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In NOVELS of the Monima type a happy ending is reached after the heroine has undergone many trials, including hair-breadth escapes from one form or another of a fate "worse than death." Margaretta, for one, just barely escapes marrying her own father. Her escape is as narrow as that of the heroine in *The History of Albert and Eliza* (1812): had Eliza's marriage to Blake been consummated, she would have been the wife of a bigamist, and one married to his own half-sister. Eliza, too, after suffering various delays and anxieties, finally marries her true love, a happy ending already in sight when the truth about Blake becomes known. The retrospective horror of hearing about Blake's incest, and also that he unwittingly killed his (admittedly wicked) half-brother, does not quite blot from Eliza's memory her earlier harrowing experiences, but it certainly seems more important than the ordeals of her beloved Albert, who among other things has been a slave in Algiers.

The author of *Albert and Eliza* apparently was not quite sure about the propriety of his use of the incest motif. It is both relevant to the final outcome of the story and yet minimized, since it does not truly affect the main characters. It occurs only on the edge of the sphere of frustrating influences in which Eliza and Albert must move; nor does it really count against the person of Blake. For this young man is very much the victim of circumstances and, at first, unaware of the criminal nature of some of his acts. He is informed that he is related by blood to his wife after they have been married for some time, and learns only long after the encounter that Palmer, whom he killed in a duel, was another illegitimate Blake. His incest and fratricide do not really taint him; he appears distinctly eligible as a husband because he behaves like a gentleman throughout.
He presumably considers his former marriage annulled. His major failing is his jealousy toward Palmer and Albert, an attribute in keeping with his passionate temperament (p. 10); but the same impulsiveness perhaps also prompts him to do "the right thing" in the end: "He hastily rose from his seat—distraction had seized upon his brain. He cast a wild despairing look around him, and rushed out at the door. In a few minutes the report of a pistol was heard in his chamber, the people ran upstairs; his door was locked; they burst it open; he lay dead upon the floor!" (pp. 51-52). Miss Smith, his half-sister, is more dangerously jealous; it is she who is the real villain of the story, unless we assign the role to the blind fate that causes painfully inopportune meetings, delays, and misunderstandings. She tries to kill Eliza and later divulges the truth about the Blakes, and her own shame at the same time, simply because she cannot bear that another should enjoy her half-brother's love. Yet she is used as an extraneous diabolus ex machina device, and plays practically no part in the story to which she provides the startling conclusion. Miss Smith slightly resembles the vengeful Eliza of The Hapless Orphan. There are other similarities with contemporary American works of fiction: the use of a namesake to cause confusion and despair, as in The Asylum, and the various plot elements that recall The Unfortunate Lovers and Cruel Parents. The incest motif has a far more important function in The Power of Sympathy: or, The Triumph of Nature (1789), attributed to William Hill Brown (1765-93). This novel is about lovers who, like Blake, must pay for the wild oats sown by their father. Unlike Blake, Sr., Mr. Harrington himself is also made to suffer by the repercussions of his earlier behavior. His crime has been the seduction of Maria, who died after he had deserted her. Others have been similarly treacherous: two further episodes of seduction are inserted into the main narrative; and a footnote (pp. 50-53) refers to a recent cause célèbre of New England, the story of Elizabeth Whitman, which was to be treated in fiction by Mrs. Foster in The Coquette. The seduction motif thus appears to dominate The Power of Sympathy. There are two reasons for its importance: the popularity of the motif
with novel readers since the days of Richardson, and the built-in
ingestion for the writer's professed aim to instruct and warn
his female readers. In his dedication and preface, Brown declared
that he meant to expose the crime of seduction and propose a
way to counteract its dangers. He then introduced Mrs. Holmes,
to whom he gave an important speaking part: she holds forth
on the necessity of giving young girls an education that will be
useful to them when they enter the world and meet potential
seducers (letter 29).9

Yet in spite of the didactic treatment it is given, the subject
of seduction fails to dominate Brown's novel. The figure of Mrs.
Holmes provides a clue why this should be so. In offering her
opinions on education, she is indeed didactic and explicit; but
she also has another, dramatic, function to fulfill, and it is the
relative importance of her two roles that appears significant.
Brown allowed much of the suspense of the story to derive from
Mrs. Holmes's suggestive hesitancy to reveal the truth about
Harriot's origin (letters 26-37). She means to spare Mr. Harrington, presumably; but she succeeds above all in direct­ing
attention to the notion of incest, which is thus given an entirely
superfluous emphasis. The latent incest situation is obviously a
consequence of the previous seduction; all the same, Brown's
intention to expose the dangers of seduction might have been
better served without the introduction of the incest motif. Brown
laid himself open in yet another respect to the charge of toying
with unsavory topics:10 in the Ophelia-Martin episode, a trans-parent disguise only was thrown over the persons involved in
the notorious real affair which had involved Mr. Morton and his
wife's sister, Frances Apthorpe, an affair of a particularly scan-dalous, almost incestuous, nature, because of their relationship.11

Half a century earlier, Fielding and others had found that
Richardson's Pamela seemed less concerned with virtue than
with the material reward which virtue preserved might yield.
Some readers of The Power of Sympathy may have raised similar
objections. The lovers do not act as if they were relieved at
being spared the crime and shame of an incestuous marriage;
but they are deeply grieved by the necessity of renouncing their
mutual love. Thus Harriot writes:

[244]
I indulge, in idea, the recollection of his caresses—of his protestations, and of his truth and sincerity—I become lost in a wilderness, and still I travel on, and find myself no nearer an escape. I cherish the dear idea of a lover—I see the danger and do not wish to shun it, because, to avoid it, is to forget it—and can I, at one stroke, erase from my mind the remembrance of all in which my heart used to delight? Ah! I have not the fortitude—I have not the virtue, to "forget myself to marble." On the contrary, I strive no longer to remember our present connexion. I endeavour to forget—I curse the idea of a brother—my hand refuses to trace the word. (2:110-11)  

Up to this crisis they have obeyed the abstract moral precepts inculcated by their elders. To do this automatically will no longer do when they are faced with the practical, challenging aspects which their life abruptly assumes. As a consequence of their father’s conduct, they find themselves in a situation they feel unable to cope with. Their desires have been awakened, yet must remain unsatisfied; their emotional and imaginative life has been stimulated and is now suddenly being thwarted.

To treat such a conflict demanded understanding and artistic skill. Brown either did not possess the required abilities or would not make the effort to summon them. He outlined a cycle running from the violation of the moral order in one generation to the retribution it entails in the next; at its conclusion the lovers are frustrated by issues that seem inescapable, without becoming tragic. Even the evocation of the final hours of Harriot falls flat. The girl appears to be still hoping against hope that the “triumph of nature” might, after all, be the consummation of her love, whereas it cannot of course mean anything except the negative affirmation of the law of blood-relationship. At no time, to be sure, does anything about Harriot imply that she could seriously consider flying in the face of convention. She is no more than a typical novel heroine, pathetic in her helplessness and dependence upon her surroundings, and susceptible to loving without reservations when the right man turns up. Though occasionally she seems endowed with some naïve common sense, her sensibility remains her most important attribute. A similar sensibility is characteristic of Harrington, too, who invokes it in his first letter: “But come thou spirit of celestial
language, that canst communicate by one affectionate look—one tender glance—more divine information to the soul of sensibility, than can be contained in myriads of volumes!” (i:10). This sensibility is chiefly responsible for Harrington’s quick conversion from a would-be seducer to an enthusiastic admirer of Harriot’s virtues; but this very quality of his worries Harriot and Myra, who fear that it might make him yield to the temptation of suicide, should Harriot die. The young man’s case is further complicated by his familiarity with Werther. Only late in the novel did Brown add an individual feature to Harrington’s portrait: in a letter to Worthy, the young man admits his need for help and that something could be done to save him from his desperately self-centered and obsessive emotions (2:124).

But Worthy is an abstract reasoner, and he cannot respond to Harrington’s appeal. He merely offers him arguments against suicide that strike one as more likely to render the idea of it more insistently present in his friend’s hypersensitive state of mind than rationally to dissuade him from committing the act. Worthy’s role is similar to that of Mrs. Holmes. They both bear a heavy didactic burden but also serve to focus the reader’s attention on a latent possibility of crisis. At any rate, Worthy immediately guesses what must have happened when he is told that Harrington is dead: “He has killed himself!” (2:148). Mrs. Holmes and Worthy differ from the other characters in the novel through their essentially rational nature. If a balance between the rational and the emotional is achieved in The Power of Sympathy (something which the tenor of the preface entitles us to expect), it is found in the sum total of its personnel rather than in any one of the individual figures. These tend to be “humours” of sensibility or common sense, respectively. The different sensibilities in the aggregate make for a mood of sentimental receptivity, enhancing the various scenes of melancholy, in particular; didactically speaking, they create pretexts for messages to the reader. Maria’s parting letter to Mr. Harrington teaches the necessity of forgiveness and compassion (2:44-47); it is echoed by Holmes in a sterner manner (2:49-56). Mr. Harrington’s consciousness of his guilt gives him a foretaste of the retribution awaiting him: in his infernal habitat he will have no
communication even with other inmates of hell (2:95-106). This is an appropriate punishment, because the victims of seduction on earth are doomed to be alienated from those they love.\textsuperscript{18}

Considering the insistence on sensibility and moralizing, it is easy to guess what the style of The Power of Sympathy must be like. Occasions of intense feeling are provided by the falls from virtue and the related deaths of Ophelia, Henry, Maria, Harrriot, and Harrington, as well as Elizabeth Whitman. One passage from such a context conveys an impression of the tone prevailing in the novel.

Is it necessary to depict the state of this deluded young creature after her fall from virtue? Stung with remorse, and frantick with despair, does she not fly from the face of day, and secrete her conscious head in the bosom of eternal forgetfulness? Melancholy and guilt transfix her heart, and she sighs out her miserable existence—the prey of poverty, ignominy and reproach! Lost to the world, to her friends, and to herself, she blesses the approach of death in whatever shape he may appear, that terminates a life, no longer a blessing to its possessor, or a joy to those around her.

Behold her stretched upon the mournful bier!—Behold her silently descend to the grave!—Soon the wild weeds springs afresh round the little hillock, as if to shelter the remains of betrayed innocence—and the friends of her youth shun even the spot which conceals her relics. (2:54-55)

In other respects, however, Brown attempted variety. His eight correspondents write different kinds of letters. Some of them comment, from different points of view, on the contrast between the bustle of the city and the calm of a country retreat (letters 5, 7, 10). Subsidiary episodes combine with the main narrative and, like the verse with which some letters are sprinkled, touch upon its chief subject.\textsuperscript{19} Suspense is attempted, first, after a brisk conversational beginning, in connection with Harrington’s campaign against the virtue of Harriot, and afterward, through Mr. Harrington’s evasive attitude concerning the marriage of the young couple. But the gradual revelation of Mr. Harrington’s paternity and the hints about the young lover’s impending suicide are devices of protraction rather than suspense.
Lacking in continuity, inadequate in characterization, hovering between its didactic message and its potential of lurid ingredients, The Power of Sympathy blends so many elements of the minor fiction of the age (not unlike Mrs. Rowson's Charlotte) that its appearance at the beginning of an era of imitative novel-writing in the United States seems highly appropriate. The only additions made in Brown's first novel to the canon of that type of fiction concern the new nation: there are mentions of democracy and of a new world as yet uncivilized and therefore uncorrupted, where free men may fashion an example for the degenerate Old World; they will free their slaves (letters 17-18), and a moral literature shall be their answer to the decadent writings of Europe (letters 29-30).

The title page of Ira and Isabella: or the Natural Children (1807) bears the name of its author, "the Late William H. Brown, of Boston." This piece of information does not, unfortunately, help us to decide whether the same man also wrote The Power of Sympathy, which would be reassuring, since Brown's claim as the author of the "first American novel" is none too secure. Thirty-five years ago Milton Ellis suggested the evidence that, according to him, justified the attribution of the two novels to the same author. It is doubtful, however, if the style of the two books is as much of a help as he suggested. In the minor American fiction of the late eighteenth century, stylistic criteria are generally unreliable when it comes to attributing a book to a particular author. The writers of the age had little skill and inventiveness and consequently inclined to imitation; but as the current plot elements suggested at best only few variants in expression, the individual styles tended to become anonymous instead of distinctive. The misspellings listed by Ellis might indeed be thought more idiosyncratic than the stylistic features. It is perhaps the relationship in tone and approach which best supports the theory that The Power of Sympathy and Ira and Isabella are the work of the same writer; at any rate, a discussion of the author's tone and approach may serve as an introduction to the second novel.

Though The Power of Sympathy was advertised in the Massachusetts Magazine as the first American novel, the term "novel"
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itself does not appear on its title page at all, where the book is described as "founded in truth." *Ira and Isabella*, on the other hand, is said to be "a novel," with the additional qualification "founded in fiction." This sounds like a gibe at the many novels that proclaimed their faithful adherence to actual events, perhaps to arouse their readers' curiosity and to anticipate critics who might consider them the fruit of an undisciplined imagination. Of such novels, *The Power of Sympathy* was the very first in America. It would seem that Brown later wanted to make fun of its pretended truthfulness, and he appears to have been ridiculing its pompous didacticism as well. Whereas the introductory pages of *The Power of Sympathy* had gravely asserted the moral and patriotic intent of the book, in the preface to *Ira and Isabella* a lighter tone prevails, even in the comments on the decline of the novel or, in a more caustic spirit, on the large number of novel-readers, especially among the ladies. Brown's manner of addressing the latter is here markedly different from the seriousness displayed in the earlier dedication, and though it might pass for a variant of the style of sensibility, it obviously has its touch of irony (pp. x-xi). Brown appears temporarily serious when he echoes his former statement that the novel should unequivocally teach that vice is to be avoided and virtue emulated, but he quickly returns to the merry mood in which he remarked on the obsolescence of superhuman machinery and deprecated his own lack of inventiveness. In conclusion he gives marks to a number of European writers: Dr. Johnson heads his list, followed by Swift, Cervantes, Voltaire, Sterne, and Richardson.

After reading the preface, we carry into *Ira and Isabella* a feeling that we had better not accept events and reflections quite at their face value, that we are to attend a comedy performance; and just before the end of the novel there is another piece of ironical de-romanticizing. The story framed by such an introduction and conclusion is likely to be taken with a grain of salt. The de-romanticizing anecdote referred to is significant, especially in the light of a comparison of *Ira and Isabella* with *The Power of Sympathy*. The last-named novel insists on the degrading nature of seduction—degrading because the odds are so clearly
against unsuspecting innocence at the mercy of the seducer's villainous cunning. But in *Ira and Isabella* Mr. Savage tells a story apt to shake the accepted view or legend of the ruthless male triumphant over female helplessness:

Lucinda, lively, affable and simple as she was, had successfully laid a snare for me. She was not won from the way of prudence by my means, but had had the fortune to have been apparently beguiled three or four times. . . . My rural disciple, with the greatest pleasantry imaginable, told me it was her intention to make me the father of a child. It was in vain to remonstrate, for I, like all gentlemen in my honourable situation, had accustomed myself to comply with all the whims of my mistress. (pp. 113-14)

This novelty is refreshing not necessarily because of the case made against a prejudice thoughtlessly renewed and sanctioned but certainly because Savage's irony quite dissolves the mood in which the seduction motif tended to be treated: a morbidly sentimental mood it generally was, though it is possible that the authors meant their work to sound genuinely pathetic and tragic. Although William Hill Brown himself may not have clearly realized what a revealing light he shed on the workings of the plot machinery of *The Power of Sympathy*, it seems conceivable that he deliberately added a measure of burlesque, if not self-parody, to his *Ira and Isabella*.  

There is more to support this view than just the relation existing between Maria, who was seduced by Mr. Harrington, and Lucinda, who did the seducing of, among others, Mr. Savage—a relation not unlike that between Richardson's Pamela and Fielding's Lady Booby. The question of responsibility in cases of seduction is also touched upon when Isabella speaks to her old nurse. She blames her for her archetypal notion of man as an unreliable and unfaithful creature, congenitally prone to seducing maidens; if there were no such preconceived idea of man, she argues, he would be less likely to behave according to the pattern (pp. 36-38). Furthermore, some characters and features of *The Power of Sympathy* may be said also to turn up in *Ira and Isabella*, but with inverted signs, as if with a burlesque de-
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sign. Harrington, rejecting Worthy’s counsel, starts out as an apparently unscrupulous man-about-town with black designs on Harriot; Lorenzo is akin to this early Harrington, for he suggests that the love of his companion Ira may not be all that pure (p. 24). It is Lorenzo who represents the frailest part of mankind, and the hero has as much reason to shun him as Harrington has to follow Worthy’s advice. Mr. Harrington fails to admit his error until faced with the fact that the secret is out; on the contrary, both Savage and Dr. Joseph come to acknowledge their children, however reluctantly. The allegation of the two lovers’ kinship is made after the wedding ceremony and the apparent beginning of an incestuous relationship, whereas in the case of Harrington and Harriot the incest can be prevented through Mrs. Holmes’s intervention; yet the event which has the appearance of a gruesome joke played by fate upon two blameless victims is in reality more innocent than the mutual attraction of Harriot and Harrington. For Ira and Isabella are not truly the children of the same father and therefore can be rewarded with a happy ending. Before Savage’s confession reassures them, they also prove better able than Harriot and Harrington to stand the shock of mythical horror at their incestuous connection and capable of discussing their plight stoically. Harriot and Harrington, shattered by the blow, are deprived of all the resources of calm reasoning; their story consequently is increasingly permeated with an overpowerful sensibility and self-pity connected with the melancholy indictment of the seducer (in which there is no room for Savage’s view of woman as an equal partner in the business of seduction, of course).

Yet it is not tenable to discuss Ira and Isabella exclusively as the reworking of material used in the main plot of *The Power of Sympathy*, with some of its features reversed or given an ironical slant. There are also parallels between the books which are presumably independent of any burlesque design and some traits which give *Ira and Isabella* a modest degree of distinctiveness. The similarities in the plot structure have been referred to. Its main stages are the mutual attraction between the lovers, the intimation that they must not marry, and the unsettling revelation of their being closely related; in the second half of each
book, the author must of course tell the circumstances to which the illegitimate children owe their birth.

In either couple, the girl seems to have a shrewder grasp of the realities of life and a clear sense of the relative weakness of her partner. Harriot's strength is shown only obliquely, through her resentment at the trick played by fate upon her love; she also perceives that, left alone, Harrington may be unable to deal with his accumulated troubles. In the context of the whole novel, however, Harriot, a conventional sentimental heroine, is reduced to a comparative insignificance by the weight of the words of Mrs. Holmes, Worthy, and Holmes, and further by the mere fact of Harrington's survival. There is considerably more originality in Brown's conception of Isabella and the views which he put into her mouth. He introduced her traits of character and potentialities before sketching a picture of her appearance, an unorthodox procedure. Ira admires her ability to ignore certain patterns of expected behavior in young ladies. Thus Isabella has no patience with the idea of courting according to which the girl must remain passive until she has been proposed to and coyly refuse, after that stage, to commit herself once and for all (p. 30). She therefore does not attempt to disguise her feelings even before she has received a formal declaration, and she responds—Juliet-like—to Ira's outspoken compliments to her as a desirable woman (pp. 32-33). After rebuking her nurse for her prejudices, Isabella proclaims her independence, saying, "Happiness is within ourselves, not in the opinions of others" (p. 40). She does qualify her youthful defiance, though, by expressing her gratitude for the nurse (p. 43). To Ira she is a source of strength. When he plans to go away, she not only shows "evident symptoms of dislike at this resolution" (p. 68) but sets about, and easily succeeds in, dissuading him. Ira indignantly rejects his friend Florio's suggestion that he should seek distraction among prostitutes and, as a natural conclusion to the incident, hurries back to Isabella, "his sister, his wife" (p. 67), and a friend "of decency, of truth, and of sobriety," who will "open the sluices of tranquillity" for him (p. 92). The girl treats him to a number of mottoes couched in Johnsonian periods, at the end of which tuition the qualities of leadership in the girl are acknowledged
by Ira more fully than ever: "The unfortunate youth, gazed upon his beautiful monitor with eyes swimming in tears, and with a soul, lost in wonder and ecstasy" (p. 99).

This is the only time in Ira and Isabella when the sensibility so much in evidence in The Power of Sympathy emerges for a number of pages. Generally, Brown’s playful approach, and the commonsensical frankness of his (or Isabella’s) remarks on certain conventions, prohibited its use. The climax of seriousness apparently rendered him more dependent on stylistic means designed to do justice to exceptional situations; he thus overstressed the emotional significance of some of his statements, as above, or struck a pompous note so much out of tune with the wider context as, once more, to suggest deliberate parody: "As Isabella pronounced these words, her posture was firm, and her eye fixed upon her brother; her right hand placed upon her breast, and her left pointing towards heaven" (p. 101). Everything considered, Ira and Isabella is an unsatisfactory medley. Some of its ingredients may be justifiable if we assume that the book was written, among other things, as a wry comment on another individual piece of writing or possibly a whole sub-genre: the novel of seduction. But that does not redeem the production as a whole. Nor, of course, is the conceivably burlesque nature of this novel sufficient by itself to determine whether The Power of Sympathy must be attributed to William Hill Brown.

1."...This night shall subdue your pride, and humble you with the dust!"
"Do you mean to murder me also?" cried Monima.
"Worse than death shall be your portion" (p. 411).

2. The History of Albert and Eliza. To which is prefixed, The Cruel Father. Founded on Fact. Compiled by Russell Ladd. In reality "The Cruel Father" follows (pp. 55-88) "Albert and Eliza" (pp. 3-53). The authenticity of "Albert and Eliza" is stressed in an introductory remark (p. 3) and in the conclusion (pp. 52-53). There is a reference to "The Cruel Father" in a footnote, above, "Cruel Parents," pp. 208-9 n.43.

3. Killing one's adversary in a duel is a minor offense if the challenge is justified. Now, Palmer has amply merited chastisement for his insulting behavior toward Eliza; and according to the code of honor underlying the custom of dueling, Blake deserves praise rather than blame. Legally, of course, the matter is not quite so simple; Palmer's body is therefore quickly disposed of.

4. E.g., the Long Island families; the loving couple destined to be married; the heroine watching the boat leave with her lover on board; the latter’s reappearance just as she is to be married to someone else.

6. Mr. Harrington is worried by the growing affection of Harriot and his son and tries to prohibit the match; he then witnesses Harriot's decline and death; this is followed by his vision of hell.

7. Ophelia is seduced by her brother-in-law Martin, gives birth to a child, and poisons herself (letters 21-23). Henry jumps into the river after Fidelia has disappeared with Williams on the eve of their wedding (letters 27-28). All references are to the 1789 edition.

8. The didactic ponderousness of *The Power of Sympathy* is reflected in some judgments on the novel. See, e.g., Cowie, *The American Novel*, p. 11; Fiedler, *Love and Death*, p. 97. Fiedler also mentions its "fundamental seriousness," and to him it remains, despite the "thinness of realization throughout," "more a psychological, even a metaphysical essay than a lurid story told to shock and amuse" (pp. 104, 102); a contrary view is that of Mary S. Benson, *Women*, p. 190.

9. It appears from Harrington's attitude that all men will seduce girls who are without a properly strengthened moral sense; Harriot, e.g., quickly transforms Harrington, who finds himself unable to propose to her that she should become his mistress (p. 23). See also Maria's reflections (2:41); other educational topics are discussed in letters 11 and 12.

10. This charge might have helped, along with the arguments of neighborly good will, to persuade Brown to withdraw the book from circulation. McDowell has pointed out, though, that advertising for *The Power of Sympathy* in the *Massachusetts Magazine* continued for eight months (*AL* 4[1932]:68). A sort of indirect advertising occurred in Hitchcock's *Memoirs of the Bloomsgrove Family*, where the quatrain of the title page of *The Power of Sympathy* is quoted with a minor alteration (2:22). The "first American novel" later furnished moral copy for the *New York Magazine* 5, no. 11(1795):687-88.


12. Cf. 2:90-91, 113-14; and 2:151, from a letter written quite some time after Harriot's death.

13. See her wish, perhaps not entirely innocent, to help Harrington overcome
his timidity (1:19), and her cool remark about Mrs. Francis, who "like the
rest of the world, bears the misfortunes of her friends with a most christian
fortitude" (1:113).

14. Cf. his apostrophes to sensibility (2:32-33) and the god of love (2:10-11).

15. He begins by rationalizing his desire for his own benefit and Worthy's,
arguing that in setting up Harriot as his mistress he would free her from her
dependence on Mrs. Francis—an argument of a type popular with the seducers.

16. Like Werther, Harrington is heard walking about his room during his
last night, when he composes a long and frequently interrupted letter before
shooting himself. A copy of Werther is found on his table after his death. His
first intimation of suicide occurs even before Harriot's death, incidentally
(2:94).

17. The characters apparently were not meant to be that simple; see e.g.,
Harrington's half-serious self-analysis (1:8); Worthy's opinion of his friend
(2:155); and Mrs. Holmes's praise of the beauties of nature and its endorse-
ment in the Sterne quotation appended (1:27-28). Admittedly, the term
"sensibility" must be used loosely to accommodate its various representatives:
the cowardly feebleness embodied in Mr. Harrington, Myra's gushing senti-
mentalism (she swoons when she finds out why Harrington must not marry
Harriot), the extreme sensibility cultivated by the hero, and the various
sensitive characters of the subplots. Martin, on the contrary, is apparently
impervious to any feeling at all.

18. Ophelia loses her parents' love; her father assumes for her the features
of a stern judge. She then commits suicide; so does Henry, when there is no
one about to help him. Insanity is Fidelia's form of alienation. Maria and her
daughter Harriot die of a broken heart, the immediate or ultimate consequence
of seduction. Harrington, increasingly isolated from his fellow beings, also
kils himself.

19. See Harrington's "The Court of Vice" (letter 25).

20. Herbert Ross Brown has called The Power of Sympathy "one of the very
worst" of American novels. See his introduction to the 1961 edition of the

21. AL 4:359-68.

22. The Power of Sympathy, pp. v-vi, and Ira and Isabella (Boston, 1807),
pp. xi-xii.

23. The list also includes the name of William Dodd, whose best claim to
literary fame would seem to be his forgery (among other frauds) of the
signature of Lord Chesterfield. Fielding and Goldsmith are not listed. A
thoughtful reader of the copy of Ira and Isabella in the Boston Athenaeum in
a penciled note gave a total of 14½ points to Brown, whose own marks to
Dr. Johnson add up to 122.

24. These remarks and others of a similar nature occur in the context of
observations addressed to "gentlemen who edify the world by writing novels," also
called "these rulers of nature," and ending with Savage's comment: "I
would not willingly make one remark inimical to good morals, but as I am
not a professed dealer in literature, I may be allowed to speak the truth"
(p. 116).

25. Fiedler, Love and Death (p. 105), calls the novel a "howling travesty"
and adds: "One hopes the burlesque is deliberate, but it is hard to be sure."
Terence Martin suggests that Brown may have felt the need to make up "for his
insistence on tragic effects of seduction in The Power of Sympathy" and points
to an ambiguity which may account for the reader's difficulties in accepting
wholeheartedly the burlesque theory: "Capable of irony, capable of toying with some of the most basic assumptions of his culture, he at once questions and employs the conventions of writing sentimental fiction" (The Instructed Vision, pp. 134, 132).

26. It is worth noting that Lucinda not only achieves her ends with several gentlemen but also succeeds in securing her retreat and maintaining her reputation and marries "an honest, industrious husband" (p. 116). The average victim of seduction has no such luck; the famous Elizabeth Whitman, for example, was disappointed even in her attempt to marry a substitute husband before the birth of her illegitimate child.

27. The discovery of a close relationship can also be a pleasant surprise. In the "Margaretta" story in The Gleaner, the heroine worries over her husband's interest in Serafina, whom he has known since they were children, and is relieved to find out that the girl is an illegitimate child of her husband's father. "Augustus and Aurelia," by John Blair Linn (Miscellaneous Works, pp. 201-16), seems to be verging on tragedy when Augustus finds his Aurelia, who has been fondly encouraging him, embraced by another young man; but the latter turns round and stands revealed as Aurelia's brother and Augustus's friend.

28. The combination of a mind "susceptible of cultivation" and a heart "feeling by nature" with an attractive appearance and an expressive face indicating "a soul, which broke out at the eyes" (pp. 18-19) is one which Ira knows how to appreciate; another might be less pleased with it: "What must be his disappointment, who thought himself fascinated by beauty, when he finds he has unknowingly been charmed by reason and virtue!" (The Power of Sympathy, 2:88).