A Study of Family Relationships in the Restoration Comedy of Manners.

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The Louisiana State University and Agricultural
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A STUDY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE
RESTORATION COMEDY OF MANNERS

A Dissertation

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by

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ABSTRACT

An examination of family relationships in the Restoration comedy of manners reveals conflict and bitterness. The Restoration comic world, influenced by a court milieu of skepticism, libertinism, and naturalism, is essentially a selfish one; the characters' pursuit of full realization of their egoistic natures takes precedence over all else, including loyalty to family members. Furthermore, the rebellion of Charles II's court against Puritan and middle-class values encouraged the dramatists, themselves aristocrats writing for a court audience, to question the conventionally accepted family structure—a structure which often disintegrates in Restoration comedy. The playwrights depict families as lacking cohesion; relatives are not supportive of one another, and hostilities flare.

Family disintegration appears in the relationships between young women and their parents or guardians, young men and their parents or guardians, and siblings. The heroine rebels against her parent's determining her mate, a decision which is often based on purely monetary considerations. As a foil to the witty and charming young girl, the parental figure is prudish in a libertine age and would repress the heroine's natural instincts. The older generation is always outwitted by the heroine, who not only wins the man of her choice, but ends up with enough money to continue to enjoy her aristocratic life style. Similarly, the young man in the Restoration comedy of manners confronts his elders and attempts to achieve freedom. His main opponent in the play is often a parent or guardian who threatens
him with financial deprivation if he does not adhere to the parent's or guardian's wishes. The siblings portrayed frequently lack contact with one another during the play. (The Restoration comedy of manners emphasizes social, rather than familial, spheres.) In plays where there is interaction between siblings, they provide a constant source of irritation to each other. In the specific case of the elder and younger brothers, no evidence of generosity exists; the elder brother who inherits an estate allows his younger sibling to suffer poverty.

As the seventeenth century draws to a close, there is a shift from a comedy of selfishness to a drama of unselfishness. The rise in power of the bourgeoisie, the attacks on the morality of the Restoration comedy of manners, and the severing of close ties between court and theatre, all influence the shape of the new drama. Sentimentality infiltrates the comedy, and love and supportiveness begin to manifest themselves in family relationships. As the libertine and free existence loses attractiveness for hero and heroine alike, they now value family ties. The heroine is able to wed the right man without alienating her parent or guardian. Parents, in turn, care more about their daughter's happiness than finances. The now sober hero bears love and respect for his parent, who is no longer depicted as a ridiculous fool merely because he is aged. Should a son cause his father pain, he suffers remorse and repentance. Siblings, rather than ignoring each other or interacting only with conflict, serve dramatically to reinforce each other's virtuous traits. In sentimental comedy, harmony replaces the earlier depiction of family relationships as indifferent, bitter, or openly hostile.
INTRODUCTION

"The Restoration comedy of manners" is the specific label applied to a body of witty, elegant and rather risqué dramatic literature which developed after the restitution of the monarchy in England in 1660. Its basic pattern was established by writers such as Sir George Etherege in the 1660's, and the genre reached its peak in the works of William Congreve in the 1690's. Around the turn of the century, the Restoration comedy of manners began to undergo erosion with transitional dramatists like George Farquhar, whose works display the influence of the growing movement towards sentimentalism. As the so-called "sentimental comedy" of such authors as Colley Cibber and Sir Richard Steele began to flourish in the eighteenth century, the comedy of manners faded away. As John Loftis points out, although to the historian "Restoration" refers to the period between 1660 and 1685 or 1688, to the drama student it refers to the tradition "established in the 1660's, weakening after 1700, and displaced in the 1730's."¹

The numerous studies of Restoration comedy have generally emphasized one of the following topics: the relationship of the comedies to society;² the immorality,³ or amorality,⁴ or morality⁵ of the plays; or, their function as a social corrective.⁶ More specifically, the focus has often been on the predominance of love or sexual affairs, the game of courtship, and the mocking of marriage.⁷
While the rake-mistress and husband-wife relationships have been
thoroughly explored in many critical studies, little appears to have
been written about the interaction among family members such as
parents and children, aunts and nieces or nephews, or siblings.

Two works consulted for this dissertation deal with family
relationships directly: Elisabeth Mignon's Crabbed Age and Youth:
The Old Men and Women in the Restoration Comedy of Manners (1947)
and Leon Barron's unpublished Harvard dissertation, "The Quest for
Good Society: Friends and Families in Restoration Comedy" (1960).
Mignon's book outlines the struggle between the old and the young
which seems inherent in most comedy in general and in the Restoration
comedy of Manners in particular. She also indicates briefly the change
in the treatment of the aged which accompanies the development of
sentimentality in drama: the older characters now reassume the dignity
denied them in the Restoration comic tradition. Mignon provided
helpful suggestions to an approach to the conflict between age groups.
Her short treatment of each play did not, however, focus necessarily
on family relationships; nor did it deal with same-age siblings.
Barron's dissertation concentrates on the figure of the hero who,
living among friends bound only by self-interest or pleasure-seeking
and fragmentary family relationships, seeks redemption through a more
satisfying relationship with a wife or mistress. While Barron's study
reaffirms the disintegration of the family unit in the Restoration
comedies, it does not document the drastic change as sentimentalism
infiltrates the drama. Neither of the above studies concentrates
intensively on how the social and intellectual milieu of the comedies
influences the portrayal of family relationships.
In addition, of the many valuable but more general studies of the Restoration comedy of manners, three have proven most helpful. *Wild Civility: The English Comic Spirit on the Restoration Stage* (1970), by Virginia Birdsall, places the Restoration hero, seeking freedom from the rigidity of institutions, within the English comic tradition. Thomas Fujimura's *The Restoration Comedy of Wit* (1952) emphasizes the serious content of the plays, and makes a case for a comedy of wit rather than of manners. *Themes and Conventions in the Comedy of Manners* (1965), by R. C. Sharma, studies Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar in relation to the background of their age.

The following examination of the portrayal of family relationships in the Restoration comedy of manners and the early sentimental drama includes a study of plays by the most significant dramatists of the period, beginning with Etherege's *She Would If She Could* (1668) through Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), which has been termed "an undeniable watershed." The playwrights to be discussed are Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Farquhar, Cibber and Steele. The last three of these dramatists provide contrasts to the early Restoration writers by the conscious sentimentality which pervades many of their works.

The purpose of this study is to explore what in the nature of the Restoration comedy of manners seems to preclude the depiction of close, supportive family interaction. What patterns of relationships emerge from an investigation of the drama, and in what ways, if any, do they reflect the society producing these plays? Finally, how does
the rise of sentimentality in comedy change the playwrights' and the audience's views of the relationships among family members?

Chapter One provides a background of the social, political and intellectual milieu in which the plays were written. Chapter Two examines the relationships of Restoration comic heroines and their parents/guardians, while Chapter Three does the same for the young men in the plays. In Chapter Four the interaction between siblings in Restoration comedy is analyzed. Chapter Five concerns the altered relationships among family members as the comedy turns sentimental.
Footnotes


3 The case for the immorality of the Restoration comedy of manners can be traced from Jeremy Collier's famous tract, A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage (Munchen: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1967) through the various writings of Sir Richard Steele to William Archer, The Old Drama and the New: An Essay in Re-Valuation (Boston: Small, Maynard and Co., 1923).


CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Descent of the Comedy of Manners

Most critics agree that the Restoration comedy of manners developed in the English comic tradition inherited from the popular comedies of Shirley, Beaumont and Fletcher. Although Ben Jonson had some influence on the manners writers (e.g., the character of Foresight in Congreve's *Love for Love*), and sometimes Restoration dramatists mixed manners and humors (e.g., Shadwell's *Bury Fair*), Jonson was usually considered too coarse for the aristocratic, refined Restoration audience. A French influence also prevailed, a result of the courtiers' years of exile in France during Cromwell's Puritan reign. Although some situations, dialogue, and characters were borrowed from French authors such as Molière, the English dramatists, who were more sensual and risqué, lacked Molière's humanitarian spirit. Dobrée points out that despite translations and adaptations of foreign works, "the standpoint, the form, and the atmosphere" of the drama always remains English.

Although the writers used French, Latin and Spanish plots, they essentially drew their inspiration from the life around them. As they themselves were aristocrats, this life was the high society of upper-class Londoners. In their new comedy, they sought "to reflect and interpret the gay life around the court of King Charles,
the Second."³ Krutch defines the Restoration comedy of manners as "depicting realistically and in a sinister spirit the life of the most dissolute portion of the fashionable society of the city."⁴

**Characteristics of the Comedy of Manners**

Specific elements characterize the Restoration comedy of manners from its inception through its slow demise in the early eighteenth century. Dominating the play is at least one pair of young lovers (Truewits), with whom the other characters are contrasted. The dialogue is free and graceful, and the plot holds less importance than the wit. Furthermore, as Nicoll states, the plays bear "an air of refined cynicism."⁵ In all of the works until those of Farquhar, dramatists ridicule localities outside of London. Palmer remarks that the new comedy reflects the habits of aristocratic Londoners, employing such settings as Spring Garden, Gray's Inn Walk, St. James' Street and Park, the New Exchange, the playhouses and the clubs.⁶

The plot usually involves "a trick, an intrigue, a deception," and often "a whole bagfull" of them.⁷ Through the outwitting situation, the heroine escapes the greedy clutches of her parent or guardian, the hero gains his inheritance, or the hero and heroine are permitted to marry.

The main themes of the comedies are manners, love, and marriage, the last being mocked as an unworkable situation much dreaded by the rake-heroes. Instead of romantic or spiritual love, a preoccupation with money in the form of dowries and inheritances, a stress on the physical nature of love, and a battle of wits between the level-headed hero and heroine are predominant. Dobrée believes
that "the distinguishing characteristic of Restoration comedy down to Congreve is that it is concerned with the attempt to rationalize sexual relationships." The idea of sex antagonism, with man and woman as equal combatants, comes as "a consequence of the experimental freedom allowed to women, which gave matter for some of its most brilliant scenes." Yet the double standard holds: men seek liberties with ladies before marriage, but women want to preserve their chastity until after the wedding vows. As Ariana says to Courtal in She Would if She Could, "I know you wou'd think it as great a scandal to be thought to have an inclination for marriage, as we shou'd to be believed willing to take our freedom without it" (V, i).10

In addition to the Truewit hero and heroine, the characters of the Restoration comedy of manners include the pretender to wit (Witwoud) and the fool (Witless); the much mocked country bumpkin, often a relative of a sophisticated town-dweller; the affected fop; the antiquated coquette; and the lecherous old man who does not comprehend his exclusion from the charmed inner circle of gallants and belles. As a matter of fact, everyone outside this charmed inner circle becomes an object of scorn. Krutch notes that the dramatists hated and satirized "foolishness, cant, and all that was not easy and graceful."11

Social Background

The social and intellectual milieu of the comedy of manners dictated many of its characteristics. The theatres in England, closed during the Puritan reign from 1642 to 1660, were reopened
with the Restoration of Charles II. The Restoration meant that the king, Parliament and law replaced military dictatorship; that Bishops and Anglicanism replaced Puritanism; and that nobles and gentry returned to positions of leadership. The Restoration ushered in what Perry has called "a violent reaction in art as well as morals." With the middle class no longer frequenting the theatre, it became the toy of the aristocracy, the drama itself being directed at a court audience whose morality and manners it reflected. Charles II himself was very much interested in the theatre and helped shape comedy to mirror his taste. One of his chief diversions, sexual intrigue, was adopted as the leading motif in the new type of comedy."

The king and the younger aristocracy were scarred by their experiences resulting from the Cromwell reign. Their very existence—family life, education, enjoyment of property—had been disrupted. They had endured "injustice done to them in the name of religion." Now the court reacted in the extreme, shunning the sober dress and manner of the Puritans. Krutch states: "To be debauched was the easiest way of clearing one's self of suspicion of disloyalty." The polished and amorous young king became the model for many gallants. Other models such as Rochester and Buckingham won admiration by their personal style and "by their way of entering a ballroom." Form, not virtue, was all important.

The people of fashion were cut off from the rest of the city, which remained strongly Puritan. After the Restoration, "morally and socially the nation continued to be split up into two hostile camps which largely explains the violent reaction against the
conventional morality among the courtiers. . . . " The comedies ridicule the mercantile city characters. Aristocratic playwrights such as Etherege and Wycherley so overwhelmingly sided with the fashionable crowd that the citizens they portrayed appeared foolish and immoral. But, after all, this was the class that had attacked the stage for most of the century and had supported the Puritan reign.

With the aristocratic court circles furnishing both playwrights and audience for the comedy of manners, court and comedies alike were severed from the life of the nation. The theatre itself, not highly valued as a cultural center, was used as a meeting-place of such license that "those citizens who still retained some of their Puritan convictions shunned the place like the plague." The scene not only of assignations but of numerous brawls, the playhouse was attended by an audience who came not for instruction but entertainment or their own amusements. A typical play-goer's anonymous pamphlet states:

For my part, when I go to the theatres, it is with this intention alone, viz: to unbend my thoughts from all manner of business, and by this relaxation to raise again my wearied spirits . . . the mirth and jollity of the place, like a well prescribed cordial, performs its operations, enlivens my drooping thoughts, and passes clearly off, working a pleasing cure, and leaving not impression behind it.

The audience's assurance of the king's blessing on comedy, their anti-Puritan and anti-mercantile bias, and their intense pleasure-seeking all contributed to the unique quality of the Restoration comedy of manners.
**Intellectual Background**

The intellectual milieu of the court, which was one of skepticism, libertinism and naturalism, greatly affected the approach to comedy. It was an age of experimentation and the "new philosophy." Seventeenth century thinkers such as Spinoza and Hobbes wielded considerable influence among the educated, aristocratic wits at Whitehall. That scientific curiosity had become widespread is indicated by the founding of the Royal Society in 1662, which concentrated its attention on empirically verifiable rather than spiritual matters. "'God and the Soul' were taken for granted—and left aside," says Trevelyan. Curiosity stamped all facets of living, from politics to sex. According to Dobrée, the attempt to rationalize human relationships found in everyday life was reflected in the comedy, which expressed the desire to try new life styles. Whether in science, life, or drama, experience was valued over tradition, and experimentation over simple acceptance.

The plays display the rationalistic, empirical and libertine temper of the court. The wits "committed themselves, though not always consistently, to a point of view that accepted the naturalness, and hence the rightness, of man's egoistic, hedonic and malicious character." The result of the naturalistic bias of the courtiers, influenced by the "new philosophy" and science of Galileo, Newton, Copernicus and others, was a loss of absolutes and a development of the sense that their world was falling apart.

Due to the hardships the royalty and aristocracy had undergone during the Puritan reign, cynicism prevailed. Krutch points out that
the faith in human nature which dominated the Elizabethan period was largely missing from the Restoration. Underwood views the attitude of skepticism in two senses of the word. First, there is the philosophic sense, wherein all knowledge is uncertain: this concerns the libertine's antirationalism or denial of reason as an instrument of speculation. The libertine rejects the medieval and Renaissance idea of universal order and man's place in the hierarchy. "His ends were hedonistic, 'Epicurean,' and embraced the satisfaction of the senses in accordance with the 'reasonable' dictates of Nature—that is, in this case, one's 'natural' impulses and desires." Second, the attitude of skepticism means doubt of orthodox dogma and the substitution of free thought. The libertine considered laws and institutions to be the products of individual societies, "mere customs varying with the variations of society. . . ." There being nothing "natural" about these laws and institutions, they must be reflected by anyone exercising "right reason." The societal customs against which the libertine rebelled included marriage and courtly love attitudes, family, church and state.

Hobbes, whose views of psychology influenced the court intellectuals, held that man is motivated by aversion and desire. His philosophical view of the importance of happiness or pleasure stemming from satisfaction of the appetites is reflected in the comedies' egoistic and libertine heroes, such as Dorimant in The Man of Mode. These heroes principally concern themselves "with the objects of their desire or aversion: they pursue the pleasures of wine, women and wit, and they ridicule Witless, Witwoud, and unnatural creatures." From the concept that man is "self-seeking in
motivation and ruthless in his means" comes from the idea of aggression and conquest which appears in the heroes' relationships with women. Inextricably tied in with the new naturalistic, libertine and skeptical outlook of the era was the idea of wit and decorum. According to Hobbes, man's rational faculties are divided into fancy (the creative faculty which discovers similarities in unlike things) and judgment (the analytical faculty which discovers dissimilarities in like things). He sometimes associated wit with both fancy and judgment; other times he identified it with one or the other. Wit considered as including both fancy and judgment concerns general mental sharpness, implying intellectual superiority in perception and knowledge, and consequently, acumen, penetration, and sophistication. Wit as identified with fancy concerns the invention of figures of speech and the embellishment of a work of art to give pleasure through vividness and novelty. Wit as equated with judgment was looked upon as a normative factor and often identified with decorum. For the refined person, decorum meant an ideal of behavior, "based on judgment and not on more convention." The differences among the Truewit, Witwoud and Witless lie in their adherence to decorum, which equals "a natural elegance of thought and conduct, based on respect for sound judgment, fidelity to nature, and a due regard for beauty." Decorum is naturalistic because it stands for what is reasonable, empirically verifiable, and probable. The naturalistic bias meant writers would reward the Truewit hero who followed his libertine nature and mock characters who denied their true nature, such as the lustful old woman who pretends to be virtuous.
Changes in Society and Comedy

Behind the characters and plots of the Restoration comedy of manners stands a unifying approach based on libertinism and naturalism. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, however, the social and intellectual milieu changed considerably, and with it the view of the purpose and nature of comedy. Whereas the court of Charles II had been "the scene of much pleasure, liberty and scandal" as well as "the centre of patronage for politics, fashion, literature, art, learning, invention, company-promoting, and a hundred other activities," after the Revolution of 1688, the court's glory became clouded. William's sternness and Anne's invalidism caused the court to become less accessible and royalty more secluded. Patronage was no longer sought from the Crown, but in Parliament, from the ministers, or in the country houses of the aristocracy, and ultimately in an appeal to the educated public.

Though the Revolution which terminated the Restoration regime did not suddenly or visibly alter the moral tone of the stage and society, changes took place subtly. Many stemmed from the Bill of Rights which ended one phase of struggle between the aristocracy and the middle class. Now the bourgeoisie began to gain control over the purse-strings. The House of Commons began to exercise many of the privileges formerly held by the House of Lords. The last part of the century, then, saw the rise in power of the bourgeoisie and the decline of the aristocracy. During the reign of William and Mary, notable progress was made in industry and the establishment of new trades. Exportation increased, town populations rose, and wars and
conquests created new markets. The navy grew to protect this expansion, and nationalism developed "in hasty and ferocious form."\[39\]

The earlier aristocracy and its comic drama had scorned, ignored and often satirized the middle class. Now trade grew more reputable. Intermarriage between the mobility and the rising bourgeoisie became more common. Younger sons of aristocrats entered trade, and wealthy merchants purchased land. The early eighteenth century witnessed a growing conviction that "successful merchants were in their own right entitled to a high place in social esteem, quite apart from their ability to transform themselves into 'gentlemen' by marriage or the purchase of land."\[40\] Most important, during the reign of William and Mary the middle class was so strongly in control of the state that "the prevailing social attitude became bourgeois instead of aristocratic."\[41\] A greater restraint was placed on theatre and literature. In the 1680's, judging from dramatists' prefaces, it seems to have become common for ladies to protest plays written in Restoration comic style, with the libertine hero engaging in cuckoldry and going unpunished, and the stress on women's failings and vices.\[42\] Further protests against the immorality of the stage were voiced in the 1690's by Blackmore, Collier, and Societies for the Reformation of Manners. That bourgeois attitudes were expressed even by the court is exemplified by William's honoring the pious Jeremy Collier.

Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar little acknowledged the new contemporary social change; their dramatic worlds still consisted of a stratified society with an anti-mercantile bias. Some evidence of the new sentimentality did invade their works, however, as in the
sententiousness of Congreve's Mirabel and Farquhar's sympathy towards rusticity in his last two plays. The works of Cibber and Steele contain the real beginnings of sentimental comedy, with the expression of an attitude toward sex completely contrary to that of the Restoration. Now the drama became no longer sensual or licentious; instead, writers "exalt the dull, domestic virtues of the new order."43 Marriage, no longer mocked, moves into the center of interest. The relationships most seriously explored are those between husband and wife and family members, rather than those between the witty lovers. The female characters became more decisively virtuous than many of their sisters in the earlier plays. They lack the gay and carefree quality of a Harriet or a Millamant. The gallants, too, appear more serious, more thoughtful, than their predecessors. The comedy becomes infiltrated by characters and themes hitherto associated with romantic drama, such as the virtuous maiden who changes the hero from seducer to husband, or the wife who withstands the rake's courtship, winning both his and the audience's respect.

While the comic method of the Restoration incorporates realism and satire but reveals little concern with actual reform, sentimental comedy stresses change by "representing not things as they were but standards as they ought to be, personified in characters who should be examples for imitation by the audience."44 Thus, those characters who have made mistakes repent in the fifth act; sinners suffer remorse in drawn-out scenes of forgiveness. Virtue is always triumphant and vice defeated.

According to Nicoll, the major characteristic of the unwitty sentimental comedy is a question proposed for solution; either
directly stated or implied. "This problem usually takes for granted the presence of some latent good in human nature; but it may exist in and for itself with characters wholly unrelieved by any virtue or humane sense of justice." Bernbaum sees confidence in man's goodness as "the mainspring of sentimentalism." The term itself has been disputed since the eighteenth century, with many writers offering different concepts of sentimental drama. Sherbo summarizes the common elements among the definitions:

1. The presence of a moral element, variously designated as a "moral problem," "moral treatment," or "moral purpose."
2. An element of the artificial, illogical, exaggerated, or improbable (very often in the treatment of emotion).
3. Good or perfectible human beings as characters.
4. An emphasis on pity, with tears for the good who suffer, and admiration for the virtuous.

Krutch explains further that "comedy began to take on some of the functions of tragedy," with the audience expected now "not only to laugh at the characters, but to share their joys and sorrows."

**Criticism of the Comedy of Manners**

Although Restoration comedy has been the subject of dispute since the seventeenth century, it had little open attack from the 1660's through the 1690's, until William III's "indifference to the stage made it possible for critics to speak out." Even before Jeremy Collier's famous publication of 1698, sermons and essays had discussed the faults of the stage. Pamphlets by clerics, usually anonymous, concerning the moral depravity of the age, showed the developing sentiment. Societies for the Reformation of Manners advocated suppression of the theatre as early as 1694. Sir Richard Blackmore's Preface to *Prince Arthur* propelled the controversy in
1695. Blackmore argued that comedy with its libertine hero and downgrading of virtue corrupts manners through its examples. His was a moralistic point of view carried on by Collier and continued into our own century. Collier was distinguished by his fervency and devotion to a cause, rather than originality of idea. With the great zeal of an obsessed reformer, he wrote *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage: Together with the Sense of Antiquity upon this Argument*. Rather than relying merely on grounds of Christian piety to criticize the comedies, he used critical dicta. Poetry should serve the purpose of recommending virtue and discouraging vice, but playwrights were helping debauch the public instead. Among the subjects Collier discusses are: the immodesty and lewd language; profanity; the abuse of the clergy; and the rewarding of vicious characters at the end. The fourth section of his treatise, a discussion of immorality encouraged by the stage, "insured his literary reputation." The theory that the audience is encouraged to sin through the play's reward of vice ("'which 'tis the business of Reason to discountenance") has remained a dominant approach for two and a half centuries of Restoration criticism.

Collier attacked the comedies wherever they were vulnerable, such as in their lack of adherence to the unity of time. He used the arguments of the formal literary critics if they helped his case against the comedies. Even an admirer of Collier such as Nettleton admits the following: "He often failed to distinguish between immorality and harmless jest, between moral and artistic issues. He
poured censure alike on plays that rewarded vice and on those that violated the dramatic unities."

Collier's work evoked much controversy. Between 1698 and 1725, more than forty books and pamphlets appeared on the subject. The stage was defended by Charles Gildon, John Dennis, Congreve and Vanbrugh, among others. Although Congreve's Amendments to Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations, etc. and Vanbrugh's A Short Vindication of The Relapse and The Provok'd Wife each showed Collier as over-zealous to find offense, they "made the mistake of . . . stretching the point too far and of pretending Collier was only reading into plays things which any candid reader must admit the authors had put there themselves." Collier replied to the dramatists in A Defence of The Short View, a wordy, renewed attack on the stage.

Collier's influence continued into the following century. Moreover, neoclassical criticism assumed there was a moral function to literature. The comedies provoked not only a moral controversy but a social one, for if the stage encouraged immorality, social disruption would result. Therefore it had to be censured. Defenders of the comedies, who had to use the same grounds as the attackers, argued that Restoration comedy was really moral after all and able to fulfill the neoclassical function of instruction. The eighteenth century change in public attitude is exemplified in Steele's criticisms. For example, he condemns The Country Wife in Tatler, 16 April, 1709: Wycherley has shown "'the gradual steps to ruin and destruction which persons of condition run into without the help of a good education how to form their conduct.'"
further demonstrates how the idea of comedy changed in the eighteenth century in his Preface to *The Conscious Lovers:*

. . . anything that has its foundation in happiness and success must be allowed to be the object of comedy; and sure it must be an improvement of it to introduce a joy too exquisite for laughter, that can have no spring but in delight. . . .

He hopes to have a favorable effect on the audience, for in constructing an "innocent performance" (in contrast to the not-so-innocent Restoration comedy of manners) and one in which a duel is averted, he may improve "the Goths and Vandals that frequent the theatres. . . ."

Although the utilitarian idea persisted, the nineteenth century saw the rise of romanticism and a new school of criticism. Instead of theorizing that the audience imitated behavior they witnessed on the stage, some critics stressed the idea that literature functioned to train the imagination. A conflict arose between the romantic elite and the majority of critics who still adhered to neoclassical precepts. Consequently, "the 'defence' of Restoration comedy moved away from neoclassicism altogether, while the 'attack' continued in the old manner, though now at a level below that of the best criticism of the day."

One highly influential critic was Charles Lamb, who denies that Restoration comedy produces harmful effects in the audience since the "immorality" of the plays is irrelevant to their literary quality. Separating theatrical experience and reality, he thinks the theory of imitation of stage behavior cannot possibly apply. Lamb even appreciates the opportunity to escape reality in the
theatre. Characters such as Dorimant do not offend, for they do not even appeal to our moral sense. "They have got out of Christendom into the land—what shall I call it?—of cuckoldry—the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty and the manners perfect freedom." Contemporary standards of morality simply cannot be ascribed to the Restoration comedy.

No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings—for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated—for no family ties exist among them. No purity of the marriage bed is stained—for none is supposed to have a being. No deep affections are disquieted, no holy wedlock bands are snapped asunder—for affection's depth and wedded faith are not of the growth of that soil. There is neither right nor wrong,—gratitude or its opposite,—claim or duty,—paternity or sonship.

William Hazlitt essentially follows Lamb's approach although, as Bear points out, he does lapse into the old manner of defense in discussing The Plain Dealer. (E.g., he says that Olivia's hypocrisy turns men away from vice.) Important in the history of criticism is that instead of generalizing, Hazlitt discusses the works play by play. According to Holland, "he perfectly pinpointed the essential comic sense of the Restoration, the contrasts among true refinement, affection, and ignorance."

Leigh Hunt's editing of the works of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar (1840) was significant in making the plays available to the reading public. Macaulay, who reviewed the edition in 1841, was an old-style critic who followed Collier's line of reasoning. He attacks defenders such as Lamb and Hunt who carefully distinguish between life and literature: "The morality of The Country Wife and The Old Bachelour is the morality, not, as Mr. Charles Lamb
maintains, of an unreal world, but of a world which is a great deal too real. . . . "67 He insists that morality does enter into this world; that is, both a sound morality which is derided and an unsound morality which is made attractive.

Modern defenses of the twentieth century include critics who follow Lamb's approach, which denies a moral problem. The result is a criticism of manners, wherein plays are treated as sociological documentation. John Palmer's influential 1913 work, The Comedy of Manners, argues that the excellence of Restoration comedy lies in the fidelity with which it reflects the spirit of that period's society. Dobrée also stresses the depiction of manners as the drama's principal merit; it provides "a brilliant picture" of its era.68

Because manners criticism often stresses sociological documentation, however, the Restoration comedies "are commonly regarded as meaningless representatives of an outmoded frivolity."69 Holland, who considers manners criticism a failure, notes such exceptions as Kathleen Lynch's Social Mode of Restoration Comedy which argues that the plays are part of the English comic tradition. She demonstrates that the wit which influenced Restoration comedy is the result of and rebellion against seventeenth century preciosity (e.g., extravagant similitudes and idealized emotions). Restoration comedy fuses the precieuse tradition with Jonsonian realism and satirizes both those who could not use the precieuse manner and those who affected the manner. Holland cites the value of her study as follows:

... first, the recognition that the authors do not unhesitatingly approve of their heroes and heroines. Second, the realization that because these authors use the positive and the negative of the same standard, they rise above that standard—these plays are not just about "manners."70
Holland's concern with the critical failure surrounding Restoration comedy is expressed in his own influential books, *The First Modern Comedies* (1959). His conception of the "right-way-wrong-way" approach to morality in the comedies defends the genre as highly moral. The reform of the audience is achieved as follows: "(1) the stage is the mirror of life; (2) it reveals the wrong ways of society; (3) the audience infers a right way and so is reformed." Holland points out that the works of Etherege, Wycherley and Congreve depict heroes who are reformed at the end when they are initiated into the ways of true love, rather than pictures of vice rewarded.

A far different modern direction in Restoration criticism is exemplified by L. C. Knights' essay, "Restoration Comedy: The Reality and the Myth" (1937). Knights denies that the Restoration comedy effectively represents the culture and thought of its time; manners critics such as Dobrée have read too much into the drama. He also complains about the lack of real feeling in the comedies and the superficial cynicism which pervades them. He tries to criticize the plays without dealing with the question of immorality or corrupting effects. To conduct criticism of Restoration comedy on moral grounds is unsatisfactory because such grounds can be turned upside down by defenders who say the works are satirical or modern critics who do not see the plays as licentious but as a presentation of a freedom of manners. Restoration comedy does not have to answer to the charge of immorality but of being trivial, gross and dull. Knights' charge of triviality, which seems to place high value on its opposite, is vulnerable to the same objection that Knights has to Macaulay's view, and may also
to be turned "upside down" by anyone who would maintain, for example, that the plays present a desirable, or at least a realistic, attitude towards sex and marriage; that conventional solemnities about sex ought to be deflated; that such cynicism is the only possible approach to life; and that triviality and superficiality have a positive value as sources of relief or detachment from the pressures of an increasingly absurd civilization.73

With an underlying idea of the essay being that the trivial is dangerous, Knights returns to an "effects" consideration.

Another twentieth century critic who attacks the comedy is William Archer, who declares it indefensible from a moral standpoint. He denies the validity of Palmer's historical defense or Lamb's view of the comedy as a fairy land. Restoration comedy cannot be amoral because it criticizes life, asking the audience to admire an "infamous" line of conduct and condemn a "relatively good" one.74 Although Archer, like Knights, insists that the theatre did not truly reflect the Restoration period, for it did not show evidence of Newton, Locke, Bunyan and others, several contemporary critics such as Fujimura have demonstrated how closely the Restoration comedy reflected inherited streams of contemporary thought and philosophy.

A recent admirer of L. C. Knights is John Wain, whose essay, "Restoration Comedy and its Modern Critics," (1956) insists that the comedy reveals "the extent to which people were unbalanced. . . ."75 He believes that this "immoral" body of literature has a more sociological than literary value. The main sociological problem of the day was the clash between a defensive court newly returned to power and the growing business community, resulting in a bifurcated Restoration literature. The partisan spirit was most obvious in the theatre, which was partly a triumphant yell of the courtiers' return
and partly "wish-fulfilling fantasy."76 Wain argues, too, that the Restoration writers trifle with problems of conduct instead of forming a consistent judgment towards them.

Recent critics who disagree with such attackers as Wain or Knights and who have influenced this study include Underwood, Birdsall and, especially, Fujimura. Underwood investigates the characters, actions, and settings of the plays. He maintains that Restoration comedy reflects the juxtaposition of two opposing traditions: Christianity and humanism, the honest-man tradition, courtly love; and philosophic libertinism, Hobbesian concepts of man, Machiavellianism.77

According to Birdsall, the comedies are more than sociological studies or intellectual pictures of cynicism and disillusion.78 Restoration playwrights were serious artists who held consistent attitudes towards behavior, contrary to Wain's assertion. Birdsall sees the English comic spirit as involving a challenge to the rigidity of institutions, creeds and dictates. The Restoration hero belongs not only to his own historical period, but also to "a comic tradition as old as English drama—a tradition of comic 'heroes' who were shrewd, double-dealing rascals dedicated to the cause of their own freedom and prosperity."79 The Restoration dramatists follow the very essence of English comedy, which has a "devilish, bad-boy nature."80 The heroes and heroines win at the end by creating their own "morality of honesty or of integrity," having little relation to conventional morality.81
Fujimura also fiercely attacks the manners school of criticism which stresses the artificiality of the plays and examines treatment rather than content. To deny any serious content in the Restoration comedies is wrong, for he believes that "the morality of Restoration comedy is naturalistic, and that the dramatists dealt with moral issues, though wittily rather than soberly." He proposes a comedy of "wit" rather than manners, and a conception of laughter not in the Meredithian sense but rather Hobbesian in nature: the sudden realization of one's superiority. Laughter is produced when the audience identifies with the Truewit's triumphing over the inferior Witwoud or Witless.

The Dramatists

Sir George Etherege (1635?-91)

Palmer believes that "Etherege found a form for the spirit of his age," and Nicoll credits him with "definitely establishing the species" of the manners genre. Etherege is furthermore "typically a figure of the time." A court personality familiar with politicians and wits such as Rochester, Buckingham and Sedley, he was polished in France and himself the model of the witty and fashionable young man he created in such characters as Courtal and Dorimant. In other words, he was a libertine in an age of libertinism. The writing in his three plays entails witty dialogue, a naturalistic view of man, and a realistic technique. Since Etherege's first play is not a typical Restoration comedy of manners, only his latter two plays, She Would if She Could and The Man of Mode, will be considered in this study.
William Wycherley (1640-1716)

From France where he associated with a group of intellectuals, Wycherley returned to England just prior to the Restoration. After a short try at the university and the Middle Temple, he became a court wit. His friends included Etherege, Dryden, Buckingham, Rochester and other wits.

"Sharp, pointed, bold, masculine, strong—these were the words his contemporaries chose when describing his work." The general conception of Wycherley as a misanthropic and harsh satirist or a Puritan is viewed as incorrect by Fujimura, among other critics. Instead, Wycherley shows "consistent libertinism" in his life and thought.

As a Truewit, he wittily exposed the unnatural and the affected on the basis of his naturalistic philosophy; and when the conventional observance of Christian morality produced an artificial relationship, as in arranged marriages, he exposed conventional morality.

His satire is directed against false wit and the overinsistence on honor, not morality. He often presents the theme of people's inability to accept themselves for natural creatures and to live accordingly. His objects of ridicule such as Dapperwit, Gripe, or Mrs. Fidget seem more satiric than those of Etherege or Congreve because the latter writers "are content to take the comic view and to accept them as objects of laughter and amusement, while Wycherley seems always to have been torn between the comic view and the angry satiric one." Family relationships in both major and minor plots appear in all of Wycherley's plays: Love in a Wood, The Gentleman Dancing-Master, The Country Wife, and The Plain Dealer.
William Congreve (1670-1729)

Although Congreve wrote long after Etherege and Wycherley, he is usually grouped with them and praised for his grace, style and wit. Mignon points out that the concern with Congreve's style has tended to obscure his major strength, his conception of human nature. His characters may be the stock ones of the genre, but they "are not isolated targets but are seen in relation to one another and to their society as a whole." Congreve did not belong to the Restoration proper, but rather to the reign of William and Mary and Queen Anne. His friends were not libertines like Sedley and Buckingham, but Pope, Gay and Walsh. Nor was his life so full of scandals or drunken brawls as those of Etherege and Wycherley. After entering the Middle Temple, he decided against a career in law and chose instead to be an amateur wit and writer. He was the peace-maker who arbitrated literary quarrels. After he stopped writing for the stage, he continued to be a man of letters and a civil servant.

Like the works of the earlier authors, Congreve's plays exhibit the same libertine outlook and "a strong interest in wit in all its manifestations." His works differ, however, through a growing emphasis on morality. Congreve's greater seriousness is discussed by such critics as Mignon and Leech. The latter writes: "... he came late enough to see the Restoration manners in perspective, to look at them with just a sufficient trace of the newer seriousness." Although his first play, The Old Bachelour, does not involve any family relationships, his subsequent plays (The Double Dealer, Love
for Love, and The Way of the World) provide an abundant number for examination.

**John Vanbrugh (1664-1726)**

Vanbrugh was educated for architecture in France, and his life included careers as architect, herald, and civil servant. He made little money as an author, his playwriting being an avocation, according to Palmer. His fame as a dramatist rests upon three works, The Relapse, The Provoked Wife (both original), and The Confederacy (an adaptation of a play by Dancourt). Vanbrugh has been noted for his natural dialogue (Cibber remarked how easy it was to remember Vanbrugh's lines) and dramatic construction, although according to Hazlitt, "his genius flags and grows dull when it is not put into action," and emergency or clash of motives is necessary to bring out his vivacity. The ablest characters show their judgment and ingenuity in critical situations, rather than their wit "'in intellectual gladiatorship,' or in speculating on the affairs and characters of other people."  

Vanbrugh was influenced by existing ideas on the new morality, and reacted in part against Collier. Still, in his works gallantry is no longer taken for granted, and rakishness is yielding to unvirtuous temptations. Mignon sums it up thus:

... the social groups distinguished by the tradition of the comedy of manners are crumbling. The inhabitants of the privileged inner circle are less brilliant and less exclusive. The would-be and nonmembers of the circle, the aged or aging, may now become more vivid and compelling comic figures.  

Despite his modification of Restoration comedy, Vanbrugh has been classified with the other dramatists. Archer points out that although
"glimmerings" of the new spirit appear in his plays, "they are not sufficiently distinct to mark him off in any decisive way from the men of the Restoration."106

**George Farquhar (1678-1707)**

The Irish-born Farquhar left Trinity College after two years, tried acting in Dublin, led the life of an army officer, and, on Robert Wilks' advice, went to London to write plays, all of which appeared post-Collier. He is commonly seen as "the connecting link between the older generation of the Restoration and the rising tide of Cibbers and Steeles. . . . "107 Although he retained the essential technique of Restoration comedy, his plays also reflect the new ideas and attitudes. His comedies are more topical than those of Congreve, with military characters expressing Farquhar's comments on England's changing position in the world. Although all his comedies possess the assumptions of a society where land is the "proper basis for social pretensions,"108 and the main characters are of the nobility or gentry, many different kinds of characters populate his plays: squires, justices, innkeepers, highwaymen, and rustic varieties. His country settings have a "tone of healthy vitality."109 to them, especially in the later plays. The works of Farquhar examined in this study are: *Love and a Bottle*, *The Constant Couple*, *Sir Harry Wildair*, *The Twin-Rivals*, *The Recruiting Officer*, and *The Beaux' Stratagem*. Because he is a transitional figure, aspects of his work will be discussed both with the earlier Restoration writers and with the authors of sentimental comedy.
Colley Cibber (1671-1757)

Cibber is another dramatist who belongs to two worlds. Although his plots tend toward the conventional love-chase among the rich, he definitely leans toward the sentimental. He came along at the right time, when the theatrical pendulum was swinging, and he seized upon the changing times, "whether from moral duty or from sheer opportunism no one can say..." Nicoll points out that at least two of his plays may be classified as moral-immoral comedies, which aim at catching, if not the best, at least something, of both worlds; introducing themes repugnant or risqué, but preserving the sentimental note by some occasional moralisations or unnatural conversions at the close.

Cibber, less concerned with social commentary than Steele or even Vanbrugh and Farquhar, is "more obviously a professional synthesizer of plays. He understood what made a play a commercial success, and had a good ear for dialogue and a good eye for the mise-en-scene. Several of Cibber's original works are examined in this study to indicate the effect of sentimentalism on the portrayal of family relationships: Woman's Wit, Love's Last Shift, and The Lady's Last Stake.

Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729)

Steele, born in Dublin, attended Oxford but was not interested in the academic life. Like other dramatists, he joined the service and rose to the rank of captain. During his career, he was busy with public service and political activities, as an essayist and as supervisor of Drury Lane. He was knighted in 1715.
Although Steele is not the first sentimental writer (despite the fact that some critics, like Ward, see him as "the real founder" of sentimental comedy), he epitomizes the new school in *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), just the kind of drama expected to be penned by one who finds *The Man of Mode* "a perfect contradiction to good manners, good sense, and common honesty." Comedy for Steele, functioned in an almost therapeutic manner. The audience sees goodness on the stage, sympathizes with it, and therefore behaves in a good fashion henceforth.

Three of Steele's four comedies are discussed in this study: *The Lying Lover*, *The Funeral*, and *The Conscious Lovers*. His other play, *The Tender Husband*, although containing family relationships, harkens to a more Restoration-like style. Not being representative of sentimental comedy, it would not point up the differences between the Restoration and the later mode.
Footnotes


3 Sharma, p. 18.


8 Dobrée, p. 23.

9 Dobrée, p. 23.

10 All quotations from She Would If She Could are from The Dramatic Works of Sir George Etherege, ed. H. F. B. Brett-Smith, II (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1927).

11 Krutch, p. 44.


15 Trevelyan, p. 261.

17 Thorndike, p. 275.

18 Sharma, p. 6.


20 Loftis, p. 22.

21 Nicoll, p. 7.

22 From *A Vindication of the Stage* (1698), quoted by Taylor, p. 124.

23 Trevelyan, p. 257.

24 Dobrée, p. 22.


26 Fujimura, p. 200.

27 Krutch, p. 2.


30 Fujimura, p. 50.

31 Underwood, p. 27.

32 Fujimura, p. 19.

33 Fujimura, p. 29.

34 Fujimura, p. 24.
35 Fujimura, p. 27.

36 Trevelyan, p. 338.

37 Trevelyan, p. 338.


39 Calverton, pp. 170-71.

40 Loftis, pp. 4-5.

41 Calverton, p. 172.


43 Calverton, p. 174.

44 Smith, p. 238.


48 Krutch, p. 192.

49 Loftis, p. 25.

50 Taylor, p. 109.

51 Krutch, p. 95.

52 Krutch, p. 92.


56. Krutch, p. 121.


61. Steele, p. 269.

62. Steele, p. 270.

63. Bear, p. 11.


65. Lamb, p. 196.


67. Quoted by Nettleton, p. 8.


70. Holland, p. 207.
71 Holland, p. 116.

72 Holland, p. 203.

73 Bear, pp. 22-23.


75 John Wain, "Restoration Comedy and its Modern Critics," Essays in Criticism, VI (October, 1956), 367.

76 Wain, p. 369.

77 Underwood, p. 8.


79 Birdsall, p. 6.

80 Birdsall, p. 7.

81 Birdsall, p. 8.

82 Fujimura, p. 4.

83 Fujimura, p. 9.

84 Fujimura further explains that this is not a didactic kind of humor because the audience does not see its own faults. P. 67.

85 Palmer, p. 91.


87 Palmer, p. 31.

89 See Fujimura, p. 86.


91 Fujimura, p. 118.

92 Fujimura, p. 119.

93 Zimbardo would disagree. She insists his method is that of the satirist who presents scenes of moral corruption to the audience. After indicting human nature, he brings in a standard of virtue against which to measure "the deviation of human beings from humanness." Rose A. Zimbardo, Wyckerley's Drama: A Link with the Development of English Satire (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 16.

94 Birdsall, p. 107.

95 Birdsall, p. 108.

96 See Dobrée, Hazlitt, Meredith, Palmer, Perry.


98 Fujimura, p. 158.

99 Fujimura, pp. 164-65.

100 Leech, p. 132.

101 Palmer, p. 204.

102 Nettleton, p. 136.


104 Hazlitt, p. 97.

105 Mignon, p. 132.
CHAPTER II

YOUNG WOMEN

The Restoration was an age of increased freedom for women, although they were still legally subordinate to men. The comedies reflect this new freedom and place it in conflict with the repressive tendencies of parents and guardians toward young girls. This repression appears in every aspect of the lives of young women, from their education to courtship. For example, although some did go to boarding school, most girls acquired the classical education (including languages, dancing, needlework, housekeeping and music) at home.¹

In the comedies, being taught at home is part of the general picture of young ladies kept tightly in check by overly fearful guardians. During the latter part of the seventeenth century, protests arose against the limited education of women. For example, Mary Astell's *Defence of The Female Sex*, published in 1697, blames men for women's handicaps.²

In the theatre, females now appeared onstage, and surely this influenced the portrayal of female characters. What is the role of the young female protagonist in the comedies? Sharma states, "The new woman was emerging in contemporary society, and it is significant that these comedies herald the modern demand for equality between the sexes."³ The girls mix freely with the gallants and discuss
love and sexual matters. The double standard still exists, however, and despite the heroines' flippancy, their ultimate goal remains marriage. True heroines engage in the new libertinism only up to the point where their honor is at stake. Furthermore, because "rakishness and the general absence of any true sentiment of love among the gallants, constituted a real danger to women," heroines such as Harriet (The Man of Mode) subject the gallants to tests of love.

Marriage was a concern of the whole family. Matches were made by the head of the family, the father or older brother, and were essentially determined by considerations of estates and settlements. Women were little consulted, and often paired with much older men. In some cases, "the negotiations for their marriage began when they were still in the nursery. . . ." After the civil war, estates dwindled and parents had more trouble giving girls doweries. Wrote Mary Villiers to a suitor, "Without an estate, I will never marry you nor no man living." More important, after the Restoration there was renewed thinking about family relationships. As Vernon has pointed out, "the traditional code of family conduct had always been intimately linked with political theory and practice." Cataclysmic events such as the revolution and the execution of Charles I caused reassessment of relations between ruler and ruled, "and now some of them felt the need to re-examine the bonds which held the miniature state of the family together." Questioned were a father's dictatorship, the dictatorship of husband over wife, and the power to bind of "marriage vows which were not freely contracted." In real life, some "high-spirited" girls did refuse their parents' choice: examples
are Mary Boyle, daughter of the Earl of Cork, who at fourteen refused to marry a Mr. Hamilton, and Dorothy Osborne of Chicksands who repeatedly refused the suitors her brother provided for her despite an impoverished family estate and her father's failing health.\footnote{12}

The rebellion of some girls against their parents' determinations is reflected in the comedies: a striking new idea is the right of a young woman to choose her own husband. According to Gagen, noting the emergence of the new woman in English drama, a woman's right to love and marry whomever she pleases "could not be admitted without upsetting an established order which regarded women as inferior beings who needed to be protected and governed by the sex for whose pleasure and convenience they have been created."\footnote{13} The plays usually provide a sympathetic portrait of girls who rebel against being pushed into marriage by parents who consider position and monetary gain more important than their daughters' happiness.

Also sympathetic are the females who rebel against being dominated in marriage. The proviso scenes which set up rules for a forthcoming union, such as that in The Way of the World, help safeguard women against tyranny by their husbands. In the bargain scenes, which are perhaps "the most significant part" of Restoration comedy, the dramatists propose their solution "to the most vexed and vexing question of the day—the relationship of the sexes."\footnote{14} Because a marriage in its traditional form cannot be a happy one, a woman and man must avoid Millamant's fear of "dwindling into" a wife or Mirabell's horror of "being enlarged beyond measure into a husband" (The Way of the World).\footnote{15} The problem of marriage is at
least partially solved by the equality of husband and wife, and respect for each other's individuality, after they are wed.

Because parents and guardians often desire the heroine's marriage to an unsuitable man (one who will not allow her freedom after the wedding), and because they do not allow her to explore the libertinism of the age, the comedy of manners poses constant opposition between the generations. The Truewit heroines always outwit the repressive older generation and wind up with their match in wit and intelligence. Throughout the comic drama until the sentimental period, the themes of tyranny and restraint crop up time and time again in the treatment of girls and their interaction with parents or guardians.

Basic conflicts between girls and their guardians, such as naturalness and affectation, youth and age, and social ease and social incompetence, are brought out in the first truly representative comedy of the genre, Etherege's She Would If She Could. It is a play of contrasts: appearance versus nature, social requirements versus "natural" desires, town versus country, and liberty versus restraint. Newly arrived from the country are the Cockwoods, Lady Cockwood's kinsman, Sir Joslin Jolly, and his two nieces, Gatty and Ariana, all of whom feel liberated from the restraints of country life. The clownish Sir Joslin's relationship to the girls is not a central concern of the play. Although he does act a "master of the revels" role in introducing them to the gallants and encouraging songs and dances, and although he is associated with the more extroverted girl, Gatty, who dances a jig under his supervision, he
does not interfere much in their affairs, being more occupied with his own whoring and drinking. While he should be responsible for his nieces, he acts irresponsibly in matters concerning them. He is drunk when he brings gallants home to them; his approach to finding these suitors is so inappropriate that his charges must take over the task of their own matchmaking.

More important to the theme of repression is the girls' relationship to their kinswoman, Lady Cockwood. The girls are young, witty, town-loving, pleasure-seeking, and know how to play the game of courtship by appearing to be pursued by the men. Lady Cockwood, on the other hand, has boxed herself up in a fortress of her own devising, a fortress wherein she must preserve the illusion of virtue while hunting game in the form of Courtal. Actually, she would probably listen to her real inner nature and engage in sexual affairs if she could cast aside the notion that "honor" rules her actions. Through this character Etherege mocks the conventional idea of honor, since it is professed only by "a ridiculous female coxcomb" like Lady Cockwood. In addition to being hypocritical and overly aggressive with men, deceiving herself by refusing to face her own sexual needs, her other faults, such as vanity and jealousy, parallel those of similar Witwouds.

Lady Cockwood does not understand the techniques of the courtship game; for example, she takes too seriously Courtal's chivalric attitude. Nor does she possess the prerequisite youthfulness to play the game. Her preoccupation with and facade of virtue are contrasted with the real virtue of her relatives, who possess youth and wit and
refuse to settle for less than marriage. Jealous of the girls' membership in the beau monde and overly protective of her reputation of honor, she says, "I cou'd wish Sir Joslin wou'd remove 'em, for fear they should bring an unjust Imputation on my Honour" (II' ii).

She does not accept their acting as liberated young heroines should act, e.g., flirting with men and gaining attention. While Lady Cockwood does not have a true idea of the virtuous nature of the girls, the latter are capable of seeing through both her and her husband, and determined to avoid a similarly repressive marriage.

Lady Cockwood tries to dominate her family, whether it is a matter of keeping her husband under her thumb or of arranging the lives of Gatty and Ariana. Her unsatisfactory relationship with Sir Oliver is probably one cause for her hypocrisy and suppression of everyone else's natural inclinations. Her idea of love as duty has destroyed Sir Oliver's physical desire for her; in turn, he does not satisfy her sexual needs. Thus she must seek satisfaction elsewhere, but also must keep Sir Oliver convinced of her virtue so that she can move freely. An unhappy woman, Lady Cockwood attempts to maintain control but does not prevent her husband from drinking and whoring, both of which she takes as personal affronts.

Nor can she keep her nieces from pairing off with the young gallants at the end of the play. It seems that "rebellion, treason, and disloyalty" are the inevitable results of repressive monarchy, in the family as in the state.

The play is one not only of contrasts but of balances. There are pairs of country gentlemen, town rakes, heroines, and Exchange-women. For example, Sir Joslin releases Sir Oliver from Lady
Cockwood's repressive world and takes him to the free world of the tavern. They are a balanced pair of Witlesses who set in relief each other's foolishness, and thus furnish "one of the creative opposi-
positions to the sterile singleness of Lady Cockwood." Only Lady Cockwood stands alone, "unbracketed with anyone." And her intrigues and hypocrisy during the course of the action serve only to isolate her further from the others and to divide her more and more against herself. Because she suspects a romance between Courtal and one of the girls, she forges a letter in the girls' names. When Courtal responds to the letter by agreeing to meet the girls, and uses business as an excuse for not seeing Lady Cockwood, she is determined to gain revenge. "How I am fill'd with indignation! To find my person and my passion both despis'd, and what is more, so much precious time fool'd away in fruitless expectation ...." (IV, i). Lady Cockwood does her best to alienate the girls from the gallants, and also nearly destroys the friendship of Sir Oliver and Courtal by arousing the former's jealousy.

Only through the cleverness of Courtal (he untangles the web of Lady Cockwood's weaving by providing a false but accepted reason for hiding in her closet and by covering for Lady Cockwood about the forged letter) is she herself able to escape with honor unscathed at the end. But she is beaten. While the heroines are in a position to force the gallants to undergo a testing period of one month to prove their sincerity about their marriage offers, Lady Cockwood plans to retire to the country, that Restoration symbol of repression. She says, "I am resolv'd to give over the great bus'ness of this Town, and hereafter modestly confine my self to the humble affairs
of my own Family" (V, i). Courtal suggests, however, that Lady Cockwood's true nature will not be so easily subdued. "'Tis a very pious resolution, Madam, and the better to confirm you in it, pray entertain an able Chaplain" (V, i). This is the final cut to a woman who would act against nature, wear a mask of hypocrisy, and try to repress the instincts and actions of her young female relations.

In She Would If She Could, then, we see clearly the opposition between the younger generation (Gatty and Ariana) and the older generation (Lady Cockwood). Lady Cockwood represents for Etherege all the negative aspects of conventional society, such as hypocrisy and suppression, while the girls, who win out in the end, represent the newer values of a libertine age.

In Etherege's later play, The Man of Mode, we find another example of repression, this time in the form of a mother-daughter relationship. Early in Etherege's masterpiece, the Orange Woman describes Lady Woodvil for Dorimant as

A goodly grave Gentlewoman: Lord, how she talks against the wild young men o' the Town; as for your part, she thinks you an arrant Devil; shou'd she see you, on my Conscience she wou'd look if you had not a cloven foot (I, i).^24

Dorimant's companion, Medley, adds that "the Mother's a great admirer of the Forms and Civility of the last Age" (I, i). Lady Woodvil, then, is one of the old-fashioned breed who sees no good in the rambunctious new society. She rails about the gallants' treatment of people of quality: "'Tis good breeding now to be civil to none but Players and Exchange Women; they are treated by 'em as much above their Condition, as others are below theirs" (III, ii). Of
Dorimant, about whom she has heard wild tales, she claims, "He is the Prince of all the Devils in the Town, delights in nothing but in Rapes and Riots" (III, iii).

Because of her attitude towards the new age, she is overly protective towards her daughter, Harriet. How can she let her loose in such a society? After all, "Lewdness is the business now, Love was the bus'ness in my Time" (IV, i). Harriet is a sensible young heroine, however, disliking both the affectation of a Sir Fopling Flutter and the dullness of country life. She reacts against Lady Woodvil's emphasis on forms and ceremonies and wants to investigate the world critically for herself: thus she must escape the country and experience for herself the offerings of the city. Suspecting appearances, she is placed in contrast to her mother who, for example, is taken in by Dorimant as "Mr. Courtage."

Acting courteous and obedient to her mother in the country, where they reside, has won Harriet the opportunity to visit the town in which she is determined to have her liberty. She refuses to marry her mother's choice, Young Bellair, a nice enough man but one who lacks Dorimant's fire. Rebelling against arranged marriages, Harriet cries: "Shall I be paid down by a covetous Parent for a Purchase? I need no Land; no I'le lay my self out all in love" (II, i). To outwit their respective parents, Harriet forms an alliance with Young Bellair who is in love with Emilia and wants as little to marry Harriet as she does him. They put on the appearance of falling in love, instructing each other in the conventional outward forms. Lady Woodvil and Old Bellair, judging by externals only, are taken in by the trappings of courtship.
Harriet manifests her cleverness not only in dealing with her mother, but in managing her relationship with Dorimant as well. She will banter with him in the mall, but as soon as the talk turns specifically to compliments and courtship, she stops their conversation: "... 'tis time to leave him, men grow dull when they begin to be particular" (III, iii). Harriet, like Dorimant, refuses to show her love, to risk exposing her true emotions. She subjects him to tests. "In men who have been long harden'd in Sin, we have reason to mistrust the first signs of repentance" (V, iii). She determines that if he can face embarrassment for her sake he really loves her. And if he is willing to visit her in the country, "that bugbear of all gallants," their marriage may work out. She describes the dreariness of country living, to which her mother would have them return:

... a great rambling lone house, that looks as it were not inhabited, the family's so small; there you'll find my Mother, an old lame Aunt, and my self, Sir, perch'd up on Chairs at a distance in a large parlour; sitting moping like three or four Melancholy Birds in a spacious vollary --Does not this stagger your Resolution (V, ii)?

Visiting her in the country is a test only; they will not remain there, out of their element. She does not desire Dorimant totally to abandon his naturalistic inclinations, "but to translate them into marriage." For both Harriet and Dorimant, the game of life's first requirement is "freedom to follow one's own inclinations, however arbitrary they may be." In opposition to the "vitality of the young lovers stand Lady Woodvil and Mrs. Loveit, Dorimant's cast-off
mistress. Harriet refuses to give in to her mother's restraints, just as Dorimant refuses to give in to Loveit's demand for his constancy.

The parents in *The Man of Mode*, Lady Woodvil and Old Bellair, function as the butts of jokes as well as foils for their children's cleverness. At the end, both parents are defeated, for their children gain the mates of their choice. Harriet knows how to win her own way. She tells her mother she will marry Dorimant or no one. "But I will never marry him against your will" (V, ii). Thus she melts Lady Woodvil. In the battle between the generations, another victory has been scored for the young.

Wycherley, like Etherege, explores young women's less than perfect relationships with their parents. Before creating in *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* a heroine whose situation is drastically more confining than that of Gatty, Ariana, or Harriet, Wycherley depicted two young ladies' interaction with their parents in *Love in a Wood*. Neither Lucy nor Martha is a typical heroine. Not only are they minor figures of the subplot, but each possesses a questionable morality. Lucy is especially antithetical to the virtuous young women presented in most of the comedies. Her interaction with her parent may be dismissed briefly. Mrs. Crossbite, Lucy's mother, like many parents in the Restoration comedy of manners pursues monetary gain. She will sell Lucy in marriage or as a mistress to the man who bids the highest. Hearing that Gripe, a "fine Old Alderman of the City" (III, i)²⁸ bent on Lucy's redemption from Dapperwit, would provide for both mother and daughter, she is eager to end Lucy's affair with the Witwoud. A self-seeking, unnatural mother, Mrs. Crossbite displays no desire to preserve Lucy's
chastity or to match her with someone more suitable than a hypo-
critical, overly precise aged alderman. That Lucy does not conflict
with her mother results from her being a younger version of Mrs.
Crossbite. They both represent a whorish mentality that views the
human body as the avenue to riches.

Martha is more closely allied with the heroines discussed in
this chapter, and her situation similarly shows the folly of parental
tyranny. Foreshadowing Don Diego's actions toward Hippolita in The
Gentleman Dancing-Master, Gripe has locked up his daughter, an
heiress worth thirty thousand pounds, in an effort to protect her
from the rake Dapperwit to whom she is much attracted. Martha
publicly pretends, like her father, to consider Dapperwit "a terrible
man" (I, i), but makes plans to meet him secretly. She views her life
as imprisonment and is desperate to escape her father.

Gripe. Martha, be sure you stay within now; if you
go out, you shall never come into my dores again.
Martha. No, I will not, Sir; I'le ne're come into
your dores again, if once I shou'd go out (IV, i).

Gripe, of course, is too obtuse to appreciate the wit of Martha's
reply.

Martha is aided in her liaison with Dapperwit by Sir Simon
Addleplot, who intrigues to win her through disguising himself as
"Jonas," clerk to her father. Meanwhile, he unwittingly facilitates
a correspondence between Martha and her lover. When Gripe has left
the house, "Jonas" urges Martha to steal away with him to meet Sir
Simon whom he has depicted to her as a fine man. Martha's wit
surfaces as she mocks and insults her would-be suitor: "You plead
better for him, than he cou'd for himself; I believe, for indeed,
they say, he is no better than an Ideot" (IV, i). When they do escape Gripe's house, Sir Simon brings her straight to Dapperwit, in whose care he leaves her as he runs to change his clothes so that he may reveal his true identity.

Martha informs her husband-to-be that Gripe has been his good friend. "His hard usage of me, conspir'd with your good Meen, and Wit, and to avoid slavery under him, I stoop to your yoke" (V, i). Actually, Martha, shrewd and unscrupulous like her father, marries Dapperwit because she is six months pregnant: Sir Simon, outwitted by the young lovers, reveals Martha's escape from the house and involvement with Dapperwit to Gripe, who is furiously upset. "Oh graceless Babe, marry'd to a Wit! an idle, bytering, slandering, foul-mouth'd, beggarly Wit: Oh that my child should ever live to marry a Wit!" (V, 2). Gripe plans his revenge: he will marry Lucy, get heirs, disinherit Martha and frustrate Dapperwit. Unlike most parents and guardians of the genre, Gripe neither forgives nor blesses his daughter's marriage. Their relationship is irrevocably severed, and the lesson obvious: when a parent submits his daughter to a life of imprisonment, rebellion must follow.

Unlike Lucy and Martha, Hippolita of The Gentleman Dancing-Master is a model heroine, and a delightful one at that. The opening speech sets the tone and theme of the play, as Hippolita complains:

To confine a Woman just in her rambling Age! take away her liberty at the very time she shou'd use it! O barbarous Aunt! O unnatural Father! to shut up a poor Girl at fourteen, and hinder her budding . . . (I, i).
Not allowed to go to the park, parties or even to church because men are sometimes present, Hippolita is trapped in the most restrictive circumstances because her father, Don Diego (Mr. James Formal) holds a false idea of honor and insists she be brought up in the "Spanish" fashion. She is also guarded by an unpleasant, overly precise aunt, Mrs. Caution, and betrothed to a foppish, francophile cousin, Monsieur de Paris.

With a rebelliousness much in the Restoration comic tradition, Hippolita tries to free herself from her "barbarous aunt" and "unnatural father" by tricking Monsieur de Paris into enticing the most witty gallant-about-town to their house. Once Gerrard meets Hippolita and falls in love with her, she passes him off as her dancing master. Her cleverness is accompanied by an eagerness for freedom and a common sense approach to life. Not only does she desire a love marriage, but she tells Gerrard there must be equality in marriage and lack of jealousy. To gain her natural and spontaneous life style, she uses her outward appearance of innocence "in a thoroughly Machiavellian way." Muir describes this vigorous heroine as "a convincing blend of the adolescent and the intriguing woman. . . ." She frankly admits being an heiress to Gerrard, then later reverses and pretends to be penniless to test his love. She is forward in pursuing a stranger, yet careful to draw back when it comes to actually eloping.

Throughout the play, the Truewit Hippolita is contrasted to fools who judge externals as reality. For example, Monsieur de Paris mistakes "inane briskness for wit," and Hippolita's disdain for her
cousin stems from his witlessness. The conceit characteristic of
the fop figures in Restoration comedy is obvious in Monsieur de Paris
who feels no woman could betray him; besides, jealousy is not French.
Clothing is more important to him than marriage (he refuses to dress
in the Spanish garb upon which his prospective father-in-law insists).
"He is the real dancing-master (the outside of a gentleman), and
Gerrard is the real gentleman." Monsieur de Paris' social pre­tensions are equally ridiculous, as emphasized when Gerrard reminds
him about his beer merchant father. Certainly, he is not a suitable
match for a Truewit heroine. Furthermore, Hippolita is upset by the
fact that she has had no say in the matter of their engagement.

For Fathers seldom chuse well, and I will no more take my
Fathers choice in a Husband, than I wou'd in a Gown or a
Suit of Knots; so that if that Cousin of mine were not an
ill contriv'd ugly-Freekish-fool in being my Fathers choice,
I shou'd hate him . . . (I, i).

Although he disagrees with his nephew on matters of dress, Don Diego,
suffering from deficient judgment, cannot see how poor a match he has
made for Hippolita. He would marry her off to a fool merely to
protect his fortune. His idea of marriage "is clearly only socially
sanctioned prostitution." He keeps his daughter locked up because
he can get a good price for her if she maintains her virtue.

Don Diego's whole attitude towards Hippolita involves little
concern for her feelings or her rights as a human being. Like
Monsieur de Paris, Don Diego values clothing above Hippolita. In
his judgment of people, he confuses the outside, such as Spanish
clothes, oaths, and customs, with the inside or real nature. He is
characterized by his very first speech, when he asks Mrs. Caution:
"Have you had a Spanish care of the Honour of my Family, that is to say, have you kept up my daughter close in my absence? as I directed" (II, i). The "Spanish" manner of rearing a daughter is truly opposed to the Restoration emphasis on the freedom to follow one's instincts.

Don Diego is a gull whom the clever Hippolita has little difficulty in outwitting. The game of one-upsmanship in which he and Mrs. Caution engage makes things easier for the young couple. The older people are so concerned with proving who is the smarter that they provide lies and excuses for them. For example, when Mrs. Caution insists that Gerrard is no more a dancing master than she is a maid, Don Diego replies, "What! will you still be wiser than I? voto" (III, i).

Mrs. Caution, the third fool of the play, provides the third foil for Hippolita's naturalness and wit. Mrs. Caution confuses "technical chastity preserved by force" and wisdom. Hypocritical (her own youth was not exactly the model of virtue), she rails against the current licentiousness. "The Children of this Age must be wise Children indeed, if they know their Fathers, since their Mothers themselves cannot inform 'em! O the fatal Liberty of this masquerading Age . . ." (I, i). Strongly disagreeing, Hippolita stands up to her prudish aunt, declaring that "'tis a pleasant-well-bred-complacent-free-frollick-good-natur'd-pretty Age; and if you do not like it, leave it to us that do" (I, i). Aunt and niece epitomize the Restoration comic conflict between age and youth, hypocrisy and honesty, prudishness and naturalness.
Through Mrs. Caution, Wycherley examines the question of true modesty. Although she stresses virtue, she voices many of the sexual double-entendres. Like other precise women, she rails against sex while all the while filling her conversation with sexual innuendoes. For example, in Act V, scene i, she tells Hippolita that she will soon have her "bellyful" of Gerrard. And throughout the play, she sees lewdness where it does not exist. She comments frequently while watching Gerrard and Hippolita dancing, telling her brother, "There, there, he pinch'd her by the Thigh, will you suffer it?" and "See, see, she squeezes his hand now, O the debauch'd Harletry!" (III, i). She constantly inflicts a sexual interpretation on everything.

Hippolita must escape from the restraint of her situation, her life among three fools, if she is to fulfill her potential as a libertine young woman. As Sharma remarks: "To Wycherley freedom appears to be an absolute condition for the growth of intelligent, happy and healthy womanhood." Wycherley fills the play with clues to his protestations about the treatment of women. For example, the song at the end of Act II states:

Our Parents who restrain our Liberty
But take the course to make us sooner free (II, i).

Again, there is Hippolita's closing couplet:

When Children marry, Parents shou'd obey
Since Love claims more Obedience than they (V, i).

Wycherley's most famous play, The Country Wife, also examines the repression of young women. Pinchwife views his sister, Alithea, as a piece of property to be gotten off his hands. "I must give Sparkish to morrow five thousand pounds to lye with my sister"
he says at the beginning of the play. He obviously considers his guardianship as a kind of pimping. Later, he decides he prefers to have Horner marry Alithea than cuckold him with Margery: "I'd rather give him my Sister than lend him my Wife, and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my Wife sure" (V, i). Like Don Diego, Pinchwife has no concern for people's feelings and will marry off Alithea for convenience's sake.

Pinchwife does not possess a realistic conception of Alithea's worth. When she tries to intercede for Margery, whom he keeps locked up to protect from the town rakes, he lashes out at his sister: "What you wou'd have her as impudent as your self, as errant a Jilflirt, a gadder, a Magpy, and to say all a meer notorious Town-Woman?" (II, i). Alithea defends herself in a frank and courageous manner. "Brother, you are my only Censurer; and the honour of your Family shall sooner suffer in your Wife there, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the Town" (II, i). She believes she can remain virtuous and still partake of the "innocent liberty of the Town"; Pinchwife thinks innocence is possible only in ignorance and advocates isolation, even imprisonment (as demonstrated in his treatment of Margery). Barron states the problem as "whether virtue consists in engagement or retreat." Pinchwife, lacking faith in people, believes that the virtuous woman is one not exposed to temptations. Alithea, on the other hand, believes she can act morally at all times, no matter what the situation.

Another example of Pinchwife's misguided judgment of Alithea occurs when his wife, dressed as a boy to appear in public, escapes
with Horner for a while and Pinchwife tries to lay the blame on his sister.

    Pinchwife. No, you know where they are, you infamous Wretch, Eternal shame of your Family, which you do not dishonour enough your self, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of Bawds.
    Alithea. Good Brother.
    Pinchwife. Damn'd, damn'd Sister (III, ii).

Far from being a Jilflirt or a bawd, Alithea is an ideal character, almost a sentimental figure like Christina in the earlier Love in a Wood or Fidelia in The Plain Dealer, set down in a world of vice and hypocrisy. Birdsall comments that Alithea's sphere is "romantic idealism" and that of Horner "comic realism." Against Alithea are contrasted all the other women of the play, the hypocrites of the Lady Fidget type whose interpretation of honor is merely the absence of scandal.

Some parallelism exists between Alithea and Margery, despite the fact that Margery belongs to the real and Alithea to the ideal world. Both are natural and honest and ask only to enjoy the town pleasures from which Pinchwife would keep them. Alithea's type of innocence differs from Margery's in that she is not so naive and unsophisticated. She holds, however, an abstract ideal of honor and love that makes dealing with the real world difficult. "For Alithea, honor is stubbornness of fidelity to a detestable commitment, the sort of honor that sentimental comedy will take in dead earnest. . . ." She almost loses her cherished freedom by marrying Sparkish, with whom she feels she cannot break off because he has given her no cause, having displayed no jealousy. Actually, he resembles Monsieur de Paris in being so self-centered that jealousy
does not even enter his mind; he is as foolish in his lack of jealousy of Harcourt (whom he forces on Alithea so that he can run off to the playhouse) as Pinchwife is in his jealousy of everyone where his wife is concerned. Sparkish considers Alithea a money-making proposition and a beautiful object to show off to his companions. Certainly, marriage to such a boor would be disastrous. He and Pinchwife holds similarly low opinions of women, who exist only to fill their needs.

By the end of the play, Alithea is made to see the truth about Sparkish. She finally realizes that her ideas were "both shortsighted and unworthy; the best way a woman can insure her happiness is to marry a man she loves and respects--and to trust him to treat her decently." Significantly, her escape is not through her own means or rebellion against her guardian-brother, but through the doing of her earthy maid, Lucy. Unlike Harriet or Hippolita, Alithea does not pave her own path for an unpressed future. Is she a Truewit? Although she does not spout witty remarks, she leads an active social life and appreciates Harcourt's wit. Furthermore, the man with whom she is finally paired is himself a libertine hero able to outwit his opposition.

The heroines of Congreve display more seriousness and less open rebellion than those of Etherege and Wycherley. Although Cynthia, Angelica and Millamant all get their own way and marry the men of their choice, there is a certain sententiousness about them not found in a Harriet or a Hippolita. It is only in Congreve's portrait of a lesser character, Prue in Love for Love, that we find a girl blowing caution to the wind.
The Double-Dealer differs from the plays examined above in that the hero and the heroine love each other from the beginning; there is no rallying or sex-antagonism. Reasonable and serious, Cynthia witnesses a parade of fools around her: Lord Froth, who refuses to laugh; Lady Froth, who fancies herself a poet; Brisk, who will not keep quiet; her own father, suppressed by her stepmother. A heroine of good judgment, she displays some tolerance for these Witlesses. Still, she is wary because of the results which marriage has produced in others. "I'm thinking, though marriage makes man and wife one flesh, it leaves them still two fools . . ." (II, i).

Perhaps her main concern about the marriage state stems from her father's pitiable situation. Sir Paul Plyant has taken as his second wife a foolish and domineering young woman (a frequent occurrence in Restoration comedy), who not only restricts his activities but hampers Cynthia's plans as well. Cynthia, as a dutiful daughter, desires her father's consent to marry Mellefont which she seems to have gained without any problem. But Lady Plyant makes her husband break off the match because Lady Touchwood, the play's villainess who plots to ensnare Mellefont, has prepared Lady Plyant to believe Mellefont loves her, not her stepdaughter. Sir Paul, an easy dupe for his sister's (Lady Touchwood's) scheme, "is no tyrant, but catering to his wife's caprices makes him one, and Cynthia is thus unable to act as she would." 46

Sir Paul seems completely under his wife's control. Lady Plyant's response to his anger at the idea that Mellefont would seduce her is disapproval: "Slidikins, can't I govern you? what did I marry you for?" (II, i). She even informs him that he has
no honor but what is in her keeping. But what remains for a man
without honor? Lady Plyant possesses foppish characteristics, al­
though her protestations of virtue fool no one but her husband. She
will not allow him to have normal marital relations with her, and
keeps him swaddled in blankets so that he cannot approach her in bed.
Sadly ingenuous, Sir Paul admits what he wants above all else is a
son, but he believes that his wife is "so very nice" that she would
not "touch a man for the world;--at least not above once a year"
(III, ii). Sir Paul even depends upon Lady Plyant for an allowance.
His second wife has broken his spirit, "and has deeply impressed him
with the feeling of his own inferiority. He is thus left by her with
no vestige of his own individuality or will."47 As a result, it is
no wonder that Cynthia has little respect for her father and considers
him to be "so very silly" (IV, ii).

Although Sir Paul seems to bear true affection for his
daughter, he would have her forget all about Mellefont. Her state­
ment, "If I have not him, I have sworn never to marry" (IV, ii), does
not move her father. But when Lady Plyant switches over to the side
of the young lovers due to the influence of her seducer, Careless
(Mellefont's friend), it takes only one remark from her to change his
mind. Sir Paul now speaks to Cynthia in a rather strange fashion
about how she and Mellefont will have a child; Sir Paul wants "some
resemblance of myself in posterity, hey" (IV, ii). He even promises
her five hundred pounds for every inch of the grandson that resembles
him. He warns her against following Lady Plyant's example of
abstinence from sex. As Holland states:
Instead of satisfying his desire to express himself through progeny in the normal marital way, he tries to extend his wishes through the family triangle to his grandchildren. He tries by overexpression through Cynthia to compensate for his suppression by Lady Plyant.

At the end of *The Double-Dealer*, the wise and serious Cynthia is married to her similarly serious beloved, Mellefont, who is welcomed as a son-in-law by Sir Paul. Sir Paul, however, as the price for his naivety and gullibility, remains trapped in his repressive marriage.

The central couple of *Love for Love* is also serious, although somewhat wittier than Cynthia and Mellefont. Valentine relinquishes all love games to the pursuit of Angelica, while Angelica concerns herself with making sure of Valentine's sincerity, a virtue which had not figured importantly in earlier works.

In this comedy, Foresight is a parental figure to both Angelica, his niece, and Prue, his daughter by his first marriage. The superstitious old man desires to be lord and master of his household, but he is an ineffectual father, guardian and husband; besides, the women are never around enough to be dominated. At the beginning of Act II, he is upset because all his female relations—wife, sister-in-law, daughter—are out, and his niece is also planning to leave. Angelica is a strong young woman who does not fear her uncle. In this scene she is shown to be a free-speaking girl whose conversation with Foresight contains frankly sexual allusions. "I have a mind to go abroad; and if you won't lend me your coach, I'll take a hackney, or a chair, and leave you to erect a scheme, and find who's in conjunction with your wife" (II, i). She continues to tease him: "Uncle, I'm afraid you are not lord of the ascendant, ha! ha! ha!" (II, i).
No bonds of love exist between Angelica and her legal guardian. He is vengeful because Angelica, lacking respect for him, mocks him about his foolish action in marrying an energetic young woman and his belief in omens. He lashes out at her: "I'll be revenged on you, cockatrice; I'll hamper you.--You have your fortune in your own hands,--but I'll find a way to make your lover, your prodigal spendthrift gallant, Valentine, pay for all, I will" (II, i). Thus Foresight displays no concern with providing for her contented future; indeed, he would see her unhappy.

Foresight is a gull who "holds what had become in Congreve's day an outmoded Renaissance and medieval belief in direct supernatural influence on the physical world." Because he judges under false premises, such as stars or facial moles, any knowledge he holds of people or events is also false. He makes an easy dupe, as when Scandal, planning an affair with Mrs. Foresight, convinces him that he is ill. Foresight goes to his room to take secret measures to get well and leaves the field free for his wife and scandal. Angelica, on the other hand, is wise and refuses to be fooled by Valentine's "madness," a ploy to delay losing his inheritance and to trap Angelica into admitting she loves him. Because she is convinced there is mischief afoot, she plans to play Valentine "trick for trick" (IV, i). Once again, we see a contrast between a foolish aged guardian and the Truewit young heroine.

Angelica is a serious, yet still libertine heroine; she displays wit, tests Valentine all along, and rejects the idea of a dull, confined life. "Would anything but a madman complain of uncertainty? Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. Security is an
insipid thing," she claims (IV, iii). Her uncle, on the other hand, would find certainty through the conjunction of the stars. Foresight, however, is cuckolded by his wife and outwitted by the younger characters. Congreve's disposal of the characters at the end of Love for Love (Angelica paired with her beloved Valentine and Foresight faced with a life of cuckoldom and deceit) makes his sympathies clear.

Foresight's young and frivolous second wife has no sense of loyalty to her new family. She tries to marry her sister, Mrs. Frail, first to Ben and then to Valentine for the sake of the inheritance. When she plans to pass off Mrs. Frail as Angelica to the "mad" Valentine, she shows no consideration for the feelings either of her niece or of Valentine himself. In addition, she refuses to allow Prue, Foresight's daughter by his first marriage, to address her as "mother." "By my soul, I shall fancy myself old, indeed, to have this great girl call me mother" (II, ii). Trying to help her sister obtain a rich husband, she plans to destroy the intended marriage of Prue to Ben. Furthermore, she cares so little about Prue that she leaves her alone with the foppish Tattle, practically encouraging him to seduce her.

Prue provides the first full-length portrayal of a country Hoyden in English comedy. Like other Hoydens, Prue's comic depiction "stems from her liberation through ignorance from the decorum which the prude overstates and the plain-dealing heroine understates." Foresight has had her reared with an education aimed at maintaining her innocence, which means he has produced, "true to the irrefutable laws of Restoration comedy, an ignorant, defenseless girl who knows nothing of the way of the world and can be seduced by
the first young man she sees." Unaccustomed to society's ways, the uninhibited and outspoken Prue is very much impressed with Tattle. "Mr. Tattle is all over sweet, his peruke is sweet, and his gloves are sweet, and his handkerchief is sweet, pure sweet, sweeter than roses" (II, ii). She does not know enough to play the coquette when Tattle asks to make love to her. Prue relinquishes her country honesty, however, when Tattle teaches her to dissemble. He instructs Prue in the skills of flirting. "Your words must contradict your thoughts; but your actions may contradict your words" (II, ii). She proves a quick learner, and because of her new-found talents she quarrels with Ben, the "sea-beast" whom Foresight would have her marry.

Prue is in many ways similar to Hoyden (The Relapse), especially in her longing for a man. She determines that now that she has decided she wants a man, she will gain one "some way or other" (V, ii). Foresight's reaction to Prue's desire for any man and to her affair with Tattle is to have her locked up by her nurse. Thus Foresight is another in the long line of fathers and guardians who cannot deal in any but a totally repressive manner with the instincts of young females.

The theme of repression continues in The Way of the World. Congreve's final comic masterpiece examines the assertion of authority. The happiness of the characters depends upon whether the final authority which is imposed on the family members is creative or destructive, Lady Wishfort's dominance being an example of the latter and Mirabell's of the former.
Although she does not appear until Act III, Lady Wishfort makes her presence felt throughout the play. She wields her authority as head of the family irrationally and even chaotically. As the play opens, she holds all the cards, controlling both her daughter's (Mrs. Fainall's) estate and part of her niece's, since half of Millamant's fortune depends upon her marrying with her aunt's consent. Because Lady Wishfort has discovered that Mirabell paid sham court to her to conceal his love for Millamant, she hates him, or thus pretends. Lady Wishfort stands as the major obstacle to the marriage of Millamant and Mirabell, who like other heroines and heroes of Restoration comedy want a marriage with full financial security.

Lady Wishfort is desperate both to revenge herself on Mirabell and to find a husband. Because of her desperation, Mirabell believes his scheme to pass off his servant, Waitwell, as his uncle, "Sir Rowland," will work. Lady Wishfort, determined to marry the uncle, deceives herself into believing that she is young enough to be courted, that "Sir Rowland" kisses her portrait and longs for her. Mignon describes her accurately as "another aging huntress, who lacks the equipment for a sport she is unwilling to give over." Aware enough of her appearance, however, to worry about her cracking makeup, she comments drily, "I look like an old peeled wall" (III, i). That she compares herself with a wall is significant. First, she resembles a wall because she perpetuates separation between appearance and nature both for herself and others. Second, she raises obstacles to natural emotion, as when she tries to separate Millamant and Mirabell and marry her niece to Sir Wilfull, who is too countryish and too intent on traveling at the ripe age of forty to prove a good husband.
Third, peeling suggests "that such a wall is bound to decay and crumble." And, in the course of the play, Lady Wishfort's authority does crumble as it is undermined by Mirabell.

Lady Wishfort represents the totally artificial woman, as exemplified by her plans to receive "Sir Rowland" in such a manner as to make the best first impression. She illustrates the play's tension between "an emotional reality and the artifice of social behavior." That she becomes trapped between desire and the wish not to seem to be a woman of appetite is manifested in her harping on decorum and her fear that her suitor will not make advances.

Lady Wishfort lacks the easy grace of her niece. Millamant has long been a favorite heroine of critics, such as Hazlitt, who have written flowing praises of her. A "perfect model of the accomplished lady," Millamant is the ideal heroine who

arrives at the height of indifference to everything from the height of satisfaction; to whom a pleasure is as familiar as the air she draws; elegance worn as a part of her dress; wit the habitual language which she hears and speaks; love, a matter of course; and who has nothing to hope or fear, her own caprice being the only law to herself, and rule to those about her.

Although she possesses a whimsical wit and an ability to laugh things off most of the time, her flippancy often hides her deep feelings toward Mirabell, whom, as she admits to Mrs. Fainall, she loves "violently" (IV, vii).

One trait shared by aunt and niece is that of malice. Lady Wishfort's malice manifests itself in her vengefulness towards Mirabell and her high-handed treatment of servants. Millamant's malice is incorporated in her wit, and appears only in her treatment
of her would-be rival, Mrs. Marwood, who, unlike the victims of Lady Wishfort's passions, deserves what she gets. Note how Millamant speaks to Mrs. Marwood about Mirabell in Act III, scene iii. When Mrs. Marwood insists she detests Mirabell, Millamant answers:

O madam, why so do I—and yet the creature loves me, ha! ha! ha! how can one forbear laughing to think of it.—I am a sibyl if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer—and within a year or two as young—if you could but stay for me I should overtake you—but that cannot be.—Well, that thought makes me melancholic.—Now, I'll be sad (III, iii).

Furthermore, the song Millamant orders sung pointedly digs at Marwood's unrequited love for Mirabell.

Then I alone the conquest prize,
When I insult a rival's eyes:
If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart, which others bleed for, bleed for me (III, iii).

While Lady Wishfort is a slave to and victim of her own passions, Millamant refuses to be restrained. Thus we have the famous proviso scene with Mirabell, which insures her of her personal liberty when a wife. As a Truewit heroine, she values sincerity and refinement more than a showy facade. Lady Wishfort is hemmed in by ideas of form as demanded by society; e.g., she must appear youthful as a prerequisite to romance with "Sir Rowland." Because she does not act her age, she denies what is real or natural. Her attempts at complete control over her family ignore the ability of her niece and daughter to think and act for themselves. Millamant, on the other hand, evolves her own forms. She allows neither passion nor sentiment to reign over her as does Lady Wishfort; as a rational woman, "she does not tyrannize over her own natural inclinations as does that lady in her Puritanical moments."
Lady Wishfort's Puritanism appears in her conversation and in her library, which boasts the works of Quarles, Prynne, Bunyan and, of course, *The Short View of the Stage* by Collier. Having educated Mrs. Fainall in a Collier-like manner, Lady Wishfort has not permitted her daughter's natural development. Now Lady Wishfort feels shock when she discovers the truth about her daughter's past affair with Mirabell. She speaks in a language tinged with Puritanism.

"O daughter, daughter! is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and, as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the most minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mould of virtue? I have not only been a mould but a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world (V, ii).

Lady Wishfort denies her daughter an identity of her own, and would produce in her a miniature Lady Wishfort. Speaking about Mrs. Fainall's education, Lady Wishfort continues: "I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men..." (V, ii). Mrs. Fainall's childhood was so strict that the only men she saw were her father or the chaplain, the latter clothed in a shift to pass for a woman. Perhaps had Mrs. Fainall's upbringing been more naturalistic, she would not have made the mistakes she has.

Lady Wishfort holds reputation as a high priority. What leverage Mrs. Marwood and Fainall have on their side of the intrigue is the knowledge that Lady Wishfort will go to any extreme to protect her daughter's name. Because the plotters recognize this, they feel
they can blackmail Lady Wishfort and gain control of the family
fortunes. Of course, all their machinations fail in Act V when Mirabell
rescues Lady Wishfort and she, in turn, blesses his union with
Millamant.

Unlike her mother, Mrs. Fainall can act as a true and generous
friend to Millamant and Mirabell. From her past errors she has
learned not to place too much importance on reputation or on outward
appearances. She now realizes the tragedy that results from "allowing
an outward convention, her marriage, which did not grow organically
from emotion, to impose itself upon and stifle her inner nature."61

Both complicated family relationships and emotional relationships
proliferate the play. That there is a discrepancy between
them is essential to the structure of The Way of the World, for the
difference "between appearances (the overt family relations) and
'nature' (the hidden emotional facts) gives power to the man who knows
the discrepancy."62 Mirabell tries at the beginning of the play to
erect this type of situation, planning for Waitwell to court Lady
Wishfort. The announcement that she has married a servant would
blackmail her into allowing Millamant to marry Mirabell with estate
intact. The entire play compares the reality of family and emotional
ties. As the play develops, the emotional forces seem to become
stronger. (E.g., Mrs. Marwood, although not a family member, takes
on greater importance and Sir Wilfull, a relative, lesser importance.)
The cure for the inconsistency of family structure versus emotional
ties lies in creating "an overt, social situation which will truly
reflect the underlying realities."63 In this action of The Way of
the World, Millamant can marry Mirabell, Mrs. Fainall gains the upper hand over her husband, Sir Wilfull can pursue his travels, and so on. The characters are freed from their dependence on the tyrannical Lady Wishfort.

In Vanbrugh's original plays, a heroine with a repressive guardian appears only in one secondary plot. The major tension of the play in which Miss Hoyden fights for freedom, The Relapse, is between the country where there is lack of affectation and sex games, and the town, to which the characters travel. The country-reared and unaffected Miss Hoyden is carefully guarded by her justice of the peace father, Sir Tunbelly Clumsey. Sir Tunbelly represents "the once formidable, though now obsolete class of country squires, who had no idea beyond the boundaries of their own estates, or the circumference of their own persons." The lord and master of his house, he maintains a protective attitude towards his estate and his daughter, to the point of greeting intruders with firearms.

When Young Fashion and Lory reach the Clumsey estate, Sir Tunbelly orders Hoyden locked up by her nurse. But discovering that Young Fashion is supposedly her fiance, Lord Foppington (Young Fashion's older brother), he welcomes him and releases his daughter. His social ambition manifests itself through his choice of a lord as a husband for Hoyden. His other characteristics include a lack of sophistication and blunt speech which reflects his naivete and rusticity. Unlike other older figures in the comedies, he does not even seek inclusion in the charmed inner circle of gallants and
belles; but then, his similarly unsophisticated and blunt daughter herself does not belong to that circle.

Sir Tunbelly is proud of Hoyden's sheltered upbringing, much as Lady Wishfort is proud of Mrs. Fainall's education. The result of country confinement on the girl, however, is to make her (like Prue) long for a man indiscriminately. Furthermore, victimized by her inadequate education, "she is ignorant not only of the differences between men and women but, more important, Vanbrugh implies, of the differences between men and animals." Her craving for liberty appears in the following speech:

It's well I have a husband a coming, or i'dod, I'd marry the baker, I wou'd so. No body can knock at the gate, but presently I must be lockt up; and here's the young greyhound bitch can run loose about the house all the day long, she can; 'tis very well (III, iv).67

Unlike the Truewit heroines of Restoration comedy, Miss Hoyden does not concern herself with marrying for love, but only with getting out of the country and into town. Thus she agrees to Young Fashion's plan to disobey her father's orders to wait a week to marry and weds him immediately in secret.

Again, unlike the Truewit heroines, she is impressed by externals, such as the way Lord Foppington decks himself out and how she would be called "your ladyship" were she his wife. To solve the dilemma of having married the wrong brother, she decides to marry Lord Foppington, too. That she finally ends up with Young Fashion, the hero of the subplot, is the result of the latter's machinations.

At the denouement, Hoyden rightfully fears her father's reaction to the news that she has already married Young Fashion. She tells
her nurse, "When the business comes to break out, be sure you get between me and my father, for you know his tricks; he'll knock me down" (V, iv). Sir Tunbelly, who has been jovial and coarse ("she'll breed like a tame rabbit," he says in Act V, scene v) thinking his daughter about to wed a wealthy lord, is furious when he discovers the truth. "Why then, that noble peer, and thee, and thy wife, and the nurse, and the priest--may all go and be damn'd together" (V, v).

Unlike most Restoration comedy fathers, he is not reconciled to being outwitted by the younger generation. Van Niel comments that when Sir Tunbelly walks out at the end, it manifests more than his having been made a fool of; he leaves the town society of game-playing people to be damned while he returns to the relative sanity of country life.

In examining plays by Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve and Vanbrugh, we have seen that parents and guardians in the Restoration comedy of manners have two major functions in relation to young girls. They act as obstacles to marriages of true love (e.g., Lady Wishfort in The Way of the World), and their foolishness sets in relief the wit of the heroines (e.g., Lady Cockwood in She Would If She Could).

Whenever the heroines are restrained by overly prudish or mercenary parents and guardians, they outwit or openly defy their elders and gain their desired ends, usually a love match complete with financial security. The playwrights object strongly to women being considered pawns for monetary gain or property to be discharged through marriage. The comedies wage battle against the unnatural and repressive action of "keeping" practiced by such figures as Don
Diego (The Gentleman Dancing-Master) and the restriction of life in the country forced on such heroines as Harriet (The Man of Mode).

When the parents or guardians function as a contrast to the Truewit heroines, the latter always appear as the preferred models of behavior. Even with the two unsophisticated country girls examined above, Prue and Hoyden, the authors' sympathies are more clearly with the natural behavior of the girls than with the repressive actions of their fathers. As for the heroines, they know how to act in a libertine era, how to treat their beaux and to test them, and how to achieve a marriage of equality. The dramatists would never allow a Truewit heroine to wed a fool or a fop who would threaten her liberty after marriage. While the young are wise and atuned to the spirit of the age, the parents and guardians are Witwouds, like Don Diego, or Witlesses, like Foresight (Love for Love).

Heroines such as Hippolita (The Gentleman Dancing-Master) believe that their elders are either unfair in suppressing their natural instincts, or that they are, as Cynthia (The Double-Dealer) says of Sir Paul Plyant, "so very silly" (IV, ii). And the audience or reader must agree. In these plays, family relationships involving young women are at best strained and at worst an out-and-out battle.
Footnotes


4 Sarup Singh notes that the heroine is not allowed to act as men did, but did possess a freedom of expression. "It was essential that she should enjoy this quality. A modest and a quiet heroine would have been out of place in the comedy of manners." Furthermore, to have a wit duel, there must be two equal combattants. The Theory of Drama in the Restoration Period (Calcutta: Orient Longmans, 1963), pp. 207-209.

5 Sharma, p. 68.


7 Coate, p. 25.

8 Coate, p. 25.

9 Vernon, p. 16.

10 Vernon, p. 16.

11 Vernon, p. 16.

12 Coate, p. 25.


14 Sharma, p. 76.


Sir Oliver is a sad failure as the would-be head of the household. He constantly repents for real or imaginary transgressions of the marriage vow such as drunkenness. Lady Cockwood completely dominates him and he loses any chance of having an effect on the girls' lives. See Barron, pp. 31-32.


Birdsall, p. 70.

Birdsall, p. 58.

All quotations from The Man of Mode are from the Brett-Smith edition.


Birdsall, p. 90.
All quotations from Love in a Wood are from The Complete Plays of William Wycherley, ed. Gerald Weales (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966).

All quotations from The Gentleman Dancing-Master are from the Weales edition. Although fourteen may seem young to us now, Mignon points out that girls became belles shortly after entering adolescence and cites examples from many plays. "Haunted by the brevity of their gay years, the youth in these plays proclaim a carpe diem philosophy." Elisabeth Mignon, Crabbed Age and Youth: The Old Men and Women in the Restoration Comedy of Manners (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1947), p. 29.

Vernon comments that Hippolita's wit may seem unlikely in a girl of fourteen, but "Wycherley needed her youth to emphasize the naturalness of her disobedience, and in his eyes no woman could be really desirable without a mature intelligence." Vernon, p. 23.

Birdsall, p. 126.


Holland, p. 66.


Rogers, p. 53.

Sharma, p. 165.

Because Pinchwife plays a guardian's role in relation to his younger sister, Alithea, The Country Wife is discussed in this chapter rather than in Chapter IV.

All quotations from The Country Wife are from the Weales edition.
There is an interesting parallel between the brother/guardian-sister relationship of Pinchwife and Alithea and that of Sir Jasper Fidget and Dainty. Sir Jasper, preoccupied with business, seeks a harmless companion for his wife and foolishly leads her and his sister to Horner, believing him a eunuch. Wycherley shows that Sir Jasper's "supervision over his sister Dainty was as senseless as that over his wife. . . ." Barron, p. 140. Dainty echoes her sister-in-law's ideas on reputation and virtue and shows a similar lasciviousness. These women "are all that can be expected from a family presided over by the inadequate Sir Jasper." Barron, p. 135.


Birdsall, p. 137.


Rogers, p. 70.

All quotations from The Double-Dealer are from the Ewald edition.

Barron, p. 231.

Sharma, p. 139.

Holland, p. 151.


All quotations from Love for Love are from the Ewald edition.

Holland, p. 168.


54 Barron, pp. 243-44.

55 See Birdsall, p. 229.

56 Mignon, p. 122.

57 Holland, p. 186.


60 Birdsall, p. 240.

61 Holland, p. 190.

62 Holland, p. 177.

63 Holland, p. 180.


65 Hazlitt, p. 95.

66 Barron, p. 332.


68 Van Niel, p. 331.
CHAPTER III

YOUNG MEN

Most heroes of the Restoration comedy of manners have no dealing with their family within the plays. This may be because their characteristic freedom of movement and libertinism, contrasted with the repressive situations of other characters, allow dramatically no interference from domineering or powerful relations. While Courtal (She Would If She Could) may become involved with the Cockwoods, or Horner (The Country Wife) with the Pinchwifes, we rarely see a hero interacting with his own family. The world in which most Restoration comic heroes are immersed is one where social, not familial, relations are of prime importance.

Most of the young women examined for family relationships are main plot heroines; the majority of the young men who must deal with their family, however, are part of the subplot and do not fit into the category of "hero"--an energetic, wild rake who defies traditional institutions and mores. Even the two main plot heroes examined below, Mellefont (The Double-Dealer) and Valentine (Love for Love), are more serious than heroes such as Dorimant (The Man of Mode), perhaps partially as a function of their family ties which present barriers to the attainment of happiness in the form of estate or wife. The other young men, Young Bellair (The Man of Mode), Jerry (The
Plain Dealer), Ben (Love for Love), Young Rakish (Woman's Wit) and Johnny (Woman's Wit), are all minor plot characters and share few traits of the hero. An examination of some features of the typical hero will reveal the differences between the hero unbound by family ties and the figures fettered with parents and guardians.

Virginia Birdsall sees the rake-hero as Player, Vice, and Libertine. With qualities of youthfulness and childlikeness, he partakes of the playground of life: "He is a mischief-maker, a prideful rebel, a showman, a shameless egotist, an actor complete with disguises, a clever manipulator of the world he lives in, and above all an artist."¹ Dorimant, for example, displays his histrionic talent in pretending to be Mr. Courtage and in mimicking Sir Fopling Flutter. Courtal creates the illusion that Lady Cockwood's honor, rather than his distaste, prevents their affair. Mirabell (The Way of the World) authors a play in which the disguised Waitwell will help manipulate Lady Wishfort into a position of being blackmailed. As Vice, the rake-hero's stratagems are achieved through disguise and craftiness. Dissimulation, both useful and necessary, is exemplified by Horner, whose cloak of eunuch enables him easily to cuckold unsuspecting husbands. Dorimant and Mirabell also engage in pretense. Birdsall's third view of the rake-hero is as Libertine, a role well played by Courtal, Dorimant, and others.² She cites the flourishing social-intellectual atmosphere of skepticism, Machiavellianism, and naturalism:

In short, a great many of the ingredients which, when combined in past English comedy, had made up the vigorous self-assertiveness and rebelliousness of the comic
protagonist, were actually present among the members of the Restoration court.\textsuperscript{3}

That court life was reflected in the comedies has been mentioned previously. Heroes, like the court gallants, have a fully developed \textit{carpe diem} philosophy and reject "the oppressive past--symbolized in Restoration comedies by traditional institutions, by the country, and by age..."\textsuperscript{4} Marriage affords an example of one traditional institution rejected by characters such as Wildish (Sedley's \textit{The Mulberry Garden}), until, of course, they happily succumb to the charms of the heroines at the end of the play.\textsuperscript{5}

Heroes lead existences of idleness in which they attend theatre, wench, drink, gamble, and socialize, representing "the aristocratic ideal of free life" in the period.\textsuperscript{6} Debauchery is a fashionable vice: wildness is equivalent to good breeding.\textsuperscript{7} Cuckoldry is the mode, as demonstrated by Rashley (D'Urfey's \textit{A Fond Husband}) and Bellmour (Congreve's \textit{The Old Bachelor}). Unfaithfulness is common. In Shadwell's \textit{The Squire of Alsatia}, although Belfond, Junior says he sincerely loves Isabella, he seduces Lucia because "'tis dangerous to fast too long for fear of losing an appetite quite" (I, i).\textsuperscript{8} To entitle a character to the status of hero, however, refinement is necessary. The combination of wildness plus good breeding is especially true of early Dryden heroes, Etherege's Dorimant, and later, Farquhar's Sir Harry Wildair.

The hero is a Truewit. Wit in the general sense implies superior intellect, perception, knowledge and sophistication.\textsuperscript{9} These attributes appear in the hero's "one-liners," such as Dorimant's reply to Mrs. Loveit. "Constancy at my years! 'tis not a Vertue in
season, you might as well expect the Fruit the Autumn ripens i' the Spring" (II, ii). Furthermore, the Truewit possesses superior decorum in speech and conduct. For example, Monsieur de Paris describes Gerrard (The Gentleman Dancing-Master) as "witty, brave, and dé bel humeur, and well-bred" (I, i). The main difference between the Truewit and Witwoud and Witless (often rivals for fortune and heroine) is this concern for decorum. At the end of the play, the Truewit always outwits the others, as demonstrated in Harcourt's winning out over the Witwoud, Sparkish, in The Country Wife.

Heroes share the characteristic of bravery—not just a physical but a psychological kind of courage. Instead of battle, there is intrigue; instead of the enemy, there are stingy parents, citizens and fops; cleverness and strategy replace force and weapons. Thus a clever beau such as Gerrard, instead of carrying off Hippolita with force, intrigues with her and is disguised as her dancing master, enabling the young lovers to remain close and to develop their relationship.

Finally, heroes like heroines are concerned with money. The desire for financial independence is a theme running through most of the plays. The young men are not avaricious like their scheming antagonists, however. It is only common sense that the hero and heroine need money along with marriage to preserve their life style. Thus, one of Harriet's attractions for Dorimant is that she is an heiress.

The rake-hero, then, is a player in a world of his own manipulations; a dissimulator; a libertine; a Truewit; he is psychologically
courageous and practical in his concern for finances. As we turn to the study of young men with family ties in the comedies, the difference between them and the typical hero becomes apparent.

Young Bellair is the least exciting among the three young men of *The Man of Mode*. He lacks Medley's wit, but even more significant, he lacks Dorimant's fire and wildness, and "emerges as a conservative nonentity." Cautious compared to the standards of defiance established by Dorimant, he even warns Harriet that the mall is dangerous. Rather than being a libertine, Young Bellair is, as Dorimant assesses, "handsome, well bred, and by much the most tolerable of all the young men that do not abound in wit" (I, i). Dorimant regards rather contemptuously his desire for marriage. According to the clear-sighted Medley, Emilia is a most suitable match for Young Bellair, for she has "the best reputation of any young Woman around the Town, who has beauty enough to provoke detraction . . . " (I, i). These characters, Young Bellair and Emilia, are rather more sentimental than the typical hero and heroine. Yet they have a place in the Restoration comic world because of their situation. The problem is that Old Bellair, who has just arrived in town, has arranged a marriage between his son and Harriet.

A moderate and realistic young man, Young Bellair knows he must proceed carefully in going against his father's wishes; to be overt means disinheritance. He decides to pretend to go along with his father's plans in order to gain time to deceive him. Old Bellair, like Lady Woodvil, is taken in by the externals of the seeming courtship between his son and Harriet. Young Bellair also encourages
Dorimant's and Harriet's interest in each other, thus safeguarding Harriet's opposition to the match.

Although father and son alike lack wit, the latter is accepted into the inner circle because he is young and agreeable and not a fool. Old Bellair, however, is a fool. He coincidentally resides in the same house as Emilia, whose modesty and beauty impress him favorably. Ignoring the fact of his advancing years, he pictures himself a perfect match for her. As he tells Lady Townley, his sister: "I am but Five and Fifty, Sister, you know, an Age not altogether unsensible" (II, i). But he is inescapably beyond the boundaries of the beau monde. His manner of speech characterizes him: his conversation, sprinkled with "a Dod," is repetitious and bears overtones of senility. Furthermore, his manner of endearments takes the ridiculous form of protests to Emilia: "I can't abide you: go, I can't abide you" (II, i).

Young Bellair's secret marriage to Emilia makes Old Bellair appear even more foolish in his desire for the girl. Although he has been cozened, he finally forgives his son. Like Lady Woodvil, he relents easily and even blesses his child's choice of a mate.

With Congreve's *The Double-Dealer*, we come to a young man who, although the main plot's protagonist, is yet not the libertine hero described above. Unlike Valentine in *Love for Love*, there is no indication that Mellefont has even been a rake in the past. He is hardly described as a Truewit by Congreve, who calls him "an open-hearted honest man, who has an entire confidence in one whom he takes to be his friend. . . ." He does not even rally with Cynthia, as most Restoration comic lovers do.
However likable and virtuous Mellefont may be, "Congreve carefully undermines Mellefont's heroic status" in showing the villains continually victorious (until the end) in the outwitting situations which constitute the play. We have seen the rake-hero, described as Player, as the manipulator of his world. Perhaps the young man like Mellefont who must devote his energies to fighting an antagonistic relation does not have the energy left for making his own social existence into what Birdsall calls a "dance of life." The wildness that characterizes the rake-hero is lacking in Mellefont, as it is in Young Bellair.

Perhaps the reason that Mellefont is on the losing side of the intrigues is that he is such a complacent character and insufficiently suspicious. For example, he dismisses Careless's words of warning about Maskwell at the very beginning of the play. (This complacency is shared by the other good characters, Cynthia and Lord Touchwood, Mellefont's uncle.)

Mellefont knows at least one of his opponents from the outset: his aunt, Lady Touchwood. He tells Careless: "I would have noise and impertinence keep my Lady Touchwood's head from working; for hell is not more busy than her brain, nor contains more devils than that imaginations" (I, i). Although Mellefont is to marry Cynthia the following day, Lady Touchwood poses a threat. Because he has refused her sexual overtures toward him, she has subtly tried to fill his uncle's head with misgivings about his character. That very morning, she even surprised Mellefont in his bed, this time using a soft, tearful approach until Mellefont declined because of his relationship to his uncle. Rejected, Lady Touchwood has vowed his ruin.
Unlike most heroes, Mellefont would have Cynthia and himself forget about inheritances and jointures and run off to get married. Cynthia, however, insists upon a demonstration of his wit: he must undermine Lady Touchwood and force her to consent to their marriage.

What kind of opponent is the aunt? She is a true villainess who, with Maskwell, seems out of place in a Restoration comedy of manners. She has three plans in the course of the play. The first is to bear Maskwell's child and thus disinherit Mellefont; the second, to accuse Mellefont of attempts at rape; the third, to blackmail him into granting her desires and then ruin him. She is, in a sense, the traditional scorned woman whose passions are excessive. Her name itself indicates age (old tender wood) and "the easy inflammability of her passions." She exclaims: "O Mellefont! I burn—Married to-morrow!—Despair strikes me. Yet my soul knows I hate him too: let him but once be mine, and next immediate ruin seize him" (I, iii).

Mellefont's uncle, Lord Touchwood, has fairly good sense and confidence in his nephew and heir. When Lady Touchwood schemes to have the Plyants believe that Mellefont is after Lady Plyant instead of her stepdaughter, Cynthia, Lord Touchwood refuses to accept that Mellefont has made a play for the flirtatious stepmother. Mellefont "has better principles," his uncle insists (III, i). But Lady Touchwood, by pretending to protect Mellefont, damns him. She tells her spouse that she has reasons for suspecting Mellefont's virtue, suggesting that Mellefont has made advances towards her as well.

Mellefont, far from a hero in control of the situation, is manipulated by Maskwell into entering Lady Touchwood's chamber. When
Maskwell then leads in Lord Touchwood, Lady Touchwood turns the scene to her advantage and tricks her husband into believing Mellefont's villainy. Gullible like his nephew, Lord Touchwood turns against Mellefont and makes Maskwell his heir, even planning to arrange a marriage between him and Cynthia.

It is Careless's detective work about the supposed elopement of Cynthia and Mellefont (arranged by Maskwell who, in actuality, would have himself married Cynthia) which uncovers Maskwell's villainy and gives Lord Touchwood "proof of the real situation within his family." When the affair and plotting of Lady Touchwood and Maskwell are revealed, Lord Touchwood is confused and amazed. He begs Mellefont's and Cynthia's pardon and unites them. As in a Restoration tragedy, evil is outdone and good triumphs. But typical of Restoration comedy, the young protagonists wind up with a marriage of love as well as financial security.

Family affairs are in a far worse state in Congreve's *Love for Love*, a play concerned with civil government: parents and children, husbands and wives. Relations fail because no mutual respect for the rights of the individual exists. This is best exemplified in the relationship between Valentine, the hero, and his father, Sir Sampson Legend.

In the course of the play, Valentine progresses from lover to poet to madman to martyr. As *Love for Love* opens, Valentine, long enamored of Angelica, considers becoming a poet to woo her with words. He cannot court her in person because he is in forced confinement, Sir Sampson having cut off his funds, and he is unable to pay his debts. The situation is unnatural for a healthy, normal young man.
Although creditors are at the door as a result of his libertine past, Valentine is actually reformed now and displays a rather moral character. He no longer exhibits the wildness of the typical hero, such as Dorimant. Furthermore, despite his occasional wittiness in conversation and his attitude towards life, he lapses into seriousness. Sir Sampson presents new conditions to his son. If Valentine agrees to turn over his inheritance to his younger brother, the sea-going Ben (which would be another unnatural act), Sir Sampson will give him four thousand pounds with which to pay his debts and make his fortune. Valentine decides to accept because he hates confinement and the separation from Angelica.

Throughout the play, Sir Sampson is motivated by a selfish principle only. In Lockean terms, he represents "an unnatural force denying basic human rights and in comic terms, the law and authority against which the audacious spirit of youth is to assert its defiance and its right to freedom and pleasure." Sir Sampson demands duty from his sons. He "believes in a kind of Elizabethan 'nature' in which a father's authority is like a king's--absolute, divinely ordained." He determines to show Valentine who is boss.

What, I warrant my son thought nothing belonged to a father but forgiveness and affection; no authority, no correction, no arbitrary power; nothing to be done, but for him to offend, and me to pardon . . . I'm so glad I'm revenged on this undutiful rogue (II, i).

No love is lost between them. Valentine finally ventures out to pay his respect to his father and ask for more money than the terms of agreement, counting on Sir Sampson's "fatherly fondness (II, i)." Sir Sampson replies, "No doubt of it, sweet sir, but your filial
piety and my fatherly fondness would fit like two tallies" (II, i).

The extent of Sir Sampson's preoccupation with duty manifests itself in the following speech:

Why, sirrah, mayn't I do what I please? are you not my slave? did I not beget you? ... Did you come a volunteer into the world? or did I, with the lawful authority of a parent, press you to the service (II, i)?

Not content with disinheriting Valentine, Sir Sampson even speaks against him to Angelica.

The rogue has not a drachm of generous love about him: all interest, all interest; he's an undone scoundrel, and courts your estate: body o' me, he does not care a doit for your person (III, iii).

Later in the play, he sets himself up as a rival suitor and tries to convince Angelica of his youthfulness. "I have warm blood about me yet, and can serve a lady any way.--Come, come, let me tell you, you women think a man old too soon, faith and troth, you do" (V, i).

Angelica suggests that they pretend to be engaged to force Valentine to throw off his disguise of madness, but Sir Sampson would prefer a real contract. "Odsbud, hussy, you know how to choose, and so do I; odd, I think we are very well met" (V, i). He wants to wed Angelica for all the wrong reasons: to revenge himself on his son, to gain her money, to possess a pretty thing, and to maintain the illusion of youth.25

Meanwhile, Valentine has been enacting the Restoration rake-hero as Vice in attempting to achieve his ends through dissimulation.26 His scheme of feigning madness to postpone signing away his inheritance and to trick Angelica into admitting that she loves him does not work, however. Angelica sees through his disguise.
As for Sir Sampson, he shows little concern about his son's "madness"; if Valentine can still hold a pen, he would have him sign his name on the deed of conveyance.

At the close of the play, when he believes he has lost Angelica to his father, Valentine does agree to sign the paper. But Angelica tears it up and gives herself to Valentine, who learns his lesson: Angelica may be won through sincerity and directness, not show or affectation. Sir Sampson, however, is "not only deprived of an opportunity to bring his prodigal to his knees but is also made a laughing stock of others by betraying his libidinousness." He loses Angelica, his plans for Ben and, in a sense, his own youth.

There are parallels between Sir Sampson of Love for Love and Old Bellair of The Man of Mode. Both want to marry the girls their sons love and both are outwitted at the end. But Sir Sampson insists even more desperately on being considered youthful. Furthermore, his actions to deprive Valentine of Angelica and the estate are "malicious and deliberate," while Old Bellair's attraction to Emilia is accidental. As Sir Sampson's meanness is more pronounced, so is the trick played on him.

Sir Sampson is demanding not only with Valentine, but with his younger son, Ben, whom he calls "The hopes of my family" (III, iii), although he has not seen him in three years. Ben really has little concern with his family; e.g., he has even forgotten that his brother, Dick, died two years ago. Sir Sampson, who does not understand that what pleases Ben is the free sea-going existence, declares he will not marry again for Ben's sake. Ben's heart, however, lies neither
in marriage nor in land life. "An you marry again--why, then, I'll go to sea again, so there's one for 'tother, an that be all" (III, iii).

Ben is a "sea-wit" whose sea jargon individualizes him. He possesses more wit than the typical outsider but, unlike the Restoration hero, his wit is crude and lacks decorum. Frequent images of freedom as contrasted with restraint sprinkle his conversation. Although his parts "want a little polishing" (III, iii), as Sir Sampson points out, he is honest and likeable.

Ben agrees to marry the hoyden, Prue, out of duty to his father. The "sea-beast" and the "land-monster" do not get along, however, thus spoiling their fathers' plans. When that relationship does not work out, the naive and gullible Ben falls into the snares of Mrs. Frail, whose flatteries he takes at face value. He ultimately quarrels with his authoritarian father. His saying that he will marry whomever he pleases causes Sir Sampson to threaten to marry someone himself and cut Ben off from the estate. Mrs. Frail seizes on their quarrel as an excuse for breaking off with Ben, since all she wanted was his inheritance in the first place.

Father and son argue again when Ben suggests that Sir Sampson is ill-matched with the young Angelica. Sir Sampson reacts in the expected fashion: "Who gave you authority to speak, sirrah? To your element, fish! be mute, fish, and to sea! rule your helm, sirrah, don't direct me" (V, ii). Thus Sir Sampson cannot bear insubordination from even his favored son, and loses the positive values that existed in that relationship as well.
The final three parent-son relationships examined in this chapter involve young men who wish to burst their confines. The subplot of *The Plain Dealer* includes the portrayal of a young man who tries to become a libertine instead of a suppressed child, and a mother whose consuming passion with the law outweighs her regard for her son. The Widow Blackacre treats Jerry in a manner similar to that of guardians repressing young heroines. A "Litigious She-Pettyfogger, who is a Law and difference with all the world . . ." (I, ii), the Widow is always in litigation, the joy of her life. She would have her son, in whom she has stamped out all independence, follow in her footsteps. Her zeal for the law ultimately leads to her downfall and the emergence of her son as an independent human being.

In *The Plain Dealer*, which contains a satire on the legal system, Wycherley seems to be saying that there is no real justice. Even for the Widow Blackacre who is passionately involved with the law, it is only "a socially acceptable way of deceiving one's fellows for one's gain." Material rewards are all that concern her. Jerry is secondary in importance, and she treats him like a servant whose mission it is to carry the green bags.

At the beginning of the play, we see Jerry trailing the Widow and cheering her on in her put-down of potential suitors, the rakish Freeman, who would marry her for her money, and the foolish Major Oldfox, an elderly man with a fortune of his own. To the latter, a "Bag of Mummy," she says, "Wou'dst thou make me the staff of thy Age, the Crutch of thy decrepedness?" (II, i). She also attacks Freeman,
calling him a "senseless, quibbling, drveling, feeble, paralytic, impotent, fumbling, fridgid Nincompoop" (II, i). Jerry expresses self-interested delight in her jeering, for should she remarry, it would mean a lose of estate for him. 

Although the Widow refuses marriage because it would end her litigations, she pretends to have Jerry's interests at heart. As she tells Major Oldfox, "and dost thou think I wou'd wrong my poor Minor there, for you?" He replies wisely, "it seems, you will have the cheating of your Minor to your self" (II, i). And she does cheat Jerry, both out of the money he should rightfully have and out of the opportunity to act naturally in a libertine society.

Act III, which takes place at Westminster Hall, is dominated by the Widow, who busily instructs lawyers on what actions to take in her suits. Wycherley shows her at every turn repressing Jerry's instincts and desires. She insists upon his getting the Young Clerk's Guide from the bookseller rather than St. George from Christendom or The Seven Champions of England. Nor will she allow him to read plays which "wou'd make you in love with your laundress, or what's worse, some Queen of the Stage, that was a Laundress . . . " (III, i).

The widow makes the mistake of leaving Jerry alone at Westminster Hall while she goes off to conduct business. Freeman, spying his golden opportunity, gives Jerry money for The Seven Champions and trinkets and comiserates with him about his sad life. "I'm sorry a Man of your Estate shou'd want money" (III, i). That the Widow refuses to give Jerry any allowance until he is "at age" prompts Freeman to exclaim:
At Age! Why, you are at Age already, to have spent an Estate, Man; there are younger than you, have kept their Women these three Years, have had half a dozen Claps, and lost as many thousand pounds at Play (III, 1).

Because Jerry fears his mother's cleverness at law, he will not sue for his inheritance as other young men have done. He feels that she would marry just to spite him.

Jerry is ripe for Freeman's sympathy and gifts of pocket money. When the Widow's fury is aroused at Jerry's having lost their bags (Freeman had them stolen) during his excitement at being able to make purchases, Freeman arranges for Jerry to be brought to Manly's lodgings and locked up there. Thus Jerry goes from one kind of repression to another. He becomes Freeman's tool in his quest for the rich Widow.

At Manly's apartment, Jerry displays a new-found bravery in facing his mother. He defies her by wearing red breeches rather than a cap and gown. He informs her that he has chosen Freeman for his guardian and is out of her "Hucksters' hands. Suddenly, his anger and frustration at being held in check all these years is unleashed:

... if I do go where Money and Wenches are to be had, you may thank your self; for you us'd me so unnaturally, you wou'd never let me have a Penny to go abroad with; nor so much as come near the Garret, where your Maidens lay; nay, you wou'd not so much as let me play at Hotcockles with 'em, nor have any Recreation with 'em, tho' one shou'd have kist you behind, you were so unnatural a Mother, so you were (IV, 1).

While Jerry is ready to follow Freeman anywhere and begin to enjoy life, he does not realize how selfish are Freeman's motives. Freeman threatens the Widow that if she is to have her son again, she must take him, too. But the Widow's complacent reply is, "Nay, if one of
us must be ruin'd, e'en let it be him" (IV, i). Uncontrollable anger replaces her complacency, however, when Jerry announces that he has given up "lawyering" and "pettifogging" forever. She now goes so far as to claim that Jerry is a bastard and thus cannot inherit an estate. She defends herself: often a widow will "give up her Honour to save her Joynture" (IV, i). She would rather declare herself a whore than let the ungrateful Jerry, who cast aspersions on her beloved law, inherit from her.

The Widow, the great law-fox, is finally herself out-foxed by Freeman's manipulations. At his instigation, a bribery charge is laid upon her, and the only way out, insists Freeman, is matrimony. The Widow protests:

O stay, Sir, can you be so cruel as to bring me under Covert Baron again? and put it out of my power to sue in my own name. Matrimony, to a Woman, worse than Excommunication, in depriving her of the benefit of the Law: and I wou'd rather be depriv'd of life (V, ii).

Instead, she agrees to pay him an annuity and settle his debts. Freeman provides for Jerry as well.

First, Widow, you must say no more that he is the Son of a Whore; have care of that: And then, he must have a settle Exhibition of Forty pounds a Year, and a Nag of Assizes, kept by you, but not upon the Common; and have free ingress, egress, and regress to and from your Maids Garret (V, ii).

The Widow assents to all Freeman's conditions. Thus Jerry receives the freedom entitled to a young man in a libertine age, although it requires the interference of another to gain it. The Widow is really not too badly punished at the end, for she is saved from a marriage to a man who cares only for her money, and she can continue in her legal pursuits, her raison d'être.
In *Woman's Wit*, a play by Cibber that preceded by two years the publication of Collier's famous pamphlet, the subplots contain two young men involved in serious conflicts with their parents. Although Young Rakish bears more hero-like qualities than Johnny (he is energetically crafty in outwitting his avaricious father), he does not play the libertine at ease in the *beau monde* and engaged in wit duels with a Truewit heroine.

At the opening of the play, Young Rakish has won five hundred pounds from his father who now pursues him with a drawn sword. Major Rakish, proud of his ability to enjoy vice without paying for it, would have Young Rakish follow in his footsteps and not require any of his money. Later, the Major fences with his son: for every thrust Young Rakish gives, he will receive one hundred pounds; but if the Major disarms him, he gets nothing. Obsessed with the fear of losing any part of his estate, Major Rakish throws his wig in his son's face and unfairly disarms him. Young Rakish retaliates by warning his father not to visit Lady Manlove, whom the Major has been courting, for he is going there himself. "In short, Sir, I find your Good Nature, and my Fortune are so very low, that I am resolv'd to Marry her" (III, v). Thus another father and son rival each other for a woman's hand, although Lady Manlove is certainly not a desirable young heroine like Angelica.

Johnny, Lady Manlove's son, sees a soulmate in Young Rakish who cares no more for his father than he does for his mother. Johnny has suffered his mother's control of his life long enough. Designing him for a churchman, she has educated him at a private school and
tried to keep him naive and ignorant. Although Johnny pretends to adhere to her wishes, he secretly has an affair with her maid, Lettice, thereby displaying at least more nerve than his counterpart, Jerry, in The Plain Dealer. When he refuses to buckle under to Father Benedic, fastens his mother's gown to the floor, and insists on marrying Lettice, Lady Manlove swears revenge: she determines to marry and keep the estate for herself.

The two plots come together because Johnny, too inept to fend for himself, needs a liberator and confidant, whom he finds in Young Rakish; and Young Rakish can use the boy in his outwitting of the Major. Johnny wants the parson who is secretly to marry Young Rakish to Lady Manlove also to marry him to Lettice, and Young Rakish agrees to make the arrangements. When the Major, discovering that Lady Manlove has supposedly wed Young Rakish, threatens to court her daughter, have children and disinherit his son, he is countered by Young Rakish's ability to forbid it as he is now Leonora's stepfather. Actually, Young Rakish has not really married the old woman and if his father signs a paper giving him an annuity, he will resign Lady Manlove to him. Lady Manlove, insulted at being sold, promises to marry the Major if he completely cuts off Young Rakish, and the Major agrees. But Young Rakish has one last trick up his sleeve: Johnny has chosen him for his guardian! He will resign charge of the boy's estate only if Lady Manlove does not marry the Major until he signs the property settlement.

Young Rakish obtains the financial freedom and independence from his father that he has so long sought. As for Johnny, who is not really wed to Lettice after all, his lot is somewhat improved,
with Major Rakish becoming his guardian. Lacking Young Rakish's ingenuity and wit, Johnny is not as greatly rewarded.

We have seen that young men with family ties in Restoration comedy are not typical libertine heroes, although they may fight and win many of the same battles, confront the older generation, and attempt to lead a properly free life. For example, Young Bellair outwits his doddering father and Valentine claims both his inheritance and Angelica. The parental opponents to the most hero-like of the seven figures--Young Bellair, Mellefont, and Valentine--are not accepted into the charmed inner circle, while the young men are, despite their unusual seriousness. (Ben, Jerry and Johnny, of course, are outsiders to the fashionable world due to their lack of sophistication, while Young Rakish's concerns all center around gaining money from his father and he has little social interaction.)

As explained in the beginning of this chapter, the rake-hero as Libertine rejects the oppressive past. Although all the young men with family ties do fight repression and restraint, figures like Young Bellair, Mellefont and Valentine do not reject the traditional institution of marriage. Indeed, unlike the beaux in She Would If She Could and other Restoration comedies of manners, they actively seek it.

As far as psychological courage and the ability to manipulate their world are concerned, Young Bellair, Valentine and Young Rakish do display some comic resourcefulness. Mellefont's drama, however, is much like a tragedy; his enemies are not stingy parents, but outright villains (Maskwell and Lady Touchwood). Ben, an outsider to
the hypocritical town society, is manipulated by others, and Jerry and Johnny have not the presence of mind to fend for themselves.

What characterizes most significantly family relationships involving young men is lack of respect for the rights of the individual. Old Bellair would order his son to marry whom he chooses; Lady Touchwood will not accept Mellefont's refusal of her sexual overtures and tries to ruin his marriage plans; Sir Sampson attempts to deprive Valentine of his estate and to run Ben's life; the Widow Blackacre does not allow Jerry to lead an independent, much less a libertine, existence; Major Rakish denies Young Rakish any financial resources; and Lady Manlove pushes Johnny toward the unnatural life of a churchman. As with the young women examined in the preceding chapter, the young men's family interactions entail conflict and often bitterness.
Footnotes


2 Although Mirabell's libertinism may all be in the past, it still shapes his personality and he still makes use "of his seductive powers when the occasion demands." Birdsall, p. 228.

3 Birdsall, pp. 32-33.

4 Birdsall, p. 35.

5 The new heroes—and heroines—regard marriage with suspicion as a societal restriction to prevent the expression of instincts, as means for economic gain on the part of the parent, or as a way of letting people use one another as property. Birdsall, p. 34.


7 The virtue insisted upon for the heroines of Restoration comedy is not a trait of the rake-heroes. The double standard remains in effect.


11 See Fujimura, p. 23.

12 All quotations from The Gentleman Dancing-Master are from The Complete Plays of William Wycherley, ed. Gerald Weales (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966).

14 Birdsall, p. 82.


17 Birdsall, p. 16.

18 All quotations from The Double-Dealer are from the Ewald edition of Congreve's plays.


21 Fujimura, p. 180. Although there is much levity in his madness act, his underlying concern is dishonesty.


23 Holland, p. 168.

24 All quotations from Love for Love are from the Ewald edition of Congreve's plays.

25 Schneider, p. 186.

26 All Valentine wants is his right of inheritance, but Sir Sampson tells him to live by his wits. "The problem of this particular play is to see whether or not the wit Valentine can prevent the anti-wit Sir Sampson from depriving him of his rightful inheritance." Barron, p. 265.

27 Sharma, p. 129.

28 Sharma, p. 143.

29 Fujimura, p. 177.
30. Ben, who reacts with childlike honesty, quickly angers when his response does not inspire a similarly honest one, points out Birdsall, pp. 215-16. When Sir Sampson addresses him "in a surly sort of manner," he feels he has the right to do likewise.

31. All quotations from The Plain Dealer are from the Weales' edition of Wycherley's plays.


33. It is only in concern for his inheritance that Jerry resembles a hero. He is in no way a libertine, Truewit, rake or intriguer.

34. The main plot includes the sentimentally-tinged family tie of Longville and his sister, Emilia, discussed in Chapter V.

35. Colley Cibber, Woman's Wit (London: John Sturton, 1697).
CHAPTER IV

SIBLINGS

There are fewer siblings portrayed in the comedies of manners covered by this study than young men and women with parents or guardians. As the siblings are often the same age and of the same stature, the theme of repression does not apply, except in the case of elder brothers whose inheritance of the family estate deprives younger brothers of money and, therefore, of the chance to lead a fully libertine existence.

Most siblings, although of the same generation, either do not get along together or lack contact with each other. The latter situation may exist because the emphasis in the comedies is not on blood ties but on social ties or spheres. As Witwoud (The Way of the World) tells his brother, "'tis not modish to know relations in town . . ." (III, ii).1

Siblings who do have a congenial relationship appear in Etherege’s She Would If She Could. Gatty and Ariana are young, witty heroines who provide a constant contrast to the hypocritical Lady Cockwood. Although both sisters want adventures and the attention of gallants, there is a major difference between them. Gatty (whom her uncle, Sir Joslin Jolly, calls "mad-cap") is more worldly and aggressive while Ariana ("sly-girl") is more shy and tends to follow her sister’s lead.
Gatty, the more vocal of the two, advocates taking advantage of the social life of the town without considerations of guardians. She remarks to Ariana:

Would'st thou never have us go to a Play but with our grave Relations, never take the air but with our grave Relations? to feed their pride, and make the world believe it is in their power to afford some Gallant or other a good bargain? (I, ii).²

She also bewails the freedom men have compared with women and expresses her envy of the opposite sex. "Well! we cannot plague 'em enough when we have it in our power for those privileges which custom has allow'd 'em above us" (I, ii). And plague them she does, as in Act II, scene i, when the girls devilishly make Courtal uncomfortable in front of Lady Cockwood by alluding to their earlier meeting in the park.

Just as Courtal is more honest than Freeman, who has an incipient flirtation with Lady Cockwood late in the play, Gatty is more honest than Ariana who hides behind demureness. Gatty has real spirit, dislikes fakery, and speaks frankly when she thinks she is alone with her sister. "I hate to dissemble when I need not; 'twou'd look as affected in us to be reserv'd now w'are alone, as for a Player to maintain the Character she acts in the Tyring-room" (V, i). Not for Gatty are the melancholy songs to which Ariana would listen. "I'de rather be a Nun, than a Lover at thy rate; devotion is not able to make me half so serious as Love has made thee already" (V, i), she teases her sister. A realist, Gatty understands the real world and allows no sentimentality to color her dealings with it.

Still, the two sisters share the same basic attitudes toward life. They are eager to enjoy society, they engage in the love chase,
and they demonstrate their wit in dealing with the young men. As long as they are after a different gallant, they are supportive of each other in their endeavors. Furthermore, they both follow the convention of testing the lover's seriousness of intention.

Adriana. Come, Gentlemen, I'le make you a fair proposition; since you have made a discovery of our inclinations, my Sister and I will be content to admit you in the quality of Servants.

Gatty. And if after a months experience of your good behaviour, upon serious thoughts, you have courage enough to ingage further, we will accept of the Challenge and believe you men of Honour (V, i).

Although Gatty is the livelier of the two, both sisters exist as prototypal Restoration heroines who maintain the upper hand.

In marked contrast to these girls are Love for Love's two sisters, who bear similarities and get along, but who share doubtful morals. Although Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail quibble in their first scene together (II, ii), they achieve a closeness through deceiving others. Mrs. Foresight expresses her dismay at her unmarried sister's having been seen with a man in a hackney-coach. Not only does she fear for Mrs. Frail's reputation, but she worries that her sister's behavior may reflect upon her. Mrs. Foresight further accuses her sister of having frequented a disreputable tavern, the World's End. When Mrs. Frail denies it, Mrs. Foresight pulls out her evidence, a gold bodkin belonging to Mrs. Frail. The latter counters: "Well, if you go to that, where did you find this bodkin.--O sister, sister! --sister every way" (II, ii).³ The discovery of their parallel lack of propriety brings them closer together, and they pledge "sisterly secrecy and affection" (II, ii). Mrs. Frail then confides her plan
to land Ben, who will inherit from Sir Sampson, and Mrs. Foresight agrees to help her. For the rest of the play, they remain con­ federates.

Both sisters lack a moral sense. Mrs. Foresight has an affair with Scandal, then the next day denies any memory of his having come to her bed. Mrs. Frail casts Ben aside when it looks as if he will not gain Sir Sampson's estate. She answers heartlessly her sister's question as to what she plans to do with Ben. "Do with him! send him to the sea again in the next foul weather" (IV, iii). The sisters continually plot without caring whom they are hurting, as when they plan to pass off Mrs. Frail as Angelica to the "mad" Valentine and consummate the marriage, although Valentine loves Angelica deeply.

They easily trap the naive Ben, but Valentine, out of their league in cleverness, outwits them. He arranges a wedding ceremony in which the disguised Mrs. Frail unwittingly marries the disguised Tattle. Afterwards, the sisters confer.

Mrs. Foresight (aside to Mrs. Frail). He's better than no husband at all.
Mrs. Frail (aside to Mrs. Foresight). Any, ay, it's well it's no worse (V, ii).

The two sisters achieve at least their goal of a man for Mrs. Frail, marriage providing her with a cover of respectability under which she can continue her dalliances, as does her sister.

Sometimes the dramatists portray siblings who have similar traits but do not get along well together. The earliest Wycherley comedies provide such a situation. In Love in a Wood, Alderman Gripe and his sister, Lady Flippant, are aged characters who try to play a game for which they are no longer suited. A widow, Lady Flippant
flirts outrageously, oblivious to insults from Dapperwit and the other young fellows. Gripe lusts after Lucy though she is young enough to be his daughter.

All the lower plot characters, including these siblings, have allowed money to color their attitude toward love. In this acquisitive society, "everybody is out to get something or somebody, preferably somebody possessed of something." Lady Flippant, for example, desperately seeks a rich husband, despite all her railing against marriage. Broke and in danger of losing her precious coach, she has even hired a bawd, Mrs. Joyner, to help her find a mate.

Like his sister's, Gripe's major motivation is money. He tries to spend a minimal amount on courting Lucy, whom he has decided to redeem from the bad influence of the rake Dapperwit. Mrs. Crossbite, Lucy's materialistic mother, determines that she and Lucy should be provided for by the pious alderman. But when the parsimonious Gripe visits, he brings no gifts and neglects to send for entertainment, although he does finally give Mrs. Joyner—a go-between for him as for his sister—a groat to buy some ale and cake. Later, he gives Mrs. Joyner more money to buy presents for Lucy, so that he can be alone with the girl. When he tries to kiss Lucy, she cries out "murder," and Gripe is blackmailed for his lascivious behavior. With his reputation at stake, however, he willingly parts with five hundred pounds to preserve it. "My enemies are many," he says, "and I shall be a scandal to the Faithful, as a laughing-stock to the wicked . . ." (III, i). In the next act, the money much occupies his mind. He complains to Mrs. Joyner:
I had not grudg'd you the money I gave you, but the five hundred pound; the five hundred pound; you cheated, trappand, rob'd me of the five hundred pound (IV, i).

After being blackmailed, he wants Lucy mainly to get his money's worth.

Brother and sister alike are hypocrites. Lady Flippant, for example, pretends to run from the fellows in the park, but tries to escape her companion, Lydia, for a better opportunity of men approaching her. Despite her affection of honor, she is not precise but lecherous; not only does she desire an affair with Dapperwit, but she literally throws herself at Sir Simon Addleplot, disguised as her brother's clerk. Covering up sexuality with prudery, and pursuing men (for whom she has no regard) for lust and money, she makes herself ridiculous. Hypocritical concerning her brother, she calls Gripe "a censurrious ridged Fop" who "knows nothing" (I, i). She expresses annoyance with his puritanism and only lives with him because of her poverty. She complains to Mrs. Joyner:

Do you think if things had been with me as they have been, I would ever have hous'd with this counter fashion Brother of mine, (who hates a Vest as much as a Surplice) to have my Patches assaulted every day; at Dinner my Freedom sensured, and my Visitants shut out of doors; poor Mr. Dapperwit cannot be admitted (I, i).

Hating Gripe, as does everyone in the play, she says of him: "... this world hath nothing like him; I know not what Devil may be in the other" (V, i).

Gripe demonstrates hypocrisy in his preciseness which is also mere pretense. While warning his own daughter to keep locked up in the house, he leaves to seduce Lucy. When he walks in the park with Lucy, Mrs. Joyner and Mrs. Crossbite, he rejoices that it is dark,
"because in the dark . . . there is no envy, nor scandal; I wou'd
neither lose you, nor my reputation" (V, i). His very diction affects
religiousness although his actions do not. Even upon entering
Lucy's room and planning to make her his mistress, he says, "Peace,
Plenty, and Pastime be within these walls" (III, i). The word
"Pastime," of course, reveals his true intentions.

The characters get what they deserve at the end. Lady Flippant
winds up with Addleplot, each believing the other rich. Gripe finds
himself about to marry Lucy, actually his son-in-law's ex-mistress.
He weds her out of revenge when he discovers his daughter, who is
pregnant, has married the Witwoud, Dapperwit.

My Daughter, my Reputation, and my Money gone— but the
last is dearest to me; yet at once I may retrieve that,
and be reveng'd for the loss of the other; and all this
by marrying Lucy here: I shall get my five hundred pound
again, and get Heirs to exclude my Daughter, and frustrate
Dapperwit; besides, 'tis agreed on all hands, 'tis
cheaper keeping a Wife than a Wench (V, ii).

He has allowed money "to become the measure of all things, a value
higher than honor, social relations, or parental responsibility."^6

It must be noted that little interaction occurs between brother
and sister in Love in a Wood. This may be due in part to the fact
that Wycherley's first play with its several plots lacks the skillful
construction of his latter pieces. Gripe and Lady Flippant, however,
set off each other's follies, and the parallels between them are
strong.

Another brother and sister who have a great deal in common
appear in The Gentleman Dancing-Master. Don Diego and Mrs. Caution,
discussed in detail in Chapter II, are, as we have seen, foolish
figures of the older generation who possess false standards of judgment and repress Hippolita, the heroine. Mrs. Caution, a sour and precise old lady representative of what her niece calls "crabbed age" (I, i), follows Don Diego's instructions to keep Hippolita locked up in the Spanish fashion. Mrs. Caution and Don Diego are at odds, however, over Hippolita's supposed dancing-master. Although they seek the same goal—the preservation of Hippolita's virtue and a financially beneficial marriage for her to Monsieur de Paris—their constant game of one-upsman ship serves only to help along the courtship of Hippolita and Gerrard.

In trying to prove smarter than the other, each unwittingly supplies answers for the befuddled young hero. For example, Don Diego demands to know the location of Gerrard's school.

Caution. Why, he'll say, may be he has ne're a one.
Don Diego. Who ask'd you, nimble Chaps? So you have put an Excuse in his head (II, i).

Turnabout comes when Mrs. Caution asks how Gerrard came to their house. Don Diego supplies, "Ay, how should he come hither? upon his legs" (II, i). At another point in the play, Mrs. Caution insists on staying with Hippolita and Gerrard to chaperone a dancing lesson. Don Diego, always opposing his sibling, thrusts her out of the room so that the lesson can proceed smoothly. An additional example of their one-upsman ship game is when Mrs. Caution demands, "What, will you let her whisper with him too?" and Don Diego replies, "Nay, if you find fault with it, they shall whisper; though I did not like it before, I'le ha' no body wiser than my self . . . " (IV, i). He even criticizes Mrs. Caution for her endless suspicion. "Come
leave your sensorious prating, thou hast been a false right Woman
they self in thy youth, I warrant you" (III, i).

Because Don Diego is so pigheaded, he does not listen to his
sister's warnings and takes affront.

I cheated by any man! I scorn your words, I that have so
much Spanish care, Circumspection, and Prudence, cheated
by a man: do you think I who have been in Spain, look
you, and have kept up my Daughter a twelve-month, for fear
of being cheated of her, look you? I cheated of her!
(III, i).

In a way, Mrs. Caution appears less gullible than her brother because
she at least sees the truth of the situation and realizes that
Hippolita disdains her cousin and wants the "dancing-master." Don
Diego will never admit to his sister's superior insight. He plans
the one-upsmanship game to the very end.

I will cheat 'em all; for I will declare I understood the
whole Plot and Contrivance, and conniv'd at it, finding
my Cousin a Fool, and not answering my expectation. Well;
but then if I approve of the Match, I must give this Mock-
Daning-master my Estate, especially since half he wou'd
have in right of my Daughter, and in spight of me. Well, I
am resolv'd to turn the Cheat upon themselves, and give
them my Consent and Estate (V, i).

His determination to raise himself above everyone else, especially
Mrs. Caution, enables the young lovers to be married with full
financial security.

Don Diego and Mrs. Caution, then, are brother and sister with
a great deal of foolishness in common. But these two dupes cannot
get along together, and their interaction during the course of the
play consists of constant bickering.

More often than not, the dramatists use siblings for the
purpose of contrast between types of life styles. In the case of
The Man of Mode, Etherege shows through two siblings the difference between proper and indecorous behavior. This study reveals in Chapter III how old Bellair acts ridiculously in trying to pretend he is young and hardy, and in making a play for the lovely Emilia, his son's fiancée. "A dod, sweethear," he tells her, "be advis'd, and do not throw thy self away on a young idle fellow" (IV, i). His sister, Lady Townley, on the other hand, is a gracious and generous woman who acts as Young Bellair's and Emilia's confidante. In fact, the two are secretly married in her home.

Brother and sister have little to do with each other, except when Old Bellair tries to convince Lady Townley that he is only fifty-five, a time of life "not altogether unsensible!" (II, i). In contrast, Lady Townley enjoys young men and women but nevertheless acts her age. She holds society together, describing her house as a place of general rendez-vous, "and next to the Play-house . . . the Common Refuge of all the Young idle people" (III, ii). Although her home receives fools like Sir Fopling Flutter as well as wits, she maintains her sense of values and her power of discernment. She reads Old Bellair well, seeing immediately that he is infatuated with Emilia and does not suspect her of being his son's mistress. (She also sees the danger to Bellinda of becoming Mrs. Loveit's close friend, and understands Medley's character.) Because she sees things clearly, she approves of the marriage between her nephew and Emilia, makes the wedding arrangements, and afterwards calms down Old Bellair. That rare figure in Restoration comedy, a likeable older person who can befriend the younger generation and not herself appear foolish,
she is set in marked opposition to her silly brother. Old Bellair, not as clear sighted as she, cannot fit into the world of high society as she does, and continues to blunder his way through social situations.

Like many of the siblings portrayed in the Restoration comedy of manners, Sir Paul Plyant and Lady Touchwood of The Double-Dealer have almost no contact during the play. What they have in common is exclusion from the charmed inner circle—Sir Paul because he is an old dupe whose wife controls him completely, and Lady Touchwood because she is evil. Sir Paul's credulity contrasts with Lady Touchwood's shrewdness. She is wise (at least she can see through his wife's hypocrisy) but cruel; he is foolish (he believes his wife faithful despite all evidence to the contrary) but means well. Sir Paul proves an easy gull for his sister's plan to discredit Mellefont in the eyes of the Plyant family. As he tells Cynthia, the daughter about whom he truly cares, "I had it from his aunt, my sister Touchwood.—Gadsbud, he does not care a farthing for anything of thee by thy portion . . ." (II, i).  

When brother and sister do have a conversation, no evidence of affection emerges between them. In the last act, Lady Touchwood discovers that Lord Touchwood has made Maskwell, her lover and partner in villainy, his heir, and plans to marry him to Cynthia. Lady Touchwood now understands why Maskwell has been false to Mellefont. Oh! what woman can bear to be a property? To be kindled to a flame, only to light him to another's arms. . . . All my designs are lost, my love unsated, my revenge unfinished, and fresh cause of fury from unthought-of plagues (V, ii).
At this inopportune moment, her brother enters and asks if Lady Touchwood has seen his wife. She takes out her bitter disappointment on him by mocking her brother's cuckoldom. Lady Plyant is, according to Lady Plyant, "Where she is serving you, as all your sex ought to be served; making you a beast. Don't you know that you're a fool, brother?" (V, ii). Distressed because Lord Touchwood has talked of disinheriting Mellefont, Sir Paul wants to be assured of his daughter's future security. "Look you sister, I must know what my girl has to trust to; or not a syllable of a wedding, gadsbud--to show you that I am not a fool" (V, ii). Lady Touchwood lashes out at him:

Hear me! consent to the breaking off this marriage, and the promoting any other, without consulting me, and I'll renounce all blood, all relation and concern with you for ever;--nay, I'll be your enemy, and pursue you to destruction; I'll tear your eyes out, and tread you under my feet (V, ii).

He can only take her outburst as a joke, attributing it to the fact that the entire family is choleric: "... I am the only peaceable person amongst 'em" (V, ii).

Other than this confrontation, brother and sister have little to do with one another. Perhaps one reason lies in the structure of the play. While Sir Paul furnishes part of the comic plot satirizing folly, Lady Touchwood functions as part of the serious plot attacking villainy. Holland sees this combination of plots as suggesting a relationship between villainy and folly, both of which "take the same two characteristic forms: suppressing the real self or overexpressing it."10 The Plyants suppress nature; e.g., by their lack of sexual relations. Effusive Lady Touchwood overexpresses herself in dramatic
and emotionally charged outbursts. Neither reaches the natural, happy mean, attained only by members of the inner circle.

A pair of siblings who have even less interaction is Valentine and Ben in *Love for Love*. In fact, they do not even appear together in a scene until the very end of the play, and then they barely acknowledge one another.

Valentine, in a position of forced confinement, is to make over to his brother the right of inheritance and receive in turn a lump sum from his father. Valentine fights Sir Sampson's injustice (e.g., by pretending to be mad), but never seems to blame Ben or even to think about him at all.

Although both brothers are basically good people, they are otherwise sharply contrasted: Valentine represents land, Ben represents sea; Valentine is sophisticated, Ben ingenuous; Valentine is clever, Ben foolish; Valentine wants marriage and the estate, while Ben cares little for either. Significantly, his feigned madness gives Valentine freedom to speak his mind, a freedom which Ben possesses by virtue of his reputation for being unpolished. Valentine must pretend to be out of his wits to express his views of society.

The play has been viewed as divided into social, suprasocial and presocial spheres. Valentine functions, of course, as part of the suprasocial plot; he and Angelica are outside of and above the social level and religious overtones permeate their relationship.

The social plot of *Love for Love*, which includes Tattle, Foresight, Sir Sampson, Mrs. Foresight, and Mrs. Frail, stresses the separation
of appearances from nature. As noted previously, the sisters, Mrs. Frail and Mrs. Foresight, are hypocritical women of easy virtue and great selfishness, representative of their corrupt sphere. Ben participates in the presocial plot, along with Prue, the other natural, boorish character. A "curious kinship" exists between the presocial and suprasocial characters: throughout the play, Ben and Angelica are free of societal pretense, Valentine becomes free at the end, and Prue is free at the beginning. Ben chooses to remain a child; i.e., "to avoid commitment to civilization and to retreat to the world of innocence whence he has come." An alternative is offered in the main plot, where Valentine can remain true to himself and live in civilization by using his wits.

Congreve again employs two brothers for contrast in The Way of the World. The country squire, Sir Wilfull Witwoud, is half-brother to a town fop, Witwoud, a member of Lady Wishfort's cabal. Fainall prepares us to meet them. "Witwoud grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge' one is all pulp, and the other all core" (I, ii). In other words, Witwoud is "all manner and no substance," while Sir Wilfull, "though equally absurd, is [his] opposite, all substance and no manner."

Sir Wilfull has just arrived in town. (It is a comment on family relationships that the brothers do not recognize each other immediately.) Sir Wilfull does not care for Witwoud's polite but coldly affected, "Your servant, brother" (III, iii). Witwoud explains why he does not greet Sir Wilfull more warmly:
Witwoud thus denies his own origins. He has gone over to town ways completely—in the worst sense—since escaping his brother's guardianship in the country. As a matter of fact, Witwoud only consented to become a law clerk in order to live in London. Now Sir Wilfull unhappily witnesses what a fop his brother has become.

Sir Wilfull and Witwoud illustrate "the results of country and town life; and the squire, booby though he is, comes off better."

Sir Wilfull may lack finesse, but he does possess common sense and independence which Witwoud lacks. Witwoud, as his name suggests, tries hard to be accepted as a wit, but uses so many similitudes that Millamant finally tells him to keep quiet (II, i). Sir Wilfull, on the other hand, maintains his own ways when thrust into the fashionable world. He has made up his mind to travel, although he is forty and others may find the idea silly. Aware of his lack of sophistication, he realizes his inadequacies as a match for Millamant, although Lady Wishfort tries to pair them. He has no mind to marry, anyway, preferring to begin his journey. He feels no inclination to participate in the courtship game, and embarrasses his aunt by getting drunk. Furthermore, he is on the side of the angels, for he helps the young lovers, Millamant and Mirabell. Though not part of the charmed inner circle, he befriends those who are.

Thus the two brothers in The Way of the World represent alternatives of town and country life, of blind conformity and determined
independence. What little interaction they have during the play—their initial meeting, detailed above—points up their differences.

More conflicts appear in the relationship between the two brothers of the subplot of The Relapse. From the opening of the play, Vanbrugh indicates that the feeling between Young Fashion and his older brother, Lord Foppington, has never been warm. Since Young Fashion, without funds, has even mortgaged his annuity, his servant suggests that he "lay aside all animosity" and apply to Lord Foppington for aid (I, ii). But Young Fashion refuses to wheedle his brother. The plight of most younger brothers in the Restoration comedy of manners (Ben is a notable exception) is summed up in his outcry: "Sdeath and Furies! why was that coxcomb thrust into the world before me? O Fortune—Fortune—thou art a bitch, by Gad"

The older brother, Lord Foppington, enjoys his superior position. Recently knighted, having paid ten thousand pounds for the honor, he expresses pleasure with himself. "Why the ladies were ready to puke at me, whilst I had nothing but Sir Navelty to recommend me to 'em . . . " (I, iii). Now the would-be beau pursues women such as Amanda and acts the fool. As Amanda declares, Lord Foppington "thinks his title an authentick passport to every woman's heart, below the degree of a peeress" (II, ii). He mistakes Amanda's politeness for encouragement and ends up humiliated in swordplay with her husband, Loveless. Furthermore, Lord Foppington, as his name implies, is an outrageous fop with an entourage of dressers. He treats his tailor and perriwig maker "as necessary appendages of his
person."\textsuperscript{20} Too busy dressing and fussing over his appearance to hear his brother's plea, he is, indeed, as Krutch calls him, "a heartless and brainless ass."\textsuperscript{21}

Although flattery of his brother would probably prove effective, Young Fashion refuses to play up to him. Instead, he plots to outwit him with the help of Coupler, a lecherous old matchmaker who dislikes Lord Foppington because he knows the latter plans to cheat him of the money he owes him. Their scheme involves passing off Young Fashion as his elder brother and marrying him to the country heiress to whom Lord Foppington is engaged. This plot leads to adventures for Young Fashion, a pattern in late seventeenth century comedy wherein younger sons, brought up to live as gentlemen, are driven by economic necessity to lively escapades.\textsuperscript{22}

It must be pointed out that Young Fashion has scruples despite his brother's coolness toward him. He determines that before he goes through with his plan to marry Hoyden, he will try talking to his brother once again.

\begin{quote}
I'll speak to him with the temper of a philosopher; my reasons (tho' they press him home) shall yet be cloth'd with so much modesty, not one of all the truths they urge, shall be so naked to offend his sight: if he has yet so much humanity about him, as to assist me (tho' with a moderate aid) I'll drop my project at his feet, and shew him how I can do for him, much more than what I ask he'd do for me (II, i).
\end{quote}

Otherwise, he will subdue his conscience and continue with his plot. But Lord Foppington rejects Young Fashion's appeal for five hundred pounds to redeem his mortgaged annuity. "Taxes are so great, Repairs so exorbitant, Tenants such Rogues, and Perriwigs so dear . . . " (III, i). The advice he offers is that if Young Fashion needs money,
he should steal! Furthermore, he acts in an obnoxiously superior manner: "Nature has made some differences 'twixt you and I" (III, i). Young Fashion, scruples destroyed by Lord Foppington's behavior, decides to go ahead and steal his brother's fiancée. In the revelation of the brothers' antagonism, it becomes obvious that "there are times when a younger brother has no other course, if he is to survive in the world, than to practice deception."23

The contrast between the two brothers is not a question of merely good versus bad. Young Fashion does show some sense of morality and concern for his brother; but on another account, he bears similarity to Lord Foppington.24 Specifically, neither brother treats women very well, although initially they appear to differ in their attitudes. Compare their positions about prostitutes in this exchange:

Young Fashion. Why, is it possible you can value a woman that's to be bought?
Lord Foppington. Pr'ythee, why not as well as a pad-nag?
Young Fashion. Because a woman has a heart to dispose of; a horse has none.
Lord Foppington. Look you, Tam, of all things that belong to a woman, I have an aversion to her heart . . . (III, i).

Yet, Young Fashion does not consider Hoyden's feelings at all. A cynical fortune hunter, he does not care whom he marries as long as he gets money. (Hoyden does not care either, as long as she gains social freedom.) Young Fashion figures that once he and Hoyden are wed, they will probably go their separate ways in town. He hardly worries about Hoyden's cuckoldng him when he brings her to London, since she brings him access to an estate which "will afford me a
separate maintenance" (IV, i). Furthermore, Young Fashion makes it obvious that her participation in the city's sexual intrigues will provide him with some amusement.

Young Fashion does manage to pass himself off as his brother. When the real Lord Foppington, arriving unexpectedly at the Clumsey residence, is bound and interrogated, he even offers Young Fashion five thousand pounds to extricate him from the situation. But Young Fashion holds firm. "It's a much easier matter to prevent a disease than to cure it; a quarter of that sum would have secur'd your mistress; twice that won't redeem her" (IV, iv). The arrival of a neighbor who can vouch for Lord Foppington's identity frees him, and Young Fashion beats a hasty retreat, slipping out the back with Lory, his servant. With the help of Coupler and bribes to Hoyden's nurse and the priest, however, Young Fashion wins out in the end, gaining both Hoyden (who really is not much of a prize) and her estate.

When the nurse and priest interrupt the wedding celebration of Lord Foppington and Hoyden to declare Young Fashion Hoyden's lawful husband, the lord decides to bear his defeat gracefully and to "put on a serene countenance; for a philosophical air is the most becoming thing in the world to the face of a person of quality . . . " (V, v). Nothing indicates that he has been hurt; he concerns himself only with the proper response. He cannot, however, totally redeem himself. He has been the butt of several jokes in the play, including being pricked by his sword when wooing Amanda and landing in a dog kennel when wooing Hoyden. His dignity, like his air of libertine rakishness, is all affectation.
The subplot of *The Relapse*, then presents conflict between a hero-like figure, Young Fashion, and a foolish fop. Such conflict appears in many of the comedies of manners where similar characters compete for the heroine. Additional tension here lies in the fact that the hero and the fop are related and the inheritance alienates them. While the elder brother, Lord Foppington, has a chance to raise his esteem by helping out his younger brother, his foppish self-centeredness precludes any such action.

The subplot of an early Farquhar play, *The Constant Couple*, also contains two brothers. When their father recently died, Clincher Senior left his job as an apprentice to Smuggler; he "broke his indentures, whipped from behind the counter into the sidebox, foreswears merchandise, where he must live by cheating, and usurps gentility, where he may die by raking" (I, i). He admires Sir Harry Wildair's style of dress and wants to become a similar sort of beau. His assertion, "I design to shoot seven Italians a week, sire" (III, ii), indicates his idea of what a brave gallant does. All he cares about is going to the Jubilee in Paris.

As in *The Relapse*, the older brother is humiliated. When Colonel Standard catches a glimpse of Lurewell flirting with Clincher Senior, the latter exchanges clothes with a porter, Tom Errand, to hide his identity and protect himself from the colonel's wrath. But he still winds up getting a beating from Standard. Not only that, but he finds his fine Jubilee clothes missing, for Tom Errand has run off with them. Later, when Tom's wife believes Clincher Senior has murdered her husband, the mob sets upon him, and a
constable carts him off to Newgate. Quite a comedown for a would-be rake going to the Jubilee!

As we meet the younger brother, newly arrived in London and lacking the social graces, he seems to present a contrast to Clincher Senior, who sends him Dicky to help him learn town manners. That Clincher Junior chastizes his brother for not wearing mourning suggests that he has more feeling for the death of their father. Clincher Senior coarsely replies: "I wear this because I have the estate, and you wear that because you have not the estate: you have cause to mourn indeed, brother" (II, i). Not only does Clincher Senior have little regard for his father's death, but he objects to Clincher Junior's calling him "brother." "'Sir' will do every jot as well" (II, i).

As in The Relapse, the playwright shows the two brothers to be more alike than it first appears. In the course of one scene, Clincher Junior goes from bewailing the lewd London life and the change in his brother to acting like a prospective rake. At first he says:

Ah, Dicky, this London is a sad place! a sad vicious place! I wish that I were in the country again.—And this brother of mine! I'm sorry he's so great a rake! I had rather see him dead than see him thus (IV, ii).

Then he and Dicky discover Tom Errand in Clincher Senior's clothes and accuse him of killing the elder brother. When Tom lies and says he has murdered Clincher Senior, Clincher Junior believes he inherits the estate and orders Tom to strip: now he will wear the fine clothes and go to the Jubilee. "By Jupiter Ammon, all my religion's gone since I put on these fine clothes" (IV, ii). He even plans to
woo Angelica. "Now that I'm an elder brother, I'll court, and swear, and rant, and rake, and go to the Jubilee with the best of them" (IV, ii). Thus the real conflict between the two brothers has arisen as merely a result of who inherits the estate. Money corrupts each of them equally.

The study of siblings in the Restoration comedy of manners bears out the conclusion of the previous chapters: family members are not supportive of each other. (The exceptions are Gatty and Ariana, and Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail.) Either siblings have little contact with each other (e.g., Sir Paul Plyant and Lady Touchwood, and Valentine and Ben, meet only in one scene), or the contact they do have is wrought with conflict (e.g., Don Diego and Mrs. Caution quarrel over the dancing-master, and Young Fashion and Lord Foppington conflict over the inheritance).

Siblings fulfill three functions in the structure of the comedies. First, they reinforce each other's characteristics by demonstrating similar attitudes and behavior (e.g., Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail, Lady Flippant and Alderman Gripe). Second, siblings point up contrasts between types of life styles (e.g., Valentine and Ben, Witwoud and Sir Wilfull). Third, siblings help to emphasize the role money plays in the society depicted in the comedies of manners, especially in the relationship between the elder brother who inherits the estate and the younger brother whose financial situation is less fortunate (e.g., Young Fashion and Lord Foppington, Clincher Junior and Clincher Senior).
Footnotes


3 All quotations from *Love for Love* are from the Ewald edition.


7 All quotations from *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* are from the Weales edition.

8 All quotations from *The Man of Mode* are from the Brett-Smith edition.

9 All quotations from *The Double-Dealer* are from the Ewald edition.


11 See Holland.

12 Holland, p. 167.

13 Holland, p. 166.

The more cynical The Relapse is Vanbrugh's answer to Cibber's Love's Last Shift, discussed in Chapter V. "Whereas Cibber had optimistically portrayed two brothers who assisted each other to good marriages, Vanbrugh takes a more skeptical view." Barron, p. 324.


Loftis, p. 46.

Barron, p. 329.

Barron points out that Young Fashion is "no epitome of virtue" to please sentimentalists, but a fleshed-out portrait "drawn according to realistic specifications." Page 327.


By the characters of Hoyden and Sir Tunbelly Clumsey, Vanbrugh demonstrates that "the rewards given to younger brothers are not so enviable as Cibber had indicated." Barron, p. 333.

The Constant Couple contains elements of both the Restoration comic genre and the sentimental school, and will be discussed here and in Chapter V.
All quotations from *The Constant Couple* are from the Archer edition.
CHAPTER V

SENTIMENTALISM

Background

As the seventeenth century draws to a close, a new element of emotion and sentiment emerges in comedy, which reflects socio-economic and intellectual changes in England. (See Chapter I.)

The close ties are severed between the theatre and a court which has lost the gaiety and libertine atmosphere of the rule of Charles II. The old comedy is attacked from all sides: by Societies for the Reformation of Manners, by the "ladies," resentful at the portrayal of women in the plays, and by outspoken critics such as Jeremy Collier. The bourgeoisie rise in both economic and social importance, and attend theatre in increasing numbers. While the Restoration comedy of manners scorned, ignored or satirized the middle class, drama now reflects its growing respectability.

With so many forces at work on it, no wonder comedy undergoes changes. The brilliant wit of the Restoration plays, so prized by aristocratic circles, almost disappears, although even the more sentimental comedies of Farquhar, Cibber and Steele contain truly comic situations and characters. The dramatists establish new traditions. Their comedy reveals less contempt for the merchant class and rustics, and maintains more variety in
settings and characters. They place less stress on licentiousness and more on domestic virtues. Constancy in love is treated with more respect. No longer is the pathetic excluded from comedy or virtuous figures found only in romantic drama. Character prototypes appear early: the loyal wife of a wandering but reclaimable husband, the forsaken mistress who at last regains respect, the noble friend, the trusted servant, the prodigal who repents in the fifth act.

The encouragement of reform replaces the realism and satire of the earlier comedy. Steele's theory suggests that the audience imitates what it sees on the stage; therefore, characters must behave properly so that the audience may see virtue rewarded. Instead of a rake, the audience witnesses a "man of sense"; instead of a belle, a serious young lady. Not only individual characters are exemplary, but in most cases, family relationships as well. The plays of Farquhar, Cibber and Steele, although displaying some elements of the Restoration comedy of manners in their treatment of family ties, tend to emphasize harmony and fondness between relatives, especially those found in the main plots.

**Siblings**

As discussed in Chapter IV, siblings in the Restoration comedy of manners often have little contact with one another, present differing life styles, or bicker over money. In sentimental comedy, a new supportiveness manifests itself.
Even though Cibber's *A Woman's Wit* (1696) appeared before Collier's *A Short View* . . . , signs of the new sentimentality are already obvious in the main plot. The primary familial tie is that of Longville and his sister, Emilia. As the play opens, Longville displays concern over his sister who has lost her gaiety. He fears, and rightly so, that she loves Lord Lovemore who is himself hopelessly in love with the flirt, Leonora.

Longville, her guardian since their father's death, gives Emilia her portion. Although their father's will provides ten thousand pounds for her if Longville consents to her marriage, he desires now to put her mind at ease. "Therefore to set you free from all doubt, and that your fear of my consent may no way check your Inclination, I here resign my interest in your Fortune." To which Emilia, a sober heroine, replies: "In everything you show your self the best and kindest Brother. . . ." (I, i). She returns his gift, for she still wants his approval of her choice of husband. How different from a Restoration young woman who fights to throw off restraint or control of any kind!

Emilia bears great loyalty to her brother, as demonstrated when Olivia, in love with Longville, voices her jealousy of the time he spends with another woman, and Emilia defends him. Again, although Olivia believes the devious Leonora when she asserts that Longville has secretly married her, Emilia not only mistrusts Leonora's credibility but maintains great faith in her brother. Between this sentimental brother and sister, then, exists a supportiveness and genuine loyalty which is lacking in the Restoration comedy of manners.
Love and a Bottle (1698) by Farquhar hastened further the
degeneration of the manners genre through the inclusion of what
Nicoll calls "spurious sentimentalism." The relationship between
brother and sister in this play shows their similarly virtuous
natures which contrast to the morality of the profligate rake who
fills the hero's role. The brother, Lovewell, and the hero,
Roebuck, represent the new model of behavior and the old. Roebuck
epitomizes the wild Irish rover: his father disowned him because
he fathered twins and refused to marry the woman. Lovewell, more
a sentimental figure, asks his friend to renounce his wild ways
and "lead a sober life" (II, i), as he does. Leanthe, like her
brother, determines to save Roebuck whom she loves.

Wild as Winds, and unconfin'd as Air.—Yet I may reclaim
him. His follies are weakly founded, upon the Principles
of Honour, where the very Foundation helps to undermine
the Structure. How charming wou'd Vertue look in him,
whose behavior can add a Grave to the unseemliness of Vice!
(III, i).

Leanthe's generous nature manifests itself when she aids her
lover's mistress and bastards. Moreover, she disguises herself as
a page, and follows Roebuck to England where she engages in a
series of adventures to win him and to prevent his marrying
Lucinda, beloved of Lovewell.

Finally revealing her true identity, she asks her brother
to pardon her for her "imprudent Actions; But none such as may
blot the honour of my Vertue, or Family" (V, iii). On the contrary,
Lovewell has never doubted her goodness. Furthermore, he expresses
gratitude to his sister who has helped him to gain Lucinda. "Thou
art my Sister, and my Guardian-Angel; for thou hast bless'd thy self,
and bless'd thy brother" (V, iii). Thus, early in the development of sentimental comedy, Farquhar demonstrates the possibility of sibling affection and gratitude.

Protectiveness characterizes the attitude of Sir Charles Freeman towards his sister, Mrs. Sullen, in *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707). Mrs. Sullen, trapped in a loveless marriage with the brutish Squire Sullen and in love with Archer, hopes that her brother (who was abroad when their father married her to the Squire) will find some way to free her from the marriage. Sir Charles appears to experience genuine concern for his sister, who has written him a letter describing Squire Sullen's obnoxious behavior. He verifies for himself the unsuitability of the match by observing Squire Sullen at the inn, drinking and complaining of his wife. With Sir Charles' encouragement at the end of the play, the couple agrees—and this is the only thing about which they do agree—to separate. Farquhar here shows rather unsubtle use of the "knightly savior." Unlike situations involving siblings in Restoration comedies, help may be forthcoming from a gallant brother to his sister in distress.

In the Restoration comedy of manners, brothers often clash over inheritances. In *Love's Last Shift* (1696), often called the first sentimental comedy, a younger and older brother remain on good terms with each other. Unlike the scheming Young Fashion who outwits Lord Foppington and marries the latter's intended bride (*The Relapse*), Young Worthy strives to attain both his own and his brother's goals, which are harmonious.
Young Worthy ties together the sentimental Amanda-Loveless plot and the more Restoration-like Sir William Wisewoud household. His rake-like role is tempered by his plot to bring to account the really undisciplined rake, Loveless. An old friend of the penniless Loveless, he expresses amazement at the depths to which he has fallen, and tells him: "Faith, Ned, I'm as much in Love with Wickedness as thou canst be, but I'm for having it at a cheaper Rate than my Ruine!" (I, i). He knows that Amanda is not dead, although Loveless believes so and plans to take advantage of the pleasures of London as a bachelor. Young Worthy's kind heart reveals itself. "I won't undeceive him, lest the Rogue should go and rife her of what she has" (I, i). Through Young Worthy's plan, Amanda wins back her wandering husband. When the reconciled grateful wife and repentant husband thank Young Worthy for his help, he modestly replies: "The Success of the Design I thought on, sufficiently rewards me" (V, iii). His purely gratuitous involvement with Loveless and Amanda sets off Young Worthy from the self-interested libertine such as Dorimant.

Furthermore, although Young Worthy possesses the rakish younger brother's quick wit and inventiveness, unlike that Restoration figure he does not suffer from lack of money, for his older sibling indulges him. Rather than tax the Elder Worthy's good nature, however, he determines to marry a young woman with a good portion. In fact, he and his brother both plot to marry despite the parental objections of Sir William Wisewoud. Young Worthy is engaged to Sir William's daughter, Narcissa, although
the father wants her to marry the Elder Worthy, who loves Sir William's niece, Hillaria. Meanwhile, Young Worthy pretends to act as go-between for his brother and Narcissa, thus gaining the opportunity to see his mistress. He also plans to obtain the extra five thousand pounds Sir William has offered the Elder Worthy to marry her.

Young Worthy fights conventional attitudes that constitute barriers to what he desires: he soothes the Elder Worthy's jealousy, cures Hillaria's penchant for flirtation, changes Narcissa from wanting a much-discussed courtship to accepting marriage, and shows Sir William that money is not the basis for wedlock. Young Worthy has been forced to deal with two women: Narcissa and her cousin, with whom the Elder Worthy is always quarreling. Now Young Worthy tries to discover the cause of their latest falling out, for he must reconcile them in order to further his own plans. He has more sense about women than his older brother, who considers breaking off with Hillaria because she has been flirting with the foolish Sir Novelty Fashion in the park. The Elder Worthy has even written her a letter calling off their relationship. Young Worthy guesses its contents and points out to his brother his mistake: "... she is too high-spirited, not to take you at your Word, and you are too much in Love, not to ask her Pardon" (I, i). When Hillaria continues to play on the Elder Worthy's jealousy and they fight, Young Worthy makes her see she is in the wrong, for Sir Novelty—at whom she only laughs—will be sure to publicize a distorted picture of their relationship. Hillaria admits to the
Elder Worthy that she has been indiscreet and they reconcile, with the Elder Worthy admitting: "Brother, I am indebted to you."

(II, i). Certainly, this is a different statement than one would find in the Restoration comedy of manners where brothers at best ignore each other and at worst wage open attack.

When Sir William discovers that his daughter and niece have married against his wishes and that he has been tricked out of five thousand pounds, he prepares to duel with Young Worthy. But the Elder Worthy backs up Loveless in his promise to give Sir William the money if, after one year, he is dissatisfied with Young Worthy as his son-in-law. Nobly, Young Worthy declines to be so obliged. "Therefore, Sir William, as the first Proof of that Respect and Duty I owe a Father, I here, unask'd, return your Bond, and will henceforth expect nothing from you, but as my Conduct shall deserve it" (V, iii). Sir William, pacified, gives the bond back to Young Worthy, who has shown that even a rakish younger brother may have some affection for his older sibling and a sense of honor.

Some brothers in the Restoration comedy of manners represent different life styles. (Witwoud and Sir Wilfull of The Way of the World, or Valentine and Ben of Love for Love, for example.) In Sir Harry Wildair (1701), a sequel to The Constant Couple (1699), Colonel Standard and Fireball contrast without conflicting.

Despite Colonel Standard's land-orientation and Fireball's sea-orientation, the brothers express affection towards each other in their greeting in Act I. Colonel Standard welcomes Fireball ashore warmly upon the latter's return from sea. "What! Heart
whole? Limbs firm and Frigat safe?" (I, i). Fireball, in turn, concerns himself about Colonel Standard's happiness and reputation. More of a hothead than his brother, Fireball readies himself to defend Standard and his sister-in-law, Lady Lurewell, against the rumor that Lurewell is a great coquette and Standard a cuckold. His brother holds him back, however. "The world is too strong for us. Were Scandal and Detraction to be throwly reveng'd, we must murder all the Beaux and poysen half the Ladies . . ." (I, i). Fireball feels impatient with Standard's complacency.

Shake off these drowsy Chains that fetter your Resentments. If your Wife has wrong'd you, pack her off, and let her Person be as publick as her Character: If she be honest, revenge her Quarrel (I, i).

One critic suggests that Standard lacks jealousy until his brother returns from sea and starts working on him, "Iago-like." At the beginning of Act I, Standard asks for his brother's congratulations; by the end of the act, he looks upon the marriage as a "bad bargain." Still, it must be noted that Fireball's intention is not to destroy but to save his brother.

Quick-tempered Fireball and calm Standard continue as opposites throughout the play. Standard constantly subdues his brother, as when he stops a fight between Fireball and "Beau Banter" (Angelica, disguised as a young man). Although Standard, less emotional, never gets as upset over Lady Lurewell's behavior, when Fireball sees her merely in conversation with the Marquis he urges his brother to revenge. He also wants to tear to pieces Clincher, who has been courting Lady Lurewell, but Standard has another plan in mind and Fireball follows his brother's less
violent course of action. Despite the contrast between their personalities, the brothers, who share the aim of maintaining Lady Lurewell's honor, remain on good terms throughout the play.

Another personality contrast exists between Lady Harriot and Lady Sharlot in Steele's *The Funeral* (1701). Lady Harriot, more of a wit and a flirt than her sister, wants to be "pursued with sighs, with flatteries, with nonsense" (II, iii). She and Campley are the lively couple of the piece while the quieter Lady Sharlot and Lord Hardy are the sober couple. Still, the sisters face together the unpleasant challenge of escaping Lady Brumpton's clutches. Notably, Lady Harriot (who escapes earlier than Lady Sharlot) and Campley postpone their marriage until sister and friend are in a similarly fortunate situation.

An important exception exists to the general rule that siblings have harmonious relations in sentimental comedy. The antithetical depiction of Hermes and Benjamin Wouldbe in Farquhar's *The Twin-Rivals* (1702) is so exaggerated as to make the twins personifications of good and evil. Falling somewhere between melodrama and sentimental comedy, *The Twin-Rivals* attacks admired Restoration vices and presents as its villain, Benjamin Wouldbe, a character who formerly would have been a hero, like Horner.

The opening scene, almost reminiscent of *The Man of Mode*, portrays an upper-class gentleman dressing. Like the standard comedy of manners rake-hero, Benjamin is broke, Machiavellian, debauched and, not least of all, a younger brother. But the audience does not identify with him as they do with Dorimant, for Benjamin
is a hunchback, and thus a "rake manqué." The bitter younger brother cannot gain what he desires most, success with the ladies, because of the hump on his back; a defect he feels he could tolerate were he a lord. He blames his twin brother for his deformity: "... 'twas his crowding me that spoiled my shape, and his coming half an hour before me that ruined my fortune" (I, i).

Benjamin uses Mrs. Mandrake, a woman with an unusual propensity for evil, in his scheme to inherit his father's estate. This scheme involves counterfeiting a letter saying his brother has been killed abroad in a duel, sending the letter to his dead father and allowing it to fall into the steward's hands when Benjamin is close by to take immediate possession of the estate. Mrs. Mandrake will see to the drawing up of a false will. As an added inducement to their plot, Constance (Hermes' beloved) is engaged to Lord Wouldbe's "son and heir," which would now be Benjamin.

Benjamin displays no love or concern for his dead father or absent brother.

The world has broke all civilities with me, and left me in the eldest state of nature, wild, where force or cunning first created right. I cannot say I ever knew a father; 'tis true, I was begotten in his lifetime, but I was posthumous born, and lived not till he died. My hours indeed I numbered, but ne'er enjoyed 'em till this moment.—My brother! what is brother? we are all so; and the first two were enemies. He stands before me in the road of life to rob me of my pleasures. My senses, formed by nature for delight, are all alarmed. My sight, my hearing, taste and touch, call loudly on me for their objects, and they shall be satisfied (II, v).

Anxious to explore his libertine nature, Benjamin views his father and brother merely as obstacles between him and the estate. Financial concerns override all else in his familial relationships.
Once Benjamin takes possession and acts the lord of the estate, others seek him out for favors, but he pays little attention to their needs. He differs from his father (although dead, Lord Wouldbe is one of The Twin-Rivals' exemplary characters) who avoided debt and paid his bills to tradespeople promptly.

Farquhar models the elder brother, Hermes, more on the tragic hero than the manners rake. A virtuous man, Hermes relies on sentiment rather than wit to express himself. When he returns to England, he discovers that he is supposedly dead. Unrecognized, he speaks with Fairbanks, his father's goldsmith, who reveals the affectionate bond between father and son in a scene overladen with sentimentality:

... those that saw (Hermes) in his travels, told such wonders of his improvement, that the report recalled his father's years; and with the joy to hear his Hermes praised, he oft would break the chains of gout and age, and leaping up with strength of greenest youth, cry, My Hermes is myself: methinks I live my sprightly days again, and I am young in him (III, ii).

Obviously, when Lord Wouldbe was alive, the relationship between father and virtuous son differed greatly from those found in the Restoration comedy of manners.

When Benjamin and Hermes confront each other, Benjamin feigns brotherly warmth while Hermes refuses to dissemble. The older brother warns the younger:

Brother, take heed how you deal with one that, cautious of your falsehood, comes prepared to meet your arts, and can retort your cunning to your infamy. Your black, unnatural designs against my life, before I went abroad, my charity can pardon: but my prudence must remember to guard me from your malice for the future (IV, i).
Benjamin has previously plotted Hermes' death, a far more drastic and dastardly action than any Restoration younger brother would have taken. Although Hermes uncovers Benjamin's present act of villainy, he forgives him, which is one action Benjamin simply cannot tolerate. "I scorn your beggarly benevolences. Had my designs succeeded, I would not have allowed you the weight of a wafer, and therefore will accept none" (IV, i). When Mrs. Mandrake tries to save the day for Benjamin by announcing that she had formerly lied about the order of the twins' birth, Benjamin rejoices: "By all my forward hopes, I could have sworn it! I found the spirit of eldership in my blood; my pulses beat, and swelled for seniority" (IV, i). Thus can Benjamin, greatly inflated, fool himself into believing he has the right to inherit the estate he would gain by treachery. The scene ends with Hermes, having drawn his sword to protect his servant, being carried off to prison.

Hermes has true and loyal friends on his side to help fight the forces of evil personified in Benjamin. With the aid of Constance and Trueman, good wins out. (In Restoration comedy, it is not the morally evil characters who are defeated, but the foolish, foppish or hypocritical; that is, those who do not follow "nature.") The sentimental ending could hardly be more explicit. Hermes announces: "And now, I hope, all parties have received their due rewards and punishments" (V, iii). The idea of poetic justice reigns strong: the true lovers are united and Benjamin and his ally, Mrs. Mandrake, lose all.
The friction which characterizes the relationship between a Truewit heroine and her prudish, overly protective or mercenary parent or guardian, does not usually appear in the sentimental comedies. Exemplifying the new harmony are Angelica and Lady Darling in Farquhar's The Constant Couple (1699). "We are all so reformed, that gallantry is taken for vice" (I, i), Sir Harry learns when he returns to London. Indeed, virtue permeates the portrayal of the heroine and her mother.

Angelica has sent back unopened a letter to the debauched Vizard. Now, seeking revenge on her and on Sir Harry, his competitor for Lady Lurewell's favors, Vizard tries to pass Angelica off to Sir Harry as a whore and her mother as a bawd. Lady Darling, less discriminating than her daughter, is taken in by Vizard whom she considers a "sober and pious" young man (II, ii). Because of his letter of recommendation, she welcomes Sir Harry as a suitor for Angelica. "Sir Harry, your conversation with Mr. Vizard argues you a gentleman, free from the loose and vicious carriage of the town; I'll therefore call my daughter" (II, ii). Later, Lady Darling assures Angelica that Sir Harry's intentions—despite his odd behavior—must be honorable since Vizard has so informed her.

When a public reading of Vizard's letter at last clears up the confusion and Sir Harry realizes he has been duped into treating a lady as a whore, Lady Darling tries to remedy the situation. Together, she and her daughter work on Sir Harry.
Lady Dar. Think, Sir, that our blood for many
generations has run in the purest channel of unsullied honour.
Sir Har. Ay, madam. (Bows to her.
Angel. Consider what a tender blossom is female reputation,
which the least air of foul detraction blasts.
Sir Har. Yes madam. (Bows to Angelica.
Lady Dar. Call then to mind your rude and scandalous
behaviour (V, i).

Lady Darling then offers Sir Harry the alternatives of killing the
villain, Vizard, or marrying Angelica, and he chooses the latter.

Although Lady Darling has not been all along as perceptive
as her daughter, she and Angelica, unlike parents and heroines in
the Restoration comedy of manners, both want the same thing: Sir
Harry's courting and marrying Angelica. Both regard virtue highly,
and no evidence of conflict between them exists in their scenes
together.

In another play by Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer (1706),
the female protagonist, unlike most previous heroines, is a
country girl, and her father, a country justice. But rather than
mocking rural inhabitants, as in The Relapse, Farquhar treats Silvia
and Justice Balance with respect.25

Silvia, a wholesome and determined young lady, embodies the
ideal traits of the heroine: chaste (she refuses to go to bed with
Captain Plume before marriage), generous (she sends Plume's whore
money to buy baby clothes), and sensible (a "natural" woman without
vapours, she stands in contrast to her affected cousin, Melinda).
Furthermore, she is tired of the superficialities associated with
her sex.

Justice Balance, an older gentleman and thus a natural
outsider to the Restoration comedy's charmed inner circle, stays
in his own environment, escaping a "bungling entrance" into a sophisticated crowd which is contemptuous of country dwellers and old age. He loves his daughter deeply and regards her protectively (but without keeping her cloistered as The Gentleman Dancing-Master's Don Diego would do). He also shows affection for Plume, whom he sees as a reflection of himself as a young man. He understands the captain's appetite for women because of his own youth and tries to guard Silvia from his lust. Opposed to his daughter's marrying a soldier, he is especially set against their match after his son dies and Silvia becomes sole heir to the estate. A disruptive letter from Melinda, angry with her cousin, suggesting that Plume has dishonorable designs upon Silvia, causes Balance to send her out of town, an act which he accomplishes by playing on her gratitude and love for him. An element of respect between them, absent from father-daughter relationships in the Restoration comedy of manners, appears in their mutual promises before she leaves: Silvia will never marry without her father's consent and he, in turn, will never dispose of her without hers.

For the remainder of the play, father and daughter have little contact. Silvia, disguised as a young man, pretends she is ready to enlist, which makes her a sought-after commodity for both Plume and his rival, Brazen. She fights with Plume over the country girl, Rose, and discovers to her relief that Plume has not bedded her. After a series of adventures which arise from her masculine disguise, Silvia at last winds up in her father's courtroom facing a charge of rape. It takes a while for Balance to
recognize his daughter, and when he does, he believes that Plume is behind the disguise plot and feels hurt at his friend's duplicity. But upon realizing that Plume is not the instigator, he is moved by the sincerity and selflessness of Silvia's love. He gives his daughter to the captain. Although disguise has proven the only way Silvia can trick her father into granting his consent for her to marry Plume, no bitterness or hostility surrounds the outwitting.

Another father-daughter relationship crops up in *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707). As in *The Recruiting Officer*, the action of *The Beaux' Stratagem* unfolds in the country and combines Restoration tradition with the new trends in comedy. Not strictly a sentimental play, *The Beaux' Stratagem* suggests a changed social emphasis, with the subject matter the middle class instead of the aristocracy.²⁸

An unspoiled country girl who engages in the unconventional task of serving as an accomplice to a highway gang, Cherry has an ambivalent relationship with her father, Boniface. Boniface appears to be a stereotyped innkeeper at first, but is actually a highwayman who would betray his guests, Aimwell and Archer (the heroes of the piece) and debauch Cherry. "He violates the natural, social, familial, and personal relationships with equanimity."²⁹ Boniface suggests to Cherry that he ply Archer with drink and she use her feminine wiles on him. Distressed, Cherry asks: "Father, would you have me give my secret for his?" But Boniface's only concern is money. "Consider, child, there's two hundred pound to boot." (I, i).³⁰
Cherry disrupts her father's plan for the highway gang to rob Lady Bountiful's house because Lady Bountiful is her godmother and she also loves Dorinda, Lady Bountiful's daughter. Yet, when the gallants disarm the rogues, Cherry realizes that they will involve her father and runs off to warn him. Despite her affectations, she seems to be motivated by true feeling for people, including her father even though he is a scoundrel. Although their interaction is not so harmonious as others depicted in sentimental comedy, Cherry's loyalty to her father in the end sets her off from previous Restoration heroines.

Mutual warmth and respect characterize the relationship between a young woman and her guardian in *The Lady's Last Stake* (1707). Cibber's comedy features the figure of Sir Friendly Moral whose name itself indicates his sentimental depiction. A study of family ties in this play involves Sir Friendly's contrasting relationships with two very different young women, his niece, Miss Notable, and his ward, Mrs. Conquest.

Mrs. Conquest bears the traits of the typical witty heroine, with the one drawback of having but a small inheritance. She hopes to marry Lord George, with whom she meanwhile engages in wit duels. Sir Friendly acts as her confidant; they seem to be on the best of terms. That he feels fondness for the young woman reveals itself in his telling Lord George that the latter's liberty (i.e., bachelorhood) is not worth keeping when compared to marriage with Mrs. Conquest, whose smile alone "is worth all the sodden Favours of your whole Seraglio . . ." (III, i).
Sir Friendly's interaction with his niece, Miss Notable, is less amicable. He watches Miss Notable carefully, and for good reason, for she is always up to mischief. She complains of her uncle's behavior to Lady Wronglove in a manner reminiscent of Restoration comedy. He is "past the Pleasures of Life himself, and always snarling at us that are just come into 'em" (II, i). Lady Wronglove suggests that despite Miss Notable's wit and pretty qualities, "your Interest and Reputation will find a better Account in trusting 'em under your Unkle's Conduct than your own" (II, i). Miss Notable, however, plays by her own impudent rules. For example, she informs Lady Wronglove of Lord Wronglove's assignation with a mistress (herself), and she plans to make Lord George Lord Wronglove's rival because she wants to gain additional lovers and to mortify Mrs. Conquest. She tries to engage in these intrigues, but lacks the experience and sophistication to come out the winner.

Sir Friendly has redeeming features which give him a life surpassing that of the stock Restoration comedy figure of the rigid guardian. Lord Wronglove says of him: "For give him his due, with all his severity of Principles, he is as good humour'd, and as well bred, as if he had no Principles at all" (III, i). Not only does he participate in the sentimental Wronglove plot by befriending the unhappy couple and acting instrumentally in their reconciliation, but he condones Mrs. Conquest's scheme of disguising herself as "Sir John," her twin, to capture Lord George.

When Miss Notable becomes interested in "Sir John," Sir Friendly encourages Mrs. Conquest in her overtures toward the
young girl. "I'm glad you have so innocent a Revenge in your Hands; persue your addresses to her: To make her Coquettry a little ridiculous will do her no harm" (V, i). Indeed, Miss Notable's humiliation at the end of the play, when the truth about "Sir John" surfaces, demonstrates the triumph of age over youth, a triumph which hardly characterizes the Restoration comedy of manners.

Another affectionate heroine-guardian relationship exists in Steele's The Conscious Lovers (1722). Isabella, having cared for her niece, Indiana, since the latter was orphaned, feels protective towards her. Afraid that Bevil has some design in providing Indiana with clothes, lodging and money, Isabella warns Indiana against him. She acts not out of meanness or jealousy, but out of genuine concern for her niece.

In the same play, Sealand, a successful merchant, goes against Restoration type as a father who values virtue in a potential son-in-law above monetary considerations. Sealand, proud of his mercantile status and aware of the significance of his daughter, Lucinda, marrying into landed gentry, suspects Bevil's morals concerning Indiana: his concern about his daughter is great enough that he hesitates to give Lucinda to him. He visits Indiana to judge her behavior and to discover the truth about her relationship with Bevil. Indiana defends the virtuous young man and his unblemished conduct toward her. Pure and deserving of good fortune, she turns out to be Sealand's long-lost daughter whom he now is happy to join in marriage with Bevil. "Though I have lost so many
years of soft paternal dalliance with thee, yet, in one day, to
find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness,
is ample reparation" (V, iii). In exemplary style, Sealand
proves to have genuine affection for both Lucinda and his new-found
daughter, Indiana. "Perfect happiness" rewards the virtuous.

Young Men and Their Parents

An examination of the young man-parent relationship in
sentimental comedy continues to bear out the assertion that the
new family interactions are more harmonious than those portrayed
in the Restoration comedy of manners. The young man with family
ties in Restoration comedy was usually not a typical (i. e.,
libertine) hero. Now he becomes the typical (i. e., sententious or
reforming) protagonist.

Steele's first play, The Funeral (1701) not an example of
full-blown sentimentality, mingles elements of the comedy of manners,
humours, and even satire. But the influence of sentimentalism
in the play makes itself felt in aspects such as the blank verse
dialogue introduced near the end for the lovers' reunion and, more
important here, the filial love and respect of the hero for his
father.

The plot of The Funeral involves Lord Brumpton's pretending
to be dead to test the faithfulness of his wife against his son,
Lord Hardy. Lady Brumpton, a new young wife, has convinced him to
cut off Lord Hardy from his estate. She has had her servant tell
Lord Brumpton stories about his son; she then would implore her
husband to pardon him, "and with tears, sighs and importunities for
him, prevailed against him . . . " (I, i). Now the "widow," a mercenary woman who sheds few tears at Lord Brumpton's supposed death, believes her late husband's deed entitles her to all his property and charge of two young, rich wards.

Trusy, the faithful servant figure often found in sentimental comedy, tries to convince Lord Brumpton of the treachery of his wife, "who has so wrought upon your noble nature as to make it act against itself in disinheriting your brave son" (I, i). Aware of Lord Brumpton's virtues, Trusty determines to help him punish his wife and save his property, his son, and his honor. The idea that a close relationship has existed between father and son emerges as Trusty discusses Lord Hardy with his master: "Though you made him not your heir, he is still your son, and has all the duty and tenderness in the world for your memory" (V, i).

Like his father, Lord Hardy possesses positive attributes. His friend, the lively Tom Campley, calls him extraordinary because, despite his loss of fortune, he remains "master of a temper that makes you the envy, rather than the pity, of your more fortunate, not more happy friends" (II, i). The two young men, in love with the wards of Lady Brumpton, are set in contrast, with Lord Hardy as Steele's conception of himself "in idealized form," and Campley a wilder young man, although still not a Restoration rake.

Father and son, then, are both men of noble natures who deserve happiness, which consists in part of a close, fulfilling relationship between them. When Lord Brumpton shows himself alive to the reunited young couples near the end of the play, he expresses
"Oh my children! Oh, ho! These passions are too strong for my old frame. Oh, the sweet torture! my son! my son! I shall expire in the too mighty pleasure! my boy!" (V, iv). All problems, financial and otherwise, are resolved when the truth surfaces about Lady Brumpton's prior first marriage which invalidates her claim on Lord Brumpton. Not only are the virtuous rewarded in this first play of Steele, but he, like the young characters, displays respect for the old father whose moralizings permeate the last scene.

Sentimentality is more pronounced in Steele's next work, The Lying Lover (1703). All Steele's appendages to the play—dedication, preface, and prologue—attest to its moral purpose. What makes the play sentimental is not its first four acts, which draw upon the usual comedic devices, but the fifth act with its emotional condemnation of dueling, serious tone, blank verse, and loving relationship revealed between father and son.

As the play opens, Young Bookwit appears as a Restoration-type rake. With his father's permission, he has left Oxford to come to London. He feels that his father has cramped him in college while the rest of the world was in action, and desires now to make up for lost time with the ladies, for which purpose he has donned a soldier's uniform. His friend, Latine, acts as his footman in his amorous adventures. Young Bookwit seems to have been born to a sparkish manner, which he attributes, strangely enough, to "the Indulgence of an excellent Father, in whose Company I was always
free and unconstrain'd" (I, i). He wastes no time pursuing the ladies, but flirts with Penelope, beloved of his school friend, Lovemore, and impresses her with his lies. Young Bookwit's inflaming of Lovemore's jealousy by lying about his relationship with Penelope leads later to their duel.

Young Bookwit's somewhat ambiguous feeling toward his father is not paralleled in Old Bookwit, who loves his son "entirely" (II, i). With Young Bookwit's best interests at heart, he attempts to betrothe him to Penelope. Young Bookwit, not knowing that his flirtatious young lady and Old Bookwit's choice are one and the same, tries to escape his father's matchmaking by pleading a secret previous marriage, which saddens Old Bookwit because "you conceal'd it from me your best Friend" (II, i). Obviously, Old Bookwit's conception of the father-son relationship does not preclude confidence and friendship.

The thrust of sentimentality in the play with its arguments against dueling and lying begins with Young Bookwit's duel with Lovemore, during which he wounds his friend and believes him dead. Arrested for Lovemore's murder, Young Bookwit is carted off to Newgate. There he suffers great remorse.

Oh! whither shall I run, t'avoid my self? Why all these Bars? These bolted Iron Gates? They're needless to secure me.--Here, here's my Rack, My Gaol, my Torture--Oh! I can't bear it (V, i).

The last act finds Lovemore disguised and the other characters lamenting in blank verse. The climax of the play occurs at Penelope's house, where Old Bookwit has arranged for his son to be
brought by a jailer. Distressed at Young Bookwit's languid figure
approaching the house, the old father cries out in grief: "Oh!
Gentlemen!—you know not what it is to be a Father.—To see my only
Child in that Condition" (V, iii). The reunion of Old Bookwit and
his son results in "an emotional orgy."45 Old Bookwit sobs:
"Oh, my Son! my Son! rise and support thy Father! I sink with
Tenderness, my Child, come to my arms while thou art mine" (V, iii).
Young Bookwit responds in kind:

Oh best of Fathers! Let me not see your Tears, don't
double my Afflictions by your Woe--There's Consolation
when a Friend laments us, but When a Parent grieves,
the Anguish is too native, Too much our own to be called
Pity (V, iii).

The happy ending—Lovemore, revealing himself as alive, is
rewarded with the repentant Penelope while Young Bookwit has the
prospect of her cousin, Victoria—finds the reformed hero determined
to tell only the truth in the future. The moralizing of Old Bookwit
well matches Steele's intention as outlined in the Preface:
despite the rakish Young Bookwit's agility, humor, and education,
he needs reform because he lies to Penelope, gets drunk, and duels;

. . . but in the fifth Act awakes from his Debauch,
with the Compunction and Remorse which is suitable to a
Man's finding Himself in a Gaol for the Death of his
Friend, without his knowing why.

The Anguish He there expresses, and the mutual
Sorrow between an only Child, and a tender Father in
that Distress, are, perhaps, an Injury to the Rules of
Comedy; but I am sure they are a Justice to those of
Morality: And Passages of such a Nature being so
frequently applauded on the Stage, it is high time that
we should no longer draw Occasions of Mirth from those
Images which the Religion of our Country tells us we ought
to tremble at with Horrour.46

Steele provides further "Injury to the Rules of Comedy" in
The Conscious Lovers, which marks "the final victory of the new
type."^47  The Conscious Lovers proved an enormous success, remaining greatly popular for two generations.^48 Comedy seems perhaps a misnomer for this drama, as the only comic scenes involve subordinate characters and events. Steele insists, however, that "anything that has its foundation in happiness and success must be allowed to be the object of comedy; and sure it must be an improve-

ment of it to introduce a joy too exquisite for laughter..."

This "joy too exquisite for laughter" permeates the major family relationship in the play, that of the hero, Bevil, Jr., and his father, Sir John Bevil. Their relationship operates at the very core of this sentimental drama.

Proud and fond of his son, Sir John Bevil is most charmed by the fact that Bevil "has never in the least action, the most distant hint or word, valued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage settlement, he has ever since he came to age" (I, i). How different is this situation from that in the Restoration comedy of manners where an inheritance provides the rake-hero freedom from his parents or guardian and the means to lead a libertine existence! The valued old servant and friend, Humphrey, reinforces this picture of Bevil:

He is dependent and resigned to your will as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty. You have ever acted like a good and generous father and he like an obedient and grateful son (I, i).

The "good and generous father," Sir John Bevil, represents "the re-established power of old age and parenthood."^50
Steele introduces Bevil reading Addison. "Such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirit for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person" (I, ii). As Bevil is a man of refined taste and sensibility, reason and benevolence play important roles in his life. Bevil differs so much from the Restoration comic hero because he is a young man endowed with the traits of an old man. He expresses Steele's own view of what a gentleman should be: "He is only one who takes more delight in reflections than sensations. He is more pleased with thinking than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him" (II, ii).

Furthermore, he, like Steele, argues against dueling, and makes his jealous friend, Myrtle, in love with Lucinda, see the error in his challenging Bevil. Myrtle, beholden to Bevil's "superior spirit," thanks him. "Dear Bevil, your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice" (IV, i).

On the day named for Bevil's marriage to Lucinda, he experiences great turmoil. "But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart" (I, ii). He is in love with Indiana; yet, he does not wish to disobey his father's desire for him to marry Lucinda. He will not propose to the orphaned Indiana without first obtaining his father's consent; indeed, he would never wed anyone without it. Although he would not carry filial duty to the extreme of acquiescing in whomsoever his father chooses, he wishes to avoid conflict with the elder Bevil, whom he holds dear. In fact, despite his having been Indiana's frequent
visitor since gallantly saving her from danger, he has never felt free to tell her that he loves her. "My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct that, till I have his consent to speak, I am determined, on that subject, to be dumb for ever" (I, ii).

Fate, of course, plays on the side of the young lovers: when Indiana is revealed as Sealand's long-lost daughter (and thus respectable and wealthy enough for Bevil to marry), their love for each other may be publicly acknowledged. The end of the play finds the exemplary, virtuous characters all rewarded: Bevil, Senior sees his son happily married to an heiress; young Bevil gains his beloved Indiana; Sealand regains a daughter; and Lucinda and Myrtle are free to marry one another. Sir John Bevil and his son are each pleased with the outcome of events and the knowledge that he has not caused the other any pain. The age of the rebellious son eager to lead a libertine existence free from any interaction with a parent or guardian is over.

**Summary**

Although some characteristics of family relationships depicted in the Restoration comedy of manners continue to appear in the new works incorporating sentimentality (even *Love's Last Shift* has in its subplot Sir William Wisewoud, his daughter and niece), the general approach to family ties becomes strikingly different around the turn of the century.

The siblings in Restoration comedy either have little contact with one another or else their dealings are fraught with
discord. With the exception of Hermes and Benjamin Wouldbe, who represent opposite poles of good and evil, siblings in the comedy of emotion are supportive of one another. Good or perfectible human beings, they serve dramatically to reinforce each other's characteristics, as in Leanthe's and Lovewell's both seeking to reform the rake Roebuck. Familial ties mean closeness and protectiveness: Fireball desires to save Colonel Standard's reputation; Sir Charles Freeman liberates Mrs. Sullen from an unhappy marriage; Longville worries about Emilia's lovesickness and she, in turn, defends him in the face of Leonora's schemes.

While brothers in the comedy of manners help to emphasize the role money plays in that society by the older brother's refusal to share his inheritance with his sibling, the Elder Worthy freely bestows gifts on Young Worthy.

In the Restoration plays, young heroines are repressed by their parents or guardians from whose power they seek escape in order to lead free lives and to marry the men of their choice. Now the libertine existence loses attractiveness for them. The sensible young woman in sentimental comedy manages to marry the right man without alienating her parent or guardian, whether through her own efforts, like Silvia, or through fate (which rewards virtue), like Lucinda and Indiana. Parents do not make money the sole consideration for marrying off their daughters, as Sealand and Lady Darling illustrate. A guardian may even act as a friend, as Sir Friendly Moral does to Mrs. Conquest.
As sentimentalism develops, the young men depicted as heroes display traits of sobriety and sententiousness rather than wildness and wit. As shown in Chapter III, many young men involved with family in the Restoration comedy of manners fight for independence and inheritances and therefore conflict with their parents or guardians. Now heroes such as Lord Hardy bear filial affection and respect; Hermes appears to have had a close bond with his dead father; Young Bookwit painfully regrets his causing his father anguish; and Bevil endangers his own happiness to avoid arousing, by his disobedience, his father's displeasure. In the relationship between young men and their parents, as in that between young women and their elders, or between siblings, harmony reigns, replacing the previous depiction of family interaction as indifferent, irritating, or openly hostile.
Footnotes

1 Farquhar, a transition figure, is treated as a Restoration writer by some critics and as a sentimental writer by others. Although his first three plays generally follow Restoration comic style, they include "characters that came near being lovable, and situations that hovered on the verge of the emotional, with a freedom that transcended the most liberal practices of his predecessors." Ernest Bernbaum, The Drama of Sensibility: A Sketch of the History of English Sentimental Comedy and Domestic Tragedy, 1696-1780, Harvard Studies in English, Vol. III (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1958), p. 84.

2 Despite his reputation as a writer of sentimental comedy, Colley Cibber went to the comedy of manners for plot, characterization and setting. "The old spirit is invoked, but the insistent moral direction transforms the plays." Maureen Sullivan (ed.), Colley Cibber: Three Sentimental Comedies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. xlv. Of his twelve comedies, eight are adaptations or combinations of plays by other writers. In this chapter, three of the original comedies—Woman's Wit, Love's Last Shift, and The Lady's Last Stake—will be discussed, while the fourth, The Careless Husband, contains no family relationships.

3 Steele builds on the sentimentalism that Farquhar and Cibber set up before him, and is the most consistently sentimental.

4 Young Bellair in The Man of Mode is laughed at by the hero; Farewel in the later Sir Courtly Nice dominates the play.

5 There are, of course, some exceptions, since comedy did not become thoroughly sentimentalized overnight. In The Constant Couple, for example, a play more similar to Restoration comedy than its sequel, Sir Harry Wildair, the Clinchers' antagonism results from the inheritance of their father's estate.

6 The subplot involving the Manloves and the Rakishes harkens back to Restoration comedy.

7 All quotations from Woman's Wit are from the edition published in London by John Sturton, 1697.

Despite such a hero, the general atmosphere is less cynical than in the works of Farquhar's predecessors. Furthermore, Roebuck's "wild and roving" temper appears as "a youthful trait that, like his careful indifference to moral considerations, does not involve a deliberate flaunting of principles." A. J. Farmer, *George Farquhar*, Writers and Their Work, No. 193 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1966), p. 19.


Although some critics (Joseph Wood Krutch, Allardyce Nicoll, J. H. Smith, for example) feel that this play and its fifth act conversion really inaugurates the new era of sentimentality, Sherbo remarks that the Loveless-Amanda plot is only one strand interwoven with other interests such as Sir Novelty Fashion. Arthur Sherbo, *English Sentimental Drama* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1957), p. 103. In any case, much of the sparkle of the Restoration comedy of manners is lost in *Love's Last Shift*, and Cibber plays up the emotional aspects of the plot. As Congreve's famous saying goes, the play "'had only in it a great many things that were like Wit, that were in reality not Wit.'" Quoted in Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama 1660-1700*, p. 266.

All quotations from *Love's Last Shift* are from the Sullivan edition.

Sullivan, pp. xvii-xviii.

In *Sir Harry Wildair*, more sentimental than its predecessors, the characters have "lost their gaiety." Farmer, p. 20. The play ends on a note of unabashed sentimentality, with Lady Lurewell repenting and two marriages—that blissful state—mended.

All quotations from *Sir Harry Wildair* are from the Stonehill edition, Vol. I.

All quotations from The Funeral are from Richard Steele, ed. G. A. Aitken, The Mermaid Series (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894).

In this serious play, Farquhar seems to be trying to reconcile the comedy of manners with Collier's preaching. The Preface admits that The Twin-Rivals was adjusted with A Short View in mind, resulting in "a wavering of his comedy between two irreconcilable conventions. . . ." John Palmer, The Comedy of Manners (London: Bell and Sons, 1913), p. 264. James points out the sentimental aspects of the play as: (1) the Clelia-Richmore story resulting in the reform of Richmore; (2) Constance's remaining true to her lover, especially as shown in the scene where Hermes overhears her revelation of love and grief; and (3) the Fairbanks episode in which Hermes wallows in praise. James, pp. 201-203.


All quotations from The Twin-Rivals are from George Farquhar, Four Plays, ed. William Archer (New York: Hill and Wang, 1959).

Exceptions to the new heroine's harmonious relationships with parents or guardians do exist. The subplot of Love's Last Shift contains a father-daughter and a guardian-niece connection reminiscent of the Restoration comedy of manners. In the line of Restoration stock father figures, Sir William Wiseowood is money-minded: he offers his niece, Hillaria, and her fortune to Young Worthy for a price, and desires his daughter, Narcissa, to marry only a wealthy older brother. Not quite as foolish as some Restoration fathers, Sir William does disdain Sir Novelty Fashion for a son-in-law, for the fop's passion with himself precludes any for a wife. The Mrs. Sealand-Lucinda relationship in The Conscious Lovers reminds the reader of the Restoration repression of heroines. The class-minded merchant's wife would have her step-daughter marry her coxcomb of a cousin, whom she views as a rung upward on the social ladder. At the end, when Lucinda is able to marry her beloved Myrtle, Mrs. Sealand is just glad that her step-daughter is somehow disposed of. Mrs. Sealand is only a minor character and a step-, not a real, mother; that she is thwarted in her plans indicates that she is not an exemplary figure, as is another parent in the play, Sir John Bevil.
All quotations from The Constant Couple are from the Archer edition.

Instead of Shrewsbury being caricatured, "the senses of real life that enhanced the traditional London scene are transferred to Shrewsbury; and the Shrewsbury values become the normative values of the play." Rothstein, George Farquhar, p. 131.


Mignon points out that unlike previous fathers, he "remembers his youth without undue reminiscence or garrulity," and his professional wisdom "... equals his tolerance for the new generation." pp. 170-171.


Rothstein, George Farquhar, p. 154.

All quotations from The Beaux' Stratagem are from the Archer edition.

Like other dramas by Cibber, The Lady's Last Stake includes elements of the new school and the old. Although the title plot bears some signs of sentimentality, it is in the Wronglove situation, which examines the disagreement and subsequent reconciliation of a husband and wife, that the new trends most obviously manifest themselves.

All quotations from The Lady's Last Stake are from the Sullivan edition.

Ernest Bernbaum says that he "voices the ethical sentiments of the new comedy." p. 160.

As Mignon points out, old age in sentimental comedy is depicted far more favorably than in the Restoration comedy of manners. Lady Bountiful in The Beaux' Stratagem, for example, represents a generous and dignified old age. As she has no contact with her children or seeming influence on their lives, a detailed analysis of her character is outside the scope of this study.
All quotations from *The Conscious Lovers* are from the Aitken edition.

Restoration-like conflicts between parent and son are not totally lacking in the new comedy. See the Major Rakish-Young Rakish, and Lady-Manlove-Johnny, relationships in *Woman's Wit*, discussed in Chapter III.

Among the works examined in this study, sentimental parent-son relationships appear only in the works of Steele. Farquhar's *The Inconstant*, because it is an adaptation, has been excluded. For Cibber's *Woman's Wit*, see the above footnote.


All quotations from *The Funeral* are from the Aitken edition.


Their counterparts appear in Lady Sharlot and Lady Harriot, discussed above. Lord Hardy sentimentally languishes over Lady Sharlot and can barely speak when in her presence; when he does speak, his language is poetic and tentative. Campley, on the other hand, approaches Lady Harriot more directly and honestly than Lord Hardy does Lady Sharlot. Although one pair of lovers is serious and the other lively, all are people of sense who do not participate in the love-game of the Restoration comedy of manners.

Some critics such as Adolphus William Ward see this play as the first instance of English sentimental comedy. Later, in his *Apology*, Steele writes that, admiring Collier, he tried to follow his precepts in a comedy. But he adds: "'I have been a martyr and confessor for the Church, for this play was damned for its piety.'" Quoted by Aitken, p. xix.

Filial duty is strongly emphasized throughout the play, as when Bevil chastizes his servant for not immediately bringing in his father. "I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father anywhere" (I, ii).

Exceptions appear in occasional characters such as Miss Notable.

Although Boniface, much interested in money, would sacrifice Cherry's virtue, it is noteworthy that she maintains a degree of concern for him and runs to warn him of danger in the end.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The nature of the Restoration comedy of manners and the milieu in which it was written preclude the portrayal of harmonious family relationships. The environment of skepticism, libertinism and naturalism in a court rebelling against Puritanism affected the comedy which was written especially for aristocratic consumption. The idea of man as basically egoistic and hedonic is pointed up in plays reflecting the high society of seventeenth century London, plays whose heroes and heroines strive to lead lives of pleasure unencumbered by conventional morality, financial worries, or interfering relatives. The Restoration comic dramatists represent institutions such as traditional marriage and the family unit as repressive forces to be fought with all one's wit, not as facts of life to be passively accepted. In the essentially selfish world of the Restoration comedy of manners, where, for the wise, the exploration of one's individual nature takes precedence over all else, family ties do not bind, as in the later sentimental comedies.

The sacredness of the family unit has always been a strongly middle-class attitude. No wonder that in the repudiation of the
Puritan value system the Restoration playwrights deal a death blow to the bonds of blood. Because of their skeptical outlook, they raise questions about the rightness of the conventionally accepted family structure which, in many of the comedies, disintegrates completely. Heads of households such as Sir Oliver Cockwood (She Would If She Could) are, to put it mildly, ineffective, with little or no control over wives, children or wards. Even siblings, such as Lady Townly and Old Bellair (The Man of Mode), seldom present a united front.

Social and not familial ties set the framework for the plays. The friction among family members serves to underline the fact that the modern thinking individual who adopts the court's skeptical, libertine and naturalistic philosophy must seek out his companions with a deliberate spirit of exploration and not rely upon accidents of birth. All socially acceptable behavior is measured by the model of the Truewit, the young, attractive and witty protagonist who behaves in a manner suitable to his age, class and environment. Decorum, both in words and actions, distinguishes him from the Witless and Witwoud. Outsiders who do not conform to the pattern of behavior established by the sophisticated hero and heroine and their close friends become objects of scorn. These include not only the traditional minded (such as Lady Woodvil in The Man of Mode) who, like real-life Puritans, rail against the current licentious age, but also hypocrites such as Lady Cockwood (She Would If She Could) and the aged who try to act young such as Sir Sampson Legend in Love for Love.
The insider or outsider characterization of individual figures in the comedies influences the respect—or, rather, lack of respect—among family members. The hero and heroine who confront one another as equals in position, wit, and intelligence must necessarily have the utmost mutual regard. But how can a young man or woman respect a relative who consistently acts foolish? Alithea (The Country Wife) should look up to Pinchwife both as her older brother and her guardian. But she witnesses his self-defeating actions as he keeps Margery, his young wife, locked up in the house and wakens her desire for a liaison with Horner. In The Double-Dealer, Cynthia's father lacks control over his affairs or his money. Sir Paul Plyant is so completely dominated by his unfaithful wife that Cynthia finds him "silly." Lady Wishfort (The Way of the World) displays none of the decorum that distinguishes her niece, Millamant, and Millamant's beloved Mirabell. Instead, she paints her face and flirts outrageously in a fruitless effort to appear half her age. Even the clear-sighted although unworldly Ben (Love for Love) ridicules his middle-aged father's attempts to court the young, sought-after Angelica.

A lack of respect also characterizes the relationship between siblings even when neither belongs to the exclusive circle of beaux and belles. Mistrust and bickering color the interaction between the too precise and mercenary siblings of Love in a Wood, Alderman Gripe and Lady Flippant. Don Diego and Mrs. Caution (The Gentleman Dancing-Master) so try to outdo each other that they cannot strive with harmony to prevent Hippolita's elopement with
the "dancing-master." In Love for Love, Valentine and the returning seafarer, Ben, do not even acknowledge one another's existence.¹

Often money in the form of inheritances, doweries and allowances plays a large role in determining the interaction among family members. After all, to dress elegantly, dine expensively, attend theatre and maintain a social position in the aristocratic sphere, the libertine or would-be libertine requires generous financial resources. Certainly, money may easily become a source of irritation within any family. In these comedies, it becomes the origin of downright hostility, a weapon or reward which the parent/guardian or elder sibling holds over the head of the younger relation.

If a girl such as Hippolita (The Gentleman Dancing-Master) or Millamant (The Way of the World) marries without the consent of her parent or guardian, she may lose all or part of the estate designated for her. For the young man, monetary considerations may present even greater problems. Financial independence and the ability to lead a wild existence are prerequisites of the Restoration comic hero. For one such as Dorimant (The Man of Mode) who possesses both the money and free reign to use his wit and charm in seducing women, his social and not familial relationships are all the dramatists portray. When young men are depicted within a family framework in the plays, most fall short of the typical rake-hero figure. The basically foolish and self-serving elders have no compassion for the needs of youth. Sir Sampson (Love for Love) expects Valentine to obey him in all matters; when he disapproves of his son's life style, he
tries to cut him off from his rightful inheritance. Because the Widow Blackacre (The Plain Dealer) gives Jerry no spending money, he is easily influenced by Freeman, the first person who pays any attention to him and who gives him funds with which to buy trinkets. Major Rakish (Woman's Wit) duels with his own son over five hundred pounds. It is not only the parent/guardian-young man relationship which suffers from financial disputes. The elder brother's inheritance of the family estate denies his younger sibling the necessary means with which to lead a libertine existence. The social-climbing Lord Foppington (The Relapse), for example, refuses to aid the poverty-stricken Young Fashion, who must resort to a scheme to provide himself with the former's rich fiancée. Money alone is not the crux of the problem, of course. The real issue involves independence from interfering relations and the ability to lead a carefree life to the hilt. Money is merely the means.

The young characters in the Restoration comedy of manners rebel against nothing so much as domination by parent, guardian or sibling. In this age of experimentation and rejection of the old ways, the young hardly tolerate being held back in their efforts at enjoying new life styles. And yet, the relatives with whom these vital characters are forced to cope would impose all sorts of restrictions and restraints. Examples abound.

Reaction against an elder kinswoman's suppression of the heroine's pleasure-loving instincts appears as early as Etherege's second play, She Would If She Could; the trend carries through in
the successive comedies of Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve and Vanbrugh. Rebellion against parental choice of mate, a favorite theme of the dramatists, crops up in *The Man of Mode*, in which the old-fashioned Lady Woodvil directs her Truewit daughter to marry the colorless Young Bellair. Sir Sampson (*Love for Love*) demands that Ben marry Prue despite his predilection for the unconfined life at sea. In no case does a parent win his or her way. Sheltered upbringings, inconsistent with the court attitudes toward individualism and freedom, are exposed by the playwrights as unconscionable and unrewarding practice. For all his pains at keeping Hippolita locked up, Don Diego (*The Gentleman Dancing-Master*) receives a thorough outwitting at the hands of his clever fourteen-year-old daughter. Sir Tunbelly Clumsey (*The Relapse*) keeps Hoyden cloistered in the country only to have her marry the wrong (i.e., peniless) brother.

In every case where relatives interfere with the freedom-seeking of their children, wards or younger siblings, the dramatists make their sympathies clear. The characters striving to adjust to a world of libertinism, skepticism, and naturalism gain their objectives or, at the very least, achieve a degree more freedom at the end of the play than they have at the beginning.

Only when changes occur in the socioeconomic, intellectual and literary background of comedy do family relationships and social relationships merge together. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, with the rise in power of the middle class, the attacks on the licentiousness of the Restoration comedy of manners, the new emphasis
on domesticity, and the introduction of sentiment into comedy, the plays show family members to have interaction laden with fondness. Exemplary characters present models of virtue for the audience to follow in their everyday lives. The new heroine is sententious rather than saucy, and the young man with family ties now becomes a standard of good (i.e., dutiful) behavior and sensible thinking. Furthermore, parents, guardians, and elder siblings no longer represent forces of repression; nor do they remain on the outside of society looking in. Instead, they are capable of loving and worthy of being loved. The goodness of the individual characters and their contented sharing of a value system causes major shifts in the depiction of family relationships.

The change is from a comedy of selfishness to a drama of unselfishness. Family members now deal with one another with sympathy and support, rather than being out only for their own ends. Sir Charles Freeman (*The Beaux' Stratagem*), for example, outraged at his sister's treatment by Squire Sullen, works to dissolve that unfortunate marriage. The Elder Worthy (*Love's Last Shift*) supplies money to his younger brother, while the latter intrigues to help him marry the woman he loves. Genuine concern permeates family interaction. A father such as Justice Balance (*The Recruiting Officer*) seeks only the best for his daughter. Old Bookwit (*The Lying Lover*) likes to consider himself his son's best friend.

In the sentimental comedies, family members respect one another. This respect enables them to experience the emotional ties of loyalty and devotion. Lord Hardy (*The Funeral*) never
stops loving and revering his father, despite the latter's error in disinheriting him. And in The Conscious Lovers, the epitome of sentimental comedy, Young Bevil's profound sense of duty to his father prevents him from announcing his love to Indiana, and the elder Bevil voices a sincere regard for his virtuous son.

As exemplary characters, models for the audience's edification, come more and more to dominate the "comic" stage, family conflicts decrease. The middle-class stress on the family unit and domestic virtues replaces the court's predilection towards individualism and libertinism. Hostilities and contentions between repressive parents and daughters, avaricious guardians and young men, or self-seeking siblings disappear; and with the passing of the conflicts among family members also dissipates much of the strength and vitality of the witty and elegant Restoration comedy of manners.
Footnotes

1 Often the dramatists use siblings for the purpose of contrast. Old Bellair and Lady Townly embody opposite adjustments to old age in a society that idealizes youth. Witwoud (The Way of the World) is a shallow city fop while his half-brother, Sir Wilfull, is a rustic booby with a good heart. Significantly, none of these siblings have much contact with one another. While their dramatic purpose may be to reveal different character types (some accepted into the inner circle, some not), their familial ties do not demand interaction.

2 In the comedy of manners, most parents, guardians and siblings demonstrate the folly of deviating from the aristocratic social norm and the libertine natural self.
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VITA

Susan Marcia Flierl was born in New York City on February 13, 1946. She grew up in Queens, New York, where she attended Bayside High School. In 1966, she graduated from William Smith College summa cum laude, earning High Honors in English as well as membership in Phi Beta Kappa. After a year spent working in the field of publishing, she returned to academic life, and in 1968 received her Master of Arts degree in Educational Theatre from New York University. She undertook further theatrical training at the New School for Social Research and HB Studio. Upon moving to Baton Rouge in 1970, she became a copywriter for an advertising agency. A year later, she enrolled in the graduate program in Speech at Louisiana State University. As a graduate teaching assistant there, she was awarded a Louisiana State University Summer Fellowship, the Louisiana Players Guild award for Best Director, 1972, and membership to Theta Alpha Phi. She was also associated with the New Playwrights Theatre where she taught acting and directed plays. At present, she teaches Theatre Arts at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, where she has initiated an active theatre program. She is also director of the improvisation group, genesis. Her professional memberships include the American Theatre Association and the Speech Communication Association.
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