Mississippi State University
Scholars Junction

Theses and Dissertations | Theses and Dissertations

1-1-2018

The Trans-Historicity of the Nineteenth-Century New England Novel: Social Injustice and the Puritan Ideological Legacy

Benjamin Michael Woods

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/td

Recommended Citation
Woods, Benjamin Michael, "The Trans-Historicity of the Nineteenth-Century New England Novel: Social Injustice and the Puritan Ideological Legacy" (2018). *Theses and Dissertations*. 4678.
https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/td/4678

This Graduate Thesis - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Scholars Junction. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholars Junction. For more information, please contact scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com.

The trans-historicity of the nineteenth-century New England novel: social injustice and the Puritan ideological legacy

By

Benjamin Michael Woods

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
in English
in the Department of English

Mississippi State, Mississippi

May 2018

Copyright by

Benjamin Michael Woods

2018

The trans-historicity of the nineteenth-century New England novel: social injustice and the Puritan ideological legacy

By

Benjamin Michael Woods

Approved:

____

Bonnie Carr O'Neill
(Thesis Director)

____

Shalyn R. Claggett
(Committee Member)

____

Matthew Little
(Committee Member)

____

Lara Dodds
(Graduate Coordinator)

____

Rick Travis
Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Name: Benjamin Michael Woods

Date of Degree: May 4, 2018

Institution: Mississippi State University

Major Field: English

Thesis Director: Bonnie Carr O’Neill

Title of Study: The trans-historicity of the nineteenth-century New England novel: social injustice and the Puritan ideological legacy

Pages in Study: 84

Candidate for Degree of Master of Arts

This study offers a transhistorical reading of Catharine Maria Sedgwick’s *Hope Leslie*, Sylvester Judd’s *Margaret*, and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*. I identify how each novel addresses the need for social reform in nineteenth-century New England by tracing the root of social injustice to the Puritan ideological legacy. These novels address social injustices by not merely using New England’s past as a catalyst, but in identifying their origin in New England’s Calvinist, Congregationalist past. These novels furthermore reflect the theological debate between Calvinists and their Unitarian and Transcendentalist opponents in the early nineteenth century. Each novel offers a challenge to the Calvinist view of humanity with one that perceives humanity as morally improvable and fully capable of discerning what is moral independently of socially-imposed moral concepts. Ultimately, these novels suggest the vital role a society’s perception of human nature has in its ability to enact and ensure justice for its constituents.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mother and father. They don't get along anymore, but both never stopped encouraging me in my pursuit of greater knowledge. I also would like to dedicate this thesis to my two brothers. May we always laugh together, no matter what circumstances we find ourselves in life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my thesis director, thesis members, and the entirety of the English Department for their support throughout my years as an undergraduate and graduate at Mississippi State University. I would like to extend personal gratitude to Dr. Bonnie O'Neill, for her vital support in this project even at its infancy in the last semesters of my undergraduate career. Without her monumental efforts in reading and critiquing draft after draft of my sometimes vague and long-winded babble, this thesis would simply not exist. I would also like to thank Dr. Shalyn Claggett for not only taking time to read this thesis but playing a significant role in its conception in introducing me to the historicist method of reading and interpreting literature. I would also thank Dr. Matthew Little for taking time to read this thesis and giving sound advice on thesis composition.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION: THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY: CALVINISM, CONGREGATIONALISM AND THE BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF NEW ENGLAND IN THE NINTEENTH CENTURY 1

II. THE TRANSHISTORIC LEGACY OF PURITAN IDEOLOGY IN HOPE LESLIE 14

III. MARGARET, THE NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE, AND THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY 31

IV. THE SCARLET LETTER, GENDER INEQUALITY, AND THE TRANS-HISTORICITY OF THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY 51

V. CONCLUSION: THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY REASSESED 72

BIBLIOGRAPHY 80

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY: CALVINISM, CONGREGATIONALISM AND THE BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF NEW ENGLAND IN THE NINTEENTH CENTURY

During one of Margaret Hart's spiritually transformative walks with Charles Evelyn around The Pond in Sylvester Judd's *Margaret*, the Unitarian minister critiques Calvinist theology, detailing its negative effects on society:

> —But what is worst of all, we are educated to regard every man with suspicion and enmity. We are taught in our earliest years that men are by nature totally depraved, and since total depravity covers every form of sin and vice, we are in effect instructed to believe every man a villain, a thief, a murderer, at heart; as mean, selfish, and malicious, in his secret conscious purpose. This is the cardinal doctrine of what passes under the name of Christianity. It is annually enforced by hundreds and thousands of discourses from Bishops and Clergy in every part of Christendom…. Every youth under the operation of that sympathetic and reciprocal law…. enters life in the spirit of hostility…. The evil which he is made to believe all others saturated with is reflected in his own bosom, and so, in spite of himself, he becomes depraved. (Judd 251)

The Calvinist doctrine, with its emphasis on man's "totally depraved" nature, is for Evelyn a stain on Christianity, fostering a "spirit of hostility" and "suspicion" towards one's fellow man. More importantly, the Christian community accepts this view of human nature as inherently depraved as conventional knowledge, as it is "annually enforced by hundreds and thousands of discourses" from the highest echelons of church authority. For Evelyn, the perpetuation of such doctrines is not only counterproductive to living a Christian life, but harmful to the individual's ability to perceive and judge the actions of those around him, as "every youth" under the sway of the doctrine "becomes depraved" in spite "of himself," the creed working only to "reflect in his own bosom" what he assumes all other human beings are morally incapable of.

Though Evelyn implicates all of Christendom in his tirade against the Calvinist doctrine of total depravity, the doctrine was particularly prevalent in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New England setting in which *Margaret* takes place. The Congregationalist church that dominates the social and political life of Livingston in the novel is representative of a long tradition of Calvinist churches and societies that had their origin in the Puritan New England of the seventeenth century. *Margaret*'s explicit condemnation of Calvinist doctrine, then, offers a critique of the very ideological foundations of nineteenth-century society, exposing to its audience the intrinsically flawed perception of human nature and the negative social ramifications of such a perception, calling the legitimacy the once unassailable Puritan legacy of New England into serious question.

Historical romances such as Catherine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*, Sylvester Judd's *Margaret*, and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, novels set in New

England's Puritan and Congregationalist past, offer a vital view into the debate raging between Calvinist theologians and their liberal opponents, the Unitarians and Transcendentalists, in the first half of the nineteenth century. In returning to an earlier, Calvinist-dominated era of New England history, these novels depict the doctrine of total depravity in practice, culminating in the unjust treatment of those within and outside of society. These novels furthermore reflect the theological debate of their own era, challenging the view of humanity as inherently depraved with either the Unitarian doctrine of human nature's essential goodness and capacity for moral perfectibility or the Transcendentalist doctrine of self reliance. In identifying social injustice in the New England of the past as a product of Calvinist theology through Unitarian and Transcendentalist doctrines, *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter* simultaneously not only present alternatives to perceiving human nature as morally compromised and inherently wicked, but also present a more inclusive and equitable alternative in ensuring and enacting justice in New England society. As early nineteenth-century American novels, *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter* share a similar, if not always explicit or intended, impetus to address social injustice and the necessity for social reform.

Amanda Claybough defines this explicit or implicit impetus in her study of nineteenth-century Anglo-American novels. She argues that the vast majority of both British and American works indicate that their "conception of purposefulness" stems from the need for social reform, or "to improve society, specifically by changing some of its aspects while leaving others intact" (7,12). A novel of purpose, however, was not necessarily written with a single social issue explicitly in mind, but instead offered an

apparatus to cover a vast, "heterogeneous array" of social problems in nineteenth-century society (Claybough 31). Nor did authors of novels of purpose necessarily write with social reform explicitly in mind, as many nineteenth-century novels "make no reference at all to particular causes" and yet "are nonetheless characterized by 'doctrinal or didactical earnestness'" (Claybough 31). What united all novels of purpose, however, was their emphasis on "the individual as both the agent and the site of social transformation" (21). For novels of purpose, the intellectual, moral or spiritual awakening within an individual resulted in the entire reformation of the society, as it would recognize the inherently positive goodness of the individual and subsequently hold the individual up as the standard the rest of society would emulate (21). Though nineteenth-century reformers were indeed "primarily interested in changing the structures that made poverty or slavery possible" rather than simply "providing charitable aid to the poor and enslaved," reform movements often steered away from advocating truly radical alternatives to social inequality. For Claybough, the nineteenth-century novel of purpose offered a "middle position, both historically and ideologically" in addressing social injustice and encouraging social reform, between "the stasis of the *Ancien Régime* and the thoroughgoing changes of a revolution" (21). Hence, the novel of purpose was a largely liberal device, opting to challenge the beliefs and opinions of the individuals that made up society, rather than advocating for systemic change within it.

Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*, Judd's *Margaret*, and Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* certainly share the novel of purpose's implicit or explicit goal of liberal social reform, but they do so in two significantly different ways. As novels set in New England, about New England, and written by New Englanders, *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter*

address social injustice as it exists in nineteenth-century New England, rather than the generalized, trans-Atlantic concern for social reform that Claybough describes. As New England novels, these works address social concerns that stem from a distinctively New England ideological and theological perception of the individual in relation to society. Though these novels certainly address social injustice as it exists in the nineteenth century as the novels of purpose do, they achieve this by tracing the source of social injustice trans-historically, as originating from seventeenth-century New England Puritan society. As the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines "transhistorical" as that which "transcend[s] historical bounds," my transhistorical reading of *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter* novels is informed by this definition. Though the Calvinist tenets and the Congregationalist social apparatus that informed the Puritans' beliefs concerning human nature are not universally present throughout New England history, these ideological mores extended beyond its original seventeenth century context and pervaded eighteenth-and nineteenth-century New England society.

The Puritan ideological legacy *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret* and *The Scarlet Letter* address begins with the arrival of the Brownists to New England in the early seventeenth century. Known by their political antagonists in England by the pejorative term "Puritans," this Calvinist-influenced group chose voluntary exile abroad rather than face social, political, and religious persecution in their Anglican-dominated homeland. With the establishment of the Plymouth Plantation by former members of the Netherlands-based Leyden congregation, the Puritan congregations would go on to deeply influence New England region well into the nineteenth century through their American-born descendants. Puritan thought was dominated by the reformation theology developed by

John Calvin in his seminal *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. This doctrine centered on an interpretation of Adam and Eve's Original Sin in partaking of the forbidden fruit, causing an enraged God "to inflict such fearful vengeance on the whole human race" and leave all humanity inherently "deficient in natural powers which might enable us to rise to a pure and clear knowledge of God" (Calvin 25). According to Calvin, humanity's inherited moral ineptitude and subsequent course to the fires of hell could not be altered without the grace of God, meaning that faith or strict adherence to scripture did not guarantee a way out of spending an eternity of torment and sorrow.

Though the Brownists were not the only Protestant sect adhering to this Calvinist doctrine of innate depravity in seventeenth-century Europe, they alone developed a political and social mode of governance centered on the doctrine in the form of Congregationalism. In an anonymous work titled *A Guide unto Zion: or, Certaine Positions, concerning a true visible Church*, a member of the Leyden-based Brownist community outlines the definition of the congregation as a community built "out of, or from the world" (8). *A Guide unto Zion* elaborates further upon the Congregationalist objective, stating that the community "must be separated" from the material world in defiance of "Satan, the Prince of this world" and "the wicked people of the world, called the children of the Divel" (8-9). Because humanity's inherent depravity effectively created a hostile environment for the faithful, the Brownists and their Puritan descendants sought to create in Congregationalism a closed, shielded environment divorced from the rest of the wicked material world and its inhabitants. This closed social system also served to protect the congregation, whom God exclusively saved from the eternal damnation, from "the corruption of nature in ourselves" (9). For both the Leyden

Brownists and their New England descendants, the Congregationalist community's social and moral integrity depended on the its ability to both strictly regulate moral behavior and enforce moral self-regulation. Failure to meet these two overriding objectives, to allow the "children of the Divel" to infiltrate the community's boundaries or to grow lax in enforcing moral regulation within the community, meant the inevitable social and moral disintegration of the community.

Hope Leslie, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter* primarily address the negative social effects of the doctrine of total depravity in nineteenth-century New England by tracing their origin to Puritan Congregationalism. The novels achieve this by posing distinctly Unitarian or Transcendentalist alternatives to Congregationalist thought, challenging the way in which New England society perceives human nature and its moral capability. The Puritan legacy of Congregationalism, with its emphasis on humanity's inherent wickedness and moral ineptitude and demand for strict moral self-regulation, remained a dominant force in New England's religious, political, and social life until the late eighteenth century with the emergence of Unitarianism. According to Phillip F. Gura, the Unitarian reaction against Calvinism that occurred in late eighteenth-century New England was more than a matter of rejecting "the notion that the Bible described a Trinitarian deity" and asserting the existence of a "unitary God" that identified Jesus as "the supreme model for humanity" (23). Unitarianism as it existed in New England was rooted in the "belief that vital religion demanded assent to the heart," a position that "championed man's self-consciousness and, especially, the idea that subjectivity allowed one to reconstitute a vital, heartfelt religion" (Gura 48). Unitarianism offered more than a different perception of the Godhead; it fundamentally challenged Congregationalism's

view of religious conversion as submission to an all-powerful, vengeful God in the face of eternal damnation. By contrast, the Unitarian system only demanded one's voluntary conversion on the basis of one's capacity to intuit the love and power of God as it exists inherently within the self.

The underlying tenet of Unitarian theology was the perception of human nature as essentially good and fully capable of moral improvement, a doctrine that contradicted Calvin's position that humanity was inherently wicked and morally inept outside of the grace of God. In his sermon "Unitarian Christianity," Unitarian founder William Ellery Channing explicitly criticized the Calvinist position of total depravity, arguing that the doctrine regrettably misled its adherents into believing that "God brings us into life wholly depraved, so that under the innocent features of our childhood is hidden a nature averse to all good and propense to all evil, a nature which exposes us to God's displeasure and wrath, even before we have acquired power to understand our duties, or to reflect upon our actions" (107). For Channing, the idea that an individual is by default damned to the fires of hell as a consequence of the Original Sin prior to any good or wicked thought or action in the material world is morally reprehensible and potentially destructive to moral growth. Channing also rejected the Congregationalist concept of the congregation as a divinely elected, exclusive group, that "God selects from this corrupt mass [the rest of humanity] a number to be saved, and plucks them, by a special influence, from the common ruin; that the rest of mankind, though left without that special grace which their conversion requires, are commanded to repent, under penalty of aggravated woe" (107). Channing criticized in Congregationalism the belief that one cannot know God's mind, which in turn lead to God's seemingly arbitrary selection of

those elected to salvation over the rest of humanity. In defiance of Congregationalism's position on God and humanity's ability to know or recognize his will in the material world, Channing argued in his "Likeness to God" that "true religion consists in proposing, as our great end, a growing likeness to the Supreme Being" (119). Rejecting Calvin's argument that humanity is utterly separated from God due to an inherent deficiency in "natural powers" to know him spiritually, Channing argued that humanity's once-intrinsic connection to God can be re-awakened from its "dormant" and "obscured" state through rediscovering the "original and essential capacities of the mind" (119). This "dormant," state, in which one's natural capacity to goodness and moral improvement is "obscured" by sin, is the result of "appetites and passions" that the individual voluntarily leaves "unresisted," which merely leads to a belief that "the image of God in man may seem wholly destroyed" (119). This state, however, is by no means permanent; once the individual re-awakens his or her intrinsic God-likeness, his or her inborn capacity to act virtuously, one can pursue the path to moral perfection.

The Unitarian perception of human nature as essentially good and morally perfectible influenced the Transcendentalist philosophy of the early nineteenth century. As a former Unitarian minister, Ralph Waldo Emerson retained the tenet of moral perfectibility in his philosophy. In his "Divinity School Address," Emerson asserted that "the intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul…. If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God; the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God do enter that man with justice" (76). For Emerson, humanity's aspiration to follow God via righteous action did not merely end with the individual's gaining a closer degree of likeness, as Channing posited. For

Emerson, the mere realization that the individual is inherently good and capable of limitless moral perfection resulted in him or her essentially becoming God, or recognizing God dwelling in the individual. Emerson's radical perception of human nature and its moral capacity led to the development of his signature philosophical tenet, self reliance. In his essay of the same name, Emerson interprets of moral perfectibility as recognizing one's individual capacity to discern what is good or just independently of an external religious or social system:

> Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore it if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. (Emerson 261)

For Emerson, the path to moral improvement does not lie in adhering to "the name of" or the socially or religiously accepted notion of goodness. Rather, one must "explore" if a thought or action is a good or just action independently of society's definitions of what is good or just. For Emerson, the individual is fully capable of self-determining whether or not an act or thing is good or wicked. As the human soul, once fully re-awakened to its limitless potential, has the capacity to become God and not simply achieve a degree of God-likeness, the individual can fully rely on "the integrity of your [the individual's] own mind" to discern the quality of thoughts and actions. In the context of New England Congregationalism, Emerson presents a radical vision of human nature and moral capacity that manages to contradict Calvinism's total depravity doctrine more than Channing's Unitarian model does. The Congregationalist objective, to exclude the depraved masses existing outside of the community's boundaries and to enforce strict

moral regulation within, is utterly abandoned in favor of the individual's ability to determine what is right and wrong, just and unjust, independently of any social or religious system.

In implementing Unitarian doctrine or Transcendentalist philosophy, Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*, Sylvester Judd's *Margaret*, and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* all transcend the confines of history to trace the origin of social injustice in nineteenth-century New-England to the Puritan, Congregationalist past to critique one of the many social consequences of the Puritan ideological legacy. Each novel then implements either a Unitarian or a Transcendentalist alternative to the prevalent Congregationalist thought dominating each novel's setting, questioning, challenging, and even successfully uprooting the problematic ideological system for a more inclusive and equitable society. Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*, the subject of chapter one, addresses a Congregationalist-dominated society's treatment of Native Americans as members of an irrevocably damned race of humanity that are seen as moral, political, and existential threats to the Puritan community. This is primarily demonstrated in the Puritan community's hostile views and actions against the Native American princess Magawisca, who is distrusted, demonized, and inevitably imprisoned on the suspicion she is a spy for the Pequot tribe. *Hope Leslie* presents the ideological alternative to the doctrine of total depravity as it exists within Puritan society, serving as Sedgwick's embodiment of the Unitarian tenet of essential human goodness and moral capacity. As the character representing Unitarian beliefs, Hope consistently questions and challenges her community's assumptions about Native Americans, most significantly in her argument with Governor Winthrop on the eve of Magawisca's trial.

In contrast with *Hope Leslie*, which represents seventeenth-century New England society following the Pequot War, Sylvester Judd's *Margaret* is set in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New England, when Unitarians began to challenge Congregationalism's religious dominance in the region. The novel depicts the Hart family suffering a unique type of class discrimination under the Congregationalist-dominated Livingston community. As residents of The Pond region, Margaret and her family are perceived as potential agents of immorality and intemperance due to their irreligiosity and geographical separation from the rest the village and congregation. This social marginalization eventually leads to the wrongful imprisonment and execution of Chilion Hart in the murder of Solomon Smith and the banishment of the entire Hart family from Livingston and the surrounding area. Responding to Winthrop's social ideal, detailed in his well-known 1630 sermon "A Modell of Christian Charity," Judd then presents a new, Unitarian-driven congregationalism over the Puritan Congregationalism in a reformed Livingston, suggesting that doing so would ultimately fulfill Winthrop's vision of a socially interdependent community.

Returning to the seventeenth century, chapter three focuses on Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. The novel addresses Calvinism and Congregationalism's role in encouraging and reinforcing gender inequality in New England society. Marked for adultery, Hester Prynne is meant to serve as a reminder to all Puritan women of their ontological and moral inferiority to men in Puritan Boston and their status as potential threats to the social and moral integrity of the community. Though Hawthorne's relationship with Transcendentalist philosophy was ambivalent at best, he draws on the Transcendentalist figure Margaret Fuller in Hester Prynne's own thought. Hester defies

society's negative consignment in enacting a project that is not unlike Margaret Fuller's proto-feminist revision of Emerson's concept of self reliance, persuading the Puritan community of her inherent goodness and sincere purpose in society through virtuous and charitable action. Hester's self reliance ultimately culminates in Dimmesdale's revelation, upending the moral and judicial legitimacy that male ministers held unquestioningly in Puritan New England society.

CHAPTER II

THE TRANSHISTORIC LEGACY OF PURITAN IDEOLOGY IN HOPE LESLIE

Recent scholarship surrounding Catherine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* has been divided into three major groups. Some critics read the novel as exposing the inherent inequality of the patriarchal system in nineteenth-century American society within the conventions of the historical romance genre. Other critics are more skeptical that *Hope Leslie* aims for social reform, due to Sedgwick's limited social and political agency as a nineteenth-century woman and the idealistic conventions of the historical romance genre. A third party has moved away from the first and second camps' attention to the novel's relationship to social reform within the framework of the historical romance genre. These critics form interpretations that instead accommodate the novel's potential as an apparatus for encouraging gender equality while granting Sedgwick's social and political limitations as a woman in the early nineteenth century and the idealistic conventions of the historical romance genre.

Though these latter critics have correctly granted both conflicting interpretations of the novel in their alternative readings, critics generally assume that *Hope Leslie* addresses primarily nineteenth-century social issues by way of its Puritan setting. Subsequently, they do not take their readings beyond the conventional parameters of the historical romance genre. If, however, the social injustices depicted in the work originate

in seventeenth-century New England society, then *Hope Leslie* does not simply address the need for gender reform in nineteenth-century New England but identifies social injustice in New England as stemming from deeply entrenched seventeenth-century Puritan ideology. Hence, the novel not only depicts the unjust treatment of women in New England; it also depicts the unethical treatment of Native Americans as a result of the Puritans' adherence to Congregationalist ideological mores. The novel's ability to incisively trace the origin of social injustice in New England society stems from Sedgwick's Unitarian beliefs; through Hope, the work offers an ideological challenge to the Calvinistic norm in the belief in humanity's moral capacity and capability. When interpreted beyond the confines of the historical romance genre, *Hope Leslie* becomes vital to understanding the major theological debate between Calvinists and Unitarians concerning human nature and moral capability and how it could determine a society's ability or inability to enact social justice for those outside of and in proximity to its parameters.

For many critics, *Hope Leslie* addresses social injustice as it exists within the novel's nineteenth-century cultural environment through its historical setting. Though they see Sedgwick as exposing the patriarchal roots of New England society by way of the novel's setting, they see Sedgwick using this historical platform primarily to address gender inequality as it existed in her own time. Addressing Mary Kelley and Sandra Zagrell's arguments concerning whether or not the novel "contains….an invalidation of patriarchal history or an uncannily prescient exercise in historical dialogics," Philip Gould argues that the historical context in which Sedgwick sets her novel exposes "the ideological underpinnings of the [Pequot] war in early national America" and connects

Hope Leslie to "a culturally resonant debate over the meaning of 'virtue' in the early American republic" (642). For Gould, this interpretation of *Hope Leslie* "lends new significance to the novel's 'anti-patriarchalism' by locating the immediate political and cultural stakes in rewriting history" from a non-patriarchal viewpoint (642). Like Gould, T. Gregory Garvey also addresses Sedgwick's revisioning of New England history through the framework of the historical romance genre. Garvey, however, differs from Gould in his emphasis on the female protagonists' role in exposing the history of deeply rooted patriarchal inequality in American society. According to Garvey, Sedgwick's presentation of her female protagonists "as civic-minded individuals who are unjustly persecuted as witches and spies" in a patriarchal Puritan society "makes *Hope Leslie* an instrument of social progress" (3). For Garvey, Sedgwick's revisioning of Puritan history in the novel "not only provides her[self] with the safety of an historically distant stage on which to investigate the tensions that were imbedded in the world of her experience," but "also reinvents the earlier context by redefining the motivations that impelled her seventeenth-century women characters to transgress the boundaries of acceptable behavior" (3). For both Gould and Garvey, Sedgwick works within the confines of the historical romance to create for herself a protective catalyst through which to push against the limitations placed on women's place and behavior in society as it primarily existed in the nineteenth century.

Laurel V. Hankins continues in Gould and Garvey's wake, interpreting *Hope Leslie* as Sedgwick's effort in revisioning an earlier male-dominated model of American historiography to expose its inherent inequality to a nineteenth-century audience. Arguing that *Hope Leslie* is "an early Romantic experiment rather than…. a straightforward

precursor to mid-nineteenth-century domestic novels," Hankins argues that Sedgwick subscribes to "early Romantic historiography" by identifying "a strain of antebellum discourse that romanticizes" so-called "uncivilized spaces," such as the early American frontier (161). Hankins asserts that the novel works as a critique of the historical romance itself in that it "protests the confines of domesticity" to which the genre conventionally relegated women (Hankins 161). For Hankins, both Hope and Magawisca represent a feminized romantic ideal in that they are not affected by "the contracted boundaries of sectarian faith," and subsequently are able to "challenge the artificial laws enforced by Pequot and Puritan patriarchs" (171). For Hankins, Hope and Magawisca's religious and philosophical views are not subject to the male-dominated ideologies that pervade both European American and Native American societies in the novel, making them the primary agents in exposing injustice in their environment.

While Gould, Garvey, and Hankins read *Hope Leslie*'s Puritan setting as a catalyst through which Sedgwick addresses gender inequality as it exists in her nineteenth-century environment, other critics are skeptical of reading *Hope Leslie* as having a social reform purpose at all. Nina Baym describes *Hope Leslie* as one of Sedgwick's more "fanciful" novels in which "women are endowed with heroic capacities unrestrained by [the] probabilities" of a nineteenth-century woman's reality in a patriarchal society, with the "setting of a remote time" allowing Hope Leslie to think and act in ways that were largely discouraged by nineteenth-century society (53). Similarly, Dana Nelson argues that the novel is at best a limited instrument for social reform due to women's social and political position in nineteenth-century society. "Despite the evidence of sympathy towards Native Americans," in *Hope Leslie,* she argues that "we

should not…. simply conclude that these women writers [like Sedgwick] were in fact advocating for social change" (Nelson 193). For Nelson, Sedgwick uses sentiment in *Hope Leslie* to primarily garner the public's attention to specific social conditions because early nineteenth century female writers lacked the social and political agency to call for more radical alternatives.

Though Baym and Nelson question arguments asserting *Hope Leslie*'s aim in addressing the need for social reform in the nineteenth-century, other critics have moved beyond the question, accommodating both interpretations as equally plausible. Judith Fetterley argues for a position "beyond the binary opposition" existing "between the hagiography characteristic of the first phase of recovery, a hagiography directly proportional to the misogyny informing previous treatment" of Sedgwick and other nineteenth-century women writers and "a critique that implicates these writers in a variety of nineteenth-century racist, classist, and imperialist projects" (492). She asserts that "what is admirable about *Hope Leslie*…cannot be separated from what is problematic," and "it is this very entanglement [of the admirable and problematic] that makes the text worth recovering in the first place" (Fetterley 493). Though Maria Karafilis agrees with Gould, Garvey and Hankins that the novel exposes "agonistic, gendered modes of governance" in nineteenth-century America, she argues that *Hope Leslie* reveals another tension consisting of "Sedgwick's desire to offer an alternative model of governance and citizenship appropriate for members of a democratic republic and her desire to foster a fledgling domestic national literature" (328). Identifying Sedgwick's desire to transcend the binary of individualism and communitarianism as "a transcendentalist or Unitarian impulse," Karafilis argues that *Hope Leslie* presents an

essentially Emersonian view of society in “the consanguinity of individual will or independence and a larger, unifying impulse that goes beyond the scope of the single person or an individual desire” (330). For Karafilis, the apparent conflict between individualists like Hope Leslie and Magawisca in the novel and the communitarian societies of the Puritans and the Pequot does not indicate an insurmountable barrier, but an attempt to reconcile society with the individual.

Gould, Garvey and Hankins are correct in that *Hope Leslie* is indeed a “instrument for social progress” in its revisioning of early American historiography through strong female protagonists who are at odds with the patriarchal social structure. What these critics have not fully considered, however, is the Calvinist nature of the seventeenth-century ideological mores that *Hope Leslie* identifies and actively questions. *Hope Leslie* exposes not only the patriarchal underpinnings of American society through the historical catalyst of the Pequot War, but also a uniquely Congregationalist perception of human nature existing outside of the community boundaries as irredeemably depraved. This theological view of human nature as inherently depraved results materially in the unequitable conditions that marginalized groups like Native Americans face in both *Hope Leslie*’s seventeenth-century Puritan setting and its continued perpetuation in Sedgwick’s contemporary era. What I am arguing for, then, is an interpretation of *Hope Leslie* that extends beyond the author’s social and political limitations and beyond the confines of the historical romance genre. In interpreting *Hope Leslie* as a trans-historical novel, the work’s significance as a novel aiming to expose social injustice in New England is its identification of ideological structures that originate in the Puritan era and remain deeply imbedded in the social culture of Sedgwick’s nineteenth-century New England.

As a New Englander, Sedgwick was fully aware of her family's Puritan ancestry, and had first-hand knowledge of Calvinist theology. Like their Puritan ancestors, the Sedgwick family largely adhered to the Calvinist doctrines commonly found in Congregationalist churches throughout New England. Sedgwick, however, became disillusioned with Calvinist doctrine at a young age, struggling "to accept the Calvinist creed preached in her parents' Congregationalist church, where ministers still thundered warnings that a righteous God could send sinners to hell at any moment" (Karcher xiv). Sedgwick found "such teachings 'unscriptural and very unprofitable, and…very demoralizing' as well as 'a gross violation the religion of the Redeemer, and an insult to a large body of Christians entitled to respect and affection'" (Karcher xv). The Sedgwick family's adherence to Calvinism and its "demoralizing" effect is particularly noticeable in Sedgwick's description of her eldest sister in one of her letters to Alice, her niece. According to Sedgwick, Eliza "suffered from the horrors of Calvinism," as she was "so true, so practical" in her nature that "she could not evade its [Calvinist doctrine's] realities" (Kelley 86). These "realities" Eliza suffers are the effects of John Calvin's doctrine of humanity's inherited condition of moral depravity and incapability that could be resolved only in submission to God on pain of eternal damnation in hell. These "monstrous doctrines" rendered Eliza "gloomy" until "the last fifteen years of her life," when "her faith softened into a true comprehension of the filial relation to God" in freeing herself from "the cruel doctrines of Geneva" (Kelly 86). Though Sedgwick indicates that Eliza eventually abandoned the doctrine of total depravity for a more positive view of God and human nature, Calvinism's "monstrous doctrines" of total depravity had nonetheless delivered near irreparable psychological damage to her sister.

For Sedgwick, this view of human nature and its relationship with God utterly negated the role of Jesus as a restorative force to humanity, resulting in the subsequent negation of all “respect and affection” God give to all Christians, if not all humans.

Sedgwick was deeply conscious and critical of Calvinism’s view of human nature as inherently depraved and bereft of any redemption outside of God’s mercy and justice. She was also critical of how this doctrine was perpetuated through Congregationalism. Sedgwick demonstrates her dislike for Congregationalist tenets in another letter to Alice. In the letter, she recounted her experience with Dr. Stephen West, a “clergyman in Stockbridge, of sound New England orthodoxy” (95). Sedgwick described the minister as a “stern old Israelite in his faith” yet “gentle and kindly in his life as my Uncle Toby,” but she also states that she “certainly did not understand him in my youth” and saw him as “only the dry, sapless embodiment of polemical divinity” (96). For Sedgwick, the minister’s “unsophisticated nature as pure and gentle as a good little child’s” starkly contrasted with his career as a Calvinist clergyman, as he “stood up in the pulpit for sixty years and logically proved the whole moral creation of God…left by him to suffer eternally for Adam’s transgression, except a handful *elected* to salvation” (Kelley 96). Sedgwick’s emphasis on West’s perpetuation of Congregationalist doctrines positing that all face eternal damnation except those elected to salvation indicates not only her dislike of Calvinism, but her distaste of Congregationalism’s manipulation of the doctrine of total depravity. Though Calvin’s doctrine posits that all humanity is destined to a state of moral depravity regardless of one’s faith in God, the Congregationalist system uses the doctrine to elevate the status of the elect over the rest of humanity. The Congregationalists granted that all were indeed depraved, but those unaffiliated with

Congregationalism were irredeemably depraved. As one's chances of entering heaven was entirely dependent on God's unknowable will and mercy, the segments of humanity who did not adhere to the Congregationalist system faced certain eternal torment in hell. Sedgwick's anti-Calvinist and Congregationalist positions acquired by first-hand experience appear in the frequent injustices Native Americans face in *Hope Leslie*. To the Congregationalist New England Puritan, the Native American represented the non-Christian, non-Congregationalist segments of humanity fated to suffer divine punishment. The primary representative of this cohort is the Native American princess Magawisca, who is distrusted and morally devalued by Puritan society on the basis of her Native American heritage. This moral devaluation leads to Magawisca's unjust imprisonment and trial at the hands of Governor Winthrop after she is suspected of being an agent for the Pequot tribe. The Congregationalist emphasis on the irrevocably damned state of humanity existing outside the confines the Puritan community is first apparent on Magawisca's arrival as a servant to the Fletcher household. Mrs. Fletcher disagrees with her husband's liberal belief that "these Indians possess the same faculties as we [Puritans] do," and she attempts to enforce the Congregationalist ideological hierarchy over Magawisca, stating: "You should receive it as a signal mercy, child, that you have been taken from a savage people and set in a Christian family" (Sedgwick 24). Though her message is not intentionally malicious, thinking that she is "expressing what she deemed a self-evident truth," Mrs. Fletcher's statement reveals the deeply entrenched ideological beliefs she holds about the segments of humanity existing outside of the exclusively elected Calvinist-powered social system. This assumption is further indicated in the Puritan household servant Jennet's blunt translation of her employer's statement:

“Mistress Fletcher means…. that you should be mightily thankful, Tawney, that you are snatched as a brand from the burning” (Sedgwick 24).

Jennet’s crude interpretation of Mrs. Fletcher’s statement to Magawisca not only indicates her personal distrust of the Native American princess, but also suggests the Puritan community’s views of Native Americans in correlation with Congregationalist ideological positions. After noticing Everell Fletcher on exceedingly friendly terms with Magawisca, Jennet declares to her mistress that she “would sooner, in faith, cast him [Everell] into the lion’s den, or the fiery furnace, than leave him to this crafty offspring of a race that are children and heirs of the evil one” (Sedgwick 39). Though Mrs. Fletcher rebukes her, Jennet’s perception of Magawisca as one of the “children and heirs” of the devil echoes the standard Congregationalist view that the community “must be separated” from “the children of the Divel,” or Native Americans, as they are the subjects of “Satan, the Prince of this world” (*A Guide unto Zion* 8-9). For Puritans, perceptions of those who existed outside of the community confines as “children of the Divel” were applied specifically to the Native American tribes even prior to the first Puritan settlement of New England in 1620. William Bradford described one of the concerns the Plymouth colonists had in sailing to New England was “the continual danger of the savage people, who are cruel, barbarous, and most treacherous, being most furious in their rage and merciless where they overcome; not being content only to kill and take away life, but delight to torment men in the most bloody manner that may be” (27). After their arrival and settlement, this view of Native Americans as inherently savage and contrary to the Puritan community’s interests did not dissipate; rather, it was reinforced by a history of hostility between Puritans and Native American groups. In his *A Brief History of the*

Warre with the Indians in New-England, Increase Mather begins his account of King Philip's War by describing the Native Americans as a "Heathen People" who contend for "the Land the Lord God of our fathers hath given us for rightful possession" and devise "mischievous devices against that part of the English Israel" in New England (9). Written in 1675, fifty-five years after Bradford and the arrival of the first Puritans to the New England region, Mather's account indicates that Puritans still perceived the Native Americans as not only a general military threat, but also as a "heathen" race actively striving against Puritan society. For Mather, the Native Americans actively obstruct the Puritans' God-given directive to take "rightful possession" of the New England region, suggesting Puritan society's ulterior motive in aggressive political and military expansion in the New World.

Though Jennet represents the distrust the Puritans generally held towards Native Americans in *Hope Leslie*, Governor Winthrop's treatment of Magawisca when she is captured and imprisoned as a Pequot spy suggests that the Puritans' views of Native Americans extended to the highest echelons of early New England governance. Despite his full knowledge of Magawisca's sacrifice of her arm to save Everell Fletcher from death at her father Mononotto's hands, Governor John Winthrop rejects Hope Leslie's intersession for Magawisca, calling the princess's heroism "a noble action for a heathen savage" (Sedgwick 288). The Governor tells Hope and Everell "not to stir in this matter" as "any private interference will but Prejudice the Pequot's cause" because the Native American tribe has "ever been a hateful race to the English [Puritans]" (Sedgwick 288). Though Winthrop's intentions are primarily political, as he does not wish to worsen the already hostile relationship between the Puritan Commonwealth and Native Americans,

his devaluation of Magawisca's heroism and assumption of the Pequots as inherently hostile to Puritan interests indicate the same Congregationalist ideology at work in Puritan society at the governmental level. Despite the amputation she suffered by her own father in order to save the life of a Puritan, Magawisca's act is deemed less valuable due to her kinship with the "heathen" and "savage" Native Americans. For Winthrop, Magawisca's heroism cannot negate her status as one of the depraved, non-Christian segments of humanity, specifically in his assumption that all Pequots like Magawisca are in a state of constant war with the elect.

Winthrop's firm adherence to the Puritan perception of Native Americans appears again during Magawisca's trial. During the trial, Mr. Eliot gives an impassioned defense of the Pequot princess in which he "recount[s] in the narrative style…the various occasions on which they [have] found their fears of the savages groundless, and their alarms unfounded" and "intimate[s] that the Lord's chosen people [have] not now, as of old, been selected to exterminate the heathen, but to enlarge the bounds of God's heritage" (Sedgwick 298). Governor Winthrop, however, is not swayed by Eliot's defense, stating, "very singular…. but brother Eliot hath an overweening kindness towards the barbarians" (Sedgwick 299). As a strict adherent to Congregationalist ideological mores, Winthrop dismisses Eliot's argument that Magawisca and other Native Americans should be at any time included within proper Puritan Society. Winthrop's assumptions that Magawisca and all Native Americans are inherently and irrevocably depraved result in the Commonwealth's inability to ensure and enact justice. The question of whether or not Magawisca is actually an agent working against the interests

of the Puritan community has been compromised by Winthrop's preconceived notion that she is guilty of being a Pequot spy, regardless of any sound evidence presented.

While Magawisca represents the social and political injustices Native Americans suffer in *Hope Leslie*, the English-born Hope Leslie is the embodiment of Unitarianism in the novel. According to Carolyn Karcher, Sedgwick "entered her literary career with the aim of diffusing the blessings of Unitarianism, and she interwove her religious beliefs into virtually all of her fiction" (xv). In stark contrast with Calvinism, Unitarian theology centers around the belief in the essential goodness of human nature. Unitarian minister Henry Ware's debate with the Orthodox Calvinist Leonard Woods demonstrates the Unitarian condemnation of the doctrine of total depravity, countering it with a vision of humanity as intrinsically innocent of sin. (201). Ware argued that "if the imputation of Adam's guilt is a solecism, and inconsistent with the moral character of God," it would mean that "all his posterity should come into being with a nature so totally corrupt and inclined to sin, as to be incapable of any good" (201). Against the Calvinist tenet of total depravity, Ware posited that "Man is by nature…. innocent and pure; free from all moral corruption, as well as destitute of all positive holiness; and until he has, by the exercise of his faculties, actually formed a character either good or bad, [he is] an object of the divine complacency and favor" (201). Beside his assertion that an inherently depraved individual could not have been created by an allegedly perfect and good God, Ware exposed a logical inconsistency in the doctrine of total depravity. He argued that such doctrine assumes the individual is wicked regardless of his or her actions, negating the value of any virtuous act the individual performs. Consequently, an individual is essentially guilty before she or he can be proved innocent by any governing standard.

In *Hope Leslie*, Hope puts Ware's vision of human nature as essentially and universally good into practice, challenging her community's dependence on the doctrine of total depravity. She does this by calling into question the Puritan community's treatment of Native Americans. In a letter to Everett, Hope recalls an incident in which the Native American medicine woman Nelema saves Cradock's life from a venomous snake bite. After spying on the medicine woman's rituals, Jennet accuses Nelema of witchcraft, implicating Hope in turn as "nothing better than an aid and abatment of this emissary of Satan" (Sedgwick 109). Hope rebukes her, stating, "Satan does not send forth his emissaries with healing gifts" (Sedgwick 109). When Jennet reports the incident to Mr. Fletcher, Hope continues to defend Nelema, stating to Mr. Fletcher "in the language of scripture, 'that this only I know, that whereas thy servant was sick, he is now whole'" (Sedgwick 111). Hope's defense of Nelema in the face of Jennet's (and to an extent, Mr. Fletcher's) assumption that Nelema is a witch and Satan's emissary indicates Hope's resistance to the concept of inherent human depravity, especially regarding Native Americans. Unlike Jennet, Hope's perception of Nelema is not obstructed by the assumption that Nelema is inherently wicked and will act wickedly in any given circumstance. Instead, Hope's actions indicate her belief in the essential goodness of Nelema's nature in direct contradiction to the ideological norms that result in the marginalization of Native Americans.

Hope's ability to challenge the ideological mores present in her Puritan environment due to her belief in the essential goodness of humanity is most apparent in her intersession for Magawisca in Boston. In her meeting with Governor Winthrop on the eve of Magawisca's trial, Hope, speaking also for Everett, boldly demands the Governor

give her "warrant…for her release" based on "her merits, and rights" (Sedgwick 287). Though she fails to get a warrant or pardon immediately from the Governor, Hope's emphasis on Magawisca's character and rights as a human being at the mercy of the Commonwealth government again indicates her Unitarian position on human nature. Contradicting Governor Winthrop's negative view of Magawisca as a Native American, Hope points to "the debt" that the Puritan community has failed to honor in Magawisca's rescuing of Everett.

Though Hope is consistently able to expose and question the problematic ideologies that permeate her society due to her belief in the essential goodness of human nature, *Hope Leslie*'s greatest claim as an instrument of social reform is in depicting New England society's failure, rather than its success, in reforming or ameliorating the social inequality faced by Native Americans in the novel. After Magawisca's escape from jail, Hope implores her to "promise us [Hope and Everett] that you will return and dwell with us—as you would say…we will walk in the same path, the same joys shall shine on us, and, if need be that sorrows come over us, why, we will all sit under their shadow together" (Sedgwick 349). Magawisca sadly replies that such a reunion will never take place:

> My people have been spoiled—we cannot take as a gift that which is our own—the law of vengeance is written on our hearts—you say you have a written rule of forgiveness—it may be better—if ye would be guided by it—it is not for us—the Indian and the white man can no more mingle, and become one, than day and night. (Sedgwick 349)

Contradicting Nelson's argument that *Hope Leslie* offers only a "sympathetic" or "sentimental" view of Native Americans, this passage incisively traces the root of injustices suffered by Native American groups throughout New England's history to the Puritans' impetus in taking "rightful possession" of New England (Mather 9). This militant agenda, to oust and eradicate the Native Americans from the region as the irredeemable children of Satan, results in an unavoidable state of distrust, violence, and death between the two groups. Hence, the "law of vengeance" driving the Pequots' conflict with the Puritan community stems from the Congregationalist settlers taking from them "that which is [their] own." For Magawisca and other Native Americans, the conflict with the Puritans will not cease because the Puritans are ultimately closed to any diplomatic relationship with Native Americans. Hence, Magawisca is resolute in her belief that "the Indian and white man" can never "become one" in any mutual bond for peace and justice. Though Hope's belief in the universal goodness of all humans offers a glimmer of hope to Magawsica, that some individuals among the Puritans reject their society's toxic ideological mores, she will not expect such treatment from a society that remains firmly tethered to seeing people like her as a hopelessly unregenerate being to be purged from material existence.

When read trans-historically, *Hope Leslie* addresses the problematic nature of the Puritan ideological legacy, exposing its role in creating and perpetuating social and political injustices faced by Native Americans in and in proximity to New England society. Native Americans like Magawisca face social distrust and political persecution due to the assumption that their race and culture are not elected to salvation by God. The Puritans perceive them as hostile savages under the sway of Satan, as irredeemable

beings that obstruct the Puritans' God-given right to possess New England. Though the novel offers some hope in the Unitarian Hope Leslie, that one can believe in Native Americans' essential goodness and capacity to act morally, racial reconciliation will never happen while Congregationalist ideological mores permeate both seventeenth-century and nineteenth-century New England society. In the context of the nineteenth-century cultural environment the novel was written in, *Hope Leslie* mirrors the intense ideological debate between Calvinists and Unitarians concerning human nature and moral capability, and its implications regarding a society's ability to enact and ensure justice.

CHAPTER III

MARGARET, THE NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE, AND THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY

Since its publication in 1845, Sylvester Judd's *Margaret: A Tale of the Real and the Ideal, Blight and Bloom* has garnered relatively little critical attention. Though some critics emphasize the work's importance as a member of the New England village genre or its significance to the study of folklore, critics largely recognize the novel as Judd's primary instrument in perpetuating Transcendentalist thought. Consequently, critics largely interpret the novel as Judd's instrument for theological and social reform in New England society, rejecting the incumbent Calvinist theology and its emphasis on humanity's inherent moral incapacity for the more positive and inclusive Unitarian or Transcendentalist doctrines. What has not been addressed, however, is *Margaret*'s role in addressing the Puritan ideological legacy as it appears in the Congregationalist framework of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New England villages.

Though these critics grant that *Margaret* offers a critique of Calvinist theology, particularly the doctrine of total depravity, they have not considered that the effects of the doctrine's implementation in a New England village society. *Margaret* addresses not only Calvinism's role in creating social injustice in a representative New England village, but

how this injustice is perpetuated through the village's failure to fully adhere to John Winthrop's ideal of social interdependence as detailed in his 1630 sermon "A Modell of Christian Charity." This failure is demonstrated in the novel by the Livingston community's treatment of people living at periphery of their society. Due to their geographical separation from the village, people who live in The Pond region are frequently perceived by the Livingston community as irreligious, intemperate, and violent. Consequently, the people of Livingston see the inhabitants of The Pond as posing a potential threat to the social and moral integrity of the community. The Livingston community's perception of the Hart family as inhabitants of The Pond region ultimately results in the unjust execution of Chilion Hart for the murder of Solomon Smith and the family's abject expulsion from the Livingston community's boundaries. After illustrating a New England village society's failure to encourage social interdependence and charity between its members, *Margaret* then presents an alternative to John Winthrop's Congregationalist social ideal in a new Unitarian-congregationalism, one that fulfills Winthrop's vision by discarding its Calvinist view of human nature. Though Margaret Hart clearly embodies Transcendentalism, Judd's social ideal indicates that it is a Unitarian future that he envisions for New England. In this context, *Margaret* signifies Judd's place as an author deeply invested in the intense theological debate between Calvinists and their Unitarian and Transcendentalist opponents, over the inherent nature and moral capacity of humanity and its significance in a society's ability to ensure and enact justice for its constituents.

The sparse criticism of *Margaret* primarily deals with the novel as addressing the need for theological reform in nineteenth-century New England society. Judd counters

the social injustice Calvinist theology causes in Livingston, a representative community of New England villages in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, by promoting theological reform driven by Unitarian and Transcendentalist thought. Philip Judd Brockway argues that Judd "clearly portrays in the lives of the main characters of his novel *Margaret* the living-out of the basic teachings of Emerson" (654). For Brockway, Judd's subscription to Transcendentalist thought is evident in *Margaret's* "completely idealistic" tone, arguing that the novel "portrays the ultimate regeneration of society" as originating from the inward transformation of the individual (662). Bruce A. Ronda agrees with Brockway that *Margaret* is "permeated with Emersonian thought," noting that Margaret in particular embodies the Transcendentalist ideal in that she regularly "communes with the all-pervasive divine spirit, understands religion intuitively, and is at once selfless and self-possessed" (217). However, Ronda emphasizes the role Calvinist theology plays in the novel, arguing that Judd's personal inability to resolve "his deep uncertainty over the question of inherent goodness versus the need for radical inward change" as a result of his Calvinist upbringing makes *Margaret* "not a simple tale of innocence rewarded, but rather a novel fraught with conflict between gradual moral improvement and the need for dramatic inward change, between sunny spontaneity and hidden emotional turmoil"(217). Drawing from biographical information concerning Judd's Calvinist childhood, Ronda locates tensions in Judd's thought between the Calvinist tenets of concealment and radical revelation and the Unitarian and Transcendentalist concepts of incremental moral perfectibility. He states that though Judd "had explicitly rejected the notion that the individual is innately and hopelessly corrupt, inevitably separated from God," he maintained that "much is hidden in the human heart

which festers and corrodes it unless it is brought out into the open" (Ronda 228). For Ronda, *Margaret* signifies Judd's attempt to reconcile this uneasy tension; though humanity's inherent nature is morally perfectible, any sin or vice accumulated via experience must be revealed in corporate renewal in order to complete the radical change that first begins within the individual.

In keeping with the interpretations of *Margaret* as championing Unitarian and Transcendentalist-driven theological reform in a New England setting, Gavin Jones argues that the novel "gains importance as an early effort to embody 'transcendental' ideas in a large and complex imaginative structure as an early instance of early American literature that promotes an idealized 'utopian social state'" (451). Though Jones grants that "the concept of utopia has been central to American thought" since its "origins [in America] among the Puritans," he argues that the concept was reinvigorated in the early nineteenth century, when "the social system, previously considered secondary to the individual or the political state" prior to the 1840's, "was now held responsible for problems like poverty" (451). Consequently, Judd's purpose in writing *Margaret* was to "promote his idealistic schemes for social reform through universal Christianity," to envision a radically new society driven by Unitarian and Transcendentalist thought (452). Like Brockway and Ronda, Jones sees the novel's promotion of Unitarian and Transcendentalist thought as working primarily through the protagonist's characterization. Though Margaret is "faced with a degenerate humanity and its corrupt institutions throughout her life, she is able to intuit the principles of natural religion, principles confirmed by her future husband Mr. Evelyn, who instructs Margaret in the true teachings of Christ" (452). Margaret's Transcendentalism, her ability to intuit

religion independently of the socially-imposed Calvinist doctrines of her community, enables Margaret to see the value of Charles Evelyn's Unitarianism. Hence, Margaret serves as the embodiment of Judd's view of human nature as intrinsically good and morally perfectible, an example of how social and theological reform in society begins within the individual.

Other critics grant the positions Brockway, Ronda, and Jones assert concerning *Margaret* as Judd's critique of Calvinism and promotion of a Unitarian and Transcendentalist-powered utopian social ideal. However, they move beyond the readings of the novel as an instrument for social reform. Affirming that Judd "maintains a larger fame for his aggressive representation of the aims and ideals" of Unitarian and Transcendentalist-driven concepts of social and theological reform, C. Grant Loomis argues that the novel is particularly valuable in the study of New England folklore. He argues that "the removal of the multitudinous, second-hand acquisitions of the avid student [Judd], who was quick to take on the coloring of his environment, leaves, nevertheless, a very valuable stratum of material which represents Judd's original research into the antiquities of Western Massachusetts" (151-152). Noting Judd's intentions in re-creating the late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century New England village of his father, complete with "the local store, noon-house, horse-sheds, and meeting-house," and attention to "native jargon and expressions current several decades before" his time, Loomis argues that *Margaret* "is a storehouse of early lore and language for the folklorist and linguist" (153). Like Loomis, John Evelev does not dispute Judd's purpose in writing *Margaret* to address social ills caused by Calvinist theology and to promote a Unitarian and Transcendentalist vision of an ideal society.

Instead, Evelev seeks to define *Margaret* along with Oliver Wendell Holmes' *Elsie Venner* and Henry Ward Beecher's *Norwood* as representatives of the New England village novel genre. Evelev argues that "the persistence of this genre" throughout the nineteenth century signified "the symbolic role of the small town in American social ideals, making the New England village a microcosm of the national community" (149). For Evelev, the New England village novel uses the nineteenth-century concept of the "picturesque sensibility" to "address civic problems within nineteenth-century American life" (150). Though Evelev's focus on *Margaret* emphasizes its position within a particular genre of nineteenth-century fiction, he still affirms the dominant interpretation of the novel as addressing the need for social reform in the New England society and American society in general.

Evelev's identification of *Margaret* as a New England village novel is particularly helpful in defining the work as an implement for social reform in nineteenth-century New England society. However, Evelev overemphasizes the New England village unit as a representative of *all* American society. Though *Margaret* presents Livingston as the representative New England village, its representativeness does not extend beyond the New England region. This is because the New England village is distinct from other models as the direct inheritor of the Puritan ideological legacy. Hence, *Margaret* addresses social injustice as it appears specifically in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New England in context with John Winthrop's Puritan social ideal. *Margaret* not only critiques the Calvinist basis of Winthrop's social ideal but depicts in Livingston the failure of New England villages to fully follow the social ideal's emphasis on encouraging social interdependence through mutual charity between members. This

failure to foster societal interdependence results in the social tensions between the members of the village proper and those who live at the community's boundaries. Though Brockway, Ronda, and Jones are correct in seeing *Margaret* as Judd's promotion of Unitarian and Transcendentalist-driven social reform through Margaret Hart's ability to critique the theological status quo, they do not consider this Unitarian or Transcendentalist impetus in context with Winthrop's social ideal. The reformed Unitarian Livingston at the end of the novel presents an alternative to Winthrop's original social ideal that retains the original's congregationalist structure and its emphasis on social interdependence but discards the Puritan model's dependence on total depravity.

Any notion of social division within the New England village depends upon two conditions: a member's geographical location in relation to the physical location of the meeting-house and the village surrounding it, and a member's adherence to the community unit's prescribed standard of religious belief and moral behavior. According to Lawrence Buell, the New England village ideal of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was essentially a "self-contained unit, sheltered from the outside world and organically interdependent: a bird's nest shielded from wind and 'foreigners'" (306). Buell's passage indicates that the village unit emphasized interdependence, encouraging its constituents to work for the mutual benefit of the community out of a sense of kinship and shared interest. However, those who lived beyond the geographical confines of the village were perceived as alien; their intrusion into the communal boundaries resulted in a degree of distrust if not hostility from the village body.

The New England village emphasis on social interdependence is a trait directly inherited from its Puritan antecedent. In his "A Modell of Christian Charity," John Winthrop

argued for the importance of social interdependence in Puritan communities. He first addressed the nature of social and economic inequality in human society, arguing that "GOD ALMIGHTY in his most holy and wise providence, hath soe disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all times some must be rich, some poore, some high, and eminent in power and dignitie; others mean and in submission" (1). This view of social and economic inequality in human society as a divinely predetermined condition is the basis of Winthrop's subsequent argument. As Winthrop assumed social inequality was a permanent condition, Winthrop's primary objective was to instruct the Puritan settlers aboard the *Arabella* in how to navigate this predetermined state of social inequality effectively. He first argued that society must "manifest the work of his [God's] spirit…upon the wicked in moderating and restraining them" regardless of one's relative wealth or poverty to ensure that "the riche and mighty do not eate upp the poore nor the poor and dispised rise upp against and shake off thiere yoake" (1). This argument, that society could alleviate social inequality and conflict by regulating the inherently wicked natures of all society's constituents regardless of social and economic status, demonstrated Winthrop's adherence to Calvin's tenet of total depravity. As humans are prone to either maliciously exploit others of lower status or violently act against those of higher status out of frustration, the community must regulate all of its constituents' moral behavior. After emphasizing the need to check both the power of the richer and higher-status individuals and the resentment the poorer and less reputable members of society, Winthrop proposed that the potential conflict between the rich and the poor and the socially reputable and disreputable can be further alleviated by "excerciseing his [God's] graces in them … thiere love, mercy, gentelness, temperance, &c." (1). Winthrop asserted

that, by adhering to the Christian virtue, the Puritan community will "be all knitt more nearly together in the Bonds of brotherly affection," a state that will negate any difference in wealth or status in the community body, as "it appears plainly that noe man is made more honorable than another or wealthier &c, out of any particular and singular respect to himselfe, but for the glory of his creator and the common good of the creature, man" (1). Though Winthrop argued for strict regulation of community members' behavior, his emphasis on the members' "excercisesing" Christian virtue to alleviate economic and social disparity suggest that social interdependence can be realized by encouraging a sense of religious commonality between members. If community members perceive each other as fellow creations of God, then they will be encouraged to work for the community's mutual well-being.

Though the New England village inherits from its Puritan antecedent its emphasis on social interdependence, the example of Livingston in *Margaret* suggests the failure of New England society to adhere to Winthrop's social ideal. Though Winthrop's model encourages mutual love and charity between its members to alleviate the permanent state of social inequality and check humanity's inherent wickedness, Livingston consistently emphasizes the necessity of regulating religious and moral behavior over mutual "Bonds of brotherly affection." As a result, those who fail to conform to Livingston's Congregationalist standards are effectively classified as potential if not inevitable threats to the social moral integrity of the community, facing treatment ranging from social exclusion to outright hostility. Furthermore, the basis of conflict between those "highe in dignitie" and those "mean in submission" takes on a geographical component in *Margaret*. Though the population living on the outskirts of Livingston are still considered

part of the community, their geographic distance from the village as well as their low socio-economic status result in social marginalization from the larger community. For Livingstonians, the inhabitants of The Pond are perceived as relatively free from the community's ability to regulate their social and moral behavior. Hence, the Livingston community associates the region with intemperance, irreligiosity, and violence.

In *Margaret*, the clearest demonstration of this negative classing of the population who exist in relative isolation from the Congregationalist system's governing influence is the Livingston community's distrust of and hostility towards the Hart family. As inhabitants of The Pond region, the Harts are defined by the Livingston community by their irreligiosity, intemperance, and political unorthodoxy. In the second chapter, the narrator states that Pluck's "fancy for giving his children scriptural names," such as Nimrod or Maharshalalhashbaz, does not indicate his religiosity, stating that "it must not be thought he had any reverence for the Bible; his conduct would belie such a supposition" (Judd 13). In bequeathing some of his children biblical names despite his irreligiosity, Pluck signifies a certain degree of ironic humor, even a mockery of the Congregationalist society situated in Livingston that would regulate his moral behavior. Pluck's indifference to religion in relation to a society that is primarily informed by a Calvinist interpretation of the Christian religion places him and his family in contention with Livingston's community standards.

The primary cause of Livingston's negative perception of the Harts, however, is their intemperance. When Margaret goes to Livingston to run errands for her family, Martha Madeline assumes that "she wants rum" for her family, as "Pluck and his boys drink five or six glasses a day," an amount that Martha states is "a sin for any family to

have" according to Deacon Welles (Judd 38). Social contempt for the Harts based on their intemperance is also apparent in the store clerk's rejection of Margaret's proposition to pay for both the items she was sent to purchase for the family as well as the rum, saying "I tell you, we can't and won't trust you. Your drunken dad has run up a long chalk already…. You are all a haggling, gulching, good-for-nothing crew" (Judd 39). The clerk's perception of the Hart family, including Margaret who is just a young child at this point in the novel, is guided by the Hart family's known intemperance; in a society where excessive consumption of alcohol is regarded as a sin, Martha Madeleine and the clerk's derogatory view of the Harts represents the marginalization faced by members of the community that fail to adhere to community's religiously informed moral standard. Due to their expensive drinking habits, the Hart family is deemed not only intemperate but a financial risk; the clerk refuses to take Margaret's word on credit because the family has generally not been able to repay its debts. Though most of the members of Hart family indeed buy and drink alcohol excessively, the injustice of the Livingston community's view of the Hart family stem from the idea that they are, because of their intemperance, a "good-for-nothing" crew. For the Calvinistic citizens of Livingston, the Harts' intemperance is not simply a bad habit and a potential financial burden to the clerk: it is a symptom of their failure to regulate their inherently depraved human natures, undoubtedly a consequence of living at the physical and social boundaries of the community itself. More significantly, the Harts' exhibition of their inherently wicked natures implicates them as a potential threat to the social and moral order of the community. For Livingstionians, Winthrop's objective of encouraging charity between community members to create social interdependence does not extend to the intemperate.

As the community places the regulation of individuals' inherently depraved natures above the need for mutual bonds of love and charity, the Harts' visible intemperance signifies to Livingstonians an aberration within the social structure that, if not mended, could potentially corrupt and destroy the community.

The perceived social and moral threat the Harts pose to Livingston as geographically distant segments of the population relatively free from Congregationalist authority suggests that Livingstonians are guided by the same fears that Puritans like William Bradford expressed in the seventeenth century: that the community's moral disintegration would result in the disintegration of the community itself. In his *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Bradford depicts a Congregationalist community's annihilation as a result of moral laxity. In the chapter, Bradford recounts a "breaking out of sundry notorious sins…. especially drunkenness and uncleanness" amongst members of the Plymouth settlement (351). In an attempt to locate the cause of the sudden laxity of religious and moral behavior, he first points to the inherently "corrupt natures" of all humans, "which are so hardly bridled, subdued and mortified," regardless of the Congregation's supposed status as elected to salvation (Bradford 351). With the Calvinist tenet of total depravity in mind, Bradford then questions if the Plymouth community had enacted laws that were too strict in prohibiting immoral behavior, stating that "When they [the community] get passage they flow with more violence and make noise and disturbance than when they are suffered to run quietly in their own channels" (352). Besides suggesting that the community's laws were too strict as a cause for the outbreak of immorality in the Plymouth community, Bradford also indicates the existence of political and religious outsiders at the borders of the Massachusetts Bay region as a

potential fear of inevitable social and moral disfunction. In his letter to Bradford, the Governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony Richard Bellingham warns of the danger posed by "the Islanders at Aquideck," whom have not "only divided" themselves "in faction" from the rest of the Puritan commonwealth, but actively "rend themselves from all the true churches of Christ and, many of them, from all the powers of magistracy" (Bradford 353). For Bellingham, the Islanders of Aquideck (Rhode Island) not only have separated themselves politically from the Commonwealth, but have also deviated from the Congregationalist church norm, making "public defiance against ministry, churches and church covenants," a move that in Bellingham implicates as "antichristian" (Bradford 353). Though Bradford's reaction to immoral acts among the community indicates the perceived result of a community that fails to regulate the religious moral behavior of its members, his and Bellingham's anxiety concerning the existence of political and religious unorthodoxy in such close proximity to Puritan society also suggests a fear of external influences infiltrating and corrupting the Puritan community. In the context of Livingston as a New England village unit that inherited this same urgency to actively regulate the moral behaviors of its constituents, the presence of social outsiders—people like the Harts—spells potential doom for the entire community. As they are already geographically excluded from the community, their presence in and around Livingston means that their continued immorality and irreligiosity could also influence the community, as agents whose unregulated depravity could potentially contaminate and destroy the village unit.

The village of Livingston's inherited fear of moral regression leading to community disintegration is most apparent when the community's distrust and hostility

towards the Harts reach the levels of judicial authority with the arrest, imprisonment and execution of Chilion Hart in connection to the murder of Solomon Smith. While drinking with the Hart family, Solomon continuously presses himself on Margaret, which earns him Rose and Chilion's scorn. Solomon's continued impositions end with Chilon's file "thrown towards Solomon," and becoming buried in "an artery of his neck" (Judd 311). As the novel's vague language implies, it is not clear who threw Chilion's file; though Chilion is certainly maddened by Solomon's treatment of Margaret, it is Rose who exclaims to Chilion "Lend me your file. I will stop his wicked presumption!" (Judd 310). When the "more considerable inhabitants" of Livingston gather at Deacon Penrose's store to discuss the murder case, however, they largely assume that Chilion Hart is Solomon's killer. Though some of the deacons and other prominent townsmen either withhold their judgement of Chilion until more solid evidence is procured regarding the crime, it is clear that the Livingston community's perception of the Hart family is very much present in the deacons presiding over the case, particularly in Penrose and Hadlock. When Judge Morris asks the deacons and prominent townsmen for a general summary of the case, Deacon Penrose answers that "it was an unprovoked and malicious attack of some members of that depraved family on the unfortunate young man" (Judd 313). When Esquire Beach tries to amend Penrose's narrative with a more objective version, Deacon Hadlock dismisses him, saying:

> Why do we mince the matter? I can tell you it is all owing to defect of justice; that we havn't heavier penalties, tighter execution, more wholesome laws. If these persons had only been kept under, or been enough broke by the chastisements they have already had, they would never have gone these lengths. Truly we can

say, we let the wicked go unpunished. For their Sabbath-breaking, their disobedience to rulers, their unbelief, their blasphemies, their hardness of heart, their stiff-neckedness and perverse ways, this has come upon them. And for our sinful remissness has this judgement lit upon the town. (Judd 314)

Deacon Hadlock's statement demonstrates what Bradford feared is a cause for the sudden increase in immorality and irreligiosity in Plymouth. Unlike Bradford, who questions if the laws regarding moral behavior have been too severe and had served to increase the frequency of immoral behavior in the settlement, Hadlock claims that Livingston community has not adequately enforced religious observance and moral behavior in order to prevent its members' originally depraved natures from resurging and threatening the structural integrity of the community. For Hadlock, it is not just Chilion who is guilty; the entire Hart family is complicit in the murder. The Hart family's irreligiosity and intemperance mark them as hostile threats to the well-being of the community, threats that could have been neutralized earlier by being "kept under or been enough broke" by the village authorities and punishing the family for their failure to adjust and conform to the community's status quo.

The Hart family's expulsion from the Livingston community's boundaries after Chilion's execution further indicates their classification as pariahs to the Livingston community. After the trial, Mr. Smith is given leave to claim "the forfeiture of the conditions on which Pluck held the [the Harts'] estate" ordering "the immediate removal of the family" from the premises, forcing the family to split apart and look for shelter and employment elsewhere outside of both Livingston and The Pond region. While Pluck leaves "to seek employment wherever it should offer" and Hash and Brown Moll go to live with Sybil

Radney, Margaret returns to the Beach family "to fulfill her engagement as governess" (Judd 327). However, Mrs. Beach informs her upon arrival that she and her husband have "concluded to dispense of your service," claiming that "it would be unsafe to our property, and perhaps to our lives, to have anything to do with you" (Judd 327). When Margaret asks what she could possibly do without the Beach's employment, Mrs. Beach callously responds "If worse comes to worst, you can go to the poorhouse; you may be able to find employment with that class of people to whom you properly belong" (Judd 327). The government of Livingston's unjust allowance of Mr. Smith to effectively render the entire Hart family homeless and the open hostility Margaret and other family members face in Livingston indicate their classification as threats to the community is now universally recognized by the village. Mrs. Beach's response to Margaret, to relocate to a "poorhouse" where she would be "with that class of people to whom [she] properly belong[s]" suggests that Mrs. Beach now perceives Margaret as belonging to an undesirable class of people she clearly associates with immoral behavior, despite the fact that Margaret had nothing to do with the events of Solomon Smith's murder. As Margaret passes the jailhouse that imprisons Chilion, one of the children comments, "I can see the devil in her eye" and another, regarding the entire Hart family, "they are the most dangerous wretches that ever walked God's earth" (Judd 329). In the context of the Calvinist theology that informs the Congregationalism dominating Livingston society, these passages indicate that Margaret and the entire Hart family are now regarded as belonging fully to the fallen world outside of the community, along with its inherently wicked human inhabitants that are doomed to eternal damnation.

If *Margaret* initially depicts a New England village society that emphasizes Winthrop's argument for social regulation of moral behavior over fostering mutual charity and love between its members, the novel then presents a reformed community in which both of Winthrop's precepts work in unison. For Judd, discarding Calvinist theology did not mean also discarding the congregationalist mode of church organization. In his sermon "The Church, illustrated by the Family and The State," Judd made it clear that, like the "Universalist, Baptist and Swedenborgian" churches, the Unitarian church has "what is called a congregational constitution, which in church matters means the same as democratic in state matters" (Judd 87). As Judd's primary intention in writing *Margaret* is to provide an ideological antidote for the social ills caused by Calvinist theology, the novel concludes with Livingstonians building a new Unitarian church, "a model suggested by Mr. Evelyn," in place of the old Congregationalist meeting-house (Judd 404). Congregationalist elites such as Deacon Hadlock are "inconsolable and inapproachable," refusing to recognize that their hold over the village is diminishing (404). The congregationalist mode of church polity, however, remains noticeably intact as the ideal of church and social organization, despite the apostolic appointment of its first minister. Though Christ-Church attempts to elect a local minister, a lack of candidates forces the congregation to appoint a minister from Boston to the position, the source of Margaret's humorous statement to Anna that "we have an Apostolic Bishop ordained over this diocese of Livingston!" (Judd 405). However, the Livingston community's initial attempt to choose a Unitarian minister from their own congregation indicates that the congregationalist polity has been retained as the ideal model of church governance in Livingston.

Livingston's new Christ-Church, however, retains more than the congregationalist mode of church organization; it also retains Winthrop's vision of an interdependent community built on common charity and shared religious beliefs. Yet Livingston's new Unitarian church, adhering to the tenet of moral perfectibility, attempts to fulfill Winthrop's objective of interdependence by discarding the original model's dependence on Calvin's tenet of total depravity. As Margaret's letter to Anna indicates, this arrival of Unitarianism to Livingston brings "a delightful change" over the No.4 tavern and the Mons Christi (formerly The Pond) area (409). Whereas in the era of the Calvinist meeting-house the area was defined by its inhabitants' "indolence and dissipation," the No.4 tavern area now possesses a "truly picturesque appearance," due to the fact that its inhabitants no longer "drink any ardent spirits" (Judd 410). This positive change in the former Pond region has spread to the town of Livingston itself, as "many have abandoned drinking, and four distilleries have stopped" (Judd 410). For Margaret, the change depicted in The Pond region signifies the community's religious and moral transformation in abandoning the old Congregationalism, stating, "God made it [Mons Christi] a beautiful spot, and man has restored its fallen image" (Judd 410). The spiritual transformation of Livingston, indicated by the wholesale abandonment of alcohol and subsequent restoration of their "fallen image", is the result of both the abandonment of the old Calvinistic social order and the new Unitarian church's view of humanity's moral capacity and capability. Though he is not unlike his Calvinist predecessor Parson Welles when the Unitarian Bishop of Livingston claims "Temperance is a Christian grace" and preaches "strongly against the Sin of Intemperance," the inhabitants of The Pond area, once treated like social pariahs due to their intemperance, have now reformed their sinful

ways voluntarily due to Unitarianism's more positive view of human nature as essentially good and morally improvable. Instead of having to conform to Congregationalism's religious and moral standards under threat of exclusion and outright banishment, members of the new Unitarian-congregationalist system voluntarily amend and regulate their behavior because they are positively encouraged to morally improve themselves. In the context of Winthrop's social ideal, this new Unitarian-driven congregationalist social construct fulfills the requirement of a prescribed set of moral guidelines for the community while ensuring that each segment of the community acts with the well-being of the community in mind because the new system discards the total depravity doctrine that formerly necessitated the need for strict moral regulation; if human nature is essentially good and morally perfectible, then the need for moral regulation by the community is far less urgent.

When read trans-historically, Sylvester Judd's clear purpose in addressing social injustice results in *Margaret*'s ability to expose the Puritan, Congregationalist ideological legacy of the seventeenth century at work in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century New England village. The novel's vision of a reformed, Unitarian-congregationalist society works to both fulfill John Winthrop's social ideal and respond to its dependence on the total depravity doctrine. Through the example of the reformed, Unitarian-congregationalist Livingston community, *Margaret* depicts a social ideal based on essential human goodness and moral perfectibility, an ideal that does not work to classify, marginalize and demonize those who fail to meet the community's prescribed standards of religiosity and moral behavior based on their geographical, social, or economic difference from the community. Judd's Unitarian social model instead

encourages voluntary adherence to community moral guidelines on the premise of individual self-improvement. As a work of historical value, *Margaret* signifies Judd's vital role in the fierce ideological debates between conservative Calvinist and liberal Unitarian and Transcendentalist voices regarding the inherent nature and moral capacity of humanity and how they in turn questioned New England society's ability to ensure and enact social justice for all of its constituents, regardless of their social, political, economic, and religious unorthodoxy.

CHAPTER IV

THE SCARLET LETTER, GENDER INEQUALITY, AND THE TRANS-HISTORICITY OF THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY

Critical scholarship surrounding Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* has primarily dealt with the author's nineteenth-century political and philosophical environment. These critics emphasize Hawthorne's distrust of political and social revolution and interpret Hester's character as a symbol for liberal compromise and reform over radical systemic change in nineteenth-century American society. Other critics focus on Hawthorne's keen interest in seventeenth-century Puritan society, seeing Hester Prynne's character and the injustice she suffers in the novel as analogous to the trial and excommunication of Anne Hutchinson on charges of heresy. A third group of Feminist critics interpret *The Scarlet Letter* as addressing the ingrained injustice women face in a deeply patriarchal society and culture, seeing Hester as the victim of gender-based social injustice who then successfully defies the constrictions unjustly placed upon her by Puritan society.

These critical arguments are vital to understanding *The Scarlet Letter*. However, these critics primarily situate their arguments on the assumption that the novel, a historical romance written in nineteenth-century America, deals primarily with the philosophical, political, and moral issues prevalent in the author's contemporary cultural

environment. But when the *Scarlet Letter* is viewed as a transhistorical novel, the *Scarlet Letter* becomes more than just a historical platform from which Hawthorne addresses a nineteenth-century audience. The novel addresses the problematic ideological root of gender inequality in nineteenth-century New England society in its seventeenth-century Puritan antecedent. Specifically, the novel demonstrates how the Calvinist doctrine of total depravity informs the Puritan Congregationalist community's view of gender and its significance to the moral integrity of their society. Consequently, Hester Prynne is not only a victim of patriarchy, she is a victim of a particular set of theological principles that posit that all women are not only ontologically inferior to men but are in consequence more vulnerable to lapsing back into humanity's original state of wickedness. For Puritan-era Boston, Hester's presence threatens the unity and stability of society itself; her allegedly compromised moral nature as an identified adulteress makes her a potential agent for social and moral contamination within the Congregationalist construct. Though some critics have correctly drawn biographical parallels between Hester Prynne's humiliation on the scaffold and the public ostracism Margaret Fuller faced in having a child out of wedlock in Hawthorne's own time, it is specifically Fuller's interpretation of self reliance that enables Hester to expose and defy the ideological forces reinforcing the patriarchy, forcing the Puritan community to question its assumed belief in her morally compromised status. Consequently, *The Scarlet Letter*'s depiction of gender-based inequality in seventeenth-century mirrors the gender inequality occurring in its contemporary cultural context, forcing its nineteenth-century New England audience into question its own society's ability to enact and ensure justice for its constituents. In Hester's self reliance, the novel furthermore represents the theological and philosophical

debates between Calvinists and their Transcendentalist and Unitarian opponents over the nature and moral capacity of humanity in the early nineteenth century.

Critics have largely focused on Hawthorne's political, social, and philosophical environment to interpret The *Scarlet Letter's* meaning and purpose. They interpret Hester Prynne's character as representing the need for political compromise or as representing Transcendentalist thought. Larry Reynolds argues that Hawthorne's concerns with "actual revolutions, past and present" inform the "political context" that "shape[ed] the structure, characterizations, and themes of the work" (44). For Reynolds, *The Scarlet Letter* demonstrates Hawthorne drawing "upon the issues and rhetoric he was encountering in the present," indicating Hawthorne's skepticism and distaste for "the violence, the bloodshed" and "extended chaos" that occurred in various revolutions across Europe in the nineteenth century (66-67). Reynolds argues that Hester ultimately "forsakes her radicalism and recognizes that the women who would lead the reform movements of the future and establish women's rights must be less 'stained with sin,' less 'bowed down with shame' than she" (65). Reynolds also argues that Margaret Fuller was one of Hawthorne's models for Hester Prynne, as "both had the problem of facing a Puritan society encumbered by a child of questionable legitimacy" and "both were concerned with social reform and the role of woman in society" (66). For Reynolds, Hester's alleged abandonment of ambitions to organize a radical movement to end gender inequality in her society further indicates Hawthorne's moderate political views and personal skepticism of radical social reform in general.

Like Reynolds, Sacvan Bercovitch focuses on Hawthorne's moderate political views and skepticism towards social revolution in *The Scarlet Letter*. Despite the

injustice she faced in Puritan Boston, Bercovitch argues that Hester's return to New England, in which she "takes up the letter of her own free will" and "reconstitutes herself as a counselor of patience and faith," signifies that Hester has transformed from a potential revolutionary to a moderate agent of progress (23). For Bercovitch, Hester's transformation revolves around the meaning she attributes to the letter *A* she wears, which at once "may be a tragic symbol of memory, the *memento mori* of her radical fantasies" of orchestrating a social revolution for women's rights and at the same time is "the symbol of Emersonian hope….as being a more effective agent of progress than [radical political action]" (19-20). For Bercovitch, Hester compromises by exchanging her "radical fantasies" of enacting a program of systemic change in the Puritan community for a more moderate model that emphasizes the individual's role as the agent who possesses a nearly unlimited potential to continuously enact and encourage social reform in society. Hence, Hester's compromise calls her to encourage gender reform by becoming the site of social transformation, to become the symbol of women's potential when treated as equal members of society.

Thomas R. Mitchell and Michael Pringle align with Reynolds and Bercovitch in interpreting *The Scarlet Letter* through Hawthorne's cultural environment, emphasizing Hawthorne's connection to the Transcendentalist movement and its proponents. Like Reynolds, Mitchell argues that Margaret Fuller substantially influenced Hawthorne's characterization of Hester Prynne. However, he differs in that he does not see Fuller as simply *a* biographical model for Hester, but *the* biographical model for Hester. Mitchell argues that "Hawthorne envisions Fuller's ordeal on the scaffold of public opinion in nineteenth-century New England" (130). For Mitchell, Hester's humiliation on the

scaffold in Puritan-era Boston for adultery mirrors Fuller's public humiliation in nineteenth-century New England in conceiving a child out of wedlock. Mitchell asserts that Hawthorne "imagined her [Fuller] returning [to Boston], as Hester did, to resume her work as counselor to wronged women," in an "ironic prophecy of her own inability, by her own standards, to become the 'destined prophetess' of women's rights in the United States" after experiencing social ostracism (130). In this sense, Mitchell's argument aligns with Reynolds in that Hester's radicalism is subdued in reconciliation through a recognition that she, as Hawthorne anticipated Fuller would recognize on her return to the United States, is unable and unworthy to enact systemic change to an unjust social system immediately. Pringle too identifies Transcendentalist figures as models for Hester Prynne. He interprets Hester's thoughts and actions and, as a result, the meaning of the novel, "through the lens of Thoreau's contemporaneous model of symbolic political action in 'Resistance to Civil Government'" (Pringle 31). For Pringle, Hester's passive defiance to the unjust morality laws in Puritan society "parallels Thoreau's model of civil disobedience, where action itself becomes symbolic and, conversely, the symbol can become a form of action" (33). The letter *A* that marks Hester's immorality effectively becomes a "lever" or "a counter-friction to stop [or slow] the machine" of institutionalized injustice (qtd. in Pringle 34).

Though Railton aligns with Reynolds, Bercovitch, Mitchell and Pringle in their emphasis on Hawthorne's nineteenth-century American cultural and social environment, he deviates from them in critical method. Using reader-response criticism, he argues that "although they [the characters of the *The Scarlet Letter*] dress like seventeenth-century colonists, their reactions, and the assumptions behind those reactions, are those of the

genteel readers who formed Hawthorne's mid-nineteenth-century audience" (Railton 352). He further asserts that Hawthorne was fully aware of this fact, and therefore "the first step in appreciating Hawthorne's 'plan' [in the novel] is to recognize the way he writes into the novel a version of his reading public, disguised in period costumes" (Railton 352). Railton's study merely affirms what prior critics grant in interpreting the *Scarlet Letter*: it is a nineteenth-century American novel written originally for a nineteenth-century American audience, regardless of its historical Puritan setting.

Rather than exploring Hawthorne's contemporary cultural environment, Charles Ryskamp, Michael J. Colacurcio, and Agnes McNeill Donohue emphasize The *Scarlet Letter*'s seventeenth-century New England setting and Hawthorne's deep interest in the Puritan past. Ryskamp argues that "Hawthorne used the most creditable history of Boston available "to re-create the historical setting in which the novel takes place (257). Colacurcio too emphasizes Hawthorne's interest in Puritan New England, arguing that the model for Hester Prynne's character was Anne Hutchinson, the woman who was convicted of heresy by the Puritan community due to her Antinomian beliefs, rather than any figure from Hawthorne's contemporary era. Though Colacurcio grants that *The Scarlet Letter* "is probably not intended as an allegory of New England's Antinomian Crisis," he asserts that Hester Prynne's characterization is closely aligned to Hutchinson's in that she is "an extraordinary woman who falls afoul of a theocratic and male-dominated society" (461). Both Hutchinson and Hester Prynne "have careers as nurses and counsellors to other women" and "both make positive pronouncements about the inapplicability of what the majority of their contemporaries take to be inviolable moral law" (Colacurcio 462). For Colacurcio, Hester's close parallel with Hutchinson's own

life and suffering under a patriarchal Puritan society indicates Hawthorne's interest in the Puritan past, the case involving Ann Hutchinson in particular. Like Ryskamp and Colacurcio, Agnes McNeill Donohue emphasizes Hawthorne's interest in the Puritan past, asserting that Hawthorne had no ulterior motive in writing *The Scarlet Letter* other than to "dramatize pitiful sinners' attempts 'to spit from the mouth the withered apple seed' of the lost Eden" (36-37) .Though Donohue aligns with Colacurcio in that Hester "becomes an Antinomian [like] Anne Hutchinson," she emphasizes Hawthorne's conflicted relationship with Calvinist doctrine, arguing that "the black flower of Calvin's doctrine of total depravity--of man's necessary yet culpable sinning—stimulated Hawthorne's imagination as no Emersonian Rhodora would" (36). Donahue rejects any interpretation involving the novel's alleged Transcendentalist influence, suggesting that it is Hawthorne's tension with his Puritan background that informs the novel's purpose in depicting characters who futilely attempt to free themselves from their morally depraved condition.

Though Reynolds, Pringle, and Colacurcio's arguments recognize Hester's suffering as the result of an inherently unjust patriarchal society, feminist critics Nina Baym and Shari Benstock emphasize this over both Hawthorne's political and philosophical leanings and his interest in early New England history. Baym argues that Hester's development in isolation from the patriarchal society results in the cultivation of "a certain feminist ideology," enabling her to defy the injustices she experiences throughout the novel connected her alleged sexual immorality (135). In contrast with Reynolds, Bercovitch, and Mitchell, Baym argues that Hester's return to New England wearing the letter *A* is neither a moderate compromise nor a failure to enact radical social

change; rather, it is “a small, but real, triumph for the heroine” in exposing the injustice of the constraints placed upon her to the Puritan community (136). Following Baym, Benstock argues that Hester “subverts the Puritan-patriarchal laws of meaning” as she “embroider and embellishes the community’s representational codes,” particularly the letter *A*, as a symbol for sin and immorality (Benstock 397). Hester then “refuses to name her child’s father, placing Pearl…. outside the bo(u)nds of Puritan ideology” (Benstock 397). By blurring the meanings of Puritan symbolism, Benstock argues that Hester wrests herself and Pearl from the negative valuation the patriarchal society has imposed on her as an adulteress.

Taking up readings that argue for Hester’s resemblance to Margaret Fuller, I would argue that Hester’s means of defiance in the *Scarlet Letter* is more in line with Margaret Fuller’s feminist revisioning of Emersonian self reliance. Though Reynolds and Mitchell correctly note the biographical parallels between Margaret Fuller’s life as signifying the novel’s intent in addressing gender inequality in the nineteenth-century, they do not address the role Fuller’s philosophy plays in Hester’s thoughts and actions. Furthermore, though Reynolds, Mitchell, Bercovitch, Pringle and Railton are correct in tracing the influence of Transcendentalist figures and their thought in *The Scarlet Letter*, they do not adequately consider the importance of the novel’s seventeenth-century Puritan setting. Conversely, Ryskamp, Colacurcio and Donohue downplay Hawthorne’s indebtedness to Transcendentalist philosophy and his concerns for the political and social issues of his contemporary environment, overemphasizing Hawthorne’s personal relationship to Calvinism and seventeenth-century Puritan history. One need not adhere to a reading that concerns itself only with Hawthorne’s contemporary cultural

environment, nor to one that emphasizes the Puritan past in which the novel is set; rather, the novel can be interpreted as addressing the problematic ideological structures that propel nineteenth-century New England society by locating their origin in New England society's Puritan antecedent. Though Baym and Benstock correctly identify the source of inequality Hester faces in Puritan Boston as part of a historic, generalized patriarchal system that continues to pervade American society, they do not identify the patriarchal system as a distinctive, Congregationalist type originating from Puritan society that is dependent on Calvin's perception of human nature as inherently depraved. By enacting a plan of self reliance, consistently performing charitable actions for the poor and less-fortunate independently of social obligation or moral guidelines, Hester manages to overcome her consignment to the role of adulteress and becomes a major source of healing and wisdom for other Puritan women. Hester's self reliance and nonconformity in regards to the Congregationalist status quo compel Puritan Boston and *The Scarlet Letter*'s nineteenth-century New England audience to question the legitimacy of their society and their ability to ensure and enact justice for women.

Puritan views of adultery informed the Boston community's response to Hester's alleged crime in *The Scarlet Letter*. In *Of Plymouth Plantation*, William Bradford pointed to the "incontinency between persons unmarried" as well as "some married persons also" as causes for the community's decline and disintegration (351). Adhering to the Calvinist perception of human nature as totally depraved, Bradford speculated that the cause of this sudden lapse of morality within the society was "our corrupt natures, which so hardly bridled, subdued and mortified" (351). Though he held that all humanity was inherently morally depraved, even within a social construct developed specifically to separate a

chosen population from the perceived material wickedness of the world, he questioned whether this sudden outbreak of immorality (including adultery) could have been "more stopped by strict laws" (Bradford 352). These laws would serve to enforce Calvinist-interpreted Christian moral law in the community, as well as compel the community to strive for moral self-regulation. Though those in the community found intemperate were liable to strict disciplinary action, punishment for sexual immorality in Puritan New England was particularly severe. Initially adultery in the Massachusetts Bay area was punished by execution of both offending parties, as one law dating from 1631 states that "if any man have carnall copulacon with another mans wife, they both shalbee punished by death" (242). By the late 1630's, some Puritan settlements such as New Plymouth enacted less severe punishments. Along with punishment "by whiping two several times; viz. one whiles the Court is in being att which they are convicted of the fact, and the 2cond time as the court shal order," Puritan settlements forced both offending parties "to weare two Capital leters viz. A D. cut out in cloth and sowed on thiere uper most Garments, or thiere arme or backe" (243). The persons convicted of adultery were effectively marked as sexual deviants and, more importantly, threats to the cohesion of the Congregationalist polity itself. As adulterers, they represented to the Puritan community the threat of failing to self-regulate their originally depraved natures in accordance with religious law, an act that had the capability to corrupt the rest of the community and destroy the structural integrity of the society and leave its constituents at the mercy of the hostile, fallen world surrounding its boundaries.

At first glance, the severe punishments enacted in cases of adultery in the Puritan community are at least equitable in that both parties are punished with the same measure,

whether it be execution or the bearing of a public mark of shame. However, John Cotton's "A Meet Help, or, a Wedding sermon" indicates otherwise, demonstrating what a female member of an adulterous pair would signify to the integrity of the Congregationalist system. Cotton took what he saw as a progressive stance against "a sort of Blasphemers then who dispise and decry them [women], calling them a *necessary evil*" due to Eve's role in tempting Adam's fall to sin in the garden of Eden (14). Though Cotton conceded that "It is true, She [Eve] being seduc'd her self, seduced him [Adam]," he argued that women were made "in his [man's] image of his own kind, like to him, which should be as it were, a Second self" (20). In this passage, Cotton establishes an ontological hierarchy that is present in much of Christian thought; the woman is perceived as lesser derivatives of humanity's first and superior form, man. Cotton then identified the Puritan marriage ideal as a "*Domestick Church*" (22). For Cotton, woman's inferior ontological position as man's "second self" should not discourage goodwill from men to women, despite the circumstances of man's fall into sin by woman. Assigning women the role of "help meet," women were to be "Graceful in his [men's] eyes; grateful to him, always as it were in his fight and affiliant of the work of his life" (20-21). When the Puritan marriage ideal of the "Domestick church" is understood in conjunction with the objectives of the Congregationalist ideological system, marriage within the community was meant to be a microcosm, a smaller version of the socio-religious structure of the Puritan community. Subsequently, the threat of adultery to the cohesion and integrity of the construct was magnified; if there was infidelity within a marriage, the inevitable disintegration of unity between husband and wife mirrored the potential disintegration of the community at large. The threat the female party in a case of adultery

posed to moral and structural cohesion is also greatly amplified; the offending woman, who was understood to be morally inferior to man by design, was consequently more prone to lapsing back into the original state of wickedness that the community sought to keep outside of its confines, making other Puritan women more liable to accusations of adultery if not immorality in general.

In *The Scarlet Letter*, the female adulterer's inequitable position in Puritan society is apparent in the women of the community's particularly severe reaction to Hester's sin of adultery. The women of Boston, the "gossips," are the most hostile to her, as she mounts the scaffold with the letter *A* sewn on the front of her dress. A member of this group of women, whom the narrator identifies as "the ugliest as well as the most pitiless of these self-constituted judges," calls for the harshest punishment imaginable concerning Hester's alleged adultery:

What do we talk of marks and brands, whether on the bodice of her gown, or the flesh of her forehead? .... This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die. Is there not law for it? Truly, there is, both in the Scripture and the statute-book. Then let the magistrates, who have made it of no effect, thank themselves if their own wives and daughters go astray! (Hawthorne 56).

The varying degrees of punishment each of these women advocate for Hester's adultery more than demonstrates Hawthorne's knowledge of the adultery laws present in Puritan New England. The open contempt each woman has for Hester demonstrates their understanding of the threat adultery poses to the moral and structural cohesion of the Puritan community, as well as their vulnerable position as women within it. For the woman arguing for capital punishment, any punishment less than death would result in

the potential moral corruption of women in the society at large, as the magistrates' own "wives and daughters" are liable to "go astray" of the prescribed moral laws of the community, resulting in the moral and social disintegration Bradford feared was happening in Plymouth. When the "most pitiless" of the women declares that Hester Prynne has "brought shame upon us all," she insinuates that Hester's adultery has tarnished the image of all women within the Puritan community. For the gossips, it is not their own actions that they are ashamed of; rather they are ashamed of what immoral acts each woman is capable of. Hester's sexual immorality serves to remind the women of Puritan Boston of their vulnerable state within the Congregationalist system, that they as women are more likely to lapse into humanity's inherently compromised state than any male member of the Puritan community if their moral behavior is not subjected to strict regulation. This is further evident after Hester's departure from prison, when the narrator of *The Scarlet Letter* states that Hester's prior position atop the scaffold was less miserable to her than her current state. Now, she must live among the very people who condemned her to punishment, "a general symbol at which the preacher and moralist might point, and which they might vivify and embody their images of woman's frailty and sinful passion" (Hawthorne 75). Essentially, Hester becomes another kind of "help-meet" to the Puritan community; she is left alive and within its borders as the Puritan authorities' pedagogical instrument to not simply inform women of the consequences of sexual immorality, but to also reinforce women's inferior ontological position as more susceptible to moral degeneration. This instrument's end, then, is to ensure that women adhere to the moral self-regulation the social construct demands in order to maintain the community's structural integrity.

Though the Puritan magistrates intend to use Hester as a tool to reinforce gender hierarchy in accordance with Calvinistic morality laws, their pronouncement paradoxically grants her a level of freedom of thought and action not held by most Puritan women. Through this freedom, the novel depicts Hester embodying Margaret Fuller's ideal of self reliance, as Hester persuades the Puritan community (and the novel's nineteenth-century audience) to voluntarily question and potentially reform gender-based inequality in their community. In Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century,* Miranda embodies Fuller's interpretation of self reliance, one who was introduced to what she calls "Religion" or "a sense that what the soul is capable to ask it must attain, and that, though I might be aided and instructed by others, I must depend on myself as the only constant friend" (Fuller 316). Similar to Emerson's concept of self reliance, Miranda understands that she must rely on her own moral capacity and judgement independent of her social environment, despite society's effort to control women's capacity to self-determination by encouraging them to adhere to social "rule from without" rather than "to unfold it from within" by pursuing individual agency (Fuller 316). For Fuller, Miranda's success in life as a self-reliant woman proved "that the restraints upon the sex were insuperable only to those who think them so, or who noisily strive to break them" (Fuller 316). More importantly, Miranda's self reliance also results in gaining the attention and respect of "not only refined, but very coarse men" who "approved and aided one in whom they saw resolution and clearness of design" (Fuller 316). Fuller's ideal of self reliance effectively augments Emerson's original concept. In his essay "Self-Reliance," Emerson states "what I must do is all that concerns me, not what people think," indicating that his concept primarily deals with nonconformity to public opinion

(263). Though Fuller's interpretation shares the same emphasis on nonconformity in order to enact a project of self reliance, such nonconformity has positive social ramifications, for women in particular. Unlike Emerson's self-reliant man, who is more singularly concerned with cultivating individual goodness and moral improvement independently of socially-imposed concepts of moral justice and less interested in how his self reliance could potentially benefit society, Fuller's self-reliant woman acts specifically to implement her nonconformity to improve her social environment. For Fuller, Miranda's nonconformity and self reliance not only expose the fallacy in perceiving women as inherently inferior to men, but have the potential to persuade society, especially men, to recognize the necessity of reforming social inequality in society.

Hester's characterization in *The Scarlet Letter* does not depend on similarities to Margaret Fuller's life. Rather, Hester exhibits thoughts and actions that mirror Fuller's interpretation of self reliance, enabling her to overcome the Puritan community's attempt to use her status as an identified threat to moral and social order and to reinforce women's inferior position within its confines. Hester's awareness that she must rely upon herself independently of the Puritan ideological system that has largely abandoned her to the prescribed identity of adulteress is demonstrated in the narrator's description of Hester, after her evening encounter with Dimmesdale at the scaffold:

> Much of the marble coldness of Hester's impression was to be attributed to the circumstance that her life had turned, in a great measure, from passion and feeling, to thought. Standing alone in the world—alone, as to any dependence on society, and with little Pearl to be guided and protected—alone, and hopeless of

> retrieving her position, even had she not scorned to consider it desirable, —she cast away the fragments of a broken chain. The world's law was no law for her mind. (Hawthorne 134)

Unlike Fuller's Miranda, whose self reliance is a product of her privilege as a daughter to a man who encouraged such self-dependence, Hester *must* be self-reliant. She is "alone in the world," spurned by the Puritan community; she cannot rely on its justice or protection for her or her daughter. Recognizing that the Puritan community of Boston has irrevocably isolated her from participating in society, Hester decides to "cast away the fragments of a broken chain," or any notion that society will grant her the protection and justice once granted to her as a member of the community. In discarding the Congregationalist system's ideological legitimacy, Hester liberates her mind; though she still must exist physically as a social pariah in Puritan Boston, she frees herself from the ideology that would relegate her to a position of ontological and social inferiority.

Hester then demonstrates her capacity for self reliance in *The Scarlet Letter* by resisting any temptation to outwardly express frustration or anger concerning her social marginalization in the Puritan community. In the face of the Puritan community's insults and derision, she consistently acts with the well-being of the community in mind. The narrator states that despite the Puritan community's hostile sentiments towards her, Hester "never battled with the public, but submitted uncomplainingly to its worst usage," making "no claim upon it, in requital for what she suffered" (Hawthorne 131). Hester's refusal to respond to or complain about her treatment by members of the Puritan community indicates her continuous adherence to self reliance. After recognizing that she will not procure any justice for the inequity she suffers from the community, she resigns

herself to continuing her life in indifference to society's contempt and ridicule. This position, however, is not one of total indifference to society or humanity itself. The narrator states that "while Hester never put forward even the humblest title to share in the world's privileges," she was "quick to acknowledge her sisterhood with the race of man, whenever benefits were to be conferred" (Hawthorne 131). Hester's genuine concern for her community's well-being despite her status is demonstrated in her readiness "to give of her little substance to every demand of poverty," despite the fact "the bitter-hearted pauper threw back a gibe in requital of the food brought to his door, or the garments wrought for him by the fingers that could have embroidered a monarch's robe" (Hawthorne 131). Hester's self-reliant behavior, not allowing the injustice of the Puritan community's hostility to affect her and acting independently of any governmental or societal body to ensure the welfare of the very same community, fully demonstrates Fuller's concept of the self-reliant woman at work in *The Scarlet Letter*. By continuously acting for the moral benefit of the Puritan community despite its hostility to her, Hester defies the social position that the social system has cast her in as a morally compromised individual who is representative of women's vulnerability to lapsing into an originally depraved state.

The long-term consequences of Hester's continued concern for the welfare of the Boston community are positive, as the community over time sees her as far less of a moral and social threat and more of a beneficial, if not an exemplary, member of their society. The narrator states that the Puritan community had "quite forgiven Hester Prynne for her frailty; nay, more, they [have] begun to look upon the scarlet letter as a token, not of that one sin…. but of her many good deeds since" (Hawthorne 133). Hester's

continuously selfless acts for the benefit of society even softens the Puritan magistrates' original designation of Hester as the model female-sinner, as their "sour and rigid wrinkles were relaxing into something which, in the due course of years, might grow to be an expression of almost benevolence" (Hawthorne 132-133). Hester's gaining of public trust and even affection due to her service to the community demonstrates Fuller's concept of self reliance achieving its objective. In her continuous independent efforts to provide for the poorest of Boston's citizens despite their contempt for her, Hester has convinced much of society, as Miranda does, of the "clearness of design" of her character and intentions regarding the well-being of society. Consequentially, Hester compels the Puritan community to radically reconstruct their perception of Hester and the letter *A* she is forced to wear. The narrator indicates this radical change in the community's perception of Hester as an adulterer:

> Such helpfulness was found in her—so much power to do, and power to sympathize, —that many people refused to interpret the scarlet A by its original signification. They said it meant Able; so strong was Hester Prynne, with a woman's strength. (Hawthorne 132)

Hester's "power to do" and "power to sympathize" demonstrate the Puritan society's positive reception of her self-reliant behavior. Acting independently of any social or religious prescription, Hester proves to the community that once reviled her that any previous identity she had as a morally compromised individual and potential threat to society's social and moral integrity no longer bears any meaning in light of her virtuous actions. Furthermore, the "woman's strength" Hester possesses indicates that Hester has forced the Puritan community to question the ideological forces guiding their society

about women's moral capacity outside of the strict regulation of the Congregationalist system.

The most significant effect of Hester's self reliance in the face of social injustice is Arthur Dimmesdale's guilt-driven revelation that he is the father of Hester's child. After Dimmesdale's declaration on the scaffold alongside Hester and Pearl, the narrator of the novel states that "the crowd was in a tumult," with "men of rank and dignity….so taken by surprise, and so perplexed as to the purport of what they saw—unable to receive the explanation which most readily presented itself, or to imagine any other" (Hawthorne 195). Governor Bellingham urgently tells Dimmesdale to "wave off that woman! Cast off that child!... do not blacken your fame, and perish in dishonor.... Would you bring infamy on your sacred profession?" (194). These passages demonstrate subversion of the Puritan's Calvinist, Congregationalist ideological system. It is not merely another member of the society that reveals himself as the father of Hester's illegitimate child, but the system's ideal embodiment of male ontological superiority over the inferior and more depravity-prone female: the Puritan minister. The ramifications of Dimmesdale's revelation, that he is equally liable to lapse into the morally compromised state as Hester or any other woman, are not lost on the Congregationalist system's patriarchal guardians. Bellingham recognizes immediately what Dimmesdale's revelation would do to "the sacred profession," both his and all Puritan ministers'; it would undermine the legitimacy of the ideological system they perpetuate, especially in their reduction of women to an inherently more depraved status than their own. For Bellingham and the other Puritan magistrates, Dimmesdale's revelation puts into question their status as the primary arbiters of religious, civic, and moral authority in the community. If men, especially the

men of the cloth, are equally vulnerable to moral weaknesses that they as Congregationalist leaders attribute particularly to women, then their largely unquestioned role as the primary agents of justice in the community is at risk.

The Scarlet Letter does not end with social compromise, nor a call for a radical upheaval of the social structure in place in the nineteenth century. Rather, the novel forces its nineteenth-century New England audience to question the legitimacy of the seventeenth-century Puritan foundations for gender inequality in New England. Hester's indebtedness to Margaret Fuller's concept of self reliance enables her to expose the inherent injustices in New England's Puritan antecedent, compelling both Puritan Boston and nineteenth-century New Englanders to come to terms with the social results of the Calvinist tenet of total depravity perpetuated by the Congregationalist polity's historical dominance in the region. Contradicting Mitchell's argument, the novel does not indicate a failure on Hester's part to be the "destined prophetess" to organize and lead the fight for women's equality in her society; nor does it indicate her settling for moderate compromise. Hester instead achieves a personal victory against an unjust patriarchal system that would use her as a symbol for women's moral depravity. In enacting a project of passive resistance, shirking the valuation placed upon her by the Calvinist-powered social system and proving herself a beneficial and morally exemplary individual to a society initially hostile to her very existence within its confines, she undermines the legitimacy of Congregationalist ideology. Dimmesdale's revelation at the end only consolidates Hester's victory. It effectively dismantles the Congregationalist polity's ontological devaluation of women as more prone to moral degeneration, presenting to the Puritan society the horrifying reality that the ministers, the primary perpetuators of the

ideology within the construct, are no less of a threat to the moral and structural fabric of the community. Interpreting *The Scarlet Letter* as a transhistorical novel suggest it's importance to understanding the social effect of the intense theological debate in nineteenth-century New England concerning the essential question of humanity's intrinsic nature and moral capability.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: THE PURITAN IDEOLOGICAL LEGACY REASSESED

In the concluding passages of *The Scarlet Letter*, the narrator notes the Boston community's speculations on the origin of Dimmesdale's stigma, identical to the letter *A* Hester is forced to wear, "imprinted in the flesh" of his chest (Hawthorne 198). Some attribute it to Dimmesdale's guilt-driven project of self-torture. Others blame Chillingworth and his malicious, arcane designs. Others yet contend that the stigma is a natural product of long years of guilt and remorse in failing to confess his part in Hester's adultery. The narrator, however, resists any attempt to validate such speculation:

> The reader may choose among these theories. We have thrown all the light we could acquire upon the portent, and would gladly, now that it has done its office, erase its deep print out of our own brain; where long meditation has fixed it in every undesirable distinctness. (Hawthorne 198).

The narrator's unwillingness to identify the cause of Dimmesdale's stigma, leaving it to "the reader" of nineteenth-century New England to decide which interpretation is more valid, signals more than the narrator's impetus to leave the novel open to interpretation. His real purpose in narration is to "throw all the light" he [or they] could upon the letter *A*, representative of a prescribed moral and religious ideology strictly enforced through social, political, and judicial institutions to the detriment of the individual. This ideology,

the doctrine of total depravity first posited by Calvin that was perpetuated through the congregational apparatus since the seventeenth century, had "done its office," or run its course as an ethical method of perceiving human nature and legitimate method for enacting and ensuring social justice. Hence, the narrator works to "erase its deep print" not out of his own brain, but out of the ideological framework powering nineteenth-century New England society, as it had been "fixed" in "every undesirable distinctness" of New England life.

The *Scarlet Letter*, like *Hope Leslie* and *Margaret*, traces the ideological origins of social injustice in New England's Puritan, Congregationalist past. Each novel achieves this by exposing the seventeenth or eighteenth-century root of racial, class, and gender discrimination, implementing either Unitarian theology or Transcendentalist philosophy to question, defy, or even present a social and ontological alternative to the Calvinistic norm. The social and ideological ramifications of critiquing the Puritan ideological legacy, however, varies. Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* presents a definitively cynical vision of a future New England. The failure of the Puritan community to reconcile with Native Americans is the result of their inability to see them as anything other than morally depraved members of a hostile, fallen world, irrevocably damned by God to suffer eternal punishment. Despite the existence and actions of characters like Hope in New England, who believe in the essential goodness of all human beings regardless of race, religion, or culture, a New England that retains its Congregationalist outlook on humanity will continue to perpetuate injustice on all considered not worthy of social inclusion. Sylvester Judd's *Margaret* could not be more different. It presents a new, Unitarian New England village that, though still implementing the congregationalist

mode of church organization, encourages all of its constituents, regardless of class or social standing, to follow a new moral law in accordance to their own wishes to improve their now theologically validated status as inherently good beings. Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* indicates neither the cynicism of *Hope Leslie* nor the optimism of *Margaret*. Though the novel presents a Calvinist-dominated society as a near-implacable perpetuator of patriarchal hierarchy and gender-based discrimination, Hester's nonconformity and self reliance suggest that it is the individual's capacity to qualify thoughts and actions independently of socially imposed moral codes that result not only in personal growth and transformation, but garner potentially positive results in persuading society to reform.

Sacvan Bercovitch's concept of American Jeremiad is important to consider in context with *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter*, as each novel demonstrates a response to the Puritan ideological legacy and then presents a challenge or alternative to it. For Bercovitch, the Puritan "errand," the impetus to create an ideal society along a set of prescribed moral and religious guidelines, inevitably pervaded all aspects of American society and culture. Though subsequent generations of Americans were "relatively free" from the Puritan need "to include all the standards of Protestant historiography," such as a "strict grounding in Scripture" and firm belief in "providence," Americans appropriated the fundamental objective of the Puritan social ideal in that they "consecrated the American present as a movement from promise to fulfilment, and translated fulfillment from its meaning within the closed system of sacred history into a metaphor for limitless secular improvement" (Bercovitch 94). This "Yankee Jeremiad" largely retained the same fundamental traits of its Puritan antecedent, containing "a moral distinction between

the Old world and the New," the "interrelation of material and spiritual blessings," "the concepts of a new chosen people whose special calling entailed special trials," and "above all a mythic view of history that extended New England's past into an apocalypse which stood 'near, even at the door,' requiring one last great act, one more climactic pouring out of the spirit, in order to realize itself" (Bercovitch 94). For Bercovitch, the American Jeremiad, the primary ideological force pervading *all* American culture, traces an unbroken lineage back to a point of origin in Puritan New England.

Though the concept of American Jeremiad is helpful in identifying the transhistorical pervasiveness of the Puritan ideological legacy *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter* respond to, Bercovitch's argument that this ideological legacy pervades *all* American life and culture are not relevant. *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet letter* respond to the Puritan legacy in a specifically New England context. Though they trace the Puritans' errand as a major source of racial, class, and gender discrimination in their own nineteenth-century environments, the social injustices and the Unitarian and Transcendentalist ideological alternatives used to expose them are unique to early nineteenth-century New England culture. Furthermore, these Unitarian and/or Transcendentalist alternatives do not necessarily indicate an "extension" of the Puritan errand to fit a new, nineteenth-century cultural environment. *Hope Leslie* presents merely the failure of the Puritan errand in enacting and ensuring justice within society. *The Scarlet Letter* suggests that it is only by divorcing oneself from the dictates of a flawed, inherently unjust society that one can achieve existential meaning, with only the potential hope that such actions result in slow degrees of social reform and subsequent fulfillment. And though *Margaret* depicts a fulfillment of the Puritan errand in responding to John

Winthrop's social ideal, it replaces far more than the superficial accoutrement of Calvinist-directed Congregationalism to envision a just and equitable society.

The significance of studying *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter* as transhistorical novels responding to the Puritan ideological legacy is twofold: the significance of the works in connection to Amanda Claybough's definition of the novel of purpose, and the significance of the works as historical and cultural artifacts that lend to a greater knowledge of the intellectual debate surrounding human moral capacity and capability occurring in early nineteenth-century New England. Though these novels exhibit Claybough's definition of the novel of purpose in their explicit or implicit impetus to address social injustice and expose the need for social reform in society, they address social injustice as it occurs within a distinctly New England setting rather than Anglo-American society in general. They furthermore do not merely address social injustice as it exists within a nineteenth-century New England social environment. Instead of calling for immediate social reform concerning a singular issue as it exists within the nineteenth-century, these novels are set in the New England of the past; they do not simply use seventeenth or eighteenth-century societies as narrative catalysts to address nineteenth-century social injustice, but to expose the origin of social injustice in New England's Puritan and Congregationalist history. Through the seventeenth-century setting of the Pequot war, *Hope Leslie* manages to both demonstrate the negative social and political ramifications of the Calvinist doctrine of total depravity in a Puritan environment, identifying it as the same ideological force powering Euro and Native American relations in nineteenth-century New England. Similarly, *The Scarlet Letter* uses the setting of Puritan Boston to trace the origins of gender inequality in nineteenth-

century New England to Congregationalism's consignment of women to an ontologically and socially inferior status within society. And though *Margaret* does not take place in the Puritan past, it depicts a late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century New England that is still deeply Congregationalist. Like *Hope Leslie* and *The Scarlet Letter*, *Margaret* explores the detrimental effects of the polity's historical legacy of excluding and outright banishing individuals who do not adequately conform to the community's Calvinistic religious and moral values.

What needs further attention in interpreting Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*, Sylvester Judd's *Margaret*, and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* as transhistorical novels is the fundamental role that female protagonists have in addressing social injustice. All three novels center around the thoughts and actions of women who embody Unitarian or Transcendentalist values. Subsequently, more research concerning the role gender play in these novels and how the novels in turn are connected to other nineteenth-century American novels that exhibit an implicit or explicit impetus to address the need for social reform.

The historical significance of studying *Hope Leslie*, *Margaret*, and *The Scarlet Letter* as transhistorical novels stems from the Unitarian and Transcendentalist doctrines each work respectively presents as a challenge to Calvinism and Congregationalism. Though each novel critiques the Puritan legacy of Calvinism and Congregationalism by tracing its role in creating social injustice throughout New England society, each also reflects the contemporary ideological debate between Calvinists and their Unitarian and Transcendentalist opponents. The key point of contention between these two parties,

humanity’s inherent moral capacity and capability, drives each novel’s critique of society’s ability to ensure and enact justice within its boundaries.

In addressing the Puritan ideological legacy, all three novels indicate the role John Calvin’s doctrine of total depravity plays in racial, class, and gender discrimination in New England society from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. Positing that humanity is inherently wicked and incapable of moral improvement without subjecting oneself to God’s mercy and authority, the doctrine is consistently countered in all three novels with a perception that humanity is instead essentially good and completely capable of moral improvement. In implementing this positive perception of human nature, these novels actively challenge the moral, political, and judicial legitimacy of society dominated by Calvin’s view of human nature; they address the marginalization and demonization of entire segments of society as either irrevocably depraved or at risk of lapsing into their originally depraved state. In its titular character, *Hope Leslie* presents an embodiment of the Unitarian concept of human nature as essentially good in action. Hope consistently believes that Magawisca and other Native American characters’ treatment at the hands of the Puritan commonwealth is unjust, seeing each individual as fully capable of making morally sound decisions regardless of race or culture. *Margaret*, aside from its titular character’s clear and well-documented Transcendentalism, presents a reformed New England village centered around a new Unitarian-driven congregationalism. In lieu of a Congregationalist society that demands moral and religious conformity on the pain of social isolation or full expulsion from the community, the new Unitarian-congregationalist system encourages moral behavior with the full consent of the community that recognizes itself as not only essentially good, but also as

fully capable of moral improvement. *The Scarlet Letter* suggests the potential social ramifications of undertaking the Transcendentalist project of self reliance. In her nonconformity to the Puritan society that would make her an example of disobedience to male authority and a symbol of female moral fragility and inferiority, Hester Prynne's sincere and self-motivated acts of charity result in an eventual change in the community's social perception of her; she transforms their view of her as a social pariah to a standard of selflessness and moral excellence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

A Guide unto Zion: Certaine Positions, Concerning a True, Visible Church. Amsterdam, 1640.

"Adultery Law (October 18,1631)." *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism*: *The Scarlet Letter. Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical, Historical, and Cultural Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Ross C. Murfin, 2nd ed. Bedford/St.Martin's, 2006, p.242.

"Adultery Law, Colony of New Plymouth (1636)." *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism*: *The Scarlet Letter. Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical, Historical, and Cultural Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Ross C. Murfin, 2nd ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006, p.242.

Bradford, William. *Of Plymouth Plantation: 1620-1647*. The Modern Library, Random House, 1981.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.1536. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Hendrickson Publishers,2008.

Channing, William Ellery. "Likeness to God." *An American Reformation: A Documentary History of Unitarian Christianity*. Ed. Sydney E. Ahlstrom and Johnathan S. Carey,Wesleyan University Press, 1985, pp.118-135.

Channing, William Ellery. "Unitarian Christianity." *An American Reformation: A Documentary History of Unitarian Christianity*. Ed. Sydney E. Ahlstrom and Johnathan S. Carey,Wesleyan University Press, 1985, pp.90-117.

Cotton, John. "A Meet Help. Or, a Wedding Sermon." Boston, 1699.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Self-Reliance." *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays &Poems*. The Library of America College Edition, 1996, pp.259-282.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The Divinity School Address." *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays &Poems*. The Library of America College Edition, 1996, pp.75-92.

Fuller, Margaret. *Woman in the Nineteenth Century and Selected Dispatches from Europe, 1846-1850. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Margaret Fuller: Selected Works*. Ed. John Carlos Rowe, Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism*: *The Scarlet Letter. Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical, Historical, and Cultural Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Ross C. Murfin, 2nd ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006, pp.21-202.

Judd, Sylvester. *Margaret: A Tale of the Real and Ideal, Blight and Bloom*. Ed. Gavin Jones. University of Massachusetts Press, 2009.

Judd, Sylvester. "Sermon VI: The Church, Illustrated by the Family and The State." *The Church: in a series of Discourses*. Crosby, Nichols, 1854.

Kelly, Mary. *The Power of her Sympathy: The Autobiography and Journal of Catharine Maria Sedgwick*. Massachusetts Historical Society, 1993.

Mather, Increase. *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England (1676): An Online Electronic Text Edition.* Ed. Paul Royster. University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Sedgwick, Catharine Maria. *Hope Leslie, or, Early Times in the Massachusetts*. Penguin, 1998.

"Transhistorical". *Merriam-Webster.com*. www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transhistorical. Accessed 9 March 2018.

Ware, Henry. "The Nature of Man." *The American Reformation: A Documentary History of Unitarian Christianity*. Ed. Sydney E. Ahlstrom and Johnathan S. Carey. Wesleyan University Press, 1985, pp.199-209.

Winthrop, John. "A Modell of Christian Charity (1630)." Hanover Historical Texts Collection, 1996.

Secondary Sources:

Baym, Nina. "[The Major Phase I, 1850: *The Scarlet Letter*]." *Critical Essays on Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter*. Ed. David B. Kesterson. G.K. Hall, 1988, pp.132-150.

Baym, Nina. "Catharine Sedgwick and Other Early Novelists." *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-1870*. Cornell University Press, 1978, pp.51-85.

Benstock, Shari. "*The Scarlet Letter* (a)doree, or the Female Body Embroidered." *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism*: *The Scarlet Letter. Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical, Historical, and Cultural Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Ross C. Murfin, 2nd ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006, pp.396-411.

Bercovitch, Sacvan. "Hawthorne's A-Morality of Compromise." *Representations*, no.24 Special Issue: America Reconstructed, 1840-1940, 1988, pp.1-27. JSTOR. Stable URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/2928474. Accessed 2 November 2017.

Bercovitch, Sacvan. "The Typology of America's Mission." *The American Jeremiad*. The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978, pp.93-131.

Brockway, Philip Judd. "Sylvester Judd: Novelist of Transcendentalism." *The New England Quarterly*. vol. 13, no. 4, 1940, pp.654-677.

Buell, Lawrence. *New England Literary Culture: From Revolution Through Renaissance*. Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Claybough, Amanda. "Social Reform and the New Transatlanticism." *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World*. Cornell University Press, 2007, pp.11-30.

Colacurcio, Michael J. "Footsteps of Anne Hutchinson: The Context of *The Scarlet Letter*." *ELH.* vol.39, no.3, 1972, pp.459-494. JSTOR. Stable URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/2872195. Accessed 2 November 2017.

Donohue, Agnes McNeill. "The Scarlet Letter: 'A' is for Apple". *Hawthorne: Calvin's Ironic Stepchild*. Kent State University Press, 1985, pp.35-67.

Evelev, John. "Picturesque Reform in the New England Village Novel,1845-1867." *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance.* vol.53, no.2, 2007, pp.148-183. Project Muse. Accessed 12 September 2017.

Fetterley, Judith. "My Sister! My Sister! the Rhetoric of Catharine Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*." *American Literature*. vol.70, no.3, September 1998, pp.491-516. JSTOR. Stable url:http://www.jstor.org/stable/2902707. Accessed 18 August 2017.

Garvey, T. Gregory. "Risking Reprisal: Catharine Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* and the Legitimization of Public Action by Women." *American Transcendental Quarterly*. December 1994, pp.287-98. MLA International Bibliography. Accessed 18 August 2017.

Gould, Philip. "Catharine Sedgwick's 'Recital' of the Pequot War." *American Literature*. vol.66, no.4, December 1994, pp.641-662. JSTOR. Stable url:http://www.jstor.org/stable/2927692. Accessed 6 September 2017.

Gura, Philip F. *American Transcendentalism: A History*. Hill and Wang, 2007.

Hankins, Laurel V. "The Voice of Nature: *Hope Leslie* and Early American Romanticism." *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*. vol.31, no.2, 2014, pp.160-182. Project Muse. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/562498. Accessed 4 August 2017.

Jones, Gavin. "The Paradise of Aesthetics: Sylvester Judd's Margaret and Antebellum American Literature." *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 71, no. 3, 1998, pp. 449-472.

Karafilis, Maria. "Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*: The Crisis Between Ethical Political Action and U.S. Literary Nationalism in the New Republic." *American Transcendental Quarterly*.1998, pp.327-340.

Karcher, Carolyn L. Introduction. *Hope Leslie, or, Early Times in the Massachusetts*. Penguin, 1998, pp. ix-xliv.

Loomis, C. Grant. "Sylvester Judd's New England Lore." *The Journal of American Folklore*. vol.60, no.236, 1947, pp. 151-158.JSTOR. Stable Url: http://www.jstor.org/stable/536697.

Mitchell, Thomas R. "Speak thou for me! Hester to Arthur in *The Scarlet Letter.*" *Hawthorne's Fuller Mystery*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1998, pp.125-158.

Nelson, Dana. "Sympathy as Strategy in Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie.*" *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*. Ed. Shirley Samuels. Oxford University Press, 1992, pp.191-202.

Pringle, Michael. "The Scarlet Lever: Hester's Civil Disobedience". *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance*. vol.53, no.1, 2007, pp.31-55.

Railton, Stephen. "The Address of *The Scarlet Letter*". *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism*: *The Scarlet Letter. Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical, Historical, and Cultural Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Ross C. Murfin, 2nd ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006, pp.348-371.

Reynolds, Larry J. "*The Scarlet Letter* and Revolutions Abroad." *American Literature*. vol.57, no.1, March 1985, pp.44-67. JSTOR. Stable URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/2926312. Accessed 2 November 2017.

Ronda, Bruce A. "Sylvester Judd's *Margaret*: Open Spirits and Hidden Hearts." *The American Transcendental Quarterly: A Journal of New England Writers.* vol. 39,1978, pp.217-229.

Ryskamp, Charles. "The New England Sources of *The Scarlet Letter*." *American Literature*. vol.31, no.3,1959, pp.257-272.JSTOR. Stable URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/2922524. Accessed 2 November 2017.