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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Debra Zoe Gahlhoff for the Master of Arts in English were presented May 18, 1995 and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Debra Zoc Gahlhoff for the Master of Arts in English presented May 18, 1995.

Title: Selling the Body: Representing the Prostitute in Maggie and Sister Carrie.

Prostitutes have played a significant role in society and literature for many centuries, both as subjects of irresistible desire and repentant shame. Although prostitution plays a role in patriarchy, female prostitutes have often defied the conventions of patriarchal society by supporting themselves outside marriage, outside the reign of religious conviction and, more recently, by seeking to continue their professional work with legal sanction. Other groups of women, such as those active in civic reform interests, have yearned for the reformation of prostitute behaviors, powerfully countering the cry from those who support prostitution and call for their legal right to pursue their profession.

As a literary theme, prostitution makes a remarkably consistent showing throughout time, but it was not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the prostitute as a character was portrayed in such a way as to allow prevailing assumptions to disperse.

This study discusses the representations of prostitutes in two novels by American authors, Stephen Crane and Theodore Dreiser, as read

through the lens of social science literature existing during the authors' lives. The social science literature noted here spans most of the nineteenth century and was known to maintain a high degree of influence over social scientists of the time. The novels cover a period stretching from 1893 (with the first publication of Maggie) to 1907 (with the second publication of Sister Carrie).

This study explores how each author's portrayal of the prostitute character corresponds with the stereotypical assumptions of the day and how the representations differ from those stereotypes. The study also examines portraits taken of the Storyville Prostitutes by a commercial photographer in New Orleans, E. J. Bellocq, in order to exemplify the visual aspects and constructions of prostitution.

Due in part to the principles of scientific determinism that influenced writers like Crane and Dreiser, the prostitute was observed and portrayed through a lens presumed to filter out subjective convictions which had so long colored the prostitute in a reddish light. By analyzing three forms of representation--the photograph, the sociological report, and the novel--my thesis shows that accepted ideologies were beginning to change with respect to the ways people viewed prostitutes.

SELLING THE BODY: REPRESENTING THE PROSTITUTE IN
MAGGIE AND SISTER CARRIE

by

DEBRA ZOE GAHLHOFF

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
ENGLISH

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1995

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P R E F A C E

"The subject of this treatise encounters peculiar obstacles in the way of public and thorough discussion. It receives only scanty notice at the hands of public journalists. It can never form a topic of common conversation. It carries with it a reminder of shame, miseries, and wrongs which must be always distressing, and therefore, instinctively shunned."

When Sheldon Amos wrote these words in 1877 as an introduction to his study of prostitution in New England (Mehlman, Seligman, v), discussions of prostitution were fundamentally limited to the medical profession. The topic of prostitution had not yet emerged as a social and ethical problem facing society at large. During the next several decades prostitution in America would become an important topic for both reformers and politicians alike. Yet, to most Americans, the prostitute body--even as a topic of conversation--remained taboo until well into the 1960s when feminism began to open up the discourse on numerous subject matters previously concealed.

Prostitution as an historical and sociological subject has increasingly received attention in the last thirty years, both in the consideration of past and present-day assumptions. However, past assumptions are often less clear and, therefore, need to be addressed. In order to discuss the prostitute in American literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I realized that I must first clarify many questions concerning the prostitute of that era. Who was she? What was

she really like? Why did she become a prostitute? What were her alternatives? What role did society play in the prostitute's life? To begin answering these questions and define who the prostitute was a century ago, I studied a wide range of reports from medical doctors, government officials, and twentieth-century researchers. Although some of these texts were contradictory, I began to see many similar assumptions.

To observe the prostitute's representations in literature, the other part of my task, I focus on two American naturalist novels, Maggie: A Girl of the Streets and Sister Carrie. By choosing these novels, I have opted to concentrate my inquiry on the later part of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century in America. The study of prostitution in literature, however, is a relatively unexplored field. Most of the criticism is general and, with these two novels in particular, seems to warily sidestep the issue of prostitution and female sexual behavior in order to discuss, instead, the many novelistic codes, devices, symbols, characterizations and settings. For this reason I concentrate on the fictional constructions of the female prostitute, her appearance, her environment, and her behavior, and examine these constructions by way of the prostitutes in Crane's and Dreiser's novels.

Furthermore, I examine the representations of the prostitute characters through the lens of the stereotypes that citizens and scientists alike held about prostitution. The stereotypes are, therefore, an important set of factors in this work because I concentrate on the ways the authors used or avoided stereotypes and suggest possible reasons for the presence or lack of stereotypical representations.

In order to examine the novels in the way I propose, it is important

to start with a considerable amount of background material. This material will serve to explain the roles society played in prostitution, as well as why women became prostitutes and what their alternatives were.

The first chapter of this thesis begins with a discussion of two photographs taken in the early twentieth century of prostitutes in New Orleans in order to show the reader a sample of the constructed images that came to be known as "the prostitute." The chapter then relates historically and sociologically the who, what, where, and why of prostitution, including the list of stereotypical characteristics that were developed during the nineteenth century by Dr. Parent-Duchatelet. Discussed also is the apparent lack of women's portrayals of their own experiences in prostitution and explanations as to why that lack exists.

The second and third chapters take on the literary texts examined in this study. Chapter Two explores Crane's Maggie: A Girl of the Streets in connection to the stereotypes, while Chapter Three examines the same concepts in Dreiser's Sister Carrie. In each novel, I concentrate on the representations of prostitutes in light of contemporary social science literature and its stereotypes concerning prostitution and point out changes in social attitudes as charted by the two novels.

The fourth chapter summarizes and explores connections made in the preceding chapters in order to clarify the comparisons of various forms or images of the prostitute--in the photograph, in the medical and sociological report, and in the novel--each representing another view of the prostitute body.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE PROSTITUTE AND HER IMAGE

The Photography of E. J. Bellocq

E. J. Bellocq, a commercial photographer working in New Orleans, produced negatives for portraits of the Storyville prostitutes around the year 1912. After Bellocq's death, 89 plates were discovered. These plates, his only known surviving works, were sold in 1966 to Lee Friedlander for reproduction.¹ Many of the plates portray nude or partially clad women, while other plates depict the same women in the customary dress of the period. Bellocq was reportedly interested in realism, and film became a medium that allowed him to step back from his subject just enough to capture more than a face, neck, and shoulders positioned before a canvas backdrop. Bellocq frequently placed his camera far enough away from his subject so that his photographs captured whatever stood behind the backdrop, allowing the viewer a glimpse of the day-to-day life of the women of Storyville. The following photographs are taken from the Friedlander reproductions that appear in a book edited by John Szarkowski. These photographs represent the appearance, the temperament, and the environment of the type of women this study concerns and the aspects that I will concentrate on throughout the course of this thesis.

Figure 1 portrays a woman sitting on a chair before a backdrop as

she poses for Bellocq. She sits calmly with her hands folded, resting in her lap, while her face portrays a solemn demeanor. Her hat is large and feathered, her blouse, white and starched, buttoned to the neck and pinned with a broach. Around her neck she also wears a pendant or locket. A dark skirt flows to her ankles, obscuring her shape, while a belt with a large buckle is cinched about her middle.

But if we look beyond the canvas backdrop, we see that laundry hangs from a clothesline behind the woman, a brick wall reveals the structure of a building, and cracked concrete pavement covers the ground. All these things indicate she is seated outside.

Her clothing, especially the high-necked blouse and broach, suggests that she embodies high moral character. She, like her blouse, has a starched, stiff quality and a clean, well dressed appearance. Her hair is piled upon her head but it is also hidden under her hat, a somewhat extravagant accessory because of its size and feathery decoration, adding to her presentation an image of the well situated, middle-class woman whose budget evidently allows for the purchase of bits of finery and fashion. She has an angelic look; her demure pose has a hint of shyness and solemnity. Her expression is temperate, virtuous, and dignified. She appears to be the sort of woman who moments ago finished hanging the laundry, changed quickly out of a work dress, and then sat down to pose for her portrait. When the photography session is over, we might expect her to promptly change back into a shabbier dress in order to continue with her household chores, or she might stay dressed as she is to go visiting with her neighbors. She could be the wife of a hard working husband, a school teacher, and/or a suffragist. She could be many things

Figure One

and play many roles, but the photographer has given just one strong clue as to her identity--the laundry. However, one cannot be certain that she herself has hung the wash out to dry or whether a maid or servant has completed the task upon her orders. If the posing woman had a maid to do chores like laundry, it would seem odd that she poses so near the clothesline for an important photograph. Rather she could sit near a rosebush at the front of the house. But maybe there is no rosebush. Is the building behind her a house? Or is it a city building of several floors with numberless apartments and offices?

Without the items in the background, the picture would tell much less about the woman. However, the laundry does appear in the photograph and the viewer is therefore given a clue that its subject is associated with some form of housework. Based on what the viewer does know, one does not get the impression that she leads the life of a prostitute. The photograph offers quite a contrasting impression. It is certain that this is a photograph taken by Bellocq and because it is known that Bellocq had an interest in prostitutes--because this piece was found amongst his many prostitute negatives and because the photographs were later explained by old friends of Bellocq's who were interviewed by Friedlander--one can be reasonably assured as to the origination and subject of the artist's work. According to the interviews, many of the women in the Storyville Portraits were recognized and remembered by Bellocq's friends as women who were often seen in the district and known personally by Bellocq and his friends. In spite of one's impressions upon first viewing the photograph in figure one, the woman depicted is a prostitute.

It may not be unusual that an early twentieth-century photographer would present the prostitute model in women's traditional clothing for her portrait. In fact, she would not have been required to dress indiscreetly since many prostitutes' services were secured by upper class men who desired prostitutes who resembled in appearance and behavior women of their own class.² Due to Bellecq's stated interest in realistic styles, he may not have suggested her apparel or pose at all. However, many of his photographs, whether of clothed or naked women, have a quality that alludes to the careful preparation and placement of each element, causing a reason for dispute of the claim that he was a strict follower of the realistic mode.³

The next photograph displays the precisely planned appearance that I noted above while it also makes a strong statement about the woman portrayed. This photograph, again a work by Bellocq, interests me because it appears to be so unlike the photograph in Figure 1.

The woman in Figure 2 wears what resembles a toga, perhaps fashioned from a lace tablecloth, and a pair of boldly striped stockings. She holds a half filled glass in her hand while she gazes upon the dark liquid. Daylight streams in through the nearby window. On the small table are several other objects of interest. A bottle of rye (its label pointed straight at the camera) sits near the woman's elbow as she leans on the table in a somewhat lighthearted pose. A statuette of a goddess-like figure represents the woman herself by its similarly draped gown. A clock shows that the time of day is twelve noon (the sunlight shines through the window confirming that the time of day is not midnight). Just

Figure Two

below the table top, on its lower shelf, sits a collection of miniature doll furniture, little chairs and tables with feathers stuck on them for decoration. On the papered wall behind the woman hang a number of framed photographs and decorations.

The woman in this photograph seems to represent someone merrily passing her time in relative idleness as if she were waiting for something to happen. Unlike the woman who appears with the laundry, this striped lady seems to have no work to do. The decoration of the room indicates a possibility of useless expense and extravagance: the alcohol, the statuette, the abundance of wall hangings, and of course the fancy stockings (which would have been considered quite garish for the times). The toys offer a childlike quality to the scene, or if they are merely ornamental, they can be interpreted as another example of decoration. But in Figure 2, are things really as they seem? The pose of the woman, her dress, and all her props suggest that Bellocq was not following a realistic approach. Rather the scene has been fashioned to present a particular image. Unlike Figure 1, the photograph in Figure 2 shows Bellocq (whether intentionally or not) adhering to many of the stereotypical traits commonly associated with prostitutes of the time. Figure 1, on the other hand, which adheres to none of the stereotypes, contrasts significantly with Figure 2 and suggests that the prostitute was becoming known as a more complex subject than the stereotypes previously allowed. The sections that follow describe the stereotypical traits and the men who supported them, offering also an interpretation of what the stereotypes mean.

Dr. Parent-Duchatelet's Study of Prostitution

Bellocq was a Frenchman who came to America around the turn of the century and soon established himself in New Orleans as a commercial photographer. Very little is really known about him, but considering his background Bellocq was probably aware of French fiction by a number of writers like Zola.⁴ What Bellocq may not have been aware of was the influence that Dr. Parent-Duchatelet had upon nineteenth century views of prostitution in France and Europe.

Parent-Duchatelet was a medical doctor who published one of the first studies of prostitution in the nineteenth century. According to Alain Corbin,⁵ Parent-Duchatelet's work quickly received the notice of other doctors of medicine and early psychology, of politicians, and of intellectuals--including artists and writers (7, 371). Parent-Duchatelet's work had such influence on both French society and other western cultures that it is hard to tell who had more influence on the results of the study, the doctor or the prostitutes?

Parent-Duchatelet published in 1833 findings based on his long study of prostitutes and prostitution, their habits, their effects on society, and their effects on the legal system. He proposed that regulation was the answer to "a prostitute problem" that had grown out of hand. He claimed that because prostitutes were a threat to good society, something had to be done about them. Rather than try to eradicate prostitution, which he suggested would be a futile effort, he proposed that through the use of doctors, police officers and the court systems, cities would be able to keep track of their prostitutes. He recommended that the courts require

prostitutes to live and work only in certain parts of the city. This would prevent the "good" citizen from being exposed to the bawdy misconduct that was considered prevalent in prostitutes during the early part of the nineteenth century. It would become the policeman's job to keep the prostitutes in the red-light districts, while keeping out the "good" women and children.

Parent-Duchatelet noted that in Paris, for example, the elimination of prostitutes would be a hazardous enterprise. His reasoning was based on the idea that by advocating a policy of tolerance (i.e., regulation), prostitutes would continue to preserve social order as protectors of harmony. Without the prostitute, a man with desires might pervert his daughters and servant girls, producing serious conflicts within the home and family. The best alternative, according to Parent-Duchatelet, was to maintain a prostitute population to which a man with carnal appetites could safely turn when necessary.

Dr. Parent-Duchatelet's Stereotypes

Parent-Duchatelet's most significant contribution to the study of prostitution was his discovery of "traits," characteristics, according to Alain Corbin, that seek to identify common elements from among disparate information (7). After much observation, he developed the traits which I have organized in the following chart (Figure 3).

I have placed Parent-Duchatelet's traits into three main categories: the prostitute's physical appearance, her temperament (both her thinking and behavior), and her social and physical environment. However, a few

Prostitute Stereotypes
Observed By Dr. Parent-Duchatelet

Appearance	Temperament	Environment
lacks good hygiene dresses shamefully or extravagantly plump figure loud, crude sounding voice rough and unrefined	immature an affection for animals, children, and nature thoughtless and careless dislikes work (e.g. house- cleaning) loves pleasure loves alcohol and food likes excess unable to save money indulgent in the "useless" chatters constantly rough, loud, and unrefined frequently angry infrequently hysterical sudden mood swings	discordant childhood grows up in broken home grows up in poverty avoids settling down moves or changes address often lives in disorder lacks a clean home rejects order of society and economy

Figure 3

of the traits set down by Parent-Duchatelet seem to reach beyond a single category, qualifying under a second heading; I have accommodated these duplications by listing a few of the traits under more than one heading.

The appearance of the prostitute was, according to Parent-Duchatelet, generally lacking in good personal hygiene. Prostitutes were considered slovenly in their dress, as well as in their behaviors. They dressed shamefully or extravagantly and often spent much of their money on this type of extravagance. The prostitute was usually plump, but in spite of her fleshiness, Parent-Duchatelet admitted that prostitutes were diverse in their size, their coloring, and their attributes. Many prostitutes were thought to have crude sounding voices, partly due to the excessive drinking in which they were believed to participate.

Considering that maturity during Parent-Duchatelet's time was identified with an acquired acceptance of the values of society as a whole, the temperament of the prostitute was determined immature. She had a childlike nature that included an affection for animals, children, nature and the countryside. Although she was fond of animals and children, she was considered thoughtless of others, only satisfying her own selfish needs and not caring for the emotional and physical needs of others. It was believed that she was unable to concentrate and found it difficult to keep her mind on tasks long enough to see them to completion. Perhaps this is why she was also considered lazy, that is, as being one who hated to do any kind of work such as cleaning, cooking, or caring for a family. Her behavior involved a love of drinking alcohol and eating rich or sweet foods. She had a tendency to be excessive in both her eating and drinking and in her indulgences in "useless" items like flowers, gambling, and

cards. She was not considered a thrifty person and was unable to save money. The prostitute's carelessness and improvident ways were viewed by Parent-Duchatelet as another example of her immaturity.

Parent-Duchatelet represented the prostitute as someone who liked to talk. In fact she was thought to chatter constantly in a loud, rough, and unrefined manner. She was thought to display sudden and frequent mood swings, sometimes bursting into fits of anger but seldom experiencing the fits of hysterical fear and panic that were considered common among eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women. In addition to her other behaviors, the prostitute, already of loose morals, was also thought to be at risk of becoming a lesbian as a natural progression in her already depraved and transgressive lifestyle.

As a child, it was often believed that her social and physical environment was violent or that she was raised in a broken home, having experienced the death of one or both parents, or having witnessed a general but severe conflict between members of her family. She often grew up in poverty, and because of her desire for clothes and materials that she saw in shops or being worn by fine looking ladies, money became important to her even though ways of getting it were difficult. She was thought to move quite often, changing addresses frequently in order to avoid being detected by policemen. In her home or, more frequently, in her rented rooms, she was thought to live in disorder. Her apartments were lacking in cleanliness and harmonious arrangement. She was generally thought to reject the order of society and of economy, going against the religious and societal sanctions of sexual relations, i.e., within the legal confines of marriage. The prostitute also was thought to oppose

the acceptability of being supported by a husband because she supported herself through disrespectful means.

What Parent-Duchatelet designated as common traits in the early nineteenth century solidified over the next 100-plus years into what modern readers see as stereotypical representations of the prostitute. The research and opinions which followed Parent-Duchatelet projected a sense of this stereotypical prostitute and it is a sampling of this research that I explore in the following section.

Other Studies of Prostitution

The work of Parent-Duchatelet has been noted as one of the first and most extensive of reports done on prostitution in France. Although published first in the 1830s, for nearly 50 years Parent-Duchatelet's findings went largely undisputed.⁶ Unlike his followers, Parent-Duchatelet was not concerned with unregistered prostitutes, courtesans, kept women, or those prostitutes who owned their homes and paid taxes. "Such women, in his view, represented no real danger to the ruling classes, of which they were *de facto* members" (Corbin 4).

However, some forty years later in France, Dr. Hippolyte Homo produced a study that showed his anxiety over prostitution as it echoed his fear of decaying morals in society. He claimed that prostitution had been allowed to flourish, and that male authority had weakened and was partly to blame. He claimed that prostitution had spread because of the increase in atheism, freethinking, and the permissiveness of liberal attitudes. He reported that people had generally taken to pleasure seeking and were

now challenging not only the church but political authority as well, causing various social upheavals. Industrialization was also having an immense impact, allowing some people to obtain excessive social mobility for which they were unprepared, too often placing men and women in the same workspaces, allowing workers the freedom to associate with members of the opposite sex. In addition, Dr. Homo blamed the growing uniformity of dress as yet another reason that society looked with less scrutiny upon its local prostitutes (Corbin 19). Dr. Homo considered the regulation of prostitution in early nineteenth-century France too lax and urged that a policy of strict order and supervision would reduce the number of prostitutes as well as reform the permissiveness of society in the late 1800s.

Meanwhile in England and the British Isles regulation was also affecting prostitution. The Contagious Diseases Acts, which were enforced in parts of England and Ireland between 1864 and 1884, provided for medical and police inspection of prostitutes in garrison towns and ports. The Acts were seen by many men as simple sanitary measures to control the spread of venereal disease. However, many women attacked the Acts on the grounds that they were a moral insult to all women and a reinforcement of the double standard (Walkowitz, City, 159). According to articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1887, some middle-class citizens had repeatedly voiced complaints of the "physical and visual aggressiveness of the 'painted creatures,' with their 'gaudy dress,' aggressive gaze, and provoking deportment" (Walkowitz, City, 23). It was for this reason that police officers had looked forward to an extension of the Acts to London, where they sought to initiate a system of

police supervision to aid in containment of the disorderly conduct of prostitution in the West End. However, the extension was defeated and the Acts were repealed.

The growing number of citizens who had become increasingly dissatisfied with the state's role and ability to control prostitute traffic sought alternatives. Many moral reformers, such as the well known Josephine Butler, had become critical of the police and the prison system for making young female offenders into hardened criminals. If sent to prison, those found guilty of minor offences were often thought to be further corrupted by their close contact with criminals who were incarcerated for more serious crimes. Reformers, therefore, instituted special penitentiaries for prostitutes where they were watchfully subjected to moral education, industrial training, and a heavy dose of middle-class standards of femininity (Mahood 3).

Similar to these reforms in Britain, corrective actions were also a serious matter in the United States. The attitudes of Americans toward prostitution, like their European counterparts, slanted toward a double standard, one that modern readers tend to view as fallacious. However, many felt that prostitution was inevitable in order to preserve the integrity of the "proper" woman. Crimes on the patrons of brothels increased as did crimes against the prostitute.⁷ A need became increasingly apparent to establish societies of reform which were based on the English model of moral education and job training. In America, unlike the European countries, floods of newly settled immigrants altered the texture of prostitution, as did the westward movement, causing some prostitutes to move to frontier mining camps where the women were

scarce (Bullough 200-203).

Urban prostitution, according to W. W. Sanger, only differed from that of frontier prostitution in numbers. In cities with larger populations, the potential of available customers induced many prostitutes to work in these urban centers, and it was here that many immigrant women employed themselves as prostitutes. The largest number of immigrant prostitutes were Irish, followed by the Germans (Sanger 460).

Although many American cities tried to adopt regulation laws, the only city in the United States to officially enact a European regulation system was St. Louis in 1870. The American women's movement opposed regulation, as did women's reform groups in England. But their success in this country did not stop the segregation. Red-light districts,⁸ similar to the 38-block span of the Storyville district recorded in Bellocq's photographs, became areas of pseudo-tolerance in at least 77 American cities (Bullough 208). Consequently, police corruption became a prominent sideline along with the frequent raids they made upon the districts.

Citizens in a number of cities in the United States became increasingly distressed as the new century approached. Problems with gambling and "social evil" (prostitution), were often thought to be related (just as Parent-Duchatelet had suggested earlier). It was for this reason in 1900 that the city officials of New York selected a committee whose purpose was to discover the causes of "gambling and Social evil. . .and to collect such evidence as shall establish the connection between existing conditions and those who. . .are responsible for these conditions" (Mehlman, Seligman, ix). As if the problems had just been discovered,

other officials also began to study vice in their cities. In Syracuse in 1913, a study of prostitution was done in order to enlighten the public and better enforce laws so as to keep "youth of both sexes" from being lured "into their toils" (Mehlman, Syracuse, 7). In 1914, the Massachusetts State Senate and House of Representative commissioned a report to advise them "to what extent women and girls are included or compelled by others to lead an immoral life. . ." (Mehlman, House Report 2281, 5). In 1917, Howard Woolston published a study of prostitution that included such states as Arizona, Montana, Georgia, and Utah, in addition to the states of New England.

Many of these reports noted the following: that stronger reform efforts were mandatory, that police surveillance needed to be increased, that churches and schools would be expected to provide moral training, that education for both the public and "sinful" women was necessary, that more attention needed to be directed to youths before they became corrupted, that the depraved should be confined to hospitals so that they would not spread moral filth and physical disease, and that owners of buildings, restaurants, saloons, and apartments should be held accountable for prohibited activities that took place on their premises.

In nearly a hundred years, from the time that Parent-Duchatelet had first conceived of his study, to the publishing of Woolston's extensive report, very little had actually changed in the way that human beings dealt with prostitution. They had tried reform, regulation, segregation, and, at times, had even tried to ignore prostitution. Most of the reported observations were accomplished by men, mostly doctors, presumably men of the upper or middle classes, whose lives were quite unlike any of those

of the women they observed. As a result, the male researcher necessarily brought to his study a number of assumptions based on his position, his financial status, his social standing, and probably even his own religious and moral beliefs. Although a few of the studies I found included summaries of interviews with prostitutes, the interpretations of women's experiences could have easily been distorted or misinterpreted by the interviewing doctors or transcribers. Despite these things, Parent-Duchatelet became known as an expert in the study of prostitution, a field in which researchers for many years merely augmented what had been published before.

Women's Silence

Given the assumptions made about prostitutes, it is unfortunate that so few women wrote about their own experiences in prostitution. It is at the same time understandable. It goes without saying that prostitution was considered immoral. For this reason, a woman often did not want to volunteer information that could, for example, be used to discredit her. As prostitution became outlawed, there was even less incentive for her to record her experiences for the fear of these records falling into the wrong hands, to be used to put her in jail. Another explanation acknowledges that women did not record their prostitute experiences because these might cause embarrassment for families if the written accounts should end up in their hands. And finally, a large number of prostitutes were illiterate and, therefore, unable to write down the events of their lives. Although prostitution is often called "the oldest

profession," writing about one's experiences as a prostitute is a relatively new endeavor.

Maimie's Papers

One prostitute in America early in the twentieth century did write about the matters affecting her life in the form of letters to her friend and benefactress. The Maimie Papers, a collection of letters written by Maimie Pinzer to a charitable Bostonian lady, Mrs. Fanny Quincy Howe (also known as "Mrs. Grundy"), give one account of the prostitute's life in the words of the woman herself. The letters span a twelve-year period and present aspects of Maimie's past and her "troubles" as she attempts to reform. She lived primarily in Philadelphia and New York and worked as a prostitute for a number of years before her reform. Prostitution had been her first choice as a means of survival when, rejected by her family, she was left with only two other choices, marriage or unskilled menial work. For Maimie, prostitution was the best option.

As a girl of eighteen, she had already spent four years in prison after being accused by her own family of promiscuous behaviors. Prior to her time in prison, she had worked as a department store salesgirl and had become familiar with all the luxuries afforded by a consumer driven materialistic society. Many young women who worked as salesgirls during the early twentieth century chose to become prostitutes as a way of acquiring extra money for the beautiful clothing and trinkets they saw each day and for which they yearned. In department stores, young women also met many unattached men who loitered about, making

purchases or flirting with the salesgirls. Maimie's background also paralleled other aspects of typical working-class girls: she experienced familial financial crisis as a result of her father's death and developed an estranged relationship with her mother, requiring her to seek employment at an early age (Rosen xiii-xl).

In spite of Maimie's efforts to reform with the help of Mrs. Howe, she makes the following claim in a lengthy letter written from White Plains in the spring of 1912. "My trouble is that I am a 'working girl' who has lived like a 'lady'--and it's hard to curb my desires and live as the working girl should" (Rosen 141). Just as it was for thousands of young women, leaving behind the life of prostitution was for Maimie a difficult process. Problems with her health (e.g., the loss of an eye to venereal disease) and a morphine addiction caused an unloved Maimie to turn to Mrs. Howe and her generous offer of support and guidance. Through hard work and perseverance she succeeded in refraining from prostitution and later entered into a marriage with Ira Benjamin. But even her marriage was not without difficulty; a rabbi had to be found who was willing to perform the ceremony without asking those questions that she "could not answer truthfully. . .[as] a girl must before she marries" (Rosen 387).

Maimie's existence was in many ways typical of other prostitutes, both in European countries and in America. Maimie's letters, however, are limited as a means for understanding prostitution. Judith Walkowitz remarks:

[T]hey reveal little of Maimie's experience in prostitution (she was never a streetwalker but seems to

have carried on a discreet trade with gentlemen in the afternoon). The letters do. . .tell us a great deal about her subsequent working life outside prostitution and about the circumstances that might have impelled "self-respecting errant girls" like herself to move into prostitution. (133)

Quoted here from a review of The Maimie Papers, Walkowitz emphasizes the problem one encounters when studying prostitutes who lived and died long before us. Very little was recorded by the prostitute herself while the interpretations of prostitutes lives were left to men like Parent-Duchatelet. We have so little that recounts the prostitute's actual thoughts and experiences that many have been compelled to rely on the stereotypical interpretations and on views held by society, seemingly forgetting that a different account might exist.

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg describes women's imprint on events as intrinsically important to an understanding of the way women position themselves in the world. She comments:

[L]etters and diaries provide us with a unique opportunity to hear women's own words directly, not filtered through a male record. Male voices have so often drowned out or denied women's words and perceptions that the rediscovery of women's unique language must be our first priority. (29)

Since so few records exist that give accounts of the prostitute's experiences, owing to things such as fear of embarrassment or punishment, scholars are left to salvage what they can from remaining accounts,

whether they are written by men or women. The limited numbers of letters, diaries, and interviews that do exist are must interpreted by those studying prostitution and the related historical literature of the social sciences. Perhaps more accounts will be discovered with time, allowing us to learn more about the prostitute of the past as she relates her own experiences in her own words. Meanwhile, male voices offer perspectives of prostitute representations not yet exhausted.

Interpreting the Male Voice

According to Corbin, Parent-Duchatelet's portrait of the prostitute was so often repeated in reports on prostitution that it inspired a great many novelists and, "in addition to distorting the vision of later researchers, as I have said, it probably determined to some extent the behavior of the prostitutes themselves" (7). In Zola's Nana, the stereotypes are amply dispensed. It is a book which, Corbin suggests, launched the theme of prostitution in fiction (29). Although many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels of sentiment contained prostitute figures, the treatment of "sinful" women in sentimental fiction, works that were often written by women, was different than the prostitute theme that is credited to Zola, simply because his treatment, like many that would follow, was non-sympathetic. Zola and many of the other male fiction writers were attempting to write texts in the scientific mode of literary naturalism which corresponded to the work of social scientists of the same period. Nevertheless, his work repeats the typical assumptions that were held of prostitutes. It is these assumptions and

stereotypes in light of the history they pass through, which provide me the lens through which I explore Crane's and Dreiser's representations of prostitute characters.

The novels, like the visual representations of Bellocq and the nineteenth-century social science literature, are interpretations of a reality that has been handed down through the years, offering a variety of points of view of the body prostitute.

As I have indicated, Bellocq employed both stereotypical representations and progressive representations in his photographs. Parent-Duchatelet observed a set of stereotypes that became known as conventional. Crane and Dreiser, as I will show, adopt a method similar to Bellocq's as they portray prostitutes who seek survival in a world too complex for stereotypical constructions.

¹ In E. J. Bellocq: Storyville Portraits, 34 plates out of a total of 89 are included in the book, plates which were reproduced by Friedlander. John Szarkowski, editor.

² Alain Corbin, Vern Bullough, and Nicki Roberts represent authors of studies of prostitution who include pictures and/or descriptions of prostitutes who wore "afternoon clothes of a sober, decent kind" (Corbin 175).

³ Of course, Bellocq was not the only photographer to experiment with work of this type. In Martha Banta's Imaging American Women, she discusses the Pre-Raphaelite movement of the artistic world which began during the middle 1800s, a movement that called for truth, symbolism, sensuousness, experimentation, and an interest in minute details. The movement produced many young photographers who were interested in shooting pictures of nude women in seductive poses and who called their work "genteel art photography." According to Banta, Pre-Raphaelite styles of photography often bordered on soft porn and suspiciously revealed that every look and gesture had been arranged by the combined efforts of the photographer and model (Banta 13). How realistic or truthfully shot are Bellocq's photographs? This question comes up again but for now, based solely on figure one, the viewer beholds a pose of a realistic quality, seemingly unarranged, with the presence of the laundry, building, and cracked pavement.

⁴ Zola, especially in his novel *Nana*, utilizes the stereotypical representations, reports Alain Corbin.

⁵ In *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France After 1850*, Corbin reminds readers of Dr. Parent-Duchatelet's thoughts in order to help that reader understand the debate that took place when regulationism began to break down in the later part of the nineteenth century.

⁶ Alain Corbin's book notes that Parent-Duchatelet's work had an immediate influence. "It was in reference to this work and with the avowed aim of completing it with the account of a policeman's experience that A. Béraud published, in 1839, *Les filles publiques de Paris, et la police qui les régit*. It was in the work of Parent-Duchatelet that Buret, Frégier, and Ducpétiaux found their quantitative data on prostitution. When, between 1839 and 1842, Dr. Potton wrote *De la prostitution et de la syphilis dans les grandes villes, dans la ville de Lyon en particulier*, it was because he was driven by a desire to see Parisian regulationism, so well described by Parent-Duchatelet, applied in Lyons. Only Alphonse Esquiros (*Les vierges folles*, 1844) tried to react against the thinking of the regulationist doctor, by whom, nonetheless, he himself had been inspired"(371).

⁷ One example of a notorious crime, similar to the Jack the Ripper murders in England, occurred in New York in 1836 when a prostitute by

the name of Helen Jewett was killed with an ax, allegedly by R. L. Robinson. "Although the circumstantial evidence was strong, most of the testimony depended on the words of prostitutes, and this in contrast to the appearance of the defendant, the handsome, nineteen-year-old socialite who did not testify himself, decided the outcome. When the jury brought in its verdict of "Not guilty," the crowded courtroom cheered. Prostitutes could not be trusted. . ." (Bullough, Prostitution: An Illustrated Social History, 201-02).

⁸ This term is said to derive from the practice of trainmen who would leave their signal lanterns outside of a building while visiting there (Bullough 208).

CHAPTER TWO

REPRESENTATIONS OF MAGGIE

Unlike many novelists classified in the literary schools of realism and naturalism, Crane did not avoid stereotypes. He encountered the plot and character directly, recreating them according to his own view of the human condition. Some have suggested that Crane wrote Maggie as a deliberate attempt to parody the sentimental novel, that he took the codes of sentimentalism and recreated them without the highly romanticized notions so often criticized in that type of fiction (Solomon 22).

As a representation, both social and symbolic, the stereotype depends on its relationship to others within hierarchical strata. The magdalene is one type among others, such as the virgin, the spinster, the mother, and women in general. Often subconsciously, each of the classifications is considered in association to its position with others in the group. The prostitute stereotypes that were observed and formulated by Parent-Duchatelet and his followers maintained the position of the prostitute in a social system that placed her on the lowest level.

Alain Corbin suggests Zola was influenced in his perception of prostitution by the social science literature of his time, perhaps aiding him in his creation of Nana. Crane was similarly influenced; he knew about stereotypes and put them to work in his novel. A few years after first publishing Maggie, Crane even associated with actual prostitutes,

intimately in at least one case, suggesting his acceptance of others was not confined to middle-class standards.

It is well known that he entered a common-law marriage with Cora Crane, a one time madam of a brothel in New Orleans. In addition, in 1896 Crane appeared in court before a New York City judge in order to testify on behalf of Dora Clark, who had been accused by police officers of soliciting two men on the street. Crane, a witness to the whole incident and being certain that she had not solicited the two men, went so far as to stake his career and reputation as an author on his claim that she was innocent.

Although Crane's associations with these two particular women suggest rebellion against societal norms, his associations also propose sympathetic feelings toward persons caught within particular social strata. Maggie was written before Crane became associated with Cora and Ms. Clark. His representations of the prostitute in Maggie, therefore, were not influenced by his actual experiences with these two women. And yet, Crane portrayed in the novel an understanding of both the stereotypical and the nonstereotypical representations of prostitution. Hence, what follows is an analysis of the stereotypical traits as they appeared in Parent-Duchatelet's work in order to discover how they conform or do not conform to the prostitute in Maggie.

Maggie's Appearance

Unlike prostitutes observed and reported in Parent-Duchatelet's

study, Maggie develops good personal hygiene. She is described in Chapter Five as blooming in a mud puddle; as a child playing in the streets, "dirt disguised her," but as she grew up the "tatters and grime" fell away and she blossomed like a flower into a lovely young woman. Crane writes that Maggie was "a most rare and wonderful production of a tenement district." The suggestion here is that as Maggie grew up, she no longer went about the neighborhood dirty and disheveled. Like most girls as they become women, Maggie gained an appreciation for her appearance, was lucky enough to be a beautiful young woman, and was soon noticed by the men of the tenement district as a "puty good looker."

As Maggie develops into a "pretty girl," she begins to take notice of her clothing in a way that she never had before. When she happily agrees to go on her first date with Pete, he arrives to pick her up and finds her wearing "a worn black dress." While she spends the evening with Pete at the hall watching the performers and drinking beer, the narrator suggests that she takes an interest in the apparel of the people there. "Yellow silk women" make up part of the orchestra and "a girl in a pink dress with short skirts" dances upon the stage. As the reader takes notice of the colorfully well dressed performers and patrons, so does Maggie.

During the next few days Maggie finds herself thinking of Pete and as a result, "she began to have an intense dislike for all her dresses." Here one finds evidence that Maggie's clothing does not satisfy her and she begins to long for nicer things. It is also at this time that her mother begins to complain, "What deh hell ails yeh? What makes yeh be allus fixin' and fussin'? Good Gawd," offering further proof that Maggie has

acquired an appreciation for making herself look neat and clean.

Maggie is not financially able to purchase fine dresses for herself while working at a cuff and collar factory. Her wages of five dollars a week do not allow for such extravagance. But once she becomes a prostitute, Maggie is described as walking along city sidewalks "in her handsome cloak, daintily lifting her skirts and picking for her well-shod feet the dryer spots upon the pavements." Although the prostitute is stereotyped as one who dresses shamefully or extravagantly, this representation of Maggie lacks those qualities. Apparently Maggie has improved her financial situation as a prostitute because she is described in more prosperous terms, in attractive garments. However, her clothes are not described as frivolous; the cloak is called "handsome" and her feet are "well-shod."

Another element of Maggie's appearance that disagrees with the stereotypical representation of the prostitute is her voice. Parent-Duchatelet describes prostitutes as having crude, rough, and loud speech habits. But Maggie is never loud or rough or crude. In fact, Maggie is a quiet girl. She often says very little and, although she is the main character of the novel, others around her participate in many more dialogues than Maggie does. When she is characterized as "small and mouse-like," the description tells more about her than her size. It hints at another element associated with "mouse," such as the high-pitched squeak that mice are known to make, a sound that is almost imperceptible.

If Maggie is "small and mouse-like," then her size, like her voice, is contrary to the stereotypical plumpness of prostitutes. Although her mother is a large woman, Maggie is small and slender. Parent-Duchatelet

admits that although most prostitutes are fleshy and plump, they come in sizes that are large and small, with a range of skin color from dark to light, with shapely curves or thin, straight lines. Pete notices Maggie's figure and tells her that he's "stuck" on her "shape," that "it's outa sight." Whatever Maggie's size, Pete's statement allows the reader to picture her with attributes that are found attractive. If Maggie perceives herself as small and Pete views her as shapely, one can be assured at least that she is not the plump figure that Parent-Duchatelet points to in the stereotypes.

Thus far, Maggie's appearance resembles not one of the stereotypes. She has good hygiene, never appears to dress shamefully or extravagantly, is not plump or large, and she speaks in a small quiet voice that is neither rough nor loud. Maggie corresponds with the stereotype only in her lack of a refined appearance. Throughout most of the novel she is portrayed as clean and pretty, but not as refined. Her poverty does not allow her to cultivate a refined nature. But even this assumption becomes erroneous when one considers Maggie in the handsome cloak and shoes, daintily picking up her skirts to avoid puddles on the sidewalk. A refined, genteel woman of the day would not allow her skirts to drag along the wet streets. Because Maggie keeps her skirts out of the puddles, Parent-Duchatelet's stereotypes would have us believe that she is a well-bred woman rather than a prostitute. Therefore, in Maggie's appearance one can see the contrasts between the vision of Dr. Parent-Duchatelet and that of Stephen Crane.

Maggie's Temperament

Maggie's temperament, much like her appearance, gives further evidence that Crane's representation of the prostitute character is different from that of the French doctor and his stereotypical classifications.

New York City, and especially the Bowery where Maggie grew up, was not well known for an abundance of green spaces¹ (apart from the 840 acres that make up Central Park). It was and is a city that boasts of its nightlife and Broadway entertainments, of enormous populations, and a vast economic center. In the 1890s it was filled with numerous tenement districts that housed a significant proportion of this country's poor citizens, many of them immigrants. Because Maggie is portrayed as growing up in the heart of what was then one of the roughest parts of the city, she experienced little that was common to country folk.

Although there are numerous animal images in the novel which are revealed in the descriptions of the characters, Crane's novel does not give readers the opportunity to watch Maggie associate with animals or nature. Maggie herself is portrayed as "mouse-like," and as a child eating her dinner, "Maggie, with side glances of fear of interruption, ate like a small pursued tigress." The only natural settings in the novel are brief allusions to the larger natural world that exists outside of the city. As a child Maggie steals a flower from an Italian vendor in order to place it in the clenched fist of her dead baby brother before he is taken away in an "insignificant coffin." Later, Maggie is likened to a flower that blooms in a mud puddle. And near the end of the novel, she walks to the river to

look down into the dirty water, contemplating her fate. Despite these instances, one is unable to decipher whether Maggie possessed an affection for animals or nature, as would a reportedly stereotypical prostitute. The natural and animalistic elements indicate little about Maggie's feelings, thoughts, or behaviors, although they do function to tell the reader how Maggie should be viewed.

Children, unlike qualities of the animal and natural world, appear frequently in the novel. Maggie is first portrayed as a child herself, dragging her baby brother by the arm through dirty streets. Here she shows no affection for him. Rather the two are engaged in a battle of wills as she pulls him in one direction and he pulls in another. In spite of the battle, she does not abandon him but continues to insist that he follow her. When he dies and she places a flower in his fist, a momentary glimpse of affection for the child shines through and then quickly disappears. When Maggie has grown into a young woman and is spotted in the hallways of her mother's tenement apartment, many young children are depicted nearby as playing or pointing, but Maggie's previous glimpse of affection for children does not even register a glimmer. These children are merely part of the chorus-effect that Crane includes as a stylistic device. Therefore, unlike the stereotypical prostitute, one recognizes in Maggie virtually no affection for nature, for animals, or for children.

The prostitute, according to Parent-Duchatelet, is considered thoughtless, careless, and improvident. Does Maggie's character conform to these traits? When she places the flower in her baby brother's fist, she shows a moment of thoughtfulness for his departed soul. When she tidies

up her mother's apartment before taking her things and going away to live with Pete, she exhibits another thoughtful act. On a number of occasions she kindly submits to the wishes of others, such as when she leaves the saloon where Pete works because he shows concern that she will sully his reputation by hanging around. One might argue that Maggie performs many of these thoughtful or kindly tasks only out of feelings of guilt or selfish fears of encountering an ugly confrontation. On the other hand, she performs these thoughtful acts without receiving any tangible rewards for them, causing at least this reader to consider Maggie unlike the stereotypically thoughtless prostitute.

Maggie also lacks a careless and improvident, or reckless, temperament. Her initial infatuation for Pete, and her eventual fall into prostitution, displays a recklessness in Maggie only if one neglects to consider her background. Growing up in a tenement district, where alcoholism, family violence, and poverty are everyday problems, Maggie did not have the opportunity to learn, as would a girl of the middle classes, that perserving her chastity was the preferred way of protecting herself from a miserable future. Although Mrs. Johnson claims to have talked with her daughter about avoiding sinfulness, there is no evidence that she ever carries through or, indeed, has any civil conversations with Maggie. Without adequate parenting to teach her how to live according to middle class values, Maggie must find her own ways to survive, and she usually seeks whatever presents to her mind the least conflict. Giving up her virginity and living with Pete are matters of survival rather than merely careless or reckless behavior and becoming a prostitute is the consequence of Maggie seeing herself with no other alternatives.

Unlike the stereotypical prostitute, Maggie is not lazy, nor does she display a dislike for completing tasks such as housekeeping. When Jimmie tells Maggie "Yeh've edder got teh go teh hell or go teh work," she gets a job at a cuff and collar factory and sits all day sewing at a treadle machine, "having the feminine aversion of going to hell." She discovers that she does not like her job because of the monotony of repeating the same task for hours and hours each day. She feels a sense of discontentment but in spite of this continues to arrive daily. When Maggie lives in her mother's apartment she cleans and tidies quite often. Even as a child, she washes mountains of dirty dishes that her mother leaves for her. These examples suggest that Maggie is not lazy. They also suggest that for Maggie cleaning and housekeeping are tolerable activities that offer pleasing results. And unlike Parent-Duchatelet's vision of the prostitute character, the narrator does not describe Maggie as expressing a dislike for work.

Another common trait represents the prostitute as loving food and alcohol to an excessive degree. Food is not an important element in Crane's novel; only once, at the beginning of the novel, when Maggie is a child, is she portrayed eating--like a "small pursued tigress." From this one determines that she eats food for survival but she is never portrayed as eating merely for the pleasure of it. Just as with food, Maggie shows no particular love for alcohol. When she goes to the hall with Pete on dates, he orders beer for her, but there is never a suggestion that Maggie gets drunk or drinks excessively. Although the people in her life spend much of their time becoming obnoxiously intoxicated, Maggie is always portrayed as quiet and sober.

Unlike the prostitutes that Parent-Duchatelet represents in his study, Maggie, in fact, has no excessive tendencies. She becomes infatuated with Pete and fantasizes about him, but her thoughts and behaviors are like those of any girl who discovers her first sweetheart. She cleans her mother's apartment, but again her penchant for order is not extreme. She decorates the apartment, placing a lambrequin over the stove and ribbons on the curtain, which are hardly depicted as unreasonable decorations in the dumpy place that the Johnson family calls home. Maggie's efforts at decorating are pitiful attempts to bring order and civility into her world of chaos. Finally, when she is represented near the end of the novel, Maggie appears sensibly dressed but without any excessive extravagance in her costume.

The stereotypical prostitute, according to Parent-Duchatelet, indulges in "useless" items and pastimes, things such as card playing, gambling, drinking alcohol, the buying of trinkets, candy, and other sweets. The lambrequin that Maggie buys as an attempt to beautify the Johnson home, may be futile in light of the inevitable destruction caused by her mother, but at the same time such a small purchase refrains from being "useless" in the same sense as drinking, gambling, and eating candy.

As indicated in the discussion of Maggie's appearance, she has a quiet voice and says very little. Her behavior and temperament do not correlate with the constant chattering or loud quality of speech that corresponds with the social science stereotypes, showing, once again, that the representation of Maggie defies the common traits.

Also like her appearance, she has not the behavior of a "rough" woman nor does she behave in an unrefined way. Although Maggie has

sexual relations with Pete, which based on middle-class standards is considered unrefined behavior for one who is unmarried, Maggie's behavior is not represented as inappropriate. Rather, the situations she experiences while living with her mother and brother (a brother who suggests she "go to hell", i.e., become a prostitute) explain and justify Maggie's desire to flee with Pete as her "savior."

Maggie's moods are another element of her temperament that, like the others explored here, portray her contrast with the stereotypical prostitute. She is never depicted as getting angry, she is never hysterical, and her moods do not fluctuate swiftly. She occasionally becomes melancholy when she thinks about her situation in life. At other times her moods portray fear (like when she is a child trying to eat dinner without interruption) or confusion (as she tries to understand Pete's resistance to telling her that he loves her). But Maggie usually controls her moods so that they do not get the best of her. Only in Maggie's final scene does she submit to the fear and depression that grips her, leads her to the river's edge, and takes her to a fate mingled with the muddy waters. Even the action of throwing herself into the river is unlike the sudden mood swings considered common in the prostitute. Judging from her calm and contemplative behaviors preceeding this event and the success her apparel indicates, suicide is not her last resort but it is the one that she chooses.

Thus far, Maggie's character represents not one of the stereotypical classifications that Parent-Duchatelet observed, but when she is compared to the next three traits under the category of temperament, one discovers that, at last, some similarities exist. Maggie, like the stereotypical prostitute, is unable to save money. When she works at the cuff and

collar factory, making only five dollars a week, she makes far too little money to be able to establish any significant sort of savings. As a prostitute, she must have clothes that enhance her ability to attract customers. Living on her own as a prostitute, she must also pay room and board. But in her new line of work, like her previous factory job, it is improbable that she is able to save very much money. Furthermore, her status as a streetwalker would not have supplied her with the same wages as women in brothels who were generally considered a higher class of prostitute (Sanger 133).

Another stereotype represented in Maggie is the love of pleasure. When Pete takes her on their first date, she thoroughly enjoys the sights and sounds of the evening and spends the following days thinking over the experience. After bringing home the lambrequin and meticulously positioning it over the stove, Maggie is at first pleased to look on her efforts. When Pete and Maggie go to museums, parks, and other amusements, she is delighted by each encounter. In this respect, Maggie is like Parent-Duchatelet's vision of the prostitute. However, while she enjoys these little pleasures, like most women, whether they are promiscuous or not, she also presents a sense of being overwhelmed and confused by the civilized world that is so foreign and different from her Bowery background. What the French researcher considers applicable to the prostitute is in this case relevant to human beings as a whole.

Finally, social scientists of the nineteenth century considered prostitutes immature in both their thinking and their behavior; as one soon discovers, Maggie too is immature. But maturity is a difficult concept to weigh. Before she meets Pete, Maggie has an air of innocence

in spite of growing up in the Bowery. She retains this innocent nature even after she lives with Pete and then tries to return to her mother's apartment. Naively, Maggie thinks that her mother will allow her back into the family home. She does not realize that her sexual behavior has clouded her reputation, nor does she understand why she is ostracized by her mother and brother. Maturity suggests that one has reached full growth or development (both mental and physical), that one is able to consider the different angles of an issue in order to make the best decisions and prove oneself evolving toward wholeness and self-sufficiency. As a child and young woman, Maggie witnesses a number of events that might reasonably have made her streetwise and cautious of treachery in others. That she has not become streetwise makes her seem all the more naive. For example, she trusts Pete and views him as an aristocratic figure when he is really no different from her own brother except in the clothes that he can afford to wear. Maggie also has little reason to trust Pete simply because she does not know him very well. Her trust is based solely on his appearance, on his fancy suits, on his smooth and haughty speeches, but not on the way he treats people or talks to them. Maggie is unable to see Pete in realistic and sensible terms because she has no way of comparing him with a more humane type of man, a type that she has never known.

Maggie's immaturity leaves her vulnerable. Neither her mother nor her brother point out the flaws or distrustful qualities in Pete's character. Maggie must rely on her own judgment. Because she is naive, innocent, and without guidance, she becomes Pete's lover, only to learn that society will demand a high price for that decision.

One explanation of Maggie's immaturity is her age. She cannot be more than eighteen years old when she leaves home to live with Pete. Still in her teens, Maggie has not matured emotionally even though she has developed physically into a beautiful young woman. Furthermore, Maggie's age closely corresponds with the age group of the highest number of first offences for prostitution, age 17 (Woolston 39-40). The immaturity in Maggie is similar to the immaturity of other young women prostitutes who traveled down the path established by social scientists. In spite of her lack of maturity, Maggie senses that there are proper and improper ways to live and attempts to make the best choices she can without models, friends, or hope. Although she is portrayed as rejecting prostitution, her immaturity in combination with her circumstances eventually lead her to that end.

Maggie's Environment

The physical and social environment that Parent-Duchatelet observed and recorded in the stereotypical prostitute includes one characteristic that receives plenty of attention today. The way a child is raised, the type of home and family life a child grows up with, is the focus of considerable discussion today among groups of psychologists, sociologists, doctors, and teachers. The debate on nature versus nurture brings a good deal of weight to the nurturing half of the equation. Parent-Duchatelet contributed to that debate as early as the 1830s when he claimed that prostitutes usually grew up in broken homes, in poverty, and had conflicting or discordant childhoods. Maggie, too, is representative

of these characteristics in both the social and physical aspects of her childhood environment.

The first scenes of Maggie depict a day in the life of the Johnson family. The book opens with Maggie's brother, Jimmie, fighting a group of Devil's Row children. Then Jimmie fights with a child from his own neighborhood, Rum Alley. Jimmie's father comes along and breaks up the fight with a kick of his heavy boot into the ribs of a boy and drags his son away. Jimmie hits Maggie as they walk through the streets to their tenement apartment while Maggie drags her little howling brother by the arm. Upon reaching the Johnson apartment, Mrs. Johnson pounces on her bloody son, screaming at him as she scrapes the blood and dirt from his wounds. The husband and wife begin to holler at each other and he leaves to get drunk in a saloon. Mrs. Johnson feeds her frightened children while drinking from her own brown bottle and begins to yell anew when a plate is broken. Jimmie runs out of the apartment, sees his father, who steals a pail of beer that the boy was fetching for a neighbor and bangs his son over the head with the empty bucket. When Mr. Johnson comes home, another vicious battle ensues with his wife until the two adults pass out on the apartment floor and the children are at last able to settle into sleep. All this in one evening.

Obviously, Maggie's childhood is filled with more than mere conflict. Her home is a battleground but, though her baby brother falls victim to the raging fury, Maggie survives. Based on her discordant childhood, Maggie's fall into prostitution corresponds unquestionably with Parent-Duchatelet's stereotypes.

The representation of Maggie conforms also to the stereotype in

which the prostitute is believed to grow up in a broken home. As happened in many families, Maggie's father dies while she is young. Like Maimie Pinzer's father, whose death leaves a wife with several young children to support, Mr. Johnson's death recounts a similar fate. In the case of the Johnson family, Mrs. Johnson begins to live in thirty-day cycles, corresponding to the support checks that she receives from some unmentioned entity, probably the government or Mr. Johnson's last employer. Based on the environment in which the Johnson family continues to live, the support checks Mrs. Johnson receives buy little more than the family's most urgent necessities. Maggie grows up with a roof over her head and food in her belly, but if her "worn black dress" is any indication, she has acquired little more than a few essentials. Just like the familial conflict she endures, Maggie also fits the stereotypical trait of growing up in poverty.

Although her childhood portrays a life full of conflict, Maggie lives in her tenement apartment for most of her life. It is not until she goes to live with Pete that she changes her residence. The sociological literature reports that prostitutes moved often and avoided settling down. Once Maggie does leave her mother's apartment, she is forced to move more frequently. After spending three weeks with Pete, and a return to her mother's being refused, Maggie, like the stereotypical prostitute, must seek an entirely new place to live.

As indicated under the heading of temperament, Maggie is not a woman who dislikes work; she gets a job when her brother tells her to and she often makes attempts to beautify her surroundings. She expends considerable effort in the Johnson home, making her physical

environment a pleasant place in spite of the family's poverty. Mrs. Johnson, however, quickly demolishes Maggie's efforts on several occasions throughout the novel:

Maggie. . .was waiting for [Pete] in the midst of a floor strewn with wreckage. The curtain at the window had been pulled by a heavy hand and hung by one tack, dangling to and fro in the draft through the cracks at the sash. The knots of blue ribbons appeared like violated flowers. The fire in the stove had gone out. The displaced lids and open doors showed heaps of sullen grey ashes. The remnants of a meal, ghastly, like dead flesh, lay in a corner. Maggie's red mother, stretched on the floor, blasphemed and gave her daughter a bad name. (21)

Whatever effort Maggie puts forth in straightening the home, Mrs. Johnson always comes along and destroys it. So Maggie does live in disorder, lacking a clean home, but only because of her mother. The disorder that Maggie lives with is more than physical; it is social as well. Because her mother drinks too much, fights with her family, and lies to everyone including the judges before whom she appears under charges of disorderly conduct, Maggie must witness a succession of chaotic events. As if that were not enough, her older brother also drinks to excess and gets into fights. Maggie's turbulent and disorganized environment strongly associates her with Parent-Duchatelet's typical prostitute.

The last of the doctor's stereotypes addresses the prostitute's rejection of both society and economy. Like the prostitute in his studies, Maggie gives up her virginity and loses her reputation as a chaste young

woman.

While it is clear that Maggie is forced to become a prostitute in order to survive (seeing herself with no other alternatives), Parent-Duchatelet would interpret her fall from grace as a rejection by a society that dictates a woman's virginity be maintained until marriage. However, Maggie lives in a world that is quite different from that of a middle-class which advocated a code of chastity. Because she was not raised in a middle-class family, Maggie could not have begun to learn or understand the moral codes upon which Parent-Duchatelet based his reports. She lived and died within the structures of her own class. Maggie does not reject society and economy; rather, as a prostitute, she is rejected not only by citizens of the lower-class, her peers, but also by middle and upper class society as well.

Of all the stereotypes recorded by Parent-Duchatelet and acknowledged by his followers, only a few of the types can be ascribed to Maggie. She is not characteristic of the prostitutes they observed, but is more like a rare flower whose seed is accidentally dropped on the streets of the Bowery. Crane's version of the prostitute, of a person caught within a particular social stratum, is quite unlike the version handed down by social science. But Crane offers a vision of more than one prostitute in his novel; he offers a foil against which Maggie's innocent, angelic qualities are allowed to shine.

Nell and Other Magdalenes

Maggie is not the only prostitute in Crane's first novel. Nell, a woman "painted with no apparent paint," represents many of the stereotypical traits believed common in the prostitute. When first encountered in Chapter Fourteen, Nell has just moved back to the city because a business deal did not meet her expectations. Presumably the business deal pertained to a man and his lack of money. There is a hint that Nell was going to be a kept woman or a wife to the man, but because of his lack of "stamps," she returns to New York. Based on her statement, she associates immediately with several of the stereotypes; she moves often, avoids settling down, likes the indulgences money can buy, and because she depends on his "stamps," it is suggested that she is unable to save her own money. When Nell leaves the table to talk with Pete she is unconcerned with her male escort's feelings until he complains. She quickly whispers something in his ear and then walks off. She is even less concerned with Maggie's feelings as she steals Pete away. Nell, a survivor, is not only thoughtless but uncaring. Her words and actions indicate that she views herself as a sophisticated, prosperous woman who need not be troubled by those she deems unworthy. Ironically, this is just how society views her.

Nell is dressed very nicely, in a perfectly fitted black dress and with "tan gloves stretched over her well-shaped hands." Maggie takes note of Nell's appearance but seems uncertain as to what she thinks of the woman. As a device, Nell prefigures the woman that Maggie would become if she were to live out her life as a prostitute.

Nell is not crude or rough or angry or hysterical. She has good personal hygiene, is evidently a handsome woman, and seems quite in control of her mood and the situation around her. Although she does not fit these particular stereotypes, others represent her quite well. Nell takes money from Pete late in the novel, a scene reminiscent of Nell's reappearance in the city when she steals Pete away from Maggie. Just as Maggie is unable to see Pete for the man he is, Pete is unable to see Nell's less attractive qualities. Pete is Nell's victim much like Maggie is Pete's. Nell is a devious and powerful woman, the kind of woman who generates fear in the citizens of "good" society because she is so adept at beguiling their sons and daughters. In society's eyes, women like Nell steal money and morality by corrupting "good" men. By comparison, in the words of Nell, Maggie is like "pumpkin pie."

Other prostitutes also appear in the novel on various occasions. In Chapter Twelve, as Maggie and Pete leave the hall, she perceives two painted women sitting with some men. Maggie notices that "their cheeks had lost their roundness," roundness perhaps being an indication to Maggie of one's virtuous nature. Maggie shrinks from the women, draws her skirts back, and passes by as if trying to avoid seeing or touching them. Maggie's reaction is one influenced by middle-class values, but it is a reaction that will be turned on her by the end of the novel. Maggie's reaction ironically depicts how one's assumptions about others do not take into consideration who they really are, where they come from, or why they are in certain situations. Similarly, when Maggie becomes a prostitute, people do not consider her as anything other

than one of the "painted cohorts."

Prostitutes appear again in Chapter Eighteen when Pete gets drunk buying rounds for the "girls" who are sharing his company in the saloon. When Pete tells them that he really is a "good f'ler," they ironically nod their heads in approval and answer: "You're the kind of a man we like, Pete. You're outa sight! What yeh goin' to buy this time, dear?" Unlike Maggie, who wants affection from her lover, these prostitutes want what his money can buy, in this case, alcohol and a good time, but in another sense they want his money in order to survive. The scene suggests not only an exploitation of the prostitute in a sexual setting, but in a social and, at the same time, economic setting as well. Here the prostitute also manages to exploit Pete, adding to the novel a turn of events that Zola had incorporated in the scenes of Nana.

Mrs. Johnson, even though she is not a prostitute, more stereotypically falls into the categories that this thesis has been addressing. Mrs. Johnson loves alcohol and disorder. She is excessive in nearly every scene in which she appears. She has poor hygiene, lacks a clean home (except of course when Maggie cleans up after her), is often angry or hysterical, and changes moods rather suddenly. Mrs. Johnson is large, according to Crane's description in Chapter Two; she is improvident, thoughtless and careless; she is unable to save money and her indulgences into the "useless" consist mainly of drink. She is rough, loud, unrefined, dishonest, manipulative, and she behaves in a manner that rejects the general order of society. Since Maggie's mother is so like the stereotypical prostitute and nothing like a saintly, virginal mother, how

ironic it is indeed that Crane named Mrs. Johnson "Mary," and her sweet young daughter (the prostitute), "Maggie."

Maggie is not typical of the prostitute Parent-Duchatelet observed in the stereotypes listed on page 14. Instead of being a stereotypical prostitute, she remains closely associated with the type of woman that Solomon suggests Crane meant to parody. Maggie conforms more nearly to a woman of the literary mode of sentimentality. Like a sentimental character, she finds herself in the situation of selling her sexual services so that she can survive. She has become the prey of a rakish, unfeeling man while her family looks accusingly on, making not a single effort to steer her onto a virtuous path.

Crane's novel suggests that typical traits do not dictate the personalities or professions of others. At the time Maggie was written and published, middle class society still assumed that a woman should be cast out of "proper" company if she gave up her virginity before marriage. However, Crane offers readers an alternative view, one that punishes the prostitute for her sins but simultaneously generates sympathy for her and her predicament. Other examples of this alternative view of fallen or prostitute women are recognizable in The Scarlet Letter, in the representation of Hester Prynne, and in Work, by Louisa May Alcott, in the prostitute Rachel.

In Crane's novel we see both the sympathetic representation of a prostitute (in Maggie) and the unsympathetic (in Nell and her friends). Like Bellocq, who both employed and avoided stereotypical representations in his photographs of prostitutes, Crane also employed

and avoided the stereotypes in Maggie. The unsympathetic representations help readers view Maggie more sympathetically; they act as a foil and, therefore, are a literary strategy. Crane is not so much doing something new as much as he is adding to a growing reassessment of the prostitute body in literature. Therefore, like Zola's fiction, Crane's fiction was influenced by the prevailing ideology of prostitution but he used that ideology to make a statement contrary to popular notions.

¹ Jacob Riis in How the Other Half Lives, 1890, tells how a group of children in the Bowery ironically painted a message on a fence saying "Keeb of te Grass" which Riis claims they had learned by heart, "for there was not, I verily believe, a green sod within a quarter of a mile" (182-83).

CHAPTER THREE

THEODORE DREISER AND *SISTER CARRIE*

Theodore Dreiser, like his contemporary Stephen Crane, began his writing career by working as a news reporter. His first reporting assignment was for the Globe in Chicago, writing political news for the Democratic convention in 1892. He quickly learned how to observe and write in newspaper fashion and as the years passed was promoted into positions with titles such as editor-in-chief. Also like Crane, he realized his dream to become a novelist. Sister Carrie became Dreiser's premier novel, a work that received a great deal of attention. At the Doubleday offices attempts were made to suppress Sister Carrie; the subject matter was considered immoral by Frank Doubleday¹ himself and the book was regarded as one that would not sell (Swanberg, 87). Thanks to the efforts of Frank Norris, the book was widely reviewed but was often noted to be just what Doubleday had predicted, and relatively few copies were sold. Although the novel was not successful with the critics or the public in 1900, it was reissued in 1907. It then received adequate advertising under the watchful eye of Dreiser, and as increased sales indicated, the book was more favorably received. Although many angry assaults were vented on the first publication of Sister Carrie, in seven short years the reading public's taste had shifted. The immorality perceived by so many in the version published in 1900 suggests that the novel was acting as a social barometer of virtue, giving today's reader a glimpse of late-nineteenth-century society and values. A woman such as Carrie, unmarried but

living with a man, was frowned upon by much of the reading public, those middle-class citizens for whom moral codes were as sacred as God's word to the devout Christian.

Carrie's Roles as Prostitute and Actress

In spite of the moral climate of late nineteenth-century America, it may at first seem puzzling that I designate Carrie as a prostitute. Unlike Maggie, she never walks the streets selling her sexual services. She never finds herself in a brothel, primped, painted, and put on display, to be purchased for an hour or two by any man offering the required number of dollars. Rather she is a "kept" woman, kept first by Charles Drouet and later by George Hurstwood. Researcher Howard Woolston, who gathered data concerning prostitutes in America during the early part of the twentieth-century, states that although there were various classes of prostitutes, "which shade from apparent respectability to the well established status of women in open brothels," there also existed the clandestine or secret prostitute (37). She was a prostitute known only to a small group of acquaintances, or she might lapse into "immoral" sexual behaviors and then resume her regular life after a period of time. Often the woman held a job in addition to her work as a "kept" woman and some ventured into "quasi-marriages" as a way to supplement their inadequate incomes (Corbin 137). Dreiser's representation of Carrie places her in this border area.

As read through the bourgeois matrimonial model, Carrie begins living with Drouet in a Chicago rooming house for the same reason that

many middle-class women marry, because she likes the well-dressed man and because Drouet offers to dress her nicely and take care of her. He in turn promises to marry Carrie once his "real-estate deal" goes through; but since it never goes through, he never acts on his promise.

During this time Carrie is known to the other tenants as Mrs. Drouet even though her legal name is still Caroline Meeber. Later, when she is living with George Hurstwood, who has been forced to call himself George Wheeler as a way to mask his own identity, Carrie again goes by a name not her own, as Mrs. Wheeler. As an actress, Carrie also takes another name, a stage name--Carrie Madenda. She wears or casts-off personas just like the roles she plays upon the stage. The names themselves are allusions to her many secret lives.

The nineteenth-century prostitute, upon entering her new career in the sexual market, lost her name and went by a pseudonym which she often kept throughout her profession even if she moved to different establishments or cities (Corbin 77). Actresses, too, were well known for taking on fictitious names. Furthermore, even up through the late nineteenth century, acting was considered a less than reputable profession. Women who had acted on the stage often found it difficult to obtain other kinds of employment if they admitted to having worked as an actress. Within the course of the novel, Carrie's success on the stage, once she does succeed, obviates her need to seek alternative employment. However, if acting was considered a disreputable form of employment, prostitution was a far worse transgression.

Name changes, for the prostitute or the actress, were one way to enhance the presentation of self. They were also a way to remain

disguised. Carrie wears each of her different names quite convincingly, showing a fine ability to imitate and pretend, to become someone other than the plain Carrie Meeber who first leaves a small country town on a train to Chicago.

Further similarities exist between the life of an actress and the life of a prostitute. Just as the prostitute primps and paints herself, making ready for her customer, so the actress dresses as her part requires, applying thick stage makeup, adorning her hair, and donning an appropriate gown. Several times Dreiser devotes space in the novel to discussions of Carrie in her dressing room as she prepares for a show. The reader watches Carrie put on her makeup, do her hair, dress, and nervously or excitedly anticipate her evening's work. Also, like a prostitute, the actress is placed on a stage: she is on display, to be watched and admired by the audience. Anyone paying admittance price may watch her perform for a few short hours. The talented actress makes her work look easy and playful and she displays feelings of enjoyment or sorrow as the role requires. The audience generally receives pleasure from the experience, not unlike the man who buys the prostitute's services. But "virtuous" society, whose double standards often went unnoticed, consisted of many people who enjoyed the theater while denouncing the actress who sought employment outside of the dramatic world.

The similarity of the actress and the prostitute makes Carrie's character as a "kept" woman even more successfully drawn. Dreiser's first novel, considered immoral at the time it was published, makes the connection of the "kept" woman and the prostitute one that was evident to

readers in the early 1900's (although such a connection is subtle by today's standards). For Dreiser to allude to Carrie's demoralized status by making an actress of her only adds to the rich quality of her representation and allows him to portray her character in a method that was less sentimental and more realistic.

Carrie and the Stereotypes

Like Maggie, who is representative of some of the stereotypes and not of others, the following sections will discuss the stereotypes as revealed or absent in Carrie. In addition to delineating the ways in which Carrie is cast to type, I will discuss Dreiser's use of the type within the novel.

Carrie's Appearance

Carrie's appearance is a significant part of who she is. From the moment the reader first meets her on the train bound for Chicago to the last scene where she sits in her room at the Waldorf contemplating how she can successfully obtain the dreams festering in her heart, Carrie considers her appearance. She seeks to continually improve the image she presents to others.

Clothes are important and to Carrie they become the flag and signpost for one's (or one's husband's) success and prosperity. She admires Drouet's smart suit, shoes, hat, and all that he and his appearance represent to her. She wanders through a department store when she first

seeks a job in the city and becomes aware of the many lovely things that money could buy, if only she had money. After landing a job in a factory, she frets over the plain dresses she owns and the plain, dirty atmosphere in which she works. Without a winter coat or decent shoes and with the arrival of cold Chicago weather, she is severely tempted by Drouet's offer of \$20. Because Carrie so longs for fine clothes, she falls prey to Drouet and ends up living with him at Ogden Place.

Once Carrie shares an apartment with Drouet and he is able to freely spend his money on making the pretty girl beautiful, she dresses for the first time in her life in all the fine apparel of her dreams. He buys her many smart dresses, skirts, blouses, and all the accessories to match. Best of all for Carrie, she no longer has to work in a dirty factory. Drouet, being a lover of beautiful women, wants to see that Carrie looks her best, in fashions of the latest style. He is satisfied knowing that she spends her time making a pleasant home of their rented rooms. He considers himself benevolent, an element of Drouet's character which Carrie admires. But Carrie is also plagued by the morality of her situation. Established in Drouet's apartment, she is confronted by new and ominous difficulties as seen in the following passage.

She looked into her glass and saw a prettier Carrie there than she had seen before; she looked into her mind, a mirror prepared of her own and the world's opinions, and saw a worse. Between these two images she wavered, hesitating which to believe. (89)

Although Carrie is perplexed on an emotional level over her new

lifestyle, physically she is nothing like the representation of the stereotypical prostitute. Carrie's hygiene is impeccable. She often stands before the mirror examining her appearance or trying new styles for her hair. She does not dress in a shameful manner, nor is her attire extravagant. She wears smart, sensible, and at the same time, fashionable clothing, just like all the moneyed people of Chicago. She is a thin girl before Drouet takes her under his wing, but she gains shapely curves after a few months of good food and unemployment. She does not become plump; she merely fills out so that her face is not thin and drawn. Her flesh takes on a smooth, fresh quality. This is the "prettier Carrie" she sees when she looks in the mirror. Drouet also beholds a beautiful woman whom he can be proud of and whom he desires to show off to friends like Hurstwood.

Another element of Carrie's beautiful appearance is that of her voice. Upon her first endeavor as an actress for a charity play, Carrie finds she has a sweet voice which can be manipulated to resonate a variety of emotions. For example, in the play Under the Gaslight, she plays the melodramatic heroine who bravely gives up her wealthy upper-class sweetheart and returns to her childhood past in the slums, a thing that Carrie herself would not willingly do. Carrie's acting voice ranges from the sweetness of an innocent lover, to the firmness of a woman who knows her duty, to the courageous and powerful tone of a woman accepting her fate.

Under the guise of the actress, Carrie is able to appear and sound like another person, all the while maintaining a dream-like sense of who she would like to be. Under the guise of wife, Carrie plays yet another

role she wants herself and others to believe. As for her representations of the stereotypes, Carrie's appearance, like Maggie's, does not fit a single attribute that Parent-Duchatelet observed earlier in the century. Carrie has good hygiene, she dresses well, she is not plump, nor does she speak in a crude, loud voice. Furthermore, her appearance develops from that of a rural country girl to the semblance of a refined woman of urban life.

Carrie's Temperament

Carrie's temperament is more like that of Parent-Duchatelet's version of the prostitute than is her appearance. She possesses a degree of immaturity at the beginning of the novel that changes very little throughout the course of the work. Her innocence, like Maggie's, does not go away when she is "kept" by Drouet and Hurstwood. When she leaves her home town of Columbia City, she is not conscious of any regrets as she leaves behind her parents and the security of the community she knows so well. She imagines that she can go back if things don't work out in Chicago. She gazes at the green landscape but is caught up with her fancies of how life will be in the city, momentarily showing a lack of regard for the countryside and nature. She thinks of the good employment that she will find and the rich people she will meet. Her self-interest guides her while books and knowledge attract little regard. She possesses a fascination with her own charms and anticipates the keener pleasures of life, including material things. Her thoughts early in the novel suggest she is like a child playing a game:

A half-equipped little knight she was, venturing to reconnoitre the mysterious city and dreaming wild dreams of some vague, far-off supremacy which should make it prey and subject, the proper penitent, grovelling at a woman's slipper. (4)

Like Parent-Duchatelet's stereotypical prostitute, Carrie exhibits immaturity. Unlike the stereotypes, however, she lacks an affection for beings and elements outside herself. For example, the countryside, which she would admire if she were more typical of the Parent-Duchatelet's prostitutes, goes past without notice. Animals are never even a consideration in Carrie's life, while children make a limited appearance. Carrie entertains her sister's child early in the novel but does not contemplate an affection for children and never thinks about having children of her own.

After illness causes Carrie to lose her first factory job, she fails to find another and wanders hopelessly through the streets, unable to locate a shred of enthusiasm in her dejected consciousness. At a low point, when she begins to realize that she will probably have to go back to Columbia City, having spent rather than saved what money she did have left, she is rescued by Drouet and his money. Like a parent, Drouet extends his wing, comforting and sheltering the fledgling girl. He protects her like a child or a wife (but only until she betrays him).

Carrie is not portrayed as a lazy woman, like Parent-Duchatelet's representation of the prostitute. She is merely frightened and immature, lacking the confidence needed to secure a job. Her work in the home, cooking, cleaning, and shopping, depict both her lack of indolence and

her concern for an inviting atmosphere. Even later in the novel when Carrie lands an acting role in a New York theater company, she finds work within a week after watching Hurstwood search for a job for many months. Acting becomes her work, but it is also a pleasure and a dream come true that she envisions as the answer to all her troubles.

Parent-Duchatelet's traits imply that the prostitute is thoughtless and careless, and the representation of Carrie can be seen as both possessing and evading these traits. Thoughtlessly, Carrie accepts the advances of Hurstwood, thinking she can move on to a better man than Drouet, in spite of all that Drouet has done for her. Knowing he will be angry, she fails to responsibly consider Drouet's feelings should she leave him. In light of Drouet's seeming thoughtfulness toward Carrie, she appears in this instance to do a great disservice to the drummer. Considering his reason for taking Carrie in, however, he becomes less deserving of sympathy. Drouet wanted a beautiful Carrie to dress, to adore, and to share his bed. Theirs was mainly a business relationship and Carrie naively and carelessly breaks their agreement by falling in love with Hurstwood.

Carrie lacks thoughtfulness even though she spends much of her time thinking. While she rocks in her chair, sitting before a window and looking out at the world and its people going quickly by, she thinks about herself, her desires, and how she wishes that everything were wonderful. This motif² occurs when she lives with Minnie, with Drouet, with Hurstwood, and even later, when she lives with Lola as a successful actress. Carrie rocks and thinks of how she wants to be a married woman, with money and pretty clothes. Since Carrie's thoughtfulness is

only directed at herself she can be seen as being similar in temperament to Parent-Duchatelet's prostitutes.

But Carrie is not always so callous. When she leaves Hurstwood, she puts money in an envelope and sets it where she knows he will find it. She gives him money to pay expenses for the next month, not wanting to leave him completely stranded. Months later, when he stops her and asks for money as she goes into the theater one evening, a shocked Carrie opens her purse and gives Hurstwood, now a beggar, all she has at the moment, regretting that it is only small change. Carrie also shows herself as thoughtful by taking in her friend, Lola, to live with her in the extravagant hotels that her success as an actress allows.

Carrie, like Maggie, is a woman who often has little to say. She does not chatter in a constant or childish way, as many prostitutes were thought to do. She does not burst into fits of anger or hysteria, and has control over her moods. When Hurstwood, after months of supposed job hunting, does not have a single prospect of earning money to support himself and Carrie, she does not yell, badger, or ridicule him. She occasionally makes comments about the need for one of them to find work but usually avoids pointing an angry finger. Therefore, unlike the stereotypical prostitute represented in Parent-Duchatelet's study, Carrie has a smooth, easy-going temperament that makes her company a pleasure for both her lovers and friends.

In spite of the financial difficulties she and Hurstwood endure, Carrie also maintains her soft, kind, and refined manner, continuing to dress herself in whatever fashions she can and becoming friendly with a neighbor woman whom she admires. In keeping with her calm

temperament, Carrie she does not possess the unrefined, loud or rough behaviors that were considered common elements in the Parent-Duchatelet's idea of the prostitute and, hence, differs yet again with the stereotypes.

Another of the stereotypes commonly represented in the prostitute is a belief that she indulges in useless frivolities and is unable to save money for "useful" things. During the period in which neither Hurtswood nor Carrie is employed, she shows how resourceful she can be when necessity requires. She carefully plans how she will spend her grocery money and saves the exact amount to pay for coal and other household expenses. She shows that she can be very careful, rather than careless. She is mindful not to indulge in useless artifacts for herself or the home but continues to keep the flat spotless and simple. This is a change from the earlier Carrie who spent the few dollars left in her purse and then gratefully turned to Drouet as a financial savior. Carrie learns, therefore, to make her money stretch and provide what is necessary for survival. And survive is just what Carrie does. Unlike Parent-Duchatelet's prostitutes, Carrie develops an understanding of the value of money as well as a sense of thriftiness.

Finally, Carrie's thoughts and behaviors show that she, like many women, has a love for pleasure. She thoroughly enjoys going to the theater and out to dinner. She likes to walk in the park or along city streets showing off her newest fashions. She even develops a love for the pleasure of being pursued by Hurstwood. But Carrie's favored pleasures do not include all those represented by Parent-Duchatelet. Carrie likes to eat out, but she shows no great love for eating, nor does she display a

fondness for alcoholic drinks. Pleasures for Carrie consists mainly in clothing and entertainment, unlike the sterotypical prostitute's love of excessive eating, drinking, gambling, and spending in addition to a penchant for clothing and entertainment.

Of all the traits that fall under "temperament," only two can be associated with Carrie without doubt, her lack of maturity and her love of pleasure. Other traits in the category of temperament, however, are less easily defined in relation to Dreiser's protagonist. Things such as a dislike for work, excessiveness, the inability to save money, and a lack of thoughtlessness, all can be found in Carrie at various times but, depending on the reader's perspective, are not necessarily convincing as a demonstration that she is a stereotypical prostitute. The number of traits of temperament that do not correspond with Carrie's representation continue to outweigh the rest.

Carrie's Environment

Carrie's physical and social environment, much like her appearance, is contrary to the environments of the stereotypical prostitute as seen in the social science literature of the nineteenth century. Although many prostitutes grew up in broken homes, Carrie's parents stayed together as the years progressed and watched their children leave to build futures of their own; they were not separated by death, as were Maggie's parents. Carrie's family is not rich, as evidenced by the clothes and travel gear she wears and carries onto the train heading to Chicago. But her family is also not dirt poor like Maggie's, nor grossly alcoholic,

vengeful, or troublesome. Carrie comes from a lower middle-class atmosphere that has attempted to impart middle-class values to its young. In spite of her favorable upbringing, Carrie still falls into prostitution via the role of the kept woman.

Also unlike the typical prostitute, Carrie wants very much to settle down. At first, she hopes to marry Drouet, then she looks forward to marrying Hurstwood (until she discovers he is already married). Later Dreiser suggests that Carrie wishes to make a connection with Mr. Ames, the brother of her friend Mrs. Vance, a man of wealth and intellect who cares little for the material objects that money can buy.³

Carrie moves frequently, like the prostitute represented by Parent-Duchatelet, changing addresses and apartments at least nine times during the course of the novel. In spite of her movement, however, she maintains a desire for a settled lifestyle. Even when Carrie leaves Hurstwood, she settles into a life with another young actress, her friend Lola, and finds she is pleased with the new situation and roommate. The social atmosphere that comes from with living with another person becomes significant here. For the first time Carrie is actually settled, building on a relationship based on equality. At one point the two women sit looking through newspapers for reviews of Carrie's recent starring role in a play that had just opened. Lola cheers her roommate on when they discover a mention of Carrie's name but no picture to go with it:

"They never published my picture."

"But they will," said Lola. "You'll see. You do better than most that get theirs in now."

Carrie felt deeply grateful for this. She almost

loved Lola for the sympathy and praise she
extended. (443)

The love that Carrie feels here is a love of friendship which is unparalleled with her experiences with her lovers. Later, when Carrie has made a huge success, she reciprocates Lola's kindness and invites Lola to move with her to a bigger, more elegant apartment.

Carrie keeps a clean home as well as an ordered appearance for herself, again diverging from the desires of the typical prostitute. When Carrie lives with Drouet and then with Hurstwood, she cleans the rented rooms and keeps the living spaces neat, once again showing how different she is from the prostitutes observed in Parent-Duchatelet's study.

By living with a man out of wedlock Carrie threatens one of nineteenth-century society's most sacred of bonds, in this way rejecting the order of society and economy. When Hurstwood kidnaps Carrie, she rejects social order again not only because she stays with the man who has tricked her into leaving her home but also because she knowingly agrees to live with a man who is still married and who has left behind two children in addition to his wife. She then goes on rejecting the systems of moral society by participating in a church marriage, making vows to love and honor Hurstwood, as George Wheeler, a false name, in a ceremony that is not legally binding because he is not free to marry. Like Hurstwood, going by a name that is merely an alias meant to safeguard his identity, Carrie as Mrs. Wheeler is as much a legal fiction as Hurstwood is a criminal. Although Dreiser may be trying to expose the absurdity of bourgeois marriage in American society, Carrie's behavior and environment for the purposes of this study show that her

representation was at odds with the contemporary social attitude.

Carrie lies about her "married" status, throughout the book: to the neighbors in Chicago at Ogden Place, to the neighbors in the New York flats, to her friend Mrs. Vance, and to nearly everyone she meets after leaving her sister's Van Buren Street apartment. Just as one lie requires another, Carrie's series of lies lead her further from the virtues of middle-class values and further from the Carrie that first took a train out of a small country town. Her lies liken her to Mrs. Johnson in Crane's novel; however, Mrs. Johnson's dishonesty is blatant and without remorse but Carrie's dishonesty is covert and tends to eat away at her conscience. Therefore, Carrie's lies represent her as corresponding with another example of societal rejection that Parent-Duchatelet considered common in the prostitute.

Although Carrie can be seen as rejecting accepted economic standards by living with Drouet, by living with Hurstwood as a kept woman she repudiates economy even more. She unconsciously and ironically threatens the financial security of Mrs. Hurstwood and the Hurstwood children, even though Mrs. Hurstwood has been well provided for by her husband due to his act of placing property in his wife's name. Dreiser offers an ironic twist to the experience of a straying husband and the kept woman by representing Mrs. Hurstwood as getting the better end of the financial bargain. What is normally considered a terrible blow to a married woman, emotionally and financially, turns out to be Mrs. Hurstwood's windfall. The prostitute was considered a threat to the married woman because she could lead away an otherwise loving husband, but in Sister Carrie Dreiser gives the reader a much different

scenario. In this novel, the author tells the story of a husband who is not lured by the prostitute but who himself does the enticing. Thereby, Dreiser's representation of Carrie challenges the prostitute stereotypes in several significant ways while also attempting to subvert common attitudes about marriage.

Carrie is not at fault, *per se*, for breaking up Hurstwood's marriage. Before he met Carrie, before she accepted his attentions, before she agreed to meet him daily in the park, he was not dissatisfied with his marriage, boring though it may have been. But Hurstwood pursues the drummer's "wife" so zealously that she soon becomes awed by the love he showers upon her. Had Carrie refused to spend time with Hurstwood, his life may have gone on as before. Carrie's self-interested nature and her desire to be admired by one so rich and well-known keep her from seeing the difficulties that loving Hurstwood would entail. All the same, Carrie cannot be blamed for falling in love with the married man because she did not know at the time that he was married. Drouet does not mention this fact to Carrie until after she is lost to the emotions of love. Even worse, Hurstwood himself does not admit to Carrie that he is already married even though she brings up the subject with him weeks before Drouet's innocent remark. She is deluded into a situation from which she cannot extract herself. Carrie has no friends or family to set her straight or give her courage, so that she feels she must continue upon her path, remaining with Hurstwood long after her love and respect for him have died.

As a representation, Carrie, like Maggie, fits only a few of the stereotypes that made such an impact on the nineteenth century and much

of social science literature. Like Crane, Dreiser was interested in types because they begged alternative readings and new ways of perceiving what was considered by most to be an accepted standard. He refers to types often throughout Sister Carrie. When Carrie meets Drouet on the train, Dreiser writes:

Here was a type of the traveling canvasser for a manufacturing house--a class which at the time was first being dubbed by the slang of the day "drummers." He came within the meaning of a still newer term which had sprung into general use among Americans in 1880, and which concisely expressed the thought of one whose dress or manners are such as to impress strongly the fancy, or elicit the admiration, of susceptible young women--a "masher." (5)

Types were so significant to Dreiser that he goes on to describe Drouet's clothes and manners in the rest of the paragraph and in the next several paragraphs as well. Within the quote Dreiser also makes for the reader a typifying assumption about Carrie. She is referred to as another type, a "susceptible young woman," as one who is easily influenced by the man who would force his attentions upon her.

Carrie's friend and short-time neighbor, Mrs. Vance, is narrated as another type who, in contrast with Carrie during her New York days with Hurstwood, is more charming and superbly dressed than the woeful Carrie. Mrs. Vance has trinkets of gold, a fancy handkerchief with a rich design, and an elegant green leather purse monogrammed with her initials.

She seemed to have so many dainty things which Carrie had not. . . . It was a trying though rather unjust thought, for Carrie had now developed an equally pleasing figure, and had grown in comeliness until she was a thoroughly attractive type of her color of beauty. (322)

Dreiser's description of Carrie as a "type" goes on to tell the reader that there was an unnoticeable difference in the clothing of the two women but that Carrie's dissatisfaction was acute.

This description, like so many in Sister Carrie, shows that of the stereotypes Carrie might be representative of, she is above all a materialistic lover of excess, namely of fashions. In this respect she is like millions of other women who are not considered within the classifications of "prostitute."

Dreiser saw Carrie as representing a prostitute even though his often sympathetic depiction of her betrays a sense of ambiguity. In the scene where Hurstwood meets Carrie for the first time (found in the paragraph quoted below), the reader sees through Hurstwood's eyes who Carrie is in Drouet's and Hurstwood's point of view.

It must be readily seen that by a roundabout process, Carrie had been brought within Hurstwood's reach. He went forth at Drouet's invitation to meet a new baggage of fine clothes and pretty features. He entered expecting to indulge an evening of lightsome frolic and then lose track of the newcomer forever. Instead he found a

woman whose youth and beauty attracted him. In the mild light of Carrie's eye was nothing of the calculation of the mistress. In the diffident manner was nothing of the art of the courtesan. He saw at once that a mistake had been made--that some difficult conditions had pushed this troubled creature into his presence, and his interest was enlisted. Here sympathy sprang to the rescue, but it was not unmixed with selfishness. He wanted to win Carrie because he thought her fate mingled with his was better than if it was united with Drouet's. He envied the drummer his conquest as he had never envied any man in all the course of his experience. (122)

Hurstwood notes that, unlike Drouet, he does not find Carrie to be a "courtesan." Courtesan is another word for a prostitute, which originated with the French term for female courtier; it indicates one who associates with men of wealth or rank. But can the reader believe Hurstwood when he determines that she is not a courtesan? Drouet's remarks have obviously given the manager the impression that he would be meeting a woman with corrupt morals. Is she one, or not? Whatever she is, Hurstwood's behaviors are grounded in his belief that he can rescue her from a fate that was mistakenly determined. Because he does this, his fate is mingled with hers, in a way that was in 1900 an uncommon element in the novel.

Hurstwood, as a character, trades places with Carrie's character in the conventional resolution of their fates. Typically it was the male

character who survived, usually unscathed, to continue his life successfully after an encounter with a "sinful" woman. But in Sister Carrie, it is not Hurstwood but Carrie who succeeds. Dreiser turns the tables on the well known sentimental mode of literature, albeit for different reasons than Crane, and does not end this work with the death of the fallen woman but with the death of a fallen man. Instead of the death of Carrie, we have the death of Hurstwood, suggesting Dreiser's challenge, both direct and ironic, to existing conventions. It is no wonder that the reading public in 1900 was shocked with the depravity of Dreiser's first novelistic attempt.

¹ Frank Norris reported to Dreiser that Mrs. Doubleday was the person who had a strong aversion to the book and, according to Swanberg, Dreiser "became convinced that she was the real editor-in-chief of a petticoat-ridden house" (92).

² The motif alludes to the rocking motion of a ship at sea and to the wavering of her constantly churning mind.

³ Since Dreiser changed the ending of *Sister Carrie*, a discrepancy exists with regard to Mr. Ames. In the first version he awakens in Carrie a passion for reading books and although he leaves a profound mark on her, it is not suggested that the two will develop a relationship other than that of acquaintances. But in the edited version Dreiser allows the reader to interpret the possibility of an intimate relationship budding between Ames and Carrie.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Representing the Prostitute Body

This study has shown that out of approximately thirty stereotypes, Maggie and Carrie conform to only a few of those observed in the research of Parent-Duchatelet in 1833. What is notable is what is lacking. In the novels, both main characters lack maturity and have a love for pleasurable experiences; it is only within these two stereotypes that the characters *and* Parent-Duchatelet's work conform. But qualities such as immaturity and love of pleasures describe millions of people, regardless of their sexual behaviors. Although they were not always treated as such, prostitutes were, and are, human beings who possess characteristics and personalities far too complex to be confined by a set of traits.

Outside of the rubric of stereotypes, the protagonists conform to each other in a number of ways which cannot be compared within the context of Parent-Duchatelet's research and, therefore, were not subject to close examination in this study. These additional similarities offer interesting and valuable contributions to the study of prostitution in the novels but due to length and time constraints I was unable to explore at this time. Some further points of similarity, for example, show that both characters have passive dispositions and apparently little influence over their own lives, as if life were

happening to them. They are presented as lonely figures; Carrie spends much of her time alone in her apartment, thinking and rocking, while Maggie is portrayed as entirely friendless. Both Maggie and Carrie fall in love with men they would be better off avoiding and they each maintain a sense of innocence about themselves in spite of their troubles and experiences. Both are characters in fiction, and therefore constructions; they are actors on the stage of literary life.

Similarly, as social actors, prostitutes have played an important role according to Linda Mahood in her study of nineteenth-century magdalenes. They are women who have tried

"to survive in towns that offered them only poor wages and unsteady employment. Their move into prostitution was neither pathological nor deviant but a rational choice given their limited opportunities." (6)

As a young woman, Maimie Pinzer of The Maimie Papers represents a woman who makes just that type of choice. Limited as her contribution is, however, Maimie offers a view of the prostitute that is possibly more realistic an account than many encountered in the writings of men.

Dreiser and Crane offer their views of the prostitute, Parent-Duchatelet renders another, and Bellocq yet another. By examining these visions of the prostitute, I have endeavored to re-present the representations provided by the men whose work appears in this study. I would emphasize that one's vision of the prostitute is a

construction, much like a brick building that stands at the center of town; it is less formidable a fortress than it may seem.

As suggested in their representations, Dreiser, Crane, and Bellocq realized that the prostitute was a far more sophisticated construct than the stereotypes epitomized by Parent-Duchatelet and his followers. More than a construct, the prostitute was a symbol, a metaphor, a scapegoat if you will, representing the problems in society that generated a need for legal actions such as those of regulation.

The visions of Crane, Dreiser, and Bellocq did not conform to nineteenth-century society's classifications of prostitution. According to Corbin, "the literature of prostitution became one of the most revealing symptoms of the anxieties of this period" (18), causing typical assumption to be repeated over time. Preserving the integrity of "proper" women, for example, was one of nineteenth-century society's most prevalent concerns. Crane and Dreiser viewed the prostitute with a more sympathetic eye than that of their fellow citizens because they did not look upon her with fear, contempt, or thoughts of reform. They characterized the prostitute by focusing on a description of who she was as a person, rather than a discussion of how she might be eradicated or suppressed.

Calling to mind once again the photographs included in the first chapter of this study, I remind readers of the differences that are evident in the picture of the woman with her laundry and the other who drinks her rye at midday. Remember that one is dressed

in a pure, white blouse while the other wears a pair of showy, striped stockings. I would have readers also recollect the way that Crane uses Nell as a foil for Maggie and how Dreiser makes Hurstwood a foil for Carrie. I suggest that Bellocq, Crane, and Dreiser sought to reclassify the body prostitute, while at the same time acknowledging her stereotypical history and form.

Having discovered that Maggie, Carrie, and the woman in the first photograph are all very unlike the stereotypes that Dr. Parent-Duchatelet observed, I am compelled to question the stereotypes. In his study from 1920, nearly one hundred years after the research of Parent-Duchatelet, Howard Woolston looks at many of the same points that were pointed out by Parent-Duchatelet. For Woolston, the prostitute was in a number of ways still associated with traits similar to those of Parent-Duchatelet.

Crane and Dreiser, as authors of literary naturalism, and Bellocq, as a realist photographer, were all interested in portraying the prostitute as they saw her. Woolston and Parent-Duchatelet were also portraying what they saw. Each of these groups of men offers different versions of the prostitute. She is a sophisticated construct, but she is more than just a set of categories or stereotypes.

I suggest that Crane, Dreiser, and Bellocq wanted people to look at the prostitute as a person, not as merely a prostitute. By giving us new readings of the prostitute, these artists challenged readers to put aside their assumptions in order to think about the human elements. As we near the end of another century, will people

continue to view the prostitute in stereotypical terms? Or, will we learn to consider her a woman who differs from the rest only by her profession?

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