INTRODUCTION

At the conclusion of Tom Sawyer, Twain comments, "When one writes a novel about grown people, he knows exactly where to stop—that is with a marriage." For those of us accustomed to reading novels about grown people (at times, perhaps, only ostensibly grown people) by such writers as Updike, Bellow, Mailer, Philip Roth, Lurie, Heller, Cheever, and a panoply of other observers of the complex and multifarious intimacies of American married life, Twain's remark is a curious one because it excludes from fiction—and cavalierly at that—not only a crucial realm of adult experience but a central subject of some of the better American fiction of recent decades. But curious as it may be, it reflects an attitude long held by American authors in the nineteenth century and only beginning to change in Twain's own day. Once begun, though, the change was rapid. Thus, had Twain made his statement ten years later, the publication, in the interim, of The Portrait of a Lady, A Modern Instance, and The Rise of Silas Lapham would have made the idea that married life was beyond the purview of American fiction seem a badly dated one; and had he made it thirty years later, it would, in the light of the careers of Howells, James, Chopin, Wharton, and Herrick, have been incomprehensible. The marriage fiction that comprises much of the best work in those five careers is the subject of this study, one that attempts to show how effectually these writers worked to prove the truth of W. H. Auden's assertion in our own day that "any marriage, happy or unhappy, is infinitely more interesting and significant than any romance, however passionate."

To be sure, Twain's comment is an overstatement for comic effect. Neither he nor his predecessors among American authors would concur with the notion, implicit in his remark, that the central experience of adult life is courtship and its complications and that all the years following the wedding
ceremony are of little interest to anyone save, perhaps, the married couple. Indeed, any survey of major American fiction before 1876, when Twain made his statement, makes clear that areas of adult experience other than courtship were thought suitable for literary delineation. But the same survey would show, however, that whatever these areas might be, in a given work, it was more than likely that married life would not be one of them—thus revealing a foundation of truth underlying Twain’s humorous exaggeration. In effect, then, although what William Wasserstrom describes as the “Puritan conviction that marriage rather than celibacy is the approved state of man”⁴ never really waned on the American scene in the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, there was little, as Twain implied, in the way of an effort in American fiction of adult life to depict this “approved state.” One, for example, never sees Ahab with the young wife he left back on shore. Chillingworth and Hester’s life as man and wife before their fateful separation can only be inferred in retrospect, and Phoebe’s life with Holgrave and Hilda’s with Kenyon can only be anticipated. Arthur Mervyn, Edgar Huntly, Natty Bumppo, Roderick Usher, Taji, Ishmael, Pierre, Coverdale, the Reverend Mr. Hooper, even Thoreau’s fictional reconstruction of himself at Walden pond are all unmarried and in most cases unimaginable as married.

The few glimpses of American marriage afforded readers before the 1870s neither show how most married Americans lived nor make one believe that the authors who presented them were interested in the subject in its own right. Irving’s Van Winkles, Cooper’s grim lower-class marrieds like the Bushes or Spikes, Hawthorne’s Aylmers, Browns, and other misunited unfortunates, and Poe’s couples enmeshed in the dubious gratifications of spiritual and psychological vampirism all seem, perhaps, to convey an implicit encomium to celibacy; and though in the cases of Irving and Poe, at least, the pairs might, in part, be meant to do so, the major impulse behind these depictions finally has little to do with a delineation of marriage. Irving’s love of humor and local color and his profound ambivalence about the desire for repose and for escape from a world too much with one, Cooper’s conserva-
the political, religious, and social views, Hawthorne's emphasis on the need to maintain a feeling heart, and the mixed yearning and horror with which Poe pursued his personal vision of transcendent beauty in the universe that he found to be so dark yet so strangely lovely all take primacy over their presentations of marriage, which become, invariably, little more than vehicles or symbols for conveying these overriding concerns. Similarly, even the few ostensibly pleasant unions seen, like Cooper's elegant matings of highborn folk and the cozy pairs inhabiting Hawthorne's "The Great Carbuncle" and "The Ambitious Guest," are the vaguely limned, idealized, unconvincing affairs they are because, their pro-nuptial intentions notwithstanding, the authors involved are more concerned with delineating their overriding visions than with marriage itself and any types of behavior it may, in fact, engender. Nor, one might note, was this tendency to subordinate the treatment of marriage in fiction to other concerns peculiar to the major writers. Even the producers of the popular sentimental fiction of the mid-nineteenth century, the E. D. E. N. Southworths, Susan Warners, and Maria Cumminses, "rarely offer a portrait of marriage," as Alfred Habegger notes, though their works so often depict heroines in singleminded search of the nuptial altar.5

Unlike their counterparts elsewhere, then, who, to quote David Daiches on the British Victorian novelists, were exploring the "moral and psychological adequacy of the institutions through which social and economic life was organized" and who, like the British writers described by Daiches, found their imaginations "most directly engaged" by the institutions of marriage and family,6 American fiction writers of all levels of competency through the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century rarely looked at the actual dealings between husbands and wives any more closely than Emerson did when he declared marriage "the perfection which love aimed at, ignorant of what it sought" and "a relation of perfect understanding, aid, contentment . . . which dwarfs love to green fruit."7 Though Emerson's enthusiasm for matrimony is a little more restrained in "Illusions," in which he speaks of marriage as an experience that has its
consolations and educative possibilities despite being an "es­
pecial trap" that is "laid to trip up our feet with," the fact
remains that his response to marriage whether unreservedly
affirmative or relatively somber is, like that of the fiction
writers of his day, the typically American one through much
of the nineteenth century of quickly looking past matri-
mony—or, indeed, any institution—to something else: a
moral truth, a political or social theory, a cosmological vision.
This is by no means to imply that a close scrutiny of marriage
cannot lead to these things. In fact, for the five writers whose
marriage fiction we shall examine, it actually does; but these
writers look at marriage far more closely than did their pre­
decessors, see it, as their frequent accounts of marriage re­
veal, as fascinating in its own right, and reach whatever
conclusions or visions they do reach, consequently, through
their delineations of marriage rather than by leaping beyond
the marriages in their works.

The reasons for this relative lack of interest in depicting
matrimony on the part of American writers for most of the
nineteenth century are not terribly hard to discern, of
course. As commentators have long noted, institutions mat­
tered far less to these writers, society itself mattered far less
to them for the most part, than individuals, the universe, and
those abstractions that might help define the relationship be­
tween the two. The influence of the Calvinist emphasis on
the necessity for lonely self-scrutiny on the path to one's
spiritual destiny, the premium on rugged individualism in
frontier life, the glorification of the self-made man in Amer­
ican economic ideals, the commitment to individual freedoms
built into the American political framework, and, certainly,
the lack of a long-established, stable, hierarchical social or­
der—all, along with, doubtless, other features of the Ameri­
can scene, distracted most nineteenth-century American
writers from a close look at marriage. Not surprisingly, this
mélange of influences made them far more interested in de­
fining the nature of man and man's place in the universe and
establishing those values for the individual, and even the
myths to ground them in, that precede and prepare for the
establishment of a society, than they were in observing day-
to-day existence and those institutions, such as marriage, so intimately tied to it. Whatever the underlying causes, there was indeed nothing in American fiction until the 1870s comparable to the close examination marriage underwent in the works of English writers as diverse as Dickens, Thackeray, Gaskell, Eliot, Trollope, or Meredith.

Just as a whole complex of influences kept American writers from looking at marriage closely for most of the nineteenth century, there was no single factor that brought about the interest in delineating marriage that developed in American fiction in the latter part of the century. Clearly, all the elements on the American scene leading to the rise of literary realism generally and the close look at social relations it inspired helped turn American writers to the specific social relation of marriage as a subject. The Civil War, urbanization, industrialization, Darwinian theory, and advances in knowledge in the sciences generally, the development of pragmatism, the rise of sociology and of a new awareness of social and economic inequities, drew a number of American writers, as all know, to increased concern with relations among people and away from a narrow if intense concern with the individual in relation to absolutes, abstractions, and the cosmological context. More specifically, the rise of the so-called new woman—vocal, independent, and deeply inclined to question the traditional roles assigned her—the rapidly rising divorce rate, and the falling birthrate among the "better sort" brought about widespread concern among the American public about the condition of marriage and the family. Christopher Lasch notes in this connection that "by the end of the nineteenth century, American newspapers and magazines brimmed with speculation about the crisis of marriage and the family." Given the high level of concern, then, among sensitive Americans in the latter part of the century with social relations generally and married life in particular, it is in no way surprising, of course, that American writers would turn readily to close observation of marriage in their fiction. Finally, perhaps the most crucial factor turning American writers of fiction in the latter part of the century to close scrutiny of marriage was, one suspects, the fact that
if one were committed to examining social relations and examining them particularly, as the realists usually did, with an eye to ascertaining and promulgating patterns of social behavior conducive to humane dealings among people and the generating of a more humane social situation at large, one might find oneself almost of necessity turning to a close look at marriage. As a social relation more intimate and intense than most, and demanding more of those in it than most, marriage is not only an eminently suitable subject but even the most logical place to begin for such writers as the realists, who hoped to reveal ranges of behavior among people in close conjunction with one another in fiction that their readers might find both compelling and educative.

Nor, obviously, were James and Howells, whose first works of fiction are, in fact, marriage stories, and Chopin, Wharton, and Herrick, whose earliest work includes marriage stories, alone among those writers usually associated with literary realism in depicting married life. Harold Frederic's *Seth's Brother's Wife* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, for example, present sardonic looks at marital faithlessness in the cases of Seth's sister-in-law and the would-be philanderer, the Reverend Mr. Ware, respectively, and the latter work offers a no less sardonic view of the comradeship and affection achieved in matrimony by the roving evangelical hucksters, the Soulsbys. Henry Blake Fuller's *The Cliff-Dwellers* and *With the Procession* reveal how vulnerable marriage is to the pressures exerted on it by the pernicious commitment of all too many late-nineteenth-century Americans to the pursuit of wealth, possession, status, and power. E. W. Howe in *The Story of a Country Town* presents a grim picture of marital conflicts, suffering, and infidelity in a stark rural setting, and Hamlin Garland in stories set in scenes similar to Howe's portrays the hard economic lot confronting many rural married folk and the capacity of some to endure it together with a deeply moving quiet courage. Writers linked to the naturalist tradition, too, did not ignore marriage as a subject. Norris's McTeagues and Zerkows reveal a brutishness that becomes all the more horrifying within the context of marriage that so exacerbates it, and the difficulties of
the Jadwins in *The Pit* and the destruction visited upon the Derricks and Annixters in *The Octopus* show, as do the problems undergone by Fuller's married characters, the ugly and ruinous impact on married life of conflicts over money and power. Dreiser's Eugene Witta in *The Genius*, Hurstwood in *Sister Carrie*, Lester Kane in *Jennie Gerhardt*, and Rufus Haymaker in "Free" all reveal the desperation felt by men finding themselves in marriages they consider repressive and unfulfilling. Not surprisingly, utopian novelists also include accounts of marriage in their programs for the perfection of society. Edward Bellamy in *Looking Backward* and *Equality* envisions a future in which matrimony in its traditional form will persist but within the framework, of course, of a more humane social atmosphere generally; and his brother Charles in *An Experiment in Marriage* espouses the development of a new form of matrimony based on perfect equality between the sexes and on the conviction of both husband and wife that the legal bonds of their marriage shall be easily set aside should love fail to last as long as life.

Clearly, as this brief survey of some of the portrayals of marriage in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century American fiction shows, an extensive literary history might be written on the subject. It is not my purpose to attempt such a comprehensive study here. Instead, I have confined myself, as I have noted, to five authors—Howells, James, Chopin, Wharton, and Herrick. I have chosen these five in particular because their portrayals of marriage are more fully delineated than those of their contemporaries and because, more than for their contemporaries—especially the utopians, naturalists, and regional realists—marriage is central to their work in terms both of the proportion of their fiction in which it figures and its significance in conveying their most pivotal themes. In Howells's fiction, for example, it is marriage that is intended to provide many of the most telling instances of how the overwhelming commitment to self that in its various manifestations Howells saw as ravaging the American scene might best be overcome. It is marriage too in his work that offers some of the most painful instances of the very social breakdown he lamented and
worked against. Finally, for Howells, it is often delineations of marriage that convey with the greatest force the havoc wrought by those terrors in existence itself that transcend the failures of any given society, and it is delineations of marriage through which he means to show with the greatest affection the fragile havens of comfort and decency men and women can establish in the very midst of those terrors. For James, whose well-known "imagination of disaster" made him no less aware, obviously, of the terrors lurking in existence than was Howells, it is marriage that reveals, more intensely and consistently perhaps than any other human relationship, the dangers and, too, the faint possibility for a hard-won triumph of a rare, highly personal form that are attendant upon an intimate confrontation with experience.

Nor is marriage any less significant in the works of Chopin, Wharton, and Herrick. Underlying the local color, the humor, the striking ironies in Chopin's fiction is her exceedingly deterministic vision of the total inability of people either to resist or, more often than not, even understand the deeply rooted impulses that drive them; and it is in her marriage works that this central feature of Chopin's outlook becomes most apparent. Similarly, it is her marriage stories that most evidence Wharton's awareness of human imperfection and of the consequent necessity for the maintenance of an essentially restrictive social order as a means of limiting the destructive capacity inherent in the folly of individual men and women. Further, as one might suspect, it is her stories of wedded life that show Wharton's awareness of just how large a part marriages can play either in preserving or pulling down such a social order. Finally, Herrick's distaste for an America that he viewed as increasingly corrupt and his inability when conveying his visions of what a fulfilling life and fulfilling relations between the sexes might be to ground them in anything much akin to the America around him is evident most poignantly in his fiction of marriage, the institution that engendered in him his profoundest hopes and his deepest disappointments in regard to the American scene.

Certainly, then, these five writers share a concern with delineating marriage, a concern that permeates their careers,
but they are linked by something else too. All are, as I noted, figures usually considered to be realists—writers who in Edwin Cady's words are "especially concerned with persons in their relations with other persons." Consequently, a look at their depiction of marriage, perhaps the quintessential social relation, reveals a great deal not only about their brightest expectations for mankind and, as well, their most troubling doubts and disturbing fears but a great deal too about realism itself as practiced in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America. Obviously, students of the "realism" of this period generally recognize that the mode is neither easy to define nor manifested in any entirely consistent manner in the works of those usually thought of as realists or as strongly linked to the realist tradition; nevertheless, discussions of realism have always suffered from a failure to look at a large body of material closely. A careful examination, therefore, of these five writers as they reach widely varying conclusions about an institution that seems in such a basic manner to epitomize that fundamental object of realist interest, human relations in a commonplace social context, does portray freshly and vividly, I think, just how exceedingly disparate from one another the realists often were in their aims, methods, and central values.

However, along with presenting vividly the multifariousness of approaches and values that one finds under the rubric of "realism," a study of the marriage fiction of these five writers shows certain surprising similarities apart from their mutual interest in marriage, similarities that reflect tendencies in realism of which commentators have never taken adequate note. Edwin Cady and Harold Kolb, perhaps the commentators who have provided the most painstaking and extensive accounts of what realism in America was, find themselves in general agreement both with each other and with other writers on the subject in their view of the realists' overriding orientation. Unlike "the romantic," who, Cady notes, is "in the long run . . . concerned with the ideal, the transcendent, the superhuman" (p. 7), the realist's impulse, he asserts, is "toward the common, democratic, mock heroic, and novelistic" (p. 64). Further, realism, in fact, as typified for
Cady by Howells's work, "attacks superhumanism," for it is "anti-idealistic, anti-organicist, anti-egoistic" (p. 180), and, in short, maintains as "essential" to its "moral vision" an "active disbelief in the health or safety of romantic individualism" (p. 11). Similarly, Kolb observes that "the realists cannot accept supernaturalism, Platonic idealism, and the worlds of the spirit," for "in their best work the realists were pragmatic, relativistic, democratic, and experimental" (p. 39); and, more, typically concentrating "on what people are rather than what they ought to be, on men rather than Man" (p. 40), they "believed in an open, anthropocentric universe in which men might control their destinies" (p. 104).

As Mark Twain said in another context, there is nothing wrong with all this, except that it ain't so. Ain't entirely so, anyway, I might note; for although one can readily take carefully selected works by each of the five authors treated here and prove line for line and point for point the validity of these accounts by Cady and Kolb, a study of the realists' work on marriage—a very large body of work clearly of high importance to them—reveals something quite different. It reveals, for example, that decidedly nonpragmatic outlooks are evident in marriage works by James, Chopin, and Herrick and that doubts about the pragmatic orientation surface even in the works of Howells himself, the most explicit spokesman among the realists for pragmatic modes of solving human problems. Similarly, the belief in free will that is presupposed both by pragmatism and the concept of an "anthropocentric universe in which men might control their destinies" is not evident in Chopin's marriage fiction or apparent without some severe qualifications in marital fiction by James, Wharton, and, again, Howells himself. Finally, idealism, absolutism, sympathetic depictions of personal quests after obscure goals, and even "romantic individualism" are not foreign to the marriage fiction of these five.

Thus, a major similarity that emerges as one studies the marriage fiction of these five authors is that the outlook of none of them really conforms consistently to the prevailing notions of what the outlook of a realistic writer is. Doubting more than has heretofore been thought the orientation to-
ward social relations that commentators have posited as central to their work, valuing more than has heretofore been realized the individualistic orientation that has been posited as vehemently eschewed by them, these realist writers do not seem so "realistic" after all. In light of this, it should not be too surprising to see that another striking similarity among them becomes apparent when one studies their marriage fiction, namely, that to a degree that would be wholly unanticipated by any who accept standard notions of realism, they portray marriage as an exceedingly bleak relationship characterized by blighted hopes, stunted lives, and a misery that is often unremitting.

This is not to say that they see benefits as never to be derived in wedded life. One may learn through the suffering that marriage often brings—a crucial point in some works by James and Wharton and one at least touched on by Howells and Herrick. Further, one may by enduring a trying marriage serve as a bulwark against social disorder—an idea of more than a little significance in Wharton's marriage fiction particularly, but evident as well in marriage works by Howells and Herrick. Finally, one can even find happiness as a husband or wife—there are indeed figures who do in the works of all five authors. But the marriages in which such benefits are, in fact, derived are in a decided minority here. And, ultimately, even when they are delineated, they only infrequently inspire especially sanguine thoughts about matrimony as experienced by American men and women. For one thing, whatever the intentions of the authors, those relatively few marriages in which benefits accrue are too often simply rendered unconvincingly, the depictions marred by a sentimentality or ideality reflecting, one suspects, lack of real conviction on the writers' parts. For another, the benefits are often arrived at by individuals acting with "idealistic," even "romantic" and perhaps rather idiosyncratic codes of conduct, codes that may be shaped by the absolutist imperatives operative in their own personal makeups. Finally, even those marriages, such as one occasionally sees in Wharton's works, in which benefits are derived, the delineation is convincing, and the protagonist follows a morality that reaches beyond
the personal, are unions so tinged with the darkness of the surrounding world, so somber in their affirmations as to offer prospective marrieds bleak prospects at best for their future state as husband and wife. The benefits of marriage, then, as envisioned by these five authors are not often presented as within the reach of most marrieds, linked as these advantages almost customarily are to a context of sentimental ideality or described as garnered only through the development of a highly personal moral vision. And even when they are in reach, they only rarely do more than palliate slightly the pain in existence of which marriage invariably makes these authors aware.

A decided pessimism thus characterizes the marriage fiction of these five figures although they generally value the institution of marriage itself. It is a pessimism about the human capacity to establish and maintain successful intimate social relations. And it is this pessimism, I think, that is especially revelatory in terms of understanding these writers and the realism to which they are linked. Implicit in the accounts of realism by Cady and Kolb and many others is the notion that realism by and large is a body of literature reflecting an optimistic stance toward life. Surely, this is the message when words like “pragmatic,” “democratic,” and “experimental” are used to characterize the realists, who are further described as believing that man can “control” his destiny. It is a message asserting that the realists have faith that persons can work together rationally, humanely, flexibly, socially, and resolve their differences, thereby making themselves happier and in some tangible way improving the common lot. But examination of the marriage fiction presents, as I have noted, a different message, one that asserts that in a central, perhaps the central, social relationship humanness, happiness, and moral development are exceedingly elusive. It is a message too that points up, despite what the commentators have seen, the human capacity for growth far less than the human capacity for futility; and it is a message that implies that such growth as may occasionally occur is often of a highly individualistic nature and to be measured on an absolutist rather than “relativistic” scale, one perhaps
even "transcendent" rather than mundane. Obviously, it is a message that should prompt yet further definitions of realism.

One reason for the prevailing pessimism of the marriage fiction may well be that conventionally happy marriages are probably less interesting to depict than unhappy or idiosyncratically happy ones. But far more important, I suspect, is the continuing tradition of romantic individualism in America. Harold Kolb himself notes that "it is a mistake to simplistically oppose realism to romanticism, and it is unhistorical" (p. 133) and observes the realists' "debt to the romantic emphasis on personal experience and the individual" (p. 136). As far as this goes, it is an apt reminder; but the debt is larger than Kolb observes, for part of the romantic emphasis on personal experience and the individual was the romantic suspicion of all that would restrict the individual, impinge on personal freedom of movement and development, and this too was manifestly passed on to the realists. This legacy for which they are indebted undercuts at every turn the faith they usually seek to maintain in marriage and, by extension, in personal improvement through social relations generally. Therefore, should one wish to begin to understand in depth both the legacy of romanticism that makes itself felt in realism and the surprising extent of the pessimism about social relations that this legacy prompts in realistic literature in America, one might best begin with the realists' studies of husbands and wives.

These, then, are the aims of my study: an illumination of the central ideas of five prominent realist writers through an examination of their marriage fiction—a body of material that bulks large in their careers in terms of quantity and significance; an observation of the multifarious nature of realism by focusing on the widely varying responses among the five to what may be the quintessential social relation; and observation too, though, of similarities among the five that offer surprising insights into the nature of realism in practice, showing that the realists were far less "realistic" and more "romantic" than commentators have shown and, strikingly, far more pessimistic than heretofore thought about the pos-
sibility of personal growth through nourishing social relations.

My focus, therefore, is literary. Consequently, it is not my purpose to judge these writers in terms of whether or not their views on marriage were conducive to creating an atmosphere in which more equitable conditions for women, less ruthless business practices, and a less rigidly stratified social and economic structure might develop. Valuable as studies leading to such judgments may be, my primary concerns here are literary, and, because an examination of marriage and literary realism has never before been attempted, the topic is fresh enough as well as rich enough to demand my full attention. Again, I should be immensely pleased, however, should such literary matter as I present be useful to anyone dealing with the relations between American literature and social change.

Carl Jung once asserted that "viewed as a psychological relationship, marriage is the most complicated of structures." One might add that viewed as a social relationship it is no less an exceedingly complicated one. And because it is so complex psychologically, socially, and often spiritually as well, and clearly so fascinating to so many, from the writers we look at here to psychologists, economists, sociologists, reformers of all stripes, and even comedians, who persistently get laughs with gags of the "Take my wife—please!" variety, I seek to focus primarily on marriage itself as presented in the works we shall examine. More often than not, courtship is beyond my purview unless a given courtship bears significantly on the form a subsequent marriage takes or unless the delineation of the courtship in some significant manner reflects the outlook of the author on marriage itself. Similarly, relations between parents and children, unless they bear on an author's view of marriage, are touched on only slightly in this study. Finally, I should add that in seeking to get at what is most of import in the marriage fiction of these five authors, I have found it most useful to employ a variety of approaches. Because the marriage fiction of Howells, for example, is of interest more in terms of the overriding ideas Howells advances on matrimony and the way they develop over his ca-
reer than in terms of the working-out of these ideas in any
particular work, I have opted for a survey approach to his
marriage fiction in which no work is dealt with at great
length. On the other hand, Herrick’s marriage fiction is most
fruitfully explored, I find, through close scrutiny of the sty­
listic and philosophical difficulties into which he is led in his
accounts of matrimony by the conflict in his own nature be­
tween realistic and romantic impulses. Consequently, the
Herrick chapter focuses on a few central works and examines
them at length. I found too that the sheer mass of marriage
stories by James and Wharton and the complexity with which
they frequently render both their ideas on wedlock and the
themes with which they connect it, necessitated three chap­
ters on each of this pair, chapters in which some works are
handled only cursorily and others are discussed extensively.
The Chopin chapter, like those on James and Wharton, is an
effort to combine survey with close, extended analysis.
Though I began this work with approximate symmetry and
uniformity of approach as my expectation, it was not long
before I found that, like marriage itself, a study of marriage
can make demands on one that are never anticipated at the
outset.

2. Howells’s *Their Wedding Journey*, a significant depiction of married folk published in 1871, anticipates the spate of marriage fiction to come.
9. James Fenimore Cooper in such works as *Home As Found* and *The Crater* is an exception to this tendency.


13. Although Richard A. Hocks, in *Henry James and Pragmatistic Thought* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1974), argues cogently that "William James's pragmatistic thought is literally actualized in the literary art and idiom of his brother Henry James, especially so in the later work" (p. 4), a study of Henry's marriage fiction reveals, I believe, a commitment in Henry James to romantic individualism that such influence as he may have felt from William's philosophy could never really shake.

14. Habegger notes in this connection that "one of the reasons realism was often 'pessimistic'" was that "it insisted that the self was limited and conditioned and not capable of the apotheosis promised by mass fantasy" (p. 109). Similarly, Anthony Channell Hilfer, in *The Ethics of Intensity in American Fiction* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), asserts that in Howells's *A Modern Instance* "choice is shown to be a complex process in which vague and not fully acknowledged impulses have a major role" (p. 56), a situation that Hilfer does not see as eliminating free will, but that does severely limit it nonetheless. Finally, Gordon O. Taylor, speaking of Howells's *A Hazard of New Fortunes* in *The Passages of Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), observes "a latent sense of determinism" in "the fictive psychology of the novel" (p. 109).

15. For discussions of the significance of the romantic quest motif in James's work, see my "Lambert Strether's Circuitous Journey: Motifs of Internalized Quest and Circularity in *The Ambassadors*," ESQ 22 (Fourth Quarter, 1976): 245-53, and Daniel Mark Fogel's *Henry James and the Structure of the Romantic Imagination* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981). For a discussion of James's essentially romantic commitment to capturing the unique intensity of highly personal experience in his fiction, see the chapter on James in Charles Schug's *The Romantic Genesis of the Modern Novel* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979). Also see Hilfer's chapters on Howells and James for studies of their tendency toward affirmation of the self's ability to respond intensely to experience in its quest for fulfillment and identity, and see Taylor for his discussions of Howells and James as writers who aimed at "intensifying and extending analysis of the mind in process" (p. 7), an aim not at all at odds, certainly, with the goals of a Hawthorne, a Melville, a Poe, or an Emerson as each focused on the self in its process of self-formulation and self-definition.