those qualities he has already entertained about the life within this place, but he only briefly references the garden’s potential to change him. Even so, Holgrave’s early romantic interest in “refreshing” himself through contact with the natural world suggests an aesthetic interest in the garden that serves as the foundation of his growing domestic
attachments (91). As I will explain later, Hawthorne uses the romantic pleasures of the garden to both motivate Holgrave’s initial labors and guide his growing domestic attachments.

Downing’s aesthetic ideas are particularly relevant to Holgrave’s perception of the Pyncheon-garden. Downing may not have invented the aesthetic forms he endorses in his books, but, as Aames writes, “he made intelligible and accessible . . . the rules of genteel material culture” (Aames 195). While Downing only rarely mentions the gendered aspects of his ideas, the environmental qualities that he favors are closely related to a male perspective, especially as these qualities operate in a text like Hawthorne’s The House of the Seven Gables. Specifically, the Pyncheon home and its surrounding landscape is a close match for Downing’s definition of the picturesque. Downing defines this quality as “the beauty expressed by striking, irregular, spirited forms,” and his example of a picturesque scene includes “[r]ough and irregular stems and trunks, rocks half covered with mosses and flowering plants, open glades of bright verdure opposed to dark masses of shadowy foliage” (Treatise 29, 30). Compare this to the massive elm tree, knotty weeds, and mossy gables amidst the blooming flowers of the Pyncheon estate. These less genial landscapes are not intrinsically masculine, but when measured against Downing’s definition of environmental beauty and its adoption within Hawthorne’s romance, the manly character of the picturesque becomes much clearer.

Distinct from this concept of the picturesque, Downing defines “general or natural [beauty]” as that which is “characterized by simple and flowing forms” (29 Treatise). Interestingly, Downing finds this gentler form of beauty, with “all those graceful and flowing forms, and all that harmonious coloring,” in the paintings of Claude
Lorrain (31). Downing does not overtly favor picturesque over natural beauty, but he shows an implicit bias toward the former, writing, “it is requisite to possess a greater degree of imagination, and perhaps more vigour of mind . . . fully to appreciate the beauty of the more picturesque forms of nature” (32). Hawthorne uses a similar aesthetic sensibility to signal the masculinity (or lack thereof) of the men in *The House of the Seven Gables*. Clifford Pyncheon, a “Sybarite . . . [with a] love and necessity for the Beautiful,” is distinctly associated with Downing’s natural beauty, and in earlier generations Alice Pyncheon notes how her father Gervayse uses a painting by Claude Lorrain “[to] try to bring back sunny recollections” (Hawthorne, *CE* 2: 108, 202). For both Clifford and Gervayse Pyncheon, an overly sensitive and impractical form of manhood can be read in their response and preference for an easier and less emotionally taxing environment. These are gentle men who prefer a gentle place to the “rugged scenes” of Downing’s picturesque (*Treatise* 31).

In *The House of the Seven Gables*, this culturally-specific appreciation for striking and irregular picturesque scenes develops alongside characters’ engagement with the environment. As Downing writes, “It is easy enough to draw upon paper a pleasing plan of a flower-garden . . . [, b]ut it is far more difficult to plant and arrange a garden in such as way as to afford a constant succession of beauty,” (*Rural Essays* 7). In their outdoor work in the backyard of the Pyncheon house, Holgrave and Phoebe gain the combined “sensibility to the Beautiful, and good judgment” that Downing cites as necessary for elevated taste (Downing, *Rural Essays* 112). Hawthorne’s depiction of nature uses many of the features that Lance Newman links to Emersonian, “scholarly” Transcendentalists, but nature’s influence within Phoebe and Holgrave draws on the slightly earlier romantic
sensibility of William Wordsworth, for whom “restorative contact with the eternities reflected in nature makes possible ‘a noble and a true generosity’ toward ‘humanity,’ teaches us to sympathize, and therefore to be democratic” (Newman 81).

Just as Newman describes of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, who “believed that social hierarchies were, like everything else in nature, a direct reflection of divine law,” Hawthorne uses the natural processes and features within the Pyncheon-garden to describe the renewing potential of domestic culture (Newman 114). At the same time, Hawthorne’s repeated depiction of the impracticality, immaturity, or outmodedness of abstract ideas of unseen places aligns him with the views of Emerson’s more communitarian rivals, for whom, “nature was not a Transcendental ideal, it was the material world in its entirety . . . [a]nd it was the necessary field of life” (Newman 117-118). Not just the garden but the entire Pyncheon estate bears this out, as the primeval wilderness gives way to Matthew Maule’s homestead, and then Maule’s land becomes Pycheon property, poisoning the natural spring in the process. Hawthorne’s nature is both an ideal model and a malleable record of human activity, and Holgrave’s personal transformation in the garden is a key to navigating this mix of idealism and materiality. By attending first to its abundant materiality, Holgrave can then benefit from nature’s capacity to transform his ways of thinking, leading him toward the domestic partnership at the end of the narrative. In The House of the Seven Gables and in earlier sketches, Hawthorne uses romantic language and ideas to showcase the local natural environment of the garden as an example of the enlivening beauties and enticements of home life.

Focusing on the short excursions into the forest in “The Old Manse,” Larry Reynolds examines Hawthorne travels from the societal restriction associated with the
manse, to the unmarked wilds of nature, and back again. Reynolds links this esteem for “a social world of difference, of language, of law and conventions” to Hawthorne’s sense of his “failure of paternity” in being unable to support his family financially while living at the manse (Reynolds 69, 71). Although, as Reynolds notes, Hawthorne “struggled to free himself from the Emersonian idealism which imbued and constrained” an intimate experience with nature, Hawthorne clearly values the “[s]trange and happy times . . . when we cast aside all irksome forms and delivered ourselves up to the free air” (Reynolds 63; Hawthorne, CE 10: 21). Robert Milder also identifies the sketch’s movement between natural freedom and societal order, making a crucial link between the “The Old Manse” and The House of the Seven Gables. In both the sketch and the romance, Hawthorne uses the spirit of Transcendentalism “as a ground-clearing instrument to sweep away the detritus of history,” and his solution is “a species of interior decoration: the institutions of society are left structurally intact, but they are renovated from within by a freshness of heart” (Milder 483, 484). The garden is the physical space associated with this personal renovation, where the disciplined gardener benefits from the growth and change of the plants he cultivates without radically changing the domestic culture he seeks to “renovate . . . from within.”

Aided by its rejuvenating powers, Hawthorne uses the garden to alleviate the paternal anxieties Reynolds finds in the text. Reynolds sees Hawthorne’s reference to “when we, like Saturn, make a meal out of” his “vegetable children” as “an impulse to negate fatherhood through filicide” (Hawthorne, CE 10: 15, Reynolds 71). Hawthorne’s use of the word “we” leaves room for an alternative reading from Reynolds, in which the growing plants provide an abstract sense of fatherhood as well as a material contribution
to the dinner plates of the entire Hawthorne family. If, as Noble writes, Hawthorne’s sentimental epistemology is founded upon “the experience of physical and sympathetic communion” with other people, then this reference to Saturn takes on a far lighter tone (Noble 274). Hawthorne enjoys the paternal feelings he experiences while tending the vegetables, but “the greatest pleasure is reserved” for the ways in which the physical products of the garden bring him closer to the other people in his family (Hawthorne, CE 10: 15). He is happiest when his family eats the food that he has grown.

Holgrave and the Pyncheon-garden share a complicated relationship with nature that is guided as much by contemporary ideas of leisure and middle class rural life as by their romantic appreciation of its picturesqueness. Hawthorne’s “Buds and Bird-Voices” is much more invested in an idealistic vision of nature. Newman describes this perspective in his account of Transcendentalist scholars like Ralph Waldo Emerson, who “scanned the operations of physical nature for confirmation of the inevitability of the current social order and the kinds of human relationships and experiences it produced” (Newman 120). In this sketch, Hawthorne uses local outdoor imagery to justify the form of domestic ideology that he elaborates later in The House of the Seven Gables. “Buds and Bird-Voices” describes a number of natural landscapes, but Hawthorne’s grants special attention to those spaces and processes that are associated with the home. While more distant “fields and wood-paths have as yet few charms to entice the wanderer,” the familiar land “in front of that old red farm-house . . . wear[s] a beautiful and tender green, to which no future luxuriance can add a charm” (CE 10: 156, 150). Without the budding leaves of a willow tree, the narrator writes, “[o]ur house would lose a charm,” and the most beautiful birds are those who build their nests “under the sheltering eaves” of a
home (151, 154). In trees, birds, and grassy fields, Hawthorne’s concept of natural renewal draws its power from a close connection to the home. Gulls are more “picturesque” than ducks because gulls “float and rest upon the air” instead of a “flight . . . too rapid and determined for the eye to catch enjoyment from it, although [the duck] never fails to stir up the heart with the sportsman’s ineradicable instinct” (154). Hawthorne is not looking for signs of fleeting inspiration or invitations to prove one’s worth as a sportsman. These images of Spring praise “the sentiment of renewed life” as a product of settled life.

Hawthorne’s sketch shows equal concern for the deadening effects of an unchanging home life, using a sense of natural rebirth to counteract the weight of the past: “We dwell in an old moss-covered mansion, and tread in the worn footprints of the past, and have a gray clergyman’s ghost for our daily and nightly inmate; yet all these outward circumstances are made less than visionary, by the renewing power of the spirit” (CE 10: 153). Nature is no ever-changing sublime here—the power of Spring’s rebirth lies in its constant return, and those who lose faith in natural renewal “must hope no reformation of [the world’s] evil—no sympathy with the lofty faith and gallant struggles of those who contend in its behalf” (157-158). Nature alone does little, but the sentiment of Spring, as felt and expressed by men and women, is an influence crucial to maintaining a healthy domestic life: “The old, paradisiacal economy of life is again in force; we live, not to think, nor to labor, but for the simple end of being happy; nothing, for the present hour, is worth of man’s infinite capacity, save to imbibe the warm smile of heaven, and sympathize with the reviving earth” (149). Like the gardener in “The Old Manse,” Hawthorne’s values the emotional rewards of this experience more than the material
rewards associated with concentrated thinking and “labor,” but the abstract idea of nature and the human spirit cannot inspire such lofty hopes without action and engagement.

Hawthorne’s springtime sketch is not wholly beautiful, at least not “according to our prejudices” (CE 10: 152). The melting snow reveals dead branches, an “avenue . . . strewn with the whole crop of autumn’s withered leaves,” and the remains of vegetables “frozen into the soil before their unthrifty cultivator could find time to gather them.” When Hawthorne expands upon these signs of death and decay, connecting the “withered leaves . . . [to] the ideas and feelings that we have done with,” there is an element of resignation in the idea that “[t]here is not wind strong enough to sweep them away.” The narrator asks, “Why may we not be permitted to live and enjoy as if this were the first life and our own primal enjoyment, instead of treading always on these dry bones and mouldering relics . . . ?” The text does not provide a direct answer, but the images themselves are more suggestive. These ruined vegetables, unraked leaves, and rotten branches—“one or two with the ruin of a bird’s nest clinging to them”—suggest local, domestic failures. Instead of clinging to decayed branches or neglecting fallen leaves, “the renewing power of the spirit” can motivate more decisive action (153). Hawthorne’s depiction of the Spring evokes a feeling of renewal, but it is a spotty expression of rebirth, strewn with the wet, brown leaves and rotting branches from the past. More than the sketches and tales in Mosses from an Old Manse, Hawthorne’s The House of the Seven Gables shows how, by cultivating and domesticating a nearby natural space, men can work toward a more lasting feeling of renewal associated with the home.

Hawthorne uses natural patterns, changes, and activity to support his vision of domesticity as an essential, organic outgrowth of the condition of the Pyncheon family.
Hawthorne’s description of the physical environment tracks the sins and failures of the family and points toward the proper, purifying union of Phoebe and Holgrave, but the message of the Pyncheon home’s outdoor surroundings is most legible to those who do the physical work to maintain them. The broad strokes of the Pyncheon estate’s environmental history are easy to identify. Colonel Pyncheon steals Matthew Maule’s “garden ground” and builds his house there, and then the freshwater spring on the property becomes poisonous (CE 2: 7, 10). The house of seven gables grows its mossy mantle, Alice Pyncheon starts a rooftop colony of posies, the Pyncheon Elm expands its massive branches, and the formerly “extensive” backyard Pyncheon-garden shrinks away and is “now infringed upon by other enclosures, or shut in by habitations and outbuildings” (27-28). The springwater feeding Maule’s Well is the clearest environmental record of the Pyncheon family’s guilt, and it works as a key for reading the natural processes throughout the narrative. Colonel Pyncheon’s disregard for the environmental impact of his home’s location, from which the springwater is “disturbed by the depth of the new cellar,” works in concert with his indifference to the “shaking of the head among the village gossips” in choosing his home on “a site that had already been accurst” (9). The Pyncheon family is redeemed by the end of the book, but Maule’s Well is still as “hard[,] . . . brackish[,] . . . [and] productive of intestinal mischief” as it was when the workmen dug Colonel Pyncheon’s cellar (10). Past actions leave physical effects that stretch into the future, and even the most wholesome resolution seemingly cannot erase what was done. Hawthorne’s romance posits a sense of natural and domestic renewal that does not erase or break from the past as much as it builds from it and refines it.
In the same way that his manual labor complements his growing feelings for the
garden and the home, Holgrave’s domesticity depends on his ability to perceive the
emotional significance of the history that is recorded in the physical environment.
Holgrave, responding to Uncle Venner’s comments about Alice’s Posies, says, “‘I have
heard . . . that the water of Maule’s well suits those flowers best’” (Hawthorne, CE 2:
288). That these remarks are part of the three short paragraphs on Alice’s Posies in the
chapter named after them serves to highlight Holgrave’s methods and the natural
processes from which he draws. The persistent growth of these posies show how
something beautiful can emerge from great tragedy, and Holgrave, attuned to the
ancestral misfortune recorded in the well’s foul water, would use it to further the beauty
of those flowers.

Holgrave’s transformative environmentalism does not preclude the potential for
lasting good. Just as Colonel Pyncheon’s evil persists, so can the natural signs of
benevolent cultivation. Elsewhere in the chapter “Alice’s Posies,” the Pyncheon home’s
surroundings all but glow with benevolent warmth:

So little faith is due to external appearance, that there was really an
inviting aspect over the venerable edifice, conveying an idea that its
history must be a decorous and happy one, and such as would be delightful
for a fireside tale. Its windows gleamed cheerfully in the slanting sunlight.
The lines and tufts of green moss, here and there, seemed pledges of
familiarity and sisterhood with Nature; as if this human dwelling-place,
being of such old date, had established its prescriptive title among
primeval oaks and whatever other objects, by virtue of their long continuance, have acquired a gracious right to be (Hawthorne, CE 2: 285).

This passage highlights an idea that is implicit in the outdoor gatherings among Phoebe, Clifford, Uncle Venner, and Holgrave. By aligning with natural processes and earning “pledges of familiarity and sisterhood with Nature,” characters can overcome others’ doubts about their identity to secure “a gracious right to be.” Equally important for Holgrave’s progress toward domestic manhood, this passage describes the space of the home as a product of nature.

Much of the “inviting aspect” of the above passage comes from it closely following the demise of Judge Pyncheon, but in having “[s]o little faith” in the misleading appearance of the home’s “decorous and happy” history, Hawthorne undercuts nature’s function in authenticating and legitimizing the surviving members of the Pyncheon family (CE 2: 285). The pleasant aspect of the house does not come from its history and “long continuance,” but these images are not meaningless. This moment fulfills the promise of the garden’s “black, rich soil . . . fed . . . with the decay of a long period of time,” and whereas Holgrave’s and Phoebe’s labor in the garden transforms the garden’s “symbolic . . . transmitted vices of society” into verdant beauty, their partnership at the end of the narrative converts the moral (and physical) decay of men like Judge Pyncheon into a renewed and virtuous domesticity (86). Finding the truth within these images requires an ability to read these natural signs alongside the history that they appear to represent. Hawthorne does not make an easy correlation between the physical environment and the state of his characters, and one needs a more complete
knowledge than appearance not only to read this bright sunshine as a symbol of the future but also to transform the land in a specific way to create such sunny prospects.

A pivotal late afternoon meeting between Phoebe and Holgrave shows how the young couple has grown as a result of their care and maintenance of the garden. Holgrave enthuses “‘that I never watched the coming of so beautiful an eve, and never felt anything so very much like happiness as at this moment,’” and Phoebe gains the more vigorous and discerning perspective that Downing associates with appreciation for shadowy, picturesque scenes (Hawthorne, CE 2: 213-214): “I have been happier than I am now[,] . . . said Phoebe thoughtfully. ‘Yet I am sensible of a great charm in this brightening moonlight; and I love to watch how the day, tired as it is, lags away reluctantly . . . I never cared so much about moonlight before. What is there, I wonder, so beautiful in it, to-night?’” (214). Holgrave and Phoebe’s changed appreciation for their exterior surroundings is inextricably linked to their personal development and their future domestic life. Phoebe finds new beauty in the moonlight because her view of this environment has grown in tandem with her compassion for the members of her newfound home.

Equally transformed by the dusky garden scene, Holgrave finds a warmer, more youthful sensibility that “he sometimes forgot, thrust so early, as he had been, into the rude struggle of man with man” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 213). Phoebe remarks that she has grown “[o]lder, and, I hope, wiser, and—not exactly sadder—but, certainly, with not half so much lightness in my spirits’” (214). Though my reading focuses on its relevance for Holgrave’s manhood, the Pyncheon-garden is a place where both men and women can cultivate ways of thinking and feeling that cross the gendered lines of traditional
domestic ideology. This internal development takes place within other environments and involves more than these two characters, but by using the Pyncheon garden as the site of a domestic development less restricted by established gender norms, Hawthorne opens up an ideological and physical space for masculine domesticity.

The book ends rather abruptly, and its characters are slightly disconnected from the actions that lead to their beneficial circumstance in the final chapters. Among those critics questioning a conclusion that, in F. O. Matthiessen’s words, “has satisfied very few,” Michael Gilmore views the ending as an expression of Hawthorne’s desire to please his audience coupled with “his misgivings that in bowing to the marketplace he was compromising his artistic independence and integrity” (Matthiessen 331, Gilmore 97). Part of my analysis looks to explain how this ending works within the domestic logic that Hawthorne establishes earlier in the text. One rather broad explanation for the narrator’s shifting attention from the titular house is that Hawthorne is modeling Holgrave and Phoebe’s marriage as a successful domestic ideal, and their hopeful future works as a reward for the domestic partnership these two characters built throughout the novel. While some critics call attention to the darker aspects of this ending, I would like to treat this as a sunnier conclusion and examine the reason why Holgrave and Phoebe can be said to have earned this happiness.

The characters’ planned relocation, from the house of seven gables to the late Judge Pyncheon’s wealthy estate, is a similarly strange aspect of the end of The House of the Seven Gables. Hepzibah and Clifford, along with Phoebe, Holgrave, and Uncle Venner, choose to abandon the house that they have zealously guarded throughout the book, and neither characters nor narrator mention the possibility of renovating the house
or rejuvenating the place in a way that parallels the scenes of home-like regrowth within the garden. Compounding the strange yet fortuitous events at the close of the romance—Judge Pyncheon suddenly dies, Judge Pyncheon’s son and heir dies, and Clifford is quickly found innocent of the crime for which he had been imprisoned—the Pyncheons, Maules, and Uncle Venner decide to leave the house of seven gables and live out their lives in the late Judge’s country estate. Along with serving as the title of Hawthorne’s romance, the house of seven gables receives a great deal of narrative attention, and with the efforts of Phoebe and Holgrave, is slowly brightened and rehabilitated throughout the course of the romance. Given these positive efforts at improving the house, the characters’ exodus to a wholly undescribed country estate seems more like abandonment than a substantive resolution of the problems and guilt associated with the generations-old Pyncheon home. Again, Downing’s ideas on tasteful domestic life can explain this abrupt movement. At the beginning of Hawthorne’s romance, Colonel Pyncheon desires and appropriates Matthew Maule’s land because of its freshwater spring and its desirable location. The springwater grows foul and poisonous once Colonel Pyncheon builds his house, but the Colonel does not move away. In the time of Colonel Pyncheon and Matthew Maule, the house of seven gables, according to an anachronistic antebellum valuation of suburban real estate, was in a far more aesthetic and socially appropriate location.

Citing the how a single geographic location can evoke a sense of place that differs for each person, Buell concludes, “‘Place,’ then, is a configuration of highly flexible subjective, social, and material dimensions, not reducible to any of these” (Buell, *Endangered* 60). Hawthorne’s romance describes the place of the house of seven gables
from a perspective much different than its long line of aristocratic residents. Given the ease with which the house and garden are abandoned in favor of Judge Pyncheon’s estate, Hawthorne aligns himself with a sense of place that emerged as a reaction to urban environments: “There is nothing radically new about the desire to affirm place against place-eroding historical forces. In the early industrial era it made sense for romantic idealization of country village life to begin in cities” (Buell, Endangered 58). Downing references these forces in his Treatise on Landscape Gardening: “But in the older states, as wealth has accumulated, the country become more populous, and society more fixed in its character, a return to . . . country life and rural pursuits, is witnessed on every side. And to this innate feeling . . . we must look for a counterpoise to the great tendency towards constant change . . . [which is] opposed to social and domestic happiness” (viii).

For young men living in the city, the “place” of the suburbs represented an idealized opportunity for social advancement as well as a physical alternative to increasingly populated urban life. D’Amore, noting Hawthorne’s desire for “domestic comforts” without the burden of “familial obligations,” sees Hawthorne’s depictions of suburbia in The Blithedale Romance as “the perfect setting for a meditation on bourgeois evasiveness” (“Suburban Romance” 173). The suburban character of Pyncheon Lane is fading by the end of The House of the Seven Gables, and like the morally purified inheritance from the late Judge Jaffery, the Pyncheons’ future estate promises wealth and social status without the responsibilities or past exploitation related to their attainment.

Try as they might, Phoebe and Holgrave cannot do enough gardening and housekeeping to change the fact that, in the hundred-plus years that have passed since Colonel Pyncheon lived there, the house of the seven gables is no longer in the suburbs:
“The street in which it upreared its venerable peaks has long ceased to be a fashionable quarter of the town; so that, though the old edifice was surrounded by habitations of modern date, they were mostly small, built entirely of wood, and typical of the most plodding uniformity of common life” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 26-27). In the logic of Hawthorne’s romance, moving away from the house does not mean abandoning family history. By inhabiting a more suburban setting, Phoebe and Holgrave elevate their social standing above the “common life” now associated with the neighborhood of the house of seven gables, and this physical distance allows them to passively separate themselves and their family from contamination by contact with lower classes or racial others while maintaining the appearance of an inviting home.

The end of Hawthorne’s tale is best understood as the socially-elevating reward for proper domesticity. Because Holgrave and Phoebe have so wonderfully improved the physical and social environment of the house of seven gables, they are granted distance from the lower-class encroachments on the former Pyncheon home. Anthony shows how Hawthorne’s romance constructs its ideal middle-class manhood in relation to racial otherness, defining successful white masculinity against a black or non-white male figure who is racially tainted by too much contact with the everyday transactions of the world of commerce (182). Similarly, Amy Kaplan explains how antebellum domestic ideology established a unified, national concept of the home “by making black people, both free and enslaved, foreign to the domestic nation and denying them a home within America’s expanding borders” (194). By separating themselves from increasingly dense, urban spaces and their relation to commerce, the remaining Pyncheons and Maules follow the same processes that Kaplan and Anthony identify. The new home of the Maules and
Pyncheons is as much an escape from the past as an escape into a more tasteful and distinguished suburban location.

The development and conclusion of Hawthorne’s romance perform a similar function as Downing’s vision of rural gentility, using Phoebe’s virtue to “domesticate the relation between persons and their properties, securing to the Pyncheons their family estate without the [moral] liabilities formerly attached to it” (Brown, “Woman’s Property” 108). There is an intrinsic goodness, then, in working with the natural environment around one’s home, but this purifying horticultural exercise cannot be adequately realized in a city home that lacks the physical space required for landscape gardening. Amy Schrager Lang finds a similar logic—promises of morally untainted social and financial success overlook the wealth required for their realization—in Holgrave’s rapid philosophical reversal near the end of Hawthorne’s narrative: “[T]he desire to ‘plant a family,’ to found a dynastic house, is not, as it turns out, peculiar to the Pyncheons but to the wealthy . . . [, and Holgrave’s] conservatism . . . is . . . a luxury of class” (Lang 41). I would add to Lang’s argument here by emphasizing how Holgrave’s work in the garden prepares him for his conservative shift. Ultimately, without Hepzibah’s invitation into the Pyncheon home, Holgrave would not have the home or garden that he uses to prove he belongs in the home and the garden. Hawthorne works to universalize middle-class domestic life by framing it as an environmentally-endorsed alternative to aristocratic decay, but the hopeful pairing of Holgrave and Phoebe depends on the previous wealth and status of the Pyncheon family. Hawthorne’s romantic Pyncheon-garden may be able to purify the intentions of Holgrave and allow him an entry into middle-class domesticity, but it cannot escape the economic realities upon which middle-class domesticity is based.
While the paradox and promise of suburban domestic life helps to explain the final moments of Hawthorne’s romance, for most of the book, the Pyncheon-garden is the central place of harmonious resolution. Aided by a romantic discourse invested in an idealistic sense of natural renewal, Hawthorne uses the garden to argue for a masculine presence within the qualities, spaces, and labors of antebellum middle-class domestic ideology. Although the gardens in *The House of Seven Gables* and “Mosses from an Old Manse” preserve enough masculine industry and white, middle-class domesticity to work against Rita Bode’s description of the Pyncheon-garden as a vision of “a non-hierarchical human community that transcends gender and class distinctions,” these home-like, natural spaces are a significant aspect of Hawthorne’s writing and an important attempt to broaden the acceptable forms of masculinity to better contribute to life inside the home (42).

William Gilmore Simms was an incredibly prolific and vigorous spokesman for the American South in the decades before the Civil War. He was a poet, author, editor, lecturer, historian, geographer, and Southern planter whose range and energy were united by his interest and support of the American South and its way of life. While Simms is perhaps most readily associated with his early frontier romance The Yemassee, Simms’s longest and most sustained depiction of Southern culture can be found in his Revolutionary War romances, a series of eight books written over a span of roughly forty years. For an author deeply concerned with American identity in general and Southern identity in particular, these texts provide an opportunity to explore the complicated values and influences that underlie the character of an individual and a community in the American South. Simms’s is a Southern perspective of the Revolutionary War, and the battles in these books, which are fought for the home as much as they are fought in and around it, reveal as much about Simms’s sense of Southern social life as they do about the landscape of the South. My own work examines the first and one of the last of these Revolutionary War romances, The Partisan: A Romance of the Revolution and Woodcraft; or, Hawks about the Dovecote respectively, with a central focus on Simms’s attempts to
create a domestic male identity without sacrificing elements of traditional Southern masculinity or upsetting the gendered order and ideology of life at home.

Simms’s social vision is a vision of the home, a sense of belonging to a specific place and prioritizing the relationships with the people and local environments within and around one’s living space. Although Simms’s understanding of domestic values is broad enough to shape his understanding of the progress of nations in works like “The Social Principle,” his ideal form of domesticity is one in which the leisure, refined education, and social opportunities of white, upper-class plantation owners are necessary elements. My project examines how Simms articulates his views of manhood and the natural environment within his overarching framework of domesticity. Indeed, Simms’s masculine ideal is inseparable from domestic ideology, and his ideal man is one who exists within the rhetorical space of the home. To articulate this ideal, Simms finds a conservative, non-disruptive way to reconcile two distinct forms of southern masculinity under the rubric of the home: a facile, effeminate manhood driven by excessive interest in comfortable living, and a brusque, uncultured male figure whose aggression and indifference to others disrupt domestic order. In *The Partisan* and *Woodcraft*, Simms balances these different masculine forms by depicting a natural environment that beneficially responds to a male figure who uses hardy discipline and measured aggression to secure and preserve his domestic vision. My later analysis will show that for Simms, successful masculinity, in both the battlefield and within the home, springs from a domestic attachment to a specific environment.

Annette Kolodny’s seminal *The Lay of the Land* offers a persuasive and long-standing reading of the essential feminine character of the natural environments that
Simms depicts in his Revolutionary War romances, but I argue that understanding these places as domestic rather than feminine allows for a more effective reading of Simms’s use of spaces such as the swamp to reconcile the conflicts between masculinity and southern domestic life. The successful male characters in Simms’s swamps are both domestic and manly. They foster a generous and emotionally supportive sense of community whose members easily supply the food, shelter, and physical comforts of home, and they possess the strength and energy required to defend the home. However, as I will explain later in my analysis, the overly domestic Southern gentleman risks facile, emasculating indecision if he is too closely bound to the space of the household.

Likewise, an overtly violent and brusque demeanor similarly undermines his status as a gentle male when inside the walls of the home. By sending his male heroes—his white, aristocratic male heroes—into the swamp, Simms hardens and disciplines their gentleness through rough contact with the landscape. In these environments, men preserve their identification with the home and have greater liberty to use their strength to protect against violent, un-domestic individuals. Even in their most savage moments, Simms’s male heroes do not look to conquer a feminine, other-ized landscape as much as they seek to preserve a familiar one with which they identify.

In *The Partisan* and in *Woodcraft*, Simms depicts a swamp environment that readily inspires poetic allusions and carefree living as much as it demands a level of activity and self-mastery that can respond to the physical and human forces that threaten this pleasant, homelike environment. Simms’s depiction of these South Carolina wetlands is a remarkable example of his vision of an expanded sense of Southern domesticity.

With the exception of William Bartram, whose *Travels* Simms both read and used as
poetic inspiration, it is rare to find a major work of antebellum fiction, let alone a series of texts, that finds so much peace, comfort, and beauty in the shadows of a swamp (Simms, *Selected Poems* 116-125, 356-357). In *The Partisan*, these wetlands provide an American Whig militia with comfortable shelter from thunderstorms and inclement weather, a secure hiding place from British soldiers, and a ready source of food in the form of local wildlife that all but climbs into the cooking pot without any effort from the men.

In *Woodcraft*, the Revolutionary War has only recently ended, and the swamp takes on a different function as a space for men to exercise discipline and self-control in the absence of military order. In both of these texts, Simms contrasts a more open and romantic conception of these natural environments with a constraining and precarious life for men in traditional domestic interiors. Whether it is the British-occupied village of Dorchester in *The Partisan* or the protagonist's mortgaged estate in *Woodcraft*, the men in these texts must first go into the swamp to reclaim their homes and their place within the home. Just as Simms’s ideal home is a home for certain kinds of people, Simms’s swamps are places where the white male planter can best establish his manhood, with other men, women, and races as secondary concerns.

Beyond the scholarship on the prominence and influence of domesticity within Simms’s writing, it is useful to provide a brief definition of the elements of domesticity that Simms details in *The Partisan* and *Woodcraft*. In “The Social Principle,” an 1842 speech delivered to an academic society at the University of Alabama, Simms points to several values, beginning with “security for [man’s] possessions and his life” and including comfort, a sense of liberty tempered by the “recognition of those social laws by
which he is governed,” and a less disruptive “moral process of accumulation” in which the progress and “superior refinement” of an individual home “provokes the emulation of his neighbor” to bring about change without completely disrupting existing institutions (9, 11, 15-16). Simms’s sense of home is guided by positive connections between people, but unlike the circumscribed domesticity found in Hawthorne’s *The House of the Seven Gables*, Simms envisions the home as the seat of an open sense of social order that extends to the surrounding community. His home is refined and pleasant, with an enduring stability guided by families’ interest in preserving the social customs that sustain it and satisfying the needs of the people within it.

The natural environment is an equally important part of Simms’s domestic vision, and an interest in the permanence of the home means a “proper cultivation of the soil[,] . . . [not] in extorting by violence from its bosom, seed and stalk, alike, of the wealth it contained” (Simms, “Social Principle” 42). Simms praises an “industry of habit” that is required to maintain the home rather than a work ethic that is interested in wealth for its own sake (52). In *Woodcraft*, Simms writes that “the home is defined by the hopes it generates,” and these are hopes that proceed as much from the environment as from the “faith in one another” that connects the members of a home and a community (*Woodcraft* 197, “Social Principle” 52). In *Woodcraft* and *The Partisan*, Simms claims responsibility and generosity as important features of male domestic identity. In his vision of the home, male strength, self-mastery, and discipline complement domestic interests that he associates with femininity. In both of these works, nowhere is this combination of masculine and domestic qualities stronger than in the swamp.
Simms’s Southern Revolutionary War is guided by a sense of the nation that emerges from local attachments that begin at home. In *The Partisan* and *Woodcraft*, this sense of the home is as much a household as it is the natural environment around it. *The Partisan* is the first book written in Simms’s series of Revolutionary War romances, and of this series, it is the second-earliest in terms of the time period that Simms depicts. *Woodcraft* was written more than a decade after *The Partisan* and is the last of Simms’s series in terms of its fictional chronology. Their time of authorship and their place in the series help to illustrate the scope of Simms’s social vision, but I have selected these two texts for the way in which they address and develop the same ideas about manhood, the home, and the natural environment. A short outline of these two texts will help to emphasize how they relate to each other, with particular attention to the three concerns I have just identified.

*The Partisan* is a story about defending the homeland. It begins in 1780 in the British-occupied village of Dorchester, South Carolina and the swampy cypress groves that surround it, moves briefly to other southern battlefields, and returns to the town in dramatic fashion at the close of the narrative. It starts, as I have mentioned, in Dorchester, with “a tall, well-made youth,” Major Robert Singleton, gathering the information and manpower necessary to establish a local militia (Simms, *Partisan* 15). With the town full of American loyalist Tories as well as British officers and soldiers, Singleton puts his keen perception and charisma to work in recruiting his small fighting force. Once established, Singleton leads his militia into a base camp that both avoids the British threat and is close enough to the town to intercept and harass nearby enemy forces.
Singleton’s militia makes its camp in the middle of the Cypress Swamp. As I will explain in depth later in my analysis, Simms emphasizes the aspects of this environment that promote a friendly sense of community and a sense of security from the natural and human dangers associated with the swamp. Decisive strength and discipline are necessary to combat the threats within the swamp, but these are not the dominant qualities of this place. The Cypress Swamp is best characterized by an open and friendly atmosphere that presents a sharp contrast to the tense early scenes within Dorchester. While Simms does not mention the thick swamp air or dwell on the discomforts of its dense vegetation, the village atmosphere is claustrophobic and uncomfortable. The occupying British soldiers impede on the freedom of the townspeople and limit the kinds of things that the Americans can do or say in the town. By depicting the British officers as both military invaders and overt intruders into the love lives of two militiamen, Simms creates a physically and emotionally threatening environment within the village, such that the swamp becomes a welcome, liberating space with a more fully realized sense of home.

Once Singleton establishes his militia, Simms’s drama moves to a smaller-scale analogy of the domestic disruption within Dorchester. Briefly leaving the camp in the Cypress Swamp, Singleton rides to The Oaks, the wealthy plantation home of his respected uncle, Colonel Walton. This mansion is, in many ways, an ideal domestic environment. Household comforts, family bonds, and the softening, sentimental presence of Singleton’s bed-ridden sister are appealing elements of this home, but the influence of the British has made Walton’s plantation as confining as Dorchester. The motive for Singleton’s visit concerns his uncle’s neutral position toward the British, and with an
admirable show of youthful energy, Singleton moves Colonel Walton to more fully oppose the British and, eventually, to join the revolutionary army in battle.

After Singleton’s visit to The Oaks, Simms takes time to present the members of the militia and the challenges these men face in the Cypress Swamp. The less genteel John Davis, who vies with a British officer for the affections of an innkeeper’s daughter, joins the more middle-class son of that same innkeeper as well as the youthful Lance Frampton, whose absent father creates an opportunity for Singleton to illustrate his paternal character. Notable among this group of American soldier-homemakers is the rotund and gregarious Porgy, a formerly wealthy aristocrat whose inviting warmth and culinary expertise, aided in no small part by his slave, Tom, is an indispensable part of the domestic comforts of this place. It is important to note that, much like Hawthorne does in *The House of the Seven Gables*, Simms does not revise traditional views of domestic life as much as he extends it into an environment more amenable to his masculine ideal. The homelike character of the swamp fosters domestic attachments alongside the hardihood and controlled aggression of more traditional forms of masculinity. Significantly, Simms’s shadowy cypress groves just as easily hide those Americans who, through their loyalty to the British or their uninhibited savagery, endanger the militia’s homelike encampment just as much as the overt threat of the British invaders.

The uncontrolled violence of a crazed man who lost his wife to the British is one of these threats in the swamp. This man, the father of the young militiaman Lance Frampton, pursues his wife’s killer and brutally murders him while hidden from the militia’s camp. The maniac’s savagery, though directed at the enemy British, is an object
lesson in the importance of masculine discipline to create a space of domestic security.

The insidious threat of a traitorous American spy also disrupts the orderly encampment.

Ned Blonay, whose bulging eyes earn him the appellation “Goggle” by both the narrator and the militiamen, is the unprincipled traitor moving between the British and American groups. Taking advantage of Singleton’s trust within the swampland militia camp, Goggle is able to evade capture by the revolutionaries and deliver valuable information to the British, which begins a series of events in which the backwoods militia leaves their base camp to join Francis Marion’s troops in a large-scale battle against the British.

Unfortunately, this battle, due in no small part to the American commanding officer’s ignorance of the landscape, is a dismal failure. Among the losses is the patriarch Colonel Walton, who, after being taken prisoner, is to be executed back in Dorchester as a message to the community. Major Singleton and his men return to the village in a dramatic final scene that involves both military and civilians in the rescue of Colonel Walton. The townspeople’s sacrifices against the military threat of the British soldiers draw from a Southern sense of home that accounts for a hierarchy of individuals, with Colonel Walton as a prominent symbol of the orderly society they seek to preserve. As I will explain later in my analysis, this sense of home, aided by the stable presence of the domestic swamp that surrounds their community, is greater than individual attachments to single households. With this in mind, these Dorchester citizens’ ready defense of their community illustrates the proximity between domestic concerns and the more actively masculine aggression involved in its defense.

The hopeful, energetic tone of *The Partisan* has diminished by the start of *Woodcraft*, Simms’s tale of the close of the Revolution. The American revolutionaries
have won the war, but for the protagonist Porgy, the same gregarious gourmand from Singleton’s militia in *The Partisan*, rebuilding and returning home have their own unique difficulties. More so than in his earlier romance, Simms populates *Woodcraft* with a range of different classes, personalities, and motivations. The distinct hierarchy of the novel’s heroes and villains reflects the divided classes of Simms’s social vision.

Moncrieff, a departing British officer, is the criminal leader whose machinations continue in the hands of his underling, the conniving Scottish businessman M’Kewn. M’Kewn, in turn, employs the lower-class American southerner Bostwick, who leads a group of like-minded men to realize in violent confrontation what M’Kewn cannot achieve through legal and bureaucratic channels. The in-fighting and disputes among these men are a sharp contrast to the more harmonious and complementary community that opposes them.

At the top of this orderly neighborhood community, the wealthy widow Eveleigh is the most prominent and notable figure of authority in *Woodcraft*, and Simms’s narrative begins with a threat to her plantation home. At a slightly lower position than the widow is the returning militiaman Captain Porgy, whose ruined plantation is repaired and preserved through Eveleigh’s ingenuity. Porgy’s Millhouse and Eveleigh’s Fordham are overseers, and their cooperation with their superiors and the slaves underneath them is a major element of Simms’s vision of a stable, orderly southern plantation community. Finally, Eveleigh’s son Arthur and a slightly-older Lance Frampton, who accompanies Porgy in his return from the war are at an intermediate social position between the overseer and the head-of-household, and these young men offer the promise of new homes and expanding domestic values near the end of the narrative.
Woodcraft begins with a particularly Southern concern that indicates the importance of slavery in Simms’s conception of the home, even though the narrative includes little sustained depiction of any individual slave. At the start of the text, Widow Eveleigh visits the Charleston office of Moncrieff and M’Kewn. The two men aim to sell the slaves that the British captured during the war, and Eveleigh is negotiating for the return of the slaves that she had previously claimed as her property. When the two men leave Eveleigh in their office to confer amongst themselves, the widow, after deftly examining a pair of pistols “without any of that shuddering feeling which most ladies would exhibit at the contemplation of such implements,” discovers a paper with written records of the men’s crimes (Simms, Woodcraft 10). Eveleigh then covertly takes the paper and successfully negotiates the return of her slaves as well as those of the returning Captain Porgy. Although Moncrieff soon leaves for Britain and no longer poses a threat, M’Kewn’s greed and aspirations towards the wealth and respectability of a southern planter lead him to remain in South Carolina, and unfortunately for Eveleigh, when she, her son, and her overseer are traveling home through the swamp with her returned slaves, they are waylaid and captured by a group of unsavory men hired by M’Kewn to recover the incriminating document Eveleigh stole from the office in Charleston.

Thus begins, in these early moments of the narrative, a series of maneuvers and attacks that constitute the lengthiest approximation of a swampland battle in the entire narrative. While Eveleigh’s teenage son and her overseer escape from their captors, the newly arriving Porgy, Lance Frampton, and Millhouse manage to rescue Eveleigh’s group without suffering any casualties. Bostwick, the ruffian leader of M’Kewn’s backwoods hirelings, knows these swamps well, mostly because he lives as a squatter on
the edge of Eveleigh’s estate. The overseer Fordham, whose guidance of the young
Arthur Eveleigh is a useful example of the kind of disciplined behavior and perceptive
mindset that comprise the titular “woodcraft” needed to succeed in the swamps, works
separately from Porgy’s group to force Bostwick to flee. Eveleigh’s rescuers succeed in
driving off the criminals, but they are unable to prevent Bostwick from recovering the
written proof of M’Kewn’s and Moncrieff’s crimes. Once the skirmish is over, the
woodcraft defined in the context of this early swampland conflict takes a uniquely
domestic turn.

Porgy’s return to his empty, half-ruined plantation, Glen-Eberley, forcefully
establishes the challenges that he faces in rebuilding his household and recreating a sense
of home that comes so easily to him in the earlier moments of The Partisan. In Woodcraft,
Porgy must rely on an all-male group to accomplish this task, without the organizing
purpose of military life and without a wife or female presence more commonly associated
with domestic labor. Compared to his early successful skirmish in the swamp, Porgy’s
attempts to operate his plantation and secure his position as a gentleman planter are all
but impossible. He frets over his social graces in his visits and attempts at wooing the
wealthy widow, he worries about his ability to feed the men in his own household, and he
grows increasingly frustrated at his inability to fend off M’Kewn, who holds the
mortgage for Glen-Eberley and comes to collect on Porgy’s debts near the end of the
narrative.

Porgy survives these precarious circumstances by drawing on a sense of domestic
masculinity and a sense of home and community that is mutually supportive rather than
independently sustained. The widow Eveleigh provides a much needed loan so that Porgy
can plant his crops. Within his own household, Porgy’s slave Tom cooks, cleans, and maintains a sense of domestic order in the household, and Porgy calls upon the dull practicality of his former military subordinate, Sergeant Millhouse, to manage the planting and act as overseer on the plantation. By the end of Simms’s narrative, Porgy does not have a wife, but his plantation home runs smoothly and comfortably for him and the men of his household. While I will expand on Simms’s concept of the home shortly, it should be noted here that the kind of domestic life that Simms articulates is one in which slave and slave-owner are mutually supportive and mutually dependent on each other. Only in rare moments does Simms provide evidence that the black slaves in his fiction exist in any capacity other than to contribute to the physical, emotional, and economic well-being of the head of the household, and it is the domestic authority figure, Porgy in this case, who then distributes the benefits of their labor.

Millhouse’s frugality and farming expertise ensure that Porgy’s plantation is economically successful, and the central conflict, symbolized in part by M’Kewn holding the mortgage to Glen-Eberley, revolves around the questions of how much Porgy deserves his once-ruined home and how much he can live up to his role as a southern planter. Porgy tries to court Widow Eveleigh and also seeks the affections of the humbler, more middle-class widow Mrs. Griffin, but he fails in both endeavors. Likewise, he does not benefit from his farcical attempts to militaristically defend Glen-Eberley against the sheriff’s enforcement of M’Kewn’s deed to the plantation. In the end, Porgy’s troubles are resolved through the collapse of M’Kewn’s and Bostwick’s partnership. Bostwick, who hides the stolen document from M’Kewn and is shipped off to the West Indies for his troubles, eventually relinquishes the paper to Porgy and Eveleigh after a violent
struggle with his former employer. In this case, Porgy’s real strength is not in his ambition to capture respectability through marriage or militarism but in his ability to maintain a stable home and manage the relationships and responsibilities of a southern planter. Porgy’s all-male household does not imply expansion at the narrative’s close, but he survives and creates a stable, albeit finite, sense of southern domestic order.

Both *The Partisan* and *Woodcraft* operate from the assumption that the natural environment, exemplified by the swamp, shapes male identity by balancing domestic values of comfort, security, and shared community with physical aggression, measured discipline, and a ready impulse to take action. Particularly useful for my own analysis, examining these two texts alongside each other helps to highlight a structure and process with which to organize these interconnected qualities and determine the conditions in which, for example, aggression is limited in favor of trust and gentility. In the consistent juxtaposition of the fraught, threatening atmosphere of Dorchester and the romantic, uplifting descriptions of the miasmic and domestic swamps in *The Partisan*, Simms lays the foundation for the kind of expanded, swampland domesticity that he carries into his later romance. *Woodcraft* operates under this same conception of the interconnected home and environment, but its greater focus on the plantation provides a full view of this homelike male identity inside the walls of a home and outside in the swamps that surround it. The different conditions and narrative contexts of these texts show how strong, homelike attachments to local landscapes can lead to a form of masculinity more closely associated with domestic values and can illustrate the role of more traditional manly traits in securing and maintaining the home.
Simms’s sense of Southern (and national) social order is bound together by a specific form of domesticity that shapes his depiction of male identity as well as his depiction of local natural environments. In his Revolutionary War romances, Simms creates a domestic southern swampland, emphasizing its innate comforts and security as well as the conscious generosity and discipline of the men within it. It is important to note that Simms’s fictional environment supports a specific domestic male identity that is limited to the white, upper-class individuals with access to acceptable, cultivated knowledge of the cultural touchstones and forms of etiquette of the social elite. Black slaves, lower class whites, and, to a lesser extent, women figure mainly as the subjects of white upper-class men’s responsibility, and only the wealthiest white women are able to assert some meaningful agency outside the authority of white patriarchs.

Simms’s emphasis on the domestic and local is a major and relevant area of current scholarship on his writing, but critical work on Simms is a wide field of study. Scholars have studied his role as proponent of the South, his persistent concern about the New York literary scene and the Young America movement, and the European influences on his early gothic writing. The group of scholarly work on Simms’s theories of literature and history has shown how he endorsed American works but viewed the nation as a group of distinct regions, relating Simms’s status as an aspiring spokesman for the South to his anxieties over his relative isolation from the literary and financial successes associated with New York publishers and larger Northern audiences. In a similar vein, scholars like David Moltke-Hansen trace the broader influence of Walter Scott in Simms’s view of societal progress through conflict with other groups. Another group of scholars focus on his career as the editor of several periodicals and the kind of literary
values he promoted in that capacity, and still others have looked at Simms’s political life, especially his activities from the late 1830s to the early 1850s, during which he published very little fiction. As an editor, Simms promoted Southern authorship and encouraged a more far-reaching literary presence among southerners, and studies of Simms’s largely unsuccessful political ambitions point to the large body of historical and geographical texts as the product of his abiding interest in the South. In a related area, scholars examining the paternalistic racism that informs Simms’s views of slavery have utilized his many non-fictional essays and lectures as well as the examples in his fiction. While some excuse his defense of slavery as a necessary aspect of his promotion of Southern culture, others show how his views of racial inferiority serve to justify the dominance of white Europeans at the expense of both African slaves and Native Americans.

Particularly useful for my own work, one of the most dominant strains of scholarship on Simms addresses his consistent attempts to understand and, albeit indirectly, to shape the culture social structure of the American South and the identity of Southern men in particular. Many of these studies point to Simms’s persistent critique of an overly individualistic pursuit of monetary gain that he associates with Northern manhood, with some scholars examining how Simms articulates his manhood in the context of Southern domesticity. Another relevant group of critics examines Simms’s environmental concerns, his fidelity to the flora and fauna of the South, and the ways in which these natural features are intertwined with the lives of southerners. In addition to this critical work on the environmental elements in Simms’s writing, I draw upon scholars who cover the issues of manhood, race, and the general views of Southern domestic order that inform his writing.
Simms scholarship has benefited from a number of book-length studies that cover the breadth of his career.\textsuperscript{1,2} Among these, Masahiro Nakamura’s \textit{Visions of Order in William Gilmore Simms} is a thorough study of Simms’s social theory. In this work, Nakamura “empasize[s] his attack on bourgeois individualism and American wandering habit . . . to support [the] claim that he used a mixture of the romance convention and delineation of minute social details for his representation of” Southern society (185). Under this general thesis, Nakamura explains how “Simms’s romantic view of history and nature . . . rests upon this Southern conservative notion of society and order,” in such a way that the beauty inherent in nature’s variety of forms and features is evidence of the pervasiveness and appropriateness of social hierarchy (58, 56). While Nakamura is specifically referencing the claims about race in Simms’s \textit{Slavery in America}, Simms is quite consistent in using the natural landscape to support the ideals of class and gender that shape the hierarchy of home life in \textit{Woodcraft} and \textit{The Partisan}. My later analysis of these two texts will show how the swamp allows un-domestic and overly individualistic lower-class men to fester, corrupt, and consume themselves at the same time that it provides shelter, food, and security to the upper-class men who create and defend a domestic community amongst its muddy cypresses. Simms’s successful swampland manhood uses potentially disruptive elements of violence and aggression, but only in defense against the selfish, immoral men who seek to disturb or destroy the community of Simms’s male heroes. Likewise, Simms’s villains possess the strength and discipline required to take effective action in the physically demanding swamp, but the men who succeed in this environment use discipline to in the service of their domestic attachments. These manly traits allow them to build a secure, protected space of imaginative
contemplation, inviting comfort, and harmonious relationships within a stable domestic hierarchy. As such, Simms’s ideal male figure is able to reconcile potentially damaging elements of aggressive masculinity by only using them in the service of domestic order.

While Simms’s depiction of the environment is most relevant to my own work, it is important to note that Simms does not limit himself to the natural environment to articulate his view of domestic life and of Southern society more generally. Adam Tate, for example, shows how Simms frames his ideas about Southern order and positive change against the instability and unwarranted expansion of Northern entrepreneurs. Simms, writes Tate, was opposed to needless material progress, but he was in favor of the moral improvement seen in “the orderly growth of education, the arts, literature, religion, morality, and better government” (198). For Simms, progress was about the positive improvements that can be achieved by staying in one place and investing in existing social institutions. Tate notes how, within the pervasive social hierarchy that Nakamura mentions above, these different levels of society were not rigid and instead are the result of “free individual[s who] ‘fill . . . [their] proper place’ and thus perform . . . [their] moral duty” (Tate 197). Simms allows for personal freedom and societal change, but within certain limits, which are shaped by his “understanding of racial hierarchy” to exclude black slaves from any kind of social elevation (228). My later analysis of the suppressed agency of slaves in Woodcraft will show how this exclusion covers inconsistencies in his careful depiction of white masculinity in the Southern swamp.

In an article on the growth of Simms’s “coherent and consistent set of ideas about the relationship between literature, a people, and a nation,” Moltke-Hansen examines the impact of the Young America movement, the writings of Sir Walter Scott, and Southern
sectionalism (“Literary Horizons” 1). Partly drawing from Simms’s comments on the Norman-Saxon conflict in Scott’s *Ivanhoe*, Moltke-Hansen points to the idea of “fusion through conquest” as a principle that Simms uses to justify “the historical, political, and cultural importance of separate peoples” as well as the battles and revolutions that “resulted in the emergence of new peoples and nations . . . [and] the submergence of older stocks” (11-12). Moltke-Hansen does not neglect to mention the centrality of the home in Simms’s idea of social development, but this notion of the generative importance of conflict is an important recognition of the role of more aggressive masculinity, in which male leaders are “tutored at home . . . [to] be decisive and visionary, not timid and reactive” (13). The role of the poet stands in for this visionary element and allows southerners “to expand [their] horizons and deepen their attachments” to the places that they call home (19).  

Critics of Simms’s perspectives on issues of place and the natural world constitute a substantial portion of the studies of Simms’s writing and form the largest discrete group of critical work relevant to my own project. Annette Kolodny’s 1972 article on the landscapes in Simms’s revolutionary war romances forms a solid starting point for discussions of the values and meanings embedded in Simms’s fictional environments. In an argument she extends in her seminal *The Lay of the Land*, Kolodny’s article describes Simms’s heroes “defending a realm which, as both plot and vocabulary suggest, they are experiencing as feminine” (“Unchanging Landscape” 48). Referencing the distinct and unchanging areas of wilderness, plantations, and towns in his fiction, Kolodny explains how Simms constructs a stable set of lands that allow the male heroes to make a pastoral movement from civilized homes and villages to a wilder space, “a region whose
landscape, both symbolically and geographically, images a return to a passive, infantile orientation” within a maternal environment that is by turns openly nurturing to others and, in the form of an aggressive and threatening rattlesnake, is defensively protective of its vulnerable femininity (50, 54). The men who enter these landscapes are changed by their experience, especially the generous and amiable Porgy, who “takes on the some of the attributes of that embrace, playing very much a maternal role when providing feasts for his fellows, and also exhibits erratic bursts of anger directed at the other” living things in the swamp (60). Kolodny’s analysis stresses the ways in which this conception of a maternal and generous natural environment limits the potential for progress and social change, and while some later Simms scholars may refute or refine Kolodny’s argument, her work is an important recognition of how Simms’s depictions of non-human environments both shape and are shaped by distinct social values.

Kevin Collins’s 2011 article on the landscapes in Simms’s short story collection The Wigwam and the Cabin uses Kolodny’s work as a point of departure. While acknowledging the inherent volition associated with Kolodny’s account of the landscape acting against those who would damage or destroy it, Collins argues that Simms’s fictional, feminine natural environments have a greater capacity for agency. Citing Simms’s depiction of a hurricane’s destructive force, the entrapping embrace of “an inviting tree trunk,” and a riverside cave that alternately shelters a loving mother and child and imprisons her murderous husband, Collins extends Kolodny’s description of this feminized nature, showing how, beyond a hostile protection against human intrusion, Simms’s natural landscapes actively “favor . . . those who work with and within its laws, who respect its agancy, its values, and its power” (Collins “Nature as Character” 50).
Collins’s work supports my claims about Simms’s domestic swamp as distinct from the mostly passive natural environments that Kolodny sees in Simms’s writing, and my close readings in this chapter will detail the specific male beneficiaries of these active landscapes.

Effectively establishing the romantic character of Simms’s fictional natural environments that informs my analysis in this chapter, Mathew Brennan’s article on Simms’s and William Wordsworth’s poetry covers the opposition between the enervating world of industry and soul-restoring natural environments. In connecting this revitalizing function to a childhood experience, in which “nature becomes teacher and guardian and nurse,” Brennan’s writing touches on many of the same ideas as Kolodny and Collins (Brennan “Simms, Wordsworth” 45). Clearly, this nature is not the harsh testing-ground of masculinity, and the dominant means of experiencing the natural landscapes in Simms’s writing is domestic. Simms’s ability to soften what could easily be an array of repellent wilderness phenomena is a striking feature of his writing, and my own work seeks to answer what an environment like the swamp contributes to the domestic ideology that so effectively tames them. The swamp is not inherently domestic, and as I will explain later, Simms’s strategic depiction of this ecosystem reveals the many connections among his notion of manhood, nature, and the importance of the home.

James Kibler’s analysis of Simms’s poetry supports the romantic idea of natural renewal that Brennan describes in his article, and Kibler is careful to note that Simms’s extensive knowledge of these places is based on both diligent reading and direct experience within these environments (Kibler, “Perceiver and Perceived” 106). Kibler’s analysis grants legitimacy to Simms’s environmental writing. Simms’s fictional
landscapes are far from purely speculative places and are grounded in his extensive experience and study. While Simms makes an effort to depict authentic environments, my work in this chapter will also show how the romantic elements of these places further his specific ideas about masculinity and Southern culture. As Kibler writes in an introduction to a collection of Simms’s poetry, “[n]ature is at once emblem of the spiritual and a mirror of man’s inner being,” and neglecting nature’s spiritual benefits leads to artificiality, meaninglessness, and “the dead shell of the physical” (“Introduction” xviii).

While Kibler does not dwell long on the effects of nature’s spiritual rejuvenation, in separate studies, A. J. Conyers and Ras Michael Brown help to describe this experience beyond a generic uplift of the soul.

Conyers follows the religious implications of Simms’s nature writing and describes “an incarnational sentiment in religion” as a middle ground between the “distanced God” of Calvinism and a Transcendental perspective “at one with nature” (Conyers 85, 86). Conyers, noting how domesticity shapes this incarnational sentiment of “man’s place within nature,” describes how Simms’s natural environments “reflect . . . the beauty and the reason of the hand that works its skill upon her, whether that be the hand of God as creator and master, or the hand of humanity as fellow creature and master” (88). Simms’s swamps and forests offer divine inspiration as well as a variety of distinct, local spaces that humans—specifically, the white, upper-class exemplary male characters I examine in this chapter—can make into a home.

Brown’s work with Simms’s natural landscapes shows how Simms uses narratives of Native American ghosts and local guardian spirits to legitimize the land claims of properly domestic Anglo-Americans, both to justify the disappearance of overly
nomadic American Indians and to exclude the possibility of African slaves’ claims to the
environment. Citing examples examples from Simms’s poetry and fiction, Brown places
these spiritual, haunted narratives into a form of historical mythology in which “Indian
spirits and chiefs give the land to the whites . . . [,] come to love the Anglo newcomers,”
and, through a fictional antagonism between Native Americans and African slaves,
“exclud[e] the latter] entirely from an attachment to the Lowcountry landscape” (42, 45).
Whereas Conyers outlines a more traditionally religious perspective on the environment,
his concept of incarnational theology allows for the presence of the domestic ideology
that drives the mystical elements that Brown describes. Both of them work to sharpen the
broader claims of the spiritual benefits of an attachment to the land: This connection to
the natural world sanctions the continued presence of (white) individuals over the land’s
former inhabitants, and it strengthens their relationship with God and the home. Brown’s
work is particularly relevant to my later discussion of Simms’s treatment of the slave
women in Woodcraft who thrive in the swamp but receive very little attention in the
narrative, even though these women upset Simms’s careful logic about manhood in the
natural environment.

With examples that are particularly relevant to my own work, John Idol writes of
Simms’s dedication to the specific places depicted in The Partisan, tracing Simms’s
research and reading of both traditional historians’ accounts and “the journals, memoirs,
and letters of soldiers” (Idol 17). In addition to the work Simms does in faithfully
recreating The Partisan’s South Carolina setting during the Revolutionary War, Simms
explicitly links knowledge of this terrain to military success and, “most tellingly,” to the
domestic male Porgy, through whose interest in the comforts of the land “we see feel, and
hear, and taste low country terrain” (Idol 15). My later analysis will examine in depth what Idol briefly suggests here in his pairing of military and domestic interests, namely, that manhood emerges from a specific natural environment.

Kevin Collins’s article on Simms’s ideas about the frontier helps to explain the implications of an attachment to a specific place, as Collins highlights the difference between the unstable identities in Simms’s frontier fiction and the stable hierarchies of race and class that Simms depicts in the “works he sets on the settled lowland plantations of Carolina” (Collins, “Earlier Frontier Thesis” 35-36). Likewise, Moltke-Hansen emphasizes “the relationship of the plantation to the frontier or backwoods” as well as how “attachment to home and family” leads to the establishment of “one’s local community as both a place and a society” (“Planation and Frontier” 4, 11). The backwoods is most important because of its association with the home, and viewing and treating these environments domestically places them into the larger fabric of the local community. At the same time, these more distant natural settings allow Simms to imagine a form of domesticity that reflects the rugged aspects of the terrain and the men within it.⁵

Captain Porgy is the central figure of Simms’s refashioned masculinity that I discuss in this chapter. Corinne Dale’s article on Porgy’s domesticity effectively identifies the key features of this form of manhood, chief of which is a gentleman status based on a sense of responsibility associated with “welcoming [others] as his family and inquir[ing] first of all after their needs” as well as “provid[ing] a domestic atmosphere in which the arts can flourish” (55). Citing Porgy’s aims toward comfort over mere practicality, Dale finds that “woodcraft is clearly a domestic skill rather than a practical matter of survival” (56). While Simms’s depiction of Porgy’s domestic woodcraft is a
more notable contribution to masculine ideology, I will argue that Porgy’s woodcraft combines both the domestic and outdoor survivalist senses of the term. For Simms, navigating through the backwoods confers a number of skills, like patience and observation, which are equally useful in working through the tangle of thorny issues inside the household. While Porgy’s character in *Woodcraft* adequately manages this mixture of masculine (military) survival and domestic responsibility, Corrine Dale’s analysis of his exploits earlier in Simms’s series of Revolutionary War romances reveals the potential dangers and limits of this form of manhood.⁶

Porgy’s masculinity is not wholly defined by his ability to create a comfortable space and meet the needs of those under his care, and in my later analysis of Simms’s work, I will explain how his decision to focus on the swamp is in part a tacit acknowledgement of the role of more recognizably masculine traits in his conception of the home. Michael T. Wilson’s analysis of the Native American conflict in Simms’s *The Yemassee* demonstrates how Simms imbues his heroic white southerners with manly discipline through comparison with “the allegedly inherent inability of the Indian brave to master himself” (“Saturnalia” 136). This sense of self-control, writes Molly Boyd, does not lead to “[t]he individual self-absorption of Natty Bumppo” as much as a “southern [American] Adam who dedicates his life, with a sense of noblesse oblige, to the furtherance of his society” (78). This society, of course, is a white one, as Wilson, who also notes how Simms absolves his white heroes from “any accusations of loss of masculine self-control” by depicting their black slaves as the perpetrators of the worst violence against the Indians, signals the importance of race in Simms’s depiction of white Southern manhood and the home life he protects and maintains (“Saturnalia” 138-139).⁷
In *Woodcraft*, and less explicitly in *The Partisan*, Simms’s masters and slaves both need and care for each other in ways that closely follow the values of domestic life, but, as Joseph Kelly notes, the relationship between Porgy and Tom “is more like the husband/wife bond: a symbiotic, unequal relationship that nevertheless implies the permanent dependency of blacks” (65). For all the mutual feelings between master and slave, and, interestingly enough, in a novel that departs from common notions about gender and the home, Simms’s conception of slavery draws from his own well-established model of male domestic authority. While it is difficult to ignore texts as dedicated to Southern plantation society as his 1838 *Slavery in America*, Simms’s ideas in *Woodcraft* are expansive enough to include both praise and scorn for the South he so vigorously champions in his non-fictional writing, allowing for the expanded ideas about the role of manhood and the environment within the home that I examine in this chapter. While many of Simms’s fictional and non-fictional writings on slavery clearly contradict Louis Rubin’s argument that Simms’s views on slavery were less of an “abiding philosophical conviction” than an attempt to court a larger readership in the South, the forthright criticism that Watson and Bakker see in *Woodcraft* is a strong argument in favor of Rubin’s claim that Simms’s literary ambitions supersede his political life (Rubin 97, 67). That being said, Simms’s conception of race and slavery is a critical part of his construction of manhood within the home. Similar to Wilson’s description of white men’s disciplined manhood in *The Yemassee*, I will demonstrate how Simms, in his Revolutionary War romances, credits white men like Porgy and Robert Singleton with a form of genteel, domestic manhood at the expense of black slaves like
Sappho, whose markedly domestic act of nursing the infant Porgy is an unrecognized part of Porgy’s conception of home life. Porgy and Singleton take care of everyone within the places they call home, but, as I will show in more detail later, hierarchies of class and race exclude a number of men from this level of manly responsibility.

Much like Boyd’s description of Simms’s Southern American Adam figure in *The Yemassee*, Renee Dye places *Woodcraft* in the context of an antebellum Southern literature in which, instead of a solitary individual within nature, writers depicted “characters who can come into a full realization of their beings within, not apart from, the confines of a social order . . . according to their race, class, and gender” (191). By a system of paired characters that cut across class, gender, and moral alignment, Simms shows the failure of a (Northern) social order based on a zero-sum game of “personal greed . . . and political expediency” and praises the “intimate and organic” relationship seen in Porgy’s and his men’s mutual dependency and in Porgy’s ability to make sacrifices “in the interest of the greater good of the social whole” (194-195, 198). Tellingly, especially given Simms’s vocal opposition to a capitalist, utilitarian system dominated by greed, much of Porgy’s sacrifice takes the form of his acquiescence to the practical, more business-minded authority of his overseer, Millhouse (201). On its own, Millhouse’s gross utilitarianism may descend into a callous disregard for the welfare of others. Under Porgy’s guidance and within Simms’s concept of an organic, mutually reciprocal Southern social order, Millhouse’s capitalistic energies are transformed into Southern generosity, and Porgy’s household has a secure financial foundation. My following readings of Simms’s fiction alongside his nonfictional work like “The Social
Principle” will show how this organic social order flows from his specific vision of the Southern home.

As shown above, scholarship on Simms’s writing ably covers the key features of Simms’s ideal home and the role of men within it. Likewise, scholarship on Simms’s depiction of the natural environment has shown its relevance and its relationship to the home. However, no scholar yet has explained the essential connection between Simms’s domestic male and the natural environments that he inhabits, especially the ways in which these outdoor places encourage a mixture of traits not present in Simms’s vision of the home. In addition to providing a full account of the values associated with Simms’s domestic natural environment, I intend to illustrate how Simms’s ideal manhood is formed by a combination of manly discipline, aggression, and upper-class domestic values that can only be fully achieved within the environment of the swamp.

As the first of Simms’s Revolutionary War romances, The Partisan establishes much of the social and domestic order that governs his treatment of manhood and the environment, but there is far more focus on the contributions of traditional Southern masculinity. His manly ideal, Robert Singleton, is a far more disciplined and energetic character than Porgy is in Woodcraft. Unlike Porgy’s inviting plantation in that later text, the built environments and household interiors in The Partisan are marked by the confining threat of British occupation. Not only are these swamps free from the stifling presence of British officers, they are free from the more restrictive domesticity inside the walls of the home. Simms claims responsibility, generosity, and an interest in the pleasant charms of home as important features of male domestic identity, and Simms complements these softer qualities with an emphasis on the strength, self-mastery, and
energy necessary to his vision of home. As I have noted, nowhere is this combination of traditionally masculine and domestic qualities stronger than in the swamp.

Many of The Partisan’s most violent scenes occur in the wetlands around Dorchester, but the real power of this environment is its ability to bring the heroic militiamen together against their British enemies by fostering a shared sense of home. Simms suggests the benefits of domestic ideology in his portrayal of heartfelt scenes like protagonist Major Singleton’s visit with his family at the comfortable estate of his uncle, Colonel Walton, but the value of the home is most explicitly stated and most fervently held as a motivation for the Americans fighting in the Revolution. Simms embeds these soldiers’ thoughts of home into a description of the landscape, writing: “[The grass’s] deep green has been dyed with a yet deeper and darker stain—the outpourings of the invaders veins, mingling with the generous streams flowing from bosoms that had but one hope . . . the unpolluted freedom and security of home . . . the sweet repose of the domestic hearth from the intrusion of hostile feet” (Simms, Partisan 202). If, as Masahiro Nakamura writes, “Simms focuses his attention on the antagonism and collision between the anti-British Whigs and pro-British Tories rather than on the clash between the American and British forces,” Simms appeal to Americans’ domestic attachments works to sharpen this internal division (Nakamura 76). Both Tories and Whigs call the same place home, but to differentiate these two groups, Simms relies on domesticity’s ability, as described by Amy Kaplan, “to create a home by rendering prior inhabitants alien and undomesticated and by implicitly nativizing newcomers” (Kaplan 193). Simms characterizes the successful Whig men as those best able to expand domestic values into local natural spaces.
Yet, Singleton and his men do not tend to fenced-in gardens or lawns. Their home is in the swamp. Simms creates a cozy atmosphere from a cloying, humid bog, but without men’s domestic sense of intimacy, he would not be able to convey the comfort and security of this place, where “[t]he boisterous laugh, the angry, sharp retort, the ready song from some sturdy bacchanal, and the silent sleeper undisturbed amid all the uproar, made, of themselves, a picture to the mind not likely to be soon forgotten” (62). Simms’s description of the militia’s camp within the Cypress Swamp, of which this passage is just a small part, forms the central image of the home that these men make in the swamp.

The most dramatic scene of Simms’s book relies on a sense of home apart from the household in order to preserve local identity. At the end of the narrative, the distinguished patriarch Colonel Walton is to be hanged by the British just outside the home village of the American militiamen, and the American soldiers work to rescue their Colonel. The rescue plan calls for “‘[s]omething to make a noise and a confusion’” amongst the villagers showing up for the hanging, and an elderly tavern keeper “whispers a single sentence” in the militia leader’s ear (443). Simms does not reveal the militia’s plans before they are put into action, and on the day of the execution, “[a]nother and another body of flame, in different directions, and the now distinguished cry from the villagers, announced [the village] to be on fire” (454). Most importantly, the old tavern keeper, “with the feeling of a true patriot,” selects “his own dwelling . . . [as] the very first for destruction” (454-455). The men save the Colonel by burning down their houses. This tactical decision relies on the domestic attachments of the villagers watching the spectacle, such that, “[t]he crowd—each individual only thinking of his family and household goods—broke on every side through the guard clustering around the prisoner;
heedless of the resistance which they offered, and all unconscious of the present danger” (454). Simms works towards a larger conception of the home here, one that supersedes the “individual” buildings and families of these villagers, but he also recognizes the powerful connection to home life that spurs these unarmed townspeople to so boldly defy the British military seeking to contain them. This moment, and the transformed and transformative domesticity it requires, does not emerge without ample preparation, and in the pages before these final moments, Simms strives to convey a sense of domestic comfort into the local natural space of the swamp.

While the doomed urban spaces in The Partisan are under threat of change or destruction, Simms uses the life and variety of natural spaces to subtly suggest a way to move past the destructive forces in the village. Despite the hopeful qualities of this place, the swamp is not isolated from destruction. Hurricane winds “twist the pine from its place, snapping it as a reed,” but these destructive forces also have their opposite, as “the prostrated trees and shrubs . . . which had survived the storm . . . once more elevated themselves to their former position” (147, 148). While the recovering trees function as indirect signs of renewal, the soldiers make a more direct connection between their own community and the twisted, windblown branches: “How many of these mighty pines were to be prostrated under that approaching tempest! . . . How could Singleton overlook the analogy between the fortune of his family and friends, and that which his imagination depicted as the probable fortune of the forest?” (144). With Simms directly comparing the natural to the military storm, the relief and hope of the surviving forest has a clear influence on the men, evincing a hope for themselves and for the homes they mean to protect.
The swamp works differently for the Tories opposed to the American revolutionaries, and these loyalists’ ambivalent and often reluctant attachment to the wetlands implicitly excludes them from the shared, local home of the Whig militiamen and the Dorchester community. A British officer captures this attitude in his comments on an American Tory’s connection to the place: “‘[T]hou lovest them—thou lovest the wallow and the slough—the thick ooze which the alligator loves, and the dry fern-bank where he makes his nest . . . because thy spirit craves for thee a home like that which they abide in’” (Simms, Partisan 72). The loyalist Tory soldier, Ned Travis, is quite familiar with these surroundings, but they do not mean “home” to him in the same way as they do for the anti-British militia. Even so, Simms does not describe a completely antagonistic relationship with the land here. The Tory soldier admires the “‘pleasant . . . concert the frogs make for thee at sunset,’” but to him it is “‘a dog’s life, this scented swamps for the carrion they had better keep” (72, 71). As Nakamura describes, Simms’s text covers the fight amongst Americans as much if not more than the battles with the British, and scenes like these show how conflicting views on the emerging nation align with conflicting views of the landscape. The swamp may mean “home” to both groups, but Simms contrasts a home of “the wallow and slough” with the more comfortable and secure home that Major Singleton creates with his men. The pro-British Tory and the revolutionary Whig live in the same place, and given the strength of this environmental-domestic attachment—a feeling that forms a substantial part of the revolutionaries’ motivations to fight against the British—such a different relationship with their local environment carries a great deal of ideological weight.
Kibler is part of a group of scholars who comment on Simms’s remarkable ecological accuracy in describing not only the features and habitat, but also the local understanding of the natural life, which Kibler links to Simms’s “thorough first-hand experience and personal observation” (“Lowcountry Landscape” 499). Given such close attention to the environment, the aspects of the swamp that Simms chooses to emphasize stand out as particularly evocative of the comforts of home. In their separate works on the swamp in the culture of the American South, David Miller and Anthony Wilson highlight how this environment’s association with immorality, infection, and disorder informed a cultural backdrop in which the swamp was either deliberately ignored or, writes Wilson, “render[ed] . . . as a supernaturally wild place of devils and pestilence” (Miller 80; Wilson, Shadow 8). Apart from naturalist William Bartram’s work decades earlier, Simms is rare as a prominent cultural figure who does not try to denigrate, ignore, or physically transform these southern wetlands and instead depicts their wonderful, comfortable, and homelike features.

While the swamp’s association with “[t]he gloomy painter[’s] . . . wild and mystic imagination” and its features like “the black and stagnant puddle, the slimy ooze, [and] the decayed and prostrate tree” undercut the possibility that Simms’s environment is inherently domestic, Singleton and his men make their own space within the swamp without diminishing the natural environment’s inspiring and spiritually uplifting qualities (Simms, Partisan 61, 227). Conyers explains how Simms’s “incarnational theology,” a spiritual perspective distinct from both the “distanced God” of Calvinism and a Transcendental perspective “at one with nature,” informs a view of the environment that celebrates “the beauty and the reason of the hand that works its skill upon her, whether
that be the hand of God as creator and master, or the hand of humanity as fellow creature and master” (Conyers 85-86, 88). Conyers’s ideas help to account for the undiminished natural beauty of the militia’s camp in the Cypress Swamp, such that Simms ends his initial description of its convivial atmosphere by noting how “the cry of the screech-owl[,] . . . the plaint of the whipporwill, . . . . [and] the croaking of the frogs in millions . . . compel a sense of the solemn-picturesque even in the mind of the habitually frivolous and unthinking” (Simms, Partisan 62). More pointedly, Simms makes the case that the domestic impulses of Singleton’s men constitute the ideal relationship with the natural environment. Like the “volitional nature” that Kevin Collins describes in Simms’s short stories, in The Partisan, the swamp spares these men from a hurricane “laying waste all in its progress,” provides the “epicure” militiaman Porgy with turtles that all but jump into his cooking pot, and, less directly, grants these men a tactical advantage against those who seek to destroy the homes within and around Dorchester (Collins 51; Simms, Partisan 148, 277).

Simms fills these wetlands with a community of “solemn cypresses . . . the verdant freshness of the water-oak—the rough simplicity and height of the pine . . . bound together . . . by the bulging body of the luxuriant grape vine . . . form[ing] a natural roof” (61). These plants exist in a community together, with their physical forms, the vines twisting around oaks and pines, bound together like the walls of a family home. Instead of what Kibler calls “a middleground between effete civilization and totally unchecked savage nature,” The Partisan depicts a natural environment contiguous with the values of families and communities at home (Kibler, “Lowcountry Landscape” 517). These preexisting features of the landscape, so readily amendable to the charms of the
militia’s camp, show how the environment and its male inhabitants work together to make a home.

By promoting community and protecting its residents, the swamp in *The Partisan* mirrors many features and functions of the home, but Simms’s emphasis on the life and variety within the swamp allows room for a distinctly masculine presence within this environment. Given the many easy hiding places for those familiar with this landscape, Simms’s swamp lacks many of societal restrictions of a village like Dorchester. As such, Simms calls upon a specific model of masculine discipline to both regulate potential male violence and to instill a sense of community in this place so far from town. Both Tory and Whig take advantage of swampland freedom, but Simms uses characters like Robert Singleton as a model for a successful manhood that is both disciplined and domestic.

The maniac Frampton, a man consumed by thoughts of revenge against the British soldiers who killed his wife, is the most dramatic example of the potential for unchecked and unjust violence in this place. The scene of this revenge effectively illustrates Simms’s call for masculine discipline. Frampton leads a captured British officer deep into the swamp, and while Frampton is momentarily moved to tears in remembering “many little incidents of domestic occurrence” the memory of his wife’s death produces a “terrific” change, enraging the maniac (*Partisan* 286-287). From here, Simms describes the savage drowning of the British officer Hastings at the hands of Frampton, noting the protests of an “aroused and disappointed partisan” who has arrived too late to prevent the murder (288). At one point, Simms uses the word “executioner” in reference to the vengeful Frampton, but this word choice serves to emphasize the many times in which Frampton is described as an outright “murderer” (287, 288). To secure the
positive, homelike atmosphere of the swamp and counter the savagery associated with Frampton, Simms calls on male discipline.

While self-mastery is crucial for security and order in the wetlands, it is unequally distributed in this place, suggesting that Simms’s ideal manhood is tied to a specific race and social position as much as a shared, domestic community. Michael Wilson’s writing on masculine discipline readily applies to the environments and characters in *The Partisan*. Wilson writes how, in *The Yemassee*, Simms denounces the uncontrolled violence of Indians and black slaves as failures of masculinity (Wilson, “‘Saturnalia’” 139) Even Indian stoicism is inadequately disciplined, writes Wilson, as it “fails to constrain Indian ‘vices’ like revenge and impulsive violence” (“‘Saturnalia’” 136). *The Partisan* contains less commentary on the racial issues of which Wilson writes, but this form of strong, yet controlled manhood is a significant element of Simms’s model for the men in the swamp. Wilson also notes how, in a scene of brutality against the Indians in *The Yemassee*, Simms “displaces the responsibility for the worst violence, implying as it does a failure of masculine control[,] . . . onto black slaves; the whites who benefit from that violence are nonetheless depicted as the controlling voice of reason and civilization” (“‘Saturnalia’” 139). In a similar process, Simms illustrates gradations of violence and self-control along class and racial lines in the wetlands of *The Partisan*.

Alongside the maniac Frampton, Simms finds the traitorous Goggle defined by an unregulated desire for revenge. The middle-class Whig, lieutenant Humphries, references social position, race, and uncontrolled revenge in Goggle’s first description: “‘The blood’s bad that’s in him. His father was a horse-thief, and they do say, a mulatto or an Indian . . . How he lives, and where and by what means he gets his bread, is a secret. He
will not work . . . but the worst is, he fights with a bad heart, and loves to remember injuries” (Simms, Partisan 81). The lower class “countryman” John Davis occupies a slightly higher social position than Goggle and the unhinged Frampton, but he has not completely mastered his desire for revenge. Davis, a member of the anti-British militia, does not actually commit murder, but with “a plan which promised him that satisfaction for his previous injuries at the hands of Sergeant Hastings,” Davis fully intends to participate in violent revenge before the crazed Frampton takes this opportunity for himself (264). Like the white soldiers Wilson examines in The Yemassee, Davis is absolved of responsibility for murder, but Simms does not completely excuse Davis’s vengeful motivations. In an environment that so easily conceals and permits the brutality of Tories and Whigs alike, Simms constructs a male figure, Robert Singleton, whose disciplined swampland masculinity reflects and protects the domestic character of the place.

Initially, it might seem that “the sentimental gourmand, the philosophic Porgy” best reflects the exemplary manhood formed within the civilized and homelike wetlands, but he falls short of Simms’s ideal (Partisan 220). With his culinary skills and inviting presence, the affable Porgy is certainly interested in fostering a pleasant, friendly atmosphere for those in his company, but his selfish interest in his own comfort—he follows his epicurean tastes and hunts for terrapins while Frampton exacts his violent revenge against the British soldier—prevents him from living up to Simms’s standard of manhood (281). Porgy readily appreciates the comforts of the swamp and has little difficulty in such a setting, but he lacks the masculine self-mastery required to maintain order and security within the swamp. In other words, Porgy’s inability to control his own
desires in this environment leaves him unable to maintain its domesticity, illustrating the complementary relationship of these different strains of Simms’s favored male identity. While Porgy better fits Simms’s vision of manhood in *Woodcraft*, in the earlier romance, it is Robert Singleton who, though subject to the occasional “fire of insulted patriotism,” evinces the discipline required to protect the men and homes for which he is responsible without violating the domestic values and “gentleness of manner” that make him “the man to be a leader of southern woodsmen” (219, 308).

Given Simms’s concern with depicting Southern social order, the military’s mixture of hierarchical rank and fraternal community is a significant source of the qualities he associates with successful Southern manhood, qualities that are necessary to combat the persistent potential for disorder in the swamp. Harry Laver explains how men’s confusion and anxiety over the shift from an 18th century “‘republican’ or ‘communal’” sense of manhood, with men as “head[s] of household,” to the more individualistic 19th century form of the self-made man led to a situation in which “white males . . . found in the militia a safe harbor of masculinity . . . that bridged class differences without threatening the hierarchal order” (1-2). R. Don Higginbotham, contesting the dominant narrative of Southern military exceptionalism, writes that “the martial expressions we do encounter came mainly from intellectuals” like Simms, implying that these military references have more to do with the construction of Southern identity than anything else (15). Regardless of the historical existence of a distinct Southern affinity for fighting men, the military offered a model of strength channeled through a clear-cut hierarchy that complemented the role of Southern men in civil society. This is the military order that Simms depicts in his romances of the Revolutionary War.
The texts I examine form an instructive contrast between the earlier more contented, purposeful militia in *The Partisan* and the aimless and anxious former soldiers in *Woodcraft* coping with the end of their careers.

Simms’s masculine ideal does not contradict common historical accounts of Southern masculinity as much as it combines more traditionally masculine elements with the civilizing values of the home. Bertram Wyatt-Brown’s influential study of Southern honor helps to isolate some of the qualities that defined manhood in the antebellum South: “Honor resides in the individual as his understanding of who he is and where he belongs in the ordered ranks of society” (Wyatt-Brown 14). Further, “[t]he determination of men to have power, prestige, and self-esteem and to immortalize these acquisitions through their property was key to the South’s development” (16). Wyatt-Brown’s description, in which mastery and social standing were the central ends and highest priorities for Southern male identity, constitutes a common understanding of Southern manhood, especially for those men in the upper, planter class who owned plantations. William Taylor’s description of the Southern cavalier figure fits most of these qualities and addresses many of the masculine ideals that Simms addresses in his fiction. In its initial usage during the English Civil War, the cavalier defined the more courtly supporters of Charles I who were opposed to the more populist supporters of Parliamentary rule. In the Old South, the cavalier is a “product of benign and salubrious country life” who helps to maintain order through a controlled and “heroic force of character that was required to hold back the restless flood of savagery that threatened to overflow the country” (92, 321). James Cobb’s account of the Southern cavalier balances this “symbol of a bygone era when idealism and respect for tradition had supposedly trumped the lust for money
and material luxuries” with its associations with “naiveté, thriftlessness, and affinity for cards or horses or whisky” (24, 25). Before Simms explores these latter, negative qualities in depth in Woodcraft, he depicts a more praiseworthy Southern cavalier in his first Revolutionary War romance.

In The Partisan, Robert Singleton’s easy confidence and refinement fit the positive qualities of the cavalier, and he is marked as well-bred with his initial description as a “well-made youth, . . . not one to pass unnoticed,” who manages his horse with “ease” and strides into the scene with “unhesitating boldness” (15). Simms establishes Singleton’s controlled strength and bravery early in the narrative, when Singleton issues orders “coolly” and joins with his men’s “flashing sabres” in a successful fight against a troop of enemy Tories (76). Despite his occasional angry outburst and Francis Marion’s comments on Singleton’s “‘feverish impatience which will hurry you into fight’” against the men who have captured Colonel Walton, Singleton’s rare lapses of control do more to highlight the passions he keeps in check as well as the patriotic and domestic concerns that guide his actions (429). Likewise, Singleton’s enthusiasm works against the tendency for a cavalier’s “rigid standards of decorum and a complicated code of honor . . . [to] paralyze . . . him as an effective man of action” (Taylor 92).

Hawthorne’s definition of manhood and the home is premised on the emotional attachments that emerge from an independent man’s economic contributions to the home. Besides the more dramatic difference between Hawthorne’s economic/professional masculinity and Simms’s militaristic manhood, Simms’s masculine ideal begins with a strong connection to the home. The real drama of Simms’s romance is how his successful
male characters employ their masculine energies in the service of these domestic attachments.

In addition to the energizing impulse to defend home, family, and nation, Singleton’s ability to act is tied to the environment where his actions take place. Colonel Walton, safely within the walls of his plantation mansion for the first half of the book, needs Singleton’s urging to break himself out of his indecisive neutrality with the invading British soldiers, but in the “sandy plains and swamps” around the British-won Battle of Camden, Walton rushes to the front line to protect another officer, telling him “I will stand by you to the last” (Simms, *Partisan* 376,428). As Idol explains, “Simms makes it abundantly clear that . . . [General Gates’] faulty knowledge of the place where the troops clashed” led to the Americans’ loss at Camden (Idol 15). Knowledge of the environment is crucially important for the individual success of the men and the larger military success of the revolutionary army in Simms’s romance. By choosing the swamp as the location of these battles, Simms combines the action and immediacy of masculine military conflict with the domestic bonds between that Singleton, Porgy, and the rest of the militia experience in their camp. Gates fails because he lacks tactical knowledge of the terrain and fails to recognize how the southern wetlands reinforce the home attachments that motivate his soldiers. In contrast, Singleton’s knowledge and experience with the varied functions of this landscape are an important part of what makes him into an ideal leader in the text.

Singleton further exemplifies Simms’s masculine vision in his interactions with Lance Frampton, the son of the undisciplined maniac. Responding to Lance’s excitement at being involved in battles where “he could take the life of his own fellow—and good
men would approve,” Singleton takes on a fatherly role and tells Lance that “‘war is a duty only, and should not be made a pleasure’” (Simms, Partisan 344, 346). Significantly, this paternal exchange reminds Singleton “of his sister’s pleadings, and her fine eloquence in defence of humanity, while considering this very subject” (346). Singleton’s sense of discipline comes not through battlefield necessity but by channeling his domestic attachments. The ability to reference and utilize these attachments, however, seems to require a male domestic presence as much as a female one. Lance, Simms writes, “had been the favorite of a mother, gentle to weakness, and fostering him with a degree of sensibility almost hostile to manhood” (347). While Lance’s mother raises him to be a gentle, sensitive boy, Lance’s later inability to regulate his violent desires implies that, in this environment, a stronger paternal figure would have better instilled this sentimental limit to violence. Wyatt-Brown’s account of Southern boyhood and home life includes the “abrupt assertion” of fatherly authority at age four, and this Southern household, in which wives’ “roles had to be played out within the legitimacy of [the patriarch’s] rule,” confers a greater sense of responsibility to men raising children (126, 117). In Simms’s work, the planter patriarch’s ability to care for those underneath him is the most important element of domestic masculinity, whether he is providing for the physical and emotional needs of those within his household, raising his sons, or aiding in the growth of young men in the community.

While Simms uses domestic values as the basis of the militiamen’s meaningful relationship with the swamp, he reinforces the values of disciplined masculinity as a way to protect the environment from external invasion, to guard against a potentially irresponsible interest in the comforts of home, and to combat the disturbing violence that
stems from warped and improper domestic attachments of men like the unhinged Frampton. In a much more heightened way than inside a home, the comfort and protection within these wetlands depend on the strength and discipline of the men within it. Lance needs a father-figure to strengthen his self-control, the swamp needs disciplined men for stable security, and the men need a place where they can experience the feelings of home without violating their manhood. Later, in Woodcraft, Simms moves this swamp-forged manhood into the home with far more mixed results, but The Partisan communicates a clear and consistent message about the power of the home within manly, rugged places and manly, rugged men alike.

Simms’s Woodcraft is an unresolved domestic tragedy. With the lighthearted Porgy as protagonist, conditions never descend into outright gloom, but Porgy’s removal from the forested battlefield and return to his neglected home begin a series of misfortunes for him and the men in his care. While Singleton begins The Partisan with little to detract from his exemplary masculinity, Porgy faces a number of challenges at the beginning of Woodcraft. He has little money, he struggles to find an outlet for his military bent, and he has trouble upholding the rules of polite, genteel society. Unfortunately for Porgy, his pre-war wealth is relatively unconnected with any practical network of family members to which he could appeal for support after the war. Amanda Mushal writes of the financial and social importance of “networks of kinship and friendship,” and Wyatt-Brown calls these family connections “a necessity,” especially among the upper class of plantation owners whose property derives from family inheritance (Mushal 78, Wyatt-Brown 6). Porgy, unfortunately, has neither family nor close friends when he first arrives at his ruined plantation. His network of relationships
branch out primarily from his military experience, and while his military contacts help him resolve some of his problems, they can do little to help him restore his reputation after the war.

Corrine Dale’s analysis of Porgy’s developing domesticity points to how, earlier in Simms’s Revolutionary War series, the character’s unmistakably selfish perspective and “concern for his own comfort . . . better illustrates the hedonism of the aristocrat than his noblesse oblige” (Dale 57). Specifically, Dale points to a strange moment in The Forayers, in which, after Porgy pursues his own sense of domestic comfort in hunting a group of frogs, “[t]he swamps are described in mourning” for the creatures that Porgy has captured for his fellow soldiers’ dinner (58). As Dale notes, the comic tone of this scene cannot completely erase Porgy’s domestic failure. Here, the landscape itself illustrates the importance of a less insular sense of the home that does not sacrifice the environment for the sake of comfort. Porgy’s status as a properly domestic gentleman is based on “his sense of social responsibility,” and the scene in The Forayers shows how this sense of responsibility extends to the land as much as the people of one’s home (55).

Porgy’s development as a domestic gentleman shows how being responsible for the well-being of the home is a collaborative process in which the gentleman incorporates the ideas of others in his home without diminishing his status. As Porgy himself readily admits, he was, before the war, a profligate, dissipated Southern planter, unable to coax much profit or plant-life from his mismanaged farmland (Simms, Woodcraft 101). His lower-class former Sergeant, the one-armed Millhouse, offers a fairly unrelenting barrage of criticism and advice, and it is a mark of Porgy’s patience and generosity that the voluble Millhouse is granted the job of overseer at the plantation (188). Likewise, Porgy
indulges Millhouse as he launches into critiques of Porgy’s impatient farming practices, commonly found “‘preticklarly among you wise people, and gentlemen born,’” and he admonishes Porgy’s desire for the trappings of the planter class, saying, “‘when a man’s wanting flesh for the pot, and meal for the hoe-cake, it’s not reasonable for him to be a sportsman and a gentleman’” (189, 191). Millhouse is an important check on Porgy’s extravagant tastes, and his knowledge of farming is crucial to maintaining the plantation household. Additionally, Millhouse’s frank demeanor presents Porgy with numerous opportunities to demonstrate how he works with the members of his household in an open, appreciative way, rather than an authoritative mode that would diminish the bonds between him and the others in his home. Simms recognizes the need for a productive presence within the home, and he uses characters like Porgy to show how a properly domestic man can incorporate utilitarian elements by welcoming practical-minded people into his home, thereby retaining his aristocratic distance from the pursuit of wealth for its own sake.

While Wyatt-Brown and other scholars point to a form of manhood secured to the larger community through local hierarchies and social networks, Southern and Northern masculinity both responded to the forms of self-made manhood associated with a developing market economy and industrializing nation. Mayfield describes an antebellum South of more fluid masculinities, in which a narrative dominated by honorable, forthright patriarchs and planters contests with an alternative of shrewd, rational discipline, with “business sense” alongside a religious and evangelical element (Counterfeit xvii-xviii). Whether in the militia camps of The Partisan or in the swampy borders Woodcraft’s fictional plantations, Simms uses a combination of male domestic
authority and environmental language to navigate the boundaries between the patriarchal, honorable manhood traditionally associated with the antebellum South, and the more practical, economical manhood of the North. Millhouse’s character shows how Simms finds a place for the industriousness and frugality of self-made manhood while replacing its individualistic and competitive elements with deference and loyalty to the male head of household and to the home in general. Porgy’s relationship with Millhouse is marked by cooperation, not rivalry, and in both The Partisan and in Woodcraft, Simms creates a male identity that inspires other men’s deference and collaboration not through assertive force of character but by attending to their wants and needs.

Porgy may not be the best money manager, but he unites a keen grasp of the hearts and minds of others with a genuine concern for their well-being. Practical to a fault, Millhouse can neither comprehend nor justify Porgy’s generosity. Among his boss’s many sins against fiscal responsibility, Millhouse views Porgy’s gift to an impoverished young girl as the product of “‘a dream . . . of a pile of treasure somewhar,’” and he has no appreciation for the moral or social dimension of the “‘good interest’” that Porgy claims he will get from his charity (Simms, Woodcraft 235). Porgy, of course, has a place for these numerous expenses within his capacious philosophy. Critics have looked at how the contrast between these two men depicts Millhouse’s character as a “gruff, direct” backwoodsman as well as a figure of the utilitarianism of the more capitalistic North, but Millhouse’s shortcomings make him a useful foil for Porgy’s character (Ridgely 429, Watson 86). Through Millhouse’s crudeness and lack of generosity, Simms highlights the perceptive and responsible manhood associated with Porgy and demonstrates how Porgy is aware of the feelings of those in his community and does his best to make everyone
feel at ease. Porgy’s monetary gifts illustrate the value of charity within Simms’s view of domestic manhood, but this male figure must also pay attention to others’ emotional and intellectual well-being in less tangible ways.

Simms’s man at home has an artistic sensibility that informs his view of the household interior as well as the surrounding natural environment. On more than one occasion, Porgy calls attention to the importance of artistic contributions to life at home by noting the objects, individuals, and qualities that provide moral and intellectual benefits. Like Porgy’s charity, Millhouse sees no use for the poet George Dennison in Glen-Eberley, and Porgy’s response uses natural imagery to describe the role of the poet: “‘God appointed to build their nests in the trees that surround a man’s dwelling . . . And they reward man for his protection, by their songs . . . Dennison is one of my song birds . . . He makes music for me which I love. It is soul music which I owe to him’” (Simms, Woodcraft 282-283). Soon after, Porgy compares the similarly impractical Doctor Oakenberg to a “‘reel in a bottle,’” which, while it “‘interested most of the soldiers, . . . was of no sort of value to anybody in the camp’” (285). A poet and a distracted amateur naturalist may not help the plantation’s bottom line, but Porgy is most interested in their potential effect on the morale within his home. Likewise, Porgy’s interest in art and poetry reflects Simms’s vision of the home. For Simms, domestic value is determined by cultivated, imaginative interest rather than material contribution, a notion that unites the qualities of the built household with those of the homelike natural landscape in Simms’s writing.
A broader, more environmentally aware form of domesticity has its own poetic benefits, and, as I will explain in more detail later, the swamp readily lends itself to the artistic sensibilities that Simms describes in his 1855 lecture “Poetry and the Practical”:

Under [the Poet’s] tuition, the Moon hath her moral mysteries also,—not simply to give us light by night, as the Utilitarian . . . would teach,—but to soothe, and harmonize and sweeten; to fling over life a spiritual atmosphere, which is to sink, like dews upon the earth, into the spirit of man, and to attune the soul, with its own music, by means of such influences as sing in the stars and blossom in the breeze. (Poetry 29)

The similarities with Hawthorne’s The House of the Seven Gables are readily apparent, but where Holgrave’s and Phoebe’s moonlit transformation is linked to their growing bonds with those living in the Pyncheon house, Simms highlights poetry’s role in calling attention to the spiritual benefits of the environment. Cultivation, then, is vitally important for one to properly appreciate the beauties of nature and fold them into the atmosphere of the home, and Porgy himself says that “‘schooling and education are meant for this very purpose, to give us an ear for . . . the music of birds as well as men, the music of the soul, as well as of the throat’” (Woodcraft 284). Whether it comes through the poet’s “tuition” or through more substantive institutions, the spiritual, soul-sustaining elements of nature do not automatically manifest themselves to someone within a given environment. This slight variation, though, between the poet-as-educator and the need for more formal education to grasp “‘the musician, whose songs you can’t understand,’” touches on the relevance of class within Simms’s ideas about manhood and the home.
Porgy’s artistic connection to the swamp evokes seemingly universal romantic notions of spiritual uplift, but for a man to fully realize his domestic relationship to a local, natural environment, he needs a poetic sensibility most accessible to the upper-class, which was often difficult to attain for men not born into the planter elite.\textsuperscript{10} Aside from certain examples like Porgy’s suppressed marital ambitions toward Mrs. Eveleigh, Simms does not directly address the class barriers to his ideal manhood in \textit{Woodcraft}. Simms references education’s refining benefits in several of his nonfiction works including “The Social Principle” and “The Philosophy of the Omnibus,” and in “The Good Farmer,” he specifically affirms the promise that “education shall so far lift the laboring and the poor, as to make them superior to the glazing artifices of smooth demagogues and lying prophets” without exploring the possibility that some boys may not have the resources or social networks necessary to realize these benefits (“Good Farmer” 156). Even though he does not address the social barriers to his vision of man and the home, Simms’s novel offers a fairly comprehensive view of the domestic relevance of refinement and education both inside and outside the household.

Fordham and Millhouse, the main audience of Porgy’s comments on schooling and poetry, help to illustrate how different attitudes toward education and art relate to Simms’s ideas about the role of men within the home. Millhouse, while interested in the home, is so strictly utilitarian that he seems incapable of appreciating art, music, or poetry for its own benefits, and for him, no music is sweeter than “‘the music that keeps tune to the money coming in’” (Simms, \textit{Woodcraft} 291). While Millhouse is a valuable member of Porgy’s home, his single-minded practicality, an interest in material gain that forms one half of the dichotomy in Simms’s “Poetry and the Practical,” would disqualify
him from a proper domestic man’s poetic appreciation regardless of his education.

Fordham, on the other hand, is a more interesting case. He shares Millhouse’s lower-class background, but, as he explains to Porgy, when it comes to things like songbirds, “‘I can’t says I ever hears ’em much, onless when somebody tells me to listen’” (283).

Unburdened by Millhouse’s narrow views, Fordham has the potential to cultivate the non-material aspects of the home, but he lacks the education associated with the planter elite. Even so, Fordham’s engagement with the environment showcases a crucial element missing from Porgy’s own domestic sensibility. Fordham’s strong attachment to the swamp, and by extension to the home which this landscape surrounds, is not as meaningful without poetic associations to guide one’s emotions toward its inspiring and divine elements. Porgy has the requisite cultivation, but his artistic sensibilities must expand into the natural environments beyond the immediate vicinity of his home if he is to fully embody Simms’s manly ideal. For Porgy, the poetic perspective that Dennison exemplifies has the effect of maintaining the bonds that unite the men inside his plantation home, but it is Fordham, not Porgy, who best illustrates the domestic potential of the nearby wetlands in *Woodcraft*.

Fordham, though lacking Porgy’s education and family background, does more to create a sense of community in the woods, using his knowledge of the landscape to further his bond with young Arthur Eveleigh. Yes, Fordham teaches Arthur Eveleigh woodcraft with a focus on practical behavior in the swamp rather than the spiritual poetry of these environs, but Fordham’s instruction is motivated by his feelings for the Eveleigh family home. Fordham, who never really notices songbirds because he is never told to listen, is a case of wasted potential. He does not have Millhouse’s dubiousness towards
poetry, but he lacks the cultivated background to know that something is properly poetic. Fordham’s educational shortcomings are all the more tragic given that he evinces the same kind of disciplined and domestic swampland masculinity seen in Robert Singleton’s relationship with Lance Frampton in *The Partisan*.

In the first real adventure of the novel, the brief kidnapping and robbery from which Porgy helps to save the widow and her son, the surrounding wetlands are a crucial element to Fordham’s paternal guidance of young Arthur Eveleigh’s discipline and environmental awareness. Fordham begins by “taking the lead, and following the edge of the road, with a bold stride, yet a vigilant eye to every brush that stirred, as he was, a thorough master of woodcraft” (Simms, *Woodcraft* 68). The relationship between Fordham and Arthur, the widow’s teenaged son, illustrates Fordham’s leadership style and his respect for the young man’s growth and independence. Urging Arthur towards caution above all, Fordham says, “‘I must give you a lesson in woodcraft. We are to see without being seen. . . . Let us round this thick, and git across the road above” (73). Although his earliest advice to Arthur is to exercise forbearance lest “‘we draw a rifle-shot from every bush we pass,’” Fordham’s most conspicuous lesson in woodcraft is to let young Arthur Eveleigh do some things himself (74). Instead of going through the woods himself, Fordham asks Arthur to lead three horses away from the bandits: “‘Ef you don’t like the job, Mr. Arthur, say so, and I’ll do it while you keep watch here; though I’m the better hand. I’m a-thinking, to do the watching part of the business.’” While labeled “woodcraft,” Fordham’s instruction is equally invested in the kinds of measured, decisive action that inform Simms’s views of domestic manhood, and the swamp is unique in encouraging this ability to quickly assess whether or not to act.
Fordham’s backwoods tutelage binds more traditional, aggressive masculinity to a domestic sense of trust and concern. Fordham instructs Arthur in stages, and these instructions are tied to specific actions, such that each of them relies on the other to contribute to their common cause. Fordham trusts Arthur to emerge from their cover and move through the forest and swamp without being detected by their enemies. Fordham’s relationship to Arthur is informed by his subordinate position as the overseer of Arthur’s mother’s plantation, but Fordham’s willingness to involve Arthur, allow for the young man’s independence, and instruct him when necessary, gives his actions the cast of fatherly guidance, especially when Fordham himself could better accomplish some of the things that he gives Arthur the opportunity to try. The swamp is relevant to Simms’s masculine ideals for more reasons than its ability to inspire the imaginations of properly cultivated young men, and these scenes with Fordham and Arthur show how the discipline and energy of traditional masculinity can, in this swampland environment, complement the more traditionally domestic elements of Simms’s manly ideal.

While Simms is far less concerned than Hawthorne is with the conflicts between manly self-possession and domestic culture, he does not neglect the issue entirely. In her essay on the college education of Southern elites, Lorri Glover writes of a relationship between parents and their sons that has a strong resemblance to the interactions between Fordham and Arthur in Woodcraft. The dual meaning of self-mastery is central to the adolescent moment that Simms depicts and Glover takes as the subject of her study. Understanding self-mastery as self-control, “parents stressed restraint of emotions and behaviors,” but, predictably, their adolescent sons drew from a sense of self-mastery as independence, following “[p]arents [who] actively encouraged . . . this pronounced male
commitment to autonomy and superiority” (Glover 34). Given that, for Southern boys more than northerners, “social standing hung on connections and reputation,” parents encouraged their sons to exercise the proper emotional control required to build a reputation as a gentleman of refinement (32). At the same time, “[h]oping to foster independence and to test judgment, parents allowed boys to make many of their own decisions about living arrangements, academic paths, friends, careers, and lifestyles,” a strategy that “[n]ot suprisingly, . . . exacerbated willfulness among sons” (35). With Lance Frampton’s excited aggression in The Partisan as an early parallel to Arthur’s character in Woodcraft, Simms invokes men’s desire for liberated self-definition mostly as a way for his older and more fully developed male characters to show how to best instill proper discipline in the specific context of the southern swamp.

If, as Glover writes, Southern boys were observably more disruptive college students than northerners during the early nineteenth-century, the genteel southerner’s approach to adolescent boyhood encouraged a potentially problematic amount of personal freedom (37). Planter parents both chastened their sons and allowed them to make their own mistakes and triumphs, and Jennifer Green describes a similar concern driving young men’s enrollment in military academies, in which boys preserved their self-determination by internalizing military order, “accepting hierarchy, [and] employing self-discipline” (174). While Simms is largely ambivalent about this balance between discipline and self-determination, he uses the wetlands in The Partisan and Woodcraft as a place where men can best find the limits to self-determined manhood, a place where the features of the landscape reward those men whose ability to take action and exercise control are properly guided by their concern for the home.
Fordham’s approach to Arthur Eveleigh, his lesson in woodcraft, involves both autonomy and emotional control, and Simms situates the education of this adolescent male in an environment with immediate consequences for those unable to balance these opposing conceptions of self-mastery. After Arthur returns from guiding the horses away from the pursuing bandits, Fordham leads him to a “wolf-castle,” a place particularly suited to test a Southern son’s self-mastery, and Arthur has “to crouch almost to four-footed levels, with his feet half the time buried from sight in mud-puddles, while his hands labor incessantly in pushing the thick masses of shrubbery from his eyes” (Simms, Woodcraft 81-82). The physical features of this space, the same mess of bushes that shelters Fordham and Arthur and allows them enough autonomy to continue their campaign against the backwoods criminals, actively test one’s manly fortitude.

While Fordham’s lack of education prevents him from sharing some kind of poetic vision of his surroundings, his adventure with Arthur Eveleigh shows that there is more to domestic engagement with the environment than artistic contemplation. Not only does Fordham help to rescue Arthur’s mother and the slaves within her household, he makes an extra effort to share his knowledge of the environment with Arthur and to encourage the most appropriate way of acting within it. Initially, Arthur “grew monstrously impatient” inside the wolf castle, but after he masters “his eager and restless temperament, . . . squatting and crouching almost to the earth, . . . he could pierce the distance of a few yards along the dark and sinuous beast-paths that ran below—the highways of deer, and bear, of fox, and ‘coon, and ‘possum” (Simms, Woodcraft 82). Once he gains control over his excitement and discomfort, Arthur looks beyond “the one monotonous wilderness of dull, green waste” and gains a new and fuller view of the
natural life around him. Again, Fordham’s woodcraft may not be as spiritually fulfilling as Simms’s more lyrical visions of nature, but the overseer’s lessons in the swamp provide Arthur with the means to appreciate it. This woodcraft is only worthwhile as long as there is an environment in which Arthur can practice it, and Arthur’s bond with Fordham thus extends to the swamps around their home. Additionally, it is worth noting how Simms uses more poetic language of “the dark and sinuous beast-paths” for Arthur’s upper-class perspective and not Fordham’s. The swamp’s artistry and imaginative potential is an important link between the plantation home interior and its surrounding natural environment, but as Arthur here illustrates, a man needs to be able to control himself and take proper action in this environment before he can be fully aware of its beauty.

Simms most fully elaborates on this cultivated mindset through a series of stark contrasts. The villainous Bostwick is the unredeemable, immoral result of a manhood completely severed from the domestic elements of the natural environment. He shares Fordham’s lower-class background but has only the barest shred of concern for his home. In Woodcraft, a secluded meeting with Bostwick and his criminal associates—in some ways the corrupt counterpart to the pleasant swamp idylls of Robert Singleton and his men in The Partisan—shows the dangerous effects of men who use these wetlands selfishly without any concern for their emotionally or spiritually uplifting capacity. Before engaging with this depraved scene, Simms begins an emotionally invested passage describing the particularly magnificent wolf-castle that shields the unsavory gathering:
They were now within the walls of “the castle;” a castle, indeed, of a magnificence such as the works of art, in the hands of man, has never displayed. The bank upon which the tent stood was crowned with aged oaks, that spread themselves out like great green canopies, covering all within their reach, their white beards trailing to the earth, or sweeping in the wind, like those of the Druid Bards, howling their songs of hate and death in the ears of the tyrant Edward, as described in the much undervalued ode of Gray—a production very far superior, in all poetic respects, to the over-lauded elegy of the same writer . . . If the oak is the Druid priest, the ancient patriarch, the Magnolia is the crowned king of the forest . . . which the hands of May would enliven, not enrich, with the purest of her great white flowers. (Woodcraft 239-240)

This is Simms’s most lyrical depiction of the swamp in either Woodcraft or The Partisan, and his description carries with it certain assumptions about the most rewarding means of living within it. With references to “Druid Bards” and Thomas Gray’s poetry, Simms’s description is a concrete example of Porgy’s ideas about education and poetic sensibility. Building on the class signifiers implicit in his choice of language and references, Simms’s swamp evokes the same kind of hierarchy that he uses as the basis of his larger social vision, a harmonious “theory of complementary social duties and responsibilities” that extends into the varied social positions within Porgy’s home (Dye 198). Like the forest walls of Robert Singleton’s camp in The Partisan, these oaks and magnolias work together to create a larger sense of magnificence that is greater than the sum of their parts and is readily available to those men who are willing and able to perceive it. Simms then
moves from this idealized symbol of domestic and environmental harmony to its rank, degraded opposite.

As a precursor to the tense and anxious scene with Bostwick and his associates, the most dramatic effect of Simms’s lovingly constructed landscape is its immediate effect on the unscrupulous criminal:

But the squatter had no eye for these objects. With him, as with most of the ignorant, a tree is a tree only; and in a region that boasts such a wilderness of trees, the most noble is but little valued—is cut down and cast into the fire without remorse on the smallest occasion. Bostwick regarded the natural effects of the spot only with references to their uses for the shelter of the fugitive. (Simms, *Woodcraft* 240)

Bostwick is undignified, unpoetic, and unmindful, if not overtly contemptuous, of the pleasant hierarchies that the environment evokes. Like the contrast between the traitorous, lower-class Goggle and the generous, well-bred Singleton and Porgy in *The Partisan*, in *Woodcraft*, Simms shows the domestic and spiritually uplifting features of the swamp as mostly fully appreciated and utilized by men with the same upper-class perspective that guides his description of druidic oaks and leads to such ready associations of poetic, natural grandeur.

More than simply missing out on a pleasant train of thought in the forest, men without the requisite concern for the artistic, immaterial elements of the home risk falling into heartless individualism, as the alternative to Simms’s ideal is a kind of competitive nightmare of deception and greed. Stepping into the tent of his associates, Bostwick enters an atmosphere that is decidedly absent of warmth and good faith. The tent is not a
home but a hideout, “the shelter of a fugitive” who blocks things out and seeks to conceal rather than openly invite (Woodcraft 240). Instead of poetry or polite conversation such as might be had at the Eveleigh’s plantation, these men drink and gamble to satisfy the “necessity of the race for mental exercise, and for the excitement of the nervous system,” and the men’s poker game serves to characterize the kind of immorality that fills the void where the home should be (241). As Simms elaborates, being primitive or uncivilized does not confer closeness to nature—“what we vulgarly and ignorantly call a state of nature, as if man, who is a born creature of art, ever knew such a condition”—as much as it refers to an inability to channel “the necessity for mental exercise” into socially appropriate pursuits. Simms’s ideal manly figure grows close to nature because of his cultivation, not in spite of it.

Interestingly, Simms writes that Bostwick, “like most of his class . . . had little adroitness” regarding the “the study of one’s moods at play” but tried to compensate by cheating “when not too impertinently watched” (Woodcraft 242). These men are so interested in themselves that they neglect to even consider the emotions of their opponents. Again, contrasting this with the genuine concern and good intentions at the Widow Eveleigh’s dinner, in which Porgy takes great pains to control his own embarrassed feelings and to read the widow’s reaction to Millhouse’s crudity, the selfish spirit of the criminals actually prevents them from a form of “mental exercise” that would be to their benefit. From this gambling scene, to Bostwick’s threats against his superior, M’Kewn, to M’Kewn’s successful plot to have the poker players throw the drunken Bostwick onto a ship bound to the West Indies, these criminals and their superiors share nothing of the harmonious hierarchy of the magnolias and oaks that surround them, and,
as Dye writes, any hierarchy between them “is grounded in mutual distrust, mutual
dislike, personal greed, and political expediency” (194).

While Bostwick’s attitude towards his home and family stops just short of
antipathy, a fact of which Fordham himself informs Porgy, saying, “‘he’s hardly ever
with ’em, and does nothing for ’em when he comes,’” Porgy’s domestic shortcomings are
much subtler (Simms, Woodcraft 209). With Millhouse a cherished part of Glen-Eberley,
Porgy remedies his own admitted impracticality through the bonds of home such that it
can hardly be counted as a mark against the Captain’s domestic manhood. The more
substantial gaps in Captain Porgy’s masculinity are related to his awareness of and level
of engagement with the environment around his home. After his long absence in the war,
Captain Porgy does not know enough about the land around his home, is not as present or
active within the swamps as he is in The Partisan, and does not recognize the local,
natural environment’s greater capacity and need for a masculine presence that has no
place within the walls of his household.

Once Porgy is finished with the pursuit and punishment of Eveleigh’s would-be
captors, Simms deemphasizes Porgy’s presence within the swamp. Porgy returns to Glen-
Eberley and only ventures out to make friendly visits inside other people’s homes. He
may pass through the swamp, for example, to travel to the home of Bostwick’s wife and
children, but he does not linger there and create the kind of rough-edged comforts that he
so enthusiastically pursues in The Partisan. Again, as in Bostwick’s hideout, the absence
of domestic values in the swamp creates an opportunity for exploitation and corruption. If,
as Stephen Berry and Joan Cashin write, the Southern household did not drastically
deviate from the North in assigning most of the daily labor to women, then men would
certainly have the opportunity to engage in things like hunting, fishing, and relaxing by the fire, and Porgy’s (and Simms’s) insistence on the value of impractical domestic comforts easily lends itself to these leisurely pursuits (Berry 104, Cashin 26). Porgy seems to take an early interest in hunting, with Millhouse refusing his Captain’s request for a pointer dog in favor of a beagle, but Simms neglects to depict Porgy acting upon these early desires within the narrative (Simms, Woodcraft 191). The swamp is vividly present in Woodcraft, but Porgy does little to take advantage of its masculine and domestic benefits. The conniving M’Kewn steps into this vacancy with ease, destroying what could have been a substantial opportunity for Porgy to cultivate a more refined version of Fordham’s fatherly relationship with Arthur Eveleigh.

To underscore this missed opportunity, Simms prefaces M’Kewn’s disruptive wetlands presence by commenting on the burgeoning paternal relationship between Arthur and Porgy, with the Captain giving fencing lessons to the boy, who “had learned to relish the eccentricities of his senior” (Simms, Woodcraft 383). Simms briefly mentions how Arthur would visit Glen-Eberley and “bird” with Porgy, but the lack of direct description places Porgy at some remove from the swampland homemaking he so ably practices in The Partisan. Additionally, given the prominence of Porgy’s humorous swamp scenes in The Partisan and The Forayers, the absence of his cheering influence in the Glen-Eberley swamps is keenly felt. So, moving from a summary description of Porgy’s bonds with Arthur, Simms sets up the first exchange between M’Kewn and Arthur when the latter “resolve[s] to ride after [Porgy]” but abandons the chase to “tramp in the pine woods” (385). While Arthur gives M’Kewn a cold reception at their first meeting, M’Kewn “contrive[s], without seeming effort, to meet the lad frequently, when
he [rides] out or ramble[s] in the woods” and, along with a feigned deference that “appeal[s] to the vanities of youth,” M’Kewn builds his relationship with a gift of “a beautiful English pointer” (403). Like Jaffery Pyncheon in *The House of the Seven Gables*, M’Kewn invokes a form of artificial domesticity to win Arthur’s favor, performing his good intentions toward the widow’s son but doing so in a way that highlights his own vanity and materialism.

The site of these conversations, in which M’Kewn turns Arthur against Porgy for a short time before Mrs. Eveleigh decisively corrects her wayward son, is as calculated as the subject of each visit. M’Kewn does not enter the Eveleigh household interior because of the watchfulness of its perceptive matriarch, but the nearby woods and wetlands are like the battle-sites in *The Partisan*. These places are only safe and homelike as long as there is a disciplined and domestic male presence there to maintain them. Again, Simms does mention that Porgy goes hunting with Arthur, and Porgy cannot be everywhere at once. Even so, Simms does very little to depict Porgy’s calming and inviting presence outside the walls of the home, and M’Kewn takes advantage of Porgy’s conspicuous absence.

The homelike aspect of these swamps makes them places that require the continued engagement of Simms’s domestic heroes, and there is no substitute for the decisiveness and discipline that the swamp encourages. Captain Porgy does try to recapture the kind of backwoods masculine identity he held during the war, but he chooses the wrong place for it. When M’Kewn puts pressure on legal officials to enforce his claim to ownership of Glen-Eberley, Porgy, as an elaborate prank, invokes the rough-hewn code of his former militia days upon the arrival of the sheriff and his men, with
questionable results. Dale’s article ably covers the domestic relevance of this scene, noting that, while the masculinity of the episode may be intended to balance the feminine associations of the Captain in the home, its “perverse masculinity . . . seriously undermines Simms’s portrait of Porgy as a capable planter” (Woodcraft 68). Porgy does not resolve this issue correctly. He tries to take arms against an enemy that would be better fought with the relationships and positive opinions of the community, and he does his fighting in the wrong place. The problem, then, is that M’Kewn, by directly threatening Porgy with legal repossession of his own home, traps Porgy too close within the walls of Glen-Eberley and its limited options for masculine expression.

There are actually two encounters between Porgy’s group and the legal authorities, each with a slightly different level of success that is wholly related to Porgy’s ability to work within the expectations of domestic propriety inside the walls of his home. In the first and more successful gambit, Porgy puts on a show of military force against the arriving sheriff. With Porgy’s men dressed in a crude semblance of military attire, which “propriety requires we should describe it as a uniform,” the sheriff is captured at the gates of Glen-Eberley and brought to a meeting with the waiting, and equally militarized, Porgy (Simms, Woodcraft 424). The humor of the scene that follows is based on Porgy’s previous relationship with the captured sheriff, who had been a Colonel during the war and is on friendly terms with Porgy. Porgy, acting as if he does not know that the Colonel is now currently the sheriff, shares a tense dinner with him while “thrusting back his sabre” and making a dramatic display of his violent intentions toward “‘the sheriff . . . [and] his satellite harpies’” (430). Finally, when the Colonel begins to ask what would happen if he himself were the sheriff, the pistols drawn and “swords crossed in air above
the victim” lead the Colonel to deny his title as officer of the law (436). While Porgy’s aggressive performance effectively persuades the fearful sheriff to give up his attempt to enforce M’Kewn’s claim on Glen-Eberley, this first battle between Porgy and the law is successful because Porgy is able to play the Colonel’s reputation for “natural good humor and love of good fellowship” against his duties as sheriff (481). Porgy knows that the Colonel expects a certain level of welcome sociability when visiting the home of a friend, and these domestic concerns are such an important feature of male identity that the Colonel relinquishes the more traditionally masculine, duty-bound role of sheriff in favor of the positive relationships formed within the home.

The succeeding events show how Porgy’s practical joke is equally invested in those elements of male identity more closely related to the boisterous militia camp in The Partisan. Richard Stott’s account of the subversive masculinity of “jolly fellows[,] . . . a distinctive male comportment that consisted of not just fighting but also heavy drinking, gambling, and playing pranks,” explains the Colonel’s “mortification” after “M’Kewn smiled significantly,” signaling his knowledge of Porgy’s joke against the Colonel (Stott 1, Simms, Woodcraft 442). Although not a sanctioned presence inside the genteel household, jolly fellowship thrived within taverns, workplaces, and, significantly, militias, as Stott cites an incident in 1841 in which militiamen impersonated policemen (Stott 26-27). Most important for the sheriff in Simms’s novel, in order to enhance and maintain one’s reputation among jolly fellows, a man must not complain as a victim of a prank and instead should look for an opportunity to reciprocate the good-natured joke (Stott 58-59). Porgy successfully exploits the sheriff’s manly reputation to escape the impending
repossession of his home, but Porgy’s subsequent encounter with law enforcement does not benefit from these shared social codes.

Porgy’s second military masquerade reveals the ultimate impotence and misguided destructiveness of masculine aggression within the household. When the once-duped sheriff sends his steadfast deputy back to Porgy’s Glen-Eberley, the warlike maneuvers take on a lurid, mean-spirited cast. Arguably, Simms could be said to have tempered negative views of Porgy by depicting the victimized deputy as a short, bow-legged Irishman (Hagood 43). Likewise, these social outcasts invoked less sympathy and were often the powerless and unreciprocating victims of pranks intended to solidify the bonds between white men like Porgy and the sheriff (Stott 60). Even so, the deputy’s physical appearance and cultural status are a thin and flimsy defense against an act of masculine bluster taken much too far. Instead of a dinner guest, the deputy is treated like a prisoner of war. At the point of a sword, Porgy, Tom, and the rest of his household group restrain and forcibly shave the deputy’s beard, which “was to him the perfection of beauty,” and when the deputy tries to read the document outlining the “‘levy upon on the lands and negroes, the goods and chattels of this estate of Glen-Eberley,’” Porgy forces him “to chew and mouth the musty document” until it is entirely eaten (Simms, Woodcraft 448, 451). With the sheriff, Porgy played the threat of violence off the more domestic concern for a pleasant meeting between the two men, but this second incident involves direct aggression and a total lack of concern for the deputy. There is some humor in the outrageousness of this incident, but, like Dale explains, Porgy’s actions run counter to the kind of inviting, pleasant atmosphere that a domestic man is expected to foster within his house.
Mere moments after the conclusion of this second episode between Porgy’s men and local law enforcement, Porgy himself deems his actions a mistake: “It was not so much that he had outraged the laws of the land, as that he had violated those of humanity. He began to feel ashamed of this, for, when not carried away by impulse, he would have revolted at everything like brutality, unless, as in the case of actual conflict in war, it took the form of a necessity” (Simms, *Woodcraft* 453). The location of this encounter is just as instructive as its excess, and both socially and environmentally, Porgy’s actions are out of place. The social and legal fallout from this easily qualifies Porgy’s violence as an incredibly inappropriate escapade, no matter its humorous intent, and Porgy only escapes arrest by leaning heavily on his military contacts for support (454). By so brazenly operating through coercion instead of the more polite and diplomatic channels of a properly domestic Southern planter, Porgy’s transgressions parallel the behavior of the British officers in *The Partisan* who invade the town of Dorchester and upset the privacy, dignity, and security of all of its citizens.

On one hand, Porgy’s actions against local law enforcement show how wartime culture has no place in homes and communities during times of peace, but more broadly, these scenes in *Woodcraft* showcase both the destructive potential and the inappropriateness of masculine ideals based on violence and coercion when transplanted into the physical space of the household interior. As illustrated by the Widow Eveleigh, whose “domestic, ‘feminine’ qualities of thrift, persuasiveness, and understated cunning not only compete successfully in a world of laws and the Protestant ethic, they preserve a social order that is supposedly capped by men,” there are other, more civilized ways to strengthen Porgy’s claim to his home (Mayfield, “‘Soul of a Man’” 496). Simms,
however, does not completely reject the relevance of masculine strength and aggressive action, and, in his essay “The Moral Character of Hamlet,” he denounces a level of over-refinement and indecision that “would not be found in the frontiers of the West . . . in any region where the primary wants of life throw the moral man into the shade, while stimulating the performances of the animal nature” (45). Rather than undermining the acknowledged necessity of the “the animal nature” and its capacity for decisive action, Simms’s comments about nature’s poetic and moral potential can be understood as a way to enlist these manly energies in securing the domestic character of local natural environments. The swamp is a region that requires a more aggressive masculinity, but only to protect the home and to address “the primary wants of life.” The woods and wetlands around the home provide an opportunity to break out of an indecisive mindset, but in the home, the impulsive expression of “the animal nature” is neither sanctioned by “primary wants” nor softened by the natural beauty it protects.

At times, Simms appears to endorse a certain amount of this manly spirit inside the house, but its expression is only momentarily successful. Like Porgy’s successful aggressive posturing in his first prank against the sheriff, Simms offers qualified praise for Arthur Eveleigh, who “looked noble, erect, manly, almost magnificent” as he makes a “passionate inquiry” to his mother about Porgy’s ulterior motives (Simms, *Woodcraft* 413). Of course, Arthur’s suspicions are unfounded and based in M’Kewn’s corrupt influence, and, like Porgy’s later failure with the deputy, Arthur’s mother’s sound rebuke leaves the boy “sobbing” for forgiveness and marks his sudden defiance as inappropriate (414). In the nearby swamp, however, Arthur’s passion has an outlet. In those early moments in which Fordham and Arthur pursue Bostwick and his men, Simms references
Hamlet in his praise of Arthur’s impulsive and successful shot against one of the ruffians (95). In this outdoor environment, Porgy can act as “[a] mountain in a passion . . . a human avalanche descending upon the plain” in his pursuit of these outlaws, and he does not damage his reputation or the domestic atmosphere he carries with him (127). There is a place, a specific, physical place for this manly show of aggression, but it is decidedly not within the walls of a home. To most fully exercise this vigorous aspect of Simms’s masculine ideal, these Southern men need to take it outside.

While Porgy’s misplaced practical jokes and understated domestic presence in the swamps can be resolved with greater attention to the opportunities within the natural environment, the problematic status of slaves reveals a fundamental conflict within Simms’s vision of the home and the men within it. The Partisan introduces Porgy as the humorously cultivated lover of food and drink whose language and demeanor contrasts with the more rough-hewn members of his military group, but he is not alone in Simms’s early romance: “He was attended by a negro body servant—a fellow named Tom, and of humors almost as ken and lively as his own. Tom was a famous cook, after the fashion of the Southern planters, who could win his way to your affections through his soups, and need no other argument” (Partisan 93). Later, Porgy evinces a jovial and welcoming spirit as Major Singleton and Lance Frampton enter the wetlands camp, and “the sentimental gourmand, the philosophic Porgy” calls to Tom to help him prepare a meal for the new arrivals (Partisan 220). Simms does acknowledge Tom’s role and relationship in providing Porgy with the comestible fuel for his generous persona, and Dye’s essay on Woodcraft explains the importance of this interdependent relationship to Simms’s concept of an organic Southern social system. Simms’s Southern man is
characterized by his concern for his subordinates and their willing support for him and the home he represents, but this is a decidedly uneven exchange.

In both *The Partisan* and in the more Porgy-centric *Woodcraft*, Porgy enjoys all of the agency and social capital that Tom’s domestic efforts confer. As Kibler writes in his introduction to that text, “[Tom] is the cook who feeds the cook, (mentally, spiritually, physically), who feeds the plantation” (“Critical Introduction” xxxi). Kibler points to Tom’s crucial role for Porgy and everyone in his domestic group, but Joseph Kelly more accurately characterizes the relationship between Porgy and Tom as a kind of regressive marital bond, “a symbiotic, unequal relationship that nevertheless implies the permanent dependency of blacks” (Kelly 65). The difference between Millhouse and Tom is that the former goes on social visits with Porgy and is able to select his position as overseer at Glen-Eberley, and the latter, presumably, is expected to remain in his place at the plantation. By working with his subordinates and creating the kind of comfortable, cultured home that Simms promotes in his writing, Porgy is able to realize an ideal masculinity that is a foreclosed possibility for the slaves of Glen-Eberley. Porgy expresses real concern for Tom and the other slaves, but his attitude, and Simms’s attitude more broadly, is fundamentally determined by an assumption of the inferiority of African slaves.

Simms’s depiction of slave relations follows a heavily paternalistic model in which, as Mary Jackman writes, “the expression of affection . . . strengthens the dominant group’s control” by defining the desires of subordinate groups and by “portray[ing] discriminatory arrangements as being in the best interests of all concerned” (Jackman 15). Jeffery Young explains how this sense of paternalism allowed the
Southern planter elite to place slaves in the kind of organic, reciprocal social system that Dye describes: “Even the revelation that slaves were scheming to rebel did not force the planters to abandon perceptions of their bondservants as childlike, loving individuals capable of loyalty to their owners” (Young 212). Tom and the other slaves in *The Partisan* and *Woodcraft* appear to happily and gratefully accept their position, but key moments in *Woodcraft* suggest a more complex arrangement between master and slave. Eugene Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese write that “[k]indness, love, and benevolence did not define paternalism, which depended on the constant threat and actuality of violence,” and while Simms’s kind slaveowners are not directly threatening, violence remains a very real possibility for the wayward slave (Genovese and Fox-Genovese 2). In one surprising instance, Porgy tells Tom, “‘I rely upon you to put yourself to death, sooner than abandon me and become the slave of another,’” and for Scott Romine, Tom’s incredulous refusal to do so undermines Simms’s domestic vision by suggesting that self-preservation, not affection, lies at the root of the “paternalistic bond” between master and slave (Simms, *Woodcraft* 184; Romine 68). With this reading of Porgy and Tom as another example of the domestic affection and controlled aggression within Simms’s domestic man, other circumstances in *Woodcraft* show how the token freedom of the swamp applies to the slaves in Simms’s narrative.

For white male southerners, the swamp is a place where they can exercise a greater range of actions without sacrificing their connection with the home. For the slaves in *Woodcraft*, the swamp exists only as a kind of undesirable separation from the home, and their actions are only meaningful as long as they contribute towards a return to the more orderly society within the fields and household of the plantation. In the swamp
skirmish early in the narrative, the widow momentarily escapes and finds her way through the swamp “under the guidance of Jenny, the servant-maid,” but Eveleigh’s “fearful fascination, which she could not withstand,” leads to both women’s capture (Simms, Woodcraft 88, 90). Jenny illustrates both knowledge and a degree of discipline in the swamp, but she is nevertheless captured along with the widow Eveleigh. Jenny’s lack of authority renders her practical experience ineffective and allows Simms to use the fate of both women to emphasize the importance of white male self-mastery in the swamp.

Later in the narrative, Simms’s depiction of black slave women’s determined survival in the swamp more pointedly illustrates how Simms is primarily concerned about how this environment shapes white male identity. After Porgy has settled into his plantation, a group of slaves return to Porgy’s home after hiding in the swamp during the war: “‘Eighteen niggers and most of ’em women! And you mean to say, old lady, that all these people are jest now in the swamp a-hiding’” (Woodcraft 315). Millhouse’s surprised comments here cover an interesting detail that Simms does not pursue in his text, nor does Porgy dwell on its significance as much as the uncouth Millhouse here. It is worth noting that, as part of Simms’s depiction of a natural environment that encourages his ideals of white upper-class masculinity, white women do not do well within the swamp. Along with the widow’s undisciplined curiosity in Woodcraft, in The Partisan, Katherine Walton is grateful to take a path that, while “more exposed to detection, . . . spared her the toilsome journey through the worst portions of the swamp” (Partisan 437). In Woodcraft, Simms describes a group of slave women who are far more capable than the white upper-class women described above. These black women know the land and
possess enough self-mastery and woodcraft to survive within it for years, but they receive little credit for their achievement beyond the fact of their survival. Again, the actions of these women and the other slaves in these two texts do not reflect back upon themselves as much as upon the homes with which they are associated. Simms’s choice not to “afflict the reader with this narration” conveniently avoids the ways in which the swamp threatened Southern order by promising “limited prosperity” to the outcasts who lived within it (Simms, *Woodcraft* 312-313; Wilson, *Shadow* 14). More fundamentally, however, Simms’s narrative choice here reflects a consistent depiction of slaves that is only concerned with the ways that they contribute to the home, a degree of neglect strong enough to overcome the gender and racial implications of black women’s strength within an environment Simms so strongly associates with white manhood.

Neil Matheson notes in his article on Hawthorne’s *The House of the Seven Gables* that beneath the overt tension between the Pyncheon family’s haunting by the Maules is a more abstract concept of the family being haunted by the maternal individuals that the Pyncheon family ignores and tries to erase as “a foreign intrusion into the family line” (24). Hawthorne is fairly explicit about the destructive character of the Pyncheon form of masculinity when measured against gentler, more domestic forms of identity, but Simms’s *Woodcraft* is slightly more oblique. It is interesting, however, that the protagonist’s home in Simms’s text is haunted in a way that parallels the guilty, ghostly influences on Hawthorne’s Pyncheon family. In *Woodcraft*, Porgy’s Glen-Eberley estate is haunted by the elderly slave woman Sappho, Porgy’s old nursemaid who raised him as an infant. Admittedly, Sappho is a flesh and blood human that is only mistaken as a ghost, and Simms first uses Sappho to undermine Millhouse’s gruff sensibility, which grows
“less confident and formidable” in her presence (306). Although she is not a ghost, Sappho haunts Glen-Eberley as a figure of the slave system that is the major source of the domestic comforts credited to Porgy.

Beyond her usefulness in puncturing Millhouse’s conceptions of grounded common sense, Sappho’s presence is an even more dramatic reminder of the unbalanced nature of the social system Simms depicts in Woodcraft. A kind of affectionate counterpart to Tom’s less emotive culinary labors, Sappho, albeit mistakenly, first sees Millhouse as “my chile” and announces herself as “you own nuss,” following her greeting with “a flood of kisses from a toothless mouth” (308). Moments later, Porgy receives the same treatment, and Bakker’s reading of Porgy’s striking lack of affection and recognition, “a startling revelation . . . of the essential expendability of slaves to their Southern masters,” helps to explain Simms’s treatment of slaves (Bakker, “First ‘Realistic’ Novel” 68). Upon first seeing his nursemaid, Porgy does not recognize the person overflowing with the domestic attachments that Simms elevates throughout his writing, providing a glimpse behind his paternalistic perspective to reveal how little attention he pays to the humanity of his slaves. Simms’s slaves are more than just expendable, and Porgy’s subsequent assurances reveal Sappho’s real importance in the text: “‘I have thought of you a thousand times, and I’m more glad to see you now . . . than I should be at meeting with the best white friend I have. . . . I remembered you not only for yourself, but for others who were very precious to me’” (Simms, Woodcraft 312). Sappho, part of the group of women who hid in the swamp during the war, operates not as a plucky survivor but as a symbol of the home that Porgy had abandoned. In Porgy’s stated desire to “‘see what’s to be done for the people in the swamp,’” Simms uses these
slaves as an opportunity for Porgy to showcase his growing sense of domestic responsibility rather than an extended meditation on, for instance, Porgy’s inability to recognize this elderly slave woman’s affection, loyalty, and woodcraft, qualities that merit so much praise when white men display them.

*Woodcraft* ends with a mixture of success and failure for Porgy and his household. Porgy does not fulfill all of his desires in the narrative, but his character is the fullest portrait of the social potential for domestic manhood. Most importantly, Porgy is able to secure ownership of his plantation from M’Kewn, and at the end of the narrative, “[t]he genial moods prevailing in the one household radiated in all directions” as the expression of the expansive domestic ideal that Simms details in “The Social Principle” (*Woodcraft* 508). In the romantic sub-plot, Porgy’s attempts at marriage are a double failure. These failures, through which “Porgy is shown to be domestic, but not effeminate,” are a final statement on the direction and qualities of a man fully dedicated to his home (Dale 70). When Porgy goes to Eveleigh to state his intentions, the widow cuts him off before he can make a clear request: “‘I have a certain spice of independence in my temper, which would argue no security for the rule which seeks to restrain me’” (Simms, *Woodcraft* 513). Eveleigh, who ably manages her plantation, secures her property from M’Kewn’s legal maneuverings without any of Porgy’s difficulty, and possesses a level of authority that is able to “curb the young tiger striving within [Arthur],” knows that a husband would curtail her freedom and rejects the proposition (508). Where Porgy’s failure is, as Mayfield writes, a tacit recognition of “the futility of creating a new manly ideal from the materials at hand” in Southern plantation culture, Eveleigh herself acknowledges the
shortcomings of a domestic system with such little opportunities for female authority as well (‘‘Soul of a Man’’ 497).

Porgy’s other romantic interest is the widow Griffin, whose lack of refinement is readily overcome by the palpable comfort of her home and its ready association with a kind of picturesque view of the natural environment amenable to Simms’s ideals of domestic manhood. Porgy’s thoughts of Mrs. Griffin create a domestic landscape in which “[t]he trees had a fresher look; the grounds seemed to shelter the most seductive recesses; . . . [t]he skies above the cottage appeared to wear looks of superior mildness and beauty, and to impart a something kindred to the looks of the beings who dwelt under their favoring auspices” (Simms, Woodcraft 372). The lush description of the surrounding vegetation underscores the promise of domestic felicity within the Griffin household, especially since Simms frames this landscape as the immediate product of a dreamlike state in which “notions of arcadian felicity crept into Porgy’s mind,” a state occasioned by Porgy’s visit to Mrs. Griffin and marked by “all the enthusiasm of a citizen escaping, for the first time, from dusty walks and wall, to the elysium of green fields and forest shelter.” Griffin’s home is as much of a liberating domestic scene as the early campsite revelry in The Partisan. While her home is certainly not as fully raucous as Singleton’s camp, Porgy appreciates not having to work as hard to regulate his manners or the subject of conversation.

Less of an indictment of Simms’s masculine ideals in general, Porgy’s final attempts to court Mrs. Griffin are suggestive of the kinds of selfish pleasure associated with his lapse of self-mastery in pursuit of household comforts. In one visit, he “fancied that spinning was a particularly picturesque performance,” and, taking charge of the
spinning wheel “with a fierce smack upon the lips with his own,” Porgy’s “Arcadian mood” has no sense of the “grotesque absurdity of the scene” until Eveleigh and her son arrive to certify his embarrassment (Simms, Woodcraft 514). Porgy kisses Mrs. Griffin and grabs her spinning wheel without any caution or reserve. This may not take the exact form of impulsive masculine aggression like his military pranks or battlefield action, but it does showcase a lack of attention to the mixture of discipline and control that inform the more traditionally masculine aspects of Simms’s manly ideal. In Porgy’s next and final visit to Mrs. Griffin, Simms’s ironic narration mirrors Porgy’s selfish frame of mind. Upon his discovery of “the fair widow, clasped close in the arms of the overseer, Fordham,” Mrs. Griffin becomes a “wicked widow,” and Fordham’s romantic advances are the “cold-blooded audacity” of a “simple-minded” man (516, 517).

Griffin’s greater affection for Fordham suggests that Porgy’s masculine deficiencies are linked to his relative absence in the local swamps. Ultimately, she chooses the man who establishes his woodcraft and paternal capacities early in the novel. While Porgy is ready to turn and ride away from this scene, Fordham intercepts him and announces, “with the coolest manner in the world,” that he and Mrs. Griffin have been engaged to be married (Simms, Woodcraft 517). Clearly, then, the relationship between Griffin and Fordham has been growing for some time, but Porgy’s willful ignorance and love of domestic repose have clouded his awareness. Like Arthur in the wolf-castle, Porgy needs to get past his own discomfort in order to get a full sense of his surroundings. Unfortunately, this kind of discipline is best exercised in the swamps, and Porgy’s time at Glen-Eberley has dulled this manly capacity.
Mayfield’s comments on Simms’s ideals of manhood point to the same qualities that the swamp evokes: “It was no longer desirable, never had been really, that men be merely patrician. They must be men of discipline and action—exactly the sort of manhood personified by [the frontier character] Richard Hurdis” (Mayfield, “‘Soul of a Man’” 497). In short, as Mayfield comments later, “Simms’s ideal . . . simply has no place on a South Carolina plantation” (498). While Simms makes a concerted effort to preserve genteel patriarchal manhood, Porgy’s failures illustrate the need for a closer proximity to an environment like the swamp, “where the rude primary wants of life throw the moral man into the shade” and incorporate aspects of an identity that Anthony Wilson links to the swamp: “the animal self both battled and denied by the cavalier” (Simms, “Hamlet” 45; Wilson, Shadow xviii). In The Partisan and Woodcraft, Simms uses the swamp as way to combine competing male identities and preserve man’s attachment to the home. Monarchial magnolias and druidic oaks stimulate the Southern gentleman’s cultivated tastes, and the need for disciplined woodcraft allows for a more decisive frame of mind that is able to take action to defend the home without destroying or corrupting the household. As Bakker writes, Simms’s ideal works with “that troubled urge toward Doing balanced by a simultaneous desire for an idyllic, calm stasis that just cannot be maintained” (Pastoral 77). If, as Woodcraft shows, the stability of plantation life needs consistent preservation, then the ideal man within it needs to treat both the swamp and the house as a home.
CHAPTER 4. THE MANLY COMFORTS OF CANNIBALS IN HERMAN MELVILLE’S TYPEE: A PEEP AT POLYNESIAN LIFE

In Melville’s first published book, *Typee: A Peep at Polynesia*, domestic concerns remain a recognizable and influential force that structures the identity of its narrator, Tommo, as well as his perspective on the Typee culture that he encounters a hemisphere away from his American place of birth. Tommo’s repeated depiction of the family bonds, shared affection, and quotidian pleasures of Typean life effectively bind his struggles between Western and Typean identity to his struggles with domestic culture’s influence on self-determined, independent masculinity. Given Tommo’s perception of the essential domesticity of both the people and the physical environments within and around the Typee Valley, Tommo’s attempt to retain an autonomous, traditionally masculine identity while actively contributing to Typean home life illustrates the problematic position of domestic manhood. His later escape from the island suggests that a male identity that is not committed to domestic life is doomed to failure and flight from the home.

*Typee* is the first-person narrative of a young man, Tommo, living with the titular group of native Polynesian islanders for two months. His time on the island of Nukuheva begins with him abandoning his whaling vessel along with another member of the ship’s crew, but the end of the narrative finds Tommo fleeing the island to rejoin a separate whaler. The two-month interim then, charts a course in which Tommo first fears and then praises the Typee people before rediscovering his fear and escaping the island at the end
of the narrative. A brief summary of the text will help to identify how Tommo’s account of the Typees and their surrounding environment reveals his own struggles to both preserve his individuality and adopt a masculine identity that can thrive in this new physical and domestic environment.

Fleeing from their whaling ship the *Dolly*, Tommo and his crewmate Toby escape what could have been an interminably long voyage in cramped conditions and under exhausting orders from their captain. With little to live on but stale bread and water, Tommo describes an experience that seems more like captivity than an occupation voluntarily undertaken. Having resolved to escape their ship, Tommo and Toby evade suspicion and step into the mountainous rainforest with little difficulty. With Tommo’s earlier and uniformly optimistic predictions of effortless passage through a jungle laden with plantains and breadfruit, it is perhaps not surprising that things grow more difficult from here. The two companions climb halfway up a mountain ridge and almost exhaust themselves hacking through a cluster of bamboo reeds. They build abysmally ineffective shelters in poorly chosen campsites, and they suffer through damp nights and days with only a handful of soggy bread as their provisions. When they finally meet a group of islanders who they hope will provide them with food and shelter, Tommo and Toby unwittingly insult their Typee rescuers by praising the rival Happars, and it is only Tommo’s last-second endorsement of the Typee tribe that places the two of them in good standing.

Tommo’s most pressing concern on the island is his infected leg, which is injured at some point in his rainforest journey and severely limits his ability to move freely. Struggles with his identity and his perception of home life are a dominant factor in his
attitude toward the Typee community, but on the surface level of the plot, he needs contact with Western civilization so that he can treat his injury. Soon after arriving in the Typee Valley, Toby uses the arrival of a ship in Typee Bay—a rare occurrence on that part of the island—as an opportunity to escape. Tommo is alone as a Westerner among the Typees, but he does not suffer. The stoic chief, Mehevi, leads him into the welcoming home of the elderly and eccentric Mareheyo and his hardworking wife Tinor. Mareheyo’s son Kory-Kory becomes Tommo’s caretaker and servitor, feeding Tommo, bathing him, and carrying him on his back whenever he needs to travel within the valley. While not completely forgetting his desire to escape, Tommo quickly adapts to his new conditions and forms an intimate relationship with Marheyo’s daughter Fayaway.

Well-fed, in comfortable surroundings, and far from any whaling captain’s demands for labor, Tommo lives the paradisiacal life he envisioned before escaping the Dolly, but he cannot give himself over to the Typee lifestyle. He is able to somewhat justify their cannibalism, and he spends a great deal of time describing the innate benevolence of these people. After some time in the Typee Valley, Tommo is horrified at finding signs of recent cannibalism, but his real crisis begins shortly before this discovery, when a Typee tattooist begins pressing Tommo to have his face tattooed. At this point, Tommo’s fears about his identity and the identity of these friendly cannibals reach a dramatic climax. A second ship arrives, and Tommo, pushing past the objections of Typee chiefs and warriors, hobbles toward the shoreline to make his escape. A now-enraged group of islanders—Marheyo, Kory-Kory, and Fayaway not among them—chases Tommo into the water, and Tommo bludgeons one of them with a boat hook to finally ensure his escape aboard a whale boat.
In *Typee*, Melville tests the limits of a domestic identity, outlining a situation in which the positive enticements of a comfortable home life come against the individual agency of a man within the home. Tommo begins his story at the tail end of a six-month whaling voyage in the open ocean. The next four months are mostly spent in the roughly ten-square-mile Typee valley, living in a community that will not let him even approach the ocean. So, Tommo flees from a confining life on a whaling ship to a captivity on land. In both of these circumstances, Tommo’s own decisions place him in environments that limit his agency to an unacceptable degree. He flees the ship for the jungle, and he flees the jungle for another ship. Where, then, is his home during this time? The ship provides a meager shadow of domestic comforts, with stale sea bread, demanding authorities, little water, and few opportunities to get a full night’s sleep. The Typee community is a clear opposite, and Melville seems to answer all of Tommo’s nautical objections with a ready variety of food, a magnanimous chief, and a culture that virtually revolves around domestic repose in the Typee Valley. Even so, Tommo flees back to a shipboard life by the end of the narrative. Tommo’s experience amongst the Typee people and his ultimate flight from the island comprise a detailed view of Typee home life as well as the domestic values that inform Tommo’s problematic conception of his manhood. Tommo, outwardly flexible and conciliatory in almost all of his interactions with the Typees, retains an interest in an independent and mobile masculine identity, but the paradisiacal Typee community and the physical environment of the Typee Valley place clear limits on male agency and individualism.

Like Hawthorne’s Holgrave, Tommo vies to become a member of proper domestic culture, but *Typee* takes Holgrave’s outsider bachelor figure in *The House of the
Seven Gables and moves him to the far side of the world. For the majority of the text, Tommo makes a conscious effort to depict the Typee Valley as a gentle, easy paradise, excusing or justifying the notion of Typean cannibalism to better serve his descriptions of the Typees as affectionate members of a shared family. With Tommo characterizing Typean culture as a kind of domestic ideal, his genial and accommodating attempts to bridge the cultural distance between him and the islanders overlaps and conflicts with his struggles to retain individualistic manhood in the home. Tommo legitimately enjoys the easy comforts of life in the Typee Valley, but he has trouble reconciling his manly self-possession within such a welcoming, communal culture. Tommo is not simply caught between the poles of American and Polynesian cultural conversion; he is working out the stakes of a masculine identity within the home.

Simms’s Porgy exudes a comforting domestic presence with little effect on his manhood, and Holgrave is similarly free from the emasculating effects of domestic life in Hawthorne’s text. The home is both a goal and a benefit for Porgy and Holgrave, but with Tommo, there are clear costs to domestic life, even in the most charming formulation of the home. Tommo begins with a self-image as a man who is capable of rebellion against his former captain and who assumes to have easy mastery over the physical and social environments of Nukuheva, but he is quickly disabused of these masculine assumptions. Tommo is beaten back by reeds, cowed into submission by stern-faced islanders, and infantilized as an injured outsider who must be carried instead of walking independently, but Melville does more than undermine the assumed power and authority of his narrator.

By placing Tommo, however emasculated, in a foreign, domesticated environment that is so amenable to his desires, Melville examines the strength and depth
of male identity and domestic ideology and reveals the fundamental relationship between manhood and the home. Faced with emasculation from the people and places on the island, Tommo depicts a domesticity that extends to both men and women, with the goal of protecting his masculine individuality from the personal effects of domestic life. Treating the home as both a sanctuary and a threat to his manhood, however, is a difficult proposition compounded by the fact that Tommo’s is not the only male identity in the Typee Valley. By the end of the narrative, Tommo’s lovely island portrait cannot withstand his growing perception of another masculine presence in the valley, and the same Typean gender distinctions that Tommo uses to retain his own masculinity make a violent return.

Before discussing the scholarship and analysis that form the backbone of this chapter, I need to explain my approach to the issue of the fictional status of the text and the distance between Melville and his first-person narrator. Typee is a story based on Melville’s real-life experiences in Nukuhiva, and his preface specifically points to his “anxious desire to speak the unvarnished truth” (10). On the other hand, Melville creates some distance between himself and his narrator by changing his name and providing a forthright description of the conceptual dead-ends, aborted identities, and half-formed ideals that make Tommo a less reliable narrator than the author himself. Likewise, access to Melville’s revisions and changes of Typee, his most fully-intact manuscript, has allowed critics to examine his careful authorial decisions and the series of changes he made before publication. Melville was certainly closely connected to his protagonist, but Tommo is less of a direct reflection than a character through which Melville works out a separate, more fictional encounter with the Typee people. This chapter’s Tommo-focused
reading will demonstrate how Melville uses his narrator both to address the limitations of aggressive, independent masculinity within the home and natural environment and also to show how domestic culture simultaneously threatens and preserves male identity.

_Typee_ has not received the same level of critical attention as _Moby-Dick_ or Melville’s shorter works like _Billy Budd_, “Benito Cereno,” or “Bartleby the Scrivener,” but it is far from overlooked. Much of the scholarship on Melville’s first book deals with the slippery binary between civilization and savagery, but critics have generated a number of different readings of the sexuality, imperialism, geography, and fictional status of the text. The ambiguities of Melville’s text play into a lively debate on many of these topics with sometimes contradictory interpretations, but the body of work on _Typee_ remains a cohesive examination of many themes that Melville continues to develop throughout his career. Alongside these specific studies of _Typee_, articles that examine how Melville addresses issues of masculinity, the natural environment, and domestic culture provide a crucial critical lens through which to view the interplay between gender and the landscape of Melville’s fictional Typee Valley.

John Bryant’s work with _Typee_ is a comprehensive and useful starting point for the major issues in Melville’s text. In _Melville and Repose_, Bryant shows how the whimsy and geniality of Melville’s narrator shape the text in significant ways. Through this gentle narrator, Melville is able to blunt his criticism of European missionaries, to make playful suggestions about Typee sexuality, and explore a range of digressive ideas that contribute to a perspective on the narrative that expands beyond the narrow limits of the island of Nukuheva. As Bryant explains, Tommo’s digressive character expresses the unstable relationship between Typee and Western society and is ultimately unable to
resolve their cultural differences. Despite leading to Tommo’s failure, the wandering qualities that Bryant identifies are the same ones that allow Tommo to entertain a peaceful Typean existence in the first place, a crucial first step towards the domestic and masculine negotiations that I examine in this chapter. Tommo is able to shift from whaler to islander, from captive to guest, and, most relevantly for my own project, from active and individualistic manhood to a more receptive and communal masculinity in line with his views of Typee domestic life. Yet, he is unable to sustain an identity and perspective that simultaneously incorporates both Typee and Western culture. In a sense, Tommo’s construction of Typee domestic life and his attempts to adopt an outwardly accommodating persona are both products of the digressive and open character that Bryant identifies, but I will add the specific influences of the environment as a significant impetus for this change. If Tommo’s wandering mind makes it easier for him to discover new identities and new social forms, his immediate environment is there to guide him towards an identity that reflects his social and physical reality.

While utilized in parts of Melville and Repose, Bryant’s Melville Unfolding provides a focused reading of the extant fragments of Melville’s manuscript to illuminate Melville’s process of composing and revising Typee. With attention to the personal and professional concerns that influence Melville’s writing, Bryant highlights the subdued eroticism, more guarded critiques of European missionary efforts, and the subtle political statements that change from the manuscript fragment, to the first-published British edition, to the more sanitized revisions in the later American edition. Bryant effectively captures the unsettled and unstable nature of Melville’s text in a way that readily relates not only to his earlier reading of Tommo’s digressive geniality but also to a general
reading of the narrator’s changing identification with different cultures, environments, and forms of manhood. Specifically, Bryant’s reading of the sexual undercurrent of Tommo and Toby’s relationship supports my own reading of Tommo’s anxiety toward same-sex desires that increasingly shapes his perception of the men in the Typee Valley.

Along with an overview of much of the scholarly work on *Typee*, G. R. Thompson’s 2005 article “Being There: Melville and the Romance of Real Life Adventure” provides a crucial support to my reading of the ways in which “Melville blends a fidelity to remembered experience with romance” (14). Melville is writing about events from his own memory, but fixing *Typee*’s narrator’s persona to Melville’s identity overlooks Melville’s mixture of romantic and realist elements. The more realistic elements of the text give weight to Melville’s ideas about the politics and personalities around and within Nukuheva, but without the romantic excess of his text, Melville would be less able to comment on the wide-ranging ideas that he incorporates through Tommo’s voice. Tommo is not Herman Melville, and this chapter’s analysis of male identity relies on the essential difference between author and narrator. Tommo allows Melville to communicate the potential impact of his South Pacific experience on a masculine identity in a more forthright and expansive way than if he were limited to his own personal experience. While Bryant explains how Melville’s revision process anticipates readers’ connections between Melville and Tommo, the persistent flaws and oversights of Melville’s narrator only partially benefit from Melville’s greater access to information and authorial control over the events of the narrative. I do not deny *Typee*’s basis in Herman Melville’s experience, but as a structuring claim for this chapter, I argue that Melville’s desire to relate his faults alongside his strengths does not fully account for the
ways in which Tommo’s progression aligns with specific issues of masculinity and domestic culture.

Regardless of the fictional or factual correspondence between Tommo and Herman Melville, *Typee* is a text that is rooted in a specific place and time, and T. Walter Herbert’s earlier *Marquesan Encounters* provides a rich background of its various textual sources and cultural contexts. With its detailed description of Marquesan society and its history of contact with European missionaries, whaling ships, and naval vessels, Herbert’s 1980 book remains a valuable reference of the events and cultures associated with Melville’s text. Tommo’s sometimes-brief references to Typean culture do not always constitute the most solid analytic ground, and by explaining the significant religious and cultural roles of Typean sexuality, Herbert’s discussion of the historically open sexuality of Marquesan islanders provides substantial support to my discussion of Tommo’s suppressed references to Typee sexuality.

As noted above, issues of imperialism and Western hegemony represent a significant portion of recent scholarship on *Typee*, with readings from Justin Edwards, Johanna Kardux, Mita Banerjee, and Christopher McBride detailing a similar process in which hierarchical cultural assumptions cloud Tommo’s conception of Typee society and lead to his escape on a whaler at the end of the book. Kardux deals with the use of captivity and travel narratives. Edwards explains the ideological problems associated with Melville’s use of sources like those from missionary Charles Stewart and Captain David Porter, and Banerjee shows how Melville uses the islanders to critique European and American society. All of these critics converge on the idea that Melville’s critical failure and Tommo’s narrative flight can be traced to the powerful influence of Western
culture over Typee society. While this chapter’s discussion of masculine and domestic culture does not address Typee’s imperialist elements in the same way as the above scholars, Tommo’s conception of home and manhood is intrinsically tied to his Western identity. My chapter is focused on the personal implications of Tommo’s attempt to apply Western masculine and domestic values to a completely different physical and social environment, but these broader imperialist issues are an undeniable element of Tommo’s struggles with his identity and place in the text.

S. X. Goudie’s article is notable in its focus on the capitalist aspects of Western imperialism and on the clothing so often described in Melville’s text. Goudie identifies a hybrid ideology in Tommo’s “textilic” experience, one that, if only momentarily, grants Tommo an intermediate position between the reciprocal ideology of capitalist “civilization” and a less legible “social system seemingly indifferent to commodity exchange” (218, 217). Without directly invoking domestic culture, Goudie nevertheless describes a conception of the home that is strikingly similar to the one in this study. Specifically, his account of Typean society’s “seemingly” separate existence from the world of reciprocal capitalism is an arrangement that I will argue plays a crucial role in Tommo’s masculine identity. At the same time, Goudie’s article reveals a crucial difference between my own work and the scholarship on imperialism within Typee. Where Goudie is careful not to make a distinct connection between the wholly-foreign Typean culture and Western forms of domesticity, I am specifically interested in these places within the text where Tommo’s conflicts with Western male identity in the Western home become legible through his depiction of the Typees and their surrounding natural environment.
Where Goudie provides an optimistic view of Tommo’s balance between communal and reciprocal exchange, Juniper Ellis takes on a more critical tone in her article on Western forms and exotic stereotypes of gender in *Typee*. Writing that Melville’s idealized depiction of Polynesian women like Fayaway “reinforce[s] the conflation of Marquesan women and wanton sexuality” and works against his critique of imperialism, Ellis also notes the ways in which Melville’s later depictions of women “entrap narrators and other male figures in a suffocating, domesticating marriage” (65, 64). Ellis is most interested in Melville’s treatment of women as a tool to explore masculinity or how “white women are equated with a constraining domesticity” (74). Ellis’s conception of white women in Melville’s works aligns with my later analysis of Tommo’s perception of domestic culture, but in *Typee*, these white women are an absent presence whose constraining force is felt in Tommo’s struggles with his masculinity. The discussion of Tommo’s crisis of manhood in this chapter is most distinct from Ellis’s analysis in calling attention to the ways in which Melville’s “willing Pacific Islands women” represent a latent sexual threat to Tommo’s independent masculine identity. Aside from their divergent claims about the shape of domestic influence, both Goudie and Ellis provide helpful support to this chapter’s claims about the relevance of the (feminine) space of the Western home in Melville’s Marquesan island narrative.

Geoffrey Sanborn’s *The Sign of the Cannibal* provides a postcolonial reading of Tommo’s views of Typee savagery that stands apart from the above readings of Melville’s text. Commenting on Typee womanhood, domesticity, masculinity, and tattoos, Sanborn develops a reading of Typee’s use of cannibalism as a performance used to maintain Typean social hierarchy. Most usefully for my own Tommo-focused reading,
Sanborn relates these larger cultural issues to Tommo’s personal experience rather than the more distanced rhetoric of the many of the scholars mentioned above. For Sanborn, Tommo’s horror at discovering the evidence of cannibalism, when linked to his anxieties about being tattooed, represents a realization that the Typee people do not fit Tommo’s romantic views of an easily-understood, emotionally-motivated society and are involved in a complex system of signs that mask their intentions from Tommo. Sanborn’s emphasis on the opacity of Typee phenomena like taboo, tattoo, and cannibalism informs my later discussion of trust as an important aspect of domestic culture in Typee that follows Tommo’s changing sense of his manhood on the island.

Like Sanborn’s text, essays by Sophia Mihic and Kennan Ferguson address Melville’s depiction of Typee culture, but the conclusions they draw from their analyses are quite different. Ferguson finds Melville’s treatment of friendly Typees as a sign of “anthropolotical imperialism” in which a benevolent view of the islanders as subjects of study reaffirms American cultural superiority (38). Later analysis in this chapter comes close to Ferguson’s ideas in commenting on Tommo’s early assumptions of cultural superiority, but I place greater emphasis on how his benevolent view of the Typees is both a reaction to his subordinate status and a threatening perspective with charms that could undermine his masculine self-possession. Mihic’s essay is a far more positive reading of Melville’s depiction of a Typee society as a sophisticated and independent society standing on equal terms with the Western society that Tommo represents. Mihic consciously brackets the issue of imperialist implications to focus on the separate and small-scale cohesion of Typee society and its specific encounter with Tommo as representative Westerner. While I would argue that these scholars’ conflation of Melville
with Tommo leads each to a singular and less flexible view of Melville’s text, both of these essays help to explain the different stages of Tommo’s development, and Mihic’s article is particularly useful in its ready applicability to the small-scale integrity of domestic life.

Wendy Flory also writes about the significance of Typee domestic life, but her reading, which supports my own treatment of Tommo as “a very calculatingly created character,” sees the charms of Typee society as a potential vulnerability for the community, with Tommo’s captivity and the rumor of cannibalism used as a way to protect Typee culture through a ferocious reputation (265). With a position that addresses both Tommo’s perception and Typean performance, Alex Calder’s work comes closest to the dynamic covered in this chapter. Both Tommo and the islanders collaborate to create the hospitable image of the Typee community, and my later analysis of this arrangement will address how this image hides the potential for violence. While I would not go as far as Wai-Chee Dimock’s reading of a Typean culture that thoroughly erodes individuality in favor of a communal identity, her sense of the pleasant community’s dangerous homogeneity aligns with Tommo’s abiding concern for his internal identity that I explore in this chapter.

Strongly linked to Tommo’s conflicted sense of self, Samuel Otter’s *Melville’s Anatomies* addresses the systems of racial and ethnological classification that support an imperialist perspective and grant tattooing its horrible significance for Tommo in the text. Otter explains how Tommo’s depiction of alluring Typee women and grotesque men are an outgrowth of contemporary scientific discourses that used the body to determine social and racial hierarchies. While the relatively visible and legible bodies of Polynesian
females are seen as more alluring, the more heavily-tattooed Typee men are an unsettling sign of racial instability. Otter links Tommo’s horror at the prospect of being tattooed to the idea of racial mutability and a white anxiety over the loss of identity and interiority. This chapter’s study of manhood benefits from Otter’s scholarship, which provides a historical context of the racial element of Tommo’s white male identity. As Otter explains, tattooing not only threatens to mark Tommo’s white face with racial and cultural difference, the physically inked lines of Polynesian tattoos are disturbingly similar to the imaginary lines used by 19th-century ethnologists to justify racial hierarchy. Whether through the signifying systems that Sanborn describes or through the bodily-inflected racialism of Otter’s analysis, a significant portion of the issues I examine in Tommo’s character are motivated by his desire to know what others mean while withholding meaning from others. As I will explain in more detail, Tommo tries to change outwardly and limit the internal changes that would, he believes, more fundamentally affect his masculine selfhood, and the crisis occasioned by his tattooing fears coincides with his realization that he cannot protect his identity from the domestic influence of the Typean people.

Numerous critics have noted Tommo’s shifting attitude toward the Typees, and I will add that these shifts in cultural perspective accompany changes in Tommo’s male identity, especially as it relates to the home. More precisely, Tommo’s shifting attitudes follow his movement across different masculine forms, a movement which is the product of conflicts with Typean manhood that emerge in particularly domestic spaces. Scholarship on Typee has covered the larger imperialist questions and the more intimate signs of identity within the body, but there has been little attention to how Melville
frames his narrative of cultural contact as the story of a man fitting into the home. A focus on the issues of manhood and the home in *Typee* does not contradict previous scholarship, but it effectively highlights the mobility and influence of domesticity and points to the relevance of masculine ideals as a specific explanation for the various shifts of its narrator as he travels from a whaling ship to a tropical island and back to a whaler by the end of the text.

With his former ship as such a dismal source of domestic comforts, Tommo begins his journey in the rebellious, self-reliant mode that leads him and Toby to so much failure in the forested ridges of Nukuheva. These early cues from the environment, coupled with his extended experience in the Typee Valley, bring Tommo closer to a form of manhood characterized by flexibility, dependence, and personal growth. While Tara Penry uses Melville’s term from *Pierre*, “soul-toddler,” to explain “the conventional predicament of abandonment” within that novel and *Moby-Dick*, her description of romantic masculinity’s defiance and “obsessive, self-reliant competition for power” readily applies to Tommo’s aggressive pursuit of autonomy in the first section of *Typee* (Penry 227). Where this romantic, competitive male can only “answer the riddle of his identity . . . in a masturbatory suicide leap like Ahab’s[,] . . . [t]o prevent drowning and solipsism, a man must find a palpable Other to ‘grasp’” (230). As an alternative to this destructive model of manhood, Penry posits a sentimental masculinity. While acknowledging that Melville only ambivalently favors this sentimental form, Penry’s account of its honest affections—“feelings substantiated by handclasps” and supported by action—points to the open masculine form that Tommo entertains as a masculine ideal during his time among the Typees. This is not the inviolate male that David Greven
describes in Men Beyond Desire, “defensively poised against . . . desires from both Woman and the homosocial sphere” (Men 2). Tommo has little reservations about the friendly and sometimes sexual relationships he holds with the Typees, but he has some doubts about the potential effects “of a powerless but strangely delightful” male identity on his sense of individuality (Penry 239). Tommo wants to be a part of the home, but his struggle “to distinguish between genuine affect and spurious, self-serving forms of propriety” lead him to retain an element of the self-possessed manhood that guides his actions in the jungle.

Before Tommo encounters the perspective-altering Polynesians that fill him with such nervous excitement while still on board The Dolly, Melville uses the jungles of Nukuheva in the first dramatic deflation of Tommo’s assumptions of manly fortitude and mastery. Tommo’s early contemplations of escape from the whaling ship are motivated by a sense of both dominance and domestic repose: “I straightaway fell to picturing myself seated beneath a cocoa-nut tree on the brow of a mountain, with a cluster of plantains within easy reach, criticizing [the ship’s] nautical evolutions as she was working her way out of the harbor” (43). In Tommo’s daydreams here, a hardy young man like himself will have little difficulty in the rainforest. Not only will food be effortlessly available, Tommo places himself “on the brow of a mountain,” a dominant position within his imagined landscape, without considering the inherent difficulty or danger associated with such a location. The landscapes in Typee are far from an independent backdrop of the text, and Tommo’s fantasies set up a dramatic example of how, as Bruce Harvey writes, “identity takes shape within and against a weighty, felt world” in Melville’s writing (Harvey 71).
The island landscape works against Tommo’s dreams from the moment he and Toby step onto the shore. A downpour of rain leaves their “frocks completely saturated with water,” soaking the little provisions of bread and tobacco he had prepared (Melville 50). Unaffected by this early suggestion of difficulty, Tommo promises his companion that “in a few hours’ time we will laugh aloud,” but, again, his prediction is inaccurate. Instead of a pleasant, commanding gaze, Tommo and Toby “[are] stopped by a mass of tall yellow reeds, growing together as thickly as they could stand, and as tough and stubborn as so many rods of steel” (51). Melville’s heroes are cowed by a bunch of reeds, a fairly benign environmental hazard when compared to the cannibals referenced earlier in the text. Here, then, not much more than one full page after his arrival on the island, does Tommo begin to confront his incorrect assumptions of masculine dominance: “Half wild with meeting an obstacle we had so little anticipated, I threw myself desperately against it, crushing to the ground the canes with which I came in contact; . . . Twenty minutes of this violent exercise almost exhausted me.” Tommo is physically unmanned here, and his dreams of a masterful gaze of his surrounds are equally dashed by the reeds’ “great height[, which] completely shut us out from the view of surrounding objects, and we were not certain but that we might have been going all the time in a wrong direction” (51-52). Blinded and “completely incapacitated for further exertion,” it seems more by chance than manful, calculated effort that Tommo “discern[s] a peep of daylight through the canes” (52).

Tommo’s and Toby’s battle with these reeds is an early example of the ways in which the island environment forces Tommo to reassess his masculine identity. Crashing through the reeds has little effect on his progress through the jungle, and his deliverance
from the stifling thicket is largely a passive experience. Shawn Thomson reads *Typee* through the lens of a “[Robinson] Crusoe topos . . . [wherein] intense registers of isolation and abandonment provided a structure of feeling through which men could imagine their restoration within the feminine sphere of the home without subduing their animal spirits” (54). In essence, the Crusoe model allows men to pine for a closeness to the home while establishing their self-reliant manhood in a completely separate place, but *Typee* shows a shift from its “ethos of hard, earned struggle” to a more imperialist “vector of pleasure and conquest” (63). To Thomson, the jungle hardships of Tommo and Toby “demonstrate their dependence on civilization rather than their self-reliance and fortitude.”

While Thomson connects this failure with Tommo’s later experience among the Typees, with Tommo’s desire “to elevate himself in the world of men” incompatible with Crusoe’s solitude, I argue that Tommo’s journey to the Typee Valley points him toward a far different form of manhood than the ambitious striving that Thomson describes.

Melville’s text is distinct from Simms’s and Hawthorne’s in that the natural environment does not function as a sanctuary in which men can balance traditional manhood and the culture of the home. In *The Partisan* and *Woodcraft*, Simms uses the swamp as a space where men can exercise their aggression in defense of the home. When, in his ill-conceived attempt to ward off the officials trying to dispossess him of his estate, Porgy tries to bring this manly strength and discipline inside the walls of a house, he disturbs domestic order and damages his reputation. In Hawthorne’s romance, Holgrave is rarely even described inside the house of seven gables, despite being a resident of the house, and his labor within the Pyncheon garden grants him a stake in the emotionally restoring aspects of domestic life without directly associating him with the traditional
interior space of the home. In *Typee*, the natural environment is far less useful or accommodating as a space for the kind of independent, active manhood that is able to thrive in Hawthorne’s Pyncheon garden or Simms’s Carolina swamps. Instead, the landscapes of Nukuheva force the same series of compromises and capitulations that the built home demands from male identity. As seen in Tommo and Toby’s many difficulties in the Nukuheva rainforest, it is abundantly clear that independent action alone is wholly insufficient for their survival. The pair’s weakness and emasculating failure in this environment only abates when they see other people, and it is Tommo, not Toby, who comes to recognize that to thrive in Nukuheva, he needs to draw on the generosity and support of other people. He needs to treat the island and the Typee Valley specifically as the shared space of a home.

Tommo and Toby fail miserably in the jungle, and these failures pull Tommo away from his assumptions of solitary capability. Significantly, the forbidding reeds he encounters leave his “limbs torn and lacerated with [their] broken fragments” (Melville 51). Tommo’s central physical weakness in the narrative is his injured and infected leg, which comes to symbolize Tommo’s sense of alienation and captivity during his time in the Typee Valley. Melville does not describe the specific moment of Tommo’s injury, but his encounter with these broken reeds, his first confrontation with the environmental realities that disabuse him of his fantasies of manly strength over pliant surroundings, is a strong candidate for the cause of his ailment. With this in mind, Tommo’s disability serves as a constant reminder of the headstrong masculinity that created his dependent state. Without Tommo directly acknowledging how his misplaced assumptions contributed his subordinate position, Tommo’s leg throbs its own implicit message.
Having survived the reedy thicket, the pair’s continued journey through the mountainous jungle offers little to encourage their presumptions of masculine hardihood or their ability to make a home in this new environment. Clear of that malevolent plant life, Tommo and Toby reach the top of the mountain ridge, but their elevated gaze is doubly disappointing. They find neither their hoped-for destination nor “[any] of those trees upon whose fruit we had relied with such certainty” (Melville 55). Having counted on readily available food and an amenable environment, the unforeseen rain and scarcity of fruit trees are a stunning disappointment, especially since their provisions amount to a small, soggy mixture of sea bread and tobacco (56). Tommo and Toby’s attempts to fashion some kind of shelter from their surroundings replay the same broken promises of comfort. Answering his companion’s concerns about “‘mooring ourselves for the night,’” Tommo tells him, “‘this ravine will answer exactly our purpose, for it is roomy, secluded, well watered, and may shelter us from the weather’” (59). Of course, in the same way that Toby’s nautical language betrays his inexperience in these forested mountains, Tommo’s opinions are equally suspect, and the image of a “deep black pool scooped out of the gloomy-looking rocks” does little to suggest an adequate place to sleep for the night.

With a flimsy shelter consisting of “six or eight of the straightest branches we could find laid obliquely against the steep wall of rock,” the former whalers’ construction abilities are as questionable as Tommo’s skills as a surveyor (Melville 60-61). Having suggested as much in his earlier description, their “poor shelter proved a mere mockery,” and for Tommo, “the accumulated horrors of that night, the deathlike coldness of the place, the appalling darkness and the dismal sense of our forlorn condition, almost
unmanned me” (61). Tommo is not consistently explicit about his motivations for continuing his journey, but this brief invocation of the language of manhood helps to explain his reasoning. To give up now would damage his self-image as an independent male, just as his perceived self-sufficiency informs his earlier decision not to bring food or other substantial preparations. With hard-won hindsight, Tommo cautions “all adventurous youths who abandon vessels in romantic islands during the rainy season to provide themselves with umbrellas” (63). The romantic vision of this island complements his romantic vision of masculine prowess, and his recent hardships heighten the irony of this suggestion.

By any measure, Tommo and Toby’s passage through the rainforest is a humbling one, but there are brief moments in which Tommo is able to experience the environment through a less adversarial perspective. After leaving their dismal shelter and continuing their trek up and down several mountain ridges, Tommo pauses to take admire the view while Toby is sleeping: “Had a glimpse of the gardens of Paradise been revealed to me I could scarcely have been more ravished by the sight” (64). Crucially, Tommo’s enthusiastic response to “those silent cascades, whose slender threads of water . . . were lost among the rich herbage of the valley” is linked to a completely different mindset than the one that prompted him to slam into the tall yellow reeds: “Over all the landscape there reigned the most hushed repose, which I almost feared to break . . . , [and] I remained gazing around me, hardly able to comprehend by what means I had thus been made a spectator of such a scene” (64-65). Unlike the power and privileged knowledge associated with Tommo’s early vision of sitting on a mountaintop critiquing the movements of his former ship, Tommo is determinedly receptive here, obscuring his own
agency in questioning “by what means I had thus been made a spectator.” His pleasure, which crowds out the newly-emerging pains of his infected leg, suggests a less proactive form of masculinity. Tommo’s pliant frame of mind allows for a fuller sense of the environment and allows for an opportunity to learn new things about his surroundings without the interference from actions or assumptions that might, for instance, lead him to misinterpret a frigid ravine as a suitable place to sleep.

In *Melville and Repose*, John Bryant examines an important precursor to Tommo’s expansive awareness in the above moment on the jungle ridge. Looking out from *The Dolly*, Tommo’s description of the vibrant contrasts “of blue and silver . . . of sunshine and evil” accompany a finely detailed seascape that works as an example of “masterful literary containment” (139). Significantly, Bryant writes that Tommo is “[e]xhausted by the sleep of consciousness” before his non-human surroundings lift and energize him into “a more fuller mental repose” and a sense of the “voicelessness of Nature.” While Bryant’s focus on Melville’s picturesque containment is relevant to my later discussion of Tommo’s attitude(s) toward the domestic life in the Typee Valley, Tommo’s mental state here is an early signal of the benefits and heightened awareness that accompany a more flexible and open frame of mind. Like Tommo’s later encounter with the terrestrial vistas of Nukuheva, Tommo’s fuller awareness emerges from a more passive frame of mind.

In his later book *Melville Unfolding*, Bryant connects Tommo’s passive view of the Typee Valley to “a form of speechless wonder that, like his leg wound, is unmanning,” but Tommo’s less antagonistic response to these noiseless waterfalls more closely resembles the “self-awareness [and] growth” of Bryant’s “gaze of wonder” than the
“socializing gaze of control” (137, 135). Tommo’s experience in the Typee Valley is most influential in its pleasant and wondrous aspects. More than his humbling moments with reeds or ravines, these picturesque scenes mark the beginning of Tommo’s conflict between his identity as a self-sufficient, self-determined man and a more dependent and communal masculinity that is better suited to the charms of a landscape that he can hardly comprehend.

Even in the absence of specific homes, Tommo progresses as a character and succeeds in the rainforest when he is able to acknowledge the validity of environmental and social signs instead of relying on his individual masculine capability. As Tommo himself states halfway through his jungle trek, “There is scarcely anything when a man is in difficulties that he is more disposed to look upon with abhorrence than a right-about retrograde movement . . . especially if he has a love of adventure” (Melville 70-71). Tommo would rather take solace in “the least hope to be derived from braving untried difficulties” than confront the fact that the previously untried difficulties have been uniformly unfruitful. The man that Tommo describes is unafraid of anything except his own weakness, and reassessing his plans would imply that he is incapable of facing the physical demands of his surroundings. Thus, even though “Belzoni, worming himself through the subterranean passages of the Egyptian catacombs, could not have met with greater impediments than those we encountered[,] . . . we struggled against them manfully, well knowing our only hope lay in advancing” (75). If Tommo trusts one thing in this early point in the narrative, it is his own ability to “manfully” meet whatever challenge presents itself, but Tommo’s earlier wondrous view of the valley is an
important, albeit brief, example of a more adaptable male figure that benefits from an openness toward the people and places he does not know.

That being said, Tommo’s initial interactions with the indigenous islanders demonstrate the folly of his self-confident assumptions more than the benefits of a receptive alternative. When he and Toby first encounter members of the island communities they are seeking, they are more apt to believe that the young boy and girl “took us for a couple of white cannibals” than to sense any threat (Melville 87). Initially, this assumption does not pose much danger to Tommo and Toby, but they are almost imperiled by their determination that the boy and girl are Happar and not Typee. Only when in the threatening presence of the Typee chief, Mehevi does Tommo begin to take more heed of his “lingering doubts” about their tribal allegiance (88). Confronted with the chief’s “fixed and stern attention, which not a little discomposed our equanimity,” Tommo begins to alter his assumptions of cultural knowledge and manly superiority, qualities which are further called into question when the chief rejects Tommo’s gift of tobacco, which was supposed to be an easy path to good relations with the islanders (89). Only when Tommo doubles back on his earlier determination, saying “‘Typee mortarkee’” instead of his earlier endorsement of the Happar, does “the wrath of the chief evaporate” along with the suspicions of the other surrounding Typees. Mehevi does in a few minutes what could not be accomplished in five grueling days in the jungle. He effects a change in Tommo’s perspective and illustrates the benefits of meeting hardship with flexibility rather than antagonistic strength. Like Tommo’s brief glimpse of island paradise on the mountaintop, suspending his assumption of superior knowledge and authority opens him up to unforeseen benefits.
Tommo’s initial romantic and rebellious masculinity, represented by Tommo’s companion, the soon-to-escape Toby, would remain static and intransigent in these circumstances, but Tommo, limited by his infected leg and drawn to the undeniable attractions of the beautiful valley and the strikingly generous men and women who live within it, makes an extended effort to adapt. More than undermining the idea of individual manly strength and versatility through Tommo and Toby’s early failures in Nukuheva’s mountainous rainforest, the real work of Melville’s book consists of the ways in which Tommo’s specific experience within the Typee community affects his masculine identity. For a large portion of Tommo’s and Toby’s passage through ridges and valleys, their difficulties are almost a mirror image of domestic comforts. Their shelters are miserably cold and wet, their food is tobacco-filled dough except for the one welcomed occasion in which they gleefully eat rotten fruit, and fear of dangerous islanders or a search party from their old whaling ship keeps them moving without real promise of settling down for any length of time. The Typees, living in this same location, display a life that is to Tommo almost wholly domestic and almost wholly unmarked by the burdens of the working world or the burdens of the jungle environment. Tommo is subject to similar domesticating impulses by the Typees themselves, and his movement from self-reliance to a more flexible and socially engaged persona is a tacit acknowledgment of the powerful influence of domestic culture on male identity.

Certainly, the brutality and corrupting influence of supposedly benevolent Western powers outweighs the relatively brief incidences of violence and (qualified) cannibalism in Melville’s text, but the positive example of Typee home life is a far more prevalent narrative element that forms the foundation of Tommo’s changed opinions.
about Typees and indigenous islanders in general. Herbert, in his account of Marquesan
culture, notes that, while “Marquesan families were structured in a way that baffled early
Western visitors, . . . the Marquesans, not surprisingly, gave great importance to family
relationships” (35). Additionally, given the more expansive familial relations and “the
system of pekio or secondary mateship” it is easier “to consider the household as the
basic unit rather than the family” (36). Herbert, who describes how “[e]arly visitors
noticed . . . that the chiefs of the Marquesan tribes appeared to have only a slight
preeminence over the heads of households,” recognizes the power of the home within a
Marquesan culture that, to Tommo, “appeared to form one household, whose members
were bound together by the ties of strong affection” (Herbert 37, Melville 240). For both
Tommo and the early Western visitors to the Marquesas, the island culture is a culture of
the home. Thus, Tommo’s narrative is not an escape from the home in the Crusoe topos
of Thomson’s reading. Tommo moves from one home to a different home, and the
differences between these two homes are instructive.

Tommo’s circumstances on his former whaling ship could qualify as the more
public sphere of the workplace, but he also eats and sleeps on the same ship. Tommo’s
superior, Captain Vangs, uses his power over the food and drink on the ship to control the
men on board and creates a mockery of a home aboard his ship. By the time The Dolly
approaches Nukuheva, the ship’s provisions have run low, but the captain is less
concerned about the welfare of his crew than himself. While for the crew, “there is
nothing left . . . but salt-horse and sea-biscuit,” the captain enjoys a steady diet of pork
and chicken and “will never point the ship for the land so long as he has in anticipation a
mess of fresh meat” (Melville 12). With such unequal conditions fostered by a captain
indifferent to the concerns of his crew, common aspects of the home are warped into means of captivity and control. Where a full cupboard is a benevolent image of domestic security on land, the enormous quantities of food and drink on board a whaling ship has a far more distressing effect: “Oftentimes, when we had occasion to break out in the hold, and I beheld the successive tiers of casks and barrels, whose contents were all destined to be consumed in due course by the ship’s company, my heart has sunk within me” (32). This is stifling security, and Tommo has only a “presentiment that we should make an unfortunate voyage,” which, given that “head-strong captains . . . bartering the fruits of their hard-earned toils for a new supply of provisions,” can extend a whaling trip indefinitely, offers little assurance about his trust in the captain (33, 32). Captain Vangs, whose “paternal solicitude” and “fatherly anxiety” consist of issuing bounties for the capture of any crewmembers who escape his well-provisioned vessel, converts domestic security into oppression, and it is this combined lack of security and agency that impels Tommo to escape from the ship (42).

Vangs’s Typean counterpart, Chief Mehevi, earns Tommo’s trust and cooperation through a patient, generous demeanor, and once Tommo resolves an initial tense moment with the chief, Tommo’s introduction to Typee culture takes on a distinctly domestic cast. Tommo’s and Toby’s first task consists of an hour of “[r]eclining upon our mats” and entertaining visitors lightheartedly “bestowing upon themselves a string of absurd titles, of the humor of which we were entirely ignorant,” before Tommo asks Mehevi for some food and sleep (Melville 91). This may not be the most apt image of Typee domesticity, but the shared repose and genial dispositions confer a more homelike sense of levity than a courtly introduction. These are people who want to make visitors comfortable and feel
no reticence about making themselves comfortable as well. As Geoffrey Sanborn writes, “Tommo’s rhetoric bears a striking resemblance to the language of domesticity[, and] . . . the Typees’ [valley] . . . could very often be taken to be an allegorical representation of the ‘separate sphere’ of nineteenth-century’ American women” (Cannibal 89). For Sanborn, the masculine implications of this dominant home life in Typee culture contribute to Tommo’s more forthright admission of Typee cannibalism, because, “[i]f the men of Typee were too humane to be cannibals, they would be, for all practical purposes, indistinguishable from the women of Typee.” While these comments are just a small part of his larger claims about Melville’s treatment of Typee cannibalism, Sanborn identifies the critical relationship between Tommo’s male identity and the pleasures of home. In my later reading of Tommo’s account of Typee culture, I will argue that the Typee system of taboo reproduces elements of the gendered spaces of domesticity and preserves Typee masculinity in a more conventional and identifiable way than cannibalism.

Tommo’s second task presents a far more specific case of how the values and activities of the home bridge the cultural distance between Typee and Tommo: “The poee-poee was then placed before us, and even famished as I was, I paused to consider in what manner to convey it to my mouth. . . . [U]nable any longer to stand on ceremony, [I] plunged my hand into the yielding mass, and to the boisterous mirth of the natives drew it forth laden with the poee-poee” (Melville 91). Mehevi’s initial coldness can be read as a diplomatic decision; he was dealing with two people of questionable loyalties on a larger intertribal and international scale. Once Tommo and Toby affirm their affinity for the “mortarkee” Typees, Mehevi, along with the other observers whose “fixed and stern
attention . . . not a little discomposed our equanimity,” changes into a gracious host (89). While, as Henry Hughes writes, there is a certain amount of cultural leveling associated with how “Melville depicts the Americans as near barbarians who must be taught proper Marquesan table manners,” the domestic failure of Tommo’s crude manner of eating is the subject of laughter, not condemnation (Hughes 5). There is no threat here, and Mehevi, “motioning us to be attentive,” demonstrates how to eat the paste-like poee-poee, spinning it around his fore finger in a paternal “performance . . . evidently intended for our instruction” (92). Alone in the jungle, there is little to direct Tommo and Toby towards the more practical ways of eating or finding shelter, and their repeated nights in a damp, primitive lean-to suggest that whatever signs the environment provided them, these two men needed additional instruction from the people who make a permanent home in this place. While less fraught than the initial Typee encounter, this is another moment of conflict between Tommo and Toby’s self-sufficient manhood and the outwardly generous Typean masculinity. By placing this scene inside a home and in the context of a shared (family) meal, Melville emphasizes the domestic relevance of Typean manhood. Indeed, Tommo’s shift from his manly self-assurance is most pronounced in these homes and homelike spaces.

Like Mehevi’s performance with the poee-poee, and likely owing to the language barrier between the Typees and their two visitors, most knowledge about Typee life and culture is conveyed through demonstration. Notably, this demonstration is not haltingly given, nor do the islanders assume any reason for Tommo and Toby to reject their instruction. With this in mind, the Typean community’s inviting attitude toward the two men is an early example of an alternative identity to Tommo’s and Toby’s initially more
intransigent and self-determined masculinity. When a group of curious women visit them, “their proceedings were altogether informal, and void of artificial restraint” in a way that leaves Tommo feeling “sheepish[,] and Toby . . . immeasurably outraged at their familiarity” (Melville 96). This moment follows Tommo’s earlier moments of self-doubt and growth, and it serves as a significant point of contrast between the two men. Instead of anger or aggression, Tommo has a less confrontational response. He does not completely accept what is happening, but by feeling inwardly shameful instead of visibly outraged, Tommo continues, in this small way, his development of an alternative masculinity in the face of unfamiliar domestic kindness.

Tommo further engages Typee culture and entertains its influence by viewing the people and physical features of his dwelling space through the familiar lens of the Western, middle-class home. Tinor, “the mistress of the family, and a notable housewife . . . did not understand the art of making jellies, jams, . . . and such like trashy affairs, [but] she was profoundly skilled in the mysteries of preparing ‘amar,’ ‘poee-poee,’ and ‘kokoo’ (Melville 104). Her husband Marheyo, “employing the greater part of his time in throwing up a little shed outside the house, . . . was a most paternal and warm-hearted old fellow,” and the most conspicuous feature of the dwelling itself is “a multitude of gaily-worked mats . . . [that] formed the common couch and lounging place of the natives” (104, 102). The walls are “tastefully adorned,” and attached to the front of the home there is “a little shed used as a sort of larder or pantry” (10, 102). As much for the reader as for himself, Tommo actively translates the elements of the Typean home into the idiom of American domestic life. A hardworking mother takes on the “mysterious” housework associated with the cult of domesticity, the kindhearted father
does some manual labor just outside the house, and Tommo grows more comfortable within a home environment that he can understand.

Tommo is less comfortable with a group of “three young men, dissipated, good-for-nothing, roistering blades of savages, who were either employed in prosecuting love-affairs with the maidens of the tribe, or grew boozy on ‘arva’ and tobacco in the company of congenial spirits” (Melville 104). These men disturb Tommo because they mirror his own position, a bachelor state which, as I will detail later, places unmarried men outside the framework of Western domestic life and under the threat of moral and physical corruption. Tommo distinguishes himself by emphasizing these men’s savage form and calling attention to the immoderate character of their actions, but he enjoys these recreations later in the text. Likewise, Tommo does not pay attention to these men beyond this short passage, and he places far more emphasis on the charming and properly domestic features of his Typean home.

The natural environment is a constant presence in Melville’s text, and to Tommo, much of the blissful domesticity of the Typee people is an outgrowth of their arboreal surroundings, which can be seen in the structure of their homes. These dwellings, which are built with trunks of coconut trees and the bamboo reeds that gave Tommo so much early difficulty, “present . . . three quarters for the circulation of the air, while the whole was impervious to the rain” (Melville 101). In this structure, a Typee family “would . . . slumber through the hours of the night, and recline luxuriously during the greater part of the day” (102). Open to their surroundings yet able to prevent the damp misery that Tommo and Toby experience in their own crude shelter, Tommo praises the “commodious and appropriate” Typean dwellings chiefly for their ability to utilize only
the most pleasant aspects of the natural environment. Sleeplessness, whether on *The Dolly* or during his five-day march ending in the Typee Valley, gives way to a home life chiefly characterized by relaxation. With this in mind, Tommo’s stay among the Typees leads him toward a form of masculinity that is far different than the productive, self-made men of white, middle-class America.

*Typee*’s natural landscapes are a diverse group, but no single place is unaffected by the domestic culture that shapes Tommo’s development and characterizes the Typee Valley as a whole. In contrast, Hawthorne and Simms focus on more contained and singular spaces, whether it be the circumscribed plot of Hawthorne’s Pyncheon garden or Simms’s local swamps around Porgy’s plantation and the community of Dorchester. Likewise, the environments in Melville’s text have a wide range of effects on Tommo, capable of easy comfort and trying hardship. The Pyncheon garden is more limited in its effects, conferring a sense of spiritual rejuvenation for those within it, and Simms’s wetlands are similarly marked by their common ability to foster a sense of community for his male heroes. Tommo’s experience in Nukuheva varies along with the island’s non-human environments, but these places work together as examples of the common influence of domestic culture on the island and on Tommo’s identity. The beginning of his adventure finds him and his companion Toby enmeshed in hostile and trying landscapes, with only brief moments of natural beauty in an otherwise constant string of jagged rocks, soaked sleeping arrangements, and scarce food and water. Once Tommo falls into the Typee community, the formerly humbling non-human environment becomes a pleasant extension of the comforts of home. Food is plentiful, the nights are warm and dry, and the rugged, inhospitable surroundings shrink to a few small places less affected
by the softening influence of Typees’ domestic engagement with the land. Contact with Typean home life and openness to its benefits, then, is crucial to creating the positive comforts of the natural environments in Melville’s text.

In a more general and communal way than in the discrete space of Hawthorne’s Pyncheon Garden or Simms’s local swamps, the pervasive contact between the Typees and their environment in *Typee* conveys a sense of domesticity that extends to a number of different places and groups. At the same time, the local streams, ponds, and sacred groves of the Typee valley are unequally domestic, governed by a system of taboo that, in its ubiquity and varying importance, resembles the dictates of domestic propriety. Apart from this connection between social custom and the physical environment, which I will explain in my later discussion of the Typee system of taboo, Tommo’s description of the non-human life in the Typee Valley invokes the kind of domestic identity that is the subject of his own internal conflict, an example of what Sarah Wilson links to Melville’s “consistent fascination with the gender identifications enabled and thwarted by physical spaces” (Wilson 59). In *Typee*, Melville explores the built spaces of which Wilson writes as well as the features of non-human spaces that both influence and reflect Tommo’s conflicted masculine identity. Indeed, after announcing his intention to “enlighten the reader a little about the natural history of the valley,” Tommo’s first group of subjects are cowering, rat-like dogs who “did not feel at home in the vale” and survive Tommo’s attempt to eradicate them because they are taboo (246). Tommo’s opening comment, asking, “[w]hence, in the name of Count Buffon and Baron Cuvier, came those dogs that I saw in Typee,” signals both his Western cultural background and his attachment to a kind of pure Typee environment within which he implicitly includes himself. Beyond
their potential status as invasive species, Tommo focuses on how the dogs “seemed aware of their being interlopers, looking fairly ashamed, and always trying to hide themselves in some dark corner.” With these comments coming one chapter before Tommo himself feels like an interloper in his refusal to be tattooed, Tommo is trying to distinguish his own attitude and strengthen his connection to the Typee community without sacrificing his sense of individuality.

Tommo may be an interloper in the Typee Valley, but he does not cower in a corner here. His permissive and flexible masculinity is better represented by another creature: “Among the few animals which are to be met with in Typee, there were none which I looked at with more interest than a beautiful golden-hued species of lizard. . . . Numbers of these creatures were to be seen basking in the sunshine upon the thatching of the houses . . . They were perfectly tame and insensible to fear[,] . . . turn[ing] for protection to the very hand that attacked it” (Melville 247). These lizards do not sense any threat from their surroundings, and Tommo’s interest in these creatures is specifically linked to their trusting nature. Yet, while “the birds and the lizards of the valley show their confidence in the kindliness of man,” Tommo is close to confronting his own doubts about the pleasant Typee community and his own male identity within it (248). The issue of confidence manifests itself in Tommo’s accounts of natural life, and, even in these kindly images, implicitly reinforces Tommo’s struggle to maintain a sense of masculine individuality while gaining membership within the Typee home.

Tommo’s following comments on Typee insect life better illustrate how this trust, apart from any threat of violence or danger, could present a problem for his sense of self: “The tameness of the birds and lizards is nothing compared to the fearless confidence of
this [fly]. He will perch upon one of your eye-lashes, . . . or force his way through your hair, or along the cavity of your nostril, till you almost fancy his is resolved to explore the very brain itself” (Melville 248). Domestic trust, taken to this level, becomes an obnoxious lack of individual privacy, an example of what David Greven describes as Melville “emphasizing the unwelcome intimacy of being the always-available object . . . of both male and female attention” (Greven, Gender Protest 176). The Typees do not act against Tommo, but their closeness, despite being well-intentioned, serves to unman Tommo as an extreme example of the pervasive influence of domestic attachments. As such, Tommo’s image of the fly’s cranial encroachment suggests that there is little of his self-possessed male identity that would escape the kindly influences within the Typee home, and his inability to control the Typees’ intimate advances takes the form of a distinct threat with sexual and implications that I will explain later in this chapter.

Tommo’s description of the domesticated golden lizards shows how he appreciates the comforts associated with others’ more relaxed and open perspective, but his comments about this penetrating insect show his abiding interest in his own individuality.

It is worth noting that these unpleasant implications are an undercurrent to Tommo’s discussion of the valley’s non-human life, and his descriptions more often contribute to an image of the natural environment that complements the pleasant domesticity of Typee society. Most significantly, “[t]here are no wild animals on the island, unless it be decided that the natives themselves are such” (Melville 248). Yes, Tommo briefly suggests an element of Typee violence, but this momentary darkness is best explained by Bryant’s account of Tommo’s tendency toward digression that leaves “his arguments . . . always on the verge of becoming unhinged” (Repose 135). While this
whimsical character cannot resist placing an undermining suggestion of savagery, Tommo’s general assessment remains: This is a safe place. The pleasant weather is only broken by rainfall that is “intermitting and refreshing,” and there are no “beasts of prey, . . . no venomous reptiles, and no snakes of any description in the Typee Valley” (Melville 249). Tommo’s account of the weather on the island is completely dependent on a domestic perspective and works against the less pleasant undercurrent he maintains in his earlier reference to the islanders’ ferocity. With Tommo’s and Toby’s damp miseries in their flimsy shelters as an unspoken but memorable example of an environment indifferent to independent manhood, it is clear that only within a well-built Typee home can these intermittent showers be called “refreshing.”

The island climate is flatly pleasant, absent any qualifiers from Tommo, because of the close relationship and mutual influence between the natural environment and the home life of the Typee people. While such agreeable surroundings are implicitly linked to Tommo’s claim that “[w]ith the Marquesans [sleep] might almost be styled the great business of life,” Tommo is most drawn to the ways in which islanders’ active engagement with the environment maintains and builds upon the pervasive domestic character of the valley (Melville 182). The branchless trunk of the cocoa nut tree, “by the surprising agility and ingenuity of the islanders,” is accessible and numerous enough that the islanders can afford to mimic the discriminating tastes of “some delicate wine-bibber experimenting glass in hand among his dusty demijohns of different vintages” (249, 250). Such is their familiarity with their local natural environment that Typee parents applaud the efforts of a five-year-old child “fearlessly climbing . . . a young cocoa-nut tree . . . perhaps fifty feet from the ground,” an act which would send “the nervous mothers of
America and England . . . into hysterics” (251). In places like these, Tommo comes closest to his domestic masculine ideal. He attempts to embrace and adapt to the Typee homes that are so open and embracing to him, but he retains an interest in his own mobility, strength, and individuality. He wants to contribute to Typee society, not by being the privileged object of selfless Typee affection but through a useful demonstration of how his own independent actions can contribute to the home. Far from Thomson’s claim of Tommo “as oriented to opportunity and ascension,” these scenes are closer to Alex Calder’s description of a man who “settles into his surroundings with the wariness of one who must always imagine himself being seen” (Thomson 64, Calder 34). Given this increased visibility, Tommo seeks a masculine identity that is able to outwardly contribute to the home while remaining internally unaffected and independent from its domestic environment.

While Tommo’s repeated questions about the Typee’s intentions toward him are certainly mixed with his unresolved fears and sense of captivity, these questions are also an expression of Tommo’s involvement and interest in the island community and its effects on his identity. In Flory’s analysis of this issue, the Typees’ security depends on their fearsome reputation, and Tommo cannot leave because “[h]e has come to have too positive a view of them” (276; emphasis in original). Despite Tommo’s unawareness of Typean intentions, Flory’s assessment supports my own claims about Tommo’s sense of Typean domesticity and his place within the community. The Typees may keep Tommo around to maintain their reputation, but there is little mystery to their kindness toward him. They are an inviting people, and they want to make him feel at home. Impressed by
the friendliness of the islanders, Tommo expresses his receptivity towards their influence by outwardly contributing to Typean domestic life.

Extending Flory’s reading of Typean motivations, the islanders may also want to keep Tommo because of his efforts to be a part of their community. Tommo’s questions about their intentions can be read as a rhetorical gesture meant to distance his Western masculine identity from the Typees’ influence, and Tommo’s role within the Typee Valley can be deduced from the way the Typees respond to his actions. Tommo’s boxing matches, which Thomson cites as evidence of his desire for notoriety, do little if anything to establish his aggressive superiority (64). Both the Typees’ views of this exercise and Tommo’s account of it suggest that while these boxing matches bolster Tommo’s internal sense of strong, masculine individualism, the Typees view them as yet another source of nonthreatening amusement. Never once acknowledging his crippled leg, Tommo assures himself that “not one of the natives had soul enough in him to stand up like a man, and allow me to hammer away at him” and later comments that “[t]he noble art of self-defence appeared to be regarded by them as the peculiar gift of the white man,” but these details convey the same kind of assumptions that cause Tommo and Toby so much difficulty in their first days on the island (Melville 265-266). Instead of Tommo’s physical superiority, the islanders refrain from competition because they are most interested in Tommo’s capacity for entertainment, and his ability to strengthen community bonds rather than undermine them through a kind of physical hierarchy. The islanders want Tommo to be a part of their society, so rather than risk alienation through masculine competition with him, they convert his pugilism into a more domestic performance.
Tommo’s reading of the islanders’ martial shortcomings is even more doubtful considering that his account of his boxing matches follows a description of how, being the only one in the valley who can sing, he is “promoted to the place of court-minstrel” (265). Following this admission, Tommo briefly details a nasal flute instrument that “is a favorite recreation with the females.” Then, after this gentler fare, Tommo begins his description of those boxing matches as yet another “means I possessed of diverting the royal Mehevi and his easy-going subjects.” Tommo’s appreciation of the innate domesticity of the Typee Valley, coupled with his unresolveable interest in self-reliant, Jacksonian masculinity, drive these and similar situations where he preserves an internal individuality incommensurate with his external contributions to Typean home life.

While Tommo’s martial arts most dramatically showcase the interpretive power of Typean domestic logic, this is not a unique process, as every time Tommo brings part of his cultural and technological experience into the Typee Valley, it benefits the life of the home. This homelike quality extends to Tommo building pop-gun toys, which Thomson uses to support his claims of Tommo’s ambition and privileged Western knowledge, “even as that knowledge reinforces the failed fantasy of achieving . . . superiority over the cannibals” (Melville 68). This case is far less ambiguous than Tommo’s boxing: Both Tommo and the islanders treat these “nursery muskets” as toys and appreciate them, like his fighting matches, as shared, domestic diversions (173). Again, Tommo is not trying to ascend within the Typean ranks as much as secure his own internal sense of distinction. He spends time making the toys and even finds “a lad of remarkable quick parts, whom I soon initiated into the art and mystery,” but he keeps his own identity separate from “[t]he minds of these simple savages” (173, 172). Even more
homelike is Tommo’s sewing, and “[t]hey regarded this wonderful application of science with intense admiration” (146). The “science” of Tommo’s sewing, like the “ordnance” he uses to describe his pop-guns, indicates Tommo’s advantage at the same time that it ironically undermines his attempts to claim a more traditionally masculine realm of knowledge (173).

These are domestic contributions, and their practical utility is second to the relationships they strengthen between Tommo and the Typees. Likewise, when Tommo grants the request of a Typee warrior, Narmonee, and shaves the islander’s head with the razor that he brought from his ship, Tommo shows little interest in reciprocity or elevated status among the villagers. Instead, Tommo is looking for acceptance, and the image of him shaving Narmonee, who “writhed and wriggled under the infliction, but, fully convinced of my skill, endured the pain like a martyr,” places Tommo in a selfless and trusted domestic position (147). Notably, Tommo’s attitude toward Narmonee is similar to an earlier moment in the narrative, when Tommo, newly arrived and visibly injured from his infected leg, submits to Chief Mehevi’s healing efforts as the chief holds down Tommo’s wounded leg like “an affectionate mother” (147, 99).

Tommo’s generous behavior is shaped by his perception of a social environment and physical environment in which abundant food and resources obviate the kind of individual striving associated with his old whale ship’s interminable search for new prey. Most significantly, Tommo does not operate as a tradesman and is little interested in counting the favors bestowed upon the Typees or the debts he incurs from their kind treatment. The only time he assumes the more traditionally masculine and market-based logic of exchange is at the very beginning of his stay in the valley, and he is quickly
disabused of that notion when Mehevi refuses his gift of tobacco. Tommo is not completely free from jealousy, however, and his attachment to self-reliant, competitive masculinity reemerges in the context of his limited mobility. Flory’s analysis of Typean intentions is likely more accurate than my extension here, but it is worth noting that Tommo is not completely useless to the Typees; his contributions are simply less materially productive and benefit the domestic bonds among the islanders. Unfortunately, Tommo’s sensibility, flexible enough to enjoy the island without Toby’s fearful defiance, cannot bend enough to see that his own shaving, sewing, toymaking, and amusing performances are not “ludicrous” but meaningful investments in Typean culture and suitable reasons for the islanders to want him to remain in the valley (Melville 145).

As I mentioned in the above paragraph, Tommo most fully connects with competitive, self-interested masculinity in the context of his mobility, and the Nukuhevan cosmopolitan Marnoo elicits Tommo’s most selfish emotions. By virtue of the taboo upon him, Marnoo is free to visit all parts of the island without provoking the anger of its warring tribes. This freedom, a clear departure from Wilson’s explanation of “the domestic status quo insofar as it limits masculine identification with the spaces and labors of domesticity,” is the reason for Tommo’s astonishment and jealousy (60). Wilson’s article notes how Melville subverts this status quo in sites like the Pequod in Moby-Dick, but Typee only partially approaches a male space within the home. It is Marnoo that Bryant associates with an ideal marginal “state that remains forever both worlds at once,” and this applies to the Typee-West dichotomy that Bryant describes as well as the domestic and masculine worlds of Wilson’s essay (Bryant, Repose 185). Tommo’s initial envious reaction centers on Marnoo’s balanced “manner . . . of a traveller conscious that
he is approaching a comfortable stage in his journey,” a kind of domestic mobility that Tommo is unable to inhabit (Melville 163).

When Marnoo shows himself polite and charming to everyone in Marheyo’s household except for Tommo, the narrator compares himself to “the belle of the season . . . cut in a place of public resort by some supercilious exquisite” (Melville 163). Tommo is directly unmanned here by Marnoo’s artful domestic propriety, but given Tommo’s own sense of captivity and tense identity, his sense of inferiority is also linked to Marnoo’s mobility and his ability to tell the captivated Typees with authority that “the terror of their name had preserved them from attack” (165). That Tommo’s insecurities emerge as a sense of neglected status among the Typees is a telling weak point. There is no other moment in the narrative in which Tommo is as concerned about his place within Typee society, and, elsewhere in the text, he seems content to adopt his less invested identity apart from the islanders.

With Marnoo, Tommo gains a brief awareness of the importance of an identity committed to the domestic life from which tries to distinguish himself, and Tommo’s wounded reaction to Marnoo can be read as a sign that the narrator is unready or unwilling to make this commitment. Marnoo, cautiously aware of the dangers of associating with this unaffiliated Westerner and equally sensible of his domestic limitations such that “he could not presume to meddle with [the Typees’] concerns,” responds to both the benefits and dangers of his own position without rejecting them as insults to his manhood (Melville 169). In some ways, Tommo’s relationship with Typee culture parallels Vincent Bertolini’s account of the vexed position of the bachelor in antebellum America. Bertolini describes the bachelor as an irresponsible, “failed middle-
class masculinity that lacked self control,” and was more vulnerable to his desires (707). Whereas the bachelor is a physically passive male who internally imaginines a more traditional domestic role, “what it would be like not to be a bachelor,” Tommo has a physically active domestic life but internally imagines himself as an independent, unconnected man. The outcome of Tommo’s stay on the island extends the lesson Tommo learns in those exhausting first days on the island; he cannot be present in an environment, whether it be social or physical, without some effect on his identity.

Tommo’s attitude towards Marnoo is equally notable as it relates to Tommo’s sexuality. Not only is Marnoo charismatic, “the matchless symmetry of his form” and his ability to capture the attention of Typean women, “caus[ing] smiles and blushes to mantle their ingenuous faces,” undermines Tommo’s sense of masculine sexual prowess and the careful work he performs in fitting his sexuality into an acceptable domestic position (Melville 162, 165). Whether these erotic elements are, as Bryant suggests, a distancing mechanism to shift Tommo’s focus from same-sex affection for Toby to “a more controlling love of women,” or if they are the product of a licentious spirit whose gratification is enabled by Nukuheva’s extreme distance from the social pressures of the Western world, Typee rewrites the rules of bachelorhood as arguably its most transgressive element (Unfolding 132). Tommo is sexually active outside the space of the Western family and “the bounds of a limited procreative conjugal sexuality” that would normally inhibit a bachelor’s behavior in antebellum America, but in the Typee Valley, Tommo’s domestic success is present in the strong affections of his adopted family and in the acceptance of the Typees more broadly (Bertolini 710). Tommo does evince the “feelingful imaginative activity” that Bertolini describes, but instead of imagining how he
would fit into traditional domestic life, he envisions a form of domesticity that fits his own desires, enabled by the social and physical environment of the Typee Valley (707).

The Typees, even in those readings that emphasize the fictional elements of Melville’s text, are nonetheless based on a historical Marquesan culture with features that are particularly useful in explaining the latent eroticism in the text. In his study of Marquesan culture, Herbert explains how communal chants both supported and reflected “the interworked multiplicity of Marquesans’ social relationships” that record the genealogy of the tribe (39) Herbert’s account of these chants follows a note on Western missionaries’ confusion about the islanders’ relative lack of government, but it leads to a point that links this homelike and informally governed culture to Tommo’s difficulty inhabiting the role of the bachelor: “In principle, there was a detailed set of linkages that tied together individuals, groups, natural objects, fabricated things, and the origins of the universe. It is important to recognize that the form of this linkage was generative: it was the sexual bond” (40). Sexuality plays a “conspicuous” and central role in Typee culture, not as a denied or suppressed impulse limited to the approved, procreative sex between married members of antebellum domestic culture but as an “activity . . . abundantly manifest in the daily lives of the Marquesans, much to the dismay of the missionaries” (40, 41). So, Marquesan sexuality is an unguarded constituent feature of the islanders’ daily, domestic lives, and it is something that the missionaries, a group that Melville cites in his text, actively denounce in their writing. Most importantly, this overt connection between sex and Marquesan culture violates Western domesticity’s prohibition against marital “sex for purposes other than procreation” as well as the “open secret” that
connected motherly surveillance to a son who “stayed home and masturbated” instead of having sex (Goshgarian 52, 54, 51).

This system of women’s domestic sexual surveillance is markedly different from Tommo’s description of Typee gender roles. Instead of male passions needing to be controlled, Tommo describes “a regular system of polygamy . . . of a most extraordinary nature,—a plurality of husbands, instead of wives,” a system that Tommo depicts in an image of “the harem rendered the abode of bearded men” (Melville 225). Most tellingly, Tommo suggests his own frustrated masculinity in concluding that “this solitary fact speaks volumes for the gentle disposition of the male population.” Tommo works to resolve the conflict between his sexual desire and the opposing tenets of Western domestic culture by making himself the object of Marquesan women’s domestically-appropriate sexual desire instead of the object of Western women’s surveillance. Thus, instead of a sexually frustrated or abject Western bachelor figure, Tommo can satisfy his desires without compromising his role as a man within the home. However, given the sexual limitations of his readership, Melville is limited to brief suggestions of eroticism or veiled descriptions of sexual acts like a fish-eating scene that Henry Hughes and John Bryant read as a description of cunnilingus. Significantly, Hughes notes how Tommo “feminizes the phallic fish, not only to permit his sexual repast, but also to invert the male hierarchy of the tribe” (12). This inversion is an important aspect of Tommo’s sense of individualistic manhood as well as his attempts to resolve the dilemma of Western bachelorhood through female-sanctioned Typean sexuality.

In other places, Tommo links these erotic moments to the same kind of natural imagery that frames Typean domesticity as an outgrowth of the physical environment of
the Typee Valley. For Robert Azzarello, these moments show how “Melville crafts . . . a ‘queer nature,’” a concept that refers to “a conjoined epistemological disruption and ontological revision of the strange matrix between the human, the natural, and the sexual[,] . . . an erotic, taxonomically problematic world just outside of human comprehension” (Azzarello 65). While Azzarello does not focus on Typee, he captures its narrator’s perception of a social and natural environment that is both strange and sexual.

Tommo relates how he would “[f]requently . . . [visit] a particular part of the stream, where the beauty of the scene produced a soothing influence upon my mind” (Melville 133). Descriptions of “enormous bread-fruit trees, whose vast branches . . . formed a leafy canopy,” and a large rock that “projected several feet above the surface of the water, . . . which . . . formed a delightful couch” convey an environmental domesticity that Tommo blends with the sexual in the paragraphs that immediately follow. Tommo moves from images of an intimate “Fayaway . . . brushing aside the insects that occasionally lighted on my face” and a more suggestive “half-immersed figure of a beautiful girl” to a reminder of “the tranquilizing effects of beautiful scenery” before describing a more blatantly sexual moment in which “the girls of the house . . . would anoint my whole body with a fragrant oil,” a daily operation that Tommo “hail[s] with delight” (134). As Tommo describes it, Typean sexuality proceeds from the same paradisiacal nature that produces the Typees’ genial domesticity. Despite these environmental underpinnings, Tommo’s implicit critique of a Western domestic culture that needlessly denies male sexuality depends on Typean men’s “gentle disposition” in the home, and his portrayal of male Typean sexuality as domestically productive instead
of licentious would collapse in the presence of a more aggressive and destructive Typean masculinity (225).

Extending Bryant’s comments on the same-sex affection between Tommo and Toby, I argue that the threatening aspects of Typean men in the home evoke a similar uneasiness that continues throughout his time in the valley. Bryant highlights a particular manuscript section in which Melville “dissipate[s] the intensity of Tommo’s sharp and persistent attempts in the original passage to penetrate, ‘again & again,’ the ‘mystery’ of Toby,” but Tommo’s struggle with male intimacy is present in other places in the text and is a constituent part of his anxiety about committing to the Typee home (Bryant, *Unfolding* 130). The counterpart of the heterosexual-affirming fish-eating scene comes in a scene I have discussed before, where Mehevi notices Tommo’s trouble eating the glue-like poee-poee and hand feeds the whaler by sticking his finger into Tommo’s mouth. If, as Hughes writes, there is a tacit connection between the sensual qualities of eating and sex, then this scene shows that Tommo’s struggles with his sexuality do not end with Toby’s departure. Tommo, as both a Western bachelor figure and a newcomer to the Typee Valley, occupies an outsider domestic position that is more open homosexual desires, but in his attempt to affirm a heterosexuality more appropriate to Western domestic life, Tommo grows increasingly worried about Typean men’s penetration into the home and himself.

Tommo’s throbbing leg, pierced early in the narrative by the same kind of bamboo shoots that elsewhere form the walls of his Typean dwelling, speaks to the looming threat of penetration and Tommo’s desire to hold on to a masculine individuality opposed to homosexuality. So too does the prospect of being tattooed that begins
Tommo’s earnest separation from Typean culture. In the same way that tattooing reveals the ways in which “Tommo’s sense of dignity and his reputation—his identity—are bound up with his unmarked face,” the physical penetration of tattoo is equally evocative of the connections between Tommo’s masculine identity and a suppressed desire for the male body (Otter 40). It is worth noting that Karky, the tattooist, pursues Tommo from a well-intentioned and domestic desire to fully invite Tommo into the Typee home, but Tommo meets these advances with “unconquerable repugnance” (Melville 256). The sexual dimension of Tommo’s guarded individuality is an anxious weak spot that parallels how male identity, and bachelor identity in particular, is particularly susceptible to emasculation through benevolent domesticity.

Tommo’s fear of being changed by Typees’ gentler domestic and sexual influence informs his views on the presence of cannibalism in the valley. Suppressed and qualified for much of the text, cannibalism surfaces at the end of the narrative as a both a pressing danger and horrifying sign of Typean intrusion into his sense of self. Caleb Crain, commenting on Tommo’s fear of being drawn into the savage practice as an active participant, expertly articulates the link between the unspeakable quality of cannibalism and homosexuality in the nineteenth-century imagination: “Cannibalism and homosexuality violate the distinctions between identity and desire; between the self and the other, between what we want, what we want to be, and who we are. . . . [T]his is why the nineteenth-century American man is horrified to discover that they appeal to him” (34). Cannibalism, then, is as much an overt threat as an interpretation of the threateningly sensual penetrations of Typean manhood. More so than being finger-fed by Chief Mehevi, cannibalism is a blatantly threatening exchange of the male body. The
supposed cannibal rites are all-male affairs that use a violent physical interpenetration—the act of a Typee man eating the body of a slain warrior from outside the valley—with an excited ceremony that solidifies the bonds among members of the tribe. As scholars like Flory and Calder have noted, these cannibal rites are not a definitive presence in the text, but Tommo’s imagination follows his sense of penetration by Typean men in the home. Tommo readily accepts these signs of cannibalism because they complement his anxiety of being consumed, whether sexually, socially, or physically, by Typean men. So, Tommo creates a stark binary, adopting an oppositional and romantic manhood that overrides his earlier, more open reception to the culture of the Typee Valley. He will either conform to a sexual and social life that disturbs his Western masculine ideals and leaves him unable to control his own identity, or he will act upon his preserved inner sense of complete manly self-possession in his physical escape from the enticing influence of the Typean home.

As I have detailed above, Tommo tries hard to entertain a sentimental domestic self that would benefit from “the way empathetic feeling can cross boundaries of race, class, and gender” (Bertolini 707). He eventually rejects this sentimental mode, which he associates with idealized Typean domesticity for much of the text, upon realizing the threatening presence of masculine aggression, hierarchy, and sexuality. This masculine presence undermines his earlier views of Typee home life as well as his own still-cherished Western individuality. The collection of discoveries that lead to Tommo’s escape, which I will explain later in the chapter, demonstrate the difference between a fuller perspective of Typean domesticity and Tommo’s more sentimental conception earlier in the narrative. Instead of a kind of universal emotional outreach more in line
with sentimentality, Typee society’s characteristic benevolence functions within specific bounds that end at the limits of the valley they call home.

In a more positive formulation of Typeans’ distinct understanding of the home, Tommo’s introduction and attachment to specific places show the impact of the natural environment on his domestic and masculine identity. After his arrival in the Typee valley, the first place that Tommo visits after resting in his new Typean dwelling continues the islanders’ indirect influence on his manhood. Like his response to the overly familiar women whose immoderate affections so outrage Toby, Tommo is embarrassed, but not recalcitrant, about bathing in the presence of the watching Typee women. Kory-Kory ignores his objections, and, “regarding me as a froward, inexperienced child, . . . lifted me from the rock, and tenderly bathed my arms” (Melville 111). Before giving into Kory-Kory’s coercion—for Tommo does not say that he resisted—Tommo provides only the briefest details about his surroundings. Things change once he accepts his new position: “This over, . . . I could not avoid bursting into admiration of the scene around me.”

Significantly, his subsequent description is a populated natural landscape, with “the verdant surfaces of the large stones” capturing his attention alongside the “gay laughter pealing forth at every frolicsome incident.” This leisurely scene occurs “perhaps two hundred yards from the house” and extends the pressing familiarity and easy intimacy of the visits in the pi-pi into a natural place. Importantly, he can full enjoy these moments only after he adopts a more receptive frame of mind.

Of course, adopting a more flexible demeanor comes at some cost. Immediately before the bathing scene, Kory-Kory serves food to Tommo and Toby, but whereas Tommo is fed by hand, “as if I were an infant, . . . Toby . . . [is] allowed to help himself
after his own fashion” (Melville 109). Granted, Tommo does muster a brief complaint, but he eventually is “obliged to acquiesce.” Moreover, when Kory-Kory continues his officiousness by tucking in Tommo “with a large robe of tappa, . . . [Tommo] now felt inclined to avail [him]self of the opportunity afforded [him].” Tommo’s (eventual) willing submission to Kory-Kory’s pampering attendance is an important precursor to the more open sensibility that allows him enjoy bathing in the stream, but Tommo does not fully account for the emasculating effects of his new role on the island. He need not lift a finger to feed himself, but he also may not lift a finger. Tommo’s conflict, which is muted here given the clear benefits of his relaxed attitude toward Kory-Kory, hinges on his ability to adapt to those places and actions that will allow him to feel at home in the valley without disturbing his manly self-possession.

Tommo’s attitude toward Kory-Kory illustrates his resentment about his role within the Typee Valley and distances the whaler from the sexual implications of his intimate relationship with the islander. Without neglecting to be kind and admiring, Tommo works to create a sense of Kory-Kory’s primitive nature just as Kory-Kory’s constant devotion infantilizes and diminishes Tommo’s sense of masculine independence. The islander is introduced as “a hideous object to look upon,” with strangely braided hair “that gave him the appearance of being decorated with horns,” his face “embell[ed] . . . with three broad longitudinal stripes of tattooing,” and his body covered with enough tattoos to suggest to Tommo “the idea of a pictorial museum of natural history, or an illustrated copy of ‘Goldsmith’s Animated Nature’” (Melville 102, 103). Kory-Kory is Tommo’s “savage valet,” and while a grateful Tommo promises never “to underrate or forget thy faithful services,” this gratitude itself preserves a sense of masculine authority
over a man who, overcoming all protestation, bathes, feeds, and carries Tommo around like a child (103). Tommo’s insecurity about Kory-Kory’s attitude toward him is most pronounced at the start of his time in the valley. Tommo never completely abandons a sense of self-worth and individuality from the Typees, and while he moves toward an accommodating and communal masculine form, he retains a connection to traditional masculinity that is vulnerable to the emasculating limitations, dependence, and open affections associated with domestic life.

Some of Tommo’s comments about Kory-Kory can be interpreted as the product of his sense of cultural superiority, but they also serve to remind the reader of Tommo’s independent manhood. On the page, it is Kory-Kory who relies on Tommo to give him a voice. Interestingly, this voice is obscured and ambiguous. Kory-Kory often talks to Tommo, but Tommo does not portray his speech in the same way that he does the more respectable Mehevi. At one point, when Toby and Tommo enter a building, “Mehevi seated us on the mats, and Kory-Kory gave utterance to some unintelligible gibberish” (Melville 114). Mehevi’s more distanced relationship to Tommo poses less of a threat to Tommo’s masculinity, so where Mehevi’s communication is transparently interpreted without mention of wild gesticulation or jumbled speech, Tommo’s description of Kory-Kory here is representative of the many times in which the speech of the “savage valet” signifies little but his primitivism (103). On one occasion when Kory-Kory’s “heartfelt . . . desire to infuse into our minds proper views . . . actually succeeded in making us comprehend a considerable part of what he said,” Tommo is careful to relate how the islander’s “continued strain of unintelligible and stunning gibberish . . . actually gave me a headache for the rest of the day” (125, 126). As Tommo describes them, Kory-
Kory’s more lengthy attempts to speak with Tommo communicate little more than Kory’s ecstatic enthusiasm. By leaving Kory-Kory in a subordinate role and denying him a meaningful voice, Tommo manages his own sense of masculine inferiority. It is far easier for Tommo to be the master of a voiceless servant than to be the powerless subject of an intelligent man.

In a broader way than his specific relationship with Kory-Kory, Tommo’s understanding of taboo reflects his capacity to imagine himself as a member of Typee culture. As a pervasive system of conduct that is demonstrated and lived rather than directly taught to him, Tommo’s experience with the “strange and complex . . . system” of taboo, while linked by Tommo to the “religious institutions of . . . the Polynesian islands,” resembles the detailed codes of conduct that govern upper and middle class domestic propriety and decorum associated with the Tommo-cited *Young Men’s Own Book* (Melville 257). In keeping with the informal repose of the Typee Valley, taboo is not associated with a specific authority and can describe “[a]nything opposed to the ordinary customs of the islanders, although not expressly forbidden” (261). The Typee system of taboo governs both quotidian tasks and diplomatic relations between island tribes, but for Tommo, his ability to navigate these broad social customs marks his familiarity with Typee home life: “For several days after entering the valley I had been saluted at least fifty times in the twenty-four hours with the talismanic word ‘Taboo’ shrieked in my ears, at some gross violation of its provisions, of which I had been unconsciously been guilty” (257). Interestingly, Tommo does not immediately report this experience, saving it for the later parts of the narrative as an extension of his discomfort and fear at the prospect of being tattooed.
With this threat of involuntary assimilation into Typee society, Tommo tries to distance himself from the domestic culture and “the pleasures I had previously enjoyed,” but he only vaguely conveys the overarching religious character of taboo (Melville 256). More often, a violation like Tommo passing tobacco over an islander’s head is depicted as “a . . . piece of ill-manners, which, indeed was forbidden by the canons of good breeding, as well by the mandates of the taboo” (258). Despite his inability to fully grasp the concept or act according to its dictates, Tommo has little problem taking advantage of the benefits of his own taboo distinction. In doing so, Tommo further blurs the line between taboo and domestic values: “[W]ere it not that from the first moment I had entered the valley the natives had treated me with uniform kindness, I should have supposed that their conduct afterwards was to be ascribed to the fact that I had received this sacred investiture” (259). Typean taboo here is almost indistinguishable from the welcoming, generous qualities that form Tommo’s conception of the islanders’ essential domesticity. Tommo’s personal sense of alienation from Typee culture, which increases as the Typees actively express their desire to include them in their community and physically mark his inner identity, drives his attempts to connect taboo to a strange and complex religion.

Despite Tommo’s tendency to describe taboo in domestic terms, the religious link between taboo and tattoo is worth exploring, as much for Tommo’s complicated portrayal of Typee religion as for the ways in which Typee religion compares or contrasts with the Christian missionaries that Tommo criticizes. Despite the powerful influence of taboo, Tommo does not describe a fervently religious community: “In fact religious affairs were at a very low ebb: all such matters sat very lightly upon the thoughtless inhabitants; and,
in the celebration of many of their strange rites, they appeared to seek a sort of childish amusement” (Melville 205). With the exception of the religious official Kolory, the islanders casual treatment of an idol of their deity, “thus cuffd about, cajoled, and shut up in a box” elicits Tommo’s confusion and final assessment “that the islanders in the Pacific have no fixed and definite ideas of religion” (209, 210).

A more reverent and charitable description of Typee religion would provide a rhetorically beneficial alternative to Tommo’s critique of Christian missionary efforts in Nukuheva. His account of Typee religion, however, does not delve any deeper than these descriptions of mistreated idols and impious islanders. Thus, his comments on the islanders’ lack of faith have a dual and less effective function as a both a parody of decayed Western Christian values and a description of “the Typees as a back-slidden generation . . . [who] require a spiritual revival” (Melville 211). Tommo comes close to advocating missionary work, but his general terminology allows for the ironic comparison to Christianity as well as the possibility that this spiritual revival should come from within the culture. Apart from this tense comparison and Melville’s rhetorical goals regarding Christian and Western influence in the South Pacific, Tommo’s attempt to capture Typean religion ultimately amounts to an account of a people who “submit . . . to no laws human or divine—always excepting the thrice mysterious taboo” (210). The Christian missionaries fail then, because Typees are not amenable to religious influence, and any contact between Western and Polynesian culture will be necessarily coercive and violent without respect to the “thrice mysterious” domestic values of an island society wholly structured around the home.
Indeed, much of the system of Typee taboo is concerned with distinguishing those spaces and actions that are reserved for men and those that are reserved for women. The men have their own “Ti,” a place like a fraternal lodge in which they can drink, smoke pipes, and dine on “puarkee” apart from women. When Tommo steps into a house in which some women are making “a peculiar kind” of tappa, he is “startled by a scream, like that of a whole boarding-school of young ladies” and learns that “every stage of its manufacture was guarded by a rigorous taboo, which interdicted the whole masculine gender from even so much as touching it” (Melville 258-259). The American middle-class household follows a similar logic of unspoken rules that resemble Typee taboo. Like the tabooed space that Tommo describes here, antebellum domestic culture assigned women a circumscribed domestic space associated with specific kinds of labor more than positive freedoms. With this in mind, Tommo’s inability to fully comprehend the vast system of Typee taboo suggests that he is never truly at home in the valley, but taboo is a slippery concept both to Tommo and to the islanders themselves.

There is a rule against allowing women in a canoe, but Tommo is able to override this by requesting “Fayaway’s dispensation from this portion of the taboo” (Melville 159). One could read Tommo’s sense of limitation and restriction as an implied critique of female roles in the household, and Tommo’s discomfort at the taboos against women would support this reading, foregrounded by Tommo’s opinion that “it was high time the islanders be taught a little gallantry” regarding his success in freeing Fayaway from the canoeing taboo. Melville’s characterization of Tommo, however, is a far deeper examination of male identity, and without discounting a possible critique of female domestic roles, I read Tommo’s treatment of Typee women through the lens of his
identity as a man within the home. He is surprised when he cannot enter into all areas of the Typee home, and he most keenly resents the taboos that limit his mobility and place a barrier between him and his desires. Certainly, Tommo’s negative opinion of the taboo that forbids women to enter a canoe is far from misogynistic, but his ability to free his lover Fayaway from this taboo is as much a male victory as it is a gesture toward gender equality.

Most notable for its departure from his outwardly accommodating attitude in the valley, Tommo is happy to take assertive action and grant Fayaway access to the canoe. His idyllic canoe trips with Fayaway are a repeated reminder of this active role in Typee culture, but it is a role that is informed by his individual identity apart from Typee culture. Compared to all of the scenes of Kory-Kory bathing Tommo, feeding him, and carrying him on his back, such a “delightful little party on the lake [with] the damsel, Kory-Kory, . . . and me on his back a part of the way” represents a significant island of authority in which he can feel magnanimous towards a woman within a culture that so often emasculates him (Melville 159). Most importantly, Tommo’s defiance is necessarily limited, and the limited range of his authority preserves his identity from Typee influence. A more active role in negotiating Typee taboo would either anger the Typees or would further fix his identity to the Typee Valley, both of which are unacceptable to Tommo.

An account of the gender distinctions that inform Tommo’s manhood would be incomplete without examining the most masculine site within the Typee valley, the Ti. As Tommo describes it, the path to the Ti is darker and more picturesque than the sunnier space of Typee homes:
The path was obviously the most beaten one in the valley, . . . yet, until I grew more familiar with its impediments, it seemed as difficult to travel as the recesses of a wilderness. Part of it swept round an abrupt rise in the ground, the surface of which was broken by frequent inequalities, and thickly strewn with projecting masses of rocks, whose summits were often hidden from view by the drooping foliage of the luxuriant vegetation.

(Melville 113)

Tommo’s account of the Ti itself, which I will discuss shortly, includes many common features of male domestic life, but I argue that this place has less of an influence on Tommo’s conception of domestic manhood when compared to the typical Typee home. The above passage conveys a much different relationship with the environment than Tommo’s descriptions of pacific streams, breadfruit groves, and comfortable bamboo dwellings. The path to the Ti is well-worn, but it is difficult to traverse without experience. In the other places in the valley, the Typee’s domestic relationship with the environment makes the rainfall more refreshing, the fruit more palatable, and the environment more accessible, agreeable, and inviting for the newcomer Tommo and for all the members of the community. Given its long and steady use, it is notable that the Typee men preserve these hidden impediments, suggesting that the path to the Ti requires a more traditionally masculine hardihood than the open and communal domestic manhood that is so rewarding for Tommo elsewhere in the valley. The steady use of this trail does not confer benefits to everyone equally, and its persistent obstacles reward one’s effort and experience on an individual level.
The absence of women is the Ti’s defining feature. Protected by “[t]he merciless prohibitions of the taboo . . . from the imaginary pollution of a woman’s presence,” Tommo signals a certain amount of disdain from the outset, but he does not go so far as to bristle against such an exclusion (Melville 113). The Ti itself, whose “interior presented the appearance of an immense lounging-place, the entire floor being strewn with successive layers of mats,” is a place for men to smoke a pipe, “sink into a kind of drowsy repose, drink an intoxicating ‘arva’ as a minister to social enjoyment,” and enjoy a feast when the occasion calls for it (113, 114-115, 195). As I suggested earlier, Tommo’s early discomfort at the prohibition against women does not fully characterize his attitude toward the place. As he explains later, he eventually makes it a habit to visit the “bachelor chiefs of the Ti,” and he comes to appreciate the taboo: “The Ti was a right jovial place. It did my heart, as well as my body, good to visit it. Secure from female intrusion, there was no restraint upon the hilarity of the warriors, who, like the gentlemen of Europe after the cloth is drawn, and the ladies retire, freely indulged their mirth” (181). These endorsements, however, have a certain limit, and there is a sinister aspect to its freedom from restraint.

The dimly-lit corners of the Ti may be relaxing, but they do not inspire the same benevolent charms as a Typean house or the domestic natural spaces that Tommo enjoys. When he first enters the Ti, Tommo notes the muskets and weapons hanging on the wall, and these implements of war signal a level of prohibitive masculinity that does not belong in the trusting and open space of the home. While there are bamboo spears inside the house of Marheyo as well as the Ti, Marheyo’s are “arranged in tasteful figures” on the wall, whereas the “muskets . . . [and] rude spears” of the Ti are simply “ranged against
the bamboo on one side,” suggesting to Tommo that “[t]his . . . must be the armory of the tribe” (Melville 102, 113). The spears on the wall of Marheyo’s home are decorative, but the bleakly utilitarian arrangement of the Ti’s weapons are a subtle reminder of this place’s violence and isolation from Typee domestic life.

In Tommo’s first visit to the Ti, Toby’s comments give voice to this unspoken connection between Typee domesticity and the potential for violence: “‘Why, for what do you suppose the devils have been feeding us up in this style during the last three days, unless it were for something that you are too much frightened to talk about? Look at that Kory-Kory there!—has he not been stuffing you with his confounded mushes, just in the way they treat swine before they kill them?’” (Melville 116-117). These words are a key to Tommo’s anxieties within the Typee Valley, and they hit upon his concern for his physical well-being as much as his masculine identity. As I have explained, Tommo’s time in the valley shows him the benefits of a mindset that is open to others’ charity and to the pleasures of a domestic and natural environment that he cannot completely control, but he is unable to banish the idea that the Typee charms are only superficially domestic and are ultimately intended as a tool to exploit him and ensure his cooperation.

On the Dolly, Captain Vangs uses his control over the domestic environment to compel his crew to work for him. In contrast, Toby’s comments on Typean cannibalism imply an insidious and deceptive domestic life that exploits and endangers men by manipulating sensual and sexual desire. Toby’s thoughts here resonate with Tommo even in the absence of a cannibal threat. Tommo’s leisurely domestic life, bending to avoid of any kind of antagonism or hardship, could strip his sense of masculine power and leave him as a kind of domesticated swine, wholly dependent on others for his well-being and
vulnerable to the same improper desires that define the abject role of the bachelor. Tommo’s doubts about the true character of Typean domesticity and the masculine form he adopts within it depend on how much of the savage darkness of the Ti reaches into brighter Typee homes. Tommo is shocked to discern signs of human remains of a cannibal rite at the Ti, but Tommo’s horror first emerges shortly before this discovery, when he learns that he has been sharing a home with the shrunken head remains of the victims of Typee violence (Melville 276, 269).

The Ti plays a significant role in the tribe, but its homelike features are incompatible with the general domesticity of the valley. Where openness and invitation characterizes most of the Typee Valley, the Ti and its surrounding Taboo Groves are defined by their exclusivity. Women are not allowed in the Ti, and, during the cannibal ceremony, Tommo himself is excluded. Tommo’s direct comments on Kory-Kory’s and Mehevi’s p/maternal behavior are evidence of Tommo’s tense and divided masculine self-image, but his exclusion from the cannibal rite does not register as strongly as his “fearful curiosity” about the grotesque evidence of violence hanging in packages over the same space where he sleeps each night (Melville 274). This moment occurs soon after Tommo’s fear over being tattooed as an irrevocable member of their culture, and Tommo’s relative lack of concern about being excluded from the “hideous rite” further signals his disillusionment from the island community. Tommo cannot fully engage with domestic life because he is unable to find a place in society or within himself that is free from the gendered spaces and roles that shape the Western ideology of the home, even in a place he first sees as fundamentally domestic.
Typean taboo functions as an expression of Tommo’s unstable masculinity. Tommo uses taboo to establish his own uniqueness, and his own taboo designation satisfies his desire for a masculine individuality that does not overtly interfere with his sociable and outwardly receptive identity in the valley. As mentioned earlier, Tommo’s successful campaign to relax the taboo that would otherwise prohibit Fayaway from her canoe rides functions as a more overt assertion of his Western masculine identity, but this act also hints at those elements of taboo that threaten to collapse Tommo’s experience with Typee domesticity. Tommo wants to assume that Typee society is wholly domestic to secure his manhood from his emasculating physical weakness and his dependence on others, but the very same taboo that signals his individuality and manhood also establishes gender separation. Similarly, the Tommo-endorsed Ti has a more violent function associated with its male-only status. Significantly, this savage purpose is covered by a taboo against Tommo’s presence, which the normally deferential Kory-Kory enforces “with an unusual vehemence of manner” (Melville 273). Tommo tries to use taboo to transcend the social system of the valley and establish his individuality without compromising his receptive demeanor, but as seen here, this taboo can place him in a subordinate position. Given the power of the taboo against Tommo, his own participation in this system is a tacit acknowledgement of the ways in which masculinity is a product of environmentally-specific domestic codes.

Taboo is an effective stand in for local domestic rules, ones that depend on a person’s experience within a specific community, neighborhood, yard, or valley. A stranger who might transgress the Typee rule against passing something over someone’s head might also disobey the Pyncheon house rule against upsetting Clifford in The House
of the Seven Gables or repeat one of Millhouse’s uncouth contributions to polite Southern society in Woodcraft. These taboos might be different, but for Tommo and the men in these texts, their attempts to prove their masculinity will not succeed unless they acknowledge the gendered and environmentally-specific rules that define a domestic environment. These are social and physical rules, and they reflect the difficulty of adapting to a new environment. Tommo, unlike the more successful men in the other texts, fails to recognize how masculinity entails an overarching, domestic commitment to a specific place.

Instead of anger or alienation, Tommo is most concerned with the intrusion of Typee culture into the areas of his active home life and independent identity. Tommo “[does] not anticipate a compliance with [his] request” to visit the Ti after noticing that “all the inmates of the house . . . departed in the direction of the Taboo Groves” (Melville 274). More striking than this exclusion is the dark ceremony’s seeming closeness to the daily life of the Typee people. Tommo acquiesces to Kory-Kory’s suggestion to bathe in the stream and, “[o]n our coming back to the house, I was surprised to find that all its inmates had returned, and were lounging on the mats as usual, although the drums still sounded from the groves.” It is not the rapid return of these men that so surprises Tommo; it is their relaxed attitude regarding the still-in-progress ceremony. Tommo’s following comments bear this out, as he notes how the members of other households are “reclining at their ease, or pursuing some light occupation, as if nothing unusual were going forward” (275). These images of relaxed islanders, fully in the restful domestic mode that Tommo has praised throughout the narrative, serve to compound Tommo’s horror on the following page. Tommo may not feel a personal or direct threat to his masculinity or
bodily well-being at this point in the same way that he is when pursued by the tattooist, but these images show that Typean domestic life operates alongside the savage ceremonies without the islanders sensing any problem. Tommo’s attempts to forge a new masculine identity amenable to the home-loving Typee culture collapse when he is confronted with the savagery allowed to coexist within the culture he had formerly constructed as a domestic ideal.

Sanborn argues that the signs of cannibalism that Tommo discovers are an important feature within a larger system of Typee signification. Sanborn describes Mehevi’s ornamentation “as . . . one more metonymic appendage to [Mehvi’s inner being]” and a sign of his elevated status that defines his inner identity much like how Tommo fears tattooing as an external mark of his own inner self (Cannibal 107).

Referencing the importance of outward appearance in Typean culture, Sanborn claims that the gory evidence that Tommo discovers is a “monument, signifying not only the worth of the tribe in relation to its enemies, but also the worth of the chiefs and priests in relation to the rest of the people of Typee” (113). Thus, writes Sanborn, “inequalities of power among the Typee are real, and . . . they depend not only on gender . . . but also class.” Sanborn notes that Tommo is at best ambivalent towards the gender-based inequalities of power and is only really upset “when the prohibitions on women get in the way of his own pleasure,” and these class-based inequalities upset Tommo’s conception of a generous and open Typee society and move his vision away from the domestic ideal he envisions earlier in the narrative (226). While Tommo first assumes that the Typees are motivated by straightforward emotion, his anxiety increases when he considers how Typean social division and authority motivate a form of savagery “understood as the
strategic and ceaseless ornamentation of one’s self with signs” (116). The danger lies in the ways that these signs come to determine Tommo’s identity.

In *Melville and Repose*, Bryant addresses a relationship between Melville’s whimsical narrator and the Typee society that seems by turns benevolent and imprisoning. Bryant argues that, in addition to the ways in which Tommo’s amiable whimsy combats readers’ doubts about the veracity of the narrative, Melville “makes Tommo’s rebellion credible [by] . . . present[ing] his act as a return to, rather than a destruction of, picturesque domesticity” (Bryant, *Repose* 135). Domestic life is a key element in Tommo’s conflicting representation of Typee culture, and a deeper reading of Tommo’s conception of domestic life and his physical surroundings helps to illuminate the rapid narrative changes that send him from a enthusiastic advocate of Typee culture to a desperate escapee. Bryant also points to the way in which Tommo links the Typees to the natural world as a way of justifying their lifestyle. If the Typees’ “inherent benevolence” is associated with primitive closeness to nature as expressed by a “superior domesticity,” then the “repose made tense by the ‘footpad’ shark” means that Tommo’s awareness of the “voicelessness of Nature” extends to a naturalized domesticity in which the threat of violence operates through the unspoken act of cannibalism (143, 139). By universalizing domestic culture, Tommo ultimately indicts the home life of Polynesia and Western culture alike. Both Tommo and Typee, it seems, have something to hide behind a facade of instinctual benevolence, and Melville seems to suggest that a fully domesticated male figure is both threatening in his veiled aggression within the home and threatened by the domestic culture that would efface his individuality.
Tommo’s struggles with Typean of manhood are also the product of a changing view of the Typean home life that he so idealizes. While Tommo’s first impulse is to naturalize the islanders, much of his anxiety and sense of captivity can be traced to his growing sense of the more complicated relationships and identities he once tried to subsume under “one household, whose members were bound by the ties of strong affection” (Melville 240). Later, Tommo’s fear of being tattooed and his discoveries of signs of cannibalism deflate this ideal image. Mihic explains how, instead of naturalized islanders, Melville’s novel ultimately depicts “states of artifice meet[ing] states of artifice” (Mihic 53). Given the Typees’ potential for deception, the unsettling glimpses of half-hidden sharks stand in for the potential savagery under the benevolent surface of Typee home life. A fuller commitment to domestic life would open this artificial barrier and allow Tommo to thrive on the island, but, as seen in Tommo’s perception of cannibalism’s domestic presence and the masculine penetrations into his vulnerable bachelor sexuality, there are real dangers to this commitment.

Both Tommo and the Typees have something to hide from each other, and Tommo himself notes a potential breach of domestic propriety in a footnote on “the thieving propensities some of them evince in their intercourse with foreigners” (Melville 236). Sanborn’s reading goes further than Mihic, demonstrating how Typees practice artifice and manipulate ornamentation, tattoos, and even the signs of cannibalism “in order to establish and maintain the social distinctions that structure relations between and within societies” (Sanborn, Cannibal 113). Sanborn describes a more individually-motivated arrangement than that which is motivated by the more communal and “natural” bonds of affection. It is easy enough to justify deception toward outsiders, which perhaps
explains Tommo’s lack of concern about Typee dishonesty toward foreigners; he sees himself as a trustworthy member of their home. Signs of the Typees’ internal conflicts and domestic discord, which begin with the threat of being tattooed and culminate with the half-hidden evidence of cannibalism, most forcefully collapse Tommo’s conception of their ideal domesticity. Tommo neither devalues nor directly speaks against his earlier and sunnier views of Typee home life, and the Typees’ domestic shortcomings are more of an implicit claim suggested by his anxiety and eventual escape late in the narrative. Tommo’s ideal remains intact, and so then, does his ideal of receptive masculinity. The open question, then, is whether any real culture or male identity can approach Tommo’s domestic ideal, even in the secluded and all-providing environment of the Typee Valley. Tommo’s potential for a revised masculinity looks bleak at the close of the narrative, as it is only by assuming a defiant and active masculine identity that he is able to escape the Typees’ imperfect home life.

Tommo’s thoughts about the Typees change repeatedly throughout the course of the novel, and Tommo’s movement from domestic receptivity toward doubt and desperation is as suggestive of the Typee culture as it is of the domestic comforts that Melville has thus far used to showcase their benevolence. When faced with the possibility that he will be tattooed—bodily inscribing his identity to match the society whose comforts he has enjoyed for so long—Tommo begins his most earnest attempts to escape the island. As I have noted, Tommo experiences the joys of his receptive identity and is mostly untroubled by his circumscribed agency, but he cannot fully commit to the lifestyle that is so generously offered to him because he does not completely abandon his identity as an independent, Western male. Certainly, his fears about Typee violence are
associated with his strong connections to Western culture, but it is equally expressive of the kind of masculinity that he first brought with him upon escaping the *Dolly*. He enjoys domestic life, but he does not want that life to define his identity.

This is domestic masculinity in Melville’s text: A man who enjoys participating in the domestic world but strongly rejects its influence and limitations. An earlier article by Judith Slater describes the more contented domestic masculinity of Melville’s later male protagonists, who “illustrate the importance of accepting certain limitations to the search for self-knowledge and the knowledge of the universe” (Slater 279). In *Typee*, however, Tommo cannot find this balance, and his “failure to sustain a marginal existence between two cultures” leads to his self-conscious efforts to guard his identity against the sensual and sexual desires that would redefine his innermost man (Bryant, *Repose* 183). While Bryant is describing the Western-Typee dichotomy in Melville’s novel, Tommo is equally unable to balance his attachment to the home with what Bryant calls “[t]he roving syndrome,” which describes how “Tommo and Toby act almost exclusively upon whim,” with shifting emotions complementing their wandering mobility. Indeed, Tommo may want only a life of ease on the island, but he wants to be able to choose that life himself.

Domestic life requires a fixed presence and a fixed identity that Tommo cannot accept, and Tommo’s desire for mobility and self-definition fuels his distrust of the Typees as well as his perception of his own captivity.

This persistent interest in independent masculinity drives Tommo’s anxiety about being tattooed. Otter explains how tattoo’s association with racial mutability threatened to fix Tommo’s identity on racial terms, marking him as non-white and preventing him from “mov[ing] undetected through American society” (41). More relevant to my own
argument, Otter’s work reveals the connection between Tommo’s whiteness and his
privileged status apart from the islanders, as Karky, the tattooist, “does not let Tommo
passively watch” and instead gazes back and attempts to draw Tommo into Typee society
(39).³ Karky’s interest in Tommo need not be read as an act of confinement. Karky wants
to tattoo Tommo to bring him into the community. Tommo has been contributing to the
Typee home in small ways throughout his time in the valley, but Karky forces him to take
an active domestic role and actively define his identity with the Typee community. Thus,
while receptivity and outward accommodation allow Tommo a way into Typee culture, a
more fully domestic masculinity involves accepting that contribution to the home must
necessarily redefine a man’s identity and disrupt his manly self-possession. Tommo
attempts to characterize Typee home life as a series of naps, meals, and baths with
Typean women, but his engagement with this domestic culture involves more than
passively enjoying its comforts. To truly be a part of the home, Tommo must commit to
its influence on his identity. With this in mind, Tommo’s flight from the tattooist is a
rejection of Typee culture and moves him back to the individually-active and self-
interested mindset of romantic masculinity.

Tommo’s flight signifies a failure to sustain a masculine identity within the Typee
Valley and its idealized culture of the home. The majority of the text is an extended
praise of Typean society, and the small section that ends with his conscious escape is a
strong contradiction of his otherwise glowing report. Melville is not overtly critical of
domestic culture in itself. Instead, *Typee* shows how men’s effort to shape the gendered
spaces of the home is at odds with itself. One cannot treat the home as both a sanctuary
for masculinity and a feminine space that distinguishes one’s separate masculine
character. Tommo’s story dramatizes this fundamental tension: His life amongst the ideally-domestic Typees moves him towards a more flexible attitude in line with the communal character of the home, but his investment in a male identity unaffected by the homelike character of the Typee Valley places him within a group of cannibals who use domestic taboos for a savage purpose that violates the pleasant, non-threatening lifestyle that they claim to uphold. Ultimately, Tommo’s failure is a message about the importance of committing to the same domestic attachments that define masculinity. *Typee* shows that man will always be a part of domestic culture, and the home’s greatest threat to masculinity lies in men’s denial of its influence on their identity.
CHAPTER 5. HOME, WORK, AND FRONTIER MANHOOD IN CAROLINE KIRKLAND’S *A NEW HOME, WHO’LL FOLLOW?: OR, GLIMPSES OF WESTERN LIFE*

*A New Home, Who’ll Follow?,* published in 1839 under the pseudonym Mary Clavers, is a thinly-veiled chronicle of Caroline Kirkland’s personal experiences in the Michigan town of Pinckney (renamed Montacute in the text) that she and her husband founded and helped develop. It comprises multiple sketches of the environment and characters she encountered on the antebellum frontier and emphasizes the particular hardships faced by transplanted Eastern women who often struggled (with little or limited success) to establish and maintain familiar domestic spaces in the midst of a new and rapidly-changing economic and social landscape. *A New Home* includes bold and direct criticism of frontier individualism and men’s romantic notions of the frontier environment, favoring a man’s contribution to the home through stable industry and criticizing the many ways in which drunken, lazy men and ambitious, would-be moguls fail to recognize the importance of domestic life in a remote place like Montacute.

As Sandra Zagarell notes in her introduction to the 1990 Rutgers edition of the text, “the slow process of community and cultural formation is *A New Home*’s central ‘action.’” and this focus on the larger space of the town means that no one character, not even Clavers herself can be understood as the central focus of the text (“Introduction” xxix). Instead, Clavers uses a series of smaller stories and sketches to depict the many
different personalities and environments that guide the development of Montacute, Michigan. Granted, Clavers does receive more attention in the text than other members of the town, but she does not focus on the drama of her experience such that it defines the book as a personal account of her development more than the growth of the town. With this in mind, the general outline of Kirkland’s book can best be understood by the different topics that Clavers describes rather than a series of events leading to a conclusion. Zagarell divides the text into three sections. In the first, Clavers “satirizes an eastern-based vision of the West as unspoiled ‘nature’” and introduces the Western culture of which Montacute is a part, the second section highlights “the vexed coexistence of western- and eastern-based cultures,” and the final one moves toward “the mutual acceptance on which a new and genuinely hybrid culture of the West must be founded” (xxxii). Zagarell’s is a sound summary of the text’s general progression, but the core of Kirkland’s text consists of Clavers’s descriptions of her neighbors in Montacute. Certainly, there are general moments that mark Clavers as newly-arrived in the beginning and a seasoned Michigander at the end, but these chronological sign-posts are more often used in the service of her discussion of the town as a whole.

_A New Home_ begins with Clavers relating her journey West to Montacute, specifically focusing on the hardships she encounters in Michigan. She stays at the cramped and sparsely-furnished homes and inns of settlers whose coarse manners act as a rough introduction to the indecorous domestic life of much of her neighbors in the town. Other than these nights spent in the homes of other Michiganders, “there is no other incident more alarming” than the dramatic account of her wagon stuck in the mud (Kirkland 7). Unkempt homes, uncivil neighbors, and the struggles of an isolated,
uncomfortable environment are many of the difficulties she will face as an Eastern transplant to the interior of Michigan. Once arrived in Montacute, Clavers faces the difficulties of furnishing her cabin, waiting for her larger frame-house to be built, living with the privations and added labor required to maintain a frontier home, and finally, adapting to the jarring differences of Montacute society that offend her Eastern gentility. Clavers’s individual progression anchors the narrative without defining its focus, and the majority of the text is Clavers’s story of Montacute told through sketches, vignettes, and pointed comments on the people who live there.

Even before Clavers settles into her Montacute home, her future neighbor Mrs. Danforth tells the story of how she came to Michigan. It important to note that most of the vignettes that Clavers uses to characterize the town have a series of lessons or specific points that Clavers specifically highlights in the paragraphs that immediately follow. Mrs. Danforth’s story is an example of this rhetorical strategy. After describing the circumstances that led her to Montacute, Danforth ends her short chronicle with a proud description of the many acres of land that she and her husband now own in Michigan. Without directly admonishing the Danforth family, Clavers follows her neighbor’s account with a critique of men more interested in abstract real estate wealth than the more immediate and pressing domestic concerns on the frontier. Clavers may spend a lot of time getting used to life in remote Michigan, but she does not withhold her criticism of the ways in which an immaterial and unrealistic view of the landscape detracts from the home life of the people who live there.

Eventually, after several nights in cabins of varying discomfort to her unaccustomed Eastern tastes and after many delays due to absent building materials and
indolent carpenters, Clavers witnesses the completed construction of her frame house in Montacute. Throughout this time, Clavers spends a great deal of energy negotiating with the community. She urges the inactive carpenters of her frame house to work faster, she tries to hire a number of reluctant neighbor girls as live-in maids, and she comes to terms with the fact that most of her numerous belongings and furnishings can neither fit inside her smaller house nor impress the men and women of Monacute. In this isolated town where wealth means much less than in an Eastern city, Clavers can do little to distinguish herself among residents who claim an equal social standing. In the most upsetting example of this leveled status, Clavers disdains having to share her “household conveniences” with less generous neighbors but is loath to commit the “unpardonable crime” of refusing such a request (Kirkland 67). Clavers’s social discomforts mirror her material deprivations. Baking bread is more difficult without a proper oven, milk and eggs are scarce, and eventually, “[her] ideas of comfort [a]re narrowed down to a well-swept room with a bed in one corner, and cooking-apparatus in another” (44). As Zagarell has noted, Clavers’s development as a character and her awareness of the town depend on her ability to adapt to these narrowed conditions. It is not an easy or pleasant process, but she gets used to the increased demands on her time and materials and the readjustment of her sense of place in the town.

Clavers makes a clear effort to adjust her values and expectations within this new environment, but her domestic values are far less flexible than those of Tommo in *Typee*. Whereas Tommo indulges in a charitable view of Typean culture that he works to fit within common domestic values, Clavers has more stable ideas about a proper home and is far more explicit about the homes that do not meet her standards. As a way of
illustrating both the material and social conditions that define her ideal home, Clavers offers a varied group of longer anecdotes and vignettes about the people living in Montacute. Mrs. Danforth’s story is an early example, and having described most of the difficulties of conforming to the town and settling into her new home there, Clavers begins a series of these sketches, many of which, like Danforth’s tale, have a distinct bearing on the role of men in the home.

The story of Philo Doubleday comes immediately after Clavers’s comments on sharing with her neighbors, playing upon the same class sensibilities that motivate her discomfort with the practice. Clavers appreciates Philo as much for his readiness to do work in the neighborhood as for the intellect he evinces in dealing with his wife’s complaints by writing pithy, rhyming couplets in chalk, “efforts of genius” that warrant Clavers’s undisguised admiration (Kirkland 70). The upper-class Mr. B— does not fare so well in Clavers’s estimation, and his deteriorating house and distressed wife are the product of his distaste for the kinds of domestic and professional work that Philo happily performs to better his home and community. The impoverished Newland family fails for a different reason. They are hard workers, but they isolate themselves from the community by taking advantage of neighbors’ charity and spending their money on distasteful, whiskey-fueled parties with other like-minded families. For men and their families, neither work nor refinement alone can sustain the kind of home that Clavers favors in the town. Likewise, an indolent disposition ranks alongside careless drunkenness as selfish and un-domestic features of Montacute society that Clavers would eradicate before they destroy homes and communities.
Of course, there is more to Montacut masculinity than avoiding whiskey and working hard, and Clavers’s lengthiest stories showcase a more positive domestic situation and the importance of both the amount and purpose of a man’s labor. Henry Beckworth’s is the story of a long-suffering lover. While Beckworth’s love for Agnes Irving is far from unrequited, he has neither a job nor any money, so he “go[es] to sea, in order that he might have immediate command of a trifling sum which he could devote to her service” (Kirkland 90). Eventually, after years of unexpected hardships at sea and disappointments at home, Beckworth “retouche[s] his native shore, a richer man than he had ever been in his life,” and he marries Agnes and builds “a great, noble, yankee ‘palace of pine boards’” in Michigan (87, 97). Clavers, whose disapproval of men engrossed in work and absent from the home is a running theme in the text, praises Beckworth because, despite his years-long removal from his future wife, he works to purchase an acceptable home life with Agnes instead of accumulating wealth for its own sake. Labor, not just within the home but in the market, fields, or merchant vessels of male professional life, is crucial to maintain the home, and Beckworth’s narrative emphasizes the realistic need for male professional labor that is especially strong in frontier Michigan. Clavers does not embrace those men who neglect the home in order to make more money, and the most important point of Beckworth’s story is that he ends up in the home that he worked so hard to attain. Clavers’s domestic ideal must be purchased through men’s labor within the home and men’s professional labor for the home, and even if men work to realize a comfortable domestic life for their family, theirs is an incomplete and insufficient manhood if they are not present within the home.
The experience of the Hastings family connects this need for domestic comfort and professional labor to a balance between a romantic and realistic perspective on an isolated frontier environment like Montacute. The last of Clavers’s accounts of her neighbors, the Hastings’s story leads them to an ideal approach to home life and labor in the Michigan interior. Young Everard and Cora Hastings’s journey to Michigan begins when they elope and travel from their New York City home to a wooded tract of land upstate. Wealthier than Henry Beckworth, Everard and Cora are less concerned with the demands of life away from the city, and, deciding to build their home on an unfarmable yet picturesque outcropping, they are motivated by romantic notions of the wilderness without any real sense of the hardships associated with such a life. However, both illness and the birth of their baby bring their conditions into sharp focus, and with some help from their parents, they move to a place on the outskirts of Montacute where, “[v]isionary still,” Everard matches his romantic notions with the labor of “a practical farmer” (Kirkland 169). Just as there is room for male labor outside the home, Clavers acknowledges the pleasures of a romantic mindset here, even though she spends a great deal of energy criticizing the men who operate based on frontier visions that neglect the difficulties of the frontier home. The important distinction is that Hastings’s airy visions occur within the realm of his household and are not the basis of a professional ambition that would distance him from domestic life. Hastings’s romance and Beckworth’s absence both fit within Clavers’s understanding of men and the home because their first priority is the creation and maintenance of a comfortable household. Once Everard meets the needs of the home, his romantic indulgences can only add to the charms of a Montacute home.
Clavers ends her text by adopting an attitude that mirrors the lessons of the Hastings’s story. She has addressed the physical hardships of Montacute and its isolation from the luxuries and services of urban life in the East. She has also shown herself able to meet these physical demands as well as the jarring social differences of the community. By adapting to this new environment by taking on additional labors, Clavers works to maintain her domestic ideals in a town whose residents do not often meet these same standards. Once she establishes her household and her place within the community, she spends some time indulging in a romantic description of the beauty, charms, and abstract liberty of her forested surroundings. By meeting a different environment with increased labor more often than a changed perspective, Clavers does not leave a great deal of room for personal growth beyond the changes she must make out of necessity. Her effusive descriptions later in the text suggest that this new landscape can bring about a positive change in her perspective, but she is only open to these influences after overcoming the social and physical obstacles to a stable, well-furnished, and well-mannered home life in Montacute.

The two most prominent strains of scholarship on *A New Home* examine how Kirkland depicts a woman’s perspective and how her text fits within the context and features of realism. A smaller group of studies address the influence of Western fiction, humor, and common frontier tropes, but Kirkland’s realism and her powerful female voice are the subjects of the most critical attention. The scholars looking at Kirkland’s representation of female values are often equally interested in how class shapes her depiction of a specific kind of white, middle-class femininity, and the studies of her realist inclinations note how she does not strictly adhere to what would later cohere into
the conventions of realism later in the nineteenth century. David Leverenz’s work examines masculinity from a wider perspective than the frontier tropes that other scholars study in Kirkland’s text. His chapter on Kirkland in *Manhood and the American Renaissance* identifies a number of critical moments that effectively characterize the general form and critical stakes of my work, but whereas Leverenz reads women’s influence and domestic attachments as insignificant compared to men’s professional interest in shaping the town, this chapter sees female authority within the home as the center of the community and the most powerful means of moving the town towards Clavers’s civilized, domestic ideal.

Readings by Sandra Zagarell, Judith Fetterley, Paul Lauter, and Annette Kolodny are perhaps the most widely-recognized studies of *A New Home*. While Fetterley and Lauter address the text’s realist qualifications more closely than Zagarell, all three provide a broad explication of the text, and Zagarell’s introduction to the 1990 Rutgers edition is a particularly thorough resource. Kolodny’s work, however, is the most useful in its focus on gender and the environment, detailing the importance of women in determining the social and physical qualities of the community. In particular, my reading of Kirkland’s masculine ideal builds from Kolodny’s explanation of romance as an earned luxury only available to those who first attend to the real hardships of the natural environment. Kolodny’s writing overlaps with discussions of realism and female culture present in other scholarship on Kirkland’s text, but the applicability of Kolodny’s ideas is evidence of her own perceptive analysis rather than a reflection of a limited range of critical work on *A New Home*. 
A major contribution to this varied group of scholarship on Kirkland’s text, Lori Merish’s article places *A New Home, Who’ll Follow?* into the logic of sentimental materialism that Merish later extends in her book. Kirkland’s text is a particularly fitting example of the ways in which emotional attachment to a house’s “[r]efined objects . . . deemed, by many, to be essential to the emotional culture of civilized persons” signals the social status of a home (Merish 489). This form of “pious consumption” is largely a female concern, and, commenting on how the strategic absence of Native Americans allows Kirkland to “direct . . . her civilizing efforts towards those more tractable and manageable—explicitly, members of the lower classes and men,” Merish effectively explains how the physical space of Kirkland’s fictional household appeals to a specific image of race and class (Merish 490, 495). Kirkland’s conception of domestic civility operates through distinct objects and spaces, each with a carefully delineated purpose, that “shape the nuances of bodily experience and organize an individual’s most intimate exertions and pleasures” (Merish 498). Merish’s description of refinement through material culture deftly explains the domestic goal toward which Kirkland seeks to direct the men in her text. My study of manhood in Kirkland’s text finds this formulation of household civility as a major motivation for men’s labor, a privileged end that Kirkland repeatedly distinguishes from misdirected male industry that seeks only profit.

Instead of the class and materialism of Merish’s essay, Dawn Keetley covers issues of race and gender more broadly, writing about how Kirkland’s narrator, Mary Clavers, operates at “a point at which domestic and individualistic urges intersect” (Keetley 22). Keetley’s reading of Clavers’s movement toward masculine individuality is most useful in my discussion of female domestic authority. Clavers does not completely
restructure the place of male and female labor, but, as I will show in my analysis, she articulates an ideal home life in which women’s domestic authority directs male professional labor. Racial boundaries, however, prove far less tractable than gender roles, and Keetley uses the Native American absence that Merish identifies as an example of how “[w]hite women in antebellum America, defined in opposition to Native Americans, were culturally precluded from racial boundaries” (Keetley 33). While other scholars look at Kirkland’s ideals of the home and of femininity, Keetley and Merish’s writings are useful accounts of the social and racial values that shape of Kirkland’s vision of the home.

Articles by Ana-Isabel Aliaga-Buchenau and Laura Smith demonstrate the influence of Eastern social values within Kirkland’s Montacute. Aliago-Buchenau’s essay covers the specific forms of community associated with the East and the West in antebellum America. Contrasting the “cohesiveness, commitment and closeness among the members” of a more stable Eastern community with the “loose ties” between members of a more heterogeneous and transient Western community, Aliago-Buchenau finds elements of both in Montacute (65). More pointedly, Aliago-Buchenau persuasively argues that it is women who cultivate these Eastern characteristics, “and it is notable that those factors that make the village tight in its social structure are dominated by women who seem to have had the greatest vested interest in a social form of life similar to that at home” (76). This is the kind of female authority at home whose operation I will examine in the context of men’s professional and domestic life. The majority of the men in the text are more interested in their own success or desires, and the physically uncomfortable and
emotionally troubling homes of these men are an implicit call for the influence of wives and mothers.

Laura Smith shows how the physical form of Kirkland’s Montacute homes connect this Eastern closeness and stability to the class hierarchy that Merish references in her work: “The frame-house symbolizes middle-class aspiration of accumulation of goods, participation in the prevailing culture, and commitment to the community over the long-term. The log-house, because impermanent, . . . represents a population that is transient and uninvolved in culture[,] . . . a symbol of . . . rampant land speculation and economic instability” (Smith 173). Whether expressed through regional values or through the smaller scale of an individual house, both Smith and Aliaga-Buchenau support the idea that the physical environment is crucial to understanding home life, and they both show how women are a central element in establishing the character of a frontier town like Montacute. Kirkland does not present a straightforward example of manhood, instead tracing it through the ideologies of class and gender and the specific pressures of the environment. Smith’s work helps to distinguish the pressures of Montacute domestic life that are unique to the environment of the Michigan interior, pressures that are crucial to my own conception of the landscape’s influence on the characteristics of Kirkland’s ideal male figure.

Rachel Borup and Scott Peebles directly engage with the kind of manhood that Kirkland champions and critiques in her writing. Borup focuses on the image of the frontiersman, an ideal that Kirkland’s narrator prominently skewers early in her book. More than a simple denial of this male figure, “Kirkland links the deer-slayer, a figure of the romantic frontier, with the real-estate developer, a disturbing figure of the frontier as
she experiences it” (Borup 234). Given the predatory nature of these land speculators, Borup’s reading shows the romantic perspective as suspect, distracting men from realizing that “the individual is . . . dependent on the community in the West, and that savvy people realize their reliance on their neighbors and treat them well” (242). Kirkland’s critique of the frontiersman functions as a call for a manhood that is more receptive to a cohesive force that I connect to domestic life. As I will show in my close readings, Kirkland uses domestic values as a communal counter to a men’s professional tendency to view each other as “additional business-automaton[s]” rather than neighbors who can help each other create the kind of home life that Kirkland favors in the text (Kirkland 64).

Where engagement and interest in the home is a primary element of Kirkland’s male ideal, a strong work ethic does not fall far behind. In fact, men’s capacity for labor is more important in Kirkland’s conception of manhood than it is for Hawthorne, Simms, or Melville. While Simms’s depiction of military life can be understood as an exception, none of these three authors comments in any detail on the importance of male labor or its relationship to the home. This is a topic that Kirkland takes pains to clarify in her text. Working hard is necessary in Montacute, but men’s identity and desires should direct their labor toward the improvement and maintenance of a refined household. As this chapter will make clear, working to accumulate wealth for its own sake neglects the home and leaves it in the same condition as the home of a man who does not work hard enough to support his family. Although his article covers Kirkland’s later short stories, Peebles reads her praise of male industriousness as a “market savvy” reaffirmation of “prevailing myths of equal opportunity and prosperity for all honest, hard-working
Americans who were willing to go West” (Peebles 315). It is worth noting that Peebles explains how Kirkland’s magazine fiction presents a more limited and optimistic view of the frontier than in *A New Home*. Nevertheless, Peebles isolates a crucial male quality that Rachel Azima finds applicable to all members of the Montacute community: “Michigan, an as yet uncultivated and undeveloped region, is particularly in need of labor if ‘progress’ is to continue, . . . [and] Kirkland remains consistently critical of those who refuse to engage in some sort of productive labor” (Azima 400). As seen in Mary Clavers’s careful description and commentary on frontier home life, this productive labor includes a number of domestic responsibilities for the Montacute men in *A New Home*.

While Montacute’s distance from the social world and technology of more populous regions is a significant aspect of Kirkland’s text, a small group of scholars address the environment beyond its remoteness or its conception as a frontier. Elizabeth Barnes shares Borup’s ideas about the risks of frontier fantasy, but she links this idealized perspective to the optical technologies Kirkland describes in her fiction. Barnes describes how Kirkland “transform[s] herself into an ‘optical instrument’” and aligns herself with “old devices” like a telescope or camera obscura, which “enhance objective observation for the collection of facts about an externalized world” (Barnes 63). More suspect, however, are “[t]he newer devices (glorification spectacles, magic-lantern), . . . [that] encourage antebellum consumers to engage in solipsistic visual fantasies” by facilitating an abstract and inaccurate view of the landscape that suits men’s political or financial interests (63, 66). Barnes’s essay is most helpful in treating the romance of the frontier as a distancing mechanism, a process that I argue forms the core connection between men, the home, and the environment in Kirkland’s text. Men move to Michigan without a real
knowledge of the land or its difficulties, and they are motivated by an artificial idea of frontier abundance and a conception of a generalized natural environment that bends to their masculine energy. Instead of a real place with unique benefits and difficulties, these men treat the environment as a resource for wealth and an article of trade. This chapter expands on Barnes’s ideas to show how Kirkland works to correct these romanticized views by attending to the much more immediate and real experience of life within the home. Land speculators who employ these deceptively rosy visions of the environment are flatly despicable, but the men who hold these abstract views themselves are as distanced from the landscape as they are from the life of the home.

Mary DeJong Obuchowski and Ken Egan Jr. examine Kirkland’s specific attitudes toward the Michigan environment itself, not simply the way it is perceived or the opportunities and requirements of living in such a place. For Obuchowski, Kirkland is “an advocate for sane and practical preservation of the forests that blanketed Michigan” who argues for the protection of a vulnerable landscape despite its sometimes uncomfortable features (Obuchowski 73). Egan’s reading of the poetic passages in A New Home describes a more complicated stance toward the natural world that balances a view of “the wilderness as subject to US control” with an environmental advocacy poised against “the violence and ugliness of empire-building” (51). Moving from Clavers’s tendency “to satirize her own obsession with wildflowers” to her later, more sincere engagement with “with fantasy of wilderness as the site of US incarnation,” Egan identifies a crucial turn in which Clavers expresses her own imaginative vision of the natural world (59, 61). Egan, more concerned with Kirkland’s use of poetry, does not dwell on this shift beyond speculating whether “Kirkland sensed her barbs were too sharp
[or] expressed a sincere regard for the benefits of her frontier situation” (Egan 61). Egan’s preceding statement that “the reader has been trained to anticipate the undercutting of such natural sympathy” offers a more compelling explanation. This chapter looks to fill a gap in this environmental scholarship, emphasizing how the romance and realities of the home provide both a goal and a limit to men’s professional labors. As I will demonstrate in my analysis, Clavers entertains her later, pleasantly romantic perspective because she has prepared the reader to distrust these flights of fancy, and she recognizes the utility of this domestically located romance to shape male identity and direct their labor.

As I noted earlier, Kolodny’s is the most succinct and effective description of how such a romantic sensibility operates in Kirkland’s text. Kolodny argues that “[t]he compensation for putting aside exaggerated expectations and pastoral delusions . . . is a concomitant awakening to an achievable ‘romance of rustic life’” (145). My own reading places a stronger emphasis on the domestic elements that Kolodny briefly suggests in her focus on women’s experience. These fantasies of the home are open to both men and women, and a recognition of their domestic quality better addresses the ways in which frontier dreams have no place in the professional lives of Montacute men. Romance has a valuable function in Kirkland’s text, but it is a mindset that should only be available to those who are aware of the demands of this environment, are willing to work hard to meet them, and recognize the danger of these environmental fantasies when they are used by men outside the context of the home.

Nathaniel Lewis’s article on A New Home, which he expands in his later book, clarifies Kirkland’s position toward the romance by comparing her to some of the
Western fiction that she cites in her book. Kirkland’s text, Lewis writes, is “not an anti-romance,” and instead, Lewis sees her “situating herself in relation to a tradition of social critiques” (Lewis, “Penetrating the Interior” 66). A message on the appropriate place of romance, then, would fit within this view of the text rather than define it. Lewis pays greater attention to how *A New Home* relates to Western writing’s formulation of realism and authenticity as a “mimetic representation of an extraordinary world” (*Unsettling* 29).

Lewis finds passages that fall along either side of a “realist” depiction, and he claims that, “by playing fiction against fact, or, more accurately, authenticity against romance,” Kirkland’s text “devastatingly deconstruct[s] western authenticity” (Lewis, “Penetrating the Interior” 68). Jennifer Andrews makes a similar point in her own essay, citing Amy Kaplan’s ideas of strategic and socially constructed realism and demonstrating how Kirkland balances “her desire as an Eastern-born realist to create class coherence and harmony—to manage difference—[with] her aim as a female humorist to use these differences as a source of comic inversion and relief” (Andrews 6, 11). Lewis and Andrews show how Kirkland’s shifts among fact, fiction, and humor allow her greater flexibility without completely sacrificing the legitimacy of her text, but these two scholars are more interested in highlighting Kirkland’s ability to critique different audiences and methods from different angles than the specific rhetorical goals of her method. In my analysis, Kirkland’s humor is a product of her relationship with the gender roles associated with domestic life, and she employs her mixture of humor, fact, and fiction to illustrate the difficulties of masculine involvement in the frontier home.

There is a no single male focus *A New Home, Who’ll Follow?* because Clavers tells the story of a community, without any extended character development beyond
herself as narrator. Her movement amongst the different men of Montacute, however, provides its own legible message about manhood in the Michigan interior. The home, not the wilderness, is the center of frontier life, and Kirkland inverts the common antebellum understanding of middle class domesticity, depicting the home as a goal in itself and favoring those men who work with the goal of improving domestic life, instead of domestic life improving men’s life. Melville’s Tommo is initially receptive to the islanders’ domestic life in Typee, but his escape shows that he was interested in what domesticity could do for him but feared what it would do to him. Holgrave is much more successful in The House of the Seven Gables, but the home works in a way quite similar to Tommo’s imagining, as a place that can help him realize his desires. The Southern domesticity of Simms’s romances lends itself more easily to male participation, but these men, like Holgrave and Tommo, still wrestle with potentially feminizing domestic influence. All of these texts turn on an idea of the tension between male identity and the home’s function as both a refuge for masculinity and a space that is gendered as feminine. Clavers rejects this schema outright. Manhood is not in danger in the home. More often, it is professional and political life that un-mans these men: Frontiersmen are revealed as foolish weaklings, would-be real estate traders are soundly defeated by dishonest and falsely sentimental land speculators, and a politically flexible judge is repeatedly outsmarted by women both inside and outside of the courtroom. Clavers does not fully abandon all the qualities of antebellum manhood and its difference from femininity, but she positions domestic values as an antidote to the emasculating failure associated with men whose professional and political ambitions replace their attachment to the people and places where they live.
Mary Clavers signals her tone at the outset of *A New Home*: This is not an adventure: “I have never seen a cougar—nor been bitten by a rattlesnake. The reader who has patience to go with me to the close of my desultory sketches, must expect nothing beyond a meandering recital of common-place occurrences” (3). Soon after, in what is perhaps a more digressive method than Melville’s Tommo, Clavers’s first anecdote of frontier life in Michigan presents a far more mundane portrait than fights with snakes and wildcats, meant “for the benefit of future travelers, who, flying over the soil on rail-roads, may look slightly back upon the achievements of their predecessors” (5). Clavers addresses those who benefit from the comforts of more advanced technology, whether they are future Michiganders or her East coast audience, and looks to convey the importance of people and experiences that her audience may overlook. So Clavers ushers us into the Michigan frontier by way of a “Michigan mud-hole” (5). Clavers’s account of “one of these characteristic features of the ‘West’—(How much does that expression include? I never have been able to discover its limits)” registers her own unpreparedness and introduces a common feature of her text. Clavers’s text deals as much with Montacute as with the idea of the frontier that it represents, and for her, the romanticized frontier of ample resources and a natural environment pliant to the actions of the frontiersman is both unrealistic and destructive to the home.

Clavers takes a realistic view and doubts that the wagon can pass through the “terrific mud-hole” (7). Her male companion, however, disagrees with her assessment and trusts that his own abilities and “the many wheel tracks that passed through the formidable gulf were proof positive that it might be forded” (6). Fortunately, before her companion can put his plan into action, an initially startling, fur-clad man appears, and,
“in a gentle tone and with a French accent,” speaks with Clavers and helps the company cross the hole “with true and generous politeness” (7). Clavers, noting this gentle demeanor “for the benefit of all bearskin caps, leather jerkins, and cowboy boots, which ladies from the eastward world may hereafter encounter in Michigan,” foregrounds a gulf between an appearance informed by her Eastern assumptions and the polite reality of ideal frontier manhood. Clavers is less concerned with image than with action, and she praises those men who listen and collaborate with women, helping those with less knowledge of the landscape without seeking material gain. Even so, this rugged man is a rare exception to the ways in which frontier tropes operate in the text.

Among the common male figures of Clavers’s Michigan frontier, the rugged form of the frontiersman is the object of her most dramatic and humorous commentary. As Rachel Borup, Nathaniel Lewis, Annette Kolodny, and others have noted, “[Kirkland’s] primary objective in A New Home is to challenge popular representations of the West as a kind of playground for white male adventure” (Borup 230). While my later analysis will explore Clavers’s specific use of these misperceptions, it is worth noting here that she focuses her depiction of the West on a grounded and realistic account of everyday life in the fixed place of Montacute, Michigan, a marshy land nearby Detroit. The strongest presence in this town is a group of women who, through amiable barters, friendly conversation, and mutual support, combat the hardships associated with frontier life and the relative scarcity of domestic luxuries and comforts. For the most part, the men in Clavers’s text play a far more diminished role in sustaining this community, and many of them are too detached from a single specific environment to succeed in any environment.
Clavers accepts that men have to work harder on the frontier than they would in the East, but she does not view that as an excuse to ignore the experience of women and families who are isolated within the home. The Michigan interior demands a greater share of domestic labor as well, and the chief anxiety of the frontier concerns the unequal share of labor and authority within the home. Men have the ability to improve the comforts of the home, but women are the ones tasked to maintain it even in its most dismal condition. The distance from cities and domestic luxuries, combined with this imbalance between authority and labor, often leads men to a tragic disengagement from the home:

The husband goes to work with the same axe or hoe which fitted his hand in his old woods and fields, he tills the same soil, or perhaps a far richer and more hopeful one—he gazes on the same book of nature which he has read from his infancy, and sees only a fresher and more glowing page; and he returns to his home with the sun, strong in heart and full of self-gratulation on the favorable change in his lot. But he finds the homebird drooping and disconsolate. She has been looking in vain for the reflection of any of the cherished features of her own dear fire-side. 146

Clavers does more than write about the specific features and effects of the Michigan landscape, or, more accurately, for Clavers, the experience of Michigan is caught up in the experience of immigration. Clavers and all of her neighbors have only lived in Montacute for a few years, such that a four-year resident is a veritable veteran of the Michigan interior. Granted, Clavers records a distinctive Montacute society, but these social relations have only recently been forged. Given their short time in Michigan, Clavers’s and her neighbors’ sense of their surroundings involves unavoidable
comparison with their previous homes, and it is in these insistent reminders of past and present that Clavers finds fault in those men who leave their Eastern farms for larger Michigan tracts without concern for the harsh transition between radically different domestic environments.

Men, especially those who care very little about the state of the home, experience very little shock or reduced circumstances. Their farming practices and tools easily transfer from Eastern lots to Western ones, and the cheaper land is even more encouraging for the men who spend their days outside the home farming. This view of the land as a “fresher and more glowing page” of nature separates men from the real privations of mothers, wives, and children:

What cares he if the time-honored cupboard is meagerly represented by a few oak boards lying on pegs and called shelves? His tea-equipage shines as it was wont—the biscuits can hardly stay on the brightly glistening plates. Will he find fault with the clay-built oven, or even the tin ‘reflector?’ His bread was never better baked. What does he want with the great old cushioned rocking-chair? When he is tired he goes to bed, for he is never tired till bed-time. Kirkland 146

Moving to a new place, especially one as distant as Michigan, means adapting to new conditions, but men do little of the adapting. Their work life is the same, and the home they return to meets their needs. The men Clavers describes here are distant. The vague ideas about “the same book of nature” are nowhere close to the level of specificity and immediacy that Clavers creates in her close description of the cupboard, oven, and rocking-chair. They are far removed from domestic realities, take interest in a few select
aspects of home life, and do little or no labor to maintain even these small aspects of the
home. They are filled with this great romance of frontier life, but “[t]he conviction of
good accruing on a large scale does not prevent the wearing sense of minor deprivations”
(147). Too much interest in this larger good comes at the cost of “those important
nothings on which so much depends,” things that cannot be assessed according to the
metrics of profitability or real estate value but are far more real to the life of the home.

Clavers has no patience for those visions of profit real estate holdings that pull
men away from the home, but she does not reject a dreamy mindset in all its forms.
Treating romanticized nature as an earned escape from a difficult environment helps to
resolve some of Clavers’s passages that approach the masculine frontier fantasies she
parodies elsewhere in the text. The frontier myth posits a natural landscape wherein men
can escape the restrictions of the feminizing home and workplace and reaffirm their
manhood. Clavers affirms a similar idea with a key difference: “After allowing due
weight to the many disadvantages and trials of a new-country life, it would scarce be fair
to pass without notice the compensating power of a feeling, inherent as I believe, in our
universal nature, which rejoices in that freedom from the restraints of pride and ceremony
which is only found in a new country” (Kirkland 148). If one refuses to grant “due weight”
to the trying aspects of frontier life by not meeting them with the labor that require, the
home will suffer. Clavers acknowledges “[t]hat love of unbounded and
unceremonious liberty is a natural and universal feeling,” but she characterizes it as a
harmonious and “placid contentment” occasioned by “the constant familiarity with woods
and waters.” These visions do not involve movements through dangerous and sublime
wilds, nor are they empowering in themselves. Clavers’s natural romance emerges as a
settled and domestic experience brought on by a close relationship with a specific place. She conceives of freedom as a feeling associated with the home, not with manhood.

Clavers’s relaxed trip through the woods with her husband is an example of this hard-earned domestic fantasy, a more emotionally sustaining counterpart to the impractical male fantasies that separate them from the home and the landscape. In these pleasant excursions, which occur later in the text, Clavers does not contradict her earlier dismissal of unrealistic visions of the frontier. Having attended to the realities of this place, she is able to describe “an emerald dome . . . over us, full of trembling light” and give vent to more enthusiastic and lyrical expressions: “[B]eloved forests of my country, where can your far-sounding aisles be matched for grandeur, your ‘alleys green’ for beauty?” (Kirkland 150). Clavers’s tone here is genuine. She clearly values these uplifting moments in the woods around Montacute, but, with most of these descriptions coming long after she has described the associated demands of the frontier environment, these dreamy scenes function as environmental luxuries, purchased through the domestic and professional labor required to sustain a home in the Michigan frontier.

For Clavers, these airy dreams are equally valid as motivation for the improvement of the home. Women’s “important nothings” are physical comforts or signs of social refinement that can be shared more than the personal sense of accomplishment and ambition that men take with them to the fields (147). Merish writes of these domestic purchases as signs of social status, and it is worth comparing this romance of domestic refinement with the romance of landed increase. Best seen in the Hastings’s frontier ideal that I will explain later in this chapter, Clavers finds no fault with dreams of verdant nature and luxury as long as they are directed toward domestic life. In fact, it is never the
women’s or, in the case of the wealthy shiftless husbands Clavers criticizes, the man’s fault for desiring a more comfortable home life than can be afforded in Michigan, but these dreams need to drive a realistic approach to the increased work required in this place. Clavers, shaming the lazy Mr. B— alongside the numerous other lazy husbands and fathers of Montacute, leaves men responsible for securing the means with which to realize this domestic ideal but grants women the authority to shape it.

Particularly troubling for Clavers is that life in Michigan makes it difficult to maintain a lifestyle that would signify cultivation. The fantasy of frontier wealth compounds this difficulty. Clavers attests that, although there are “several among our ten-mile neighbors, who can boast University honours, . . . and who are reading men . . . one might pass any one of these gentlemen in the road without distinguishing between him and the Corydon who curries the horses, so complete is their outward transformation” (Kirkland 61). While the former comment is a relatively innocent assessment brought on by Clavers’s surprise at finding an educated doctor from Europe and not “some village Galen, who knew just enough to bleed and blister,” when read against Clavers’s reduced domestic comforts, the comment takes on a more resigned tone (60). Clavers speculates that these educated and literate European men “‘left their country for their country’s good’ . . . [or] have forsaken the old world, either in consequence of some temporary disgust, or through romantic notions of the liberty to be found in this land” (61). Aside from the connotations of criminality in leaving one’s country for its own good, these cultivated Europeans are motivated by the same romantic notions of frontier escape that drive the profit-oriented American men.
Again, this idea of male escape leaves women with reduced domestic circumstances. For Leverenz, women’s greater isolation in frontier homes means that gender roles are more difficult to overcome: “As an equally simple corollary, the men use their gender superiority to transcend class conflict, while genteel women use class superiority to transcend gender conflict” (165). As a general assessment of Clavers’s abiding sense of social distinction from most of the families in and around Montacute, Leverenz’s reading holds true. Clavers is troubled that “there are places where ‘the almighty dollar’ is almost powerless,” and she struggles to retain her cultivated sensibility amongst “strangers . . . whose manners, habits of thinking, and social connexions are often quite different from [her] own, and often exceedingly repugnant to [her] taste” (53). As is common throughout the text, Clavers couches her comments on the social status of her neighbors in an assessment of their home life. The above thoughts directly explain how “[t]he social character of the meals, in particular, is quite destroyed,” but they readily apply in a more general sense to those neighbors that Clavers, in an arguable ironic statement, hopes to civilize through a politic demonstration of “[n]eatness, propriety, and that delicate forbearance on the least encroachment upon the rights or the enjoyments of others” (52-53, 53). Clavers’s honest thoughts on Montacute manners undermines her claims of polite forbearance, and even when Clavers “plainly” informs a potential maid that “smoking would make the house uncomfortable to me,” she is met with dismissive laughter representative of her neighbors’ intractability to her civilizing influence (56). More often, the reduced circumstances of her environment results in Clavers acknowledging her neighbors’ critique of her “ridiculously superfluous” domestic luxuries, “for the truth began to dawn on [her] that the common sense was all
on their side” (42). Clavers retains a sense of distinction from her neighbors through the material and social environment of her home, but she is quick to criticize the impracticality of her cultivated assumptions.

While Clavers’s class sensibilities are a key element of Kirkland’s book, a shared sense of female resentment toward men’s neglect of the home is visible in the homes of the low and high alike, and this common interest in male domestic involvement powers some of the most dramatic scenes in A New Home—Who’ll Follow?. As I will explain in my discussion of Montacute men, Clavers describes the upper-class Mr. B——’s dejected wife and the impoverished, abandoned family of Mr. White as rooted in the same cruel indifference toward the home. For Clavers, class superiority is best expressed through the comforts of home and the inviting presence of a loving family, and to realize this sign of social success in the Michigan frontier, men must be industrious outside the home and must be ready to take on the additional domestic labors associated with this more demanding environment. So, to improve one’s position in Montacute society, both men and women should dedicate their labor toward the improvement of households, gardens, and those social or entertaining activities that fall outside the world of commerce or politics.

With this in mind, Clavers’s sense of her social position, which does persist despite the deprivations of Montacute life, can be found in her assessment of those homes that are better able to purchase the luxuries that she associates with a comfortable household. I will discuss these lower-class families of Montacute in greater detail later in the chapter, but it is important to note that Clavers retains a sense of domestic propriety that involves purchased goods or available leisure time that are unavailable to some
Montacute families. More often, however, this remote environment unites women in their common experience of male indifference: “In this newly-formed world, the earlier settler has a feeling of hostess-ship toward the new-comer. I speak only of women—men look upon each one, newly arrived, merely as an additional business-automaton—a somebody more with whom to try the race of enterprize, i.e. money-making” (Kirkland 64). Clavers does not reject the gender expectations behind men’s professional world. She is fine with male industry, but she does not approve of men whose interests remain in the economic realm and never reach into the more immediate world of the home.

More often than the class divisions associated with a pipe-smoking maid or a raucous, frenzied dinner table, the Michigan landscape works to level the status of the members of the Montacute community through domestic demands that involve both men and women. A woman, regardless of her class or the money that she has at her disposal, must be ready to be “her own cook, chamber-maid, and waiter; nurse, seamstress, and school ma’am” (72-73). Clavers does not neglect men in her account the common difficulties within the Michigan home, and her comments form a detailed position on proper domestic masculinity:

[E]very man, whatever his circumstances or resources, must be qualified to play groom, teamster, or boot-black, as the case may be; besides ‘tending the baby’ at odd times, and cutting wood to cook his dinner with. If he has good sense, good nature, and a little spice of practical philosophy, all this goes exceedingly well. He will find neither his mind less cheerful, nor his body less vigorous for these sacrifices. If he is too proud or too indolent to submit to such infringements upon his dignity and ease, most
essential deductions from the daily comfort of this family will be the mortifying and vexatious result of his obstinate adherence to early habits.

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Clavers starts out here by noting comfortably masculine roles like groom, teamster, or boot-black, but in listing the more feminine activity of raising an infant, Clavers combines an intersection of class roles with blurred gender roles within a Michigan household. Most significantly, a class-based refusal to take on this additional labor would have a “mortifying” social effect within the community and cause “vexatious” and anxious feelings for a man within the Michigan home. Clavers’s comments here stand out as particularly domestic when read with her brief aside on how “there could scarcely be a trade or profession which is not largely represented among the farmers of Michigan” (80). These men are farmers primarily, but the smaller, more sparsely populated environment in the Michigan interior expands men’s professional identity in the same way that the remote landscape forces an expanded number of male domestic responsibilities.

Clavers’s ideal, then, is a community in which women’s authority and familiarity with the home informs both the direction of men’s professional labor and the kinds of work they do within the home. Leverenz takes Kirkland’s book in a different direction than my own, but he points to crucial aspects in the text that can clarify her complicated ideas of gender and the home. One of these elements is female authority: “Despite [Clavers’s] claims to influencing the morals and manners of the rustics, however, ambitious and competitive men are the real agents of social change” (Leverenz 156). Beyond her brief and likely ironic statements about the power of her silent example, Clavers chronicles a number of cases in which women, armed with a strong connection to
the physical and social space of the community, exert a measurable influence on both males and females of the town. Women, for better or for worse, make many things happen in Montacute, and implicit in Clavers’s call for male domestic labor is an affirmation of female domestic authority.

Clavers’s account of a Montacute lawsuit is one of the most dramatic examples of female influence. Clavers does little to introduce the case, a slander suit over what amounts to be a trifling affair, other than to note “that at least half the Montacute Female Beneficent Society were to receive a shilling’s worth of law on the same occasion” (Kirkland 173). This society is the most prominent social group for the women of Montacute, and the crux of the suit is that a woman’s gossip has damaged a man’s professional reputation. The plaintiff is a tailor, Mr. Shafton, who is seeking damages because the defendant’s wife, Mrs. Flyter, told the Beneficent Society that Mr. Shafton charged too much for his work. Clavers, of course, thinks of the plaintiff “as no more than the ninth part of a man” for violating women’s domestic environment by “bringing a woman into trouble for what she happened to say after tea” (175). Further highlighting the ridiculousness of this conflict between female home life and masculine law, Simeon Jenkins, “if not the greatest, certainly the most grandiloquent man in Montacute,” presides over the case, and his lack of intelligence and charisma as Judge is an early sign of the tenuous power of the town’s legal authorities (Kirkland 125). More intriguing, however is the moment in which a number of women are called to testify.

The plaintiff is able to bring this woman—or more accurately, her husband—into court, but women’s subsequent testimonies easily demonstrate the level of domestic authority over the legal realm that seeks to control it: “[T]o ask one question, never
elicited less than one dozen answers; the said answers covering a much larger ground
than the suit itself, and bringing forward the private affairs and opinions of half the
village. In vain did Mr. Jenkins roar ‘silence!’ his injunctions only made the ladies angry,
and of course gave their tongues a fresh impetus” (Kirkland 175). Eventually, the
building threat of female power becomes too much to bear, and the case is settled out of
court. Kirkland’s book is an extension of this power and evinces a belief in feminine
influence and the power of a domestic environment, be it social or physical. Through
Clavers’s humorous, often self-mocking voice, Kirkland shows how this power can be
employed in a positive way rather than the less tactful example within the courtroom.
Clavers rejects men’s detachment from the home alongside men’s attempts to control it,
whether occasioned by drunkenness, sloth, or by environmental fantasies that ignore the
struggles of a Montacute household. Clavers looks to women to correct these
shortcomings, and Clavers’s relationship with her husband, along with her shifting
narrative voice, presents one way to effect change.

The specific character of women’s domestic authority is best illustrated by
Clavers’s voice as narrator. With critiques that point to herself as much as her neighbors,
Clavers marshals a kind of authority that in no way resembles the coercive directives of
masculine command and the ineffectual roaring of legal authority. As Andrews explains
in her article, humor is a crucial element to Kirkland’s text that constantly presents the
potential for new and different readings that may undercut the surface-level meaning of
the text, and Clavers is a deft narrator who knows how to veil her more threatening
criticism under accepted ideology. A leisurely stroll with her husband later in the text for
instance, occasions some self-deprecating remarks that seem all too close to the gender roles she spends so much time reproving in previous sketches of Montacute life:

> We followed the bridle-path for miles, finding scarcely a trace of human life. We scared many a grey rabbit, and many a bevy of quails, and started at least one noble buck; I said two, but may be the same one was all around us, for so it seemed. I took the opportunity of trying old Jupiter’s nerves . . . , while my companion pretended to be afraid he could not manage Prince[.] . . . What an adventure for a sober village matron! I almost think I must have blushed. At least I sure I must have done so had the affair happened only ten years earlier. Kirkland 151

Clavers’s speculative tone is part of her strategy throughout the text. She writes of a disagreement with her husband, who says he only saw one deer, but her capitulation, that “may be the same one was all around us,” strains credulity. Likewise, her brave actions with her own horse, Jupiter, contrasts with her husband’s, who “pretended” to lose control of his horse. A middle-class female readers attuned to Clavers’s humorous bent may insert the absent “so it seemed” after her husband’s incident, especially since, pretending or not, Mr. Clavers “let [his horse] go off at half speed” whereas his unaffected wife’s horse “jogged on as before.” The humor here exists in the contrast between Clavers’s appeals to the expectations of capable frontier manhood and her clear superiority over her bumbling husband, and she relies on her readers to understand how she veils her humorous criticism of Montacute men through surface-level deference to their flawed and improperly domestic manhood.
Clavers’s irony is part of a larger image in the text of a community of women who manage the town of Montacute without upsetting male authority. They know how to survive and work hard, but they do so within the bounds of their expectations. Much like the “silent influence of example” that Clavers half-ironically ascribes to herself earlier in the text, these women are well aware of the codes and expectations they must negotiate in Michigan even as the environment brings them closer to traditional male tasks than would be necessary in a more urban setting (Kirkland 53). These compromises and negotiations with an overarching patriarchal society are a large part of the social environment within the home. The town’s physical isolation from urban domestic comforts makes this kind of negotiation and influence even more important, and understanding these subtle, often humorous ways that Clavers deals with male authority is essential to understanding her message about the men in her community and the common domestic values that should govern their masculinity.

Distinct from the isolated qualities of household interiors and from the male neglect associated with the Montacute real estate market, the garden is arguably the most liberated space for women in Montacute. According to Kolodny, these gardens were a common domestic space in the new frontier, and upon arriving in places like Michigan and Ohio, “women quite literally set about planting gardens in these wilderness places . . . [, and t]hey dreamed, more modestly, of locating a home and a familial human community within a cultivated garden” (Before Her xiii). Despite men’s absence and disinterest in the home, his working life and income determines the level of domestic comfort within it. In the garden, women are more able to cultivate the flowers and vegetables themselves, and, unlike the domestic luxuries that add comfort and refinement
to the inside of the home, women are less dependent on husbands and fathers to cultivate the garden. Most significantly, men are called upon to join women in the garden, not as financial contributors but fellow cultivators. Clavers does not challenge the gendered division of labor and authority associated with domestic ideology, but her account of Michigan gardens is a striking model for a more collaborative home life with measurable authority and constructive labor afforded to women.

The garden has a different function for Clavers than it does for Hawthorne in *The House of the Seven Gables*. Where Hawthorne notes the abstract psychological and social benefits of the Pyncheon garden in refreshing the character of those who work within it, Clavers praises the plants themselves and their contribution to her household, only commenting on gardening as an admirable and “primitive source of pleasure” (Kirkland 79). She is far more enthusiastic about the flowers that are the product of her labor, such that, “I scarcely trust my pen with a word, so sure am I that my enthusiastic love for them would, to most readers, seem absolutely silly or affected.” With Clavers noting her neighbors’ indifference toward her flowers—she describes one neighbor dismissively tossing a hyacinth to the ground before she “set him sniffing at a Crown Imperial”—she seems to relish these impractical signs of her elevated class, which function like the refined domestic objects that Merish describes, distinguishing Mary Clavers’s household and reinforcing her sense of superiority over Michigan neighbors whose spartan homes are defined by utility rather than comfort and pleasure (Kirkland 80). Indeed, in “reveng[ing]” herself on her neighbor by having him sniff the foul-smelling Crown Imperial, Clavers seems to show little interest in using her garden to bring her closer to her neighbors, aligning herself with her Eastern readers with the refined taste to grasp the
aesthetic value of her garden and the informed humor of inviting a man to sniff a Crown Imperial.

Despite the distancing effect of her flower gardening, Clavers’s comments on her vegetable garden take on an expansive tone that extends beyond the intimate confines of her household plot. In her virtue-extolling commentary on “invaluable” asparagus, “majestic palm-leaf rhubarb,” and the “delicious perfection” of Michigan-grown melons, Clavers adopts a more open and communal tone, writing, “our soil amply repays whatever trouble we may bestow upon it” (Kirkland 81 emphasis mine). Clavers’s use of “our” could refer to the shared landscape of the community as well as the more intimate setting of “my beloved garden,” a phrase that directly precedes her inclusive comments on her kitchen garden (80). In the smaller space of her home, Clavers includes her husband in the “our” of the kitchen garden as well as the flower garden, mentioning how they both purchased perennial flowers that “we planted at once” upon arriving in Montacute, but she eliminates this second-person reference when writing of her neighbors’ rejection of “my noble balm geranium” or “my finest hyacinths,” a class of plants that serve to establish her superior status in a way that “the humbler luxuries in the vegetable way” do not (79, 80). These vegetables, though, do not completely escape Clavers’s social distinctions, and her closing comments on Michigan gardening disparage the class of neighbors who say “‘[t]aters grow in the field, and ’taters is good enough for me’” (82).

In his Revolutionary War romances, Simms’s lyrical descriptions and cultivated literary references confer a degree of social refinement to the relatively larger communal space of the Carolina swamp. While an educated southerner may be able to better
appreciate their uplifting qualities, these wetlands are both open to and appreciated by men from a range of different classes. In contrast, Clavers’ comments on her garden reflect both a social and physical sense of the domestic natural environment that quickly recedes outside the immediate vicinity of a house or family. Just as she “never venture[s] too far from Montacute in her strolls” through the woods, Clavers, despite her real efforts to accept her ill-mannered neighbors, does not often stray too far outside her social position (Kirkland 150). Clavers implicitly suggests a greater interest in a domestic sense of the natural environment apart from the more economic and traditionally masculine space of the farm or the “[t]aters . . . in the field,” but she is mostly interested in blending the masculine and feminine worlds of a higher class than most of her neighbors (82). At least within the chapter on gardening, Clavers’s domestic man needs to be cultivated.

Like Hawthorne’s Pyncheon garden in *The House of the Seven Gables*, the gardens in *A New Home, Who’ll Follow* exist at the intersection of masculinity and domestic life, but Clavers’s gardens are not always the pleasant or romantic site of domestic rejuvenation like Hawthorne’s. Most often, men’s presence in these Michigan gardens is muted and subdued, unlike Holgrave’s active performance and praise of gardening at the house of seven gables. In Clavers’s own garden, her husband is surely present, but she only mentions him in passing, with a “we” that distances Mr. Clavers from the efforts of his wife in the garden. While there is not definitive proof that this “we” includes husband and wife and not wife and hired domestic, Clavers clearly expects some degree of male involvement in the garden. Clavers’s thoughts about men and the environment are more direct in her comments on the decaying refinement of Mr. B—:

“His land, which would have yielded abundant supplies for his table, was suffered to lie
unimproved, because he had not money to pay labourers. Even a garden was too much trouble; the flower-beds I had seen were made by the hands of Mrs. B—, and her sisters; and it was asserted that the comforts of life were often lacking in this unfortunate household” (Kirkland 77). Clavers’s chief complaint is that Mr. B— “feel[s] above the laborious calling by which his father amassed wealth,” and her examples illustrate a characteristic connection between home, work and the non-human environment of Montacute, Michigan (76). Clavers moves from the farm as typical site of male work life, to the garden as the most likely site of male domestic labor, and finally to a general assessment of the household deficiencies that result from Mr. B—’s damaging indolence. Significantly, the outdoor environment is the expected place of male labor, and the garden functions as a bridge between more identifiably masculine farm work and the home.

Clavers’s sketch of marital discord between the older, jealous Mr. Cathcart and his wife further illustrates the garden’s importance within the home:

[L]ittle birds have whispered that after Mrs. Cathcart had spent the morning in transplanting flowers, training her honeysuckles and eglantines, and trimming the turf seats which are tastefully disposed round their pretty cottage, Mr. Cathcart has been seen to come out and destroy all she had been doing; ploughing up the neat flower-beds with his knife, tearing down the vines, and covering the turf sofas with gravel. And the same little birds have added, that when Mr. Cathcart, sated with mischief, turned to go into the house again, he found the front-door fastened, and then the back-door fastened; and after striding about for some time till his bald
head was well nigh fried, he was fain to crawl in at the little latticed window, and then—but further these deponents say not. Kirkland 142

Much like the earlier image of Mr. B—’s house, in which a husband’s absence in the garden extends to his complete neglect of domestic labor inside the home, the Cathcart’s domestic dispute plays out on the exterior environment. The Cathcart’s story is far more dramatic than the B— family’s, but it is guided by similar rules. Mr. Cathcart is able to destroy his wife’s plants, but he cannot so easily gain entrance to the domestic interior. As such, these flowers and vines are a sign of the health of their marriage. Certainly, the gossip-friendly Montacute is full of little birds to witness Mr. Cathcart’s sunburnt head disappearing into a side window, but the physical space of the garden is a striking example of the status of their home and the emotional state of the couple.

The garden is particularly interesting because of the power of women within this space. Men may be a more common presence in the garden than a house’s interior, but women have the ability to both work the land and to make meaningful decisions within the garden:

Narrow beds around the house are bright with Basalms and Sweet Williams . . . ; and if ‘th’ old man’ is good natured, a little gate takes the place of the great awkward bars before the door. By and bye a few apple-trees are set out; sweet briars grace the door yard, and lilacs and currant-bushes; all by female effort[.] . . . They are not all accomplished by her own hand, but hers is the moving spirit, and if she do her ‘spiriting gently,’ and has anything but a Caliban for a minister, she can scarcely fail to
throw over the real homeliness of her lot something of the magic of that

IDEAL which has been truly sung[.] 147

The garden is a place where women have direct control over the natural environment and men’s engagement with it. Clavers often points out the many times in which men are not present or do not do enough work in the home, but she rarely singles out the specific tasks or areas in which men could be more engaged. Clavers mentions gardens and gardening several times as shared spaces for men and women, but they are spaces largely governed by women. Men are a more expected presence in the garden, but they do not have authority over this space.

To determine Clavers’s masculine ideals, the general quality of Montacute men is as important as the places where they dedicate their labor. Leverenz writes that Clavers is most apt to praise these men: “Yet the maleness seems more good than bad. For every man who brags about being the ‘boss’ of his wife, we meet two men of whose bossing Kirkland approves. . . . Men should be firm and patriarchal” (Leverenz 161). Leverenz claims that Clavers’s portraits of admirable men outnumber the disreputable ones, but he may be missing some of the men with whom Clavers finds fault. On her journey to Montacute, Clavers stays at a house in which a drunken unnamed father and husband leaves his “wife in children in constant fear of their lives, from his insane fury” (7). This drunkard is merely the first of a series of unreformed male Michiganders. Mr. Jenkins is an unrefined, self-serving braggart who finds no fault in switching political parties to secure himself a judgeship for which he is unqualified. Mr. Jephson and Mr. Mazard are contemptible land sharks who manipulate emotions and land prices to the ruin of whole communities in Michigan. Mr. Rivers is a lazy gentleman only interested in a
comfortable lifestyle, and Mr. B—is even lazier. Mr. Brent is a philandering husband, Mr. Cathcart is a jealous one, and Mr. Newland leads a dishonest and dissipated family. Mr. Puffer is a self-important mill-wright who would rather sue Mr. Clavers than admit he was wrong. The obnoxiously curious schoolmaster, Mr. Whicher, joins a gang of highwaymen after fleeing from accusations that he fathered a Montacute woman’s child. Unsavory men are far from scarce in Montacute, and Clavers highlights the shortcomings of men from a wide range of backgrounds. Some of these men are much more terrifying and destructive than others, but all of these male failures share a selfish, individualistic perspective and have little concern for the domestic lives of their families and neighbors.

More often than those men who are openly antagonistic towards the home are men whose interests exclude it, and implicit in Clavers’s ridicule of these men is a connection between domestic life and the demands of the surrounding landscape. Clavers’s account of a frontier expedition provides the most forceful commentary on the ways in which the enticing features of the frontiersman fail to address the real difficulties associated with surviving in a place far from cities, towns, or homes. Before she delves into the journey proper, Clavers lists the prodigious collection of gear that the men carry with them: “Ponies, knapsacks, brandy-bottles, pocket-compasses, blankets, lucifers, great India rubber boots, coats of the same, and caps with immense umbrellas capes to them: these things are but a beginning of the outfit necessary to such an expedition” (25). These men are full of confidence and excitement, ready “to ‘camp out’ as often as might be desirable, to think nothing of fasting for a day or so,” and with “a double-barreled fowling piece,” at least one of the men is “almost as keen in his pursuit of game as of money” (25-26). This single paragraph quickly details the high spirits of these attempted
outdoorsman, but Clavers effectively identifies their assumed prowess in navigating and surviving in this land, a series of assumptions Clavers suggests in a brief, ironic aside about “the outfit necessary to such an expedition” and its contrast with the everyday scarcity of domestic frontier life. These men spend time and money making material preparations without considering the importance of real experience. Clavers does not immediately recount the events of this trip into the wilderness. Instead, she transitions from the men’s plans of environmental mastery straight into the outcome of their journey: “The party were absent just four days; and a more dismal sight than they presented on their return cannot well be imagined” (26). This is the real frontiersman: a man as interested in money as much as adventure whose baseless assumptions about an unfamiliar landscape lead to quick and dismal failure.

Pretensions of masculine hardihood are not in themselves destructive to anyone but the men themselves who adopt them. Much worse, for Clavers, are those men who play upon established ideas of a fertile, easily-mastered landscape and profit from the men who would be masters. No Hawkeye himself, the thin, lazy-eyed Mr. Mazard is the most prominent example of the dishonest methods of these land speculators who draw families to frontier Michigan:

His words sometimes flowed in measured softness, and sometimes tumbled over each other, in his anxiety to convince, to persuade, to inspire. His air of earnest conviction, of sincere anxiety for your interest, and, above all, of entire forgetfulness of his own, was irresistible. People who did not know him always believed every word he said; at least so I have since been informed. 11
Mr. Mazard is a confidence man. His method is the same as that which Tara Penry finds so soundly critiqued in Melville’s work, a false sentimentality “which is merely a veil for narcissistic, self-serving fantasies” (Penry 235). Mr. Mazard’s immoral, though profitable, performance of compassion serves his own financial interests by manipulating men’s fantasy of masculine power over a wilderness easily turned into a profitable site of agriculture and industry. Significantly, Clavers’s depiction of Mr. Mazard plays upon his physical weakness and a “softness” that can easily be rendered as feminine. Unlike Melville’s Tommo, who attains a degree of domestic success without any significant display of real aggression, Clavers is somewhat invested in the language of traditional manhood and the threat that femininity poses to men. Along with her demeaning comments on Mr. Mazard’s feminine features, the hardy French fur trader who helps Clavers across the mud hole shows that a powerful man is not necessarily un-domestic as long as he is attentive to the needs of others.

As the first major story of a Montacute resident, Mrs. Danforth’s explanation of how she arrived in Montacute shows the power of frontier real estate enticements and provides the first sustained example of successful manhood. The story starts with Mrs. Danforth’s adoption by a kind man and his wife. When the couple dies, Mrs. Danforth and her husband receive a home and some land in the man’s will, but the man’s selfish nephew arrives and tries to claim the Danforths’ inheritance. Before the nephew can do so, Mr. Danforth saves the nephew’s son from drowning, and the Danforths keep their land. As I mentioned earlier, the ending of the tale, with Mrs. Danforth proudly describing how she and her husband moved to Michigan in search of more acreage, is the subject of some disapproving comments from Clavers, but the start of Mrs. Danforth’s
account provides an early example of the domestic values that are so crucial for Clavers’s view of proper masculinity in Montacute. Mrs. Danforth begins her story by describing a far better man than the deceptive Mr. Mazard, and she highlights an authentic sentimentality that reaches across both family and gender lines. Mrs. Danforth starts with praise for her adopted father, Mr. Spangler, who earns her “peculiar respect” as much for his concern for her as for his ability to care for his frail wife “who could not do her own work” (Kirkland 18). Clavers does not refrain from using femininity as a weapon to insult deceptive men like Mr. Mazard, but Spangler’s potentially feminizing domestic labors are pointedly not emasculating. Instead, Clavers invokes a counter-example of a widower selfishly mourning a wife who was “‘such a dreadful good creature to work!’” Mr. Spangler is the hero here, and his inexhaustible concern for his family sets a high standard for the home-oriented manhood that is Clavers’s ideal.

Mr. Spangler, having himself—Mrs. Danforth does not mention Mrs. Spangler’s role—chosen to adopt Mrs. Danforth when he and his wife were childless, later suffers the death of his wife during childbirth and the death of the baby, who “by and bye . . . took the croup and died all in a minute like” one year after birth (Kirkland 18). Spangler, then dying from grief, not only pays outstanding debts and “set[s] his house in order if ever any man did” but also gives Mrs. Danforth’s husband the deed to his home and Mrs. Danforth “a nice settin out besides” (18, 19). Through Mrs. Danforth’s story, Clavers generally preserves the separate social worlds of men and women but elevates Spangler as a moral ideal who is able to take meaningful action domestically and professionally. More than settling his debts, Spangler shows laudable business sense in advising George to use the willed deed as credit “to buy a farm of his that was for sale on the edge of the
village . . . [with a] mortgage so worded, that George could not be hurried to pay, and
everybody said it was the greatest bargain there ever was” (19). Granted, Spangler does
not give everything to the Danforths—he leaves the rest of his estate to his nephew—but
in using his business acumen not to build more profit but to look to the welfare of his
family, Spangler forms a powerful example of domestic masculinity against which later
Michigan men can be measured.

Mr. Wilkins is the less caring, business-oriented nephew of Mr. Spangler. After
Mr. Wilkins disparages his uncle’s generosity toward the Danforths, Mrs. Danforth sees
him walk into the room where the deed to their home is located. When the deed is
subsequently found missing, Mrs. Danforth tries to convince her husband that Wilkins
stole the deed, but her husband thinks that she “had put it somewhere else without
thinking, that people often felt just as sure as I did, and found themselves mistaken after
all” (20). Mr. Danforth shows little respect for his wife here, but Mrs. Danforth does not
dwell on her husband’s lack of respect, a telling sign of her deference to male authority in
the home that is also found later in the tale. Mr. Wilkins visits the Danforth home a
second time, and, with her husband again absent, Mrs. Danforth confronts Mr. Wilkins
directly, accusing him of stealing the deed to their home. Fortunately, Mr. Danforth
arrives, “dripping wet from head to foot” after saving Mr. Wilkins’s son Henry from
drowning in the canal (21). Moved to compassion, Wilkins sends a new deed to the
Danforths, who, in an ironic twist, choose to pull up stakes and move to Michigan instead
of buying the land that Mr. Spangler recommended (22). The Danforths’ story is not a
straightforward portrait of a failed or successful man within the home, but the successes
and failures of the family follow from the domestic attachments that Clavers favors. First,
as seen in Mr. Danforth’s disbelief in his wife as well as her comment that “I could have bit off my own tongue when I tho’t how imprudent I had been, and what my husband would say” about confronting Mr. Wilkins, Mrs. Danforth maintains a strict sense of propriety that separates the professional and financial world from the domestic sphere, a separation that Clavers later criticizes after the conclusion of the Danforths’ story.

Secondly, George does not live up to Spangler’s ideal domestic manhood, but he does have his merits. Mr. Danforth does not listen to his wife or speak with her about the dangers of discussing her suspicion, and regardless of whether Mrs. Danforth’s ideas influence George to rescue Henry as a way to resolve the conflict with Mr. Wilkins, dismissing his wife is not helpful and creates more conflict for the family. George Danforth’s daring rescue of Henry Wilkins is a more praiseworthy combination of masculine valor and a selfless willingness to put his own life at risk to save the boy. Most damning, however, George’s domestic sensibilities do not reach as deeply as Spangler’s, and instead of taking the dying man’s advice and settling down on the nearby farm, George buys land and looks for profit in Michigan. Mr. Danforth escapes Wilkins’s predations through kindhearted service, but he falls prey to frontier dreams and does not listen to or include his wife in his decisions. Mr. Clavers, by contrast, communicates with his wife in about his professional dealings, and they discuss how “unaccountable did it appear to us that [Mr. Mazard’s] workmen should go on so quietly, without so much as expressing any anxiety about their pay” (Kirkland 54). This shared discussion preceded Mr. Clavers’s discovery that he has been swindled by Mr. Mazard, but he, unlike Mr. Danforth, involves his wife in this discussion. Most significantly, Mr. Clavers refuses to name the town after himself and, as Clavers writes, “refers the matter entirely to me” (12).
Clavers does not directly disparage Mrs. Danforth’s story as she tells it, but her own example and her thoughts that follow the story suggest that, even though the family is not in dire straits, their home life is too dependent on the detached values of Mr. Danforth’s professional ambitions.

Clavers’s concluding note on Mrs. Danforth’s story shows the real pressures of the Michigan landscape on domestic life. Mrs. Danforth, excusing her early hardships in Michigan by proudly boasting that “we’ve got four times as much land as we ever should have owned in York-State,” buys into her husband’s value of potential profit over the comforts of home, but Clavers does not share the Danforth’s opinion (22). Instead, Mrs. Danforth’s satisfaction with land ownership as an abstract economic object, “merely an article of trade,” reflects a male inattention to domestic life: “Comforts do not seem to abound in proportion to landed increase, but often on the contrary, are really diminished for the sake of it: and the habit of selling out so frequently makes that home-feeling, which is so large an ingredient in happiness elsewhere, almost a non-entity in Michigan.”

The most influential aspect of Michigan land is its abundance. As Keetley notes, Kirkland barely mentions Native Americans in the text, and their absence contributes to the common impression of an unpeopled frontier and an untapped, unclaimed landscape (30). While Clavers does not challenge the validity of this view of the frontier, she is forcefully critical of its effects on the white, middle-class men who act upon an inaccurate frontier fantasy. These men’s interest in an abundance of land leaves them with little meaningful, domestic attachments to a specific place. Their constant buying, selling, and moving prevents women from creating a stable and comfortable home life and prevents both men and women from a domestic attachment to the land around them.
The target keeps moving, these men keep buying more land, and women like Clavers and Mrs. Danforth suffer for it.

Mr. Danforth’s failure consists of an interest in making money and acquiring land and a subsequent neglect of the home. Clavers’s sketch of Mr. B—shows just the opposite, an interest in domestic comfort without any concern about the money and labor required to sustain it. Mr. B—fails professionally through “his pride and his indolence,” part of a set of upper class assumptions that lead him away from a more practical homestead with “[w]ater-power of all capabilities” in favor of “a charming spot for a gentlemanly residence” (Kirkland 77). The image of Mr. B—and the thought that upon which “his gun and his fishing rod he was to live,” is almost a parody of the relaxed swampland domesticity that Porgy represents in his South Carolina home in Simms’s Woodcraft. In Simms’s novel, hunting and fishing are fertile resources of domestic manhood that combine engagement with the local environment with the leisure and sociability associated with domestic life. Indeed, when Porgy does not go hunting with his neighbor’s son, the villainous McKewn uses the opportunity to undermine Porgy’s pleasant relationship with his neighbor. Without an established plantation and the slave labor that supports it, the woods and wetlands of the Michigan frontier differ dramatically from those in South Carolina in their increased demands for work from even the wealthiest of the community. Mr. B—’s laziness and incorrect views of frontier life reflect badly on himself as an individual failure of frontier masculinity, but, as Clavers states in the chapter’s earlier comments on Michigan manhood, all of the residents of a man’s home suffer from these “most essential deductions from the daily comfort of his family” (73).
Mr. B—’s failure is as much material as social, and Clavers’s description of him shows how a man’s relationship with his home is key to his place in society: “This gentleman had, after all, something of a high-bred air, if one did not look at the floor, and could forget certain indications of excessive carelessness discernable in his dress and person” (Kirkland 75). While intended as a slight against the man’s improper manhood, Clavers’s reference to high breeding here undermines her earlier move toward social equality at the start of the chapter. Laziness and pride bring Mr. B—’s failure, and his social position is not suspect in itself. Rather, Mr. B—’s social status is the product of his slovenly appearance and “desolate” household, and Clavers here calls every would-be gentleman to pay increased attention to his home in this marshy, wooded land. The gentleness of a man, his manners and attentive behavior within the home, is a crucial aspect of masculinity for Clavers: “If the best man now living should honour my humble roof with his presence—if he should have an unfortunate penchant for eating out of the dishes, picking his teeth with his fork, or using the fire-place for a pocket handkerchief, I would prefer he would take his dinner solus or with those who did as he did” (53).

Clavers’s opinions on manhood in antebellum Michigan center on the importance of a man’s engagement with the environment in and around his home. Eating straight off of the serving plate and not taking care of one’s personal hygiene are framed in the same way as the men who seek wealth in the Michigan frontier. As I have noted above, the land speculators and their fortune-seeker victims all but willfully ignore the labor and infrastructure required to realize their fantasies of valuable real estate and thriving farmland, and such fantasies of profit so consume these men that they pay little attention to creating a comfortable home life or attending to concerns of the people in their home.
So Mr. B—is a failure as well, not from excess ambition but from an antipathy towards labor that leads to the same damaging negligence toward his house and family.

The Rivers household is a less desperate environment than Mr. B—’s, but Mr. Rivers displays the same aversion to labor. Clavers’s description of her careworn friend Mrs. Rivers illustrates the profound disconnect between a man’s unrealistic vision of domestic life and the increased demands upon women in Michigan. Mrs. Rivers “tried not to look miserable,” but she is unable to hide the “tears welling in her eyes” (Kirkland 64). The Rivers family is a new arrival, so at this early moment, they have not suffered the deprivations of the B— family. Such a desolate future, however, is more than likely given the character of Mr. Rivers:

Then I saw at a glance why it was that life in the wilderness looked so peculiarly gloomy to her. Her husband’s face shewed but too plainly the marks of early excess; and there was at intervals, in spite of an evident effort to play the agreeable, the appearance of absence, of indifference, which spoke volumes of domestic history. He made innumerable inquiries, touching the hunting and fishing facilities of the country around us, expressed himself enthusiastically fond of these sports, and said that the country was a living death without them, regretting much that Mr. Clavers was not of the same mind.

This is a particularly damning articulation of the fundamental disconnect between the figure of the romanticized frontiersman and the domestic reality of the frontier. Simply put, the frontier is a place of leisure for Mr. Rivers, and there is little else that interests him beyond his dreams of hunting and fishing in the wilderness. Clavers’s husband has
already gone on his failed wilderness expedition at this point, but he comes out much better here than Mr. Rivers. Mr. Rivers may not be overtly lazy, but in valuing his own leisure over the happiness of his wife and the comforts of his home, Mr. Rivers evinces a lack of concern for the home that parallels his bored “appearance of absence” in conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Clavers.

The Rivers family comes from similarly wealthy parents as the B— family and further represents the importance of domestic responsibilities for men of all social classes. While Mr. Rivers escapes Mr. B—‘s fate, Mr. Rivers is far from a productive member of the community. Whereas the frontier represents more and greater wealth for ambitious men like Mr. Danforth, Mr. Rivers sees easy wealth. Ultimately, when Mr. Rivers takes a position as president of a fraudulent “wildcat” bank, Clavers shows how an interest in “abundant leisure for his favourite occupations of hunting and fishing” can lead to “distress among the poorer classes of farmers” when the bank fails (Kirkland 124, 126). Mr. Rivers wants to “live like a gentleman” without any concern for the well-being of others, and the “broken glass and tenpenny nails” that are found in place of more authentic specie are an extension of the selfish and inauthentic dreams of frontier leisure that separate him from the Montacute community and his own home (127, 126). Clavers views this predatory bank’s deceptive, “‘Real Estate Pledged’” currency in the same scornful way as Mr. Mazard’s lies (122). Both the bank and the land shark profit from an abstracted view of the landscape, and both take part in worthless and destructive occupations that lead to the financial collapse of homes and communities. Alternatively, Clavers favors steady labor and a stronger connection to the physical environment.

Where wildcat banks and land shark profits from falsehoods and fantasies, a hardworking
farmer can take solace in the knowledge that “toll-wheat is a currency that never depreciates” (123).

Where Mr. B—and Mr. Rivers damage their domestic social standing through their damning lack of industry, other groups of men are more summarily restricted from polite society. As Keetley notes, Clavers “mov[es] between existing identity positions” of gender but does little to contest the home’s role in “the demarcation and separation of whites and Indians” (25, 26). Clavers is capable of “masculine” mobility and self-determination, but she “never travels—in a figurative sense—far enough away from her ‘village,’ from her own racial ‘home,’ to be capable of imagining anything more than an antagonistic and alienating encounter” (30). Keetley, both in the Native American encounters she cites and in her broader claim about the white identity of Kirkland’s narrator, demonstrates the relevance of the home in determining racial identity within Montacute. The home of a “French trader and his Indian wife . . . is presented as a veritable chaos, surrounded by the drunken cries and abuses of intoxicated ‘savages,’” and Clavers’s charming trip “beyond the outskirts of Montacute” is interrupted by “her friend’s terror at an encounter with an Indian” (31, 30). In the first case, a deplorable home life disqualifies the Native American household from proper membership in the Montacute community, and in the second, the mere presence of an Indian marks the physical boundaries of the town at the same time that it disrupts the women’s pleasant sociability and undoes a pleasant and domesticated experience of “woods cool and moist as the grotto of Undine, and carpeted everywhere with strawberry vines and thousands and flowers” (Kirkland 84).
With the subordinate and often pathetic character of Clavers’s Native Americans, Kirkland’s text clears the way for a conception of the Michigan interior as a space for white settlers, but these depictions of Native Americans are equally an expression of white settlers’s uneasy relationship with the physical environment of Montacute. While the town’s woods and swamps have a persistent and measurable influence on domestic life, Clavers’s ideal households are not completely defined by their surroundings. As Smith points out, Clavers values the “carefully divided spaces” of an eastern frame house more than the commingled common area of the log houses typical in Michigan (173). Similarly, Clavers is noticeably admiring of the “Eastern enchantment” of the Beckworths, who live “not [in] a Michigan farm house, but a great noble, Yankee ‘palace of pine boards’” (Kirkland 87). As such, the general progression of Clavers’s treatment of the natural environment and preexisting Michigan culture is a rough parallel of the “one-way white appropriation of Indian ‘roving’ and ‘freedom of restraint’” (Keetley 32).

Melville’s Tommo has a similar mixture of fear and a desire to appropriate the beneficial qualities of the Typees, but his subordinate, minority position in the tribe is far different from the dominant presence of the white settlers of Kirkland’s/Clavers’s Montacute. Tommo fails, in part, because he fears the strength of Typee influence on his identity, but the citizens of Montacute have pushed the Native Americans to the outskirts of the community and are better able to claim aspects of Native American culture without losing their white identity. Clavers is proud to call herself “a denizen of the wild woods” and claims not to be interested in “the formation of a Montacute aristocracy,” so fully has she identified with the egalitarian character of the town (Kirkland 186). Just as Clavers adopts a less restrained identity from the Native Americans she pushes to the
borders of the town and the text, the egalitarian qualities she adopts from Montacute settlers would only really work if she ignores aspects of her town and herself. These adopted values, of course, neglect the sense of domestic propriety that Clavers retains throughout the text, and she suggests as much herself: “I shall visit my neighbors just as usual, and take care not to say a single word about dipped candles, *if I can help it*” (187 emphasis mine).

For the majority of the text, Clavers is most attentive to the environmental hardships that must be met with white labor. Having addressed the burdens of the land as well the Indians she avoids associating with it, Clavers then, in one of the final chapters of the book, can fully appreciate frontier liberty without the looming irony or self-reproach that characterizes her earlier descriptions of untrammelled nature. Even so, it is worth noting an additional, less threatening description of contact between Indians and settlers in Michigan. In the chapter where Clavers describes her garden and praises the fertile landscape, she notes the “spirit in which Indians buy and sell,” trading things like whortleberries and cranberries for flour, not for whiskey (Kirkland 81). While Clavers provides little sign of her opinions beyond the context of the passage, this more pleasant description of Indian traders results from the greater feeling of control associated with the space of her garden as opposed to the home of the French trader and the solitary Indian beyond the boundary of the town.

In *Typee*, Tommo does end up escaping in fear of the Typee’s influence upon him, but he has a much more receptive attitude toward the Typees for the majority of the text. Again, Tommo’s ultimate flight from the island is driven by fears similar to Clavers’s attitude toward the Native Americans, but Tommo’s earlier accommodating attitude is a
fundamentally different approach. Up until the final chapters, Tommo is less burdened by
the threat of racial difference and gains a fuller sense of the environment through his
intimacy with the people who have lived there. In contrast, Clavers’s sense of the
environment is grounded in her personal life at home more than the experiences of her
neighbors and certainly more than the experiences of the Native Americans who first
lived in the region. She is comfortable within the confines of her home and garden, but
just like the threatening presence of Indians outside the village borders, the social
differences of her neighbors constitute a vague threat. This threat is most tangible, I argue,
in the context of male drunkenness.

A common and unfortunate feature of Montacute, drunkenness both symbolizes
men’s detachment from the domestic community and acts as a sign of social and racial
status within the community. It takes men away from the immediate experience of their
homes, pushing them into a form of escape that is every bit as narcotic and enticing as the
myth of frontier abundance that drew them to Michigan in the first place, and the men
(and women) too drunk to care about the home are most often lower-class or Indians.
Alongside the first chapter’s sarcastic comment about the “fast improving” industry of
“turning our fields of golden grain into ‘fire water,’” Clavers repeats herself several
chapters later, writing that the “turning of grain into whiskey [ought to be an] indictable
offence” (Kirkland 7, 33). These brief points encapsulate a much more prevalent logic in
the book that connects the land, the home, and manhood. As I will demonstrate, drinking
is an easy signal that a man is not fully engaged in the home, and Clavers is equally
scornful of the whiskey distillers themselves. In a different way than Mr. Mazard, these
men are perverting the wholesome image of “our fields of golden grain” by pursuing profit at the expense of the homes destroyed by drunken men.

The scenes of drunken men and their families support the racial and social hierarchy of Clavers’s Montacute in the common, dismal example of their homes. In short, Indians and poor white settlers drink the most. As mentioned earlier, Keetley explains how Clavers’s sketch of an interracial home is a disordered mess with the constant presence of Indians in search of whiskey, but it is worth noting the strength of Clavers’s rhetorical connection between Native Americans and drunkenness. In the scene that Keetley references, Clavers’s foregrounds drunkenness as a central element of Indian character, not just as a feature of a chaotic household: “The Indians to whom I have alluded, had come to procure whiskey of the trader, . . . the baleful luxury which performs among their fated race the work of fire, famine, and pestilence” (Kirkland 29). Here, Clavers entwines drinking with the myth of the disappearing Indian, and the level of this “fated” desire only intensifies throughout Clavers’s stay with the French trader and his Native American wife. Twice more, in quick succession, Indians come to the trader’s door, and their clamor builds to “a hideous yelling.” Interestingly, Clavers is more critical of the male trader than “the grave and dignified mistress of the mansion.” The trader, “unblushingly . . . said they would get whiskey from someone” and his conspicuous lack of shame contrasts with how “his lady listened with no pleased aspect to this discussion of the foibles of her countrymen” (30). Clavers does nothing to counter the trader’s opinion of the Indians’ predilections, but she clearly places the trader’s appeasement alongside the men who build a profit by supplying alcohol to the community. So, given Clavers’s earlier description of Indian drunkenness, she comes
close to endorsing a full separation between white settlers and the persistent threat of Indian masculinity.

With her early stay at a “wretched inn” en route to Michigan, Clavers establishes alcohol’s most frightening effects within the home, which bear repeating here (Kirkland 7). Not only does this unnamed father breed constant terror in his house, abetted by alcohol and the isolated environment, his terrible conduct extends into the larger domestic community: “I may mention here that not very long after I heard of this man in prison in Detroit, for stabbing his neighbor in a drunken brawl, and ere the year was out he died of delirium tremens, leaving his family destitute.” Given her experience as a guest inside that home, her short description here shows how a man’s depraved home life is not fully isolated within the walls of his house and constitutes a real threat to the community. In addition to its dramatic association with violent behavior, Clavers builds an association in which drinking constitutes an escape from the pressing needs of the family and the home in the frontier. While his imprisonment is hardly intentional, this man’s drunkenness eventually removes him from the home completely both in prison and in his death. The frontier is hardly an escape from domestic life, and as shown in the effect of this man’s actions, this remote landscape brings an insistent need for men’s contribution to home life, both in their professional wages and in the work of the household itself. To completely leave the home is to sentence a man’s family to poverty, and the prevalence of alcohol complements the ways in which this open, abundant, and remote landscape can satisfy the transient and mobile inclinations of an individualistic Michigan man.
Only slightly less ignoble than the unnamed inn keeper is Jem White, whose “bad luck” on the job leaves one man with a “mashed thumb” and another with “a severe blow upon the head” (41). Of course, Clavers continues, “A jug of whiskey was pointed out by those who understood the matter, as the true cause of these disasters.” In this case, drunkenness affects both the home and the workplace. Although less dramatic than imprisonment for violent crime, Jem White makes a more concerted removal from the home, “having carried his ‘bad luck’ to a distant county, and leaving his wife and children to be taken care of by the public.” These most heinous drunkards make it clear that drinking destroys the home. In Jem White’s case, that jug of whiskey literally set back the construction of the Clavers’s home, but Clavers ends this anecdote with the more powerful image of a family abandoned by a man who values his own dissipated interests over his domestic responsibilities, a true frontier escapee from the restrictions of the home.

Clavers’s account of the Newland family best illustrates the connection between alcohol and the lower-class home. The Newlands, Clavers writes, are but one example of “one class of settlers” whose lower rank is defined not by laziness but by “denying themselves and their families every thing beyond the absolute necessaries of life” (Kirkland 107). In her first meeting with the family, Clavers responds to “intelligence we received from them” that the father, Mr. Newland, is “dangerously ill with inflammation of the lungs,” which leads some community members to help install a window in their home (108). Not only does Mr. Newland get better, “much to my surprise,” Clavers’s subsequent visit finds the family in “high hilarity,” readying for a party with a pail “nearly full of a liquid whose odor was but too discernable” as whiskey (108, 109). Male
Drunkenness may be the more widespread than the family-wide binges of the Newlands “class,” but the Newlands are an extreme example of alcohol’s detachment from proper domestic life. Where the selfish motives of a drunken father damages a single home, the Newlands’s drunkenness affects the greater domestic community of Montacute, and they flee the town collectively, “driving off with their own, as many of their neighbors’ cattle and hogs as they could persuade to accompany them” (111). That Clavers repeatedly identifies the Newlands as a representative for the lower class of Montacute is evidence of the ways in which alcohol is used to justify a sense of superiority over those who “perform the sever labor which is shunned by their neighbors” yet are unable to furnish a home that such labor would seemingly provide. In this way, Clavers preserves her upper middle-class moral standing and subtly endorses “the prevailing myths of equal opportunity and prosperity for all honest, hard-working Americans who were willing to go West,” but she gives women, through their domestic authority, the ability to determine what qualifies as prosperity in her Michigan town (Peebles 315).

Unlike the lower-class drunkards and Indians, the lazy, would-be gentlemen, or the professionally ambitious real estate traders, the husbands and fathers that Clavers most admires place the home as their top priority and answer to the authority of the mothers and wives within it. Mr. Spangler, who I mentioned earlier in my discussion of Mrs. Danforth’s story, establishes Clavers’s ideal very close the beginning of A New Home, but these positive examples of men in the home are noticeably fewer than the men that Clavers hopes to improve. Even so, Clavers does not ignore the benefits of the Montacute men who are characterized by their receptivity to the needs and desires of the home and their capacity to work hard to fulfill these domestic interests.
While Mr. Spangler’s ideal combination of domesticity and professional success is made easier by his brief appearance in Kirkland’s book, Clavers’s account of Philo Doubleday is a far more detailed example of men’s appropriate domestic engagement. Philo is interesting as a counterpoint to the hen-pecked husband, a figure that exemplifies the domestic threat to manhood by assuming that a husband’s active interest in the well-being of home and family leads to an emasculating subordination to his wife’s authority. In introducing Philo, Clavers includes many of the common signs of such a circumstance. His wife has “the sharpest eyes, the sharpest nose, the sharpest tongue, the sharpest elbows, and above all, the sharpest voice that ever ‘penetrated the interior’ of Michigan,” and Clavers openly wonders “[w]hat eclipse had come over Mr. Doubleday’s usual sagacity when he made choice of his Polly” (69). Though the “imperturbable Philo” is often the target of his wife’s sharp voice, he does not completely cede his authority. Instead of conflict and confrontation, Philo takes a piece of chalk and employs “his favourite mode of vengeance—‘poetical justice’ he calls it,” by writing lines like “Bolt not spring can bind the flame / Woman’s tongue no man can tame” in response to a scolding by his wife (70). Philo’s verses may be a more passive aggressive means to resolve domestic conflicts than a full and open discussion with his wife, but he is far more engaged with his home life than the indolent Mr. B——, the half-asleep Mr. Jenkins, and the collection of drunken, absent husbands and fathers who either do not care enough to respond to their wives’ concerns or reject them outright as a show of manly authority. Though “Mrs. Doubleday stands in no small dread” of lines like “Knock not here! / Or dread my dear,” written on the door above a sooty knuckle-print that “was
the subject of some rather severe remarks from the gentle Polly,” Philo’s chalk writing shows that he is indeed listening to her complaints.

For Clavers, Philo Doubleday’s is a compelling form of manhood because he is able to balance a range of different roles without neglecting the home. She clearly admires the ways his literary contributions, however casual, confer a sense of cultivation and intelligence that prevents him from being “mistaken for a simpleton . . . by those who do not know him” (Kirkland 68). Likewise, Philo is an “honest, hard-working Maine-man” without being totally consumed by the pursuit of profit. Clavers notes that “Philo is much sought when ‘the public’ has any work to do, or school-business, for that being very troublesome, and quite devoid of profit, is often conferred upon Philo” (69). Clavers is very critical of the men who labor for the sake of profit alone, and her praise of Philo distinguishes the kinds of work that is best suited to Michigan domestic life. A willingness to work, with more attention to the people it will bring together than the profit it will bring, is the most important quality for Michigan manhood. A man who is ready to help build a school house without worrying about payment is likely to help around the house without complaint.

Clavers’s conclusion to her sketch of Philo Doubleday vindicates his good-natured helpfulness and shows a benevolent result instead of the pathetic ruin of a man who passively accepts his wife’s domestic demands as well as the public demands for his labor. The last chalk message that Clavers describes is not a reaction to a scolding wife but “the suppressed delight of the new papa” (71). Philo and Polly Doubleday have a baby, and “the softened aspect, the womanized tone of the proud and happy mother” are signs of “a being . . . completely transformed” by motherhood. Such an ending is perhaps
as gratifying to Philo as it is to Clavers’s middle class audience. Clavers does not speak against Philo and Polly Doubleday’s early relationship, but she is not completely ready to endorse male submission as an integral part of manhood. Polly’s sharp and assertive demeanor becomes softer and properly “womanized” through motherhood, and Clavers rewards Philo with a wife “who had forgotten to scold her husband.”

Underlying Clavers’s opinions on the environment is a desire for a stable presence in the community that seeks to improve the lives of the people who live there. This presence includes women as well as men, but she focuses on the importance of men’s domestic and communal work because so many Michigan men are more interested in abstract wealth than the comforts and desires of people in their home and community. Philo Doubleday’s happy conclusion, the relative silence of a wife’s authority, could be read as an implicit criticism against a wife taking too much authority in the home, but Clavers is more interested in praising Philo than dismantling the female domestic authority that she establishes elsewhere in the text. Philo’s eagerness to help in the community and in the home makes his resolution more of a reward for proper manhood than an endorsement of male domestic authority. The fathers and husbands who are present for the lives and experiences of their families are the ones who are the most moral in Clavers’s eyes. Likewise, a man’s willingness to take on extra labor is an important stabilizing force in the fundamentally temporary character of the Montacute community. Philo Doubleday “is quite an old settler, came in four years ago” (Kirkland 68). There is a constant shuffle of new bodies and new minds, and there is a ready, even flow of people who can serve as the next willing victim of land-shark predation or the next profit-seeking, absentee father. His hen-pecked status notwithstanding, men like Philo are the
most important element of Montacute because they recognize that selfless, non-individualistic labor is the greatest source of stability in the community.

The story of Henry Beckworth dramatically illustrates how men’s labor apart from the home is a prerequisite to realizing Clavers’s domestic ideal. Leverenz offers Beckworth as particularly indicative of the kind of man inappropriately praised in Kirkland’s book, a man who to Leverenz, “twice deserted” his wife, and to Clavers, is “a romantic hero who keeps his love aflame” (Leverenz 161). The differences between Clavers’s and Leverenz’s assessment point to the kinds of masculine qualities that Clavers values as well as the circumstances in which a man’s absence from the home is excusable. Henry Beckworth’s story is as follows: Henry and his future wife Agnes fall in love, but as Agnes tends to her sick mother, the destitute Henry decides “to go to sea, in order that he might have immediate command of a trifling sum to which he could devote to her service” (Kirkland 90). After returning home—twice—to find the object of his love attached to another man, Henry makes a final voyage on a whaler, returns home a wealthy man, and marries the now (conveniently) twice-widowed Agnes. Despite leaving the object of his love, Henry earns Clavers’s admiration because his hard-won earnings are not an end to themselves; they are driven by the dream of a better home.

Throughout the text, Clavers launches numerous critiques against those men who pursue wealth at the expense of their wives and families, but Clavers states flatly that “I feel proud of my hero” in reference to Beckworth’s pursuits (Kirkland 96). Beckworth’s domestic ambitions distinguish his absence from willful desertion. With a loving home as his object, his would-be abandonment becomes a “tale of man’s constancy” (98). As well as excusing the pursuit of wealth whose object is the creation of a home, Clavers, in
passing so quickly over Henry’s initial decision to leave Agnes, implies that love alone cannot support the home. Likewise, when Henry realizes “that money is, beyond all dispute, one of the necessaries of life,” Clavers’s absent critique makes this comment into a kind of excuse for Henry’s multiple trips away from his love (96). Men need to make money to support a wife and family, and as long as a man returns home, he is perfectly justified in leaving the house to work. Granted, it is perhaps difficult to determine the point at which supporting the family becomes making money for its own sake, but Clavers relies on the condition of the home as a sign of man’s emotional investment in his family over his work. Yes, Henry leaves Agnes, but that “his heart beat as if it would burst in his blue jacket” can be seen in the “delicious home-like spot” of his future house, the “urgent hospitality” of his family, and his own “hearty, cheerful-looking” self, who “fell no whit behind in doing the honours” and making Clavers and her companion feel “quite at ease” (90, 87). Indeed, Clavers’s unrestrained praise of the Beckworth home precedes Henry’s tale, so that his constancy is never doubted. Thus, his tale presents a view of the working world as a harsh sacrifice that men must endure before their inevitable return home.

Everard and Cora Hastings do not begin with the hardworking “spunk” that Clavers admires in Henry Beckworth, but the tale of their journey to Michigan is an instructive progression that emphasizes the appropriate response to the realities of a new and more difficult physical environment. In the story of the Hastings family, which Kolodny describes as “the fullest portrait of a model frontier couple” Clavers repeatedly mentions how the fantasy of a pleasant wilderness is a deceptive and destructive force when a man bases his family’s financial well-being upon it (141). The story of Cora and
Everard Hastings begins with the two young, wealthy lovers in New York city, each with a “head as full of romance and as far from anything like plain, common-sense views of life and its wearisome cares and its imperious duties” (Kirkland 153). Eloping and moving to southwest New York, they settle in a “wild and mountainous and woody spot” that would be rejected by “any common-sense settler” but is deemed perfect “for a pair who had set out to live on other people’s thoughts” (161). Clavers, who criticizes the couple’s choice of adventure novels over reference books and instructional material, emphasizes the primacy of material engagement with the environment. The pair may be living in the wilderness, but they are more engaged with the abstract idea of the land than the land itself. As Cora and Everard soon find out, airy thoughts and dreams of nature cannot feed a family. First, minor hardships of the once-romantic homestead transform “[t]he whole face of the earth . . . [into] but one expanse of mud—deep tenacious, hopeless mud,” and the family’s problems increase when both Cora’s newborn baby and Everard both contract smallpox (166, 167). Clavers makes it clear that, just as “the world’s harshness soon cures romance,” the mere act of holding these romantic notions leaves a home in an incredibly vulnerable position (166).

The Hastings are delivered from tragedy by the domestic attachments they left in New York City. Cora’s and Everard’s parents arrive and nurse the family back to health, and along with their recovery comes “such minute explanations of all feelings and plans,” a realistic approach to their future to correct their romantic delusions (Kirkland 168). The close of the Hastings story finds them in the Michigan woods, albeit with a more rewarding and balanced perspective: “Visionary still! Perhaps so, but to Michigan they came, and with a fine large fertile tract, managed by a practical farmer and his family”
(169). At this point, the Hastings can afford to be visionaries, and Clavers withholds her scorn because the family is ready to perform the labor required within the Michigan frontier and maintains an abiding interest in their home. The takeaway here is that *domestic* romance is perfectly appropriate, but it must be secured by a realistic devotion to the needs of the family and the work ethic required to sustain the home. Whether in Everard’s conspicuously absent working life in southwest New York or in men’s deluded dreams of profit, romance has no place in men’s working world.

From the beginning of *A New Home*, Clavers addresses the disconnect between environmental romance and reality, and the bulk of her text acts as an extended critique of the frontier as men’s abstract fantasy, instead positioning the landscape as only suitable for romance in its domestic capacity, as a domestic luxury purchased by the increased male labor that this environment demands. Predatory land speculators capitalize on the romanticized frontier by advertising fertile tracts to dreamy men who do not know they are buying a worthless plot of swampland until they are already in Michigan without the means to move away, and other men are more captivated by misplaced dreams of real estate and profits than the more worthwhile dream of a better home for their families. Clavers is most concerned with how men treat the environment as an abstract article of trade and not the site of productive labor oriented toward a fulfilling home life. Working on a farm or saw mill is infinitely preferable to gaining wealth by trading possession of the land without doing any labor, but for Clavers, the Michigan environment is most insistently real and productive in the context of the home.

Clavers’s call for men’s fuller participation in the labor in and around the home provides an effective alternative to Simms’s and Hawthorne’s romantic visions. Clavers
lives in the vicinity of non-human environments at least as big as the local wetlands of Simms’s texts, but she is far more aware of the work associated with this proximity to nature. Granted, Hawthorne does describe Holgrave working in the garden, but Holgrave himself is careful not to classify it as labor. Similarly, the male characters in Simms’s Revolutionary War romances treat the local swamp as a source of relaxation and abstract, spiritual uplift. Clavers would class these men alongside Mr. B—and Mr. Rivers as men who enjoy the charms of nature without fully acknowledging the work needed to live in such a space. The natural environment certainly can be a place of pleasant, imaginative inspiration, but it is first and foremost a real space that requires a substantial labor to create and sustain the domestic, natural spaces in Hawthorne’s and Simms’s texts. In Melville’s text, Tommo uses the Nukuhevan jungles to live a life of ease among the Typees, but the environment actually pushes him towards an awareness of his own shortcomings and the benefits of a larger domestic community. Simms and Hawthorne depict a homelike environment in their texts, but their male heroes’ experiences of nature are almost wholly gratifying and complementary to their vision of manhood in the home. Kirkland and Melville describe a natural environment that highlights the conflicts between manhood and domestic life, with Kirkland’s narrator Clavers emphasizing how men’s working for the home and within the home can resolve these conflicts. As a whole, Clavers’s sketches, stories, and comments are motivated by her interest in improving the community through improving the domestic lives of its residents, and the noblest homes of Montacute are the product of male labor and female domestic authority. Clavers makes an effort to show that the home is not an essentially feminizing space, and her calls for male involvement in the home emphasize the difficulty of domestic labor
rather than its emasculating potential. More often than not, the male residents of the town are un-manned by their professional failures and by taking action based on false assumptions of their power over the home and the surrounding landscape. The greatest threat, however, is not a man’s professional failure in Montacute or a dressing-down at home. The men who simply do not care about the people and objects in the home represent the greatest barrier to the improvement of Montacute culture. The leisurely Mr. Rivers and Mr. B—indulge in a pastoral environmental fantasy of hunting and fishing, and the self-interested Mr. Danforth and Mr. Mazard buy into an abstraction of the land-as-commodity that is similarly disconnected with the full qualities of the landscape. Where an interest in leisure without labor leads men to either take advantage of their neighbors or witness their homes slowly deteriorate, men like Mr. Mazard and Mr. Danforth are equally guilty of an approach to the physical environment that has a negative effect on the home: “When every body is buying land and scarce any body cultivating it, one must not expect to find living either good or cheap” (Kirkland 33). Cultivation, then, is the crucial element to both the landscape and the home in Montacute. Clavers calls for men to work hard and cultivate the land in order to create and cultivate a stable domestic life and a thriving, civilized community.
NOTES

Chapter 2

1. In addition to its relevance to Hawthorne’s writing, Downing’s work is an important record of middle-class aspirations and the increasing importance of the environment as a marker of class in the mid-nineteenth-century.

2. It should be noted that Aames’s assessment of men’s cynical performance of proper etiquette and Herbert’s assertion of Holgrave’s deception cannot be completely discounted as support for the idea that Holgrave is manipulating the rules of domestic behavior without absorbing the ideology behind them.

3. Leland Person notes how Sophia Hawthorne’s conspicuous absence from “The Old Manse” signals Hawthorne’s anxiety about “a writerly self in relation to Sophia . . . [and one] haunted by male influences” (Person 52).

Chapter 3

1. As a general study of Simms’s literary output, Mary Ann Wimsatt’s *The Major Fiction of William Gilmore Simms* offers a number of perceptive readings of Simms’s fiction and its relevant contexts, and the extensive scope of her book provides a helpful perspective on the larger themes of his fiction as a whole. Her explanation of Francis
Marion’s lofty status in Simms’s fiction is a particularly useful guide as it identifies Marion’s heroic stature as well as his role as “an unpretentious man of the people, bridging the gap between aristocrat and commoner” (65). More directly relevant to my work, Wimsatt’s analysis of Captain Porgy’s progression throughout Simms’s Revolutionary War romances is an important recognition of the character’s masculinity, in that, “as the series progresses, fighting comes to rival eating as one of his principal concerns” (162). In both cases, Wimsatt shows the mixed quality of Simms’s male heroes, but this mixture of high and low, domestic and military, bridges gaps rather than upsetting Simms’s carefully constructed social order. Noting Simms’s mixed feelings about a sometimes necessary, sometimes “destructive preference for busyness and strife,” Jan Bakker’s book on the Southern pastoral explains how, partly through the progression of Porgy’s character, Simms wrestles with the “that troubled urge toward doing balanced by a simultaneous desire for an idyllic, calm stasis that just cannot be maintained” (Pastoral 71, 77). The swamp, I argue, is a testing-ground for just this intermixture of activity and repose as it provides an opportunity to exercise often destructive masculine energies in the maintenance, protection, and imaginative contemplation of the local natural environment.

2. Along with relevant analyses of Simms’s fictional and non-fictional works, John Caldwell Guilds’s book highlights the professional struggles of the Southern author, noting his “relentless . . . drive . . . to success” and his ambivalent, sometimes condescending stance toward a Southern culture within which, through his editorship of a number of literary journals, Simms hoped to cultivate “the creation of a literature that was distinctly American because it was distinctly Southern” (76, 65, 148). Guilds’s
attention to Simms’s professional concerns—he also notes Simms’s keenly felt distance from the New York literary market—sheds light on the importance of sectionalism and his dedication to the idea of a fixed and stable place of the home in his fiction.

3. L. Lynn Hogue brings up the relevance of the law in establishing and maintaining the social order that Nakamura and Tate describe, explaining how, while Simms’s early career as a lawyer informs his depiction of legal issues within *Woodcraft*, the efforts of Porgy’s and his supporters effect a “triumph of rustic simplicity and bucolic virtues over the disingenuous lawyers and courts” (Hogue 209). My analysis of the heated scenes that pit Porgy’s household against legal officials expand on this theme to show how Simms’s depiction of more local and domestic means of conflict resolution informs the masculinity of the male representatives of the home and the law. The order within Simms’s social vision comes from within the home and within the community, and these legal officials fail because they are too disconnected from the community to resolve the conflicts within it.

4. Given the elevated role of the poet in Simms’s social vision, it is perhaps not surprising that Doreen Theirauf’s overview of Simms’s literary criticism finds “that Simms considered the poet’s occupation to be mainly a manly one . . . [associated with] originality, plainness, and boldness” (77). Likewise, Brian Fenny, while arguing that writing was a “source of conflict and insecurity” for Simms, nevertheless points to a masculine regime wherein dominant notions of “mastery and honor” were threatened by “the range and intensity of emotions valued by literary men” (63, 65).

5. John Mayfield writes of how Simms works to combine two ways of understanding masculinity, a “social or ideological . . . way of contrasting gentry and
entrepreneur” and a set of “personal qualities . . . such as vigor and roughness, contrasted here with grace and refinement” (Mayfield “‘The Soul of a Man’” 478). As Mayfield writes in his book on Southern masculinity and humor, the “dominant fiction” of a “stable and simple” group of white male planters belies a “more permeable, shifting social topography” in the antebellum South (Counterfeit Gentlemen xiv, xvii). The failure of many of Simms’s fictional patrician elites suggests that Simms himself felt the instability of the traditional patrician code of Southern honor, and Woodcraft’s failed system of “literary transvestitism,” in which the central male and female characters take on traits associated with the opposite gender, works on some level as a recognition of this “fluidity of roles” as well as “the futility of creating a new manly ideal from the materials at hand” (Mayfield “‘The Soul of a Man’” 483, 497). For a man described as a Southern conservative, Simms works hard to fashion a system of gender relations that departs from the dominant understanding of male Southern honor in significant ways, placing refined gentlemen in swamps that demand ruggedness and adaptability.

6. Expanding on Kolodny’s similar reading of a scene in The Forayers, Dale highlights how, alongside Porgy’s social and culinary success in hunting a group of swamp frogs and turning them into an elegant meal for American military officers, Simms depicts “Porgy [as] the destroyer of the family and the peaceful home” by describing, however comically, the swamp’s general sadness at the loss of these young frogs to Porgy’s overzealous domestic aspirations (Dale 58). Porgy does not fail here because he is too gruff, rugged, or indifferent to the needs of other people. If anything, Porgy fails here because he indulges in a narrow sense of domestic comfort that neglects
how the life within his immediate environment is itself a home, rather than a collection of materials that can be used to create a home.

7. A significant contribution to the study of Simms’s treatment of race in his fiction, Joseph Ridgely’s 1960 analysis of Simms’s *Woodcraft* as a literary counterpoint to Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is a strong (find another word) starting point for how Simms “chose the positive course of presenting in a work of fiction an extended account of what he conceived [slavery] to stand for” (422). With his overall argument supported by a letter in which Simms writes that *Woodcraft* is “‘probably as good an answer to Mrs. Stowe as has been published,’” Ridgely outlines how Simms instills readers’ “tacit acceptance of the scene as presented” by depicting strong Southern women instead of “the pallid wives of Stowe’s slaveowners” and by using “the plantation home . . . [as] a microcosm of the Southern system” (422, 423, 427, 429). Ridgely’s reading is particular helpful for my analysis the treatment of the black slaves in *Woodcraft*. Simms does not criticize them as much as he ignores how their agency contributes to life in Porgy’s plantation and the swamps that surround it. With the home as the site of Simms’s idealized slaveowning society, Simms depicts an idealized master-slave relationship governed by “[m]utual respect, outspokenness, [and] the concern of each for the other’s physical welfare” and more closely focused on “the joys of reunion rather than the horrors of separation” (430).

8. Partly in response to Ridgley’s article, Charles Watson finds *Woodcraft* to be much more of a critique of Simms’s own Southern culture than an example of the admirable Southern society that Stowe neglects to depict in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. In a catalogue of character analyses, Watson sees Porgy as a critique “of the contemporary
Southern planter as indecisive philosopher,” Millhouse as an attack on the utilitarianism of “the materialistic overseer,” M’Kewn as a condemnation of the blatant social climbing of “the nouveau riche of his day,” and Bostwick as critique of the “the vices of the poor white,” which include “acute class hatred” along with gambling and drunkenness (83, 86, 88-89).

9. Jan Bakker’s article on Woodcraft uses Simms’s complex characters and a lack of “melodramatic or cataclysmic or high-flown” descriptions as the basis of his claim that, with this book, “Simms is American literature’s first distinctly ‘realistic’ writer” (“Literary Frontier” 66, 77). This realist mode, Bakker explains, informs the depiction of some scenes that might seem to undercut a view of Woodcraft as a straightforward defense of slavery, especially in a scene that involves Porgy’s inability to remember the elderly slave woman who helped to raise him as a child: “Porgy’s nonrecognition of . . . Sappho is a startling revelation . . . of the essential expendability of slaves to their Southern masters” (Bakker 68). Whether due to direct criticism of the South or due to a disciplined literary realism, these scenes, in which a white planter’s ignorance of a maternal slave contradicts Simms’s general domestic defense of slavery, are part of what makes Woodcraft such an interesting example of Simms’s complex social vision.

10. Entry into the cultivated echelons of the planter elite was difficult, but not impossible. Scholars like Amanda Mushal and Kathleen Brown have shown how the antebellum South allowed for some social mobility through marriage and through professional and kinship networks, and Lorri Glover notes that Southern boys’ college experience was “focused on a limited range of activities and related exclusively to behavior in genteel society” (Mushal 63, Brown 249, Glover 29). Despite the promise of higher education,
gaining entry into the Southern upper class was not always this simple, based on conditions that Michael O’Brien describes: “In theory, anyone who showed manners or courtesy might be a gentleman or lady. In practice, the language of gentility was shot through with ranking” (375). In a more specific example, Craig Friend’s case study of Cyrus Stuart shows how college education was often an imperfect means of social elevation, frequently requiring an outside network of relatives or patrons for young men to support themselves, with social circles often drawing from customs and manners only learned by growing up as a member of the upper class. For lower class boys “without a family to model gender, sexual, and patriarchal relations,” the upper-class society of the South, “in which even the ambitions of planters’ sons were suppressed through ritual,” made social elevation a difficult proposition (94).

Chapter 4

1. Holgrave, by comparison, is a far more traditional model of masculine individualism: “[A]midst all [his] personal vicissitudes, he had never lost his identity. Homeless as he had been, . . . he had never violated the innermost man, but had carried his conscience along with him” (Hawthorne, CE 2: 177). While part of Holgrave’s persistent character can be explained by limiting his access to a meaningful home that might change his frame of mind, he is never faced with a situation that would challenge his predetermined character or force him to either adopt a different perspective. This constancy is evident even in the moments that seem to contradict it, and Phoebe Pyncheon’s comments on Holgrave’s newfound conservatism near the end of the book
implicitly highlight Holgrave’s previously steadfast views as well directly illustrating his innermost man has truly changed. Where Holgrave’s stolid character is rarely questioned, Melville dramatizes Tommo’s struggles to retain his individual male identity in the domestic environments depicted in *Typee*. Tommo’s shifting sense of self may constitute a failure to uphold his manly ideals, but these shifts are also a testament to the influence of domestic life. Melville expands the power and presence of domesticity and proposes that, to truly become a member of domestic life, a man must accept that his masculine identity will be changed by his time in the home. Unlike Hawthorne, Melville foregrounds domestic life as a complex and ongoing negotiation with male identity, not just a series of requirements that will grant an individualistic male the manhood-restoring space of the antebellum home.

2. Unlike Simms’s construction of a masculine domesticity without a female presence, Tommo’s sense of domesticity includes both men and women.

3. For Samoan scholar Albert Wendt, tattooing a body “gives it shape, form, identity, symmetry, puts it through the pain to be endured to prepare for life: and recognizes its growing maturity and ability to serve the community” (qtd. in Ellis 72).
BIBLIOGRAPHY


VITA

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