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Daisy Miller: Picking-up James's Psychological Breadcrumbs

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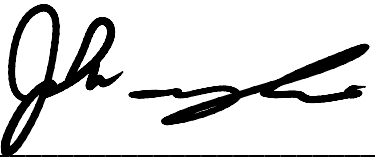

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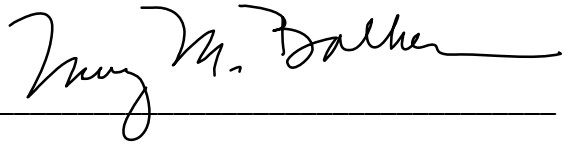

Dr. Mary, Balkun, Second Reader

Henry James's *Daisy Miller: A Study* serves as a fully functioning and historically accurate commentary outlining nineteenth century societal hierarchies. By performing an introspective dissection of society and culture, James's novella highlights the corrupt customs that permeated Europeanized society overseas. Aided by the observations of early cultural anthropologists and sociologists, the text demonstrates the psychological and liberal limitations present within the defunct pseudo- society cultivated by Europeanized Americans. When writing of his contemporary, fellow novelist William Dean Howells praises James's "international novel" (180). Howells' praise is indicative of James's ability to clearly define the "international situation," a dilemma presented to those Americans who embarked on extended travel away from the continental United States. While *Daisy Miller* does adequately capture the social boundaries obstructing those traveling abroad, it also performs the second task of better illuminating the psychological damage sustained and inflicted by Europeanized Americans. James's investigation of the international, cultural customs and hierarchies inherent within nineteenth century society abroad demonstrates the psychological deficiencies of its inhabitants. In this way, James's *Daisy Miller* serves as a commentary on his own society and the international experience of both Europeanized Americans and non-Europeanized Americans living overseas.

As a product of the nineteenth century, *Daisy Miller: A Study* has witnessed the changing face of literary criticism and theory. Henry James revised the text several times during the course of his lifetime, allowing for the novella to evolve and change. Similarly, critical theory pertaining to the text has also evolved, providing keen insight and penetrating the inner layers of this piece. By analyzing the development of critical theory regarding *Daisy Miller,* one begins to recognize the critical significance of James's work and the true depth of his characters. The novella has been touched upon by a plethora of criticisms, including Mimetic, New Criticism,

Feminist Theory, Structuralism, Deconstruction and New Historicism. The text of *Daisy Miller*, while dealing with elements of interpretation and reader response, also focuses on societal customs associated with gender roles. However, it is of interest to observe common elements of analysis that can be detected through various forms of criticism regarding the psychology of the characters within the novella.

What Carol Ohmann refers to as a "comic portrayal of different ways of living, different manners" (3) cited within the feminist study *Daisy Miller: A Study of Changing Intention*, is alternatively described in Ron Childress in his structuralist commentary on Winterbourne's world, *James's Daisy Miller*, as "the discrete but deceitful and dangerous nature of the society he is bound to" (25). Within the text, it is the psyche of the characters that serves as the most abstract element. All characters are distinguishably marked by their culture. The reader witnesses a variation the extent to which the characters are marked, but there is a clear distinction drawn between domestic Americans and Europeanized Americans living overseas. The critical issue illuminated by the text is the dilemma presented when these two categories of people must function within the same zone while living abroad. While the text offers rigid characters such as Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker, it simultaneously offers characters such as Winterbourne, thoroughly Europeanized, but also still somewhat capable of bridging the gap and forming a connection to non-Europeanized Americans. Americans such as the Millers exist within the same realm as the Europeanized Americans, but are clearly not of them. The text highlights the ultimate flaw of these Americans, as they are wholly and totally uncultivated and unable to ever fully matriculate into European society. The Millers and other traveling Americans form a striking contrast with their Europeanized companions. By highlighting the different classes of Americans present in society abroad the text demonstrates that Americans, such as the Millers,

form a secondary class of citizens; they are forcefully pushed into the role of the *other. Daisy Miller* performs a close inspection of the functioning hierarchies prevalent in foreign society and closely examines the numerous restrictions that were meticulously cultivated and sustained by Europeanized Americans living abroad. Concomitantly, the text also sheds the light of illuminating truth on the flaws of nineteenth century culture. The keepers of cultivation, such as Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Costello, are irrefutably marked by the strict demands of their community abroad and they function as the enforcers of Europeanized society. Characters such as Winterbourne and Daisy seem almost caught in the middle, unable to ever fully acclimate to either sphere. The element of interest is that all characters functioning within the hierarchal circuit are equally affected and possibly equally damaged by the roles they are forced to inhabit within this international society. The evidence James presents to the reader begs the questions as to why there must be such strict societal protocols enforced and what dangers exist in bringing down the walls of segregation between two such groups. Is there a link between the preservation of cultivation and the ultimate civility of society? James constructs a functioning account viewed through the Realist lens in order to examine these concepts, and the text expounds upon the dissonance between two separate societies operating within the same realm.

James's investigation of the progression between two separate societal spheres was likely aided by the well-known and widely circulated Darwinist findings of the 19th century. As further theories developed regarding the evolution of people, theories also developed regarding the evolution of society. By titling his novella *Daisy Miller: A Study,* James assigns the text the task of accurately portraying and possibly analyzing the nineteenth century way of life on a sociological level. By applying the concept of Social Darwinism through a historic lens, one can further define the social suppression exemplified within *Daisy Miller.* Historian William

Coleman's keen dissection of evolutionary theory, *Biology in the Nineteenth Century, Problems of Form, Function, and Transformation*, offers insight into Social Darwinism:

> In a human social situation this fact announced the existence of conflicting interests, hence, competition. Success in the rivalry could have diverse meanings: profit, enhanced social status, political or military powers; indeed, if one were thus inclined, it could and did mean sheer life and death. (87)

Social Darwinism outlined the philosophy of competition among every living creature. When applied sociologically, this demonstrated the competition that existed within Europeanized society abroad. Coleman asserts that the "socio-biological" science, which fueled social Darwinism, held appeal to theorists of the nineteenth century because "it offered justification for ruthless individual or social action" (89).

The keepers of Europeanized society abroad are clearly defined as Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Costello, but there are paramount differences to their methods of exclusion. Mrs. Costello aligns herself as she who must do her "duty" (James 17). Mrs. Walker, however, takes steps to ensure that Daisy is publically shunned and causes even Winterbourne, a fellow Europeanized American, to state that her actions towards Daisy were, in effect, "very cruel" (66). Coleman's research regarding Darwinism reveals that natural selection did not only occur within the realm of nature. Coleman asserts that a form of natural selection exists within the societal domain. The text captures the actions of Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker, two active agents functioning within the societal domain abroad. Together they project a united mindset aimed at weeding out the unworthy inhabitants. This represents their shared interest in preserving their species. This intentional exclusion of Daisy's presence is a form of controlled selection, defying the process of natural selection established by Darwin. The evidence indicates that Mrs. Walker and Mrs.

Costello are seeking to select what groups of people, and who specifically, will thrive in their societal sphere. In this way, they try to further increase the population of their own breed, the thoroughly Europeanized American colonists abroad, while contemporaneously taking steps to ensure that Daisy or her type, or her species, is driven to extinction.

Exemplified with characters such as Mrs. Walker, there is a psychologically damaging element that remains undiminished in nineteenth century society. James writing offers a Realist portray of historic custom and protocol. This non-Romanticized version of events offers no glamorization as it presents what is necessary to survive in European society. Daisy is given a chance to be incorporated into the societal circle, but her inability to culturally adapt results in her isolation. One who cannot adapt to the social demands must forfeit her life, as she cannot hope to survive. Daisy is only acceptable again once she is dead, and no longer a threat to the Europeanized colonists' way of life. By marrying this knowledge with Scientific and Socio-psychological introspections that were beginning to take shape during James's lifetime, the text of *Daisy Miller* takes on new depth. As brazenly as Daisy walked through the piniccio, James boldly expresses the true intent of his novella in the title; *A Study.* The intent of this text is to perform a public, in-depth vivisection of James's society, while highlighting the tragic cultural customs of its inhabitants. These corrupt societal customs were likely encountered by James himself as James was considered an avid international traveler who spent years at a time living abroad.

The crucial elements of Psychological Evolution and societal progression are key to James's study of this elite societal sphere. The combination of these elements is best illuminated in Andrew Scheiber's *Embedded Narratives of Science and Culture in James's Daisy Miller.* Scheiber focuses primarily on the human evolution and illuminating facets of biology in

the nineteenth century, listing Darwin's *The Origin of Species* as one possible catalytic event that popularized "the notions of biological evolution" during the nineteenth century. Scheiber speculates that biological developments are what initially may have influenced James's interest and equipped him with "an explanatory paradigm for other arenas of human inquiry…history, sociology, and, particularly, morality and aesthetics" (2). In what is optimistically described as "ample circumstantial encouragement" Scheiber outlines the varying elements of interest that may have influenced James's writing (2). A heavy emphasis is also placed on the importance of understanding these elements in order to better grasp the cultural products of the nineteenth century evident in James's fictional works.

Scheiber's article pairs his own analysis with the findings of historian William Coleman to accurately and thoroughly outline the concepts fueling the nineteenth century cultural divide. Coleman's work further defined the socio-psychological evolution of civilization. His work illuminates that the nineteenth century allowed, perhaps even required, a strong sense of "psychological unity". Applied to the text, the psychological unity referenced manifests itself as the common psychological, or common like-mindedness, of the Europeanized Americans who incorporate this unity into their unified societal hierarchies. Scheiber depicts Coleman's assertion as problematic, citing that the dilemma of the nineteenth century as it developed was to provide some account of both individual and societal variation, an account which could "preserve the notion of a generically unified species" (Scheiber 4). James's text demonstrates a unified social class, like-minded in its restricted nature. However, this unity does not allow for a "unified species" as it creates a divide within the society it governs. Daisy may be thoroughly unable to successfully copy the behaviors of her fellow Europeanized American colonists, but she is still

the same breed of International American. The Europeanized colonists' complete inability to recognize or accept Daisy as a form of themselves destroys any chance of unified species.

Coleman's in-depth analysis of the development of civilized society through the centuries created an evolutionary model as a guide for nineteenth century behavior. Coleman's model demonstrated that "Moral and intellectual development, accompanied, and provided, the critical dynamic for the social evolutionary process" (103). Coleman theorizes that one element cannot exist without the other. His findings imply that a society cannot culturally evolve if it is not intellectually advanced as well. According to Coleman, among Darwinists, "man in nineteenth-century industrial Europe represented the highest human attainment of civilization" (108). Scheiber's interpretation of this deduction capitalizes upon the connection between evolution and ethicality, as well as the role these two components play in shaping the hierarchies of society. This, Scheiber states, "implied more than simply a superior standard of living, but included the notion of higher spiritual, moral and ethical development" (Scheiber 2). Coleman's historical findings pertain specifically to the evolutionary process of society and civilization. Scheiber's analysis, in conjunction with Coleman's evolutionary studies, illuminate the popular belief that nineteenth century Europeanized society was thought to be the most morally and ethically advanced, as it was the most culturally and industrially advanced. This misconception is possibly what fueled James to write about the international situation plaguing traveling Americans. In contrast to this belief, *Daisy Miller* offers a depth of historical knowledge regarding the insidious customs of nineteenth- century Europeanized society. Sociological theorists observed a transformation of human civilization and witnessed the evolution of society from its primal self to its more advanced nineteenth-century version. However, *Daisy Miller* indisputably reveals that although Europeanized society may be culturally advanced, it is not morally or ethically

inclined towards advancement. The inhabitants of Europeanized society living abroad functioned as agents of an obsolete society and were frequently suppressed. James offers textual evidence to demonstrate the psychologically damaging elements and other harms of the pseudo-society. Just as James offers Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker as active agents of this restricted society, he also inserts Winterbourne to better illuminate the damage sustained by one who lives in between two worlds.

Winterbourne serves as a critical link in James's ability to create an adequate and functioning distinction between two societal spheres. Winterbourne represents the unfinished, transitioning project on the evolutionary scale; American born, thoroughly Europeanized, but still culturally flexible. Winterbourne still retains enough of his American-ness to be charmed by Daisy. As Scheiber states:

> As a European, or Europeanized, male of the "educated" class, he feels free to conceive of himself as culturally more "advanced" or "evolved" than Americans of the tourist class such as the Millers. But his experience with Daisy confounds and complicates this conception, producing in him doubts which, as we shall see, cut to the heart of his own, and his century's, assumptions about the relationship between such notions as progress, mortality, and beauty. (3)

Winterbourne is the adaptable Europeanized American. He is a Europeanized agent who is still somewhat moldable (if not amenable) to connecting with his American brethren; those who choose to nourish their continental roots. However, Winterbourne is flawed, as ultimately, he is not able to break away from the dominant influence of the Europeanized society that he functions within. Evident within the text, "the women who had hitherto interested him, it very often seemed to Winterbourne among the possibilities that, given certain contingencies, he

should be afraid-literally afraid-of these ladies" (28). James reveals that Winterbourne should be "literally afraid" and it is this fear that prevents him from escaping the strict mandates of his societal role. This feeling of paranoia is best described by Childress as a "passage that un-abstractly illuminates Winterbourne's psyche" (25).

The reflection of Winterbourne's character is linked directly to the study that James attempts to create in *Daisy Miller*. Winterbourne is the tragic character caught in the cultural cross-fire. He is unable to ever fully commit to either societal sphere, and likewise he is unable to ever fully commit to either lifestyle due to his fear of repercussions should he fail.
The text aims to explore the societal procedures and restrictions that existed within the tight-knit community of Americans living abroad and demonstrate the fears prevalent in society abroad. It highlights the limitations, which hinder not only the American nouveau riche, but also the Europeanized Americans who may wish to reconnect with their culture and continent of origin. The text thoroughly dissects the different attitudes and behaviors of both the foreign and domestic societies. James is able to capture the evident flaws inherent within each group. It is also apparent from the very beginning of the novella that James draws a clear contrast between the characters of Daisy Miller and Winterbourne.

Ohmann capitalizes upon this contrast by analyzing the resort setting in Vevey where Winterbourne and Daisy first meet. By concentrating on the text and the descriptive language employed, Ohmann illuminates the striking cultural disparity evident between the Europeanized and domesticated Americans. The American travelers represent "the carefree exuberance, the noisy frivolity" and are mirrored against their stoic counterparts with "the quiet formality and restraint of the Europeans" (3). In the opening scenes of the novella Winterbourne is revealed as the flexible Europeanized American. He is almost earmarked in this way by James, offered but

not fully utilized. He is a promise to the reader; James will make introductions now and draw conclusions later; Winterbourne holds the upper hand in the beginning and is a point of interest, but James promises to reveal his flaws in good time. Daisy is capable of coaxing Winterbourne out of his shell and enabling him to depart from his rigid European conventionalisms. Although Daisy is able to influence and attract Winterbourne, she is subsequently unable to duplicate this feat with other Americans living abroad. As Ohmann observes, "Daisy teases Winterbourne out of his formality and makes him, for a moment, speak her language" (4). It is Winterbourne's participation in this dialogue, as well as his ability to participate, which mark him. "Winterbourne is, and Daisy notices this, a 'mixture'. He is not quite, or at least not yet, thoroughly Europeanized" (4). He is not yet fully incorporated into the rigidity implicated by the cultivators of his society; Winterbourne is an evolutionary anomaly.

Winterbourne serves as a psychological irregularity, capable of adapting, if not fully then in part, to his American brethren from the continent. He and Daisy both represent evolutionary variables within their given societies, distinctly different models of their own species. Winterbourne exhibits a flexibility that his Europeanized American companions cannot emulate. Likewise, Daisy is a societal prodigy, one who is able to participate within the Europeanized realm of society without falling victim to its encapsulating trap and snarling entanglements. While Winterbourne serves as a half-breed of sorts, able to relate to American visitors, he still functions within his society abroad. Daisy performs as the next evolutionary element, critical in the psychological advancements of her society. She is of the continent, capable of traveling abroad and participating in that coveted society, but also capable of walking away from it, which Winterbourne fails to do, and which the governing female archetypes of American society abroad are wholly incapable of doing.

As Coleman and Scheiber's findings concur, theorists of the nineteenth century operated under the belief that the most advanced society was also the most developed society in all qualities, including morality and ethicality. This provides an important cultural discovery in regards to the "international situation" James attempted to further define or "study" with his novella. James's text elucidates the contrast between two groups of people who essentially hail from the same point of origin on the evolutionary scale. As James explores that contrast it is ultimately ironic to observe that the two groups of people are not only of the same species, but also of the same continental origin. Despite this similarity, domestic Americans, such as the Millers, are defined as primitive and base while Europeanized Americans are distinguished by their sophistication and considered to operate not only in a higher social class, but also function as a higher element of people.

These assertions are paramount in understanding the psyche and cultural relevance of James's characters in *Daisy Miller*. It is the divergence and discord evident between the Americans and Europeanized Americans that "index and interrogate this evolutional model of cultural variation (Scheiber 3). The text establishes that James utilizes *Daisy Miller* to further define the evolving face of nineteenth-century civilization. As James dissects layer after layer of societal protocol, the text further defines the depths of moral, ethical and psychological development through the evolutionary lens. The dilemma that James quickly encounters as he seeks to investigate these elements are his society's shortcomings. While the Europeanized Americans living abroad have cultivated an elite community, James encounters the question upon dissection: how can such a seemingly advanced civilization function absent of all moral and ethical aesthetics? Likewise, how can those ostracized from said distinguished civilization, banished for their lack of social refinement, be more ethically advanced? James's architectural

design erects clear structural lines of contrast within the text, alerting the reader of the boundaries permeating this community abroad. Foreign Americans living abroad operate within a singular tight-knit social sphere, and are sharply contrasted by the American tourists they despise. James places Winterbourne somewhere in the middle, the Europeanized American who is not quite fully divorced from his continent of origin, and yet who still falls tragically short of ever fully connecting with Daisy. James provides a undeniably dominating contrast that permeates throughout the novella. This contrast demonstrates the continental divide and portrays the obstacles of the international situation for Americans traveling abroad.

One such obstacle is demonstrated in the form of the vigilant watch that exists among the American colonists living overseas. The Europeanized Americans compose an elite and separate society which is self-monitoring and self-deprecating. They are "very much aware of one another's existence" and there is a clear and present hierarchy in place. As Winterbourne approaches his aunt to ask if she has noticed the Millers, Mrs. Costello's answer is indicative of her place within the community of Europeanized Americans: "They are very common . . . They are the sort of Americans that one does one's duty by not-not accepting" (James 17). Mrs. Costello is both widowed and wealthy, by describing her as such the text presents her as a leading matriarch of the Europeanized Americans living abroad. As a matriarch, Mrs. Costello is granted latitudes that younger, married women, of means would not possess. In this way, Mrs. Costello is distinguished as a character possessing additional power and privilege, above even that of her financial station and gender. The text also reveals that Mrs. Costello has the ability to pass judgment on any Americans who choose not to align themselves with the mandated societal protocols. Regarding her appraisal of Winterbourne, "she was greatly pleased with him, manifesting her approbation by initiating him into many of the secrets of that social sway

which…she exerted in the American capital" (22). It is because Mrs. Costello approves of her nephew that she voluntarily introduces and inducts him into the elite society of American's living abroad. However, it must be noted that Mrs. Costello could ostracize Winterbourne in the same way she eschews Daisy. It is in this way she has power over the inhabitants of the community of Europeanized American colonists. In this way she does her "duty" and "She admitted that she was very exclusive; but, if he were acquainted with New York, he would see that one had to be" (22). This veiled threat presents itself within the text, offering an idea of the unspoken consequences that await those who do not conform. As Ohmann states "The Americans abroad are a self-maintained group, watching "one another for vulgarity, for any possible lapse from propriety" (6). Winterbourne, the flexible Europeanized American and the character who connects both communities, exhibits a somewhat objectionable realization to the world Mrs. Costello reveals to him. The text offers "Her picture of the minutely hierarchical constitution of the society of that city, which she presented to him in many different lights, was to Winterbourne's imagination, almost oppressively striking" (22). Mrs. Costello's role within the novella is one of power, and she is endowed with an ability to assign judgment over who is worthy and isolate or eradicate those who are not welcome.

James establishes that the crux of nineteenth century-Europeanized society is the obedience that is required from its inhabitants. Although Winterbourne senses his own oppression, he does not yield to a basic survivalist instinct to extract himself from Europeanized society, and instead submits to its protocol. According to the historian and early anthropologist William Cooke Taylor in his *The Natural History of Society in the Barbarous and Civilized State: An Essay Towards Discovering the Origin and Course of Human Improvement*:

> the duty of obedience arises from the very nature of society. It is our duty to obey, because mankind, or at least that large portion of mankind which we term our country, would suffer in its rights if we were not to obey. Hence, even imperfect governments are found to possess a powerful hold on the obedience of the wise and good; hence the tendency to insurrection is found to diminish with the progress of civilization. Knowledge is a great conservative principle of society. (100)

In this way the reader may begin to understand the psychological unity that is necessary for the Europeanized Americans to ensure existence. It is because of this like-mindedness and because of this need to preserve their culture, that they can only reconcile accepting Daisy once she is dead and no longer a threat to their way of life. To accept her pre-mortem would violate their culture and serve as a threat to all of civilization.

The text shapes the face of the nineteenth-century Europeanized American Matriarch by offering Mrs. Costello, and Mrs. Walker. These two women are subject to scrutiny during the novella, as they serve as the embodiment of the cult of domesticity abroad. However, it must be noted that these same women, as they diligently monitor and seek to preserve societal custom, are also effectively building their own restricted cages. As the keepers of their own cage, the text offers psychological evidence that their hatred for Daisy may stem from the freedom she exhibits; an independence that they themselves can never obtain. Described best by Ohmann, Mrs. Costello is, "Sage and spokesman of the American set abroad, she guards a *style* of life" (4). Two key components of this statement may be furthered explored by analyzing the text of the sentence, specifically the words: *guard* and *style*. While men are the rulers of virtually all other domains, women are still rulers of hearth and home and the keepers of the societal realm.

In a predominantly patriarchal society where women lack all agency, it is of interest to note that, effectively, Mrs. Costello is not only guarding proprieties of society, but is in fact guarding, or maintaining, her own restrictions as an agent of that defunct society. James illuminates the true burden of the nineteenth century socialite. Mrs. Costello expresses that she has done her "duty" by avoiding Daisy. In this way, the text highlights that the true task of women living abroad was to exclude the undesirables from gaining entry. It is of interest to note the different methods employed in accomplishing this task. Mrs. Costello performed her own self-assigned societal obligation by feigning ignorance to Daisy's presence in Vevey, and by outright avoiding her. Although Mrs. Costello expresses to Winterbourne the importance of evading American's such as Daisy, Mrs. Costello does not ever interact directly with Daisy. Nor does Mrs. Costello ever shun or otherwise publically scold Daisy. Mrs. Walker's approach is far more hands on than her fellow American colonist. Possibly incited with her very name, *Walker*, suggests a more physical methodology. The first physical action taken by Mrs. Walker is observed in her attempt to collect Daisy for her carriage ride and save Daisy from her brazen and public walk with Mr. Giovanelli. Although this effort served as Walker's attempt to offer societal sanctuary, it is not Walker's last physical act towards Daisy. As Daisy attempts to leave the party, Mrs. Walker "turned her back straight upon Miss Miller and left her…Daisy turned very pale" (James 66). This moment is the direct ostracizing action that pushes Daisy to the edge of Europeanized society. Here the text illuminates that Daisy is very aware of Mrs. Walker's public shunning. Daisy, not naïve of the meaning of this gesture, does not seek to engage Mrs. Walker further, she merely leaves "to depart with what grace she might" (66). Daisy's decision to not apologize to Mrs. Walker highlights her independence of Europeanized societal protocol and evolutionary advancement. Daisy does not cease her rebellious actions; she goes on thriving within this community pursuing

whatever leisure's suit her. Unlike other tragic Jamesian heroines, Daisy does not crumble because she is shunned by society.

Daisy represents the next socio-evolutionary element in civilized society. The ultimate irony is found in the Europeanized American's deeming Daisy to be common. However, Daisy is aware of societal protocol and makes a conscientious choice to defy it and establish independent protocol with which she aligns herself. She states, "I don't believe it. They are only pretending to be shocked. They don't really care…" (31). This is described by Ohmann as Daisy's inability to understand "the idea that manners really matter to those who practice them" (6). The assumption that Daisy is blissfully ignorant is often cited among the key reasons for her downfall. It is proposed that Daisy's ignorance in conjunction with her complete dismissal of societal protocol comprise the reasons for her isolation by her Europeanized counterparts. This assumption is customarily accompanied by a lack of emphasis being placed on what is actually a very unique ability, possessed solely by Daisy, to completely disregard societal protocol. The question presents itself, why does Daisy choose not to conform? Is it merely ignorance alone? What critical psychological element is missing from Daisy that is heavily present in Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker? These women, who represent the upper echelon of the Europeanized American's, despise Daisy's liberties. However, it must be recognized that they cannot emulate her behavior any more than they could fly out of their carefully crafted cages. For these matriarchs, making a conscientious choice to defy societal protocol would be the end to civilized culture and the termination of their way of life. Likewise, Daisy is incapable of identifying in herself the otherness ascribed to her by Europeanized colonists. She recognizes no societal boundaries that should distinguish or hinder her social progression. Daisy does not acknowledge that operating

outside of dictated social decorum could represent a threat to this cultural way of life. This obsolete mentality is beneath her.

Daisy, although ironically viewed as common by comparison to society abroad, is in fact morally advanced and ethically superior to her Europeanized counterparts. Many attribute Daisy's inability to conform as her fatal flaw; in actuality it is Daisy's ability to refrain from adhering to the confines of nineteenth-century society that is her winning attribute, and the trait which best distinguishes her. It is the Europeanized Americans who perpetuate their own severe societal restrictions, such as Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Costello, who are envious of Daisy. As the keepers of propriety, they perceive in Daisy an uninhibited freedom; she remains unshackled. Daisy is free to flit between the coveted social circles they *guard,* while still pursuing her own desires; roaming freely unsupervised and without a chaperon throughout Europe.

Psychologically, their hatred of Daisy stems from their envy, as they covet her freedoms but remain unable to experience them. As Mrs. Walker becomes increasingly angry over Daisy's behavior she states, "Elle s'affiche.[1] It's her revenge for my having ventured to remonstrate with her. When she comes, I shall not speak to her" (James 62). Textually there is a clear desire by Mrs. Walker to physically punish Daisy for her actions. Mrs. Walker cannot emulate Daisy's actions as society prohibits her from vacating her role within the established hierarchy. However, unlike Mrs. Costello, Mrs. Walker does not merely wish to ostracize Daisy, but to publically humiliate and punish her. This aggressive exercise demonstrates Mrs. Walker's unified mindset for preservation, as well as her lack of ethical advancement. Mrs. Walker's actions mark her limited moral and ethical evolution within society. She is fully capable of taking direct action to eliminate a threat to her cultural way of life; Daisy is not. Marrying this

[1] Elle s'ffiche – French exclamation, translated as showing-off.

knowledge with Scheiber's findings, it becomes clear that the matriarchs of this piece are literally physically unable to emulate Daisy's behavior. They cannot enjoy being free or acting out against their society, as they have yet not evolved to that point, culturally, psychologically or morally. As restricted citizens, they hate that which they cannot understand and envy that which they cannot obtain, forcing them to lash out and ostracize Daisy. Once Daisy is deceased she is no longer perceived as a threat. However, the concept that a female could be offered access to their inner societal sanctum and voluntarily reject this offer operates beyond their range of knowledge; they cannot conceive of it. James struggles to penetrate his society's reasoning, seeking to better determine how the most culturally advanced society could also be the most morally inept.

Piercing insights regarding the moral ineptitude and psychologically damaging elements of nineteen century society are offered by Louise Barnett's *Jamesian Feminism: Women In Daisy Miller.* Barnett primarily focuses on the limitations exemplified within the text that highlight the limitations placed upon the nineteenth century female. Simultaneously, Barnett's article concentrates on the psychological damages societal restrictions inflict upon all inhabitants, regardless of gender. In reference to the text Barnett describes James's "constant exploration of the tension between individual self-realization and social restriction focuses upon the way in which society particularly shapes…behavior" (281). Barnett's assertion that behavior can be influenced or shaped by the societal sphere that a person inhabits allows a molecule of empathy towards characters such a Winterbourne and Mrs. Costello. They are not acting out maliciously, but rather are forced into a set pattern of behavior dictated by the mandates of their society. In this way they are trapped within their own limited mind-set and cannot escape a rationale where societal propriety takes priority. To divorce themselves from societal protocol

would mean an end to civilization. Daisy does not suffer from this ailment. It is Daisy who remains psychologically whole and mentally un-afflicted, if not physically, by the ills of society. While Barnett attests that many of James's heroines ultimately fail to obtain self-realization within the confines of their society, she points out that these failed heroines still remain attached and active within their perspective social realms. Barnett establishes that *Daisy Miller* is the only work in which James portrays a female character who "willfully and persistently" rebukes societal demands. However, Barnett explains this *willingness* to defy society as Daisy's "innocent devotion to her own nature" (281). Daisy is capable of inhabiting a sphere where she dictates her own actions and is capable of separating herself from societal rule. In this way she has evolved past Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker.

Though Barnett acknowledges Daisy's willingness to defy societal demands, he still undermines Daisy's ability to ignore societal protocol as an intentional choice. By definitively labeling Daisy's actions as "innocent devotion" it condenses Daisy's actions, portraying her as someone who does not choose to defy society outright, but as someone who merely makes an innocuous choice to pursue her own happiness. This feminist prerogative allows for Daisy to be showcased as innocent against any sociological crimes, and subsequently not worthy of her ultimate ostracizing and death. However, this perspective does not lend enough credit to Daisy's character, as she is freely offered a chance to acquiesce to Mrs. Walker's invitation and declines, while fully understanding the implications of this denial. Barnett clearly states, "Daisy is made aware of society's disapprobation by Mrs. Walker's attempt to enclose her both within her carriage and with her social code" (285). Barnett's observation fails to hail Daisy for her ability to rebuke Mrs. Walker's offer. It is Daisy's unique ability to participate in society, but not succumb to its pressures, which marks her as evolutionarily advanced.

Barnett's analysis of the text illuminates the social restrictions apparent, which limit not only Daisy and Winterbourne, but also the matriarchs who enforce them. Barnett describes these restrictions as "society's desire to confine women within a narrow and rigidly defined sphere (281). Essentially, Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker are their own self-appointed jailers, guarding and building their own prison cells within the walls of their society. Describing the psyche of Mrs. Costello, Barnett states, "Herself victimized by the demands of propriety, Mrs. Costello has internalized the rules of society and devoted herself to oppressing others in its name" (281). It is evident that the last duty in fulfilling the role of the nineteenth-century Europeanized American female is to assume the identity of the suppressor, and ultimately commit to influencing other females into yielding or submitting to the demands of society. Barnett observes "the contrast between what Daisy wants and what other women in the novella have, and between the amount of freedom allowed by society to Daisy and to Winterbourne, constitutes James's clearest indictment of the restrictions society imposes specifically on women" (281). This assertion aids the reader in grasping the significance of Daisy's inherently unique ability to conduct herself within society while failing to succumb to its advances. This statement is also applicable to other Europeanized enforces of propriety such as Mrs. Walker. Subject to the same restrictions and oppressions that her society mandates, Mrs. Walker may secretly long for freedom. However, as captives of a defunct society, women such as Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker lack the ability to emulate Daisy's behavior. They have not yet scientifically evolved to the same level as Daisy, and cannot merely rebuke societal decorum.

Mrs. Walker's invitation represents more than an opportunity to join her for a carriage ridge. This subtle invitation serves as a chance at redemption, a second chance for Daisy to successfully and properly insinuate herself into Europeanized society. The carriage scene as

described in the text serves as a pivotal moment. Daisy's refusal of Mrs. Walker seals her fate, but due to the restrictions placed on Winterbourne by the same demanding Matriarch, the scene serves a dual purpose. While Daisy's refusal ensures her banishment and eventual death, Winterbourne's compliance illuminates the severe limitations placed upon males. It is interesting to speculate the scope of these limitations and how they would have affected James himself. Focusing on the name of the societal proprietor Barnett offers, "by virtue of conforming to the conventions-being a mature married woman- she is allowed to walk with more freedom than society allows Daisy" (283). Mrs. Walker is a married woman and thoroughly Europeanized; despite being female she is afforded certain liberties that remain beyond Daisy's grasp. As noted by Lisa Johnson in *Daisy Miller: Cowboy Feminist*, "walking is well-known as a masculine motif of freedom and spiritual enlightenment (43). Walking un-chaperoned and unaccompanied by a male grants the female a rare opportunity, it allows her to establish agency over her own actions. The ensuring agency over her own person, and the allowance of one to exercise this control by governing oneself in any given direction, represents a privilege which is generally reserved for the male sex.

By combining our knowledge of both Mrs. Walker's "earned" liberties as a suppressed matriarch, along with the historical knowledge of nineteenth-century society, and Daisy's own actions, we can perhaps further speculate about Mrs. Walker's decision. Mrs. Walker's invitation may have been an earnest attempt to salvage Daisy's reputation. Mrs. Walker is an agent of the defunct Europeanized society and is likely to have suffered similar, if not more severe, restrictions. It is likely that both her invitation and her decision to pursue Daisy were motivated by jealousy. Mrs. Walker's ultimate agenda is to quell her envy by withholding from Daisy the luxury that she herself may have been denied. As Mrs. Walker was heavily suppressed by

societal demands, she would not have been allowed to roam freely un-chaperoned and perhaps envied Daisy's ability to exercise this liberty. As an obedient follower of the social decorums dictated by the Americans abroad, Mrs. Walker would perceive Daisy's walk as an attempt to exercise a privileged liberty that, as Daisy had yet to bow to the dictations of their culture, had not earned.

Barnett does illuminate the psychological damages sustained by both genders within nineteenth century society, but also admits, "men are the final arbiter and wielders of power" naming Winterbourne as the quintessential male character of the piece. When Mrs. Walker's efforts to ensnarl Daisy fail, she turns to her next available victim: Winterbourne. Although Winterbourne is a male, and by default allotted more privilege via his gender, he must still bend to societal protocol. Barnett observes, "Social decorum impels him to acquiesce to a lady's command" (283). Barnett correctly labels Mrs. Walker's request as a command; where she failed to establish dominion over Daisy, she seeks to establish some sort of power over Winterbourne as a constellation prize. This moment adequately depicts the nineteenth century restrictions which effected both men and women. Winterbourne wishes to stay and supervise Daisy, however, he is physically unable to pursue his own desires as it would be breaking with the social majority. Winterbourne is unable to execute any act of defiance against society, thus marking him as a tragic character. The restrictions depicted within the text are possibly limitations James would have faced as an American traveling abroad. Winterbourne's perception of Mrs. Walker invitation is summarized as an "imperious claim upon his society." Winterbourne lingers a moment concentrating his gaze upon Daisy before entering the carriage. Even as a male in a predominately patriarchal society, social obligation demands that Winterbourne indulge Mrs. Walker's request and join her, regardless of his personal desire to stay with Daisy. The text

exemplifies that females were not the only victims of societal obligation. Nineteenth century societal protocol was a trap designed to hinder the liberties of both male and female inhabitants alike. In reference to Winterbourne's societal obligation, Childress states, "Fear, one of the most pervasive influences on behavior…he is literally afraid of the women with whom he may actually be intimate. They epitomize the discrete but deceitful and dangerous nature of the society he is bound to: a society dominated by matriarchs" (25).

Once their carriage ride comes to an end, and once Winterbourne has fulfilled his sacred obligation by yielding to Mrs. Walker's request, Winterbourne is released. Upon his release, "this young man lingered a moment, then he began to walk" (James 25). Pursuing the same simple liberty which Daisy sought to enjoy and was denied, Winterbourne, burdened as the flexible Europeanized American, is not as evolved psychologically or morally as Daisy. He could no more turn down Mrs. Walker's offer, any more than Daisy could have accepted. Winterbourne and Daisy may physically inhabit the same societal sphere, but they have evolved separately, each representing a psychologically different species.

James utilizes the text of *Daisy Miller: A Study* to form a commentary on his own society from the Realist perspective. It is pertinent to acknowledge, as Ohmann states, "James hands a really favorable intellectual judgment to neither Geneva nor Schenectady" (6). James does not favorably side with American customs nor does he look favorably upon the customs of the Europeanized Americans abroad. The absence of the authors sanctioning of either lifestyle creates a great irony. This is best described by Ohmann:

> He gives his full approval neither to the manners of restraint nor to those of freedom. His irony touches Daisy as well as the Europeanized Americans. And the accumulation of his specific ironies hint at an ideal of freedom and of vitality

> and also of aesthetic and social awareness that is nowhere fully exemplified in the novella. To be from Schenectady, to be from the new world, is to be free from the restrictions of Geneva. But merely to be free is not enough . . . [These] are the Jamesian dynamics of social contrast. (8)

Ohmann's observations correctly capture the seemingly inevitable fatalness of the Jamesian heroine. While social awareness presents itself as an underlying agenda for the novella, as Ohmann states being free is not enough. Ohmann's observation also serves to illuminate that the novella's end does not intone a final judgment sentence for Daisy. As stated, James does not inherently align himself with either the continent connected Americans or the Europeanized Americans living abroad.

William Dean Howell lends his thoughts regarding the creation of Daisy's character in *Discovery of a Genius.* Howell does not fully credit James with the invention of the international novel, instead deeming James "the inventor, beyond question, of the international American girl" (181). In what Howell describes as James's "penetrating self-criticism," he analyzes James' chief character highlighting the recognition and portrayal of one who is both innocent and adventurous, the "unconsciously periculant American maiden…her passing might have been the effect of a more instructed civilization, or it might have be a spontaneous and voluntary disappearance" (181).

What Henry James Knew, the introspective essay by Cynthia Ozick, offers possible suggestions of the author's mind frame during the pivotal points of James's career. Naming 1895 as the crucial turning point in the author's life, Ozick hones in on the style of works being produced pre- 1895 and the "ghosts" which might have fueled the writer. "In the fiction of realism…in the Jamesian tale . . . knowledge is the measure of what can be rationally

ascertained, and it is almost never a case of knowing too much . . . a knowledge beyond the reach not only of a narrative's dramatis personae but also of the author himself" (278). Ozick asserts that James's writings, and specifically his creation of characters, contained underlying elements that the author himself may not have realized. This idea lends itself to the possibility that James was writing about his own defunct society without realizing the true brutality behind its governing forces. During the nineteenth century, readers of the novella expressed to James directly the necessity of Daisy's death. However, James himself proclaimed that he did not kill Daisy because of any outstanding judgment that her behavior warranted a death sentence. It is of interest to speculate whether or not James truly realized the consequences that would have ensured had Daisy lived in the end of the novella. Despite countless revisions throughout his lifetime, James never penned a version of *Daisy* Miller where Daisy is allowed to freely leave Europe intact.

The text struggles to negotiate between the principles outlined in the Darwinist themed theory of societal evolution and projects the image of a culturally advanced society, lacking only in ethicality. While characters such as Mrs. Costello and Winterbourne are portrayed as innocuous, they are still unwilling to sanction Daisy's existence until she is deceased. Their mind-set suggests that it is not merely enough to ostracize the *other*, but to ensure that its species does not endure. Like exotic flora thriving outside of its ecosystem, preservations such as Mrs. Walker must stomp out the breed before it is allowed to thrive outside its given domain. The text implies a brief undertone of fear regarding the reproduction of a girl such as a Daisy Miller. Should she be allowed to marry a Duke or an Earl, or the obvious victim, Winterbourne, she would be able to replicate herself and would become a thriving breed living among American Colonists abroad. Ozick states, "Jamesian works of this period…vibrate with cognitions that are

ultimately not submissive to their creator . . . ghost stories, with the ghosts, those shadows of the unconscious at the controls" (278). Her observation implies that James was possibly bothered by the savagery of his own community, and their ability to sanction and applaud the death of a young girl, if it meant their civilization remained untouched by the uncultivated nouvea riche. Ozick also asserts that readers were later aided by the "tutelage of Freud" gaining valuable insights and knowledge regarding the psyche of characters shaped within James's fiction. She states, "What was implicit in James is overt in Freud" (277). These statements offer sustenance to the ideal that those who are exposed or who experience psychological and societal restrictions must likewise impose these same restrictions upon their counterparts. This statement lends itself to the idea that women of the time, such as Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Costello did not ostracize Daisy merely out of jealousy, or out of societal obligation, but because they themselves suffered these same psychological and sociological damages, and therefore, fulfilled their roles by becoming the suppressors.

The stark contrast between Daisy and her Europeanized American counterparts is highlighted in a later conversation with Winterbourne regarding Mrs. Walker's curt invitation: "But did you ever hear anything so cool as Mrs. Walker's wanting me to get into her carriage and drop poor Mr. Giovanelli, and un-der the pretext that it was proper? It would have been most unkind; he had been talking about that walk for ten days. (27)

Daisy demonstrates an ability to feel sympathy for someone who could never hope to infiltrate the coveted societal sphere that operates for Americans living abroad. Even for the sake of her own reputation, Daisy would not consider inflicting a cruelty towards another human for the sake of society. Her revelation to the different ideas of people highlights her ability to not only consider other's feelings but also to acknowledge that the Europeanized Americans are not

the elite that they consider themselves to be. Daisy sees them merely as people, and therefore, not worthy of dictating her choices or freedoms. This trait is unique only to Daisy, as every other member, male and female alike, enclosed in a severely limited patriarchal society, allow for societal protocol to be dictated to them and therefore in that way grant their oppressor actual power over themselves. As other inhabitants fail to establish their independence, Daisy alone is capable of governing her own actions while simultaneously declaring with her deeds, you have no power over me nor are you a worthy commander. Daisy's ability to freely enjoy the liberties commonly afforded to the opposite sex is best capitalized upon Lisa Johnson's *Daisy Miller: Cowboy Feminist*. Johnson sites Daisy's successful attempts at escaping nineteenth century gender roles. Chief on Daisy's list of accomplishments, Johnson lists Daisy's stroll with Mr. Giovanelli and praises her as "she asserts her right to walk the road alone" (43). By rising above the pressure to conform, Daisy never relinquishes agency over her self or her actions. She allows no member of society to dictate her behavior nor does she allow for society to limit her activities, despite the act of walking alone being an overwhelmingly male attribute. Johnson describes this as "affirming the textual impact of Daisy's resistance to physical and psychological enclosure" (42). Johnson offers further illumination, stating, "by insisting on her entitlement to mobility and solitude, Daisy challenges the concept of separate spheres that pervaded American configurations of gender for the white middle class in the nineteenth century " (43).

As James is previously credited with being the inventor of the International American girl, Johnson credits his creation of a character for the part Daisy will play in changing the face of American literature. Johnson asserts that James's creation is, "Marking a new era in depictions of womanhood in American Literature . . . Daisy . . . can be seen as part of a gradual transformation of women in American literature from object to subject position" (42). Labeled as

an "internal cross dress" Johnson seizes the implication inherent in Daisy's ability to operate outside of her own assigned gender role. A feat that would be impossible for any female who functioned within the restrictions of nineteenth century society.

As Winterbourne surveys the funeral of Daisy Miller the text offers that he stood "with a number of other mourners, a number larger than the scandal excited by the young lady's career would have led you to expect" (82). Since Daisy's ability to sympathize with others was ultimately one of her defining attributes, the cruelty and complete lack of empathy is a defining attribute of the Europeanized Americans. They cannot accept Daisy until she no longer exists within their societal realm and therefore presents no threat to their way of life. This is the fatal societal flaw that James attempts to dissect within nineteenth century society. What defective society could allow or instill that one who is socially uncultivated may only receive penance upon their death? The mourners of Daisy's funeral are only able to accept her once she is can no longer parade around freely pursuing liberties that social decorum dictates be denied to her gender. In death, Daisy is a non- threat and the Europeanized Americans who control society abroad need no longer fear catching a glimpse of Daisy through the bars of their gilded cages, enviously peeking at the spectacle of a female walking the streets un-chaperoned and reveling in freedoms that are strictly denied to them.

It is the burden of the text to negotiate between two different breeds of people who share the same point of origin. James' text eloquently illuminates the different societal customs and cultivations evident between the two, however his novella is not about the differences between Europeans and Americans. Rather, *Daisy Miller* draws attention to the international situation which plagued James's society by focusing on the different societal classes of Americans; Europeanized Americans heavily manipulated by European custom, and the American brethren

that they are no longer capable of accepting. Europeanized Americans within the novella actively exclude the traveling nouveau riche, and as Daisy Miller encounters while traveling abroad, European protocol is adopted by the European bourgeoisie and strictly enforced. The society abroad that Daisy encounters is often dominated and governed by a strong matriarchal presence which diligently limits its new members to those who pass inspection. James alludes that this coveted social circle is the pinnacle of advanced society. However, the text allows for closer inspection that exposes the fatal flaws of the Jamesian society at large and the characters who inhabit it.

James novella functions as a true and accurate commentary on nineteenth-century social protocol. Aided by early sociological and psychological discoveries, James sought to further define the evolution of his society as a whole. The text itself opens up an illuminating window into the past, allowing for flawed societal customs to be thoroughly exposed and studied. James strives and succeeds in further investigating the biological sphere of society by closely examining the evolution of the societal hierarchy and the cultivation of custom. The evolution of his community reveals the creation of an inevitable hierarchy deeply rooted in the heart of all major civilizations. This hierarchy was especially prevalent in the nineteenth century Jamesian society described within *Daisy Miller: A Study*. Through thorough dissection of his own society, James sought to investigate the "civility" which sustained a society. Creatures such as Daisy Miller are seen as a direct threat to a way of life implanted by female archetypes such as Mrs. Walker and Mrs., Costello. In an ironic twist, to ensure their civilization ensures they must abandon civility and ethicality in order to eliminate any societal threats. The dynamics of the Jamesian society present themselves as the novella reveals the ultimately brutal nature of Europeanized Americans living abroad. Perhaps ostracized by their European predecessors,

Europeanized Americans seek to exhort control over their own societal domain. It is Daisy Miller's ability to inhabit dual societal spheres, the Europeanized American colonist, as well as the sphere of the International American Girl, which marks her as an evolutionary anomaly. Daisy has evolved passed the suppressive nature of Europeanized American females. She is capable of inhabiting their society without bending or conforming to the pressures of protocol. The novella illuminates not only the mystery of how society influences those who inhabit it, but it highlights how the inhabitants of any culture ultimately shape their society. James's text exposes the extent to which characters such as Mrs. Walker and Winterbourne allow themselves to be suppressed, fully divorcing themselves from their continent of origin. Evident with the female characters of this piece, societal inhabitants are bound to strict hierarchical roles within their social hemisphere. Concomitantly, they mold their society by refusing to break free from self-imposed limitations. Psychologically, there is an inherent jealousy of Daisy, as she is able to inhabit the coveted societal sphere of the elite, while also flitting in-and-out as she pleases and behaving as one not imprisoned or restricted by societal protocol. The psychological damage inflicted by a defunct society is expounded upon within the novella. The text leaves a resounding thought in its wake, which is the better choice? When faced with the dilemma of the heroine, what fate is ultimately superior, a long-lived life of conditional acceptance, or a short-lived life of unrestricted freedom? James offers characters such as Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walker to demonstrate that they are stained. They can never gain acclimate to life on the continent again. Tragically, flexible characters such as Winterbourne are caught between two cultures, never able to fully relate to Americans such as Daisy Miller. Daisy alone was able to inhabit dual societal spheres and was fully capable of denying societal pressure presented by Mrs. Walker and fully capable of walking away from Mrs. Walker's public shunning of her behavior. Although Daisy

does die by the end of the novella, she is not hindered or slighted by the acts of the Europeanized society. Daisy is above societal influence and an independent agent capable of governing herself. No other Europeanized American may make this claim, and therein lies the evolutionary development which distinguishes Daisy as an advanced social species.

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