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Envisioning Eden:

Race, Gender, and Family in Oregon Territory Newspaper Discourses

by

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Abstract

Oregon's territorial period (1848-1859) was a time of instability and change: no one knew what Oregon would look like after the settling phase, and many sought to control Oregon's fate. Based on the close reading of over 1300 newspapers encompassing nine years of the *Oregon Spectator*, the *Oregon Statesman* and the *Oregonian*, as well as the application of gender and discourse theories, this thesis examines three main themes: race, gender and power. The group of elite, white males who formed early in the territorial period envisioned a white society with a strict gender hierarchy, organized around the patriarchal nuclear family. These men projected their ideal society through the pages of Oregon's three main newspapers, modifying eastern, urban ideologies to fit the needs of their settler-colonial society, using race and gender discursively as tools to attempt to position themselves as the legitimate holders of power in Oregon.

The Anglo-American male elite created a regionally and historically specific modification of eastern gender prescriptions, adjusting the findings of previous historians. In variation of the ideology of domesticity found by Barbara Welter in 1966, I found that the ideal role projected for women centered on industriousness and submission, while the core of ideal masculinity was a mix of the self-made and passionate manhoods found by Anthony Rotundo in 1993. The Donation Land Act brought instability to Oregon in the form of thousands of new settlers, and in the provision that Métis men could claim land. The Anglo-American vision of an ideal society thus reflected the fear of the threats to the elites power base that came from the push for women's land and political rights, non-white intrusion, and their children's not following their value system.

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I must acknowledge the intellectual debt I owe historians John Mack Faragher, Lillian Schlissel, Cynthia Culver Prescott, Barbara Welter, and Elizabeth Jameson, along with so many others. Their work inspired mine and allowed me to take this thesis further than I imagined analytically.

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To my father, Dale, who passed away during the writing of this thesis, who always listened, even when he didn't understand.

To my mom, Barbara, the opposite of a submissive housewife, who taught me how to be a strong and independent woman.

To my dad, Mark, who never played the patriarch, but always helped me reach the stars.

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Introduction:
The Story of Territorial Oregon

"We are in a new world, under most favourable circumstances, and we wish to avoid most of [the] great evils that have so much afflicted the United States and other countries." – Peter Burnette, 1845[1]

To write the history of Oregon has often been to write a story of triumph. In such a story, Americans bravely cross the untamed continent, enduring hardship and loss, wild beasts and savage Natives[2] to claim a land that was rightfully theirs – a land that was, by their reckoning, empty.[3] This is not that story, although it has much in common with it. This is the story of Anglo-Americans in Oregon Country, or more particularly, of *male* Anglo-Americans in Oregon, and their vision for the future. Oregon Country appeared as a blank slate to many Americans who traveled across the continent to claim land there – a place to start over, to get rich, and to rectify some of the problems so common in the East. It was a society in flux, and a group of white men sought to take advantage of the situation and position themselves as the elite, the *controllers* of Oregon and its fate. They succeeded by 1850, forming a group of editors, politicians, judges, bankers and wealthy farmers that filled all of the positions of power in Oregon during the territorial years of 1848-1859. From these positions of power, using Oregon's three main newspapers, this

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[1] *Jeffersonian Inquirer* (Jefferson City, Mo.) October 23, 1845 quoted in Elizabeth McLagan, *A Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon, 1788-1940* (Portland: Georgian Press Company, 1980), 29.

[2] The terminology used to refer to Native American groups varies in scholarship. I will use the terms Native American (Native) and Indian interchangeably.

[3] David Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise: An Interpretive History* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003), 1-2; Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," *in History, Frontier, and Section: Three Essays by Frederick Jackson Turner*, ed. Martin Ridge (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993, 1893); Dorothy O. Johansen and Charles M. Gates, *Empire of the Columbia: A History of the Pacific Northwest,* 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1967); Ray Allen Billington, *The Far Western Frontier 1830-1860* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Charles H. Carey, *General History of Oregon: Through Early Statehood* (Portland: Binfords and Mort, 1971); Malcolm Clark, *Eden Seekers: The Settlement of Oregon 1818-1862* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981); Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, Power 1851-2001* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003).

group of white men broadcast their vision of an ideal society, a society based on the family unit, organized by a strict racial and gender hierarchy.

But the male Anglo-American elite's story is not one of ultimate triumph; it is one of struggle, for Oregon was not empty when they arrived. Oregon was home to a diverse population of Native Americans. It was also home to other white and Métis populations. White presence was not new to Oregon in the 1840s. In 1792, Robert Grey, a merchant sea captain, became the first European to sail into the Columbia River. After him came a fairly steady stream of explorers and traders. In 1818 Britain and the United States signed a joint occupancy treaty, allowing both countries' traders to operate freely within the Oregon Country. The settlement of fur traders, both British and American, and their Métis families in the 1820s and 1830s began the permanent settlement of a non-Native population in Oregon, starting with the building of Fort Vancouver in 1824. American missionaries continued the settlement trend in the 1830s. It was not until the 1840s that the group of white men that came to dominate Oregon during the territorial period arrived. The 1846 Oregon Treaty made the region below the 49th parallel property of the United States, but it was not really until 1848 when Oregon became a territory, that Oregon became American. Becoming an American territory allowed the elite to begin their bid for power, and by 1850, they had almost complete control of Oregon Territory, socially, economically and politically. Control, however, was only the beginning of their struggle and their vision.

The brief timeline laid out above only hints at complex familial and sexual relationships that existed in the region prior to the arrival of American settlers. These relationships, however, are crucial for the understanding of the gender and racial system

envisioned and created by the American settlers in the 1850s, a system that forms the main subject of this thesis. Since they did not actually arrive to a blank, completely malleable society, the Anglo-American male elite had to wage a systematic campaign against those people and ideas they deemed a threat to their ideal social order. Natives and Métis were two of the biggest threats to white colonialism in Oregon.

In the early-nineteenth century, the Native population of Oregon remained in control of the region, despite the damage done to the population in the late-eighteenth century by European diseases. George Simpson, the head of HBC operations in North America, complained that the Natives in the region were "very independent of us..."[4] As such British and American traders had to integrate themselves into a social and trading system controlled by the Natives in the region through marriage and family ties. Marriages form linkages between families and between cultures. In the 1820s to early 1840s, when most of the women were either Native or Métis, marriage and family creation served as a tool for cultural integration. As Susan Armitage put it, a gendered cross-racial social network was formed, one that persisted over time because it served the needs of both the HBC traders and the Native women.[5] Similar networks could be seen in early California where American traders married into wealthy Californio families, as well as in Manitoba, where marriages "after the fashion of the country," became the mainstay of the fur trade.[6] Armitage suggested that these marriage links, while beginning

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[4] George Simpson, quoted in Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 30.
[5] Susan Armitage, "Making Connections: Gender, Race and Place in Oregon Country," in *One Step Over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests*, eds. Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press and Athabasca University Press, 2008), 60.
[6] Albert Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), xxiii, 21-44; Sylvia Van Kirk, *"Many Tender Ties": Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing Ltd, 1980), 4-5; Jennifer Brown, *Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980).

in mutuality, changed over time at the elite level until they served the needs of British officers. Peterson del Mar added that while these networks increased the wealth of many individuals, both Native and white, they also accelerated the spread of disease, thus weakening Native groups (particularly in the northern Willamette Valley) so that their capacity for war against the whites in the 1850s was diminished.[7]

Important men like John McLoughlin, chief factor of the Hudson Bay Company post Fort Vancouver, and James Douglas, his protégé who would become the chief factor of Fort Victoria farther north, were prime examples of the socio-economic system of the fur trade that created and relied on interracial marriages. They were leaders in the system that created stronger bonds with the Native population through intermarriage. Both were married to Métis women, and had Métis children. They exemplified the integrated system that existed before the American settlers' arrival, and the problems that these family units signified after the American arrival with regards to land rights and inheritance issues.

Problems of race and gender combined in interracial unions, and in their mixed-race children in the 1820s-1840s, helping to create the need to police racial boundaries, as well as to regulate gender, sexuality and marriage.[8] The Americans in the later 1840s and 1850s sought to dispossess not only Natives of their land, but also the family units formed in the fur trade period so that they could have complete control of land ownership, and the power it conferred. The children born from the interracial unions in

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[7] Armitage, "Making Connections," 60-63; Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 49.

[8] Peggy Pascoe's work on interracial marriage and mixed-race children has been crucial to our understanding of how crucial marriage and family creation is to the concepts of race and gender. Peggy Pascoe, "Race, Gender and Intercultural Relations: The Case of Interracial Marriage," in *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West*, eds. Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 71-72; Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

the 1820s-1840s, and their parents, played an extremely important role in the creation of white settler society in the 1850s. They and their mothers and Native relatives served as objects and potential threats to the idealized gender and racial social system white American male settlers were trying to create. This regulation and attempt to control gender, sexuality and marriage form the main subjects of this thesis.

What to call the Americans that flooded into Oregon Country in the 1840s and 1850s, dispossessing Natives and Metis as they went, has been an issue among historians of the West. To simply call them settlers, as has been done in the past, is to ignore the implicit and explicit goals of conquest and colonization that some of the American newcomers had when entering Oregon. Nevertheless, they were agricultural settlers, intent on settling what they saw as free and open land. For this reason, I have chosen to use the terms settler and colonist interchangeably, sometimes hyphenated. The Americans in Oregon were practitioners of a specific kind of imperialism called "settler colonialism."[9] The primary goal of settler colonialism was the acquisition of land. This type of colonialism resulted in "societies in which Europeans have settled, where their descendants have become and have remained politically dominant over indigenous peoples, and where a heterogeneous society has developed in class, ethnic and racial terms."[10] Thus, I use the terms settler and colonist with the knowledge that they do not mean the same thing, but in acknowledgement that they were both settlers and colonists.

Seven hundred to a thousand people crossed the North American continent in 1843, marking the largest migration to the Pacific Northwest to that date. "Who will

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[9] Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009) 2-4.

[10] Ibid; Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 2, 6;.

dispute the characteristic boldness of the Anglo-Saxon race in America?" wrote an early settler, "Who may dare to say that this little heroic party.... has not carried with it to the shores of the Pacific, the germ of republicanism or self government...?"[11] The emigrants from the United States that came in the years after 1843 came with the intention of settling and creating a permanent society. Historians agree that between 250,000 and 500,000 traveled to the Pacific coast between 1840s and 1870s. Settlers were bonded psychologically by the shared experience of migration, and most shared roots in the Midwest. Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio were the most common departure points for settlers bound for Oregon, but a number of New England and Mid-Atlantic people traveled there as well.[12] Settler society in Oregon in the later 1840s and 1850s was remarkably homogenous with regard to socio-cultural values. Most emigrants were farm families and most had suffered from the financial panic of 1837. Single males were more likely to come from New England and settle in Oregon towns, while the farm families settled in rural areas. The settlers, on the whole, were almost exclusively white, and they mostly traveled in family groups in a phenomenon known as "chain migration," in which members of the extended family would follow other family members in later years, settling close together in Oregon. Oregon colonists on average championed democracy, self-government, equality for whites, and disliked slavery and free blacks.[13] They

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[11] Peter Boag, *Environment and Experience: Settlement Culture in Nineteenth Century Oregon* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992), 41; "Letter to the Editor," M.M.M, *Oregon Spectator*, May 14, 1846.

[12] William Bowen, *The Willamette Valley: Migration and Settlement on the Oregon Frontier* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 17, 43; Julie Roy Jeffery, *Frontier Women: "Civilizing" the West? 1840-1880* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979, 1997), 3; John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, 2001), 11, 16; Gordon B. Dodds, *Oregon: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc, 1977), 6; Dean L. May, *Three Frontiers: Family, Land, and Society in the American West 1850-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 40.

[13] There is a consensus among historians with regard to white settlers' negative attitudes toward slaves and free blacks. These attitudes can also be extrapolated from the 1857 vote in Oregon, in which Oregonians

migrated to Oregon for various purposes, but the most important were: access to free land and the economic benefits included with it, and a healthier environment (as opposed to the malaria riddled valleys of Ohio and Illinois). Less important, but still present, was a patriotic belief in manifest destiny and the conviction that they were furthering American territorial ambitions, which were a major discussion point in the 1844 American election. By 1846, there were 5,000-6,000 American settlers in the region, vastly out-numbering the British. Numbers allowed the settlers to push the American federal government to end the joint occupation that had been in place since 1818. Although there was significant rumbling, started by supporters of James K. Polk during the 1844 election, about demanding all the land up to 54° 40', Britain and the United States agreed to the 49th parallel as the boundary between the countries.[14]

Historians have agreed that Oregon settlers wanted to re-create the society and culture they left behind in their old homes. However, more than simply re-creating a society they left behind, American settler-colonists had specific goals for their new society in Oregon. These colonists sought to displace the familial system of the traders and natives that emerged in the decades before their arrival. The central problem they faced was how to create a purely white society that was ordered hierarchically in the fashion white male settler-colonists wanted it to be in a place inhabited by people who did not conform to their vision of an ideal society. My thesis thus examines how white

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voted overwhelmingly against slavery, but even more overwhelmingly against the admittance of free blacks into Oregon. Ralph James Mooney, "Remembering 1857," *Oregon Law Review* 87, no. 731 [2008]: 777; Bowen, *The Willamette Valley*, 50; Dodds, *Oregon*, 61-62; Jeffery, *Frontier Women*, 3-5; Faragher, *Women and Men*, 13, 15-17; Robert Bunting, "The Environment and Settler Society in Western Oregon," *Pacific Historical Review* 64 (August 1995): 415; Johansen and Gates, *Empire of the Columbia*, 248-249, 262; Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the West, 1528-1990* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 17-18, 48, 74-76, 80, 82, 102, 104-105, 135, 216, 253, 279.

[14] Ibid; Dodds, *Oregon*, 85, 88, 95; Johansen and Gates, *The Empire of the Columbia,* 119, 270-271; "A War with England!" *Oregon Spectator*, May 28, 1846; "The Late News" *Oregon Spectator*, November 12, 1846.

men in territorial Oregon sought to construct and control the terrains of power in ways that would benefit only themselves, and how they advanced their agenda using discourses about race, gender and family.

Literature Review

The time period of this thesis is 1848 to 1859, the territorial period. This was a period of transition and instability between the fur trade era and the statehood period. It was during this period that the American settler-colonists set about establishing themselves and their power bases, pushing the non-whites that held land or could hold land out, and preventing future non-white inhabitants of Oregon from becoming property owners and citizens. Thematically, this study is largely concerned with race, gender, family and power. As such, it addresses four main fields of history: antebellum Oregon, race, gender and settler-colonialism. These fields, of course, are not mutually exclusive, but will be treated in this review as separate entities. By combining them, I hope to illuminate the complex web of gendered and racial power and how that power was conceptualized by the dominant colonial group in Oregon: white American men.

Social Relationships in Territorial Oregon

"In conventional histories of the Oregon country," William Robbins wrote, "heroic men and women built a civilization from a primitive but abundantly endowed landscape."[15] In fact, in summarizing many of the regional histories of Oregon written before 1981, historian Kent Richards said that the history of the region, according to these histories was "a saga of man against nature; it is a story of adventure, indomitable

[15] William G. Robbins, *Landscapes of Promise: The Oregon Story: 1800-1940* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 6.

courage, endurance, and brilliant business ingenuity and enterprise."[16] To some extent, this is still true for histories written after Richards' 1981 historiographic article. Social relationships were almost completely ignored in the histories written before the 1980s, and the major focus was placed on political themes and white expansion. With few exceptions, the story of American triumphalism has been the dominant trope for histories of pre-statehood Oregon.[17]

In the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, historians of early-to-mid-nineteenth century Oregon shifted their focus away from political histories to focus more on social history. The social history of Oregon has lagged behind some of its western counterparts, like California. Earlier histories of early Oregon usually included a page or two on pre-Civil War culture, concentrating on schools and churches in the region. Race, when it was discussed, was quantified, or addressed in the context of the white-Indian conflict, and studies of Indian bands themselves. In 1982 Quintard Taylor opened a discussion of race in Oregon in a short article for the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. In detailing the topic of blacks in Oregon between 1840 and 1860, Taylor suggested that race played a fundamental part in the ordering of pre-Civil War Oregon, a point that he followed up in more detail in his 1998 book *In Search of a Racial Frontier*, expanding the idea to include how blacks resisted the whites' attempts to push them into a subordinate social position.[18] Despite this early call to examine the racial dynamics of early Oregon, however, much of the scholarship for the 1980s and 1990s remained informed by

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[16] Oscar O. Winther, *The Old Oregon Country*, quoted in Kent D. Richards, "In Search of the Pacific Northwest: The Historiography of Oregon and Washington," *Pacific Historical Review* 50, no. 4 (Nov., 1981): 419.

[17] Richards, "In Search of the Pacific Northwest," 423-429-431; Johansen and Gates, *Empire of the Columbia*, 203; Dodds, *Oregon*, 96, 109-112.

[18] Bowen, *The Willamette Valley*; Quintard Taylor, "Slaves and Free Men: Blacks in the Oregon Country, 1840-1860," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 83 (Summer 1982): 153-154; Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier,* 17-18, 48, 74-76, 80, 82, 102, 104-105, 135, 216, 253, 279.

Raymond Gastil's thesis that the inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest, Oregon in particular, were homogenous, literate, and white. However, other scholars like David Peterson del Mar, Grey Whaley, Susan Armitage, and Peggy Pascoe challenged Gastil's thesis, adding important social focus to the history of Oregon before 1859. These scholars examined the intersections among race, gender and family. Peterson del Mar argued that Native cooperation and resistance were important to how white society developed in Oregon Territory, providing at different times both allies and enemies when it suited the whites. Armitage suggested that the social and familial connections forged during the fur trade period became an important issue in the territorial period, presenting a threat white society had to guard against. Pascoe analyzed how race and the laws against interracial marriage helped define Anglo-American power and control in the West, including Oregon.[19]

The historiography of early Oregon, with its emphasis on the fur trade, the boundary settlement and the politics of the era, combined with scholarship about the Oregon Trail, left me with the question "What happened when they got to the end of the trail?" This in turn led me to enquire about the territorial period, and the social dynamics it encompassed, pushing me to question what part gender and race played in the creation of Anglo-American male power in the area, and what role family played in the process. In 1983, in her biography of Abigail Scott Duniway, Ruth Moynihan laid the foundation for the examination of family and gender roles in pre-statehood Oregon. Lillian Schlissel in her 1982 *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*, as well as a 1988 article for the

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[19] Richards, "In Search of the Pacific Northwest," 417; Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 39, 49-61; . Gray H. Whaley, "Oregon, Illahee, and the Empire Republic: A Case Study of American Colonialism, 1843-1858," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 36, no. 2 (Summer, 2005): 159; Armitage, "Making Connections," 65, 70; Peggy Pascoe, "Race, Gender and Intercultural Relations"; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*.

book *Western Women: Their Land Their Lives* pointed out the familial nature of western migration and sought to connect earlier ideas about American independence and western virtues of self-reliance and egalitarian democracy, with families in Oregon.[20] Family as the basis of early Anglo-American society in Oregon is one of the central tenets of Oregon history. Scholars have considered the nature of gender relationships on the trail and how they were similar or different from the ones they left behind.[21] Most historians agree that despite the fact that gender norms on the trail could be more flexible (particularly with regard to work roles), most mid-western families that traveled to Oregon clung to the gender ideologies they had learned in their former homes. These ideologies idealized the passive, submissive wife, and strong, independent husband.[22] There was a strict gendered division of labor and husbands controlled their wives' labor through their position as family heads. Women, due to the isolated nature of farms and a public world designed to exclude them, were thus limited to their homes and families in what John Mack Faragher described as a conscious strategy employed by men to insure the continuation of their patriarchal power.[23]

While there has been some commentary on gender values on the overland trail, very little has been said about the gender and family relationships of families once they

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[20] Ruth Barnes Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983); Lillian Schlissel, "Family on the Western Frontier," in *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*, eds. Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz and Janic Monk, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 81; Lillian Schlissel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (New York: Schocken Books, 1982, 1992, 2004); May, *Three Frontiers*, 38; Faragher, *Women and Men.*

[21] Jeffery, *Frontier Women*, 4-6, 20; Faragher, *Women and Men*, 48, 64, 66, 74-755, 87; May, *Three Frontiers*, 110; Robert L. Griswold, "Anglo Women and Domestic Ideology in the American West in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*, eds. Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz and Janic Monk, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 17.

[22] Jeffery, *Frontier Women*, 14-15, 18, 41, 69, 77; Faragher, *Women and Men*, 2, 74, 86, 89-90, 97, 99, 102; Sandra Myers, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800-1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 7-8.

[23] John Mack Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 110-118.

settled in Oregon. It was believed that emigrants simply transplanted the society they left behind. Peterson del Mar touched on the topic in both his 1996 book on domestic violence and in his survey of Oregon history, outlining briefly the patriarchal power structure of Oregon households. This power structure closely mirrored that of the mid-western family. Peterson del Mar argued that due to the origin of most Oregon settlers – Missouri and Illinois – the tradition of male-dominated households continued. Traits of dutifulness and obedience were emphasized as desirable in wives. At the same time, however, there were more opportunities for female independence, due to the blurring of the sexual division of labor and female productivity, which in turn caused men to react in media discourse with a mix of adoration and debasement toward women. Women, when they occupied their proper role of submissive helpmate of their husbands, were revered; when they challenged this role they were debased.[24] These studies examined gender and power within the family itself and the relationships between husbands and wives.

These recent studies of the connections among race, gender, family and American expansion in Oregon led me to questions about how these issues developed through the territorial period, a period that is usually ignored or glossed over. Prescott in 2007 published *Gender and Generation on the Far Western Frontier*, the only book to take gender and family in nineteenth-century Oregon as its specific topic, examined the gender conventions and roles of both first-generation settlers and their children. She argued that while first-generation settlers clung to ideas about domesticity, farming and work, second-generation Oregonians (those born in Oregon) exhibited significant ideological

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[24] Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise,* 81-82; David Peterson del Mar, *What Trouble I have Seen: A History of Violence Against Wives*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 11-15, 18, 20-21; May, *Three Frontiers*, 107-110.

differences centered on freedom, refined leisure and a culture of consumption.[25] Prescott's examination of first-generation Oregon settlers attempts to reclaim eastern gender ideology guided me further, leading me to ask how Anglo-American settlers adopted and used ideologies of race, gender and family to outline the society they wanted to create in Oregon, a region they saw as a blank slate. But to understand race and gender in Oregon I had to expand my focus to understand what exactly race and gender were and how they operated as categories of analysis.

Race

Constructing racial categories allowed Anglo-Americans in the West to create boundaries around themselves and to justify the removal or subjugation of non-whites in the region. It has long been acknowledged by western historians, and other academics, that race is not a biological fact; rather it is a culturally and historically constructed concept. Race began as abstract ideas about the physiological and social characteristics of groups of people. These abstract ideas then became legitimized criteria used to categorize, explain and rank people. This is nowhere more true than in Oregon, where whites used race to bolster their power and racial identity by subjugating Indians and blacks.[26] However, race is also constructed through sex; that is, when two people of different races procreate, a new race is born. Sylvia Van Kirk tracked such a process in western Canada. Early European fur traders married Native women who then gave birth

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[25] Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Gender and Generation on the Far Western Frontier*, (Tuscon: The University of Arizona Press, 2007), 3, 11.

[26] Richard White, "Race Relations in the American West," *American Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (1986), 397-398; Stephen Dow Beckham, *The Indians of Western Oregon: This Land was Theirs* (Coos Bay, Oregon: Arago Books, 1977); Robert Ruby and John Brown, *Indians of the Pacific Northwest* (Norman: University of Oaklahoma Press, 1981); Elliot West, *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier*; Taylor, "Slaves and Free Men: Blacks in the Oregon Country, 1840-1860"; Quintard Taylor and Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, eds., *African American Women Confront the West, 1600-2000* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003); W. Sherman Savage, *Blacks in The West* (Westport.: Greenwood Press, 1976).

to Métis children. In the next generation, Métis women became the ideal wives, as they were considered whiter. However, with the arrival of European women, Métis wives were constructed as non-white, thereby demonstrating the constantly shifting racial lines.[27] A similar process took place in Oregon. By the 1840s many of the traders, especially the officers at Fort Vancouver like John McLoughlin and James Douglas had Métis wives, and they served as a status symbols, since there were few white women in Oregon. However, with the influx of Anglo-American settlers, racial standards shifted, and gradually over the territorial period Métis wives and children in Oregon became defined as Indian, thereby losing their land and inheritance rights.[28]

But it was not just the race of Indians and blacks that concerned Anglo-American settlers in Oregon. Their own race was of pivotal concern as well. Historian David Roediger in *Colored White* stated that in the decade before 2003 there has been an increase in scholarship of viewing whiteness as a problem in need of explanation. Whiteness studies have given me the necessary tools to understand how Anglo-Americans defined and understood their whiteness and the changing conceptions of what it meant to be white. Scholarship on whiteness started by marking whiteness as a racial identity rather than an unmarked norm.[29] From there scholars argued that whiteness is distinctly linked to the exercise of power and the ownership of property. Thus, whiteness is both a racial category and an ideology used to legitimize colonial rule. Cheryl Harris contended that whiteness itself "became and remains" a form of property. Whiteness as a

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[27] Sylvia Van Kirk, *"Many Tender Ties"*; Brown, *Strangers in Blood*; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally.*
[28] Armitage, "Making Connections," 62-65.
[29] David Roediger, *Colored White: Transcending the Racial Past* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 18-28; David Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991), 6-19, 21, 29-35; Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

form of property developed "counterpoint to the dispossession of American Indian property, the owning of slave property, and later, the systematic property advantages channeled toward whites..."[30] This is the process that took place in Oregon Territory in the 1850s. Owning whiteness allowed the dominant group to "other" non-whites, thereby systematically denying them property ownership and citizenship rights. But who was considered white was rapidly changing and the construction of a racial binary of white/non-white allowed Anglo-Americans in Oregon to eliminate Métis as a racial category, and thus deprive them of their rights.

Gender

Critical to any study of gender and society is Joan Scott's theory of gender. This definition of gender relies on two ideas: "gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power." Further, gender is conceived "as an objective set of references[;] concepts of gender structure perception and the concrete symbolic organization of all social life... [and] becomes implicated in the conception and construction of power itself."[31] Further, as Margaret Jacobs argued, "Gender systems, especially the sexual division of labor, often underpin the economy of a group; they also provide fundamental mechanisms for the reproduction of the group and assertion of identity."[32] Gender is thus one of the most important tools that humans use to understand and organize themselves and the world around them. Oregon Territory was no different.

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[30] Roediger, *Colored White*, 18-28; Jacobs, *White Mother*, xxx; Julian B. Carter, *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America 1880-1940* (Druham: Duke University Press, 2007), 7-11.
[31] Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, 1999), 55; Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (Dec., 1986), 1067, 1069.
[32] Jacobs, *White Mother*, 9.

Anglo-Americans had defined ideas about gender norms and sought to maintain them. Like race, gender was culturally and historically constructed, and shifted over time. While gender remained critical to social organization and power, the meanings behind gender could change over time. The chaotic atmosphere of Oregon in the territorial years forced Anglo-Americans to adapt definitions of gender. One of the ways they did this was through the manipulation of prescriptive literature.

Prescriptive literature provided a substantial source base for understanding gender values, particularly at the ideological level. The prescriptive literature presented to Oregonians came from the same sources Barbara Welter used in 1966 to write her ground breaking article "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." These sources were advice manuals and magazines aimed at women to combat the threats of the increasingly modernized life. "The cult of true womanhood," (also called the ideology of domesticity) was a response to changing socio-economic trends in an urban environment that was moving the site of production out of the home, thereby limiting women's access to it. In Oregon, production remained almost solely in the home during the territorial period, marking a major difference between the territory and the urban East, though the nation remained over half rural until the 1920s. Domesticity rose to fill the hole in middle-class women's lives, pushing an ideology based on piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity that would let women feel useful in their "proper" place, while maintaining patriarchal power. Such literature discouraged women from reading anything but the material it provided, and from diverging from the recommended path, for fear they would upset the stable order of society and teach the wrong values to their children. These ideas were in turn imported into Oregon and played a prominent role in

the public discourse.[33] Historian Mary Ryan argued that the supply and demand economy of popular literature after 1840 created a two-way system of communication between the producers and the consumers of ideas and information, meaning that prescriptive literature both informed and was informed by ideology and popular culture.[34] Anglo-American elites utilized prescriptive literature from other places to express their ideas of how their ideal society should look. I kept this in mind as I read material selected from eastern newspapers for Oregon newspapers with the understanding that it was part of the colonial process. Prescriptive literature helped define the in-group (in this case white Americans) and to "other" alternatives as non-desirable. Discursively, it did not matter if men and women did not live up to the expectations of ideology. Instead the literature demonstrated what was desired and what was considered a threat to the ideal social order.[35] Newspaper discourse reflected the gendered desires and values of the elite male lawmakers who owned Oregon, socially, politically and economically.

Welter's work on gender in prescriptive literature was one of the first works in "second wave" women's history, and provided an important jumping off point for scholarship that followed, including western women's history. Prior to 1980 the topic gender in the nineteenth-century American West was limited to a handful of books on women in the West, most of which came out as a response to the Women's Liberation Movement which influenced the development of women's history. In 1980, Darlis Miller and Joan Jensen published their ground breaking article "The Gentle Tamers Revisited:

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[33] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966), 151-157; Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," *American Literature* 70, no. 3 No More Separate Spheres! (Sept., 1998), 582-583.

[34] Mary P. Ryan, *The Empire of the Mother: American Writing about Domesticity 1830-1860*, (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1985), 11.

[35] Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," 151-157; Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," 582-583.

New Approaches to the History of Women it the American West," which defined an agenda for western women's history. Jensen and Miller criticized older studies of the American West for giving the impression that women played insignificant roles in settling the West by excluding them or emphasizing their rareness. In such early studies women played four main, stereotyped roles: gentle tamers, sunbonneted helpmates, hell-raisers and bad women.[36] The problem with these stereotypes was not only that they did they not reflect reality, but also that they ignored crucial categories of experience, those of race and class. Jensen and Miller then suggested a new framework for studying women in the American West, that is, a multicultural framework. Their multicultural framework would allow for the evaluation of the experience of all ethnic groups of women, within the broader framework of western history. This framework was to help insure that issues of power and the political dynamics of social history were not ignored. This multicultural framework would influence the field of western gender history for the years following and should have been understood as a part of a general shift towards a "New Western History," which refocused study on aspects of the western experience such as gender, race and class, but were instead marginalized.[37]

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[36] Beverly Stoeltje, ""A Helpmate for Man Indeed": The Image of the Frontier Woman," *The Journal of American Folklore* 88, no. 347 (Jan.-Mar. 1975).

[37] Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson eds, *The Women's West*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage eds., *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); Elizabeth Jameson, "Bringing It All Back Home: Rethinking the History of Women and the Nineteenth-Century West," in *A Companion to the American West*, William Deverell ed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), 179-197; Darlis A. Miller and Joan M. Jensen, "The Gentle Tamers Revisited: New Approaches to the History of Women it the American West," in *Women and Gender in the American West: Jensen-Miller Prize Essays from the Coalition for Western Women's History*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004),9-36, originally published in *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (May 1980): 173-213; Patricia Nelson Limerick, "What on Earth is the New Western History?" in *Trails: Toward a New Western History*, eds. Patricia Nelson Limerick, Clyde A. Milner II, and Charles E. Rankin, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991), 85-87.

In the late 1980s and 1990s historians of women in the West modified the multicultural framework in significant ways. Peggy Pascoe, in 1989, pushed for the study of western women to move away from the study of "frontierswomen" to women at the "cultural crossroads" so as to expand the group of focus beyond white women to women of color, and to examine interactions between cultures. This meant seeing the West not as a frontier, or a geographic freeway that moved east to west, but as a zone of cultural interaction where various groups jockeyed for control. In addition, Pascoe argued that by focusing on women of color, all relationships of power would become visible.[38] Several books embraced this expanded framework and challenged western women's history by nudging western women's history away from its white woman universal. These anthologies argued that western women's history must be inclusive and include marginalized groups; that it must study the cultural interaction between disparate cultures; and that women's experiences should be considered as dialectical relationships instead of segregated experiences.[39] The major goals of the multicultural framework and the cultural-crossroads perspective was to decenter the stereotypes of western women presented originally by Beverley Stoeltje in "'A Helpmate for Man Indeed'," and to add race and class as important categories of analysis in both social and gender history. However, historians of women of color during the 1990s pointed to the power differentials among women and there was significant criticism for the multicultural approach. Opponents of the multicultural framework criticized it for assuming that the

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[38] Peggy Pascoe, "Western Women at the Cultural Crossroads," in *Trails: Toward a New Western History*, eds. Patricia Nelson Limerick, Clyde A. Milner II, and Charles E. Rankin, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991), 40-58.

[39] Armitage and Jameson, *The Women's West*; Schlissel et al, *Western Women*; Ellen Carol DuBois and Vicki L. Ruiz, *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Armitage and Jameson, *Writing the Range*.

concepts, categories, terminology, methodology, and language used in studying middle-class white women were universally applicable, thereby keeping middle-class white women as the subject of multicultural western histories. The ultimate failures of the multicultural approach in this view was the failure to analyze relations of power among women of different races, cultures and classes, and the failure to look at women of color in their own right and not just in relationship to men, or to whites.[40]

Histories of masculinity and men as gendered beings became more common in the 1990s and 2000s, adding depth to the study of gender and power. Early histories of men as gendered beings focused on relationships between men, ignoring the gendered aspects of power. But as the field developed and gender, following Scott's definition, became defined a relationship between men and women, focus expanded to include how masculinity was defined between the sexes as well. This helped allow for the examination of gendered power. Masculinity was often defined or demonstrated by overt acts of power, such as governing or hunting, and by men's position relative to women.[41]

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[40] Antonia I. Castañeda, "Women of Color and the Rewriting of Western History: The Discourse, Politics, and Decolonization of History" *Pacific Historical Review*, 61, no. 4 Western Women's History Revisited (Nov. 1992), 509-517; Marian Perales, "Empowering "The Welder": A Historical Survey of Women of Color in the West," in *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West*, eds. Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 25, 35.

[41] Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land the American West as Symbol and Myth* (New York: Vintage Books, 1950); Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993; Bruce Dorsey, *Reforming Men and Women: Gender in the Antebellum City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002); Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995); Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers*; Matthew Basso, Lauren McCall and Dee Garceau, *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West*, (New York: Routledge, 2001); Toby Ditz, "The New Men's History and the Peculiar Absence of Gendered Power: Some Remedies from Early American Gender History," *Gender & History* 16, no. 1 (April 2004); Amy S. Greenburg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Richard Stott, *Jolly Fellows: Male Milieus in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000); Susan Lee Johnson, "'A Memory Sweet to Soldiers': The Significance of Gender in the History of the 'American West'," *Western Historical Quarterly* 24, no.4 (Nov. 1993): 495-517; Mary Murphy, "Making Men in the West: The

Male gender thus, as demonstrated by scholars of masculinity, was an exercise of power. These studies pointed to the necessity of examining power relations between the sexes as well as among them, and helped demonstrate that power was one of the most important aspects of the history of western gender as a field.

By the 2000s, then, many historians in the field of western women and gender recognized the shortcomings of the multicultural approach and were extending the multicultural lens to include relationships of power and colonialism.[42] The field, thus, by the late 2000s shifted away from the multicultural approach to a focus on colonization and power struggles in the West. The development of the field of western gender history is analogous to how this thesis came into being. It moved through different stages, like my understanding of gender and power, and eventually arrived at colonialism as a central idea. I am in part responding to the development of western women's history, but I am also a product of it. Because historians before me did the work they did, I was able to conceptualize Oregon's territorial period within the framework of colonialism, seeing the shift from the jointly occupied Oregon Country to an American Territory, and finally to an American state as a colonial project.

Race, Gender and Settler Colonialism

In a round table on gender in the west in 2010, four prominent western women's historians assessed the state of the field, pointing to the need to further examine all power

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Coming of Age of Miles Cavanaugh and Martin Frank Dunham," in *Over the Edge: Remapping the American West*,Valerie Matsumoto and Blake Allmendinger eds (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999); John Gilbert McCurdy, *Citizen Bachelors: Manhood and the Creation of the United States* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

[42] Margaret D. Jacobs, "Getting Out of a Rut," Elizabeth Jameson, "Looking Back to the Road Ahead," Susan Lee Johnson, "Nail This To Your Door: A Disputation on the Power, Efficacy, and Indulgent Delusion of Western Scholarship That Neglects the Challenge of Gender and Women's History," Karen J. Leong, "Still Walking, Still Brave: Mapping Gender, Race, and Power in U.S. Western History," in "If Not Now, When? Gender, Power, and the Decolonization of Western History," *Pacific Historical Review* 74, no. 4 (November 2010).

structures, including gender. Margaret Jacobs stated that the multicultural approach had not provided an adequate framework for understanding gender in the American West. According to Jacobs, the narrative of western women's history still sidelined women of color and was still a story of the triumph of white women. She argued that "the master narrative of western women's history is a colonial account that serves to justify and buttress U.S. colonial aims in the region." It has done this, she suggested, by leeching out the structural inequalities and power imbalances inherent in interactions between cultures, and portraying women of various racial and cultural backgrounds in an ahistoricized and depoliticised space.[43] Susan Johnson took a slightly different approach contesting that western historians have ignored the contributions of western gender history. Structures of power and privilege, she said, cannot be made visible and interrogated only by scholars belonging to the small subfield of women's history.[44] Karen Leong, on the other hand, did not see such a bleak picture and suggested that good work was being done on women, gender and sexuality, though it is not always acknowledged by western historians or considered western history. She suggested, however, that historians should "incorporate critical theories of racial and gender formations in order to better explain the multiple and complex ways in which gender and race have been articulated as part of the narrative of U.S. westward exploration, expansion, and settlement..."[45] This approach (suggested also by Jacobs as the study of settler-colonialism) would allow for a multi-layered understanding of how race and

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[43] Jacobs, "Getting Out of a Rut," 586-587, 594, 596.
[44] Johnson, "Nail This To Your Door," 612-613.
[45] Leong, "Still Walking, Still Brave," 619, 621; Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity."

gender operate in western societies. However, despite their differences, the historians in the forum all agreed that power and colonialism are crucial to understanding the West's history.

One of the underlying assumptions of my work is the idea that white settlement in Oregon was a colonial process. Specifically, American emigrants practiced settler-colonialism, a form of colonialism that emphasized elimination over domination. Patrick Wolfe defined the settler-colony's goal as "the replacement of native society... [I]ts governing logic is one of elimination" rather than integration of indigenous peoples.[46] This was one of the Oregonians' primary goals, as suggested by the Peter Burnette quote above. Settlers in Oregon wanted to move in and settle what they saw as empty land, dispossessing Natives in the process, and creating their own idyllic society in Oregon. Whether they supported the extermination or the removal of Natives in Oregon, elimination was their goal. Ideas about race played a major role in this process. Anglo-Americans shifted definitions of race until there was an oppositional dichotomy of white and non-white. By pushing Natives and mixed-race peoples into the non-white category, white Oregonians could justify and further the colonial process.

A substantial body of literature has linked gender with colonialism. Anne McClintock argued that gender dynamics were essential to the securing and maintenance of the imperial enterprise. As it was in western Canada, white women were crucial to defining racial and gendered boundaries around new colonies and legitimizing new

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[46] Patrick Wolfe, quoted in, Jacobs, "Getting Out of a Rut," 601; .Jacobs, *White Mother*, 2-3; Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia,1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 49-61; Gray H. Whaley, "Oregon, Illahee, and the Empire Republic," 159; James Belich, *Replenishing the earth : the settler revolution and the rise of the Anglo-world, 1783-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

colonial rulers. Van Kirk, in particular, marked this trend. As white women arrived in western Canada, Métis wives became less and less valued, and possessing a white wife became a symbol of good, civilized white society. As Adele Perry noted, notions and practices of gender were central to marginalizing Native peoples, as well as to designing and building white society. Non-whites were considered unable to possess and perform the proper gender and racial attributes needed to be included in white society, and were thus pushed out. Notions of gender and race helped define who could marry whom, which in turn decided which families were legitimate, and which were not.[47] Oregonians used gender and race to help define the borders of their colonial enterprise in such a way. Family was the basis of white society and de-legitimizing non-white gender and family roles shored up their colonial power. Using the tools of gender and colonization theory and the insights from a body of literature that combined the two theories allowed me to define a crucial discourse in the newspapers of territorial Oregon where race, gender and power were three of the most important issues discussed and disputed.

Methodology

Territorial Oregon provides an interesting example of a conflation among society, politics and newspaper discourses. In Oregon Territory, the same men that edited, owned and contributed to the three main newspapers, were also the judges, the legislators, the governors, the territorial delegates, the money lenders and were substantial property owners. This gave them a high degree of social, economic and political control over

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[47] Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest, (London: Routledge, 1995), 7; Perry, On the Edge of Empire, 3, 5, 8, 19-20; Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 14; Jacobs, *White Mother*, xxx, xxxi; Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991); Van Kirk, *"Many Tender Ties,"* 173-230; Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers.*

Oregon. They made the laws, they tried the court cases, they owned the few factories, and according to some, they fixed the polls. This makes examining the newspapers, which served as their mouthpieces in the territory, useful for trying to understand what their vision was for Oregon's future.[48] Oregon was also unusual in that it had a relatively low sex ratio (1.6 males for every 1 female) for a settler society. In addition, Oregon was almost completely rural, and was fairly isolated from the larger settlements further east, creating an almost insulated atmosphere that possibly boosted the elite's power. Through the pages of Oregon's three main newspapers, the *Oregon Spectator*, the *Oregon Statesman* and the *Oregonian*, the Anglo American male elite mapped out what they wanted Oregon to look like.

The first newspaper to be printed in Oregon was first published on February 5, 1846, in what was then the largest settlement in Oregon, Oregon City. The *Oregon Spectator* was a small paper with a small circulation, but for the years before 1850, it took on an importance that defied its small circulation. It was created by a group of prominent pioneers who wanted a mouthpiece for American interests in the newly divided territory. In the years that it ran (1846 to 1855), the *Spectator* went through seven editors, most of whom were extremely prominent men politically in the territory. They included, William T'Vault; Henry Lee; George Curry, who would go on to be a governor of Oregon Territory; Aaron Wait; Rev. Wilson Blain; D.J. Schnebly and Culver Goodrich. The *Spectator*, due largely to its carousel of editors, had mixed feelings on many of the big issues. The paper initially leaned toward the Whig side, and was generally more accepting of non-whites and non-Americans. However, by 1849, the

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[48] George Stanley Turnbull, *History of Oregon Newspapers* (Portland: Binsfords & Mort, 1939), 28.

Spectator supported Indian extermination and white superiority. It described itself as aligning with the majority of Oregonians – it was anti-slavery, but also anti-black.

By 1850, several factions clamored for their own political organs. In Portland, business and professional men pushed for a Portland-based newspaper to publish their ideas and perspective. On December 4, 1850 the *Oregonian* came into being. It was headed by Thomas Jefferson Dryer, a Whig from New England, who with the editorialship, took on the role of opposition to the ruling Democratic Party. The *Oregonian* was consequently a thoroughly Whig newspaper. Dryer was a capable editor, and in the last half of the decade sat in the legislative assembly as well as in the constitutional convention. Under his stewardship, the *Oregonian* championed Indian extermination, anti-immigration and anti-slavery ideology.

Once rumors circulated that the Whigs were establishing a newspaper, the Democrats hurried to put together their own organ. Samuel L. Thurston, while in Washington as the territorial delegate, searched for a suitable editor to start a newspaper that would herald his, and his party's interests. He found Asahel Bush, a twenty-six-year-old from Massachusetts who was then editing a small paper in New England. Bush arrived in Oregon in September of 1850 and came to be the leader of a group of young men who controlled the Democratic Party and Oregon Territory in the 1850s, known as the "Salem Clique." On March 28, 1851, Bush began printing the *Oregon Statesman.*[49] The *Statesman*, purely a Democratic Party mouthpiece, was pro-immigration, pro-slavery (but not for Oregon), and mostly heralded Indian removal rather than extermination. All three newspapers shared similar values with regards to gender, women's rights and place, and the importance of family.

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[49] Turnbull, *History of Oregon Newspapers*, 24-89.

The three newspapers, the *Oregon Spectator*, the *Oregonian*, and the *Oregon Statesmen* form the foundation of this study. The *Oregonian* and the *Statesmen* were the two most important newspapers for Oregon in the 1850s, and the *Spectator* was the first newspaper for the territory. I read over 1300 issues from approximately nine-year blocks of the three newspapers – 1846-1855 of the *Spectator*, 1850-1859 of the *Oregonian* and 1851-1859 of the *Oregon Statesman.* All of the newspapers had the same basic form. Each paper was four broadsheet pages, two and a half of which were advertising. Usually the first and last pages carried the real content, which was usually a jumble of editorials and news items, letters, prescriptive articles and short axioms. The *Spectator* and the *Oregonian* both increased the number of columns over the territorial period, and by 1859 all of them were sixteen columns in length.

I began with the approach that the newspapers were controlled and contributed to by a group that could be referred to as "opinion leaders." Media theory argues "that the flow of information from mass media to individual is mediated by self-designated opinion leaders who enjoy the social power that holding and transmitting information gives them."[50] The editors of Oregon's three main newspapers, and the political groups to which they belonged formed information networks centered around the newspapers. T.H. Breen used the term "charter group" to refer to a group of men who, as the first "effective possessors" of a newly colonized region, "established rules for interaction, decided what customs would be carried to the New World, and determined the terms under which newcomers would be incorporated into these societies."[51] Those that

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[50] Christine H. Roch, "The Dual Roots of Opinion Leadership," *The Journal of Politics* 67, no. 1 (Feb., 2005), 110.

[51] T.H. Breen, quoted in David Alan Johnson, *Founding the Far West: California, Oregon, and Nevada, 1840-1890*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 2-3.

controlled the newspapers in Oregon during the territorial period were one such "charter group." The same men owned and operated the presses, controlled the legislature, the judiciary, and were often prominent businessmen and farmers. Newspaper circulation was small in Oregon, but information passed freely among these groups of men and filtered down through word of mouth during county meetings and informal gatherings. Thus, the editors and the contributors to the newspapers acted as filters for information, thereby letting them control public opinion, to a certain extent. Controlling information helped the Democratic Party of Oregon manage, for example, who got elected and appointed to positions of power and who got government funds and contracts. Patronage was a constituent element of Oregon society, and those who controlled the patronage largely controlled the public discourse. In short, a relatively small group of men wielded a vast deal of power, and they set about shoring up this power through discourse in their control of the media. It was a circular process. The central way they did this, I discovered, was through the employment of race and gender ideologies, which influenced the all-male electorate who established the legal frameworks of power.[52]

With the assumption that Oregon newspapers were significant and important sources of discourse, I read them looking for patterns and themes and found discourses of gender, race and colonialism. The kinds of stories I read varied significantly, from editorials and letters to fiction, poems and advice literature. With the exception of the editorials and letters, much of the content of Oregon's newspapers was selected from other newspapers further east, as it was readily available, and had an established

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[52] James E. Hendrickson, *Joe Lane of Oregon: Machine Politics and the Sectional Crisis, 1849-1861* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 110, 140-155; Dodds, *Oregon*, 96, 103..

audience. They were careful in their selections, choosing what pieces best enhanced their goals for power.

Together, the editorials, letters, fiction stories and advice literature formed a discourse, making the study of discourse the backbone of this thesis. The study of discourse is, essentially, the study of language, how words are used, and in some ways the study of knowledge. Language is one way, perhaps the main way, of expressing and transmitting knowledge. Sara Mills defined discourse as "groupings of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by that social context and which contribute to the way that social context continues its existence."[53] As discourse is not a singular entity, several discourses can exist at the same time and conflict with each other. Within this idea, ideology, (such as domesticity) is key to, but not the same as discourse. Discourse is a site of struggle, whereas ideology is the thing being struggled over. Foucault argued that "Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it."[54] Discourse, therefore, provides a perfect place to examine what a colonizing group wants its society to look like, and how it goes about reinforcing its own power. By studying the discourse of elite, Anglo-American males in Oregon I aimed to reveal both their ideals for social organization, and how they went about (or proposed to go about) implementing those ideals. For example, in the approximately 1300 newspapers I read, I filtered out over 600 articles that dealt with some aspect of gender. From those articles I looked for patterns and themes in how they discussed gender – what made a good man, what made a good woman, what were the

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[53] Sara Mills, *Discourse* (London: Routledge, 2004), 11.
[54] Mills, *Discourse*, 16, 19, 32-33, 43, 45.

threats the discourse was addressing. I then applied my theoretical understandings of gender and colonialism to analyze what the themes I identified meant both discursively and for Oregon. As meaning is built relationally and differentially (that is words get their meaning in relation to and contrast to other words), the study of discourse allows a glimpse of how men in a position of power developed that power through their relationships with others.

In Oregon Territory, as elsewhere, relationships of power were inextricably linked to understandings of race and gender. The Anglo-American men in control of Oregon built and legitimized their power through their racial and gendered positions as white, male household heads. On another level, race and gender are tied to language through the creation of meaning through differentiation.[55] Differential references of language in Oregon newspapers were almost always gendered or racialized – they were male because they were not female; they were non-white because they were not white. Often, race and gender worked together to denigrate the subject while legitimizing the writer's claim to authority. In setting up a white society organized by a strict gender hierarchy based in and around the family, the Anglo-American men at the helm of the newspapers would be able to place themselves at the top of the hierarchy. The charter group that controlled the newspaper discourse selected and employed certain ideologies that helped build and maintain their position in society. As William Robbins put it, "Ideologies, and especially the voices that are rooted in ideology, have exercised a profound influence in shaping... Oregon..."[56] The ideology contested in discourse was a way of judging others' lives by a largely illusory standard, but nevertheless played a crucial role in social control. Those

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[55] Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 2, 6-7, 24, 55, 60.
[56] Robbins, *Landscapes of Promise*, 15.

who controlled Oregon's newspapers, Oregon's leading white men, both influenced and were influenced by the discourse they were creating. They used and modified ideologies like domesticity from their former homes to portray what they wanted Oregon to look like socially.

Thesis

My central argument is that through control of media discourse, the white male elite of territorial Oregon used discourse to transmit their vision of an ideal society. This society would be white, and structured by a complicated gender hierarchy based in and around the central unit of the patriarchal nuclear family, ensuring and legitimizing Anglo-American male power in Oregon. Each chapter addresses a particular part of the vision. Chapter One details how non-whites were pushed out of Oregon society through their positioning in discourse. The elites in territorial Oregon drew on a racial ideology that suggested that whites were naturally superior while at the same time depicting themselves as victims of non-white aggression, thereby positioning non-whites as inferior and dangerous. Chapter Two explores the gendered discourse in Oregon newspapers, describing the specific attributes that made a good man or woman, and how gender ideology became the basis for power in Oregon. Chapter Three examines how in the ideological discourse employed by the Anglo-American elite, gender was inculcated in the family. The family was the basic social unit of society, and thus the foundation for social power, and the base upon which elite males constructed their idyllic society. Elite white males used ideologies of race, gender and family to define a certain hierarchy whereby they occupied the top spots, while at the same time de-legitimizing would-be threats to their power. They pushed out non-whites and stigmatized non-white gender

and family structures, legitimating themselves as the rightful owners of land that was technically not even theirs.

Chapter 1:
Making Oregon White

"Of all the races which are now striving for the mastery of the world, to impress on the future of society and civilization the stamp of its own character and genius, to make its law, idiom, religion, manners, government, and opinion prevail, the Anglo-Saxon is now unquestionably the most numerous, powerful and active."

~ *Oregon Spectator*, 1851[1]

In 1840, the relatively few non-Native people, mostly traders, in Oregon existed in small settlements, surrounded by autonomous Native peoples. The Hudson's Bay Company tried to control Native movements and tie them to the Company by offering credit and attempting to build a dependency on European goods. This largely failed due to the lack of acquisitiveness among the Natives in the region, and until the mass arrival of American settler-colonists in the late 1840s, Oregon's Indian population controlled the territory. Thus, when the early settler-colonists arrived, they found a country not controlled by Americans, or even by the British, but by Natives. The region's economy depended on Natives' bringing furs to HBC posts. This, combined with the relatively few whites in the area, meant that the Natives remained largely independent of whites until the migration overwhelmed them.[2] In several settlements, such as French Prairie or Fort Vancouver, mixed-raced people accounted for a good number of the population, and many white men had native wives. The 1846 Boundary Treaty protected the rights of Hudson's Bay Company employees, many of whom were French Canadian or mixed-race.[3] The Americans had difficulty defining the children of white men and Native

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[1] "Progress of the Anglo-Saxon Race," *Oregon Spectator*, September 30, 1851.

[2] David Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise: An Interpretive History* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003), 30-33.

[3] Peggy Pascoe uses the term 'mixed-race' to refer to the children of white fathers and Native mothers. I will as well. Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

women legally, since to deny them full citizenship was to diminish the father's rights as a white male. The Organic Laws of Oregon, adopted in 1843 merely limited land claims to 640 acres per male settler, with no race provisions except those prohibiting blacks from settling in Oregon. The Organic Laws became the basis for Oregon's territorial law, though the Territorial Laws nullified the Organic Laws' land provisions and asserted that Indian land titles had to be extinguished before whites could settle. The matter of land claims was settled in 1850 with the Donation Land Claim Act which allowed white settlers to claim up to 320 acres (640 if they were married) of land in Oregon. There was no independent provision for Métis in either the 1846 treaty or the 1848 territorial law, but the Donation Act allowed mixed-race males to claim land. They were therefore defined, according to law, as white, for the first half of the territorial period. This was out of necessity. White men married to Native women sought to claim the additional 320 acres under their wives' names, which they could not do unless their marriages, and children, were validated through law. Although the Donation Land Act stated that married women could claim up to 320 acres in their own names, it did not mean women owned land. Women, married or otherwise, could not own property, therefore the land claimed in their name was solely under the control of their husbands. Native wives and their mixed-race children came under the jurisdiction of white inheritance laws, and were defined as white. It was not until 1855 when the Oregon Legislature passed a bill specifically defining mixed-race peoples as Native and thereby stripping them of property rights, that the Métis people of Oregon lost their land and citizenship rights. These were the first steps towards later efforts to outlaw marriage between whites and non-whites.[4] White concepts of race were binary: people were either white or non-white, with some

[4] Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 8-9, 95-97.

groups shifting from one category to the other over the course of the territorial period as whites gained the power to define race legally.

All of this meant that when the Anglo-Americans arrived, they had to contend with a population that they felt had no place in what was to become their idyllic society, a population that was powerful in the late 1840s. The new arrivals quickly set about a campaign to push non-whites out of Oregon, discursively in media, and legally in territorial law, and then in state law. By positioning themselves as the legitimate property owners, the white male elite in territorial Oregon carved out a place for themselves at the top of the hierarchy of power. They de-legitimized non-whites by connecting whiteness to citizenship, land ownership and gender, thereby separating the "desired" population from the undesired one. Whiteness, in this understanding, became property that was closely linked to the property of manhood. Without both, one could have neither land, nor political citizenship in Oregon, and thus were blocked from political and economic power.[5]

The Anglo-American elite male settlers' central goal in creating their idyllic society through discourse was to establish a white society controlled and operated by themselves. The discourse and the society were evolving concurrently and one reflected the other. Their discourses set whiteness as the desired norm, and positioned non-whites in very specific ways. Race was thus a binary construction. Focused particularly on Indians and blacks, the white male elite of Oregon rhetorically pushed non-whites out of

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[5] "Donation Land Claim Act, 1850," *Center for Columbia River History*, http://www.ccrh.org/comm/cottage/primary/claim.htm (Accessed 15 October 2011); Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 31; Gray H.Whaley, "Oregon, Illahee, and the Empire Republic: A Case Study of American Colonialism, 1843-1858," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2005), 161; Barbara Young Welke, *Law and the Borders of Belonging in the Long Nineteenth Century United States*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); David Roediger, *How Race Survived American History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon* (London: Verso, 2008).

their idyllic society by portraying them in discourse as inferior and dangerous. In this scheme, whites were portrayed as the victims and non-whites as the aggressors; elite males were just defending their rights and families by imagining an all-white Oregon. Whiteness gave these men the proper attributes for ruling, while on the other side the race traits of Natives and blacks made them unqualified for land and power.

White "Superiority"

In discussing the Donation Act, Samuel R. Thurston, the first Territorial Delegate, justified the limiting of land claims to whites by stating, "we want this bill so shaped as to beget a substantial, intelligent, and enterprising population, of such a kind that we can all meet on a common level and with common associations and intercommunications."[6] In Thurston's mind, and the minds of his comrades who ran Oregon in the 1850s, non-whites were incapable of fitting this description. Whiteness was the ideal, and only whites were fit to be members of their new society. Blacks would only incite the Indians to violence, and "Canackers," all being employees of the HBC, would simply hand the land over to the Company, and thus to Britain. Thus, in Thurston's view, not only did white Americans deserve the land more than other races, but it was in the nation's best interests to give them the land.

Virtues that made whites deserving of the land were often linked to whiteness itself. For example, in an article selected for the *Statesman*, honesty, the very best of virtues, was likened to whiteness. Honesty, "was called *whiteness* by the ancients, for its purity and beauty; and it has always won the esteem due to the most admirable of al

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[6] Samuel L. Thurston, "Letter of the Delegate from Oregon, to the Members of the House of Representatives in Behalfof his Constituents, touching the Oregon Land Bill," *Oregon Spectator,* September 17, 1850.

virtues. [emphasis in original]"[7] Non-whites, Indians in particular, according to this idea, were incapable of honesty. In a sense, the above words can be seen as a metaphor for racial whiteness as well. Racialized insults were common in territorial Oregon. Race was a powerful tool for Anglo-American males in Oregon to substantiate their own claims to authority. These writers set up dichotomous categories in binary opposition to each other in which white was the positive norm and non-white was its negative definitional opposite. They endowed the racial classification of "white" with positive traits, while at the same time doing the opposite for the racial classifications, such as Indian, black, or Hawaiian that fell under the overarching category of "non-white." Non-white was thus positioned both as inferior to white, and also as dangerous to white, and to the white claim to hegemony. They were used in ways that were meant to devalue and de-legitimize opponents. For example Democrats connected the Whig party to abolitionism as well as to race amalgamation, thereby theoretically eroding the Whig support base by equating them with blacks, and, worse, with race mixing. Such a charge was serious enough that it could merit a violent refutation, such as the one that had an *Oregonian* supporter pointing fingers at the Republican Party as terrible "black philanthropists" and "Negro worshippers," which was as bad an insult as one white could level at another in Oregon, since abolitionism challenged the racial status quo in which whites held all the power. Thomas Dryer, editor of the *Oregonian*, in accusing another editor of being an abolitionist, called him a "white nigger."[8] In slighting others' racial identity by

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[7] "A Candid Mind," *Oregon Statesman*, February 5, 1856.

[8] CUM-TUX, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Statesman*, April 28, 1855; *Oregon Statesmen*, September 30, 1856; C.H. Burch, "The Charge of Abolitionism Refuted—"Sound on the 'Nigger' Question"," and Thomas Dryer, "Quintessence of Meanness," *Oregonian*, October 11, 1856; David Alan Johnson, *Founding the Far West: California, Oregon, and Nevada, 1840-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 166. See also, *Oregon Statesman*, July 14, 1855; *Oregonian*, April 17, 1852 and December 26, 1857.

questioning their whiteness, writers attempted to marginalize and weaken their voices and power.

Whiteness entitled people to privileges unavailable to those of other races. This whiteness was manifested in traits that made Anglo-American males the most suitable candidates for land ownership, political citizenship and power. As one Oregonian wrote, "It is a prevalent idea among Americans that they are a peculiar people, that every thing that is excellent belongs to them—it is talent or morality [sic]—qualities of head or qualities of heart..." and because of this they were best able to "promote civilization and refinement, humanity and religion."[9] Their identity as freemen (the term Oregonians used) was key to their understanding of themselves as white. In the minds of elite Oregonians, being a freeman, thus completely independent, was synonymous with being white, because the constitutional notions of equality and freedom that went along with being an American were the exclusive property of whites. In a typically overdramatic response to something a rival editor wrote, Dryer outlined his concept of eligible voters as, "white male citizens, [who were] born upon American soil, made free by the best blood of the Revolutionary sires, shed as free will offering on the altar of their common country...taught to revere and love LIBERTY as a rich boon from high heaven..."[10] Freemen were created through the Revolutionary war and had a strong American heritage that non-whites lacked. The Anglo-Americans settlers went to Oregon by their own choice and through war and suffering "brought the privileges to which every man is entitled by the constitution and laws of the country, of being recognized as a *freeman.*" These same people were, "good law-abiding, loyal subjects," of the United States.

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[9] "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, September 30, 1853.

[10] Dryer was often accused of being a Know-Nothing supporter, and thus anti-immigrant, as well as anti-non-white. Dryer, "Hard to Please," *Oregonian*, October 28, 1854.

Blacks in this understanding were neither white nor freemen, since they were either slaves or servants, and were believed to have no independence.[11]

The first editor of the *Spectator*, took the connection between whites and freemen even further, stating that the term freemen was synonymous with heroism. "By patriotism we mean something more than heroism. Heroisim has become a term synonymous with freemen. By patriotism we intend that ennobling principle in the human heart which looks beyond self up to country," wrote the *Spectator's* editor.[12] In the view of Anglo-American elites, white freemen crossing the continent to settle Oregon was an act of heroism – they were spreading civilization across the continent. Implicit this construction was the idea that white Americans were morally and intellectually superior to other races, and so it was their destiny to overcome them. The moral of an interesting story printed in the *Statesman* was indicative of how these men saw whites as superior.[13] The story told of a physically threatening mixed-race "brave" who drank and caroused, who was compared to a white storekeeper. Initially, the storekeeper was found lacking, called a coward because he let the brave abuse him. But after the brave showed his true "colors" by raping the storekeeper's beautiful wife, the storekeeper found his courage and avenged his wife by stabbing and killing her rapist. The story was essentially about the fall of a moral inferior and the rise of a morally superior, but physically weaker white man who became heroic through vanquishing his enemy.[14] Thus, the story can be seen as analogous to the story of the whites in Oregon, as told by the colonizing whites themselves. In the heroic story of white settlement, as Anglo-

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[11] "Oregonians!" *Oregonian*, July 26, 1856; Joel H. Sibley, *The American Political Nation, 1838-1893*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 75; Johnson, *Founding the Far West*, 9.
[12] "Oregon and Her Citizens—The War," *Oregon Spectator*, February 24, 1848.
[13] "Jack Warhawk; or the Arkansas Coward," *Oregon Statesmen*, June 4, 1853.
[14] Ibid.

Americans were the brave, honest, morally and intellectually superior, *free*, soldier settlers that conquered their foes and claimed the land. Non-whites, a category the came to encompass blacks, Indians and Métis, were the exact opposite.[15]

But it was not enough just to claim the land. Since land ownership was a key to independence, citizenship and power established the right to land, thereby connecting whiteness with land ownership, as non-whites had neither political citizenship or the right to own land in Oregon. Property ownership was crucial to creating a white Oregon. Early in the territorial period, Oregonians expressed trepidation over their status as landholders. "We are not intruders here," an Oregonian under the synonym M. wrote to the *Spectator*, "we came here under the patronizing care of our Government [sic]."[16] Anglo-American settlers believed that they had a right to the land, and that the United States backed them up. But they were obviously aware of their tentative position. Prior to the Donation Land Act of 1850, Oregon settlers were "trespassers upon the soil," since there was no land provision within the Organic Law of the Territory, a set of laws that went into effect when Oregon became a territory. White settlers' position in 1850 was summarized in a letter by Samuel Thurston, the first Congressional delegate for Oregon Territory. The letter raged against the Organic Law's inability, as Thurston put it, to "make any prevision to secure us in our homes." Worse, in the minds of Thurston and his contemporaries, the Organic Law "declared the rights of the Indians of the country to be

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[15] George L. Curry, "Governor's Message," *Oregonian*, December 27, 1856; "The War," *Oregonian,* December 15, 29, 1855.

[16] George Abernethy, "To the Great Chiefs of the Nez Perces, and other Tribes," *Oregon Spectator*, April 20, 1848.

in full force."[17] While in July, his argument for the Donation Act considered both races' rights, by September he considered the danger and threat that Natives posed in Oregon.

The Donation Land Claim Act took effect in December 1850, was modified in 1853, and was in effect until 1855. The Donation Land Act was a step in connecting whiteness with land ownership, and bridged the gap in public discourse between Indian claims to the right to land, and land ownership as being white privilege.[18] Under the Donation Land Claim Act, white settlers could claim a certain amount of land (the amount of land depended on a variety of factors, including marriage status or what year it was) if they lived on and improved it for four consecutive years. Under this act, "mixed-race Indians" were considered white, but Indians were not. This drew the derision of the Anglo-American elite, and was part of the discursive campaign to de-legitimize Natives and their mixed-race children. It was extremely important to the ruling elite, particularly the ruling Democratic Party, that land claims be kept for whites, as Asahel Bush's reaction to the *Spectator*'s omitting the word "white" when printing the law attests. "Will the people of Oregon sanction such petty evasions, and such criminal trifling with their interests?" Bush asked. Omitting the word "white" with regard to land claims and ownership was apparently criminal.[19]

Other than the law itself, and the derisive comment made by the *Spectator*, Oregon newspapers ignored the mixed-race clause of the Donation Law and latched on to the "white provision," but focused on mixed-races in other ways. It became clear through

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[17] "Congressional," *Oregon Spectator*, July 11, 1850; Thurston, "Letter of the Delegate from Oregon, to the Members of the House of Representatives in behalf of his Constituents, touching the Oregon Land Bill," *Oregon Spectator*, September 17, 1850.

[18] Most of the argument over rights to the land took place during the Indian Wars in the mid-1850s, and was part of a larger discursive struggle to make Indians inferior and dangerous and thus unfit to own the land. Thus it will be discussed in further detail in the section on Natives.

[19] "Section 4 and 5," *The Donation Land Claim Act, 1850* ; "Oregon Land Titles," *Oregon Spectator*, October 31, 1850; "The Spectator and the Donation Law," *Oregon Statesman*, April 25, 1851.

the coverage of the Indian Wars that Oregonians did not consider "mixed-race Natives" to be white, nor did they consider the Natives as having any more than a minor claim to the land. In 1855, at the beginning of the final set of Indian Wars, and at the end of the term for the Donation Land Act, Oregon passed a law that prevented "mixed-race Indians" from becoming citizens, and thereby stripped them also of inheritance and land ownership rights. In 1857 a bill was introduced to allow males with white fathers and Native mothers to become citizens based on certain qualifications, but the bill was defeated. Miscegenation, and the mixed-race children that resulted from it, helped define constructed racial boundaries by discursively preserving white purity and privilege.[20]

The Anglo-American men who utilized public discourse and law were definitely concerned about miscegenation and mixed-race children. Although they did not pass an anti-miscegenation law until 1862, negative discourse on the subject pervaded Oregon newspapers in the 1850s. Samuel Thurston was direct about his fear of a mixed race in Oregon, stating that such a race would be "inimical to the whites," and dangerous because it would incite violence in the Indians. Almost all of the discussion of abolitionism in Oregon was paired with miscegenation, and used as a weapon of insult against political opponents. Mixed-race people could never be considered white, because their non-white blood always eventually overran their white blood, and they inevitably fell back into their condition of depredation. Miscegenation, in this understanding, was an evil that had to be prevented, so as to keep the white race strong. This attitude, of

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[20] Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 3, 8, 14, 29.

course, served to shore up white power, and to keep those defined as non-white in positions of subordination.[21]

Thus, by the time the state constitution was written, the Oregon elite had solidified its control over land, and over political and economic power and was able to write non-whites out of land ownership and citizenship completely, thus anchoring itself as the legitimate and superior racial group in Oregon.[22] Blacks, Indians and Métis were all barred from owning land. By 1860 then, the white colonization effort was, if not complete, well on its way to being so.

The Indian Threat

For the Anglo-American newcomers in Oregon, the biggest racial problem was the land's indigenous inhabitants. The two groups had very different understandings of the land, and different usage policies. This is what caused much of the violence that characterized the territorial period. According to historian Peter Boag, white Oregon settlers had ideas about the environment and landscape that were a mix of pastoral and progressive. In the ideal, land should be used for agriculture and to support an industrial complex in towns. But Natives had a more balanced understanding of their environment, and though they altered the landscape, they did so in a sustainable way that worked with the land's natural tendencies.[23] Natives of the Oregon Country largely hunted and gathered, facilitating this by a habitual burning of ground brush and small timber stands.

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[21] Thurston, "Letter of the Delegate from Oregon,"; "Strange Infatuation—Marriage of a White Woman with an Indian" from *Medina Citizen* in *Oregon Spectator*, November 11, 1851; "Slavery," *Oregon Spectator*, July 14, 1854; "The African Race" from *Richmond Enquirer* in *Oregon Statesman*, June 13, 1851; "Indian War in Rogue River," *Oregon Statesman*, August 23, 1853; CUM-TUX, "Letter to the Editor"; "Select Company," *Oregon Statesman*, September 23, 1856; "Hypocrisy of the Black Republicans," *Oregon Statesman*, October 26, 1858; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 3, 8, 14, 29..

[22] "Article I, Section 8, 31, 35," and "Article II, Section 6," and "Article XV, Sec. 8," of "Oregon State Constitution, 1857" *Oregon Statesman*, September 29, 1857.

[23] Peter Boag, *Environment and Experience: Settlement Culture in Nineteenth-Century Oregon* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992), 17, 27, 47.

Anglo-American settlers believed that land was meant to be farmed, and as Natives largely did not farm, the whites justified taking the land so that it could be used as "God intended." Anglo-American settler-colonists thought of the land as unoccupied because Natives did not utilize the land in a way that whites felt it should be used, and because Natives were not settled on individual plots of land.[24]

Natives refused to use the land "correctly," and so not only did they have no entitlement, but they could never attain the civilization necessary to improve themselves. The Anglo-Americans remained contemptuous of Indian land claims, even as the government asserted that Indian title had to be extinguished before white settlement could take place. The *Oregonian* commented in 1852, "[the Indians] still, and rightfully too, consider themselves as the *bona fide* owners of the soil."[25] Here, the writer recognized Indian title, but there is a somewhat mocking tone to the article, since the writer also expounded on how troublesome Natives were and how unworthy they were of the land. "[T]hey are a thieving, pilfering, slothful, disgusting, dirty set, and these inborn propensities make them troublesome," Dryer stated in the same article. The same condescension permeated the tone of the *Spectator* almost exactly one year later. "They contend strongly and earnestly for the ground of their nativity," the editor wrote, "and say too that they will fight to the last man for their hereditary rights... They are a nuisance to

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[24] Ibid.; Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise, 47.*

[25] Susan Armitage, "Making Connections: Gender, Race and Place in Oregon Country," in *One Step Over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests*, eds. Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press and Athabasca University Press, 2008), 65; Gordon Dodds, *Oregon A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1977), 108-110; Dorothy O. Johansen and Charles M. Gates, *Empire of the Columbia: A History of the Pacific Northwest* 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 251; Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 47; "Willamette Indian Relations," *Oregon Spectator*, March 23, 1848; James G. Swan et al, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian*, May 7, 1853; "Puget Sound District of Country, It's Harbors, General Features, Climate, Agricultural facilities, Fisheries, &c.," *Oregonian*, September 18, 1852.

the white settlers wherever they live in close proximity."[26] While white settlers would concede that, to the Natives, Oregon was the "ground of their nativity," they were reluctant to admit Indians' rights to the land. Instead, they were troublesome nuisances who should be pushed aside.

By the latter half of the territorial period, Anglo-American elites were even less generous in their consideration of Indian land rights. "We believe that when our common country is invaded by a hostile foe...that we *the people*, the SOVEREIGNS, have some rights...[emphasis in the original]" wrote Dryer of the *Oregonian*. The land, by 1856, was firmly the property of male Anglo-American settlers. By their reckoning: "the people of Oregon regard this as their permanent abiding place; here are their wives and children, their houses, farms, herds, and their all."[27] As will be seen in Chapter Three, the family was the base of power and the foundation of white Oregon society. To claim the land as the home of their families was essentially to brand it as white men's own.

Of course, the Native inhabitants of Oregon did not passively accept white encroachment on their land. Between the 1847 Whitman Massacre, which began the Cayuse War, and the Bannock War of 1878, there were eight conflicts labeled Indian wars in Oregon. The years between 1848 and 1857 saw hardly a break in the fighting between the two groups. The only area in Oregon largely free of fighting was the Willamette Valley proper, which saw a huge portion of its Native population dead from disease by 1850, and the Natives of which had a history of trade and intermarriage with whites.[28] The Indian wars of the territorial period formed the background of the

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[26] "Indian Affairs," *Oregon Spectator*, September 15, 1853; "The Snake Indians," *Oregon Statesman*, October 3, 1854.
[27] "War Policy of the General Government," *Oregonian*, January 5, 1856.
[28] Dodds, *Oregon*, 109; Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 49.

construction of Indians as a race in the public discourse of the Anglo-Americans. The following section, which examines how Natives were constructed as a race that was inferior and dangerous, takes as its sources articles and editorials commenting on the wars, which appeared in Oregon newspapers as one ongoing conflict. The Anglo-Americans were convinced that the Indians were waging wars of white extermination. At the same time, they expressed two main strategies to deal with the "Native problem": exterminating the Indians, or removing them to reservations. The federal government chose reservations.

The public discourse construed whites as the victims of Indian aggression. All Indians were constructed as the same, possessing traits inherent to their "race." They had to be stopped to protect American property, and most importantly, American families. "The thunders of war have commenced!" C. Gilliam cried from the pages of the *Spectator*. "Let them be continued until American *property,* and American LIFE shall be SECURE *upon American soil* [emphasis in the original]."[29] The wars played out on the pages of Oregon newspapers as the Anglo-American male elite racialized Indians to distinguish them as racially inferior and a threat to the whites, thereby strengthening the Anglo-American position of power in Oregon.

Anglo-American elites followed two lines of thought with regard to the fate of the Indians: paternalism and extermination. Paternalism, promoted mostly by the Democrats through the *Statesman*, used an age-centered dichotomy to organize Indians and whites: Indians were child-like and needed the parental care of whites. The extermination route was pushed by the Whig *Oregonian*, most specifically by its editor T.J. Dryer. Rather

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[29] P. "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, April 20, 1848; C. Gilliam, "Late News from the Army," *Oregon Spectator*, February 10, 1848.

than being based on an age-centered dichotomy, the exterminationist view relied on the civilization-versus-savagery understanding of Native/white relations. There was an inherent contradiction in seeing Natives as both child-like and terrifyingly dangerous. The paternialist vision feminized Natives, minimizing their threat and placing them in a dependent position, while the exterminats masculinized them, increasing their threat, not just to white men, but to white women and children as well. For both groups, however, Natives embodied the same racial traits at various times, it was how the two groups of elitesemphasized those traits that differed, and accounted for the different solutions to the problem.

Although public discourse did ascribe some good traits to *some* Natives, the racialization of Oregon's Native population was largely a negative endeavor.[30] Most of the good things whites were willing to ascribe to the Indian character revolved around either their battle prowess or good relations with whites. In speaking of a recent battle between the Rogue River Indians and Joseph Lane, one man outlined the Indians' character of "firmness, determination and chivalry," which he assured the readers was due to the scenery. Another wrote that the Indians were "brave, well armed, and fight like veteran soldiers," a compliment when in the midst of a discussion about war.[31] In a letter to the editor of the *Oregonian*, a man under the pseudonym "Selish" stated that the good Indians were "friendly, brave and hospitable," and they boasted "with pride of never having shed white man's blood." It seems clear that in this statement at least, the Indians

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[30] Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[31] One of the Valley Boys, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Statesman*, October 18, 1853; John W. McGhee, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian*, September 13, 1851; "Indian War—Latest News," *Oregonian*, October 13, 1855.

being classified as 'good' were so because they had never shed white man's blood.[32] It is possible that that "Selish" was a Native, since "Selish" is close to "Salish." However, the vast majority of commentary on Native character traits were negative.

Negative racial traits assigned to Indians in the public discourse usually fell into three loosely clustered categories: incivility, duplicity, inhumanity. Indians were, according the Anglo-Americans, barbarous, savage, and incapable of civilization. They were a "slothful, disgusting, dirty set."[33] They were the opposite of whites: "They have no proper sense of honor, justice, or integrity, no moral restraints of consequences in the future... This being the natural instinct of the whole Indian character."[34] On top of lacking the necessary white traits listed above, Natives were considered duplicitous and untrustworthy. Treachery and theft ran rampant in Indian character and culture. The Indians, "continued under former treaties to steal and destroy the property of whites," the *Oregonian* related, making them both treacherous in their betrayal of the treaties and thieving in acquisition of white property.[35] According to Dryer of the *Oregonian*, Indians were apt to be friendly for a time after treaties were signed, but then they would use the peace created by the treaty to rob innocent white settlers. "The Indian character is universally false, deceptive and cruel," one correspondent wrote in summation of the general duplicity of Indian character.[36] Perhaps the most common traits of which Natives were accused, however, was inhumanity, which often went along with incivility and

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[32] Selish, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian*, May 6, 1854.
[33] *Oregon Spectator* January 20, April 20, 1848; *Oregon Statesman* May 26, 1856; John W. McGhee, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian* September 13, 1851; "Puget Sound District of Country," *Oregonian*, September 18, 1852.
[34] "Policy of the General Government Towards the Indians," *Oregonian*, October 25, 1856.
[35] *Oregon Statesman* May 26, 1856; *Oregon Spectator*, April 20, 1848, July 10, 1851; "Puget Sound District of Country,"; "Late from Fort Boise," *Oregonian*, February 24, 1855; "Rouge [sic] River Indian War," *Oregonian*, July 19, 1856.
[36] "The Indian War in Oregon," *Oregonian*, May 3, 1856; "Indian War North," *Oregonian*, July 19, 1856; "From the Dalles: Indian War Recommenced," *Oregonian*, May 29, 1858.

duplicity. Inhumanity in this understanding encompassed Indians inherent violence and cruelty, while incivility covered traits that made them savage – that is, lacking civilization. There was overlap in the two categories. Indians were, allegedly, vicious and cruel murderers and rapists who were apparently spurred on by their inhuman thirst for blood.

The Anglo-American elite expanded at length on the incivility, duplicity and inhumanity of Indians, both to contrast these traits with their own, but also to make Indians unworthy of occupancy in Oregon. By constructing Natives in this way, white elite males highlighted Indians' violence and the threat they posed to whites as a whole and, most importantly, to white women and children. Indians, according to this discourse, manifested a "deeply hostile spirit," and they had no respect for white authority, acting "extremely insolent and annoying," and becoming increasingly, "saucy and impudent towards the whites."[37] Positioning them as threats to whites, particularly white families (see below), allowed the Anglo-American elite to wage wars against Oregon's Native inhabitants, which would put Natives in their place and solidify white colonial power.

As mentioned above, the Anglo-American elite men had two ways of thinking about dealing with the Natives. While discursively positioning Natives as inferior and dangerous to whites, they simultaneously advocated solutions to the problem. These solutions tended to differ along political lines. Asahel Bush's Democratic *Oregon Statesman* advocated a paternalistic solution that moved Indians out of white settlement areas and onto reservations. This was the solution suggested by Territorial Delegate

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[37] "Indian Outbreak," *Oregon Spectator*, August 23, 1853; "More Indian Murders—Prospects of a General War," *Oregonian*, September 22, 1855; "Oregonians!" *Oregonian*, July 26, 1856.

Joseph Lane, a member of the Democratic Party, and was ultimately the one the U.S. government used. The paternalistic program saw Indians as child-like, and pushed for kinder treatment of the Indians, so as to prevent violence, recognizing that some tribes were kind, intelligent and tractable. The relationship between whites and Indians, Bush argued, should be parental and emphasize white protection of Indians, and Indian dependence. "The Indians should not be treated with as *nations* and as equals," he contended using the words of an article from the *Buffalo Democrat*, "but as *dependants*, over whom the government should exercise a fatherly care." This was a continuation of a case he made in 1853: "There is nothing more farcical and grossly wrong, than to *treat* with such miserable specimens of humanity..."[38] Thus while Bush represented those advocating a kinder, paternalistic approach to dealing with the Indians, this approach was not predicated on a superior opinion of the Indian character, but rather on a different view of how to deal with the Indian character. In addition, the *Statesman's* treatment of Indians as a racial group was confused, since while advocating the paternalistic program, the newspaper also degraded Indians as a race, and promoted the idea of them as blood-thirty savages, encompassing both the age-centered and civilization-versus-savagery dichotomies.

The other solution to the Indian troubles was supported and promoted by Thomas Dryer of the *Oregonian*, the territory's only Whig paper. Dryer was violently anti-Indian and felt that the only solution was extermination of the Indian race. Natives, in his view, were intelligent, but incapable of civilization, and they were savage and cruel. Dryer and his supporters felt that it was impossible for whites and Indians to live in peace together,

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[38] George Abernethy, "Circular to the Oregon Emigrants," *Oregon Spectator*, January 20, 1848; "Indian Affairs in Oregon," *Oregon Statesman*, April 25, 1854; "Our Indian Relations," from *Buffalo Democrat* in *Oregon Statesman*, November 28, 1854; "Indian Treaties," *Oregon Statesman*, January 1, 1856.

and that living Indians would simply carry on of murders of whites. In this view, Indians were a curse and a scourge. In an article that encapsulated his opinion, Dryer wrote: "These inhuman butchers and bloody fiends must be met and conquered, *vanquished*—yes, EXTERMINATED; or we can never hope for, or expect, peace, prosperity or safety [emphasis in the original]."[39]

Both positions were predicated on the undesirability of the Indian race as constructed in public discourse. Indians, whether one supported paternalistic removal or violent extermination, were unwanted in white society. Both positions saw the Indian race as lesser. Thus, in both discourses they portrayed Indians to reinforce this image. To further solidify their place at the top of the racial hierarchy, the Anglo-American elite went one step further, and infused the constructed Indian race with a sense of danger, exaggerating the Indian wars to the point that they could say that the Indians were waging a "war of extermination of whites," thereby inciting panic and fear in Oregon's population, and drumming up support for their colonial project of Indian removal. Whether one saw Indians as child-like or savage, or supported removal over extermination, Indians were a threat, and the Anglo-American elite used the possibility that Indians were set on exterminating the whites to justify their exclusion from the world they sought to create.[40]

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[39] McGhee, "Letter," *Oregonian*; "Indian Difficulties in Southern Oregon," *Oregonian*, September 13, 1853; "More Indian Difficulties in the South—Eight Men Killed—One Wounded!!" *Oregonian*, August 11, 1855; "Indian War—Latest News," *Oregonian*, October 13, 1855; *Oregonian*, March 29, 1856; "Indian War," *Oregonian*, October 20, 1855.

[40] See also, *Oregon Spectator*, July 3, 1851, August 26, 1851, January 6, 1852; September 16, 1854; *Oregon Statesman*, July 4, 1851, July 8, 1851, November 25, 1852, September 25, 1852, October 16, 1852, August 30, 1853, March 28, 1854, September 15, 1855, October 20, 1855, June 24, 1856; *Oregonian*, October 15, 1853, June 17, 1854, September 9, 1854, September 30, 1854, October 7, 1854, June 16, 1855, August 4, 1855, August 18, 1855, September 15, 1855, September 29, 1855, October 6, 155, November 10, 1855, January 12, 1856,February 15, 1856, May 10, 24, 1856, June 21, 1856, August 9, 1856, May 16, 1857, April 24, 1858, September 11, 1858, October 9, 23, 1858.

The most common tool of Anglo-American elites in constructing the Indian threat was to co-construct whites as the victims of Indian aggression. Public discourse put a large amount of effort into emphasizing that whites were only defending themselves and their families in the Indian wars, and that the wars were completely the Native's fault. The war was one of self-preservation for the whites. "There is no man," the *Oregonian* asserted, "acquainted with the facts but who will testify that the present Indian war in Oregon has been forced upon our citizens."[41] Whites were fighting for the safety of *their* country. An Oregonian, arguing for the creation of a volunteer force, stated that they were fighting, "because it was a war in defence of justice—in defence of virtue—in defence of honor."[42] It was a war of defence, against naturally hostile aggressors who were waging a war of extermination of whites. "A war of extermination against the whites was waged" in 1848, Samuel Thurston told Congress in 1850. Three years later, the *Oregonian* perpetuated rumors that the Indians were carrying on a war of extermination and that it was "generally believed to have arisen from a deep seated antipathy for the whites, and that they have premeditated an onslaught for years."[43] By positioning themselves as the victims, Anglo-Americans legitimized the governmental action against the Natives, and justified the wars.[44] White victimization highlighted the Indian threat.

The most effective tool for highlighting the Indian threat, however, came from publishing stories about, hinting at, and discussing the victimization of white women and

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[41] "Oregon Indian War—Its Cause, Management, and Probably Results," *Oregonian*, February 23, 1856.
[42] Oregon, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Statesman*, July 8, 1851.
[43] Thurston, "Letter from the Delegate of Oregon," *Oregon Spectator*; "Serious Indian Outbreak at Rogue River; Several Persons Killed," *Oregonian*, August 27, 1853.
[44] "Massacre at Waiilatpu," *Oregon Spectator*, January 20, 1848; "Indian Outrages," *Oregon Spectator*, June 20, 1851; "Startling News!" *Oregonian*, March 29, 1856; "More Indian Difficulties in the South!" *Oregonian*, August 11, 1855; "The War," *Oregonian*, April 12, 1856; "Indian War in Oregon," *Oregonian*, June 14, 1856; "Oregonians!" *Oregonian*, July 26, 1856; "Indian War," *Oregonian*, June 12, 1858.

children. The threat of danger to families challenged the very fabric of the society the Anglo-American male elite was trying to create. When women and children were victimized, it reflected poorly on the men who were supposed to protect them, and it also upset the gender system that was to organize Oregon society by removing one or more members of the familial whole. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, women and children obeyed the family head, and in return, could expect love and protection. The insult to a group that was supposed to be protected was felt keenly. The family was, after all, the heart of society, and public discourse called urgently for men to defend their homes and families: "let there be a means of defence provided even for the household heart; it may be necessary when it is too late."[45]

A subset of the theme of family victimization was the prevalence of rape imagery in the public discourse of the wars. Many of the reports and editorials mentioned the rape and murder of females. One woman in particular was apparently not only raped, but was also brutally tortured, along with children and two other women, one of whom was pregnant. On the first woman, "The marks of teeth were plainly implanted upon her left cheek, a hot piece of iron had been thrust into her private parts, doubtless whilst alive, to punish her for her resistance." The children were apparently burnt alive.[46] This story is a good example of how journalists used the victimization of women and children to justify Indian removal, and to prove that they were the superior race. The woman in the correspondence fought valiantly and was punished violently "for her resistance, and their

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[45] "Organize Rifle Companies," *Oregon Spectator,* January 6, 1848; "The Massacre at Waiilatpu," *Oregon Spectator*, January 20, 1848; Thurston, "Letter of the Delegate from Oregon," *Oregon Spectator*, September 17, 1850; Oregon, "Letter," *Oregon Statesman,* July 8, 1851; "More Indian Barbarity and Murders," *Oregonian*, September 16, 1854; "Indian War," *Oregonian*, October 20, 1855; "From the War South," *Oregonian*, February 9, 1856; "The Indian War," *Oregonian*, March 8, 1856.
[46] John F. Noble, "Fort Boise Massacre," *Oregonian*, September 23, 1854.

being unable to accomplish their *hellish ends* upon *one so young* [emphasis in the original]." The details of the story were exceptionally brutal, and the editor justified his printing it by stating: "After near two months of have elapsed since the most inhuman butchery, rapine, and wholesale murder of men, women and children, the people are officially called upon to wait the *ipse dixit* of those whom chance have placed in authority."[47] The best way to position a racial group as a threat, was to insinuate or prove that white women and children were in danger from that group. By justifying their claims to authority and the land through positioning Natives as inferior and dangerous, by racializing the Indians as non-white and by making whites the victims, the Anglo-American elite that controlled public discourse legitimized their racial claim to authority.

Keeping Blacks Out

The black population of Oregon Country was never very large. In 1850 there were only fifty-eight blacks in Oregon, in 1860 only 128.[48] Nevertheless the fear that blacks might want to make Oregon home drove the Anglo-American elite to wage a campaign against them in public discourse. This campaign was similar to, if not as violent as the one waged against Oregon's Native population. Part of the reason why it was not as violent was because every set of laws put into effect in Oregon, from the provisional government to statehood, legally barred both free blacks and slaves from living in and owning land in Oregon. Though the laws were not always enforced, they served as a sufficient deterrent to black immigration into Oregon. Newspapers spent much less time talking about blacks because they were few in number and there was no

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[47] Ibid; John F. Noble, "Fort Boise Massacre," *Oregonian*, September 23, 1854.
[48] Elizabeth McLagan, *A Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon, 1788-1940*, (Portland: Georgian Press Company, 1980), 17; Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier*, 76.

need to racialize them, since Oregonians already had solid racial concepts of blacks when they came to Oregon, whereas their racial concepts of Indians were fairly indistinct.[49]

Like the Natives, blacks were positioned in public discourse to be both racially inferior and, to a *much* lesser extent, a threat to a peaceful, smooth white lifestyle. The simplest answer for why Anglo-American elites positioned blacks like this was that their racial prejudices prevented them from being able to put blacks on the same level as themselves, with the same rights and privileges. Other threats blacks posed were to white labor, to intermarriage with white women, and to property ownership, although these were all secondary to the fact that white Oregonians were, on the whole, racist. White Oregonians were, mostly, anti-slavery, but they were even more anti free black. Blacks, as far as most white Oregonians were concerned, were known to be racially inferior to whites, particularly free blacks who existed in a sort of debased fashion. Freed blacks became "indolent, insolent, degraded and dishonest."[50] They were slothful and vice ridden, being incapable of accepting civilization to improve their condition. The highest social life blacks could ever achieve, according to the white press, was that of dependence. "The plain and inevitable deduction is this: That the Negro is a totally distinct and inferior animal or species of animal from the Caucasian...that the Negro is intended by nature for... dependence," claimed the *Statesman* through an article clipped from a Virginia newspaper.[51]

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[49] Lillian Schlissel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (New York: Schocken Books, 1982, 1992), 13.

[50] "Effects of Abolition," *Oregon Spectator*, December 24, 1853.

[51] "The African Race," from *Richmond Examiner* in *Oregon Statesman*, June 13, 1851; "Peculiarities of the Colored Race," from a New York Paper in *Oregon Statesman* September 1, 1855; "On Negroes," from *The Express* in *Oregon Statesman*, October 21, 1856; "Free Negroes," *Oregon Statesman,* November 9, 1858; "The Blacks in the West Indies," *Oregonian*, March 5, 1853; "Primus the Slave and Primus the Freeman," *Oregonian*, March 12, 1853.

The details of racial attitudes could differ slightly. While Bush of the *Statesman* was extremely anti free black, Dryer of the *Oregonian* expressed some leniency in his attitude toward free blacks, which opened him up to insult from his opponent. Dryer felt that the vast majority of free blacks were just as described above. However, he also argued that "The word 'persons' as used in the constitution, is not intended to be applied always to white people," and that blacks, bonded or free should be allowed in Oregon if they, "by education, habits and qualifications, have become voters in other states."[52] Bush reacted in a scathing manner, conveying the feeling of many white Oregonians on the subject (as judged by the 1857 vote that was overwhelmingly against allowing free blacks in Oregon) when he replied, "there is no State in the Union where Negroes are made voters in consequence of 'education, habits and qualifications.'" The implication was that blacks were incapable of such things.[53]

If free blacks were inferior and incapable of civilization then slaves were only slightly better. Much of the discussion of race with regard to slaves occurred in the context of the debate over whether Oregon would be a free or slave state that took place between 1855 and 1858. Much of the Anglo-American elite considered slavery to be a good and important institution that domesticated, civilized, and improved blacks, as much as they could be improved, and who could not benefit from freedom. Thus the discussion of slavery revolved around economic implications rather than moral ones. Dryer, who was anti-slavery completely, mourned over the lack of moral considerations displayed by white Oregonians with regard to slavery. Slavery was thought by most to be potentially damaging for Oregon's economy, being incompatible with the climate and people in

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[52] "The Dred Scott Decision," *Oregonian*, July 25, 1857; "Readers! Let us Stop and Think," *Oregonian*, April 26, 1856.
[53] "Another Platform—The Oregonian in Favor of Nigger Suffrage," *Oregon Statesman*, May 6, 1856.

Oregon. Others were concerned with slaves as property, worrying that if Oregon were a free state, whites would lose valuable property in slaves. But Oregonians expressed their desire early in the Territorial period: "[Thurston] said the people of Oregon were not pro-slavery men, nor were they pro-negroe [sic] men."[54] The provisional and territorial governments legislated against slavery in Oregon. In fact, Judge Williams, the head of the judiciary for the territory, ruled against a white farmer in a custody battle involving former slaves, Nathaniel and Polly Holmes. The Holmes sued their former master for custody of their children, as he had kept them even after freeing Nathaniel and Polly. The judge ruled that since slavery did not technically exist in Oregon, the white farmer had no right to keep his former slaves' children away from their parents, as slaves. The interesting thing about this case, Holmes vs. Ford, with regard to public discourse, is that the *Statesman* took the side of the free blacks, stating: "Difference of color does not destroy parental power and authority in this Territory.... [the] petitioner has the same right to his children that the respondent has to his." Now this is obviously paraphrasing the judge, but in this case the editor chose to emphasize parental (paternal) power over racial power, whereas most books that discuss the case focus either on the agency of the black parents or on Judge Williams' ruling that the non-existence of slavery precluded the Holmes children remaining slaves.[55] With the exception of one small article in the

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[54] "Extract from the Editorial correspondence of the *Westfield Spectator*," *Oregon Spectator*, August 22, 1850.

[55] This is not to erase the agency of the parents in bringing the case before an Oregon court. Nathaniel and Polly Ford fought both their former master and the Justice system to regain their children. However, from the perspective of the Anglo-American elite, which is the central concern of this thesis, it was Judge Williams' agreeing to take the case that finally solved it. Mr. And Mrs. Ford fought for years to get their case tried, but former Oregon justices ignored the case. Further, Judge Williams was *not* anti-slavery and not an abolitionist, and did not necessarily sympathize with the parents. His judgment was based on a strict interpretation of the law. "Negro Fidelity," from *N.O. Delta* in *Oregon Statesman*, May 16, 1851; B. Robinson, "State Constitution," June 21, 1857; *Oregon Statesman*, May 13, 1856; "On Negroes," from *The Express*, in *Oregon Stateman*, October 21, 1856; "Slavery in th Territories," *Oregon Statesman*, May 30,

Statesman, the case went largely unnoticed in Oregon's three main newspapers. It is strange, however, given the prejudice against blacks that the editors had, that none of them seemed to have a problem with a black man suing a white man in the first place.

Anglo-American elites' attitudes toward blacks were largely paternalistic, believing that blacks should remain in a state of dependence, as demonstrated above. Like the Indian, they were in need of white guidance because of their racial inferiority. But, while some strongly believed the Indians needed a violent hand to guide them, blacks in Oregon posed much less of a threat to the white elite. Public discourse did not completely ignore this aspect, however. The threat of blacks was not physical like the Indian, but rather was secondary, falling into two areas: collusion with the Indians, and labor. Thurston, in 1850, felt the law against black immigration into Oregon was the best protection Oregonians had against black encouragement of Indian violence. Blacks, in his opinion, being better acquainted with white language and custom, could cause the Natives to become more formidable, which in turn would cause "long, bloody wars." This fear of blacks' colluding with Natives seemed proved by several instances when blacks were thought either purposely to be causing problems with the Indians, or actively supplying them with guns and ammunition.[56] Only free blacks could possibly conspire with the Natives, and in the view of anti-slavery advocates, only slaves could be a threat to white labor interests. According to the *Oregonian*, allowing slavery to exist in Oregon would reduce free white laborers essentially to "Russian serfdom," as slave labor

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1857; J.W. Mack, "[A response to] State Constitution," *Oregon Statesman*, August 18, 1857; *Oregonian*, July 4, 25, 1857; "Free and Slave Labor Statistics," *Oregonian*, November 7, 1857; "The Negro Case: Robert Holmes vs. Nathaniel Ford—Habus Corpus," *Oregon Statesman*, July 26, 1853; Taylor, *In Search of a Racial Frontier*, 77; Dodds, *Oregon*, 98; Johnson, *Frontier Politics*, 22.

[56] Thurston, "Letter of the Delegate from Oregon," *Oregon Statesman*, September 17, 1850; "Indian Murders in the South," *Oregonian*, August 15, 1855; McLagen, *A Peculiar Paradise*, 24.

degraded free labor.[57] On the whole, however, the Anglo-American male elite was far more concerned with the threat of Indians, than with the numerically inconsequential blacks. It seems, from an examination of the press discourse, that the white men who ran Oregon felt that it was enough to characterize blacks as inferior and occasionally to lump them in with Indians, to get their point across that blacks were not welcome in their white society.

Conclusion

The fascinating thing about studying race in the public discourse of territorial Oregon is that the discourse and the reality overlapped in ways easily visible in law and numbers. The Anglo-American elite largely got the racial society for which they hoped. By 1860, much of the region's Native population had been removed from white settlement areas and confined to reservations. They had successfully removed "mixed-race Indians" from the definition of white and stripped them of their citizenship and property rights. Further, they managed to write whiteness as a condition to land ownership, and thus power, into the State Constitution. Under the State Constitution, all men were equal in rights, but only if they were defined as white, which over the territorial period had come to be a narrow definition. Section 6 of Article II denied the right of suffrage to blacks, Chinese and mulattos, while Section 35 of Article I and Section 8 of Article XV stipulated that the same groups did not have the right to hold land in Oregon, and blacks and mulattos were not even allowed to reside there.[58] Hawaiians and Chinese were essentially invisible in the discourse of newspapers for the period. In 1850, Thurston expressed concern that there were many Hawaiians in the country, but this

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[57] "Bush and Slavery," *Oregonian*, March 7, 1857.
[58] "State Constitution," *Oregon Statesman*, September 29, 1857.

concern seemed to have disappeared by the end of the decade. Official numbers, though problematic, suggest that Oregon in 1860 looked like the idyllic society white elites desired. They had successfully positioned themselves as the superior race, deserving of the land and rights of citizenship, while Indians and blacks were pushed out and defined as negative others who were feminized, child-like and in need of protection. Anglo-Americans by 1860 had largely accomplished their main goal: the colonization of Oregon Country.[59]

[59] *Population of the United States in 1860 Compiled from the Original Returns of the 8th Census*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 400-405. http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial1860.html (Accessed 9 June 2011); Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise*, 82.

Chapter 2:
The Gendered Hierarchy

"The foundation of domestic happiness is faith in the virtue of woman. The foundation of political happiness is confidence in the integrity of man."
~*Oregon Spectator*, December 10, 1846[1]

As early Oregonians had clear beliefs about and intentions toward racialized others, so too did they possess clearly marked ideas about gender and what kind of gender system was crucial to their ideal society. Whiteness was crucial to the colonial power structure forming in Oregon Territory, but so too was masculinity. Although, masculinity as a prerequisite to political and economic power was common everywhere in the United States, the male Anglo-American elite in Oregon still felt it necessary to reinforce through discourse a gendered power structure that emphasized white patriarchal male power. The system they devised, however, was more complicated than a simple "men over women" conception of gendered power. Ideas about gender were also a key to understanding how men organized power amongst themselves. Thus, the ideal society created by the Anglo-American elite, through the pages of their newspapers, was a society in which some men embodied ideal masculine traits better than others, and thus were more deserving of power. Women, when they minded their place, were crucial to the stability of society. Women were necessary, both to society, and to the demarcation of the gender hierarchy.

As with any colonial society, ideas traveled with the people who founded the colony. Oregon was no different. Oregon settlers came largely from the Midwest and New England, and they brought with them ideas about gender and how it should affect their lives. There is some debate among scholars about whether or not eastern and

[1] "Happiness," *Oregon Spectator*, December 10, 1846.

midwestern gender ideals broke down on the trail to Oregon, or not. Sandra Myres argued that trail and frontier conditions undermined the separate worlds of men and women, while Julie Roy Jeffery, John Mack Faragher and Robert Griswold argued instead, that men and women, despite the changing circumstances of their lives, clung to their gender ideologies to validate and give meaning to their unstable lives. Faragher also suggested that while some gender roles did change on the trail due to necessity, they were also reinforced when families arrived in Oregon.[2] I would suggest, judging from the discursive evidence from territorial Oregon, that whether or not trail conditions blurred gender distinctions is not as important as whether or not emigrants *thought* the gender distinctions were being blurred. That the Anglo-American elite in Oregon sought to distinguish gender roles and traits at least suggests the possibility of perceived instability of gender categories, as well as the assumption that the gender ideology they brought with them was right and proper. It was clear either way that the ideology of "domesticity" as an elite and urban ideology was impractical and unrealistic for the rural farming class in Oregon, just as it was for their counterparts further east. Oregonians in the 1850s cherry-picked parts of domestic ideology, modifying the major themes to emphasize traits that were highly useful in a rural, colonial environment. By doing this, the Anglo-American male elite was able to outline and reinforce its own power.

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[2] William Bowen, *The Willamette Valley: Migration and Settlement on the Oregon Frontier* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 54; Julie Roy Jeffery *Frontier women: "Civilizing" the West? 1840-1880* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997), 6, 24, 33, 69; John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, 2001), 87-88; Sandra Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800-1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 7; Robert Griswold, "Anglo Women and Domestic Ideology in the American West in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*, eds. Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz and Janice Monk (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 16-18; Lillian Schlissel, "Introduction," *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*, eds. Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz and Janice Monk (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988)1-7; Albert Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 45-74; Elizabeth Jameson, "Women as Workers, Women as Civilizers: True Womanhood in the American West," *Frontiers* 7, no. 3 (1984): 1-8.

In the realm of understandings of gender, male and female were discursive opposites. The two sexes constantly took on opposite character traits. "Man was made to lead, and woman to follow," declared one article, while another asserted, "*Man* [was] formed to rule, and *woman* to depend [emphasis in the original]."[3] Oregonians used the discursively opposite sexes to define gender attributes, thus making both genders necessary to their hierarchy. Thus, womanly characteristics in men, and manly characteristics in women became important character flaws that were grounds for political ruination for men, and social ruination for women (and the men who represented them, or who were supposed to control them). Definitions of gender, however, were further complicated by the fact that while gender, like race, partially depended on an "other," each gender also had traits that were independent of its other. For example, the ideal male trait of honesty did not depend on the idea of females being dishonest; likewise, the ideal trait of female industry did not depend on male laziness. Both traits were considered desired in both gender ideals, indicating that there was always some level of fluidity in understandings of gender. Elite males in Oregon had clearly demarcated categories of gender, which were based on the perceived characteristics, attributes and roles of the two sexes. These categories of gender, and the hierarchy they constructed, were to be the organizing structure of power in the ideal white patriarchal Oregon.

Constructing Manhood: Men in the Gender Hierarchy

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[3] "Allany D [rest unreadable]," *Oregon Statesman*, November 11, 1851; Mrs. M.J. Bailey, "Women's Rights," *Oregon Spectator*, June 9, 1854; T.S. Arthur, "Women's Rights," *Oregon Spectator*, July 21, 1854; "Reason and Rectitude – Male and Female," *Oregon Spectator*, September 9, 1854; "Oregon Riflemen—Immigration," *Oregon Spectator*, September 21, 1848.

The Anglo-American elites that controlled Oregon in the territorial period, both in public discourse and in political reality, were acutely aware of how gender, politics and power came together. Gender coding underlay many editorials and letters, and gender was an effective legitimizing and de-legitimizing tool for the white males who are at the center of this study. This is perhaps why there is more evidence regarding male gender ideals than female gender ideals. There were many prescriptive articles addressed to young men, or about proper masculinity, but there were even more editorials, letters and articles written by or about editors and other elite males that were filled with hints about the hierarchy of manhood as Anglo-American Oregonians understood it. This is likely because, as Joan Scott argued, gender is one of the ways humans give meaning to the world; it becomes a subconscious conceptual filter through which all reality is ordered. It thus underlies writing and discourse.[4] As well, men controlled the public discourse and made up the vast majority of writers in Oregon's newspapers. It makes sense, then, that there would be more material about male gender, since men were writing to and about other men. Men already dominated women, it was other men they sought to rank themselves against.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, racial considerations underpinned gender ideals. Non-whites were disqualified from possessing true manhood. The two non-white groups with whom Oregonians were most concerned possessed racial traits that made them unable to aspire to the character traits the defined the ideal man. Indians, for example, were constructed as essentially the opposite of an ideal man. The traits that endowed a white man with manhood (for example, honesty, integrity, courage,

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[4] Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, 1999), 2, 6-7.

independence etcetera)[5] were considered impossible for Natives because their racial traits (dishonesty, cowardice, dependence, etc.) precluded the positive manly characteristics that defined the ideal man. Any positive characteristics Native men possessed (for example they could be brave and strong) were cancelled out by their inherent negative "racial" traits. Thus, the foundation of ideological masculinity was whiteness. With this understanding, Anglo-American elites constructed an ideology of manhood based on dichotomized definitions of good and bad men, creating a hierarchy of manhood in public discourse. They then used this ideological hierarchy as a tool to validate who should be in power, and who should be excluded, amongst the white male elite in Oregon.

There is a solid foundation for the study of masculinity in the nineteenth-century United States. Historians have examined prescriptive ideologies of manhood, and how they changed over the course of the century. Anthony Rotundo noted that out of the Revolution came a change in masculinity ideals, and "self-made manhood" came into fashion. Closely associated with the rise of the market economy and the middle class, ideal manhood was closely tied to a man's work role and his own achievements. Ambition, reason and independence were the hallmarks of this masculinity. Late in the century ideals shifted and "passionate manhood" came to the forefront. "Passionate manhood" stretched existing beliefs about "self-made manhood," and toughness, competitiveness, and physical strength were added to the list of positive attributes. A man's identity was to come from not only his work, but his leisure as well.[6] Amy Greenberg identified two competing prescriptive masculinities for nineteenth-century

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[5] These traits, and what makes an ideal white man, will be discussed in further detail below.

[6] E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 1, 2-6, 20, 22; Laura McCall, "Introduction," in *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West*, eds. Matthew Basso, Laura McCall, and Dee Garceau (New York: Routledge, 2001), 2, 6-7, 13.

America. They were "restrained manhood" and "martial manhood." "Restrained manhood" grounded a man's identity in his family and his work, and supported the traits of moral uprightness, reliability and bravery. "Martial manhood" extolled physical strength, aggression and male leisure activities like drinking.[7] Thus, the secondary literature points to several prescriptive masculinities that were active in the United States during the nineteenth century, ever shifting and non-concrete. These historians were examining much of the same literature that appears here, except in different contexts. Male gender prescriptions in Oregon reflected their more eastern counterparts, but territorial Oregon also supplies historians with a historically and regionally specific example of how people took existing gender prescriptions and modified them. The ideal masculinity that existed in Oregon was a blend of the different masculinities studied by the above historians.

Oregonians, for the most part, espoused a very democratic view of manhood. Most believed, ideologically, that a white man made himself what he was and that his birth did not matter. "Examine not the pedigree nor patrimony of a good man," so the attitude was.[8] White men were, at their base, inherently equal. What made them unequal was their "moral capital." One author wrote, in an article selected for the *Spectator*, "[T]here is a moral capital which [young men] can have, that will weigh as much as money with those people whose opinion is worth having. It consists in truth, honesty and integrity....decision, courage and perseverance."[9] A man's moral capital was thus a set of traits he possessed that made him a "manly" (good) man. Out of the many editorials,

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[7] Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9-13; Richard Stott, *Jolly Fellows: Male Milieus in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).
[8] *Oregonian*, July 26, 1851.
[9] "Capital for the Young," from *New York Organ* in *Oregon Spectator*, January 6, 1855.

letters and prescriptive literature tracts, three main sets of traits, as well as numerous secondary traits could be distilled, based on language (word use) and overall theme of the piece, then roughly counted to determine which traits were the most important based on number of times they appeared. The central traits of masculinity were honesty and integrity, courage and strength, firmness and honor. There were a myriad of secondary character traits that also endowed men with a superior sense of manhood, traits like sobriety, intelligence, modesty, kindness and generosity – characteristics that made good human beings in general.

The highest measures of manhood were honesty and integrity, and these were the most common traits maligned when attempting to discredit an opponent. "Truth and honesty...should be to all young men, daily bread and constant apparel," declared one article.[10] Honesty was a virtue that surpassed education and wealth – in short the things possessed by more highly situated men. "There is nothing possible to man which industry and integrity will not accomplish," and "the little finger of an honest and upright young man is worth more than the whole body of an effeminate and dishonest rich man."[11] Clearly here, there was a conflation of dishonesty, luxury, and femininity, hinting that men were supposed to be more naturally honest than women. Honesty and integrity were the most highly valued political traits, even though the politicians who made up the Anglo-American elite often fell short, and dishonesty was a constant accusation. In short, a man in possession of "true" manhood should always also possess honesty and integrity since a dishonest man was by definition unmanly and effeminate.[12]

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[10] "Truth and Honesty," *Oregon Spectator*, November 30, 1855.
[11] "Honesty and Integrity," *Oregon Spectator*, June 15, 1848.
[12] Metropolis, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Statesman*, August 28, 1852; "Getting Out of Soap," *Oregon Statesman*, March 6, 1853; "The Nobility of Labor," from *The Anderson Gazette* in *Oregonian*, September

Closely associated with honesty and integrity was honor. Honor was an often murky concept that combined character trait and action: "virtue and honor are inseparable companions... Honor but being the reflection of a man's own action."[13] It was defined differently by different people, even within the same year of the same newspaper. In March of 1854, the *Spectator* reprinted an article from the *Home Gazette* that defined honor as being intimately tied with intelligence. In May, the *Spectator* selected an article from *Addison* which said, "The great point of Honor in Men is Courage [sic]."[14] In other places, honor was defined by men's treatment of women. "The respect and reverential love of womankind," set apart the honorable man from the vulgar, shameful man. One woman wrote, "there is a glow of generous feeling toward women in the hearts of most American men, which is highly honorable to them...as individuals."[15] Despite the fact that honor as a character trait was ill-defined in the public discourse, it was inherently understood as important, because it was centered around action and others' perception of that action. Honor, according to David Courtwright, can be defined as "a system of beliefs in which a man has exactly as much worth as others confer upon him," and this is a generally useful concept for dealing with how Oregonians understood honor, though worth, of course, could be conferred by other things, such as money.[16] However, honor

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23, 1854; "Truth and Honesty," *Oregon Spectator*, November 30, 1855; *Oregon Spectator*, April 10, 1851, May 8th, 1851, July 21, 1854, January 11, 1855; *Oregon Statesman*,, March 28, 1854, April 21, 1857; *Oregonian,* February 21, 1852, April 30, 1853, November 22, 1856.

[13] "Honor," *Oregonian*, May 28, 1853; "The "Hero of Encaracion," and the Violation of his Parole of Honor," *Oregon Statesman*, June 1, 1853.

[14] "The Dignity of Man," from the *Home Gazette* in *Oregon Spectator*, March 10, 1854; "Honor," from *Addison* in *Oregon Spectator*, May 28, 1854.

[15] *Oregon Statesman*, May 19, 1855; Miss Cooper, "Women," from 'Rural House,' in *Oregon Spectator*, August 4, 1854.

[16] David T. Courtwright, *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996) 28; Jesse Applegate, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, April 21, 1851; "Women among the Ancient Scandinavians," from *Arthur's Home Gazette* in *Oregon Spectator,* December 16, 1851; "Gen. Lane and his Assailants," *Oregon Statesman*, May 14, 1853; B.P. Shillaber, "The Fatal Kills," *Oregonian*, May 16, 1857.

meant different things in different cultural and historical contexts. What honor meant to colonial New Mexicans was vastly different than what it meant to Oregonians.[17] Honor, for territorial Oregonians, was synonymous with manhood that was conferred by others – in other words, honor was the external dimension of manhood.

Courage, strength, and firmness can be grouped together due to their similar meanings. According to the ideology, a man could not do anything worth doing without these traits. "The fact is," the *Spectator* asserted, "that in order to do anything in the world worth doing," and to make a mark on the world, "we must not stand shivering on the bank... but jump in and scramble through as well as we can." A man must have the courage to jump and the strength and firmness to continue on when things got difficult. *Waverly Magazine*, printed in the *Statesman* put it another way: "We heartily abominate this turning backward, this wearying and fainting of soul and purpose... It bespeaks imbecility of mind, want of character, courage, [and] true manliness."[18] Courage and firmness proved a man's worth. The Anglo-American elite understood firmness as "firmness of character," which was defined in opposition to female weakness and wavering. "There are three kinds of men in this world—the "Wills," the "Won'ts," and the "Can'ts," summarized an article in the *Oregonian*. "The former effect everything, the other oppose everything, and the latter fail in everything."[19] Since men were considered the "doers" of society, and moved in the public sphere, courage, strength and firmness were necessary attributes for a man of worthy manhood. Physical strength played an

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[17] Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).
[18] "Evils of Timidity," *Oregon Spectator,* November 14, 1850; "Carry a Thing Through," from *Waverly Magazine* from *Oregon Statesman*, March 21, 1851; *Oregon Spectator*, May 12, 1854; *Oregon Statesman*, June 6, 1851, February 2, 1852; *Oregonian*, May 28, 1853, December 27, 1856.
[19] *Oregonian*, March 19, 1853.

almost invisible role in Oregon's public discourse. It was hinted that the physical strength and body were valued, but there was much more value placed on emotional and inner strength.[20] This is likely due to the fact that those creating and controlling the discourse were more cerebral than physical – they were writers and politicians who played at farming, not adventurers or laborers.

The last central trait of ideal manhood, as outlined by Oregon's public discourse, was independence. Independence was the most practically important characteristic, since it could be physically and economically quantified through physical age and economic status, and had many layers of meaning. At its most basic level it was a simple, and natural, character trait of a masculine man. "[I]ndividuals in a state of nature, are equal and independent," wrote President Millard Fillmore in a message to the Senate and House of Representatives. Decision of character, wrote another, would "enable [a man] to be what he ought to be[:] 'a fearless, independent man.'"[21] On another level, independence as a masculine trait was the opposite of feminine dependence. "Masculine independence of mind I hold to be in reality the first requisite for the formation of a character of real manly worth," an article in the *Statesman* stated. Women were thought to be naturally in a state of dependence, since they were easily carried away by their emotions and weaknesses. Thus, a "man who suffers himself to be deceived and carried away by his own weakness...cannot be called a good man." Women were supposed to look to men for firmness and independence and so a man who failed in this aspect, "should not find

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[20] "Death in the Eye: Or, The Duel on Horseback," *Oregon Statesman*, April 14, 1851.

[21] Milliard Fillmore, "President's Message *to Fellow-Citizens of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives*," *Oregon Spectator*, February 6, 1851; Samuel M'Nutt, "Decision of Character," *Oregon Spectator*, February 10, 1848; "Dried Up," *Oregon Statesman*, October 24, 1854; Zebedee, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian*, April 30, 1853; "Bill of Rights. As Adopted in Committee of the Whole—in Convention, September 11, 1849," *Oregon Spectator*, November 29, 1849; "Oregon," *Oregon Statesman*, September 18, 1852.

favor in the eyes of a woman; for a truly...feminine nature should be attracted only by what is highest and noblest in the character of a man."[22] Men had to be independent, economically and morally, because women and their families were dependent on them.

The last level of independence was tied to age. The Anglo-American elite filled the newspapers with advice articles addressed to young men, as well as articles about the folly of youth. Age was a crucial dynamic of manhood. Young men passed from the dependent stage of their childhood into the independence of manhood, and independence symbolized the final ascent. When a young man was fully independent of his parents, he was assumed to be a man. It was believed the average age males achieved much of this independence was between eighteen and twenty-one, which was why young men could claim land at eighteen and vote at twenty-one. Until this age bracket young men, because of their inexperience and youth, were "incapable [of] intelligently perform[ing] and exercis[ing] the duties and privileges that pertain to manhood."[23]

Young men were thought to be rash and more prone to inappropriate, damaging behavior than more mature men. As one Oregonian wrote insultingly of the *Statesman*'s editor, who was then twenty-eight, "The word 'minor' is in order, which means that you are *minus* mind, morals, measure, modesty and manhood." This is of course exaggerating the negative character traits of youths, but demonstrates the age dynamic in constructions of manhood. The article referred to Bush as a "precocious youth" and implied that the *Statesman* editor was indulging in the frivolity of youth. Young men were considered

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[22] "Masculine Independence," *Oregon Statesman*, July 7, 1855; Mrs. M.J. Bailey, "Woman's Rights," *Oregon Spectator*, June 9, 1854; "Woman's Rights," from *Enquierer* in *Oregonian*, January 10, 1852; Charles Chestnut, "Why it Was," *Oregonian*, November 22, 1856.

[23] "To the People of Oregon," *Oregon Statesman*, October 28, 1851; "Opposition to Young Men," from *Exchange, Oregon Statesman*, March 9, 1852; "Hints for Young Men," *Oregon Spectator,* December 28, 1848; Rev. E. P. Rogers, "Integrity," from *Worth of a Good Character. An Address* in *Oregon Spectator,* July 21, 1854.

more at risk to take part in socially unacceptable behaviors such as gambling, swearing and violence.[24]

With greater age came experience, maturity and manhood, but the final seal in the life cycle transition to full manhood was marriage. Men's gendered identity depended far less on their marital status than women's did, but marriage was still an important dynamic. "Feel the disgusting position you occupy in the cabbage garden of humanity," one author wrote about bachelors. He continued, "Now just reform...visit the girls...propose, get accepted, marry, and the country will rely on you as a faithful and well-disposed citizen."[25] As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, marriage meant a man's evolution to household head, which symbolized his transition into a full position of power.[26]

The hierarchy of manhood that was a tool used in power relations between the Anglo-American elites would be incomplete without an examination of character traits that made for a less manly male. As discussed above, age was an important factor: boys and some young men were incapable of true manhood because their age precluded their possessing vital characteristics. Age was not necessarily literal, and the meanings of a given age scaled with manly characteristics. Most manly characteristics were continuums in which dichotomous opposites occupied each end of the spectrum and a man could exist on any point on the continuum, with the more highly valued males on the good side. For example, in honesty vs. dishonesty, the better men inhabited the honesty side of the

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[24] L. Whitcomb, "For the Oregonian, letter to Mr. Bush," *Oregonian*, May 13, 1852; "Think First and Act Afterwards," *Oregon Statesman*, November 21, 1854; "Young men," *Oregon Spectator*, September 16, 1854; "Hark Ye," from *Waterville Mail* in *Oregon Spectator*, July 3, 1851; "Plain Talk," *Oregon Statesman*, August 19, 1856.

[25] "Bachelors," *Oregonian*, October 13, 1852.

[26] Degraded manhood caused by advanced age was far less common theme in the public discourse, and only came up when the various figures involved in Oregon's public discourse were insulting each other. That will be discussed in the last part of this section.

spectrum, while the less manly were on the dishonest side. The same goes for courage/cowardice, strength/weakness, firmness/timidity, etc. This idea was fairly well summarized in an article selected from an eastern newspaper in the *Statesman.* "There are certain individuals who render themselves contemptible, if not odious, in the estimation of the manly and generous," the article stated. "They are constantly engaged in sneaking, unworthy and discreditable actions... They disregard conscience, violate honor, [and] perpetuate falsehood." These men were clearly the opposite of honest, firm, honorable and sober men of good, manly character. These men, like the *Statesman's* political opponents, who were apparently similar in that editor's view, were "lost to true manhood."[27]

Closely aligned with the dichotomous character traits outlined above were negative traits such as ignorance, arrogance, conceit, and selfishness – that is, characteristics negative in both sexes. Finally, men who appeared to be physically feminized were emasculated in discourse, although like their opposite, physically imposing, manly men, feminized men were rare. One article asserted that women did not care for "pretty men" who were too soft and lacked a cultivated mind. Another story placed the two types of men in parallel with one another, so as to highlight positive versus negative traits. The physically more masculine male "appeared to surpass all other men ...in strength...[and was] a giant in stature, a gladiator in practice, [and] a fiend in courage." The other, feminine, male had "long hair of a bright golden color, waiving

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[27] "The Little Meannesses of Life," from *Pennsylvania Enquirer* in *Oregon Spectator*, September 12, 1854; M'Nutt, "Decision of Character," *Oregon Spectator*, February 10, 1848; "Thoughts For Those Who Think," *Oregon Spectator*, November 9, 1848; A.E. Wait, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, March 13, 1851; [Author Unreadable] "Last Struggles of Federalism in Oregon," *Oregon Statesman*, January 27, 1852; A City-zen, "Men and Things," *Oregonian*, September 13, 1851; "Is there a Crisis?" *Oregonian*, January 20, 1855; Philemon, "Letter from Fort Henrietta, Umatilla Valley," *Oregonian*, December 1, 1855.

[sic] in curls around his shoulders, and a sweet smile of complacent vanity beaming on his features" that "gave him an aspect almost ludicrously feminine." The lesser of the two men was gazed upon with "ineffable contempt."[28]

Critical to the elite Oregonian's concept of ideal manhood was the democratized idea of the value of labor. Laziness was shunned, while labor was valorized so as to project the image that anyone could be middle class as long as he or she espoused the proper lifestyle and character attributes. Within the ideological discourse, industry and the nobility of labor become linked to ideal manhood. "[A]ll that is useful, luxurious, or beautiful on this earth... has been wrought out by human hands. Much of it too, at a painful cost to human hearts, far most sensitive of the real dignity of manhood, than the most bedizened and perfumed of the scorners of labor," wrote one man of men. Another article advised: "To sigh or repine over the lack of inheritance, is unmanly. Every man should strive to be a creator instead of an inheritor." Labor alone could guarantee honesty, virtue and greatness, since it "strengthens the physical constitution; it gives power to the mind; it ennobles the feelings; and makes great men and good citizens."[29] Laziness, on the contrary was damaging to manhood, and to society. "You call yourself a man,... and yet allow yourself to be deprived of all the happiness that can be obtained in this world, just because you are lazy?" one article asked. A man failed to obtain independence, or stature in life if he were lazy. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "In the

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[28] "Death in the Eye: Or, The Duel on Horseback," *Oregon Statesman*, April 4, 1851; [Author Unreadable], "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian*, January 12, 1856.

[29] Junius, "Dignity of Labor," *Oregon Spectator*, November 15, 1849; "How to Make a Fortune," *Oregon Statesman*, August 14, 1852; "The Nobility of Labor," from *Anderson Gazette* in *Oregonian*, September 23, 1854; "Labor," *Oregon Spectator*, September 21, 1848; "Industry and Integrity," *Oregon Spectator*, June 15, 1848; N. Scott, "The Choice; Virtue and Vice Contrasted," *Oregon Statesman*, April 6, 1852; Carlos D. Stuart, "Prize Article on Labor: Labor—Its wants Interests and Duties," *Oregon Stateman*, April 17, 1855; "Labor The Real Wealth of A Nation," *Oregon Statesman*, December 1, 1855; "Providence Prospers Honesty," *Oregonian*, September 11, 1852; "The Mechanic," from *Cincinnati Citizen* in *Oregonian*, October 13, 1852.

present day of steam and punctuality, the lazy man, no matter how extraordinary his acquirements, must always fall behind in the race of human life."[30] The ideal manhood as it pertained to labor existed in a balance between over-work and laziness. The ideal complete man both played and worked, thus rounding out his manhood and character.[31]

By making labor a requisite characteristic of manhood, the Anglo-American elites in Oregon promoted the underlying idea that being middle class was not based on wealth, but on social values – or "moral capital." People were middle class because they acted middle class and believed they were middle class. Wealth would inevitably follow. Closely tied to this was the myth of the "American dream," which stated that if one worked hard enough and long enough, material wealth would follow. This was the central message behind linking manhood and labor.[32] By arguing that labor was an essential element of manhood, that labor would eventually mean wealth, and that being middle class meant possessing certain traits and living by them, the Anglo-American elite implied that if one espoused the values of proper masculinity, and lived as if one were middle class, one would obtain material returns. That was not to say that the editors did not recognize the value of money, but it was in their interests to propagate a democratized ideology that made everyone feel valued and equal. By doing so, the Anglo-American elite, who were more materially wealthy than the majority of Oregon farmers, could mask the class reality in Oregon, bolster their own power, and create stability. Thus, in their ideal society there would be no social unrest because everyone had the chance to obtain

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[30] "You are Lazy, are You?" *Oregon Spectator*, October 7, 1854; Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Energy, the True Mark of Genius," *Oregon Statesman*, December 4, 1852; "The Goodness of Gardening," from *Rural Haven* in *Oregonian*, April 15, 1854; Good Rules for All," *Oregon Statesman*, May 26, 1857,

[31] "Laziness and Overwork," from *Newark Advertiser* in *Oregon Statesman*, April 8, 1856.

[32] Samuel H. Thurston, "Address of Hon. Samuel H. Thurston cont.," *Oregon Spectator*, October 3, 1850; "To Mechanics," from *Scientific American* in *Oregon Statesman*, January 15, 1853; "True Social Dignity," from *Home Gazette* in *Oregon Statesman*, July 15, 1851.

their class aspirations and if they were not well off it was, by definition, because they were lazy.

The last essential dynamic of male gender ideology in territorial Oregon was the link between citizenship and manhood. In exchange for the privileges of political citizenship[33], conferred only to men, and thus explicitly gendered, men above the age of eighteen had a duty to the territory and the nation. According to the first Territorial Delegate, all men owed "a moral duty to their state." President Fillmore went further, declaring that men possessed rights and owed duties that were "binding in morals, in conscience, and in honor."[34] The main duties men owed in Oregon due to their citizenship were two days of road work a year, and militia duty. Militia duty especially was tied closely with masculinity, because being in the militia meant protecting the women and children of Oregon. Thus, militia duty was constructed as a patriotic, manly endeavor, and those who opted out were ridiculed. Militia duty was "manly, brave and patriotic." In a letter to militiamen expressing their gratitude, a number of Oregon ladies wrote, "We never can, and never will, bestow our confidence upon a man who has neither the patriotism nor courage enough to defend his country and the girls—such a one would never have sufficient sense of obligation to defend and protect his WIFE [emphasis in the original]."[35] Civic duty, and the failure to perform it, highlighted the traits and actions of an ideal man. The ideal man not only possessed the character traits listed above, but was a civic and politically minded man who was aware of his rights and duties. He was

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[33] I use the term political citizenship to refer to white, male citizenship with the understanding that white women, as well as blacks were citizens, but the rights and duties of citizenship were defined differently by race, class and gender.

[34] Thurston, "Address of Hon. Samuel H. Thurston cont.," *Oregon Spectator*, October 3, 1850; Fillmore, "President's Message," *Oregon Spectator*, February 6, 1851.

[35] Mrs. N.M. Thornton, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, April 20, 1848; "Response by Young Ladies, to the Call of Capt. Maxon, for the Young Men in the Army," *Oregon Spectator,* April 20 1848.

affiliated with a political party, promoted its platform and ideals, and voted accordingly.[36] This manly citizen was rewarded not only with the political rights of male citizenship, but with land rights as well. In Oregon, land ownership was highly gendered, since only white men over eighteen could claim land under the Donation Land Act. Married women could claim land under their own names (single women could not), but since married women could not own land independently, women exercised no control over the land in their names, and land ownership thus remained a male endeavor. Citizenship and land ownership were theoretically egalitarian aspects of manhood in Oregon that reinforced the patriarchal gender hierarchy and further propagated the class ideals that maintained Anglo-American elite power.

To better understand how elites in territorial Oregon envisioned ideal manhood, it would be useful to examine a specific example of a man who, at least until the end of the 1850s, embodied all that was ideal Oregonian manhood. Joseph Lane was a hero of the Mexican-American War and one of the most prominent politicians in Oregon during the 1850s and 1860s. He served as Governor in 1848 and Territorial Delegate from 1851 to 1859; then he became one of the first Senators for the state. He had the ear of several presidents and controlled much of the political patronage in Oregon. He was also credited with ending the Cayuse War, and with and doing much to solve the "Indian problem." The *Statesman* clipped an article from the *Fort Wayne Sentinel* that described him as "a man, we think, possessing all the elements of true popularity, and having in an

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[36] "A word at Parting," and J.S. Griffin, "For the Spectator," *Oregon Spectator*, January 20, 1848; "Road Law—Concluded," *Oregon Spectator*, February 10, 1848; M.M.M, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, December 26, 1850; "Militia," *Oregon Statesman*, February 21, 1854; Stuart, "Prize Article on Labor," *Oregon Statesman*, April 17, 1855; "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian*, November 18, 1854; "The War," *Oregonian*, December 15, 1855. See also, *Oregon Spectator*, November 29, 1849, October 3, 1850; *Oregon Statesman*, August 4, 1851, February 20, 1855, September 29, 1857; *Oregonian*, December 4, 1850, March 22, 1851.

eminent degree that indomitable energy of character, purity, strength and singleness of purpose, firmness and good practical sense." It went on: "He is a man of the people, self-made, and free from the contaminating influence to which politicians have been exposed...in Washington City."[37] Jesse Applegate, an early Oregon settler, prominent citizen, and politically a Whig, wrote, "[Lane] is known...as a man of truth, probity and honor... rifle in hand, [he] gallantly braved the floods and storms of winter to save our property, wives and daughters from the rapine of a lawless soldiery."[38] In short, Joseph Lane embodied all the attributes the Anglo-American elites in Oregon (of which he was a part) idealized: he was a proper, manly man, a good citizen, and an honest, upright politician of the proper age, who was active and martial when he needed to be. He was a very good example of the type of man who was properly suited to a position of power in Oregon.

Codifying Oregon elites' male gender ideology allows for the examination of how that ideology was used as a tool of power between elite males. It has been demonstrated that elite male Oregonians had clear ideas about who a man should be and how he should behave. The gender coding imbedded within the struggle for power became clear by examining the political conflicts that took place within the public discourse among prominent members of the Anglo-American elite. The elites in Oregon used the hierarchy of masculinity to empower themselves and discredit their opponents in hopes of coming out on top. They did this in a couple of ways. First were subtle attacks against

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[37] [Title cut off] from *Fort Wayne Sentinel* in *Oregon Statesman*, February 2, 1852.

[38] Jesse Applegate, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, April 10, 1851; "Delegate to Congress," *Oregonian*, April 26, 1851; "Gen. Lane and His "No-Party" Supporters," *Oregon Statesman*, November 11, 1853; "Gen. Lane and His Assailants," *Oregon Statesman*, May 14, 1853; James E. Hendrickson, *Joe Lane of Oregon: Machine Politics and the Sectional Crisis, 1849-1861* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 2, 4, 25, 51-52.

their opponents' masculinity by calling into doubt their possession of the cardinal traits of ideal manhood. They employed the dichotomously opposite of manly traits, such as honesty, integrity, and honor, accusing opponents of stupidity, grovelling, vanity, conceit, selfishness and unscrupulousness. Grovelling obviously implies a lack of independence, while conceit and selfishness imply a lack of kindness and generosity. Vanity and unscrupulousness flew in the face of integrity and honor. In a direct example of this tactic, Bush of the *Statesman* wrote of Dryer of the *Oregonian*: "He is an irresponsible libeller, and utters [lies] without the slightest reference to plausibility, or decency...And so notorious has become his consistency, and his want of integrity and truth, that his journal has lost all character in influence with the public..."[39] Calling into question a particular man's manhood devalued the man himself and inferred that he was unfit to occupy a place of power. After all, a population could not want a stupid, cowardly, conceited, dishonourable and dishonest man in charge of anything; to do so would put the government and society in danger.

Another way elite male Oregonians used gender to attack and discredit their opponents was through directly challenging their manhood by comparing them in some way to women, particularly women who did not fit the ideal mould. Bush and Dryer used this strategy several times against each other, and other aspiring elites in the territory. In

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[39] "Is He Crazy?" *Oregon Statesman*, September 21, 1858; See also, for example, "The Oregonian on Personalities," *Oregon Statesman*, April 4 1851; "False Again," *Oregon Statesman*, June 20, 1851; "Organizing Parties," *Oregon Statesman*, May 16, 1851; "Pitiful Meanness and Dishonesty," *Oregon Statesman*, November 11, 1851; "Gen. Lane an Office Seeker," *Oregon Statesman, Oregon Statesman*, September, 14, 1852; "A Weak Device by Weak Men," *Oregon Statesman*, August 21, 1852; Looker On, "Letter to Mr. C.E. Cole," *Oregon Statesman*, March 6, 1853; "Our Synopsis of the Land Law," *Oregon Statesman,* November 2, 1854; "Beware," *Oregon Statesman*, December 12, 1854; "The Oregonians and the Whigs," *Oregon Statesman*, June 24, 1856; ""Official Rowdyism,"" *Oregonian*, January 3, 1852; "False in Every Sentiment, Word, and Letter," *Oregonian*, April 3, 1852; *Oregonian,* January 7, 1854; "Internal Improvements—Whig Doctrine," *Oregonian*, February 11, 1854; Justitia, "Letter to the Editor," *Oreognian,* September 9. 1854; "Crumbs for the Durham Stand-Hard," *Oregonian*, November 18, 1854; "Awful!" *Oregonian*, December 9, 1854; "Letter to the Editor," *Oregonian*, January 12, 1856.

one article, Bush borrowed the wording of the *Minnesota Democrat* and said that "like women of easy virtue, [Whigs] hate with a huge amount of spite all those in their vicinage." A couple of years later, he mocked Dryer and the prominent citizens of Portland: "Most of the old women of Portland were much excited, and *Mrs.* Dryer...was terrible so... She had not recovered from the fright received during her 'knitting work'...and this last shock was more than the old lady could [bear]."[40] Comparing a man to a woman and implying that he could not handle a situation meant questioning that man's ability to be the proper man needed to maintain authority. Of course, this discourse worked also on the simple level of insult, and Oregon's journalism in the 1850s was known for the "Oregon style"[41] which was rife with personal attacks. But the gender coding involved in these personal attacks suggests that the elite men in Oregon had specific goals in mind during their attacks, and that the idealized hierarchy of manhood gave them a tool to achieve those goals.[42]

Women and Domesticity: Women in the Gender Hierarchy

The Anglo-American elite males who ran Oregon during the territorial period went about gendering women in a different way than they did themselves. Women, according to their ideology existed in a state of nature that made them dependant and weak, and rightfully so. They could have attributes like courage, strength or honor, but these traits were defined differently from men's courage, strength, and honor. These concepts either had a completely different meaning depending on for which gender they were being used, or were defined passively versus the active definition of the male

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[40] "Getting Out of Soap," *Oregon Statesman*, March 6, 1853; "Portland Invested," *Oregon Statesman*, October 13, 1855.

[41] This term was coined by George Stanley Turnbull. George Stanley Turnbull, *History of Oregon Newspapers* (Portland: Binfords & Mort, 1939).

[42] This was not particular to Oregon, but the Oregon elite used it effectively.

version. Women's place was to be in the lower rungs of the hierarchy – to depend upon and support their husbands, fathers and brothers. Thus, in public discourse, proper women appeared mostly as wives, secondarily as daughters, and rarely existed outside the male-controlled family unit (see Chapter Three). The ideology of female gender propagated by the Anglo-American elite was a modified version of the ideology of domesticity propagated in eastern women's magazines. Of the four virtues of ideal womanhood defined by the Cult True Womanhood[43] (piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity), piety or religion was the most important. Purity meant asexuality and was crucial as well. Submissiveness was the most expected, as men were the leaders and women the passive followers. Domesticity meant that a woman's place was in her home, and that her primary identity was that of wife and mother.[44]

This was the prevailing gender ideology of the mid-nineteenth century prescribed in media discourse. That is not to say that it was the only ideology, or that it controlled the lives of all American women. It was, nevertheless, influential. However, its impact in the West has been a source of contention for historians of the American West. Some have questioned the applicability for westerners of an elite, urban, literate ideology, as well as whether or not westerners bought into the ideology of domesticity.[45] Others have suggested that it is not strict adherence to the ideology that is important, but rather how the gender ideology affected how women thought about themselves and the world around

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[43] I avoid using this term since domesticity was not a cult, but a set of values, assumptions and ideals about women and the home or "private sphere." Like many ideologies, domesticity had a powerful hold on the imagination of Americans in the mid-nineteenth century and was one of the ways Americans decoded their lives. Griswold, "Anglo Women,"15.

[44] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* vol. 18, no.2, part 1 (Summer 1966):151-162.

[45] Elizabeth Jameson, "Women as Workers, Women as Civilizers: True Womanhood in the American West," in *The Women's West*, eds. Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 145-150.

them. These historians saw the impact of domesticity on identity and self-concept, and argued that settlers brought gender ideology with them as they traveled west.[46] For the purposes of this study, it was not whether women actually conformed or not to domesticity that was important, but rather discovering exactly how elite males wanted domesticity to look in the Oregon.

The Anglo-American elites modified ideology to better meet the needs of a colonial society. There were many similarities, and the virtues heralded by True Womanhood were present in some form in the Oregon newspapers. However, since a colonial society did not subsist on middle-class idleness, and women's work was critical to the colonization process, utility or industry became the cardinal virtue in the Oregon version of domesticity. Women provided a crucial workforce for colonizing whites, and were critical to setting up the small family farms that were the goal in Oregon. As well, white women served as boundary markers between white society and othered groups. White women needed to be protected from non-whites (see Chapter One), and were the model wives for white men, producing white children, thereby allowing the de-legitimization of Native women and their children.[47]

Submissiveness was the second most important quality to the Anglo-American elite, while religious piety and the moral superiority that came with it fell a far third. In order to build an American colony where white men had complete authority, women needed to work and to follow their husbands or fathers with little question. Their moral

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[46] Jeffery, *Frontier Women*, 6; Griswold, "Anglo Women," 16.

[47] Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Gender and Generation on the Far Western Frontier* (Tuscon: The University of Arizona Press, 2007), 15-18, 32-33; Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 21, 78; Ann McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 24-25.

influence would come into play later, making society a better place, once the colony and Anglo-American power were established. Not only did Anglo-American elite men craft this ideology in the public discourse, but they attempted to reinforce it as well by mocking and ridiculing women's rights activists.[48]

As much of the discourse concerning female gender in Oregon's newspapers was selected from eastern newspapers and magazines, it is perhaps apt to begin with a quote from such a source. A woman's time should be primarily occupied "only with domestic affairs—wait till your husband confides to you those of a high importance—and do not give your advice until he asks for it."[49] This quote represented Oregon's ideal of domesticity quite well. Women were to work hard at tasks their husbands needed done, and not to question men's place as authoritarian household heads. Under colonial conditions, in an unstable society, industry or usefulness became the most important attribute for a woman to have, because the Anglo-American elite knew it could not attempt to create its idyllic society without women and their labor. Women's work, such as egg and butter production, making preserves, taking care of the family's animals and helping clear the land was essential to white colonization. "Don't turn your pretty noses at honest industry—never tell your friend that you are not obliged to work," advised one article in the *Oregonian*. Another advice article in the *Statesman* counselled, "The best qualities to look after in a wife are industry, humanity, neatness, gentleness and

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[48] "Women's Rights," from *Enquirer* in *Oregonian*, January 10, 1852; Allany D., *Oregon Statesman*, November 11, 1851; "Women's Rights," Oregonian, December 18, 1852; "Women's Rights," from *Exchange* in *Oregon Spectator*, January 21, 1854; Mrs. Mary Abbott, "Woman's Rights," *Oregon Spectator*, July 15, 1854.

[49] *The Lady's Token: or Gift of Friendship*, ed. Colesworth Pinckney (Nashua, N. H., 1848), 119 in Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," 161.

propriety."[50] Thus, the ideal woman was, above all, hard working and industrious, and helped her husband in the labor-intensive tasks of colonization.

The second most important attribute in Oregon was submissiveness. Submissiveness in this ideology was not that different from submissiveness as defined in the eastern press. The basic premise was that women, being naturally weak and timid, needed a male protector. Though already quoted above, it bears repeating, "*Man* is formed to rule, and *woman* to depend." [51] The duty of a "truthful and loving wife" to her husband, according to an 1858 piece, was summed up in this prayer, a prayer that girls were supposed to imprint on their hearts. The following is only part of the prayer, but conveys its central message:

> [M]ake me amiable forever in his eyes and forever dear to him. Unite his heart to me in the dearest love and holiness, and mine to him in all its sweetness, charity and complacency. Keep me from all ungentleness, all discontentedness and unreasonableness of passion and humor; and make me humble and obedient, useful and observant...[52]

In exchange for being submissive and obedient, along with all the other attributes women were supposed to embody, women were granted protection. "The first maxim which you should impress deeply upon your mind is, never to control your husband by opposition, by displeasure, or any other mark of anger," one father told his newly married daughter in an instructional "letter." "A man of sense...will not bear an opposition of any kind," he

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[50] "Advice to Girls," *Oregonian*, July 31, 1852; "Good Wives," *Oregon Spectator*, September 9, 1854; "A Model of a Woman," from *Memphis Enquirer* in *Oregon Spectator*, July 22, 1851; *Oregon Spectator*, September 9, 1851; "Who is the True Lady. An Interesting and Instructive Story," from *The Cleveland Plaindealer* in *Oregon Statesman*, August 19, 1851; "Ingenuity," from *Olive Branch* in *Oregon Statesman*, June21, 1853; "The Potter's Wife," *Oregon Statesman*, July 5, 1853; Harmony, "Every-Day Life of a Woman," from *The Ladies' Repository* in *Oregon Spectator*, January 13, 1852; "Woman," *Oregon Spectator*, August 11, 1854; Dow Jr., "Yes, Get Married," *Oregon Spectator*, October 7, 1851.

[51] Bailey, "Women's Rights," *Oregon Spectator*, June 9, 1854; "Strong Minded Women," *Oregon Spectator*, November 23, 1853; P.L.D. "Letter to the Editor – A Widow's Appeal," *Oregon Spectator*, December 3, 1853; Cooper, "Women," *Oregon Spectator*, August 4, 1854; "Woman's Mission," *Oregon Spectator*, February 24, 1855; Grant Thornburn, "Hints to Bachelors," from *The New York Sun* in *Oregonian*, September 18, 1852.

[52] "A Wife's Prayer," *Oregonian*, February 20, 1858.

went on, "When he marries her, if he be a good man, he expects from her smiles, not frowns; he expects to find in her, one who will not control him...[sic]"[53] This summarizes the attitude toward obedience. Submissiveness and obedience were important to Anglo-American men, but they did their best to assure women that not only was it in women's best interest to heed the word of their husbands or fathers, but that they were not completely without power. Women had the force of influence, which elite men said was a strong and important power. A "refined and virtuous woman" was "the connecting link between men and Angels." Less abstractly, the discourse assured that women were the cornerstones of social well-being and that "One mother [was] worth a thousand friends, one sister dearer and truer than twenty intimate companions." Women's influence improved men, particularly young men, and prevented a wasteful nature, vice, and stupidity. And, as Lawrence Hall and Samuel H. Goodhue, secretaries in the Oregon militia, wrote to the ladies of Oregon, "the benign influence of your counsel, shall be as a beacon star to his inmost soul—ever pointing him to that path which leads to his own honor, and his country's good."[54] Industry and submission with protection and a promise of influence, allowed Anglo-American elites to position women into their hierarchy of gender that was important for the organization of their ideal society.

The rest of the prescribed gender traits, including piety, were fairly general feminine characteristics. "Array the inner lady with the beautiful garments of virtue, modesty, truth, morality, and unsophisticated love," advised one man. To marriage,

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[53] Patrick Henry, "Advice of a Father to His Only Daughter," *Oregon Spectator*, November 30, 1848; "A True Wife," from *Exchange* in *Oregon Spectator*, July 14, 1854; *Oregon Statesman*, February 21, 1854; "A Wife's Prayer," *Oregonian*, February 20, 1858; "How to Avoid a Bad Husband," *Oregon Spectator*, March 10, 1854; "A Story for the Ladies: Self Conquest," *Oregonian*, June 19, 1852.

[54] "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, October 7, 1851; "Home and Woman," *Oregon Spectator*, June 5, 1851; Lawrence Hall and Samuel H. Goodhue, "Reply from the Army to the Ladies," *Oregon Spectator*, June 15, 1848.

Grace Greenwood assured women that they should "bring your every day tenderness, your patient, fond, worshipping, self-sacrificing love." Women, to exemplify true womanhood, needed to have, along with the various adjectives listed above, a cheerfulness of temper, mildness of personality, wisdom and intelligence, modesty, chastity, piety, and be able to comfort her husband no matter what the circumstance.[55] With women working and submissive, and embodying all of the pious, modest passivity of true womanhood, society, in this view, would stabilize and lose the chaotic nature of early colonies. As Carroll Smith-Rosenberg suggested, dominating discourse and constructing an ideology of gender that was in their favor was a way for bourgeois males to impose order on chaos. The "true object of concern" for those constructing fantasied systems of control, "was not people, but their formulators' own experience of social disorder."[56] Thus, Anglo-American men constructed a gendered hierarchy for their ideal society that would solve the problems of instability that they experienced during the territorial period and that would ensure their positions at the top of the hierarchy.

The propagation of the ideal of true womanhood was offset and supported by mocking the women's rights movement. The women's rights movement represented a threat, a dangerous set of ideas for elite men who believed women belonged in their place under male protection. Feminist ideas did not fit at all with the ideal society they had

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[55] Dow Jr., "Yes, Get Married," *Oregon Spectator*, October 7, 1851; Grace Greenwood, "Tit for Tat," *Oregon Spectator*, March 9, 1848; See also, for example, "Female Piety," *Oregon Spectator*, June 29, 1848; "Religion in a Woman," from *Boston Evening Gazette* in *Oregon Spectator*, December 28, 1848; *Oregon Spectator*, September 16, 1854; "Female Love," *Oregon Spectator*, October 21, 1854; "Woman Without Religion," from *Reveries of a Bachelor* in *Oregon Statesman*, November 18, 1851; "Female Beauty," *Oregon Statesman*, October 9, 1852; "Homely Women," from *The San Francisco Golden Era* in *Oregon Statesman*, April 8, 1856; Martin, "Power of Women," *Oregonian*, August 16, 1851; "A Story for the Ladie: Self Conquest," *Oregonian*, June 19, 1852; *Oregonian*, July 17, 1852, June 18, 1853, October 25, 1856; "The Bloom of Age," *Oregonian*, September 18, 1855; "The Governor's Daughter," *Oregon Spectator*, October 21, 1851; "Women vs. Men," *Oregon Spectator*, March 10, 1854; Addison, "Honor," *Oregon Spectator*, May 12, 1854; A Bachelor, "Nice Girls," *Oregonian*, February 7, 1858.

[56] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 91.

imagined for Oregon, which kept property rights firmly in the hands of white men. Thus, the elite males set about systematically discrediting women's rights, even going so far as publishing articles by women that refuted the idea of women's rights. When Dr. Harriet K. Hunt, an eastern women's rights activist cried, "I own property, and pay taxes on that property. I demand of the government...that it should allow me an equal voice with the other tax payers in the disposal of public money," the *Spectator* had an answer. "Miss Hunt is evidently a strong minded woman...She has no man to curb her [and no children]..." the editor practically smirked. He then assured his reading public that she and her kind were rare, "since they are only those who are husbandless or childless—a calamity which is not apt to befall American women..." He finished the retort:

> ...in reply we must answer that it is due to wives and mothers, that their sacred offices should be protected, and that the sanctuary of connubial and maternal affection should not be slandered by connection with a class,[sic] who have separated themselves from the blessings of home, and the sweet influence of domestic life.[57]

In discussion of a "Reform Convention" on women's rights, the author responded to women's cry for equal employment opportunities, stating mockingly, "we take it, that '*marriage* and the *needle*' are *crushing* to *virtue* and *independence*! ...This world is too gross for such angels—they ought to go to Heaven right off [emphasis in the original]."[58]

Consistently, the discourse parried women's rights arguments with reasons why they were unnatural, and unwanted. "Women may talk of their inherent rights as much as they please, but they can't overcome nature," a man with the pen name Allany D. wrote. "They are contending for men's rights instead of women's rights," one woman was quoted, while the editor in the same article asserted that "The intelligent, sensible, and

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[57] "Strong Minded Women," *Oregon Spectator*, November 26, 1853.
[58] "Women's Rights," from *Enquirer* in *Oregonian*, January 10, 1852.

true woman, of course view the 'Woman's Rights' agitators in no very favorable light."[59] Anti-women's rights articles written by women, or quoting women legitimized Anglo-American men's positions by allowing them to argue that women did not want or need equal rights. Women of education and thought were not "emancipated women," one woman argued, for these women emancipated themselves because they did not think before abandoning the role which God gave them – they had not emancipated themselves so much as through off their natural protection from the cruelties of the world. Another woman simply found women's rights activists' "real intellect and morality" questionable. Mrs. M.J. Bailey writing specifically for the *Spectator*, in a "Ladies Department" of the newspaper that ran for approximately three months in 1854 took the idea of women's rights and redefined it into something closer to domesticity because "Women *cannot* be adequate to the discharge of public duties," since women did not have the training or experience. Further, Bailey did not understand why any woman would want to.[60] Although there was no organized women's rights movement in Oregon in the 1850s, the fact that several women's rights speakers came to Oregon suggests that there might have been an audience for it. Society in territorial Oregon was in flux, as was the nature of colonial settlements, and Anglo-American men saw the ideas promoted by the women's right's movement as threatening to their ideals. They did not want women to push for equal employment opportunities, property rights or voting rights, and so even the idea of

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[59] Allany D., *Oregon Statesman*, November 11, 1851; "Women's Rights," Oregonian, December 18, 1852; "Women's Rights," from *Exchange* in *Oregon Spectator*, January 21, 1854; Mrs. Mary Abbott, "Woman's Rights," *Oregon Spectator*, July 15, 1854.

[60] Margaret M. Brewster, "Thought Work," *Oregon Spectator*, January 6, 1855; Mrs. Phoebe Patterson, "Women's Rights—Talkers and Doers," from *New York Times* in *Oregon Spectator*, November 19, 1853; Mrs. M.J. Bailey, "Salutatory," *Oregon Spectator*, May 12, 1854; "Correspondence of the *Oregon Statesman* from New York," *Oregon Statesman*, April 2, 1853; *Oregon Statesman*, July 26, 1853; "Great Woman's Rights Convention," from *The Spirit of the Times* in *Oregonian*, April 24, 1852; "Woman's Right," *Oregonian*, June 18, 1853.

women wanting to was dangerous. Abigail Scott Duniway (see below) was a perfect example of this.

Female professionals, lawyers particularly, came under fire in several places in all three newspapers. The *Statesman* selected an article about female lawyers because of the humorous treatment they were given. In the article the implication was that women liked to argue, but were not as good with legal writs as with other styles, and that female lawyers were, as a "race of lawyers" ugly, which made soft-hearted judges feel sorry for them. The same attitude that permeated discussions of the women's rights movement filled discussion of female professionals, and for likely the same reasons. Belittling them reduced their threat. This idea was best illustrated in a fairly amusing exchange between Dr. Ada Weed, a lecturer who briefly lived in Oregon, and Asahel Bush, the editor of the *Statesman*, and helmsman of the Oregon Democratic Party. In the opening shot, Bush wrote an editorial commenting on Dr. Weed's lecture, stating, "We concede to women certain rights, but among these we do not place the right to lay aside her womanly modesty, and [forget] her true mission in the world..." Of women doctors he said, "[T]hese are women who have unsexed themselves, and who consider themselves highly aggrieved in that they were not formed in a masculine mould." To which, Dr. Weed replied that it was not necessary for women to unsex themselves to perform traditionally male occupations. She then asked, "[W]ill you please explain how you became possessed of her [woman's] rights? Her rights are God-given," and went on to make inferences about Bush's use of alcohol and tobacco. Rather than carry on the rhetorical battle

further after this, Bush ended it, and in his opinion denied "the vociferous termagant" the controversy and uproar "women of her class chiefly aspire."[61]

Women were crucial to the ideal society colonial elites in Oregon envisioned, but only when they complied with the specific vision of womanhood the men provided. Anglo-American male power partly depended on the solid foundation women's work, submission, and reproductive power would provide. Gender hierarchy organized their ideal society, as expressed in public discourse, and women who possessed Oregonian true womanhood were a part of that hierarchy. Women's rights would destabilize white male power, which rested in land ownership and political hegemony – the two things women's rights threatened.

Conclusion

One might wonder if examining ideology is at all valuable to understanding the reality of the past. What did it mean that a group of upper middle-class white men created an ideal society in public discourse that was structured by gender ideology? As with race, the gendered society that the male elites in control of Oregon's government, judiciary and economy created through discourse revealed what those men envisioned for Oregon as a stable, American society. The discourse exposed how men used gender-coded messages to bolster personal popularity and to discredit their opponents. Men, particularly elite white men, in Oregon were extremely political, and the harming of one's public reputation through slander in public discourse was serious – serious enough to get violent, as they sometimes did. The fact that my source base for the study of manhood is a mix of editorial and prescriptive literature suggests that the gender ideology laid out for

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[61] Asahel Bush and Ada M. Weed, "Woman's Sphere" discussion, *Oregon Statesman*, November 9 and 30, 1858.

men had real consequences, and important meaning to the men in Oregon Territory. The editorials, for example, demonstrated how men used gender ideology as tools in their everyday life to strengthen their political and social positions, while weakening those of their opponents.

Studying discourse is not the best way to get at the real, experienced lives of women in the past, particularly for non-white, non-middle-class, western women. But it does give an insight to how men viewed women (or how they wanted women to be), and how they would use prescriptive gender ideals to impose a semblance order on an instable, somewhat chaotic society, and hints too at why they felt threatened. Ideology also allows for better understanding of how men and women decoded reality and it helped define the limits of women's actions. And even though the ideology constructed by the Anglo-American males in Oregon did not translate directly to women's lives, there was some connection. Cynthia Culver Prescott suggested that while at first economic instability prevented first-generation women from achieving their ideological goals, they nevertheless strove for them, and by the late 1850s and the 1860s they were able to achieve them due to economic success.

The lives of Abigail Scott Duniway, and Abigail Malick indicate that domestic ideology had some impact on their daily lives, while their experience reveals inherent contradictions in that ideology. Duniway was born in Illinois and traveled to Oregon with her family in the early 1850s. She married shortly after arriving in Oregon and worked her and her husband's farms while bearing and raising six children. Her husband, Charles Duniway, lost their second farm endorsing notes for a friend who defaulted. This event was a pivotal moment for Duniway, who resented the fact that her husband could,

without her consent, jeopardize the land claimed in her name and won with her labor. She spent the rest of her life fighting for women's property and voting rights. In 1912 she signed the suffrage amendment that allowed women to vote in Oregon and became the first woman to register to vote in Multnomah County. Duniway related all the work she did after she got married and pregnant, and wrote that her husband expected her to look do all of her chores, cook, clean *and* take care of his friends, even when he was not there. She did most of it, indicating not only her husband's ideology, but her own attempts to follow that ideology. At the same time, she protested women's subordinate position in a patriarchal society.

Malick too was a prime example of Oregon-style domesticity.Abigail Malick was born in Pennsylvania, but moved with her husband to Illinois in 1836. In 1848, Malick, her husband and six of their seven children set out for Oregon, filing a claim on the Columbia River, a few miles from Fort Vancouver. She admired industry and worked herself ragged to keep the family farm going and to obtain material goods for her children. She was also an example of submissiveness, acquiescing to her husband's sometimes harsh demands and personality – although it should be noted that she circumvented her husband's power using her position in the household. Unlike Duniway, Malick's story ended in tragedy. She lost her husband and three of the six children that traveled with them. She had to sell the family land piece by piece and eventually died alone on the family farm, with tenants renting half her house and the land.

Both women embodied industry and femininity and used their industry and contributions to challenge the rights of their husbands, while at the same time conforming to the idealized version of domesticity, thereby demonstrating the complicated

relationship between ideology and lived experience.[62] The lives and personalities of real women may not have conformed exactly to how male elites in Oregon envisioned them, and there were very likely women who rebelled or ignored social convention and ideology, but the importance of that ideology remained. Examining what white men *wanted* Oregon to look like is a valuable step in understanding what territorial Oregon *did* look like, and why Oregon became the state that it did in 1859.But beneath the surface, some women, like Duniway, began to probe the inconsistencies and faultlines in that patriarchal vision.

[62] Jameson, "Women as Workers," 147; Prescott, *Gender and Generation,* 11-12, 15, 30, 33-34; Ruth Barnes Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 55; Lillian Schlissel, "The Malick Family in Oregon Territory, 1848-1867," in *Far From Home: Families of the Westward Journey*, eds. Lillian Schlissel, Byrd Gibbens and Elizabeth Hampsten (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989, 2002), 20, 26, 28, 32.

Chapter 3:
Family and the Relational Aspects of Gendered Power

"A man's house is his earthly paradise. It should be, of all other spots, that which he leaves with most regret, and to which he turns with most delight."
~*Oregon Spectator*, October 18, 1849[1]

For the people of Oregon Territory, ideas about race and gender helped give meaning to the new environment and society they inhabited. For the elite white males who controlled the territory in the 1850s, race and gender were crucial keys to building their ideal society. As has been seen, these elites projected a society they wanted in Oregon's newspapers and used discourse to mobilize power so that they could push non-whites out of their society and construct a gender hierarchy that made sure only the proper kind of men could ascend to places of power. Women shored up the hierarchy by assuming their subordinate place as helpers of their husbands, fathers and brothers.

The gender hierarchy alone, however, was not enough. Without a foundation or a control mechanism, the hierarchy was too unstable to provide the necessary structure for the ideal society. So, Anglo-American elites built their hierarchy in and around the institution of the patriarchal nuclear family. Family was the primary organizational unit of Oregon society, especially in rural areas, which constituted the majority of Oregon in the 1850s. Family was crucially important to Oregonians. Considering emigration numbers as a whole, in the years before 1850 families made up over half of overland migrants.[2] This number decreased in the early 1850s due to the numbers of single men traveling to the Gold Rush. Kinship was an important dynamic in the migration to Oregon, as 45 percent of rural households in Oregon Territory had blood ties with one or

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[1] "Home," *Oregon Spectator*, 1849.
[2] John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, 2001), 35-37, 194-195.

more households in the territory.[3] The Donation Land Act and the demographic situation in Oregon Territory meant that most adult women were confined to the family.[4] Thus, it made sense for the elites to make use of family ties in the construction of their ideal society, since kin migration and early marriage allowed for settlement in nuclear family groups, many of which remained connected with extended family. Building an ideal society based on the family allowed Anglo-American elites to centralize power in the hands of white, adult males – the familial heads. Family thus was the foundation of gendered and social power. By providing the primary site of socialization (the learning of gender ideals), the institution of the family could instill the proper gender messages in its members, and thus create and maintain the ideal gender hierarchy. As well, since women's role was supposed to be limited to the home, their identities became, ideologically, subsumed by the family as they moved from daughter to wife.

Because the institution of the family served well as a control mechanism and a stabilizing agent, the Anglo-American male elite was directly concerned with the various stages of the family and the relationships it enveloped. The newspapers outlined the connections between home and family, and how important both were for a stable society. They gave specific advice about choosing a marriage partner and about the creation of a new family. They detailed the proper parts of a family, and the various relationships among family members, focusing on the spousal relationships between husbands and

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[3] Faragher, *Women and Men*), 35-37, 194-195; Dean L. May, *Three Frontiers: Family, Land, and Society in the American West 1850-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 107-110; William Bowen, *The Willamette Valley: Migration and Settlement on the Oregon Frontier* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 52.

[4] There were approximately 1.6 males for every 1 female in Oregon in 1850. That number dropped only to 1.5 males for every female in 1860. Ibid.; J.D.B. DeBow, *The Seventh Census of the United States 1850* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, 1853) http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1850.html (Accessed 4 November 2011); Joseph C.G. Kennedy, *The Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864) http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1860.html (Accessed 4 November 2011).

wives. This relationship was the most important because it was the backbone of the gender hierarchy. Women existed in discourse mostly as wives and mothers, and were to provide an example of proper womanhood to their children. They provided the "other" needed for the elucidation of ideal manhood. Men's positions as husbands and fathers provided a judging point for their manhood, as well as a base for credibility in political society. Discourse detailed the proper method of parenting and outlined the sort of relationship parents and children were supposed to have. By following the dictates of the Anglo-American elite, Oregonians could raise their children in a way that would insure the continuation of their ideal gendered society. In turn this would slowly stabilize society as the gender imbalance evened out and the large number of single men was controlled by the loving hand of the family.

Family was to be the foundation of society, the primary locus of socialization and control. Thus, the elite white males who controlled the media, government, judiciary and economy in Oregon directed every facet of family life and relationships in public discourse, so as to ensure the creation and maintenance of their ideal gender hierarchy and society and to keep power concentrated in their hands.

Connecting Home, Family and Power

For the Anglo-American elite in Oregon, home, family and power were intimately connected. Definitions of "home" constantly utilized family imagery. This imagery could include the family as a unit, or could refer to one or two members. Though "home" was often defined differently depending on the attribute being illuminated, it was very clear that home and family were practically synonymous. "Home—the roof that sheltered childhood and youth," one article explained. "Home—the glad welcome of

father and mother...the fond greeting of brother and sister."[5] For this writer, home meant the family unit, which held all of human happiness. Another article cried, "He feels keenly for him who has no fireside—no dear ones to welcome him with smiles, and prattle over the history of the day, no tongue to soothe him when heavy cares have troubled the mind and rendered his heart sore."[6] The writer thereby implied that a home is made up of a house, with its metaphorical fireside, a family to greet the returning household head, and a wife to soothe the husband's cares. This quote also implied the relative importance family members had in the household. The husband "talks," while the wife "prattles," implying that the husband's words were more important than those of his wife. The ideal was the nuclear family unit consisting of parents and their children only. "[T]here never was a house built yet, that was big enough for two families to live in," a character explained in a story about familial difficulty. The story outlined the life of a young woman who married and was forced to have her mother-in-law live with her and her husband. The "two families" indicated in the quotation referred to the newly married couple and the mother-in-law. The moral of the story was that domestic happiness could not be achieved while members of the extended family were present. The "home" was to be an insular unit, a haven from the chaotic and supposedly unkind world, where family members supported each other with love. Family was, for every man (word choice deliberate), the true riches in life.[7]

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[5] "Going Home," from *Exchange* in *Oregonian*, November 28, 1857.
[6] "A Home," *Oregon Statesman*, February 12, 1856.
[7] "A Story for the Ladies: Self-Conquest," *Oregonian*, June 19, 1852; "One Recipe for Happiness," *Oregonian*, September 1, 1855; Mrs. Sigourney, "A Family Scene," *Oregon Spectator*, June 26, 1851; "Home Affections," from *Arthur's Home Gazette* and "What is Home?" *Oregon Spectator*, August 4, 1854; "Beautifully Warm," from a letter from Judge Dillahunty of Tennesee on the Homestead Exemption Law in *Oregon Statesman*, April 13, 1852; "Home and It's Harmonies," from *The Pennsylvania Enquirer* in *Oregon Statesman*, April 1, 1856; "A Wife's Power," *Oregonian*, February 27, 1857.

An important theme underlying all concepts of "home" was gender, which had important implications for familial and social power. While women were often identified with the home, and sometimes definitions of what made a home relied directly on women, practically all definitions were from the male point of view. For example, in the above quotations, it was a man suffering through not having what characterized a home – a family. The family in question was almost always a wife and children, thus making the home a refuge for men. In fact, part of many definitions of home in domestic ideology, was that a home was a *man's* haven from the public world (as exemplified by the epigraph above). In "the little world of love at home...he [the household head] is a monarch."[8] The wife was the center of the household, and the "home" was the wife's world, but it was a world she created for her husband. To put it another way, one author wrote, "If ever there has been a more touching and eloquent eulogium upon the charms of home and its dearest treasure, woman..."[9] The home was a man's empire, and woman was a treasure within that empire. In simplest terms, home was a place where men and women could act out their proper gender roles, and was defined as such. As men were authorities in public life, so too were they the authority in the home, and its synonymous institution, the family. The home was man's empire, built for him, and was the foundation of his social power.

The acting out of proper gender roles was important for another function of the home and family: the training of the next generation. The family was the first setting of

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[8] "Female Influence and Energy," *Oregon Spectator*, September 21, 1848.

[9] "Home and Woman," *Oregon Spectator*, June 5, 1851; See also, for example, "Whisper to a Wife," *Oregon Spectator*, September 16, 1854; Mary Spenser Pease, "The Storm," from *Godey's Lady's Book* in *Oregon Spectator*, September 2, 1851; "Variety," *Oregon Statesman*, April 27, 1857; "Hints for Wives," *Oregon Spectator* September 21, 1848; Rev. F.S. Hoyt, "Oration, Delivered at Lafayette, O.T.,, July 4, 1854," *Oregon Statesman*, August 15, 1854; "Why Homes are Unhappy," *Oregon Statesman*, June 2, 1857; "Rural Home," *Oregon Statesman*, August 3, 1858; "An Afflicted Husband," *Oregonian*, February 21, 1854; "Smiles for Home," *Oregonian*, August 7, 1858; "Home," *Oregon Spectator*, October 18, 1849.

socialization, and was crucial for learning gender roles, which were to become the foundation of the gender hierarchy in Oregon, and, in the eyes of the Anglo-American elite, were critical to societal stability. "[O]n what does social well-being rest but on our homes?" asked one writer.[10] Thus, the family and home was responsible for inculcating ideals that structured society. The *Statesman* declared, for example, "Education does not commence with the alphabet. It begins with a father's nod of approbation, or a sign of reproof—with a sister's gentle pressure of the hand, or a brother's noble act of forbearance..."[11] It was important that family members learned their roles in life within the family setting. "It is not more true that the infant brood grows to the power of caring for themselves, in the nest, than that men are formed into the habits of life in the family," wrote Reverend J.W. Alexander. Family provided the behavioral foundation needed for social life.[12] Girls learned to be wives and men learned to be household heads and contributors to public life.

Understanding how home, family and power were intertwined in the public discourse of Oregon's white male elite is important for comprehending why and how these same men went about outlining the various relationships and roles in the family itself. The patriarchal nuclear family was the heart of society. At its head was the husband and father; below him, but above the children was the wife and mother; and then below them both were the children. The Anglo-American elite in Oregon was careful to delineate what family relationships should look like, and how they should proceed, so

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[10] "Home and Woman," *Oregon Spectator*, June 5, 1851.
[11] "Education," *Oregon Statesman*, September 21, 1854.
[12] Reverend J.W. Alexander, "The Family," *Oregon Spectator*, October 4, 1849; "Economy in a Family," *Oregon Spectator*, December 23, 1851; Mrs. E. Wellmont, "Two Portraits of Wedded Life," from *Gleason's Pictorial* in *Oregon Spectator*, June 23, 1854; "Politeness at Home," and "Love in a Family," *Oregonian*, April 23, 1853.

that the power of the male household head was the controlling idea behind the ideology. They left little out of their explanation, and started at the very point where the family started: courtship and marriage.

Family Creation: Marriage and Courtship

In order to have a fully functioning family unit that produced the results Anglo-American elites hoped for, it was essential that the proper elements be present from the family's creation. The Anglo-American elite in Oregon was expressly concerned with the territory's marital future, both in reality and ideologically. They commented numerous times on the need for more women and marriages in Oregon, even going so far as to produce conflicting opinions on early marriage. Demographic information about marriage in Oregon Territory is extremely difficult to come obtain. John Mack Faragher suggested that most, if not all, adult women travelling to Oregon were married. This suggestion can be extended to Oregon Territory where the Donation Land Act and demographic situation meant that almost all women married, many in their mid-to-late teens. However, men still outnumbered women 1.6 to 1 in 1850, meaning that there were a substantial number of single men in Oregon Territory.[13] Family migration, thus, was the primary means of increasing family creation within Oregon in the 1850s. "[A]ll the accounts agree that the proportion of women and families is materially larger than in any former year. It is such an immigration as Oregon needs, and will advance her upon the road to prosperity and greatness," wrote *Statesman* editor, and chief Democrat Asahel Bush in 1852. Faragher's estimated number of emigrants suggests that this was true. Faragher estimated that the proportion of women travelling overland in 1852 was about

[13] The censuses for 1850 and 1860 do not give marriage figures for Oregon. Faragher, *Women and Men*, 34-39; Debow, *The Seventh Census*, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1850.html; Kennedy, *The Eighth Census*, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1860.html.

11.5 percent, up from 5.7 percent two years before. The proportion of children went from 1.4 percent in 1850 to 15.8 percent in 1852.[14] Numbers from Benton County in northwestern Oregon from 1854 confirm the fairly large number of children. Of the 1247 males in Benton County, 643 were above twenty-one, while 239 were between ten and twenty-one and 367 were under ten. Of the 927 females, 377 were above eighteen, 180 between ten and eighteen and 370 were under ten.[15] These numbers indicate that the majority of Oregon's population was above eighteen or below ten, which gives an important dynamic to the ideology disseminated by the Anglo-American elite. They were targeting groups possibly impressionable to messages about marriage and parenting, groups that were directly influenced by familial bonds. Since marriage began a new family, and family was the base of society, marriage, too, could be considered a foundation of social life. "Marriage is the mother of the world," wrote one man. It "fills cities, and churches, and heaven itself, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world."[16]

Marriage, and the time leading up to it (courtship) had a special place within the public discourse in Oregon. Both were life steps that the young took in order to become full-fledged adult members of society. Gender identity was closely tied to marital status.[17] Indeed, for men, the public recognition of their privileges as white male citizens

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[14] "The Immigrants," *Oregon Statesman*, October 23, 1852; Faragher, *Women and Men*, 194-195; "The Overland Immigration," *Oregonian*, October 2, 1852; "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, October 17, 1851; "Marriages in Oregon," from *Alta. California* in *Oregon Statesman*, January 6, 1852; "List of Names of Overland Immigrants," *Oregonian*, October 29, 1853; "Address of Samuel H. Thurston Concluded," *Oregon Spectator*, October 17, 1850; "Early Marriages," *Oregonian*, April 10, 1852; *Oregonian*, April 10, 1858.

[15] Charles Wells, "1854 Benton County Census," Mrs. James O. Moore transcribed, 1947. http://files.usgwaarchives.org/or/benton/census/1854/1854bent.txt (Accessed 5 November 2011).

[16] Bishop Taylor, "Marriage Compared with Single Life," *Oregon Statesman*, July 11, 1854.

[17] "Marriages Among the Anglo-Saxons," *Oregonian*, September 3, 1853; *Oregonian*, January 8, 1853; "Marriage," *Oregon Spectator*, April 28, 1854; "To Misses," *Oregon Spectator*, August 26, 1854; "The

was connected to their status as married men, and single men were seen in a negative light.

The courtship ritual provided the groundwork for marriage, and later family life. As such, the public discourse in Oregon spent considerable time discussing it in different forums. Three themes dominated the discussion of courtship. The first was a more general treatment, usually in the form of courtship stories and general advice meant more to amuse than to impart any real message to readers. The second theme included detailed discussions of potential spouses and how to choose wisely so as to ensure the creation of the "proper" family. The third theme was completely class driven, encouraging marrying for love without regard to money. The second theme ensured that ideal gender characteristics would be created and perpetuated within the family. The third theme was another way of hiding class disparities in Oregon.

The general treatment of courtship mostly included amusing advice and stories about courtships gone wrong. For example, Grant Thorburn advised, "If you wish to gain the affections of a virtuous woman you must speak to her in 'words of truth and soberness'," adding that "ladies often suffer martyrdom when...they are compelled to sit for hours...[listening to] the small talk of some biped on whom Madam Nature has been toiling all day to form his handsome person."[18] General treatments viewed courtship in a non-serious manner, more to entertain than to teach. And yet, even the humorous stories had moralizing undertones. Stories included amusing anecdotes about couples misunderstanding each other, flirtations gone wrong, the woes of love, and the various things that could go wrong in courtships. Like modern Americans, Oregonians in the

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Marriage Alter," an extract from an address by Judge Charlton to the Young Men's Literary Association of Augusts in *Oregon Statesman*, August 16, 1853.

[18] Grant Thorburn, "Hints to Bachelors," from *The N.Y. Sun* in *Oregonian*, September 18, 1852.

1850s found the foibles of humanity amusing. It is possible that the humorous treatment of courtships gone wrong was a subtle way of warning against certain behaviors while emphasizing others in a way that was non-threatening. Stories almost always had a moral or underlying meaning, and stories about courtship, even funny ones, were no different. A story about a misunderstanding between a couple, for example, usually ended with the wife or potential bride submitting to her husband. These treatments revealed that although the lead up to marriage could be comical, especially in fiction, it was nevertheless an important stage of life. This message, more clearly seen in the other two themes of courtship discourse, was the organizing idea behind the articles and stories in this thematic treatment.[19]

The second theme, the discussion of the attributes of the ideal spouse, broke down further into what women should look for and what men should look for. It is no surprise that articles outlining what men should look for in a spouse vastly outnumbered the same advice for women. Gaining the perfect wife was more crucial for men with regards to the gender hierarchy and masculine ideal. A woman, after all, as one article pointed out, was supposed to obey her husband no matter what kind of man he was. Their marriage vows, unfortunately did not say, "I will honor and obey him if he shall deserve it."[20] On the other hand, men's status in society, and their domestic comfort at home, could be adversely affected by a wife who did not meet the ideals. Thus, the public discourse was filled with advice on how to choose a spouse, and what attributes to look for.

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[19] Virginia F. Townsend, "Only a Harmless Bit of Flirting," *Oregon Spectator*, June 16, 1854; Mary Spenser Pease, "The Storm," *Oregon Statesmen*, September 2, 1851; "To Unmarried Ladies," *Oregon Statesman*, June 2, 1857; "Marriages," *Oregon Statesman*, June 29, 1858; "Letter of Creed Turner to his Brother," *Oregonian*, December 20, 1851; "A Romantic Story," *Oregonian*, June 26, 1852; "A Matrimonial Hint," from an exchange paper in *Oregonian*, December 11, 1852; "The Way to Get Husbands," *Oregonian*, March 10, 1855; "The Man Who Kissed Three Girls," *Oregonian*, March 29, 1856; Kate Randolph, "Annie Lee; or the Bridal Song," *Oregonian*, June 28, 1856.

[20] "The Marriage Vow," *Oregon Spectator*, July 10, 1851.

Advice to women about marital choice often included not only characteristics for which to look, but also the ways they were supposed to go about catching and treating their potential husbands. Much of the counsel aimed at women revolved around marrying for money and so will be detailed in the next section. However, Oregon's newspapers did print a "list" of things to avoid in men. This list was printed in both the *Oregonian* and the *Spectator* in 1853 and 1854 respectively, and provides the best example of what character traits women were supposed to value. The number one item on the list was "Never marry for wealth." The rest is a comprehensive character sketch of the opposite of an ideal husband. Women should avoid "fops," "close-fisted" men, strangers, lazy men, men who were unkind to their mothers or sisters, gamblers or degenerates, a man slovenly in appearance, rakes and men who used tobacco.[21] Marrying a man with any of these traits would inevitably lead to heartbreak and a rough life for the woman in question.

Women were advised to reign in their flirtations and guard against men until they could correctly gauge their characters and intensions. Men, young women were warned, often preyed on women who did not guard their emotions closely enough. "[W]oe betide the silly girl who is too weak, or too unsuspicious, not to appear displeased with the well-turned compliments, and flattering attentions, so lavishly bestowed upon her by her partner," exclaimed one article.[22] To avoid this sort of thing, and to obtain a husband worth having, women were directed to behave in certain ways. "Just bring your every day tenderness, your patient, fond, worshipping, self-sacrificing love," Grace Greenwood

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[21] "How to Avoid a Bad Husband," *Oregonian*, August 13, 1853 and *Oregon Spectator*, March 10, 1854.
[22] "Men and Women," from *Exchange* in *Oregon Spectator*, May 22, 1851; [Author Unreadable], "Sweet Sixteen—or—The First Flirtation," *Oregon Spectator*, February 4, 1854; Thackerly, "The Influence of Women," *Oregonian*, October 31, 1857; "Rules for Young Men," *Oregonian*, December 8, 1855.

advised her fellow women, "and place man's holiday admiration, his fanciful, patronising, exacting, doubting affection, in the opposite scale, and see in what passion of haste they will go up!"[23] If women were careful enough in their selections of a spouse, then they would have no difficulty overlooking his faults and performing the role they were meant to, because their marriages would be happy.

For men, the search for a suitable marriage partner was trickier, if one judges from the attention paid to the problem. It stands to reason that since the discourse was selected by Anglo-American men, and men outnumbered women in Oregon, more attention would be paid to how men should go about finding wives, particularly since they were concerned with the maintenance of male power, in and out of the home. Much of the attributes men were supposed to look for in women were the same as the ideal gender identities women were supposed to embody. It is necessary to examine these gender characteristics in different contexts to illuminate the different ways gender ideology worked and was connected to family ideology. Woman's role in the ideal Oregon was almost completely confined to her role as wife and mother, and thus it is not surprising that the ideal gender identity to which women were supposed to conform showed itself in discussions of family creation and family relationships.

Industry was the most common attribute men were to look out for in a potential wife. The reasons for this were detailed in Chapter Two. But industry was just one part of a package of attributes the ideal wife was to possess. The adage, "The best dowery to advance to marriage of a young lady is, when she has in her countenance mildness; in her speech wisdom; in her behaviour modesty; and in her life virtue [sic]," was printed in

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[23] Grace Greenwood, "Tit for Tat," *Oregon Spectator*, March 9, 1848; "Our Schoolmaster and How He Came to be Married," *Oregon Spectator*, June 29, 1848.

both the *Spectator* and the *Oregonian*, indicating that it was a attractive idea to 1850s Oregon elite men.[24] It advanced the core of what a proper wife should be. It is also possible, that given the sex-ratio in Oregon, that men had to marry outside their class and thus had to come up with another set of by which to judge potential mates. Another good summation of the proper bride was suggested in a short story. An uncle in the story advised his nephew that if he were ever going to marry, "let it be to a woman who has judgement [sic] enough to superintend the work of her house; taste enough to dress herself; pride enough to wash herself before breakfast; and sense enough to hold her tongue when she has nothing to say."[25] These were the more external attributes men should look for, attributes that would be noticed by others. Physical attractiveness was secondary in the search for a wife. One bachelor wrote that "nice girls" were the best to take as wives. "Nice girls" were not elegant or pretty, they did not dance well, or laze around. Rather, a "nice girl," in the perspective of this bachelor was one of those "lively, good-tempered...amiable, neat...domestic creatures, whom [one] meet[s] in the sphere of 'home,' diffusing around the domestic hearth the influence of her goodness." These girls were the busy daughters of busy mothers, who toiled away beside their mothers, learning first hand the proper attributes and behaviors of a wife.[26] The best choice for a wife was the industrious daughter of an industrious mother.

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[24] "Dowery," from *Fenton's Epistle* in *Oregon Spectator*, May 4, 1848 and *Oregonian*, August 7, 1852; "A Lesson for Girls," *Oregon Spectator*, June 12, 1851; *Oregon Statesman*, April 2, 1853; "Matrimony,: *Oregonian*, March 19, 1853.

[25] "Marrying," *Oregon Spectator*, February 27, 1851.

[26] A Bachelor, "Nice Girls," *Oregonian*, February 27, 1858; See also for example: "How to Avoid a Bad Husband," *Oregon Spectator*, March 10, 1854 and *Oregonian*, August 13, 1853; "Hamilton Irving's Search for a Wife, and What Came of It," *Oregon Spectator*, October 21, 1854; P.W. Burnett, "Winning a Heart," *Oregon Statesman*, October 17, 1851; Grant Thorburn, "How to Do It!" *Oregon Statesman,* July 22, 1851; "Jenny Lind at the Nuptial Altar," from the *Buffalo Courier* in *Oregonian*, January 3, 1852; W. Wirt, "The Witchcraft of Women," *Oregonian*, July 3, 1852; Charles Chestnut, "Why it was," *Oregonian*, November 22, 1856.

Whereas the discussion of ideal attributes of potential mates appeared in advice literature and fiction, the class dimension of courting were published within moralizing stories in which the woman usually met some ill end or otherwise suffered for her choice of money over love. In one such story, two best friends got married at the same time, one for money, and one for love. The one who married for money was an unloved wife and was thus miserable. Her best friend, who married for love, ended up with a drunkard. But the story's author, Mrs. Mary J. Holmes, maintained that the girl who married for love was still happier with a drunkard than her friend who married for money. In the end of the story, Lina, who married the rich man without love, died alone and unhappy, while Mabel died beside her beloved husband, who sobered up through love of his wife and the death of their child.[27] Another story featured two daughters of a wealthy mechanic and their poor cousin. The two daughters were lazy and arrogant, the cousin charming, hardworking and cheerful. The suitor, a poor mechanic, was spurned by the daughters because of his lack of wealth, and married the cousin. In the end, the suitor turned out to be rich and the daughters suffered for their choice, a fairly common device for these sorts of stories. The end of the story warned, "Remember, girls, that wealth is a false standard by which to judge of respectability and worth," and went on to conclude, "very often he who earns his daily bread by the sweat of his brow, is more of a gentleman than he who counts his thousands."[28] The message behind these stories was clear: marrying for money only led to despair. It was better to be poor and happy, than rich and miserable.

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[27] Mrs. Mary J. Holmes, "The Answered Prayer," *Oregonian*, June 20, 1857.
[28] Ibid.; "The Lesson: A Tale of Domestic Life," *Oregon Spectator*, January 11, 1849; See also, for example: Emily H. May, "The Young Wife," *Oregon Spectator*, December 28, 1848; Old 'Un, "Love in a Cottage," from *Drawing Room Companion* in *Oregon Spectator*, August 12, 1851; "Marrying for Money," *Oregon Spectator*, October 14, 1851; N. Scott, "The Choice; Virtue and Vice Contrasted," *Oregon Statesman*, April 6, 1852; Annie, "A Poetical Love Story: Taken From an Intercepted Letter," *Oregon Statesman*, July 7, 1855; "Kate Yale's Marriage," *Oregonian*, November 12, 1853.

Interestingly, those young women who married rich men often suffered by having their husbands squander the fortunes, and they ended up poor in the end, while those who married for love, often ended up wealthy in the end. This idea touches upon what could be considered a hidden meaning for this kind public discourse in Oregon. Simplified, marrying a poor man for love could mean wealth and happiness later on, while marrying for money without love almost inevitably meant misery, and possible poverty later in life. This idea masked the political reality of class and gender inequality. Most men in Oregon Territory were farmers, farm laborers or general laborers, and thus not wealthy.[29] As with pushing the ideal of an egalitarian manhood, pushing for marriage without regard to money allowed the Anglo-American elite to promulgate the illusion that Oregon was a place of equality for whites, and that any poor man could marry a good woman and prosper. Acting and believing you were middle class when combined with hard work would eventually lead to wealth. At the same time, the ideal of a marriage based on love concealed the gender inequality within marriage. If a woman were loved and cherished, she had no need for greater political power or male citizenship rights, because she was protected and sheltered. "Marriage is the sanctifier of love—an institution which acknowledges the right of woman to be protected, and the duty of man to protect her," wrote Ella Wentworth. Men and women were "equal" under the bonds of love, both having duties and rights under it.[30] This, of course, was not the reality. Even in discourse, women were subordinate to their husbands (although ideology placed subordination on a scale with influence and stated that influence gave women a form of

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[29] Debow, *The Seventh Census*, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1850.html; Kennedy, *The Eighth Census*, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1860.html.

[30] "Marriage," extract from Ella Wentworth's reply to Lucy Stone, *Oregon Spectator*, April 28, 1854; Rev. F.S. Hoyt, "Oration," *Oregon Statesman*, August 15, 1854.

equality). Masking class and gender inequality allowed elites to insist that their ideal society was equal for everyone in his or her own way, while the real society developing in Oregon was not quite so equal.

Husbands and Wives

Once married, the husband and wife formed the core of the family. Their relationship provided the reference point for inter-gender relationships and was the foundation of the gender hierarchy the Oregon elite wished to create. As such, public discourse discussed the husband-wife relationship in great detail, directing couples as to the proper relationships they were supposed to have. The husband-wife relationship was based on the fundamental hierarchy that placed the married man at the top, reinforcing the patriarchal ideal. The home and the family were the married man's "empire," and he was to direct it as a loving, benign monarch. Women were to be the household head's support, providing a loving and cheerful environment that allowed the man to perform his role in the public with maximum efficiency. Theirs was a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship that was best for both parties. A fully functional marriage would then instill the proper gender messages in any children that were added to the family, and would enable both partners to parent these children with maximum effectiveness. Good parenting was done by example, inculcating the next generation with the work ethic and social values their parents thought were crucial.

Marriage created a new family and had different effects on men and women. For women, it was the chance to carry out and practice the gender role and identity they had been taught from a young age. The ideal gender identity for a wife was extremely similar to a non-married woman's ideal gender identity. Since women's primary goal in life was

supposed to be marriage, it made sense to indoctrinate young women with the ideals and roles that they would fill for the rest of their lives. One only needs to examine the ideal gender identity of women as a whole, presented in Chapter Two, and compare it to the gender traits men were looking for in a potential wife, then compare both to the role they were supposed to play in the marriage relationship. This reveals that a woman's gender identity was supposed to remain fairly static throughout her life. She was to learn to be a cheerful, obedient, hard worker from her mother, to carry these traits into her marriage and essentially to play the same role as her mother until she had children, then to pass these lessons onto her daughters. "When a daughter remarks, 'I would not hire help, for I can assist you to do the labor in the kitchen,' set it down that she will make somebody a good wife," so one adage went. A woman's ideal gender identity had to predate her marriage, since getting married was dependant on embodying those values.[31] In Oregon Territory before 1865, many girls married young: 78 percent by the time they were twenty, and 100 percent by the time they were thirty. They started their education as children by following their mother around and learning her role, and were thereby socialized into their gender identity through the home environment.[32]

For men, however, marriage was a major transition in the gender identity. Upon marriage, young men became full adult men. "There is one thing certain," wrote the *Spectator*'s editor D.J. Schnebly, "he will never be a complete man until he fulfills that

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[31] "Good wives," *Oregon Spectator*, September 9, 1854; *Oregon Spectator*, June 5, 1848; "The Faithless Wife," *Oregon Spectator*, November 11, 1849; Mrs. E. Wellmont, "Two Portraits of Wedded Life," *Oregon Spectator*, June 23, 1854; Mrs. Ellis, "A Lesson for the Girls," *Oregon Spectator*, December 2, 1854; Yankee Blade, "A Word to Old Maids," and "The Wife of Audubon," from *American Review Oregonian*, December 27, 1851; "Bachelors," *Oregonian*, October 13, 1852.

[32] Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Gender and Generation on the Far Western Frontier*, (Tuscon: The University of Arizona Press, 2007), 19-23, 62-63.

part of the scripture that enjoins marriage."[33] Men who married gained something intangible, as well as something tangible: upon gaining a family they stepped fully into their role as the leaders of households and the community. They were no longer single young men, who embodied a problematic, somewhat lesser manhood. One young woman wrote, "A man is... never so perfect in my eyes as when he is married...supporting in his manly arms, wife and children, and the whole domestic circle, which...constitutes part of his home and his world."[34] Assuming a family meant assuming the duties and attributes, like supporting a family and independence, that meant being a real man, and an adult male citizen. Getting married gave a man an air of respectability and responsibility that was necessary for the Republic. "[G]et accepted, marry, and the country will rely on you as a faithful and well-disposed citizen," wrote one man pushing bachelors to get married.[35] The difference in what marriage meant for men's and women's gender identities translated directly into their married relationships. Women continued into their subordinate identities while men assumed their positions of full authority.

"The first year of a married life is a most important era in the history of a man and wife," a *Ladies Repository* article declared from the pages of the *Statesman*. "The wife and the husband then assimilate their views and their desires, or else conjuring up their dislikes, they add fuel to their prejudices and animosities forever afterward."[36] Wives were to subordinate their desires and identities into their husbands' desires and identities.

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[33] "Desperate Bachelor," *Oregon Spectator*, June 5, 1851.
[34] Miss Bremer, "Married Men," *Oregon Spectator*, June 19, 1851; "The Adventures of a Bashful Lover," from the *New York Spirit* in *Oregon Spectator*, April 6, 1848; "Female Influence and Energy," *Oregon Spectator*, September 21, 1848; Donal MacLeod, "Early Marriages," from *Bloodstone* in *Oregon Spectator*, April 7, 1854; "A Husband's Revenge," from the *Cleveland Plainsdealer* in *Oregon Statesman*, August 4, 1851.
[35] "Bachelors," *Oregonian*, October 13, 1852.
[36] "A Happy Home," from *Ladies Repository* in *Oregon Statesman*, July 3, 1852 and *Oregonian*, April 3, 1852.

Men, too, were supposed to treat their wives with respect and kindness, and just a touch of indulgence. Too much indulgence could lead to a female-led household, which was, by definition, broken.

It may come as no surprise that the press spent more time informing wives how they were to behave in the marriage relationship, than on how men should treat their wives. Women were the potential threatening factor; after all, it was in men's interest to keep their power, so they needed less prompting. In addition, there was a prevailing attitude that a man's home was his private dominion, and thus other people had little right to interfere in how he ran his domain. And so, while men got casual advice about their role in the relationship, women got explicit instructions and moralizing stories.

Sometimes these stories were humorous. In an article adapted from a British newspaper, women were taught, satirically, how to "cook" their husbands. The article began with all the things women usually did wrong. "Some women go about it as if their lords were bladders, and blow them up," started the author, "Others keep them constantly in hot water, while others again freeze them by conjugal coldness. Some smother them in hatred contention and variance, and some keep them in pickle all their lives." Clearly, husbands were not going to be "tender and good" managed this way. Instead, the "recipe" suggested:

> Get a large jar, called the jar of carefulness, (which, by the by, all good wives have at hand.) Being placed in it, set him near the fire of conjugal love; let the fire be pretty hot, but especially let it be clear. Above all, let the heat be regular and constant. Cover him well over with equal quantities of affection, kindness and subjection. Keep plenty of these things by you, and be very attentive to supply the place of any that may waste by evaporation, or any other cause. Garnish with modest becoming familiarity, and innocent pleasantry, and if you add kisses or other confectionaries, accompany them with a sufficient portion of secrecy; and it would not be amiss to add a little prudence and moderation.[37]

[37] "How to Cook a Husband," *Oregon Spectator*, September 7, 1848.

The analogy is fairly clear. A wife was to treat her husband with nothing but love and affection and submissiveness, and by doing so, would earn herself a "tender and good" husband. Essentially, her husband, and her children when she had them, were to be the center of the world of the home she created for the family. This perfect, cheerful world, full of complete deference to her husband, was to come at all costs. "And though she may be the injured, not the injuring one; the forgotten not the forgetful wife," the wife was responsible for healing any disagreement and smoothing over any problems. Put simply, "That woman deserves not a husband's generous love, who will not greet him with smiles as he returns from the labours of the day..."[38] A wife could not expect to occupy her proper place in her husband's heart, if she did not occupy her proper place in his home: that of his obedient, cheerful, loving, subordinate partner. Women were to be happy in the knowledge that they were man's best gift, that they were sheltered and protected, and that their influence over their husbands balanced the relationship.[39]

On the husband's side of the relationship, the general message was to be kind, respectful, and have some flexibility – that is, patience. One article started simply, "First, get a wife; secondly, be patient." Then, the man was to understand that his wife had many sorrows and needed his understanding, even if he, like the article, did not know

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[38] "The Wife," *Oregon Statesman*, September 12, 1854; *Oregon Statesman*, May 12, 1857.

[39] See, for example, *Oregon Spectator*, August 11, 1854; "Hints for Wives," *Oregon Spectator*, September 21, 1848; "The True Wife," *Oregon Spectator*, October 18, 1849; Patrick Henry, "Advice of a Father to his Only Daughter," *Oregon Spectator*, November 30, 1848; "The Marriage Vow," *Oregon Spectator*, July 10, 1851; *Oregon Spectator*, November 18, 1851; "To Married Ladies," *Oregon Spectator*, March 31, 1851; "What is Home?" *Oregon Spectator*, August 4, 1854; *Oregon Statesman*, May 11, 1852; *Oregon Statesman*, June 22, 1852; "Reform Should Begin at Home: a Domestic Chat," *Oregon Statesman*, October 30, 1852; "The Wife's Influence," *Oregon Statesman*, July 28, 1855; "A Contented Wife," *Oregon Statesman*, December 1, 1855; "No Gloom at Home," *Oregon Statesman*, June 17, 1856; *Oregon Statesman*, May 12, 1857; Reverend J. P. Wilson, "Moral and Social Philosophy—Duties of a Wife," from the *Newark Advertiser* in *Oregon Statesman*, August 4, 1857; *Oregonian*, May 1, 1852; *Oregonian*, February 26, 1853; "Wives, Save Your Husbands," from *Olive Branch* in *Oregonian*, July 23, 1853; *Oregonian*, February 21, 1857; "Influence of Home," *Oregonian*, September 4, 1858.

what these sorrows were. The final piece of advice was, "show yourself manly, so that your wife can look up to you, and feel that you will act nobly, and that she can confide in your judgement [sic]."[40] As the head of the household, the man was effectively supposed to be the public face of the family, and was to make all major decisions. Yet he was still to listen to his wife and treat her with respect. Like his wife, he was to play his part in setting the mood in the household, by trying to uphold his wife's foundation of cheerfulness.

The most common advice given to men, however, was to indulge their wives on occasion. "Since it is plain that crooked is woman's temper, forgive her faults and blame her not," counseled one article. According to this author, a man should seek to please his wife, but do so carefully, since women were irrational. Another article treated the subject more sympathetically, "a wife and mother has a great many little cares and troubles, which with the kind indulgence of a husband would be soon forgotten."[41] Even this seemingly supportive advice, however, underlines the attitude that the wife's cares were little in comparison to her husband's, and easily forgotten. A husband should be fairly indulgent, but a wife must indulge her husband in all things. The husband-wife relationship reflected the gender identities of the two people involved. Women's identity was that of a hard working, obedient, but morally superior wife, while man's was that of an independent, strong leader. These gender identities blended into the foundational

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[40] "How to Treat a Wife," from the *St. Louis Republican* in *Oregon Statesman*, April 2, 1853.
[41] "How Men Should Treat Women," *Oregonian*, July 12, 1851; "What is Home," *Oregon Spectator*, August 4, 1854; E. A. Chase, "Education of the Young," *Oregon Spectator*, August 29 1850; "Philosophy of Cheerfulness: The Household Circle," from the *Pennsylvania Enquirer* in *Oregon Spectator*, July 3, 1851; Fanny Fern, "How a Husband May Rule," *Oregon Spectator*, April 14, 1854; *Oregon Spectator*, August 11, 1854; *Oregon Statesman*, February 17, 1852; "How to Treat a Wife," *Oregon Statesman*, April 2, 1853; A Lady, "Fallacies of the Gentlemen," from *Exchange* in *Oregonian* June 7, 1851; Fanny Fern, "A Lady or Money Matters," from *Olive Branch* in *Oregonian*, December 4, 1852; "A Scolding Wife," from *Olive Branch* in *Oregonian*, April 9, 1853; "Smiles for Home," *Oregonian*, August 7, 1857.

relationship of the family, which then formed the base of the ideal Anglo-American society and gender hierarchy.

With their marriage relationship sound, husbands and wives could engage in their other familial relationships with greater ease. Parenting was an important role for men and women within the family, as it passed on the crucial lessons and attributes from one generation to the next. The family, as has been seen, was considered the first, and central source of socialization, and parents were supposed to have a large impact on their children's development. Oregon newspapers were filled with advice to parents about raising and teaching their children. A stable and strong state needed well-governed families, and parental indulgence, according to Sir Charles Lyell, had disastrous consequences.[42] Because of this sort of attitude, guidance for parents usually fell into two categories: leading by example and inculcating a good work ethic and proper values.

"The parent who would train up the child in the way he should go, must go in the way he would train up his child. Example before precept," counseled one axiom.[43] Teaching by example was the most important concept for parents. Children followed their parents' examples naturally, since parents were the first and true authorities in children's lives. As well, children listened carefully and they were unjaded. They picked up and imitated their parents' behavior. A woman in one story hid everything the children did wrong from her husband and then was surprised when her children hid what they did wrong from her as well.[44] Another article stated a "course, brawling, scolding

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[42] Sir Charles Lyell, "Parental Indulgence," *Oregon Spectator*, September 23, 1851.
[43] *Oregon Statesman*, March 17, 1857.
[44] "Don't Tell Father!" *Oregon Spectator*, August 5, 1851.

woman will have vicious, brawling, fighting children."[45] Sons learned how to be men by following their fathers' examples, while girls learned industry, female submission, and piety from their mothers.

Parents were also supposed to be proactive with regards to teaching their children important lessons about life. The most important lesson was how to work. Like most adults, Americans were worried about their children. They saw them as lazy and extravagant, stemming largely from the "fashionable education" parents were giving them in eastern cities. In Oregon, as early as 1850, there were several public and private schools set up for the education of children. The schools got grander as the decade progressed, and there was some basis for the applicability of this attitude in Oregon. In any case, newspaper editors published many articles indicating the threat children posed to stability. Two sets of parents learned this lesson in an article titled "I Did as the Rest Did!" which told of a wealthy father who indulged his sons and they grew up to be idlers and fops, while a poor mother brought her daughters up genteelly and wondered why, when they married, their husbands could not support their extravagance. Another article put it more bluntly, "Parents you are responsible for this folly. Set your sons and daughters to work, and let them know that only in usefulness there is honor and

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[45] "The Manners of the Mother Mould the Child," from the *New York Evangelist* in *Oregon Statesman*, December 1, 1857; See also, for example: "Be Careful How You Treat Children," from *Olive Branch* in *Oregon Spectator*, August 4, 1854; "Mind What you Say," from *Olive Branch* in *Oregon Statesman*, October 2, 1852; John M. Howe,"The Oregon Land Bill no.III," *Oregonian*, August 26, 1851; "The Reconciliation," *Oregon Spectator*, June 15, 1848; Isabelle, "Young Ladies and Society," *Oregon Spectator*, February 3, 1855; *Oregon Statesman*, January 20, 1852; *Oregon Statesman*, November 28, 1854; J. K. Paulding, "Adam and Eve," *Oregonian*, March 27, 1852; "Love in a Family," and "Politeness at Home," *Oregonian*, April 23, 1853; "The American School of Papas," *Oregonian*, May 8, 1858; "Teaching Children Selfishness" from *Happy Home* in *Oregon Statesman*, August 24, 1858.

prosperity."[46] Working made them productive members of society, helped them find spouses, and made them better men and women. In addition to the value of work, parents were to teach their children other important values such as sobriety, moderation, obedience and thinking for themselves.[47] All of these things were aimed at grooming a generation that would uphold the ideals of their parents.

Children

The final members of the nuclear family, the children, were the least represented in Oregon's public discourse. This is probably because children were the bottom of the social and gender hierarchies: everyone was above children, they had no political or economic power and most could not read.[48] However, they were society's future, and there was some recognition of this. The Anglo-American elite may have all but ignored children's role in their ideal society, but they were not completely silent on the issue. When they spoke, it was mostly about: the child-parent relationship, the sibling relationship, and children's education. All of these were aimed at maintaining the hierarchy, and reinforcing ideologies of gender and obedience.

There was certain recognition that children were naturally contrary, and that they needed repeated lessons and advice about deference to adult authority. Children were told to "*Honor thy father and mother*, that thy days may be long in the land which the

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[46] "I did as the Rest Did!" *Oregon Statesman*, September 15, 1855; "Young America," *Oregonian*, Agust 23, 1856; Mrs. Mary Abbott, "Training Daughters," *Oregon Spectator*, November 4, 1854; "A Paragraph for Parents," *Oregon Spectator*, November 21, 1850; *Oregonian*, February 7, 1852.

[47] Jane Weaver, "The Runaway Match," from *Preston's Magazine* in *Oregon Spectator*, November 14, 1850; "Riches for Children," from the *Gambier Observer* in *Oregon Spectator*, August 12, 1851; "Teach Children to Think," *Oregon Spectator*, October 21, 1851; "A Father's Advice to His Son," *Oregon Statesman*, June 6, 1851; "Address of George H Williams at Bethel Institute," *Oregon Statesman*, March 11, 1856; "Smart Children," from *Blackwood* in *Oregon Statesman*, July 15, 1856; "Too True," *Oregon Statesman*, June 2, 1857.

[48] According to the 1850 census, only 162 adults counted in Oregon could not read and write. DeBow, *The Seventh Census*, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1850.html.

Lord God giveth thee."[49] Children owed their parents obedience and deference, due to their subordinate place in the household, but also in payment for the love and care that parents were supposed to give their children. The model daughter who appeared in several articles was the very picture of obedience and an ideal child. She always obeyed her parents, worked hard without complaint, and was kind and tender and frugal. In short, she embodied perfect womanhood: she was a miniature woman. Children who conformed to the image of their parents were considered the ideal children. They were smaller men and women so that when they reached the age of adulthood, they already knew their roles and identities.[50]

Sibling relationships depicted in public discourse often followed this pattern. They were essentially training for the inter-gender relationships of adulthood. Sisters were advised to be passive, to return their brothers' violence with kisses. At the same time they were to sacrifice and prepare the best environment they could for their brothers. In return, brothers were supposed to be kind and loving and treat their sisters with the utmost respect. One advice article summed up the relationship: "Boys, be kind to your sisters... Think how many things they do for you, how patient they are with you, how they love you in spite of all your ill temper or rudeness; how thoughtful they are for your comfort..."[51] The evidence is, admittedly, thin for this topic, but what is there, suggests

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[49] "Respect Due to Parents," from the *London Messenger* in *Oregon Spectator*, February 24, 1848; *Oregon Spectator*, March 4, 1854; "Honoring Parents," from the *Delaware Gazette* in *Oregonian*, August 14, 1852; Jane Weaver, "The Runaway Match," from *Preston's Magazine* in *Oregon Spectator*, November 14, 1851; "Too True," *Oregon Statesman*, June 2, 1857.

[50] "The Model Daughter," *Oregon Spectator*, September 16, 1851; "Who is a True Lady: An Interesting and Instructive Story," *Oregon Statesman*, August 19, 1851; "Don't Depend on Father," *Oregon Statesman*, May 13, 1856; "Address of George H. Williams to Bethel," *Oregon Statesman*, March 11, 1856.

[51] "Be Kind to Your Siste[r]s," *Oregonian*, May 2, 1857; "A Kiss for a Blow," *Oregon Spectator*, April 6, 1848; "A Sister's Value," from *West Rec.* in *Oregon Spectator*, August 4, 1854; "A Sister's Value," *Oregon Spectator*, October 21, 1854; "A Tale for the Young: Two Noble-hearted Children," *Oregonian*, August 5, 1854.

that sibling relationships were meant to be sort of training exercises for adult relationships, so that girls learned their proper gender identities and boys learned respect for women.

Similar to parenting, children's school education was of concern on both the ideal and real levels. The evidence on this topic consisted almost completely of editorials and letters, indicating the blurring of ideology and reality. The elites that controlled public discourse realized that the intellectual development of children was crucial to their existence as adults. Education was the second stage of their socialization, after parental influence. In the second stage of socialization, the child's mind was being developed, not his or her moral or gender identity. There were, of course, different agendas for boys' and girls' educations. Boys were to be taught how to think rationally, and behave in a manner befitting the citizen of a republic, as, according to early Oregon settler James McBridge, "Education is the cheapest and safest defence of good government...and moral character."[52] For girls, the subject was a little more complicated. Most of the discussion of female education took place within the context of arguing for greater education, indicating that female education stopped far before boys' did, ostensibly so that they could focus on learning gendered life skills. Even in arguing for greater female education, however, the purpose was to improve their skills as wives. Greater education would teach them to be more efficient at household management, and give them more in common with their husbands.[53] The education of children, like their relationships with

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[52] James McBride, "Letter to the Editor," *Oregon Spectator*, March 7, 1850; James McBride, "Education," *Oregon Spectator*, May 30, 1850; "School Law," *Oregon Spectator*, October 18, 1849; "True Aim of Education," *Oregon Spectator*, November 21, 1850; "A Whig-Knownothing Manufactory," *Oregon Statesman*, March 27, 1855.

[53] "Female Education," *Oregon Spectator*, September 21, 1854; Isabelle, "Young Ladies and Society," *Oregon Spectator*, February 3, 1855; C. W. S., "A Word to School Teachers," *Oregon Spectator*, March 9, 1848; "Acquiring Knowledge," *Oregon Spectator*, January 2, 1851; "A Teaching Story," *Oregon*

their siblings and their obedience to their parents was to train them for their role in society, when they eventually ascended the hierarchy.

Conclusion

Lessons about gender and power are learned through socialization, and a person's earliest socialization takes place within the family. The Anglo-American elite in Oregon knew this, and thus knew the key to the creation and maintenance of a gender hierarchy in their ideal society depended on socialization within the family. It depended on husbands choosing the right kind of wives: wives who knew the value of obedience, industry and cheerfulness. It depended on wives who knew how to work, how to create the proper, ideal household, and how to train their daughters to do the same thing. Children learned by example, and so husbands and wives were counselled carefully on how to treat each other and build the sort of relationship that fit into the carefully crafted gender system. Parenting, and outside education was supposed to solidify these lessons.

But this was an "ideal" society, not reality. Law ensured that women, at least on one level, were subservient to their husbands. They could, theoretically, own land in their own name if they were married, but they could not control it.[54] As seen in Chapter Two, women did aspire to the domestic ideal, they took pride in their domestic endeavours, but, though I have little evidence, one can be sure they were not sunny and cheerful all the time. They were not even obedient all the time. Abigail Malick and Abigail Scott Duniway are just two known example of women who worked within a constrained system and found their own ways of rebellion. Malick hid crucial information and money from her husband, while Duniway simply refused to do certain

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Statesman, August 12, 1851; "Defects of the School Law," *Oregon Statesman*, April 10, 1855; M. H., "Education," *Oregonian*, November 5, 1854.

[54] "A Wife's Property," *Oregon Statesman*, October 27, 1857.

things, like serve and feed her husband's friends when her husband was not home. As well, Duniway was extremely active in the women's rights movement in the decades after statehood. She fought hard for women's property rights, and the right to vote.[55] Women like Duniway frightened elite males, because they pushed for things that threatened the white male power base—hegemony over land ownership and political citizenship.

Men were not always kind to their wives, and they were not always responsible citizens because they were married. Domestic violence was not uncommon in Oregon, and suggested that women did not always live up to expectation, and did not always tolerate being subordinate.[56] Part of the reason why the Anglo-American elite continued to publish advice tracts and moralizing stories was because people did not live out ideology. Oregon was a society in flux, ever changing, forming and reforming, but it was not their ideal society. Further research is likely to show that while there was a definite gender hierarchy, and family was the base of society, it did not look exactly the way the Anglo-American elite wanted.

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[55] Ruth Barnes Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 55; Lillian Schlissel, "The Malick Family in Oregon Territory, 1848-1867," in *Far From Home: Families of the Westward Journey*, eds. Lillian Schlisse, Byrd Gibbens and Elizabeth Hampsten, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989, 2002),20, 26, 28, 32.

[56] Sandra Haarsager, *Oreganized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1920*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 5, 8-9; David Peterson del Mar, *What Trouble I have Seen: A History of Violence Against Wives*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 10-11, 14-15; Melody Graulich, "Violence Against Women; Power Dynamics in Literature of the Western Family," in *The Women's West*, eds. Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 111-126.

Conclusion: Statehood and Beyond

"[T]he people of Oregon are an honest, industrious people; and to charge that they could be capable of making war against the Indians for the sake of plunder is a slander upon chivalrous, high-spirited, and gallant men who have periled their lives and bared their bosoms to the weapons of a skulking and treacherous foe in protecting the defenceless women and children who have been forced to fly from their beautiful dwellings, which have, in many instances, been fired by the torch of the savage before they were out of sight of their once peaceful homes." – Joseph Lane, 1856[1]

As mentioned in my introduction, I began work on this thesis, I started with two main questions: "What happened when American settlers got to the end of the Oregon Trail?" and "What did they want Oregon to look like?" As these are two very large, open-ended questions, I isolated certain topics on which to focus on. I ended up with an examination of male, Anglo-American discourse during the territorial period. This discourse, according to my research, tells us a great deal about the social world of Oregon Territory, about the society white American men hoped to create out of the chaotic and unstable conditions on the west coast, and about what they feared could happen if they were not in positions of power. These men had three main concerns with regards to their ideal society: race, gender and family.

Anglo-American male Oregonians wanted an all-white society that they controlled. This meant getting rid of the non-white inhabitants of Oregon, most especially the Natives. The Anglo-American elite waged a systematic campaign against non-whites in the territorial period, discursively characterizing them in ways that undermined their land and citizenship rights. The two groups on whom they focused were Indians and blacks, as they were the most visible threats to white hegemony in the

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[1] *The Indian War in Oregon* delivered in the house of representatives, May 7, 1856. Washington: Printed at the Congressional Globe Office, 1856. Taken from the Oregon Collection: Lane. *Remarks on the Indian war in Oregon delivered in the House of Representatives May 7, 1856.*

area. Public discourse connected racial identity with citizenship, land ownership and manhood by imbuing whites with character traits that made them the ideal inheritors of the power these three things imparted. Whiteness, in this understanding, was a form of property that constituted a necessary precursor to citizenship, land ownership and manhood. Anglo-American males in Oregon were thus able to delegitimize non-whites by declaring them unfit for power because of their racial categorization. Non-whites were positioned as inferior and dangerous. What characterized inferiority was under debate, but whether Natives or blacks were inferior because they were savage or because they were child-like was not as important as the fact that they were inherently inferior due to their race. When Anglo-Americans combined non-white inferiority with selected violent incidents during the 1850s, they could portray themselves as the victims, thereby giving them the right to get rid of the non-white outsiders. Non-whites were obviously dangerous, and white males had to defend their families. In this highly politicized game, whiteness gave these men the right to own and govern Oregon, while the non-whiteness of Natives and blacks made them unqualified for land and power.

While being white gave Anglo-American men the right to land and power, so too did being male. Race and gender were co-constructed, and being both white and male was crucial to the social hierarchy the male settler-colonists wanted to create in Oregon. This hierarchy, however, was dependent on intricate understandings of what it meant to be male and female, and how these meanings translated into the social interactions that created hierarchies of power. The gender hierarchy the Anglo-American elite envisioned used gender ideology as a tool for deciding which men were fit to rule. Those that embodied ideal masculinity better than others were more deserving of power and prestige

than those who failed to exemplify the proper gender traits. Men were to be strong, honest, independent and honorable. Since men and women were considered discursively opposite, any traits that were considered "womanish" (like dependence) opened them up for ridicule. Opponents often used gendered insults that implied the man in question had female traits in attempt to ruin each other. *Statesman* editor Asahel Bush, for example, simply called his opponent a woman. Women's place in the gender hierarchy was the foundation of male power. They provided the other needed for parts of the definition of masculinity. More important than this, however, since gender traits were not a simple binary, was that women supplied the base of the hierarchy in which men built their gender identity. Oregonian men supported a slightly modified version of "domesticity," pushing female industry and submission above all other traits. Adhering to domesticity meant women remained in the home where their primary identity was that of wife and mother. Women formed the family that men were to head. Women and children were the ones men ruled, and their place allowed men to claim the public, active roles that were crucial to their identity and authority. Women, in short, shored up the hierarchy by assuming a subordinate place as the helpers of men. When something threatened this hierarchy, like the Women's Right's Movement, the male elite lashed out in discourse, belittling and de-legitimizing the threat, just as they did with non-whites.

The last part of the Anglo-American elite's vision of an ordered Oregon society was the very foundation: family. While ideas about race and gender helped give meaning to the chaos that was society in the 1850s, family provided the base on which Oregonians would build their hierarchical society. Family would be a control mechanism, providing a highly structured environment that would allow for the proper socialization of children.

The Donation Land Act of 1850 allowed men to claim land for themselves, as well as for their wives and families. Basing their new society on family allowed the Anglo-American elite to endow white adult males with even more power, since household heads spoke for not only themselves, but also their families, and families were the primary social unit in Oregon. Gendered social power was thus intimately connected to family. By utilizing the socialization process in the family and instilling the proper messages about gender and race, the institution of the family would consequently create and maintain the ideal hierarchy sought by Anglo-American males. The elite became concerned with every facet of family life and used discourse to impart advice and discuss the proper relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, thereby insuring their vision of a society based on hierarchy.

Oregon society in 1860 may not have been *exactly* what the Anglo-American elite of the 1850s had envisioned, but it was not too far off. The power base a certain group of white men in Oregon were able to maintain during the territorial period insured that at least some of their goals were reached. The State Constitution, for example, denied citizenship and land rights to most non-white groups, including Natives, Métis, blacks and Chinese. The Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 gave the mixed-race children of white men the right to claim land, but when the act ended in 1855, so too did this group's right to land. In 1855 the Oregon territorial legislature passed a bill that stripped mixed-race children of their citizenship, inheritance and land ownership rights, thereby defining them legally as Indian, and lumping them into the non-white category. A public vote decided that Oregon would not be a slave state, but it also decided that free blacks were banned from Oregon These racial policies were further enforced by the 1866 Anti-

Miscegenation law, which forbade whites marrying non-whites.[2] By 1860, then, whites in Oregon had achieved the supremacy they had envisioned. In the decades that followed, however, Oregon would become home to thousands of non-whites, brought by the railroad that reached Oregon in the 1870s.[3] Whites would still control Oregon, but they would no longer be able to keep non-whites out.

In 1860, the power block that allowed the Anglo-American elite examined by this study to control almost every facet of Oregon society fell apart. The Salem Clique, as it was called, fractured under the political dissonance caused by the election of Abraham Lincoln and the coming to power of the Republican Party. Asahel Bush, the editor of the *Statesman*, and the helmsman of Oregon's controlling Democratic Party supported the Republican Party and pushed his party to follow, while Joseph Lane, Oregon's Territorial Delegate, and an important Oregon Democrat politician, urged Oregon Democrats to follow the federal Democratic Party, aligning himself with the South and the cause of slavery. This split Oregon's Democratic Party, meaning that it could no longer hold on to its consolidated power and dominate Oregon politically and socially.[4] Thus, the special circumstances of the Territorial Period disappeared. The group that had controlled Oregon for ten years could no longer attempt to enforce its vision of an ideal society through control of economics and politics, leaving room for other influences.

The downfall of consolidated power combined with new social realities and the eventual coming of the railroad changed Oregon. The family-based ideal society

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[2] Art. II, Sec. 6, Art. XV, Sec. 8 "State Constitution," *Oregon Statesman*, September 29, 1857; . Ralph James Mooney, "Remembering 1857," *Oregon Law Review* 87, no. 731 (2008): 777; Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3, 8, 14, 29, 78-79.

[3] David Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise: An Interpretive History* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003), 96-100.

[4] James E. Hendrickson, *Joe Lane of Oregon: Machine Politics and the Sectional Crisis, 1849-1861* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 190-200.

envisioned by the Anglo-American elite of the 1850s both changed and stayed the same, particularly with regard to the gender hierarchy. As Dean May wrote, Oregonian's goals "shifted from the perpetuation of the family on the land to [the] acquisition of wealth."[5] Family remained important, but as Oregon became more affluent, family formation changed and more emphasis was placed on formal schooling to teach young men and women their proper social roles. Second-generation Oregonians (those born in Oregon), according to Cynthia Culver Prescott, clung to their parents' ideas about domesticity and gender identity, but also changed these ideas substantially. The gender hierarchy remained; men held the positions of power that were complemented by their positions of familial heads, and women remained subordinate members of the household. But women in particular expanded their roles. Prescott suggested that while some second-generation women followed the paths of their mothers, others became more involved in the world outside the home. Diversity, Prescott argued, was the defining trait of second-generation women.

The economic prosperity in the decades following 1860 allowed Oregon women to escape their roles as industrious housewives, and instead to become middle-class consumers. Being middle class was no longer about morality, instead it became about consumption and the ability to demonstrate wealth, even in rural settings. Because women were freed from the heavy work associated with early settlement, women were freer to push for the expansion of their rights and roles in society. The Women's Rights Movement blossomed in this period as women increasingly challenged the world their men had created in the 1850s, a fact that was reflected by the increase in misogynistic

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[5] Dean L. May, *Three Frontiers: Family, Land, and Society in the American West, 1850-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 253.

comments in Oregon's newspapers in the 1860s. Women were gaining ground politically, and men did not necessarily like it. The biggest leap for women's rights during the 1860s, 70s and 80s was made in the area of property ownership. The State Constitution stipulated that women could keep the property resources they brought into marriage separate from their husbands, and in 1872 the state passed a law protecting a wife's earnings from her husband's creditors. These concessions were meant to protect wives, not to give them freedoms, but they did so anyway and went a long way in insuring women's control of their own property.[6] Not until 1912, though, would Oregon women finally win the vote.

This study is, first and foremost, an examination of how a group of remarkably powerful men used discourse to tailor the vision of an ideal society, as well, it hints at some of the fears these men had about social disorder. Prescription often is used to combat societal change, and in territorial Oregon, change was all around. Ideologies of race, gender and family tell us that powerful men worried over women gaining economic and political power; that they were concerned at the possibility of non-whites threatening the status quo; that children did not always live up to their parents ideals. This study only suggests some of the ways these men went about implementing their vision, it is by no means complete on the matter. Rather, this study should be taken as a starting point in the study of Oregon Territory. It demonstrates a historical and regional modification of the prescriptive gender ideology generated in the eastern press. This modification allowed domestic ideology to fit the colonial reality of Oregon Territory, where women's

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[6] Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Gender and Generation on the Far Western Frontier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009), 89-91, 117, 118-119, 124, 153; Peterson del Mar, *Oregon's Promise: An Interpretive History* 95-98; David Peterson del Mar, *What Trouble I Have Seen: A History of Violence Against Wives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 17, 20-21.

productive and reproductive roles on family farms remained essential, and the urban nature of eastern ideologies were incompatible with the rural nature of Oregon.

This study also modifies what some historians have posited about gender ideologies in the West. Some argued that American settlers brought with them the gender ideologies of the East and Midwest, and that they struggled to maintain them both on the trail and once they were in Oregon. Faragher suggested that male emigrants clung to a style of manhood that would fall under the category of "martial manhood" in which strength, courage and physical demonstrations of both ruled a man's gender identity. Women, on the other hand, were thought of as weak, emotional creatures who were rightfully confined to the domestic sphere, where their domestic work could fill up their time as they cared for their families. Prescott followed this argument, writing that first-generation Oregon settlers tried to live up to the domestic ideologies they carried with them, and finally succeeded in the 1860s when economic prosperity allowed it.[7] I found, however, that rather Oregonians generated a regionally specific, modified version of eastern gender ideologies that emphasized different traits. It was not as simple as "martial manhood" and weak dependent womanhood. The gender ideology that pervaded the pages of Oregon's newspapers was a blend of masculinities, and a complicated acknowledgement of the strengths and weaknesses of women.

Further, Lillian Schlissel wrote of women on the Oregon Trail as miserable and completely subordinated creatures. In Schlissel's view only women were concerned with family life.[8] But there were women in Oregon, women like Abigail Scott Duniway and Abigail Malick, or the women who occasionally wrote for Oregon newspapers, who

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[7] John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, 2001); Prescott, *Gender and Generation.*

[8] Lillian Schlissel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey (New York: Schocken Books, 1983, 1993).*

defied this characterization. And, as Chapter Three demonstrates, Anglo-American males were clearly concerned with family issues, perhaps in a different way and for different reasons. This study builds on these works, but modifies how they conceived of gender and family in Oregon Territory.

The territorial period marked a unique time in Oregon's history, a time that is still not well understood. Oregon Territory was largely politically homogenous, which allowed the Salem Clique to have disproportionate influence and power on the society and economy of the territory. Its control of most things in Oregon makes its vision for Oregon important for not only for the state Oregon became, but also for the social reality of territorial Oregon. Further investigation is needed to reveal exactly how successful the white elite was in forming Oregon on the everyday level, and the ways individual citizens either ignored or conformed to ideology.

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