INSTRUCTIONS FROM AUTHOR TO LIBRARY FOR THESES AND PRIZE ESSAYS

AUTHOR Jacqueline Romm-Sathow

TITLE Jewish Women in American Literature, Through the Prism of Daughter-Father Relationship

TYPE OF THESIS: Ph.D. [ ] D.H.L. [ ] Rabbinic [✓]

Master's [ ] Prize Essay [ ]

1. May circulate [ ]) Not necessary
2. Is restricted [ ] for ___ years.) for Ph.D.) thesis

Note: The Library shall respect restrictions placed on theses or prize essays for a period of no more than ten years.

I understand that the Library may make a photocopy of my thesis for security purposes.

3. The Library may sell photocopies of my thesis. ___ yes ___ no

Date

Signature of Author

Library Record

Microfilmed Date June 7, 1996

Marilyn Kuder

Signature of Library Staff Member

Jewish Women in American Literature, Through the Prism of Daughter-Father Relationships

Jacqueline Romm Satlow
Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1996
Referee, Professor Alvin Reines

Digest

In this thesis, I examine four pieces of literature each with a set of fictional daughters and fathers. These literary works are *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska, "Dreamer in a Dead Language" by Grace Paley, "The Opiate of the People" by Lynne Sharon Schwartz and "Electricity" by Francine Prose. I view the relationships between these characters through a metaphorical three-sided prism: The three sides are psychology, education and religion. These sets of daughters and fathers are at the center of a prism and looked at through three separate lenses. The first is the psychological. These fathers and daughters are each molded by their personal psychology. Their parent child relationship is molded by the psychological dynamics between them. Many of the psychological influences upon these particular daughters and these particular fathers are human psychological issues faced universally by fathers and by daughters. Accordingly, I include an individual chapter on the psychological dynamics, primarily as understood by psychoanalysis. This chapter explains the nature of the analytic tools I employ in my examination of the psychological elements in these stories. While this is so, I do not neglect the other two sides of the prism. These two sides, namely education and religion, are influenced by a number of factors. First and foremost are the underlying psychological forces. However, the personalities and relationships of these characters are also influenced by economic, historical, sociological and theological issues and events. As indicated above, the daughter-father relationship is examined through the lens of education. Such questions as the level and importance of education to each character are examined. Also the way education functions between them as a factor in their relationship is analyzed. The third side of

the prism is the religious. Do these characters believe in any type of ultimate truth in the universe? Why or why not? How does each of these characters interact with his/her Jewish heritage? How does religion function in the relationship between these two family members? The prism of this thesis has three separate sides, three separate ways of seeing a relationship. Although these are three different ways of looking at the same pieces of literature, the same characters, and the same relationship, these three sides are unified because the subject matter examined is unified. In as much as my view is that literature reveals significant insights into the human condition, by examining the same characters in a variety of ways, I am able to approach a greater level of truth and knowledge about the daughter-father relationship than would be possible through a single lens. Ultimately these chapters are unified because they demonstrate three separate ways to examine a relationship that is universal - the relationship between a daughter and her father.

Contents

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I examine four pieces of literature each with a set of fictional daughters and fathers. I view the relationships between these characters through a metaphorical three-sided prism: The three sides are psychology, education and religion. These sets of daughters and fathers are at the center of a prism and looked at through three separate lenses. The first is the psychological. These fathers and daughters are each molded by their personal psychology. Their parent child relationship is molded by the psychological dynamics between them. Many of the psychological influences upon these particular daughters and these particular fathers are human psychological issues faced universally by fathers and by daughters. Accordingly, I include an individual chapter on the psychological dynamics, primarily as understood by psychoanalysis. This chapter explains the nature of the analytic tools I employ in my examination of the psychological elements in these stories. While this is so, I do not neglect the other two sides of the prism. These two sides, namely education and religion, are influenced by a number of factors. First and foremost are the underlying psychological forces. However, the personalities and relationships of these characters are also influenced by economic, historical, sociological and theological issues and events. As indicated above, the daughter-father relationship is examined through the lens of education. Such questions as the level and importance of education to each character are examined. Also the way education functions between them as a factor in their relationship is analyzed. The third side of the prism is the religious. Do these characters believe in any type of ultimate truth in the universe? Why or why not? How does each of these characters

interact with his/her Jewish heritage? How does religion function in the relationship between these two family members? The prism of this thesis has three separate sides, three separate ways of seeing a relationship. Although these are three different ways of looking at the same pieces of literature, the same characters, and the same relationship, these three sides are unified because the subject matter examined is unified. In as much as my view is that literature reveals significant insights into the human condition, by examining the same characters in a variety of ways, I am able to approach a greater level of truth and knowledge about the daughter-father relationship than would be possible through a single lens. Ultimately these chapters are unified because they demonstrate three separate ways to examine a relationship that is universal - the relationship between a daughter and her father.

Psychological Overview: According to psychoanalytic theory, children pass through several stages of psychological development as they develop physically. Healthy psychological development first of all requires successfully passing through "oral", "anal" and "phallic" stages to attain the final and mature "genital" stage. Also necessary for mature development is successful resolution of the Oedipus complex[1] which appears in addition to the above mentioned libidinal stages. According to Freud, girls pass through the stages of "oral" and "anal" development in the same way as boys. It is in the "phallic" stage that the psychological development of girls begins to differ from that of boys. Nevertheless, when males and females attain the "genital" stage, the personality characteristics of the two sexes become increasingly similar. This point will be further explored in the thesis.

---

[1]Freud rejects the term "Electra complex" in "Female Sexuality" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume XXI, 1927-1931. trans. E.B. Jackson and Joan Riviere (London: The Hogarth Press and The Insititute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961), p.229.

Freud describes separate lines[2] in which the female resolves her castration complex develops from her phallic stage toward adulthood. One is a general revulsion from sexuality. She is frightened by the comparison between male and female genitalia and dissatisfied with the clitoris. She resolves her Oedipus conflict by giving up phallic activity and sexuality. Another path of female psychological development is for the girl to maintain her hope for developing a penis. This can become her life's aim and can lead to repeated attempts to symbolically develop a penis. In this case, her basic femaleness will be denied. Her mother will be her sexual love object rather than her father. This can lead to bisexuality or to lesbianism. In the third path of development, the daughter takes her father as a love object - the female Oedipus conflict."[3] Helene Deutsch discusses a girl's wavering in her search for a choice of a love object between her mother and her father.[4] Her mother is her first and primary love object who has met her physical and pleasure needs during infancy and early childhood. During this stage she is in the process of making a shift to her secondary love object, her father. "The process is a conflict between attachment and detachment..."[5] As stated earlier, this thesis will examine women in literature who resolve the Oedipus conflict through identification with their fathers. When she models herself after the autarchic part of his personality, she is able to leave him and become an independent entity. These daughters often choose their fathers as role models as part of a search for autarchy.

---

[2]According to Freud, these lines of development result from the castration complex. See p.3.

[3] Sigmund Freud, "Female Sexuality" in *The Standard Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume XXI, 1927-1931. trans. E.B. Jackson and Joan Riviere (London:The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961), p.229.

[4]Helene Deutsch, M.D. *The Psychology of Women, A Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1944), I, 32.

[5]Deutsch, I, 253.

The Phallic Stage: In the phallic stage, children become aware of their own genitalia and those of others. The phallic phase, during which a boy's penis becomes increasingly important to him is known, for a girl, as the clitoris phase. "The anatomic structure...and erectibility make the clitoris an organ comparable to the penis...(yet it) lacks (the) forward thrusting and penetrating qualities of the penis."[6] Psychoanalysts discuss the girl's developing feeling of inferiority when she compares her own genitalia with those of her brother or father. She is jealous of their superiority. It is unclear the extent to which cultural and sociological forces create the young girl's feeling of inferiority.[7] As the boy maintains interest in his own (external) genitals, the girl's interests move inward. Her internal interest in her genitals leads to interest in giving birth to a baby. Some consider the transformation of the penis wish into the wish for a child, but Helene Deutsch does not believe this to be true for all women.[8]

Prepuberty/Puberty: Throughout the period leading up to puberty, the girl shows a thrust of energy.[9] She may become absorbed in sublimated[10] activities like religious, ethical, artistic or scientific pursuits.[11] Her competitive urge may be transplanted to a mental field.[12] She searches for a role model by closely examining not only her

---

[6]Deutsch, I, 227.

[7]Freud was aware of feminist disagreement with his views, especially of his discussion of female anatomy and inferiority. See Note #1 in "Female Sexuality".

[8]Deutsch, II, 60-61.

[9]Deutsch, I, 5.

[10]To sublimate is to divert the energy of a sexual or other biological impulse from its immediate goal to one of a more acceptable social, moral, or aesthetic nature or use. *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, Second Edition, Unabridged (New York: 1987)

[11]Karen Horney, *Feminine Psychology*, (New York: WW Norton and Company, Inc.), 1967, p.235.

[12]Horney, p.241.

parents, but also her teachers, her best friend, and others.[13] Later, as puberty approaches, the relationship between the two girl friends often develops sado-masochistic tendencies and can have harmful effects.[14] In addition to family members, teachers, and friends, even fictional role models become very important for a young girl.[15] In prepuberty, girls also develop a need for privacy and secrecy.[16] The feelings of the daughter toward her parents vary during this stage. She may become quite critical of her parents and particularly of her mother.[17] As the girl reaches puberty and adolescence, she moves away from the close connection she previously had with her mother during her infancy and early childhood. Separating from her mother can be difficult for the girl. The relationship between a mother and a daughter is more intense and leaves more of a possibility for significant problems of development than the mother/son relationship.[18] The daughter may feel guilty about striving for separation from her mother. "Especially in puberty, the mother's fear of losing her daughter, added to the daughter's overcompensated hatred, results in an excessively strong tie between them."[19] The father is an uninfluential figure during this period, often remaining in the background.[20] His importance in the psychological state of his daughter is about to increase dramatically.

> There is no single consolidated idea of the mother or the father. There is a beloved mother, and a hated mother; a sublime ideal mother and a disreputable

---

[13]Deutsch, I, 13.

[14]Deutsch, I, 16.

[15]Deutsch, I, 13.

[16]Deutch, I, 11.

[17]Deutch, I, 7.

[18]Deutsch, I, 253.

[19]Deutsch, II, 309.

[20]Deutsch, I, p.20.

> sexual one; a mother who has castrated the father and another who has been castrated by him; one who bears children and one who kills them; one who nourishes them another who poisons them; there is the rival and the personification of security and protection. Similarly there are many different fathers creating a host of possibilities for identification. The choice of identification ....depends upon earlier developments.[21]

In choosing a parental role model, she "gradually turns from her almost exclusive attachment to her mother toward her father, wavers between the two, and wants to have them both, until finally she turns toward her father with greater intensity, although still not exclusively."[22] The triangle in which the girl identifies with both her father and her mother during prepuberty is accompanied by a period of bisexuality.[23]

Adolescence: In adolescence, a girl's rising sexual urge is marked by fear.[24] By this stage of life, her tendency toward passivity is quite noticeable.[25] A normal girl's relationship with her parents changes significantly during adolescence. She abandons her infantile overestimation of her parents. She now underestimates them.[26] She makes a firm choice of a role model, no longer wavering among several. She goes through stages becoming increasingly decisive in her choice. Later puberty and adolescence (the second edition of the Oedipus situation according to Freud) is marked by clearer identification in the choice of object and strong heterosexual tendencies.[27] Like boys in their Oedipal stage, girls along this normal path of development turn away from their child-like dependence upon the mother who represents the old infantile gratifications in favor

---

[21]Deutsch, I, 7.

[22]Deutsch, I, 32.

[23]Deutsch, I, 32.

[24]Deutsch, I, 93.

[25]Deutsch, I, 140.

[26]Deutsch, I, 92.

[27]Deutsch, I, 89.

of the father who represents reality and the outside world[28] and upon whom she was not dependent for infantile gratification. As she turns toward her father she tries to compete with her mother for his attention. The process of turning away from her mother is "a conflict between attachment and detachment; the latter acquires new hate components from the now intensified rivalry for the father's love, but in favorable cases the process ends with a positive, tender, and forgiving relation to the mother."[29] The psychological work done by an adolescent girl is significant.

> The task of adolescence is not only to master the Oedipus complex, but also to continue the work begun during prepuberty and early puberty, that is to give adult forms to the old, much deeper and much more primitive ties with the mother, and to end all bisexual wavering in favor of a definite heterosexual orientation.[30]

Resolution of the Female Oedipus Conflict: Helene Deutsch defines healthy adult women as displaying a passive erotic attitude with an intensified inner life, a well developed sense of intuition, and a deepened emotional life.[31] She also says that a woman needs a certain amount of masochism if she is to be adjusted to reality since reproduction involves considerable toleration of pain for women.[32] In order to reach a psychologically healthy state in adulthood, a woman must resolve her Oedipal conflict. Resolution of the Oedipal conflict is quite difficult for a girl. It is also not easy to determine criteria which demonstrate that she has resolved her conflict. An authentic female can be autarchic or heterarchic.[33] She has a flexibility that the male does not have. While a male who is heterarchic/passive is instinctively looked down upon this is

---

[28]Deutsch, I, p.244.

[29]Deutsch, I, 253.

[30]Deutsch, I, 116.

[31]Deutsch, I, 209.

[32]Deutsch, I, 276.

[33]For the definitions of autarchy and heterarchy, please see page 16.

not the case for a female. A woman has two choices in resolution of the Oedipus. [34] If her culture allows it and she has the strength and desire she can develop an autarchic nature. If her culture does not allow it and her nature does not push for it, she can slip into the heterarchic role.[35] Indicators of resolution can be contradictory. For example, identifying with her mother may signal that she is assuming a woman's role and thus has resolved her conflict. On the other hand, it can signal dependency and an inability to express her own personality.[36] According to Dr. Alvin Reines, a woman has resolved her Oedipus if she is a person who finds life meaningful, knows the activity/profession she wishes to pursue, is pleased when she pursues it, and simply does not feel the deeply negative moods of anxiety, depression, etc. The above can be determined by asking her. A woman is able to resolve her sense of genital inferiority when a baby (especially a son) takes the place of a penis.[37] "She gives up her emotional reactions to the lack of an organ and her fantasy life becomes, so to speak, feminized, i.e. her interests turn gradually to the idea of the child..." [38] Her wish for a penis becomes sublimated into an entirely different desire - to have a baby. Yet not all women who have given birth have resolved their Oedipal conflicts successfully. Some women sublimate the Oedipal conflict in other ways. Some psychoanalysts claim that

---

[34]According to Dr. Reines, this dual nature may result from the dual nature of her genitalia. The clitoris is the physical capasity to be autarchic while the vagina is the physical capasity for passivity.

[35]My thanks to Dr. Alvin Reines for this explanation of the dual possibilities of Oedipal resolution available for women.

[36]Deutsch, I, 116.

[37]Freud, "Femininty" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1964), XXII, p.128.

[38]Deutsch, II, 60.

sublimation is not truly satisfying to a woman's nature.[39]

The daughter in Western Culture: The daughter has an ambivalent status within the family. [40] One way of determining the relative status of particular family roles within a culture is to examine the cultural stories of origin. These are the families portrayed as ideal. In the Bible we have two examples of family origin (or genesis). One example is the genesis of the entire world. This beginning is represented by Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel. The other example represents the origins of the Hebrew people. Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. The Christian Bible also portrays the genesis of Christianity through a family of three, Mary, Joseph and Jesus.[41] None of these descriptions of family origins contains a woman who is a daughter at the key moment of origin. Within the stories describing family genesis, the authorized roles are those of father, mother and son.[42]

Anthropological theory assigns value to the daughter because of her ability to be exchanged as a gift, making alliances between fathers.[43] Yet many theorists argue against the theoretical classification of the daughter as valuable for exchange because in western mythology we find fewer examples of fathers eager to marry off their daughters for the resulting alliance benefits than we find the father as a

---

[39]Horney, pp. 70 and 115.

[40] Lynda E. Boose, "The Father's House and the Daughter in It: The Structures of Western Culture's Daughter-Father Relationship" in *Daughters and Fathers* ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.64.

[41]Theologically, of course, Christianity originates from another trinity, that of God, Jesus and the Holy Ghost.

[42] Boose, p.51.

[43] For more information on the value of daughters in connection with a father's ability to exchange them, see Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship.*

blocking figure who wants to retain his daughter. There are more examples of the father trying to avoid loss than trying to pursue gain. [44]

In the patriarchal family, the father has the ability, like God, to bestow or to take away life at the utterance of a word. There are numerous examples in our culture, both Jewish and Western, of fathers who murder their daughters. One reason fathers murder their daughters is to fulfill perceived demands of the patriarchy, ensuring success of a cultural project.[45] We see this in the sacrifice of Agamemnon's daughter, Iphigenia, in order to make successful war against the Trojans. We see a similar story in Judges 11. There, Jephthah murders and sacrifices his daughter in order to thank God for military victory over the Ammonites. We also have examples of mothers who murder children (Medea) and sons who murder fathers (Oedipus). We have very very few examples of daughters who murder fathers. The notoriety of Lizzie Borden relates to the unusual nature of the crime of which she was accused. Patricide by a daughter may be so rare because daughters are socialized to be peaceful and domestic,[46] or aspects of their nature may be genetic. "The daughter's need for paternal approval and her residual awe of the godlike father seem to override the violent impulses of revenge or competition." [47]

The power of the father often silences a woman's speech, especially when her speech is threatening to his power. The daughter's power is only suppressed and

---

[44] Boose, pp. 30-31. One example is Rapunzal.

[45] Boose, p.40.

[46] Of course Lizzie Borden was accused of killing both parents. I am indebted to Dr. Karla Goldman for the insight about Lizzie Borden and discussion about the cultural construction of young women as peaceful and domestic.

[47] Boose, p.39.

muted[48] rather than aggressive. Fiction writing can be seen as self-analytic. According to Diane Sandoff, "The writer is other to herself." The "other" represents her own unconscious which is uncovered through the writing of fiction. [49] When the protagonist is the daughter and the writer is also a daughter, it is the writing process which helps to free the writer from the ghost of her father. Thus writing can be self analytic. [50] Writing is a "question of control...literary activity based upon competition, specifically against a masculine power judged...greater than herself."[51] The daughter wins a war against her father and against passivity by speaking and by writing. [52] By focusing on the daughter instead of the father, each of these stories engages in a revolutionary activity. These stories give volume to the usually silenced voice of the daughter.

The Application of Psychological Theory to Literature: The study of family relationships in literature has always been an important part of the study of literature. For the past few decades, scholars have used the Oedipal complex as a theoretical framework to interpret their growing interest in literary father-son relationships.[53]

---

[48] Christine Froula, "The Daughter's Seduction: Sexual Violence and Literary History," in *Daughters and Fathers*, ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.112.

[49] Diane F. Sandoff, "The Clergyman's Daughters: Anne Bronte, Elizabeth Glaskell and George Elliot," in *Daughters and Fathers*, ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.317.

[50] Sandoff, pp. 318-319.

[51] Dieht, p.335.

[52] Dieht, p.327.

[53] See Allen Guttmann, *The Jewish Writer in America Assimilation and the Crisis of Identity*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) p.48. Catherine Rising, *Darkness at Heart: Fathers and Sons in Conrad*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990) Devorah Steinmetz, *From Father to Son: Kinship, Conflict and Continuity in Genesis*, (Louisville, KY, 1991) David L. Dudley, *My Father's Shadow: Intergenerational Conflict in African American Men's Autobiography* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Penn. Press, 1991)

Scholars have also focused upon mother-son relationships.[54] The discussion of mothers broadened into a general discussion on the topic of mothering in general and in literature, including the characteristics of good mothering and the effects of poor mothering. With the rising interest in the study of women in literature, the study of mother-daughter relationships is currently fashionable.[55] Several literary anthologies about and by women deal with such relationships. Yet there has been very little study of the daughter per se and equally little on relationships between daughters and fathers. It is the purpose of this thesis to discuss Jewish daughters and their relationships with fathers in several literary works written by Jewish women.[56]

One of the reasons why the daughter-father relationship has received so little attention is the general silence and invisibility of the daughter. When she is studied it is frequently in the context of her relationship with her mother. When literary scholars began to study women in literature, they often tend to discuss relationships between women. Therefore the mother/daughter relationship is an obvious concern. Nancy Chodorow's book *The Reproduction of Mothering Psychoanalysis and the*

---

[54] Adele Marie Barker, *The Mother Syndrome in the Russian Folk Imagination*, (Columbus: Slavica, 1986) Margaret Storch, *Sons and Adversaries: Women in William Blake and DH Lawrence*, (Knoxville: Univ. of Tenn., 1990 Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to the Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992)

[55] For an example, see the abstract of Nancy Ezer's paper on "The Mother-Daughter Dialectic: The Book of Internal Grammar by David Grossman." The paper was given at the NAPH Methodology Conference in Berkeley, California in June 1994.

[56] Some additional examples of literary studies of daughters in relation to their mothers include: Ruth Adler: "Mothers and Daughters:The Jewish Mother as Seen by Jewish Women Writers." *Yiddish* 6 (1987): 87-92. Ann Daly. *Inventing Motherhood: The Consequences of an Ideal.* New York: Schocken Books, 1983. Jane Flax. "The Conflict Between Nurturance and Autonomy in Mother-Daughter Relationships and within Feminism." *Feminist Studies* 4, No. 1 (February 1978):171-89. Faye Moskowitz. (ed.) *Her Face in the Mirror Jewish Women on Mothers and Daughters,* (Boston: Independent Publishing, 1994). An examination of the MLA Bibliography demonstrates numerous examples of articles discussing father-son, mother-son and mother-daughter relationships in literature. It shows almost no examples of literary discussions of fathers and daughters.

Sociology of Gender, published in 1978, presents a coherent feminist psychological interpretation of mothering. Much of the recent literary scholarship on mothers and daughters applies Chodorow's work to literature.[57] The father-daughter relationship has yet to be laid out in as clear a framework as the one provided by Chodorow.

In a patriarchal family structure, the individual with the most power is the father. Obviously, there is a considerable amount of literature in which the protagonist is a male who is also a father. Yet this aspect of their identity is not often emphasized. There are few publications on the psychology of good fathering in general and especially good fathering for a daughter. The same holds for treatment of the father-daughter relationship. Feminist scholars may avoid studying father-daughter relationships because confronting the father involves a confrontation with patriarchal family which is wrought with emotional difficulties. The array of books available on father-son and mother-daughter relationships, is in contrast with the paucity of those dealing with the daughter-father relationship and its application to literature.[58]

In Jewish literature, as in literature generally, the daughter-father relationship has also been overlooked. While fictional works with interesting fathers and daughters do exist, literary analysis of American Jewish fiction usually leaves out this relationship. Analysis focused on the portrayal of Jewish women in literature discusses other family relationships. While discussion of Jewish mothers and daughters is currently receiving attention,[59] fiction which explores the father-daughter relationship is sometimes misassigned because the focus on mother-daughter relationships is so strong. One example of incorrect placement is the Grace Paley story discussed in this

---

[57]See note #3 above.

[58] See Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers, *Daughters and Fathers*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

[59] One example is Faye Moskowitz (ed.), *Her Face in the Mirror Jewish Women on Mothers and Daughters*, (Boston: Independent Publishing, 1994).

thesis, "Dreamer in a Dead Language". Sylvia Barack Fishman in *Follow My Footprints Changing Images of Women in American Jewish Fiction* places this story, incorrectly as I will argue, in her section on mothers and daughters.

How do we analyze daughter-father relationships in literature? The psychological approach would appear to be a fruitful one, yielding an insightful understanding of these relationships. Psychology supplies a logic for understanding seemingly illogical aspects of complicated relationships. When applied to literature, the psychological framework helps probe the depth of the characters, their anger, motivation, and needs. Psychology can offer a perspective that aids us in understanding the dynamic of the family and perhaps society as a whole, including the daughter, her origins and her sexual identity.[60]

Application of Literary and Psychological Theory to this Thesis: This thesis will examine women in literature who resolve the Oedipus conflict through identification with their fathers. This thesis will demonstrate a paradigm of daughter-father relationships that are molded by sexual ambivalence. In a healthy relationship, there is an erotic character in the girl's turn toward her father. "When this seduction on the part of the father is lacking, the girl will encounter difficulties in her feminine development."[61] On the other hand, a girl whose turn toward her father is too intense and who maintains her childhood overestimation of her father can only transfer her feelings toward another man with difficulty and by placing extreme demands upon him.[62] This work will apply psychological theory to the following pieces of literature: *Bread Givers*

---

[60] This last idea was influenced by Nancy Ezer, "The Mother-Daughter Dialectic: The Book of Internal Grammar by David Grossman" a paper given at the NAPH Methodology Conference in Berkeley, California June 1994. She was influenced by Nancy Chodorow.

[61] Deutsch, I, 253.

[62] Deutsch, I, 247.

by Anzia Yezierska, "Dreamer in a Dead Language" by Grace Paley, "The Opiate of the People" by Lynne Sharon Schwartz and "Electricity" by Francine Prose. The way in which the Oedipus complex is resolved and the genital stage attained is basically by identification with either one or both parents. In this thesis particular attention will be paid to those women who resolve their Oedipus by fundamental identification with their fathers. A woman can renounce her feminine erotic role and achieve satisfactory sublimation through identification with her father.[63] The girl often sees her father as helping to liberate her from the passivity of her mother.[64] Two concepts will be employed here to help clarify the problem of identification of a female with a male, that, is the daughter with her father. These are the concepts of autarchy and heterarchy introduced by Alvin Reines. These concepts are consistent with the psychoanalytic concepts of Freud and Deutsch but help to present even more clearly what psychic activity is involved in the case of a female who employs her father rather than her mother as her ego ideal.

Autarchy and Heterarchy: The autarchic person believes that s/he possesses an ultimate moral right to authority over her/himself and to autonomy. Thus the autarchic person believes that s/he has the freedom to believe, desire and act as s/he chooses according to truths and values that s/he determines. The autarchic person uses reason to control the will or desire. In addition, the autarchic person bases her/his life decisions upon that which he personally judges reality and goodness to be. Thus autarchy demands aloneness rather than influence by others. The heterarchic person believes that some other entity possesses ultimate authority over her/him with the moral right, there-

---

[63]Deutsch, I, 287.

[64]Deutsch, I, 251.

fore, to command how he must believe, desire and act.[65] The daughters in these four literary works remain under the control of their fathers until they are able to achieve autonomy. Each resolves her Oedipal conflict and achieves autarchy when she confronts her father and asserts her independence. A forceful confrontation is the first part of these daughters journeys to successful resolution of their relationships with their fathers. The independent voices of these daughters emerge only through confrontation with their fathers. Still, although these daughters work hard to attain autarchy the journey is a difficult one and they do not always succeed.

Education and Religion: In addition to dynamic depictions of daughter-father relationships, each of these works also contain common themes of education and religion. In chapters three and four, I develop these two themes. Attitudes toward education and religion affect and are affected by the daughter-father relationship. In the chapter on education, I discuss the effects of education on the daughter-father relationship. The daughters in the four literary works mentioned above develop an educational curiosity very much like their fathers. The similarity in intellectual and educational drive helps to reconcile the daughter-father relationship. These daughters use education in their struggle to achieve autonomy and their own identities. In these literary works, the resolution of a daughter-father relationship helps the daughter to make autonomous educational decisions which help her to lead an autarchic life. Those daughters who are heterarchic struggle for an intellectual focus.

The role of Judaism in the stories, which I discuss in chapter four, both supports and complicates my thesis, that when each daughter resolves her relation-

---

[65]Dr. Alvin Reines introduces and developes the principles of autarchy and hererarchy in the following two articals:

Alvin J. Reines, "Ontology, Demography, and the Silent Holocaust" in *Judaism* Vol. 38, Num 4, Fall 1989.pp. 478-487.

Alvin J. Reines, "Reform Judaism: The Shock of Freedom" in *Jews in a Free Society: Challenges and Opportunities* ed. Edward A. Goldman (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1978) pp. 128-141.

ship with her father, she achieves her own religious identity which is often very much like the religious identity of her father. On the other hand, the daughters in these works who are unable to resolve their relationships with their fathers never achieve their own Jewish voices. Because these daughters appear on the surface to be religiously different from their fathers in significant ways, a superficial examination of the role of Judaism in these stories does not appear to confirm my thesis. However, I will show that on a deeper level, the role of Judaism is entirely consistent with my thesis. These daughters often disagree with the religion of their fathers, yet when they choose a new religious focus, their approach to it is like their fathers. They resemble their fathers in their confidence in personal religious decisions. The four daughters analyzed in this study support the thesis stated above.

In order to substantiate any discussion of daughters and fathers in Jewish literature and women's literature, both Jewish literature and women's literature need to be defined. These definitions will also explain the reason these stories were selected for this thesis.

What Makes Literature Jewish?

There has been much academic discussion about what is Jewish[66] Literature and especially what is American Jewish Literature.[67] The clearest definition of Jewish

---

[66]By "Jewish" I mean all persons considered to be Jews by some sizeable group of Jews who are regarded generally by other Jews as Jews. There is no universal agreement on the meaning of "Jewish". My thanks to Dr. Alvin Reines' artical "Ontology, Demography, and the Silent Holocaust" (*Judaism*, Fall 1989, p.478) for this definition.

[67] For examples of this discussion, see the following: Robert Alter. *Defenses of the Imagination: Jewish Writers and Modern Historical Crises.* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society), 1977. Murray Baumgarten. *City Scriptures: Modern Jewish Writing*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 1982. David Daiches. "Some Aspects of Anglo-American Jewish Fiction." in *Jewish Perspectives*, ed. Jacob Sonntag. (London: Secker and Warburg), 1980. Theodore Gross. *The Literature of American Jews*. (New York: Harper and Brothers) 1952. Allen Guttmann. *The Jewish Writer in America: Assimilation and the Crisis of Identity*. (New York: Oxford University Press), 1971. Geoffrey Hartman. "On the Jewish Imagination." *Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History* 5 (September 1985): 201-220.

Literature is literature written in a Jewish language. Yet this definition is problematic. This definition would exclude the literature discussed in this thesis because it is written in English. Moreover, the work written by Elie Weisel, and many others, would not be classified as Jewish literature. Some literature, like that of Anton Shamas, an Israeli Arab who writes in Hebrew, would mistakenly be considered Jewish Literature by this definition. [68]

In contrast, the simplest formula for defining Jewish literature, and one of the least satisfying, is that Jewish Literature is literature written by Jews. [69] Thus American Jewish Literature is literature written by American Jews. However, defining literature by its author's ethnic background is problematic. Some argue that this approach is racist. [70] Jewish authors all over the world may have nothing in common. It is difficult to argue that all Jewish authors share a similar culture. One can look simply at the vast differences in culture illustrated by Nathanael West and Sholem Aleichem to reinforce this point.

A third effort to define Jewish literature describes a similarity in Jewish outlook. This argument points to common Jewish literary themes. Literary works containing these themes, and written by Jews, are considered Jewish literature. For instance, many Jewish writers examine in their work the effect that living in disparate cultures has on the individual. Allen Guttmann examines this theme in American Jewish Literature. He approaches American Jewish Literature historically and

---

[68] Hana Wirth-Nesher, "Introduction," in *What Is Jewish Literature*, ed. Hana Wirth-Nesher (Philadelphia:The Jewish Publication Society, 1994) p.4.

[69] Wirth-Nesher, p.3.

[70] Wirth-Nesher, p.3 from Geoffrey Hartman, "On the Jewish Imagination," *Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History* 5 (1985): 201-220.

sociologically. He claims that American Jewish Literature deals "significantly with the process of assimilation and the resultant crisis of identity." [71] According to Guttmann, American Jewish Literature concerns itself with continuities and discontinuities and the ways in which Jews in America have come to differ from their ancestors.[72] However, this theory has problematic implications. As Wirth-Nesher points out, if American Jewish Literature is Jewish because it is only partially adjusted to America, then it will not be Jewish for very long. According to this theory,

> Jewish Literature is always short-lived, a symptom of incomplete assimilation in the case of immigrant literature or a lack of self-sufficiency in one language and culture. Transient and anomalous, it is always aiming for its own extinction.[73]

Guttmann wonders about Jewish creativity when the behavioral distinctions between Jews and Gentiles become insignificant.[74] In 1971 when his book was published, Guttmann was concerned with complete Jewish acculturation. He points out that

> Jews have become indistinguishable in their behavior from Protestants and Catholics, not because Jews have turned to Christ but because all three groups have demonstrated their allegiances to Caesar....at what point does the assimilated descendant of Jews cease to be a Jew? [75]

Other literary theorists claim that Jewish writers consider distinctive themes other than the effects of immigration. These theorists describe a worldwide commonality in literature written by identifying Jews, despite the differences in culture. Ludwig Lewisohn defined Jewish Literature by writing, "A Jewish book is a book written by man who

---

[71] Guttmann, pp. 12-13.

[72] Guttmann, p.12.

[73] Wirth-Nesher, p.4.

[74] Guttmann, p.226.

[75] Guttmann, pp. 8-10.

knows he is a Jew." [76] Some believe that Jewish Literature portrays characters who go through conversion by sacrificing and suffering for fundamental goodness; thus each of these characters become the "essential Jew".[77] Some point to common Jewish themes involving conflict between the generations or ethical commitment.[78] Ethical commitment may be demonstrated through a sense of social awareness or a revolutionary protest which might be viewed as Jewish.[79] There are literary theorists who see Jewish literature marked by profound consciousness of Jewish history or drawing upon literary traditions that are recognizably Jewish.[80] That consciousness might involve a common sense of exile,[81] or alienation and estrangement.[82] American Jewish literature written in English would thus be doubly exiled, by language and by location. [83] Saul Bellow identifies Jewish literature by its tone. He describes a

> blend of laughter and trembling. (Bellow) makes a plea for accepting what he calls the accidents of history, the Jewish writers who accept the mixture and impurity of their cultural makeup and inscribe it into their art.[84]

Cynthia Ozick expands upon the idea that Jewish Literature contains themes which are centrally Jewish. She points to parallels between the essence of Jewishness

---

[76] Marie Syrkin, "Jewish Awareness in American Literature" in *The American Jew, a Reappraisal* ed. Oscar I. Janowsky, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1967), p.212.

[77] Wirth-Nesher, p.4.

[78] Wirth-Nesher, p.4.

[79] Syrkin, p.227.

[80] Wirth-Nesher, p.5.

[81] Wirth-Nesher, p.7.

[82] Syrkin, p.233.

[83] Wirth-Nesher, p.7.

[84] Wirth-Nesher, p.6.

and the essence of writing. Ozick claims that art with this Jewish essence is eternal. This type of art draws on liturgy, Torah, Talmud and the traditional texts of Jewish civilization.[85]

The Jews who have tried to create Diaspora art have been wiped from memory.

> In the Italy of the Renaissance, cultivated Jews, like others, wrote sonnets in Italian in imitation of Petrarch. They did not endure even in a minor way - not as a minor note in Jewish culture, not as a minor note in Italian culture...Was there not some gifted Jew of Toledo who wrote verses in Spanish? If so, try to find his name...There have been no Jewish literary giants in the Diaspora. [86]

In her opinion, the more interested Jewish art is in Judaism, the higher will be its quality. [87]According to Ozick, all other art written by Jews will not last beyond a generation. Only art that touches the core of Judaism will last, and the closer art is to this core, the longer it will last.

Ozick claims that the Jewish content of literature makes it eternal.[88] She writes, "If it (literature by Jews) is centrally Jewish it will last for Jews; if it is not centrally Jewish it will last neither for Jews nor for the host-nations" (p.28). Each of the works discussed in this thesis was resurrected from obscurity, republished and anthologized because of its Jewish content and its interest to Jews.[89] The republication of these

---

[85] Wirth-Nesher, p.6.

[86] Ozick, p.26.

[87] Ozick, p.27.

[88]This is not the only quality which make literature eternal. Perhaps formost is literary quality.

[89] Joyce Antler considers her anthology an answer to the question, "What does it mean to be both a woman and a Jew?" (p.1)

works proves that Jewish content lengthens potential readership. It is continued interest in Judaism and the study of Jewish women which brought on demand for these anthologies. If these works had been less Jewish, they might already be forgotten, like that gifted Jew of Toledo writing in Spanish.

What Is Women's Literature?

Is Jewish Women's Literature different from Jewish Literature written by men? Joyce Antler answers yes.

> Incorporating characters, settings, or themes that are identifiably if not explicitly Jewish, they provide a particularly female version of Jewish identity, centered in the private and familial meanings of women's experience. While American Jewish male writers have also written about familial and generational conflicts, their work uses male experience as the norm and often presents women in stereotypical roles. [90]

The issue of Women's Literature lends itself to a similar discussion as the one of Jewish Literature above. Is all literature written by women necessarily women's literature? Does literature written by women also have to be on particular themes or of a certain outlook to be considered "women's literature"? Those themes might relate to particular issues of power, or relationships, or issues in a woman's life cycle. If women's literature is thematically distinctive, then literature on those themes but written by men is difficult to classify. For the purposes of this paper, all the literature considered is women's literature because it is written by women. This definition has the advantage of clarity and simplicity.

Why These Particular Stories?

The stories chosen for this thesis are a sampling of American Jewish fiction written by women in the twentieth century. Thus they are at the cross section of the

---

[90] Joyce Antler, ed. and intro. "Introduction" in *America and I Short Stories by American Jewish Women Writers*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), p.3.

field of American Jewish Literature and Women's Literature. These four literary works, *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska, "Dreamer in a Dead Language" by Grace Paley, "Opiate of the Masses" by Lynne Sharon Schwartz, and "Electricity" by Francine Prose have all been chosen by literary critics as representative of American Jewish Women's literature. All of these authors write in English. Their works portray female characters created by women write as women "exploring the texture of women's lives."[91] Joyce Antler and Sylvia Barack Fishman have chosen these authors and these works for prominence and scholarship in their anthologies on women in American Jewish Literature and American Jewish Literature by women. The judgment of the worthiness of this particular literature is based upon Antler's and Barack's scholarship.

These stories have also been chosen because they portray full and interesting characters who are daughters and fathers and are the best works available on this topic. They all center upon and develop the common relationship picked for the focus of this thesis, the daughter-father relationship. They have been selected because they best exemplify the relationship between daughters and fathers in American Jewish Literature.

A Discussion of the Authors: Anzia Yezierska was born in Russian Poland, probably in a village called Plinsk, in the early 1880s.[92] *Bread Givers* was originally published, as a novel, in 1925. It is in many ways autobiographical. Yezierska's father was a Talmud scholar, like the father in her novel, Moishe Smolinsky.[93] Yezierska's fiction is one example of Jewish immigrant fiction. She is interested in trying to rectify the disparity between two divergent cultures, one Jewish

---

[91] Antler, p.15. Antler is only discussing Grace Paley's work when writing this comment, but it is, I believe, also accurate for the other authors.

[92] Antler, P.4.

[93] Alice Kessler Harris, introduction to *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska (New York: Persea Books, 1975) p. vi.

the other American. She sees considerable advantage in American culture. Unlike other practitioners of Jewish immigrant fiction, in this work especially, Yezierska is unambivalent about the wonder of the new world. One must only compare her to another well known Jewish immigrant writer, Abraham Cahan, to notice the strength of her confidence in America. Cahan, for example, creates characters such as David Levinsky who is bittersweet about his own success in America. Sara Smolinsky, in contrast, is thrilled with her own entry into American culture.[94] Yezierska demonstrates loyalty to her heritage by continuing to write about identifiably Jewish characters and scenes and experiences. Her later work and her later life demonstrate considerable ambivalence toward American success. As Alice Harris writes:

> In 1932, (Yezierska) published *All I Could Never Be* in which ...her major character explained, 'I don't believe that I shall ever write again unless I can get back to the real life I once lived when I worked in a factory.'... Yezierska ended her life convinced that her obsession to lift herself out of material poverty had resulted in poverty of the soul. Perennially lonely, she spoke of the barren road of her success."[95]

Grace Paley, the daughter of socialist, immigrant parents from Russia, was born in the Bronx in 1922. "Dreamer in a Dead Language" was originally published with a collection of her short stories entitled *Later the Same Day* in 1985.[96] In some ways, Paley's work, like Yezierska's, fits into Guttmann's definition of Jewish literature. She discusses a crisis of identity. Many of her characters are identifiably Jewish and "in their interactions reveal conflicts between the values of the immigrant gener-

---

[94] "The Fat of the Land", in contrast with *Bread Givers*, demonstrates a much more ambivalent portrayal of upward mobility in America. However, it is not Europe that Hanneh Breineh misses, rather the Jewish community of the Lower East Side.

[95] Harris, p.xi.

[96] It has been republished in Sylvia Barack Fishman's *Follow My Footprints Changing Images of Women in American Jewish Fiction*(1992).

ation and those of their descendants."[97] Paley also concentrates on other essential Jewish issues. This particular work, and others as well, describe an ethical commitment. As Joyce Antler points out, "Paley's stories portray the profound moral dilemmas of contemporary urban Jews."[98]

The other two authors whose work is discussed in this thesis are not as well known as Anzia Yezierska or Grace Paley. Francine Prose was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1947. "Electricity" was first published in *Commentary* in 1983. It was republished in her collection of short stories entitled *Women and Children First* in 1988. It demonstrates a technique also occasionally used by Cynthia Ozick, "Francine Prose, (is) known for combining the natural and the supernatural."[99] Lynne Sharon Schwartz was also born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1939. "The Opiate of the People" was originally published in *Acquainted with the Night* in 1984.

The three short stories, in contrast to *Bread Givers* originate in post World War II Jewish American fiction. The culture from which they arise is a very different one from the one in which Yezierska lived. The position of Jews within American society had changed dramatically since the time of Yezierska and Jewish immigrant fiction. These authors, and these characters, accept themselves as Jews and as Americans. They do not live in the two separate worlds described by Yezierska. The Grace Paley piece represents third generation literature. Faith (the protagonist in "Dreamer in a Dead Language") is the daughter of second generation, ideologically socialist parents. Unlike Sara in Yezierska's work, Sid Darwin knows that America is not a messianic paradise. He represents a second generation politically active Jew, with an aversion to the particularity of Jewish culture. This type of universalist character

---

[97] Antler, p.15.

[98] Antler, p.15.

[99] Antler, p.2.

who has socialist dreams for a more utopian society is also represented by the son Michael in Michael Gold's *Jews Without Money*. Both of these characters are typical of progressive, politically left wing Jews of the 1930s.[100] Sid's daughter Faith rejects her father's socialist and universalist ideology. Grace Paley knowingly describes an ideology which is satisfying for one generation and not for the next.

Francine Prose and Lynne Sharon Schwartz represent a fourth generation of American Jewish female writers. Their works are non-ideological. Each author discussed in this thesis demonstrates an interest in recovering the past.[101]

In addition to that theme, they are representative of some other typical themes introduced by fourth generation American Jewish authors. To quote Joyce Antler,

> ...a significant portion of their work portrays Jewish settings or characters. A growing number of them have become interested in spiritual themes. ...In contrast to stories written by Jewish women in the 1960s and 1970s, which focus on separations, contemporary works by these authors emphasize the ties which bind families and generations. Rather than denying the collective memory of their past, their characters seek - or are forced - to confront it. [102]

---

[100] Of course "Dreamer in a Dead Language" was published in 1985, but Sid Darwin would have been a young man in the 1930s.

[101] Antler, p.18.

[102] Antler, p.17., More examples of stories demonstrating these changing themes, are available in Antler's anthology, *America and I Short Stories by American Jewish Women Writers*.

CHAPTER 2

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE DAUGHTER-FATHER RELATIONSHIP

There are many ways to study the relationships among family members. The views and attitudes of a father and a daughter regarding such issues as the kind of education a female should choose and the career she should follow can teach us much about the father-daughter relationship. To examine those family ties more closely, however, we need to understand the psychological dynamics operating between the two people. This chapter will include a discussion of the psychology of daughter-father relationships and apply psychological theory to the literary works discussed in this thesis. The fundamental concept to be developed in this chapter is the process of seduction in a father-daughter relationship and the various aims that it serves. The following themes will be developed: 1) Daughters have an erotic longing and an unconscious desire to seduce their fathers sexually. 2) This erotic longing and unconscious desire is mutual; fathers also have an erotic longing for daughters. 3) A Father's erotic longing for his daughter often expresses itself in the father's attempt to control all areas of the daughter's life, particularly sexual but also non-sexual. 4) When left unresolved[1], erotic longing often leads the father to attempt to seduce the daughter away from attaining autonomy and independence from him. 5) When the daughter overcomes the father's attempt to seduce her away from her autonomy, she has taken a basic step on

---

[1]By unresolved, I mean that one or both of the individuals in the relationship continue to struggle with this issue. It continues to take their energy and remains an issue of high intensity. By resolved, I mean that both of the individuals have managed to work this issue through to the extent that it no longer remains an issue of high intensity.

the road toward autarchy. This is not to say that in a healthy relationship, there is no erotic element in a girl's turn from her mother as her primary libidinal object toward her father. "When this seduction [erotic affection] on the part of the father is lacking, the girl will encounter difficulties in her feminine development."[2] On the other hand, a girl whose turn away from her childhood attachment to her mother and toward her father is too intense and who maintains her childhood fantasy idealization of her father can only transfer her libidinal feelings toward another man with difficulty and often by placing extreme demands upon him[3] because no one lives up to her expectations of father. It is not the purpose of this paper to review the entire field of child psychology and development. However, since this thesis is about relationships, the discussion of a few psychological points about the daughter-father relationship will help the analysis.

Fathers and Daughters in Psychological Literature

Current psychological theory uses sexual terminology to discuss daughter-father relationships. There is a "cautious choreography of mutual eroticism and ambivalence," between the daughter and the father.[4] Freud seems to have been the first to recognize this sexual charge between daughters and fathers. He saw the sexuality however, as flowing in one direction only, the daughter's love for and desire to be seduced by her father. Freud wrote that, "...almost all my women patients told me that they had been seduced by their father....symptoms are derived from fantasies and not

---

[2]Deutsch, I, 253.

[3]Deutsch, I, 247.

[4] David Willbern, "Felia Oedipi: Father and Daughter in Freudian Theory," in *Daughters and Fathers* ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.87.

from real occurrences."[5] According to Freudian and quasi-Freudian psychoanalytic theory, in the Oedipal stage the young female's affection for her father grows and becomes sexual. "The little girl's love for her father....is a sexual love, openly, even wildly so."[6] Freud traces a girl's love for her father to her desire for a penis. "The wish with which the girl turns to her father is no doubt originally the wish for the penis."[7] Her envy of and desire for a penis is also envy for her father as an autarchic, powerful, autonomous being.

A perspective which focuses on the sexual aspect of family relationships also describes a sexual component in a father's feelings for his daughter. In the mutual eroticism that arises between fathers and daughters, it is the father rather than the daughter who has power and control. Freud's discussions of a father's erotic feelings toward his daughter are confined to his private letters rather than described in any publication.[8] In his published papers, "Freud concluded that his patients' reports of sexual abuse were fantasies, based on their own incestuous wishes."[9] It is the unconscious fantasy which produces neurosis according to Freud. Especially when the daughter enters adolescence, the father is often jealous of her emerging sexuality.[10]

---

[5] Sigmund Freud, "Femininity," in Vol. XXII of *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1964), p.120.

[6] John H. Smith, "Fathers and Daughters," in *Man and World*, 13:385-402 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1980), p.388.

[7] Freud, "Feminity", p.128.

[8] Willbern, p.80.

[9] Judith Lewis Herman, with Lisa Hirschman, *Father-Daughter Incest* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), p.10.

[10] Marjorie R. Leonard, "Fathers and Daughters, The Significance of 'Fathering' in the Psychosexual Development of the Girl," in *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, Vol. 47 (London: Bailliere, Tindall and Cassell Ltd., 1966), p.330.

The sexuality may make him quite uncomfortable. A father may be jealous that his daughter's sexuality is being directed at males other than himself. Ideally, a father would give his daughter desexualized affection, but at times his affection becomes overly sexualized, even seductive. The father generally resolves his incestuous longings with the universal incest taboo. [11] "The father seduces his daughter...he legislates to defend himself from it."[12]

Before proceeding further, I must emphasize that in employing such terms as "seduction", "erotic", and the like, I am not referring to actual or physical incestuous relationships between the father and the daughter (which, of course, do exist). Rather, I am referring to psychological processes and events which occur or exist only in the psyche. Seductive behavior is "clearly sexually motivated but... (does) not involve physical contact."[13] An overly intense relationship with her father which continues into adulthood is psychologically detrimental for the daughter. Her own needs can be unmet and her own personality undeveloped as she works hard to please her father. Pleasing him becomes important to her; it helps her to keep his attention and approval. Most daughters, "submit to the patriarch in order to derive the pleasures of security and protection."[14] Therefore, the daughter returns her father's erotic attention not only by pleasing him, but also by limiting her own sexuality. "The only way to seduce the father, to avoid scaring him away, is to please him, and to please him one must submit

---

[11] Of course this assumes a family which is not actually incestuous. For information on the incest taboo, see Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, His basic point is that the incest taboo exists in order to use daughters to create alliances between families which otherwise would be in competition.

[12] Jane Gallop, "The Father's Seduction" in *Daughters and Fathers*, ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.107.

[13] Herman and Hirschman, p.109.

[14] Willbern, p.90.

to his law, which proscribes any sexual relation."[15] The daughter may enjoy the sexualized attention she receives. Some psychological theorists believe that the daughter turns to her father for attention because she learns that "males are everywhere preferred to females....By establishing a special and privileged relationship with her father, she seeks to be elevated into the superior company of men."[16] A sexually charged relationship with her father can continue to have results throughout the daughter's life. It may limit her adult relationships. "When erotic emotions remain directed toward the father, the woman cannot yield to any man. She cannot betray her infantile faithfulness."[17] The daughter of a seductive father, "...might continue to return home to serve and care for her father; she might seek out a powerful, charming protector, rather than a real partner for a husband."[18] A daughter who is forced to be too dependent, "may find it hard to establish a psychically distinct relationship ... She may therefore enact a symbolic return to the father either in choosing a husband who resembles him or in remaining celibate."[19] Additionally, as a result of an extreme defense against it, this type of erotic attachment can lead to hate of the love object.[20]

---

[15] Gallop, p.102.

[16] Hermann and Hirschman, p.57.

[17] Leonard, p.331.

[18] Katherine C. Hill-Miller, "The Skies and Trees of the Past: Anne Thackeray Ritchie and William Makepeace Thackeray" in *Daughters and Fathers*, ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.368.

[19] Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, "A Father's Prayer, A Daughter's Anger: WB Yeats and Sylvia Plath," in *Daughters and Fathers*, ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.233.

[20] Leonard, p.333.

There is a "distressing scarcity of models of benevolent fatherhood."[21] However, good fathering does, of course, exist in our culture. Fathers exist who are kind, caring and appropriately loving. Yet while "our culture is top heavy with images...about what constitutes good mothering; our concept of good fathering is almost nonexistent."[22] The father's own psychological maturity affects the manner in which he responds to their mutual eroticism. Feeling his own sexual response may provoke inappropriate defense measures.[23] The sexuality which arises may make him quite uncomfortable. He may repress his sexual feelings, or withdraw from his daughter. Many fathers "reacted to their daughters' emerging sexuality either with an attempt to establish total control or with total rejection."[24] He may respond to her sexuality with anger. The father

> unconsciously equates his daughter's disregard for his authority with loss of control over his own impulses. The anxiety he then feels is betrayed by his unreasonable concern for his daughter's safety and his aversion toward the man of her choice....by actively protecting their daughters from 'evil-minded males'-not themselves - they are able to deny their incestuous feelings, while projecting them onto others.[25]

The father's attempt to restrain his own incestuous desire may lead to strict control of his daughter. He may try to proscribe her sexuality. Western literature is full of examples of fathers who lock up their daughters in a futile attempt to prevent a rival

---

[21] Lynda E. Boose, " The Father's House and the Daughter in It: The Structures of Western Culture's Daughter-Father Relationship," in *Daughters and Fathers*, ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.37.

[22] Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers, *Daughters and Fathers* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) introduction, p.2.

[23] Leonard, p.332.

[24] Boose, p.35-36.

[25] Leonard, p.330.

male from stealing them.[26] On the other hand, the sexual ambivalence between fathers and daughters may lead to the abandonment of the daughter, emotionally or otherwise, as the father runs from his own desire. These reactions on the part of the father have troublesome results for the daughter. "Crucial to the girl's development is whether or not her father was available to her as a love-object and whether or not he was capable of offering her affection without being seduced by her fantasies, or seducing her..."[27] One reason a father may try to control his daughter's sexuality is because he over identifies with her. "Her interest in boys reawaken(s) his latent conflict with homosexual strivings. He unconsciously wishes his daughter to remain pure and virginal so that he himself may remain pure and virginal in his relation to other males."[28]

The daughter is able to resolve her conflict when she becomes autarchic. This sexuality between fathers and daughters, if handled correctly, is part of healthy psychological development. The daughter rebels "into sexual maturity through the seizure of her own fruitfulness and her choice to give it to another male."[29] Healthy resolution often requires conflict followed by acceptance. A "daughter's struggle with her father is one of separation, unlike the son who seeks to displace the father. We seldom find sons locked inside their father's castles, because retention and separation are not the defining stress lines of the father-son narrative...the son's departure is authorized.. the threat is of displacement..."[30] Once a daughter resolves her conflict with her father, the most successful daughters become autonomous. Because in a traditional family, the father is associated with creative interaction with the world while the

---

[26] Boose, p.33. One well known example is the fairy tale of Rapunzel.

[27] Leonard, p.333.

[28] Leonard, p.330.

[29] Boose, p.54.

[30] Boose, p.32-33.

mother is associated with domesticity, those women who search for a model outside that domesticity often choose their fathers as models. Frequently, when the daughter looks at her own family she sees that her "father stands for 'life' ...all the attraction and risk of a lived life is embodied in the father. The girl wishes to be like him..."[31]

"Opiate of the People"

The themes described above are present in the literature analyzed in this thesis. One of the strongest examples of the direct application of those themes is in "Opiate of the Masses." In this short story, Lucy's sexual ambivalence toward her father, David, is demonstrated through her constant search to understand him. This story is divided into sections reflecting the life cycle of the daughter, Lucy from childhood through maturity. At each stage, her father influences her. Their relationship is described when she is six, eleven, fifteen, eighteen and twenty-six. There are also several episodes in the story during which David reflects back upon his own personal history and development. Through all of these stages, Lucy is drawn to him. She knows that underneath his calm exterior is a stream of exotic passion which fascinates her. We know that Lucy is intrigued by the exotic. She is honored when her college roommate considers her appearance exotic. (p.240) She links the exotic, passionate side of her father's personality to his rural, Jewish, Eastern European roots. This story is about her attempt to understand those roots. Her desire to be closer to her father and to better understand him has an erotic flavor. For example, when Lucy attends a wedding where she meets people who knew her father when he was a boy in Russia and thus finally discovers information about her father's past, rather than being simply embarrassed or assuming that the information was unimportant or uninteresting, David

---

[31] Carolyn G. Heilbrun, "Afterword" in *Daughters and Fathers*, ed. Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.419.

responds with shame. "David's face burned hot with shame, with an unspeakable confusion..."(p.251) He behaves as if by uncovering basic information about his past,his daughter has uncovered his nakedness. Lucy's knowing his past is for him in a way incestuous.

David is a man fighting to control his own passions. He invests considerable energy in controlling his own fervor. Perhaps he is afraid of the depth of his feelings and the possibility of them running out of control. He knows that his power inside and outside his family is grounded in his own rationality and control. He wants to be reliable to maintain that power.[32] He needs the conservatism of professional dress and never removes his business clothes. "He wore them all the time, even at night after dinner. Sometimes at breakfast he wore his jacket too, as he stood tense near the kitchen sink, swallowing orange juice and toast and coffee, briefcase waiting erect at his feet" (p.233). The briefcase is erect at (or between) his legs, perhaps symbolizing that ultimate source of passion between his legs which he works so hard to control. Both the depth of his emotion and the extent of his control emerge when he dances. At family weddings, he projects a cold and restrained persona. He avoids the passionate circle dancing done with a shout or a slap. Instead, he waltzes. "He waltzed with her mother, the two of them floating with stiff, poignant grace. His face, sharp-boned, alert, was tilted up proudly, his hand spread out flat against Anna's broad back" (p.234). When he is very happy, his exotic, passionate nature emerges. The opposite sides of his personality collide unexpectedly.

> David, ... pranced across the living room raising his knees high in an absurd parody all his own, blending a horse's gallop and a Parisian cancan... David looked so funny dancing in his baggy gray trousers and long sleeved white shirt with the loosened tie jerking from side to side. (p.233)

---

[32] Gallop, p.106.

David directs erotic attention toward his daughter, Lucy. Although he claims that he wants her to marry, he is jealous when she is attentive to other men, even those of whom he approves. (p.250) His sexual ambivalence toward his daughter also emerges in his preoccupation with her appearance. He wants her to be attractive and is concerned with her clothing. He considers these criteria of significant importance and notices them repeatedly. "She was good-looking, which was important for a girl" (p.238). "A beautiful girl, it was undeniable, and the maroon dress suited her" (p.247).

By age six, Lucy is the seduced and seductive daughter. She has an erotic attraction for her father, and she needs him. "She wanted her father never out of her sight. She felt complete only when he was present" (p.233). She uses charm and beauty to please David and to make him respond to her. "She felt clever to have charmed away his annoyance" (p.234). Yet as much as Lucy is seduced and works hard to seduce her father, David holds back. Lucy is frustrated to realize that her father has secrets from her. For Lucy, the passions of her father's past have a sexual tinge. David hides his past from his daughter the same way he hides his sexuality. "She grasped that David was keeping something back from her, something that touched herself as well as him" (p.234). In the context of the story, he is keeping his history from her. Actually, when we consider the sexuality running between them we realize that he is also keeping the secret of his sexuality from his daughter. Lucy does not like his secretive nature.

David tries to control Lucy's sexuality. No matter where her sexuality is directed, her father finds it troubling. In her teen-age years, her emerging sexuality threatens him. When she gets too close to him and the sexual tension between them intensifies, David responds with fury. "Lucy was fifteen now, strong with adolescence and nearly full grown; she stood over him and waited..." (p.235-236). David's passionless veneer begins to crack. He feels invaded both physically and emotionally by her passion. He must squash the insurrection which comes from his daughter and seems to be a vision

of social inversion. [33] He responds by yelling in anger. He removes the sexual threat by making his daughter step back.

David tries to control Lucy's sexuality in another way as well. He is as threatened by losing her sexual interest in himself as by too much sexual attention. David is jealous when Lucy's sexuality is directed toward another man. Lucy's relationship with her boyfriend Allan forces David to confront his usually repressed sexual feelings toward his own daughter. The emergence of these feelings makes him angry as he struggles to repress them. In addition, David disapproves of the fact that Lucy and Allan share an apartment. David is uncomfortable with Lucy being sexual outside the confines of marriage. Without marriage, her sexuality is left assigned to no particular man. Her father considers Lucy's open sexuality to be a betrayal of him. "It gnawed at his insides that Lucy could turn against him so" (p.248). He cannot recognize Lucy as a sexual being because sexuality is dangerous for him. It needs to be tamed and controlled in himself. His daughter's sexuality is even more frightening. David misses his daughter being fully devoted to him. He is frustrated and angry that Lucy does not allow him to control her sexuality.

Lucy has expressed her anger with her father. She has tested her father's Jewish, European and American limits[34] and in the process has discovered her own limits. She has tested her own identity both toward and away from his identity. It takes her considerable effort to develop her own identity. She finally manages to become autonomous. She confronts her father. "Lucy leaned up close; her hasty whisper was like a hiss. 'Would it have cost you so much to tell me some of those things? Would it?'" (p.251) She moves away from the academic field she associates with her father

---

[33] Boose, p.34.

[34] See my chapters on education and Judaism for a fuller discussion of Lucy testing David's limits.

(Russian Literature) and into her own field (biology). She is economically independent and she chooses a love relationship on her own rather than her father's terms. Lucy has been significantly able to resolve her Oedipal conflict. She becomes autarchic.

Lucy has chosen David as a model for her own life. She has David's articulate nature. She also has his self sufficiency. "She had his head, quick and secret and sharp; though her temper flared up easily, like his...She could take care of herself..." (p.238). She has his confidence and the passion for life he tries so hard to repress. She also has his energy and his drive. Despite the sexual tension, Lucy's father is proud of her. "Lucy, he trusted, would be fine..." (p.238). The sexual ambivalence between them is not so extreme to be psychotic. Part of his pride in her is due to her fierce independence and autarchic personality. Lucy has resolved her Oedipal conflict. She has transferred her loyalties to a serious adult relationship. She is an autonomous being.

"Dreamer in a Dead Language"

"Dreamer in a Dead Language" describes an adult, divorced daughter who takes her two young sons to visit her parents in a nursing home. We see the sexuality and sexual ambivalence between the daughter, Faith, and the father, Sid. We can see the sexual attraction on the part of the daughter. Her incestuous desire for her father is present, but it is repressed. It emerges on occasion in a flash causing her difficulty, and making her angry. She occasionally uses sexual gestures when she interacts with her father. "Faith put her hand on her father's knee. Papa darling, she said..." (p.342). Yet most of the time Faith's sexuality toward Sid has been submerged into her general desire to be a good girl and to please him. As a child, she was able to please him successfully. While speaking to her two sons, Sid describes his impression of Faith's childhood personality. "Your mother was a constant entertainment to us. She could take jokes right out of the air...She had us in stitches, your mother" (p.337). Sid attributes Faith's childhood focus to her pleasing both him and Faith's mother, Celia.

Yet we see no sign that this behavior was significant to Celia. The fact that Faith successfully pleases her father is a type of seduction. The seduction continues through adulthood. Despite her adult age and her anger, she responds to her father's demands with acquiescence. Even when she wants to refuse or to scream in anger, she obeys her father and responds as a "good girl." "'Lower your voice,' Mr. Darwin said between his teeth. 'Have pride, do you hear me?' 'Go away,' Faith whispered, obedient and frantic" (p.345). Through her obedience, Faith appeases her father, continuing their dance of ambivalent sexuality and seduction. In addition to the sexuality running between herself and her father and her continual attempts to please him, Faith has other characteristics of the seduced daughter. She has trouble with her own relationships. In fact, Faith's relationship with her father directly hinders her own sexual relationships. She emotionally and physically distances herself from her lover just because she thinks of her father. An argument with her father leads directly to an argument with her lover. (p.334 and p.346)

Sid also demonstrates sexual feelings and seductive behavior. He waits at the gate for Faith's visit as if he were greeting a lover, and the lover is his daughter. "Faith's father had been waiting at the gate for about half an hour" (p.335). He tells her she is beautiful. (p.337) Sid is the happiest when the erotic pull between himself and his daughter is strongest. Faith's sexual gestures and language help to intensify their mutual sensuality. As the result of a simple agreement, "they sat close to one another. Faith put her hand on her father's knee. Papa darling, she said. Mr. Darwin felt the freedom of committed love" (p.342). The fact that the sexual charge is so strong in this scene helps the reader to understand details which are clearly sexual to contain sexual undertones. Sid enjoys the freedom of Faith's devoted love. At the moment that his daughter's commitment makes him happy, Sid plans to break his own obligations. He wants to leave Faith's mother. In his joy over his daughter's commit-

ment to him, he is committed to no one. Sid holds his daughter for himself while he is free to roam.

Sid tries to control his daughter's sexuality. Despite his enjoyment of Faith's seduction, he has accepted his own replacement with Ricardo. Sid encourages Faith to limit her sexuality to one man by returning to Ricardo. Sid likes Ricardo. Ricardo appreciates his poetry and is also the middleman who offers Sid a chance to leave responsibilities behind and to begin a life as an artist on his own. This world of art and freedom is exactly the one he tries to prevent his daughter from entering. Sid wants Faith to return to her ex-husband at the expense of her happiness and her art. Sid's urging is an attempt to dominate his daughter sexually. Sid would like Faith to continue to be the good girl who listens to him. To play this role, she should return to her husband. By influencing her love object, he continues to possess her. The father wants

> to retain, withhold, lock up and possess his daughter. Prevented by law, custom and ritual injunction from taking any of these actions, the only satisfaction available to him is to arrogate to himself the choice of her husband, most often insisting on someone she does not want.[35]

It is less painful for Sid to lose his daughter through a transaction that he directs. If Sid convinces Faith to return to her ex-husband, Ricardo, he circumvents her ability to choose another man over her father. In this way, her sexual union with another man is in obedience to her father.[36] Sid encourages Faith to stay married, just as he contemplates doing the opposite.

The erotic ambivalence between Faith and Sid is present yet repressed. When the sexuality between them emerges, it emerges in anger. Each denies

---

[35] Lynda E. Boose, "The Father and the Bride in Shakespeare," *PLMA*, Vol. 97 No. 3 (May 1982), p.331.

[36] Boose, in *Daughters and Fathers*, p.31.

understanding each other as a sexual being. The other's sexual needs and activity are painful subjects. Faith's denial of her father's sexuality emerges through the following two examples. Sid has written the following poem:

> *There is no rest for me since love departed*
> *no sleep since I reached the bottom of the sea*
> *and the end of this woman, my wife,*
> *My lungs are full of water. I cannot breathe.*
> *Still I long to go sailing in spring among realities.*
> *There is a young girl who waits in a special time and place*
> *to love me, to be my friend and lie beside me all through the*
> *night.* (p.334)

In this poem, Sid describes being drowned by his wife whom he no longer loves as he longs for young girl to love him. (lines 3,4 and 6 above). When Faith hears the poem, she imagines that the young girl is her mother, years ago. She can accept and understand a sexual love relationship between her parents. However, her father's general sexuality toward women other than her mother is stressful for her. She denies it strongly. Faith's hostility emerges when her lover, Philip, tries to confront her about her father's sexuality. She insists in maintaining her blindness. (p.334) Later in the story, Sid directly demands that Faith recognize Sid's sexuality. Faith still tries to ignore and repress her knowledge of it. Sid says, "'I do not feel old. DO NOT. In any respect. You understand me, Faith?' Faith hoped he didn't really mean what she understood him to mean" (p.343). Sid's demand that Faith understand his sexual needs infuriates her. For Faith, this is another example of her father's hypocrisy. He is an idealist, a socialist, a Trotskyite who now plans to sell his art for profit enabling him to leave her mother, his long term comrade. In her view, Sid's artistic idealism and the idealism which he claims as an excuse for never marrying are elaborate hypocrisies which give him freedom from any responsibility. Faith sees similar characteristics in her ex-husband Ricardo.

Sid's denial of Faith's sexuality is just as strong. Sid is very disturbed by Faith's divorce. The limited acceptance he was able to give to his daughter as a sexual being is

now disturbed. Faith is aware of her father's denial. Faith is angry and upset when Sid forces her to acknowledge his sexuality. Her reply is calculated to distress her father, for the same reason. "She sat down again and filled his innocent ear with the real and ordinary world. 'Well, Pa, you know I have three lovers right this minute. I don't know which one I'll choose to finally marry.'" (p.344) Sid is disturbed when compelled to recognize his daughter as a sexual being. "Faithy. Faith. How could you do a thing like that? My God, how?...What for? Why do such things for them?"(p.344) He assumes that Faith is sexual for them, for those particular men, and not for herself. Even when confronted directly with Faith as a sexual being, his psychological paradigm is far too rigid to change. Instead, he places the new information into the old paradigm. If Faith is sexually active, Sid thinks it must be either because she needs money or to please the men. Sid cannot accept Faith taking action to meet her own sexual needs. Perhaps his denial of the eroticism in his own relationship with Faith forces him to limit any consideration of her sexuality.

Faith has not yet resolved her Oedipal conflict or reached the genital stage. She is unable to develop a long lasting adult love relationship, instead she enters several conflicting and fleeting relationships. She is just beginning to recognize that her idealization of her father is childlike. She is beginning to move toward an independent, autarchic personality. She still tries to be a good girl, but she is finally becoming strong enough to occasionally risk her father's anger by being autonomous. Faith searches for the ability to express herself as she tries to move from heterarchy to autarchy. She has recently bought a typewriter and plans to write, the ultimate self expression. As she tries to find her own voice, her own ability to express herself, she struggles to become autonomous from her father. Faith has chosen her father as her role model. She wants to follow along his artistic path. Faith chooses to enter her father's world, the world of men, to become a writer. In this story, Faith never becomes autarchic. She hopes to

find autonomy by becoming like her father as a writer. She has not found it yet. Perhaps she does not yet have the strength. She remains emotionally dependent upon her father. Her heterarchy makes her depressed. She symbolically dies on the beach. "Tears made their usual protective lenses for the safe observation of misery. 'So bury me,' she said, lying flat as a corpse under the October sun."(p. 347)

"Electricity"

Some of the themes prevalent in psychological theory of fathers and daughters are also present in the short story "Electricity." Anita returns to live in her parents house in Brooklyn with her baby son after her husband leaves her. She returns to a home filled with many changes since her father has recently joined a hasidic sect. She longs for her father and the relationship they had when she was younger. She misses their past connection, symbolized by their familiar hug, now eliminated (p.306). That yearning becomes real connection, full of sexual ambivalence in the climax of the story. Anita follows Sam to the basement in the middle of the night and a moment of sexual electricity moves between them as she stands naked in an open bathrobe nursing her baby son.

> Anita's father stands up and dries his eyes with his palm. Then he says, 'Hold up your hand.' Anita holds up her hand and he lifts his, palm facing hers, a few inches away. He asks if she feels anything. She feels something. A pressure....Her father's hand is still a few inches away, but its grip feels as tight as Jamie's. She can almost feel electrons jumping over the space between them, electricity drawing them as close as she is to Bertie, who just at that moment lets go of her breast and sits up, watching them.

The sexual energy travels through their hands from the father Sam to the daughter Anita. Anita passes that same sexual energy on to her son Bertie at her breast.

Sam also has erotic longing for and sexual ambivalence towards his daughter. In some ways, his incestuous desire for Anita is demonstrated through its repression. He

can no longer hug her. He needs to avoid the sexuality arising through even innocent touching. In other ways, the erotic ambivalence between Sam and his daughter is less repressed than previously. Vital sexual currents in this story are represented by electricity. Sam's concern with the flow of electricity, especially electric light, demonstrates his repression of life's vital currents. Sam previously stopped the flow of electricity, just as he cut off his own flow of passion. When Anita reflects upon her childhood, "she thinks of the years her father spent trailing her and Lynne from room to room, switching lights off behind them, asking who they thought was paying the electric bills" (p.304). It was not actually frugality which made him concerned with the electricity, for the TV was always playing. The noise of the television helped to fill Sam's inner emptiness and to twist the passion and connection of electricity in insignificant and unsatisfying directions. Electricity, in the form of flashing light, brings on Sam's awakening. Sam, in his mind miraculously, avoids being mugged on the New York City subway because of a light flashing on the platform (p.308). Now he is unafraid of passion and sexual energy. It flows between himself and his daughter just as the electricity now flows freely throughout his house, "every room is lit up" (p.323). The scene described above shows that electricity, representing passionate connection between people, is finally released between father and daughter.

Anita too is a seduced daughter. In comparison with Lucy and with Faith, she is less conscious in her effort to please her father. She seems less concerned with her father's pride. Yet aspects of her behavior reflect her seduction. Despite the fact that both weddings and hasidism are emotionally disturbing for her, she tries to please her father by accompanying him to a hasidic wedding. She also tries to please him by choosing a husband who is similar to her father. Anita replaces her original seduction, by her father, with a new one. Anita has a seductive relationship with her husband. When she can no longer please Jamie, and he leaves her for another woman, she

returns home to be cared for by her father. Jamie is anxious and nervous like Sam. Just like Sam, Jamie struggles with fatherhood. Both feel inadequate and search for patriarchal examples with which to measure themselves. Jamie discusses his own feelings of inadequacy in comparison with the father of a childhood friend. Mitchell Pearlman's father was strong, exciting and brave.

> '...when Bertie was born, I suddenly thought: in a couple of years, he'll be in the seventh grade. And I'll be my father. And he'll go out and find his own Mitchell Pearlman's father. And he'll hate me.... We've made a terrible mistake! We should have waited to have Bertie till I was Mitchell Pearlman's father!' ...There are tears in Jamie's eyes.(p.317)

Sam also tries to live up to the example of the ultimate patriarch - he follows the rebbe.

Anita has not fully resolved her Oedipal conflict. She also continues to struggle with significant aspects of her own identity. She continues to be heterarchic. Anita is not yet autonomous. As an adult, she continues to be dependent upon her parents. She does not really have a role model. She has been unable to transfer her own love and loyalty from her father to her husband. She is indecisive in her relationships and her goals. This story describes her at one instant in time. She is learning to communicate with her father in a new way. Perhaps Anita will one day reach autarchy.

Bread Givers

It is difficult to find examples of erotic ambivalence between the father and the daughter in this piece of immigrant fiction set, for the most part, on the Lower East Side of New York City in the early 20th century. There is more conflict and more anger between this father, Moishe, and this daughter, Sara, than in any of the other works discussed in this thesis. Moishe is a patriarchal, Orthodox Jewish immigrant from Eastern Europe who is extremely domineering of his wife and each of his four his daughters, including the protagonist of this novel, Sara. He demands control of his daughters' finances and their possessions. He also expects to control them sexually and

to arrange their marriages. He considers their sexual activity and relationships personally threatening and sees their husbands as competitors. When his daughters marry or leave home, he loses their wages. After marriage, his daughters will turn over their wages to their husbands rather than to their father. It is to Moishe's economic advantage to make marriage difficult for his daughters. If they are unmarried, they are expected to work full time, live at home, and remain in his control. Through economic control, Moishe controls his daughters sexually as well.

Sara, the youngest and most defiant of the four daughters, is furious at her father. "I hate my father. And I hate God most of all for bringing me into such a terrible house" (p.66). Her anger may result from repressed sexuality. Yet especially in this novel, Sara has specific economic and cultural reasons for considering her father a tyrant. On the other hand, despite her anger, and her choice of an independent path, Sara still wants her father's approval. When that approval is finally available, she enjoys receiving recognition and respect from Moishe.

A more classical psychoanalytic analysis of the daughter-father relationship better fits the link between Sara and Moishe Smolinsky in *Bread Givers*. According to Freud and to Deutsch, both men and women are both active and passive. Freud names the active aspect of the human personality "male" while naming the passive aspect of human nature "female."[37] Freud understood one of the possible paths for a girl to follow is to cling to her own masculinity (aggressive side). Then her hope for a penis becomes her life's aim. [38] Dr. Alvin Reines helps to explain Freud's concepts of activity and passivity through the concepts of autarchy and heterarchy. These concepts are consistent with the psychoanalytic concepts of Freud and Deutsch but help to pre-

---

[37] Freud, "Femininity", p.128. I would like to thank Dr. Alvin Reines for his explination of Freud's idea.

[38] Freud, "Female Sexuality", p.230.

sent even more clearly what psychic activity is involved in the case of a female who employs her father rather than her mother as her ego ideal. The autarchic person believes that s/he possesses an ultimate moral right to authority over her/himself and to autonomy. Thus the autarchic person believes that s/he has the freedom to believe, desire and act as s/he chooses according to truths and values that s/he determines. The autarchic person uses reason to control the will or desire. In addition, the autarchic person bases her/his life decisions upon that which he personally judges reality and goodness to be. Thus autarchy demands aloneness rather than influence by others. The heterarchic person believes that some other entity possesses ultimate authority over her/him with the moral right, therefore, to command how he must believe, desire and act.[39]

Sara is an aggressive woman whose hatred for her father can be interpreted as penis envy. Her hard work to achieve economic and intellectual success can be interpreted as a symbolic attempt to make up for her castration in a society where economic or other types of success are admired and the object of the admiration is seeen as "masculine" whatever sex the physical body may posess. In this understanding, she is able to resolve her Oedipal complex and her jealousy for her father when she gives allegiance to another man, Hugo. She is an active woman who uses her "masculine" side and achieves autarchy. Yet she does not have to be understood as trying to be a man. She may be angry at her father because he has power in their family while she has none. Since she believes that he uses his power tyrannically, she works hard to develop more power for herself to prevent any possible future domination.

---

[39]Dr. Alvin Reines introduces and developes the principles of autarchy and hererarchy in the following two articals:

Alvin J. Reines, "Ontology, Demography, and the Silent Holocaust" in *Judaism* Vol. 38, Num 4, Fall 1989.pp. 478-487.

Alvin J. Reines, "Reform Judaism: The Shock of Freedom" in *Jews in a Free Society: Challenges and Opportunities* ed. Edward A. Goldman (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1978) pp. 128-141.

Sara is able to successfully resolve her Oedipal conflict. As she moves away from his tyranny and his dominance she confronts him and eventually becomes autonomous. She is able to confront him saying, "I've got to live my own life. It's enough that Mother and the others lived for you" (p.137). She becomes strong, developing her own character and value system, becoming autarchic. She leaves her parents home to make her own way in the world. She lives alone and works while attending night school. Eventually she graduates from college and becomes a New York City public school teacher. She tells her father, "My will is as strong as yours. I'm going to live my own life. Nobody can stop me. I'm not from the old country. I'm American" (p.138). She is self sufficient and decisive and able to move directly toward her goals. "It is at this point that Sara's voice helps her become an American, dropping her heritage from her shoulders so that she can be someone other than a tool for her father to preserve his past."[40] Sara's voice demonstrates her autonomy as she literally becomes a teacher of American voice. She teaches her class proper English pronunciation. "'Now, children, let's see how perfectly we can pronounce the words we went over yesterday.' On the board I wrote, S-I-N-G" (p.271). In addition to becoming American, once Sara is an autonomous being she makes her peace with Moishe and forgives him for his tyranny. While never again moving into the heterarchic model and depending upon him, she eventually becomes more sympathetic toward his world view. She no longer feels that by listening to him she must give up her own freedom.

> In a world where all is changed, he alone remained unchanged - as tragically isolate as the rocks. All that he had left of life was his fanatical adherence to his traditions. It was within my power to keep lighted the flickering candle of his life for him. Could I deny him this poor service? Unconsciously, my hand reached out for his.(p.296)

---

[40] Amy Rose Katz, "The Power of Jewish Immigrant Voices: Tell Me your Stories" in *The Cincinnati Judaica Review*, July 1994, p.45.

She is thus able to listen to him without anger and to help him when he is in need.

Through her success and when she achieves autonomy, Sara has chosen her father as her role model. She shares his idealism, his strength of character, and his love of learning. Sara is most like Moishe in her ability to make life decisions for herself and for others. Both Sara and Moishe study many years in order to have the knowledge and the community stature to be respected teachers in the community. Both place themselves in positions of authority in which they answer questions about the correct way to live a meaningful and valuable life as a citizen of their separate and autonomous worlds.

Conclusion

Sara is the most aggressive of these four daughters. None of the other protagonists is driven to succeed like Sara. Sara is a female literary representative of the Jewish immigrant in New York City in the early twentieth century. Her drive for economic success and for Americanization are characteristic of this particular genre. We see the same drive in the male protagonist of Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky*. The reasons for her drive may be generational and economic but it is also psychological. The other three works, written in the 1980s, portray characters less concerned with economic status but just as concerned with identity and self sufficiency. Sara becomes self actualized and autarchic because she is able to confront her father and develop her own identity. She confronts her father loudly and clearly. Yet she does so while still using Moishe as a model to emulate in developing her own character. Two other daughters (Lucy and Faith) discussed in this thesis are able to confront their fathers. They also confront their fathers in their drive to be autarchic. They both achieve their own voices and thus are able to disagree and to differentiate themselves from the identities their fathers thrust upon them. Both Lucy and Faith are only able to confront their fathers in a whisper. For Lucy that whisper seems sufficient for her to

resolve her relationship. She differentiates herself from her father, becoming autonomous. Faith's confrontation with her father is incomplete, and she remains heterarchic. She is left depressed and she symbolically choosing death on the beach. The last daughter, Anita, never confronts her father. Among these daughters, she is the most heterarchic. She demonstrates the least growth. Anita has chosen no model for her own development. She is in a state of confusion. Among these works, Lucy, like Sara is able to achieve a successful love relationship. These are the two daughters who are able to move into a truly autarchic state. Neither Faith nor Anita, the two characters who emerge in the most heterarchic state have successful, meaningful love relationships. All of these daughters are influenced by their fathers as their choice of role model.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATION AND THE DAUGHTER-FATHER RELATIONSHIP

Jewish families have passed on a drive to attain a high degree of education. From the ancient period, when men spent their free time in academies composing the Midrash and the Talmud, through the European period with its famed yeshivot, and into the modern American period where Jews were highly ambitious from the start,[1] the intense Jewish pursuit of education has often been recorded. In order to realize their educational ambitions, Jewish families were careful about their priorities and often made sacrifices. In its most typical form, the "legendary sacrifices" invoked by the Jewish parents' push for their children's education were for their sons rather than for their daughters.[2] Sometimes, daughters worked in order to support the education of their brothers. In the immigrant period, daughters frequently left school at a young age to work in factories. They made a significant contribution to the economic survival of immigrant families.[3] More than 73% of unmarried Jewish women worked for wages during the immigrant period. [4]

---

[1]Selma C. Berrol, *Julia Richman, A Notable Woman*.(Philadelphia: The Balch Institute Press, 1993), p. 99.

[2]Charlotte Baum, Paula Hyman, and Sonya Michel, *The Jewish Woman in America* (New York:The Dial Press, 1976), p.123.

[3]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.120.

[4]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.98.

Immigrant families held their impoverished situation responsible for the interruption of their daughters' schooling.[5] They often had contradictory feelings about education for their daughters. This was a troubling issue for Jewish immigrant parents. There was a significant trend toward education for girls, yet it was marked with noticeable ambivalence. Some parents were concerned that an education might make their daughters less marriageable.[6] "The fact that so many of the letters in the 'Bintel Brief' column in the Yiddish press were concerned with the education of girls indicates that it was an issue of some importance to the community."[7]

When their means permitted, immigrant Jewish women did strive for education. The first courses they took were those which would increase their earning power. Among immigrant Jews, young unmarried women "first enrolled in vocational training courses to prepare themselves to enter the labor force or to acquire skills." [8] Many immigrant Jewish daughters took dressmaking, sewing and hat-trimming courses.[9] Due to the work schedules of these women during the day, evening classes became very popular. These women were motivated and determined. They often had to resist the opposition and low expectation[10] caused by their families' ambivalence toward women's education.

By their second generation in America, the educational achievement of Jewish women was noticeable. Despite the fact that the push for an education was

---

[5]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.122.

[6]Baum, Hyman and Michel, p.223.

[7]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.126.

[8]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.124.

[9]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.124.

[10]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.124.

stronger for their sons than their daughters, second generation Jewish parents in America were able to educate their daughters.

> Many second-generation Jewish girls went on to college and entered the Jewish professions, school teaching and social work. In fact, by the 1920s there were a disproportionate number of Jewish girls enrolled in colleges and universities in the urban areas of the United States where many Jewish families settled. [11]

When families had sufficient means, their daughters were frequently very well educated. Women's educational achievement was more significant among the Jewish population than among other populations in the same period. "Jewish women were more likely than their gentile counterparts to attend college in the twenties and the thirties..."[12] Some Jewish parents in the 1920s and 1930s felt that a daughter's education enhanced their own social position. [13] While the ambivalence toward education for women continued, some middle class parents considered their daughters "culture bearers" whose accomplishments made them more marriageable.[14]

Education is an interesting and significant theme in each of the works under discussion. Yet studying the role of education in fiction written by American Jewish women may not say anything about the role of education in real American Jewish families. One cannot study fiction and claim that it is historical fact. On the other hand, the authors under study create characters who make a statement about fathers and daughters in the American Jewish community. Education is intended to help these fictional families and individuals reach economic and social goals. In these works, *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska, "Dreamer in a Dead Language" by Grace Paley, "The

---

[11]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.125.

[12]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.223.

[13]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p.227.

[14]Baum, Hyman, and Michel, p. 228. - refers to 1920s and 1930s.

Opiate of the People" by Lynne Sharon Schwartz, and "Electricity" by Francine Prose, education is also valued for its own sake. Intellectual achievement is considered important, for both fathers and for daughters. While these works are fictional, they relate to issues of 20th century American-Jewish life. The drive for an education was an historical phenomenon and is described in these fictional works. The differing expectations Jewish families had for their sons and their daughters, is also portrayed in these fictional pieces. I propose to discuss each of the above mentioned literary works individually, examining the educational goals of each of these fathers and these daughters and analyze the ways education is intrinsic to their identity, personality, and behavior. This chapter deals with fictional daughters who choose their fathers' educational curiosity and love of learning as a model. The daughter-father relationship is reconciled by the similarity in intellectual and educational drive of these fathers and their daughters. These daughters often use education as a tool in the drive to become autarchic and to achieve their own identities. Other daughters remain heterarchic and dependent upon their fathers. These daughters struggle for an intellectual and emotional focus. They remain undirected.

Bread Givers

In these works, education is a source of conflict and a source of pride for both daughters and fathers. In *Bread Givers*, Anzia Yezierska puts into fictional form a conflict which became common in the immigrant generation of American Jews. Both the father, Reb Moishe Smolinsky, and the daughter, Sara, are intellectually passionate. They disagree about the goals of education and about the relative importance of a Jewish and an American education. Moishe Smolinsky, a Talmud scholar, loves to learn. He is intellectually driven, but only לשמה , for its own sake. His most important possessions, the only possessions important enough for the Smolinsky family to carry them to America from Europe, are Reb Smolinsky's books (p.9). He learns Talmud

full time, enjoying the intellectual benefits resulting from the life of the mind. Moishe is religiously heterarchic. He believes that "the knowledge and commands upon which life's decisions are based come from a perfect divine mind and are infallible."[15] He expects his learning to bring results in heaven only. He may search for an answer to a particular religious question, but any other earthly goal of an education represents a corruption of his religious ideal. When his wife suggests that he use religion to earn a living, asking, "Why not better earn a living by what you know, get a job as a Rabbi in a synagogue? Religion is your business.'" He responds with horror, saying, "'What! Sell my religion for money? Become a false prophet to the Americanized Jews! No. My religion is not for sale. I only want to go into business so as to keep sacred my religion'" (p.111).

Sara is equally, or more, intellectually driven than her father. Deprived of an education while growing up, she thirsts for knowledge and finally begins her formal education by attending night school in her twenties. (p.180) She wants an education because she craves intellectual stimulation, "I want to learn everything in the school from the beginning to the end" (p.162). She overcomes many odds and eventually attends and graduates from college. Even there, her intellectual passion is remarkable. She says, "I flung myself into the next term's work with a fierce determination to wring the last drop of knowledge from each course" (p.222). Sara connects education, and productive employment, with the self respect which come from being "a person". She says, "I want to learn something. I want to do something. I want some day to make myself for a person and come among people" (p.66). Sara is truly autarchic. She takes ultimate responsibility for her own decisions. She chooses her own beliefs and her own

---

[15]Alvin J. Reines, "Reform Judaism: The Shock of Freedom" in *Jews in a Free Society: Challenges and Opportunities*, (ed.) Edward A. Goldman, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1978), p.136.

actions.[16] She eventually becomes a teacher, the profession of highest reverence for herself and her family, receiving a steady middle-class income. For her, learning for its own sake comes only after one's economic priorities are met. Sara is interested in an American education for the upward mobility and economic advantages which result from it. In contrast with her father, Sara Smolinsky expects earthly results from her learning. She knows that as a teacher she will have a better life with money, stability, quiet, and leisure which would be unavailable to a factory worker. When she begins teaching, Sara says, "Now I'll have the leisure and the quiet to go on and on, higher and higher" (p.241). Sara loves the intellectual stimulation that comes with an education, but learning for its own sake becomes her goal only after her economic needs are met.

The differences in educational priorities between Sara and Moishe result in conflict. In several ways, Sara's intellectual drive displeases Moishe. Her separation and departure threaten him. Moishe wants all his daughters to be heterarchic and thus dependent upon him. In actuality, he is dependent upon them. When Sara is a child, Moishe is able to control the family economic priorities by collecting his daughters' pay checks. Without his daughters' income, he cannot even buy food (p.1). When Sara moves out of his house to pursue her education, Moishe can no longer rely upon her income. Without it, he may be unable to continue his own Talmudic study. Sara disappoints him with her choice for autonomy. She moves out of his home and refuses to continue supporting him. She again angers Moishe by refusing an early marriage which promises to permanently interrupt her education. (p.200) For Moishe, the intellectual role is a male one. He tries to push Sara, and his other daughters, into a more traditional woman's role, the domestic, and uneducated role of wife and helper. Moishe is able to meet his own intellectual, religious, and economic needs by keeping the women

---

[16]Reines, "Reform Judaism: The Shock of Freedom", p.135.

in his family in this traditional role. He prefers a heterarchic daughter who fears contradicting him. He does not want Sara to use her voice or her intellect to articulate needs different from his own.

Education becomes one of the fundamental aspects of Sara's identity. It helps her to become autonomous. It is both a means and an end in Sara's drive to become "a person" - economically and socially self-sufficient. It is a means which enables Sara to learn more about herself. She is willing to confront and to leave her father in order to pursue it. As an end in itself, education eventually helps Sara to find her own identity and to live in the style and the manner she chooses. In order to meet her final goals and become autarchic, Sara must separate from her father. That same inner strength which helps Sara overcome the many obstacles in her path to education also enables her to find her voice and to use it to confront her father. "I'm smart enough to look out for myself," she tells him. (p.137) By choosing her own type of education, an American and secular one, Sara has achieved her own identity. She moves out of the religious and educational domain of her father. She also moves out of his house and, as a result of her education, eventually finds a bright clean room of her own and furnishes it properly, like a person. (p.240) She achieves autonomy in her own way and even her own language. She is proud of the proper English she speaks and her ability to express herself. She wants to give that autonomous ability to the children she teaches. (p.271) She is economically self-sufficient. She is mature enough to find a satisfying relationship and to fall in love. Sara becomes that thing she has always wanted to be, "a person".

In some ways, it seems the adult Sara is very different from her father Moishe. In American culture, she is considered educated and he is not. She lives in higher social and economic classes. She moves far away from the traditional Jewish community and probably traditional Jewish practice. Yet in other ways, Sara has

chosen her father as a model. Her boyfriend Hugo tells her, "After all, it's from him that you got the iron for the fight you had to make to be what you are now" (p.279). In addition to her inner strength, Sara has chosen her father as a model in other ways as well. It is Moishe's education, in his case religious education and mastery of the Talmud, that gives him respect in the community. That respect allows him certain autarchic possibilities. He controls his family economically, without working. Sara's educational achievement, although in secular American rather than Jewish education, gives her status and economic power. It permits her to be autarchic. Just as her father is an expert in his educational forum and able to judge the smallest details of Jewish life, Sara is also an expert, helping Jewish immigrant children to adjust to life in America. Just as Moishe gives religious answers so does Sara provide lifestyle answers. Sara becomes an expert.

Once Sara is self sufficient and successful, on her own terms, she is able to forgive her father for the pain he has caused her. She takes the first steps toward achieving autarchy when, as a teen-ager, she confronts him about their relationship. She eventually forgives him for his tyranny, while still acknowledging her anger with him. Once she has achieved her own dreams, Sara cares for her father without resentment. She says, "It was within my power to keep lighted the flickering candle of his life for him? Could I deny him this poor service? Unconsciously, my hand reached out for his" (p.296). She realizes she does not have to give up her autonomy to have a relationship with her father. She is no longer threatened by his presence and she invites him into her own home. She had so recently been proud of her privacy and personal space; now she displays sympathy for Moishe and is willing to compromise her own privacy. She is willing to allow him to depend upon her.

"Dreamer in a Dead Language"

Sid Darwin is the intellectual dreamer described in the title of Grace Paley's, "Dreamer in a Dead Language". His name itself links him to Charles Darwin, implying the survival of the fittest. The name "Darwin" also implies intellectual curiosity and use of the intellect and reason rather than superstition. Mr. Darwin loves the pure cerebral excitement involved in an education. Sid is still intellectually vital in his old age. He is known as the resident poet of the retirement home. His poetry is of quality; several agents consider it saleable and want to help him publish it.(p.334) Sid Darwin loves to read, using literature for mental stimulation. He is restless, frustrated by the decreasing intellectual stimulation he associates with old age and even more so with living in the retirement home. Sid complains at the lack of decent literature at the home. "What we do not have here, what I am suffering from daily, is not enough first-class books. Plenty of best sellers, but first-class literature?" (pp.340-341) He is interested in and aware of the intellectual currents of the day, constantly assimilating new ideas. "Faith's father had been waiting at the gate for about half an hour. He wasn't bored. He has been discussing the slogan 'Black Is Beautiful' with Chuck Johnson, the gate-keeper....'It's brilliant,' said Mr. Darwin" (p.335). The reader realizes that despite Sid's Jewish background, his education reflects the American secular tradition. "Black is Beautiful" is a new phrase for him, reflecting the social and racial issues prominent in twentieth century America. He is unaware of the Biblical roots[17] of this phrase.

Sid Darwin's cohort at the residential retirement home is full of similar elderly, intellectual dreamers. One example is the "magnificent, purple-haired, black-lace-shawled Madame Elena Nazdarova, ... (sitting) at the door of the Periodical Department editing the prize-winning institutional journal *A Bessere Zeit*" (p.345). Another example is Eliezer Heligman. Sid Darwin describes part of his relationship with stereotypically socialist Heligman by saying,

---

[17]Song of Songs 1:5.

> One day I'm pointing out to him how the seeds, the regular germinating seeds of Stalinist anti-Semitism, existed not only in clockwork, Russian pogrom mentality, but also in the everyday attitude of even Mensheviks to Zionism. He gives me a big fight, very serious, profound, fundamental (p.341).

An equally idealistic Sid argues with his daughter Faith, trying to defend his own idealism while ironically sitting on a bench named for that most extreme idealist, Theodore Herzl (p.344).

Sid's daughter Faith, and the reader, know that Sid's intellectual idealism and autonomous behavior is actually a mask for hypocrisy. He may claim socialist ideals, (p.341) but in his world of pure Darwinism, the fittest survive by leaving behind those who are less fit. He plans to abandon Celia. He and Celia have been partners for many years, living as though they were married while keeping their lack of legal status a secret (p.344). When he was young, Sid believed in free love and considered legal ties unnecessary. "I think if you live together so many years it's almost equally legal as if the rabbi himself lassoed you together with June roses," he says (p.343). His youthful idealism now furnishes an excuse for abandoning a sick woman in her old age. His love and loyalty and partnership are not strong enough to last through hard times. Despite Sid's socialist ideals of fairness and equality, he is really a compassionless Darwinian at heart. Despite the many years they have spent together, he plans to leave Celia because she can no longer keep up with him physically and mentally. Another example of his hypocrisy is the immediate capitalist behavior of an artist proud of his idealism. He rushes to sell his art for money when the opportunity arises (p.336). A third example of his hypocrisy is his disloyalty toward his own daughter. Despite his love for Faith, he is more loyal to her ex-husband, Ricardo, who has taken advantage of her financially and emotionally. That ex-husband is the one who can make Sid money by being the middle-man in the sale of Sid's poetry.

Faith Darwin is an ambivalent intellectual. She is college educated, bright and expressive. (p.339 and p.333) Faith Darwin's name itself is a contradiction. There

is little room for faith in the pure world of the intellect represented by Darwin. In the Darwinian universe, those with faith are not saved and only the fittest survive. Faith is lost. As a Darwin, she is intellectually curious. She wants to express her intellectual curiosity through writing, yet she has not yet found the courage to write. It is her father who has the intellectual drive to succeed as a writer. She is heterarchic and unhappy. She uses her energy to focus on her father's goals rather than her own. The family emotional energy centers upon him to the detriment of the two women, Faith, and her mother Celia. Faith's ability to communicate is blocked. When talking with her father, Faith can hardly speak of herself. Her capacity to communicate with her mother is slightly better. Yet, she barely manages a few words about herself and her goals. Her depression renders a normally intelligent and articulate woman, inarticulate.

> 'The job ...ugh. I'm buying a new typewriter, Ma. I want to work at home. It's a big investment, you know, like going into business...' 'Faith! Her mother turned to her. Why should you go into business?...' 'Oh, Ma...oh, damn it!'...said Faith....There was no way to talk. She bent her head down to her mother's shoulder. (p.339)

One reason for Faith's ambivalence toward education and intellectual achievement is the vastly different intellectual interests of each of her parents. Although she is an adult, Faith has psychological symptoms common in a girl before puberty. She wavers in her choice of a role model.[18] Her mother, Celia, is in some ways anti-intellectual, expecting a direct result from education. She believes that her daughter's college training should improve her health. Celia says, "Faithy, how come you have a boil on the wrist. Don't you wash?...Please don't tell me (it is from) worry. You went to college. Keep your hands clean. You took biology. I remember. So wash" (p.339). Faith is frustrated by her mother's anti-intellectual connection between biology and hygiene. She is angry at her father, Sid, and frustrated by his hypocrisy and lack of

---

[18]Deutsch, I, 32.

commitment. By choosing writing as her career, Faith demonstrates that her intellectual interests are her father's. Ultimately, by choosing to write, she chooses her father as a role model despite her anger with him. It is her anger and loyalty toward her mother which keeps her wavering. Like Sid, Faith wants to use her education in order to live in the impractical world of ideas. She wants the independence and creativity involved in a writer's life. Yet her anger and intellectual ambivalence block her imagination and her ability to communicate. Faith searches for autonomy but has not yet achieved it. Perhaps because of her anger, her own direction and focus remain uncertain. She remains heterarchic.

"The Opiate of the People"

David, the father in "The Opiate of the People" by Lynne Sharon Schwartz, is intellectually driven. He is autarchic and lives the life he has chosen for himself. One reason for his intellectual drive is his belief that hard work and a good education will lead to success. The fact that David is an immigrant intensifies his emotional investment in the American dream. For David, hard work and intelligence are the stepping stones to success. David absorbed his father's teaching:

> His father never wearied of saying the four boys must work very hard to show they were as good as the others. They might not have much, but they had brains better than anyone else's. In this country lurked fortunes waiting to be snatched up by boys with heads on their shoulders. (p.236)

Upward mobility and snatching up those lurking fortunes were some of David's goals for studying law. He is proud to the point of arrogance of his intellectual prowess at the law and in speech. "His vocabulary was studded with multisyllabic little-used words he enjoyed hearing spoken in his own voice" (p.239). David works hard to eliminate his foreign accent; he is vain about speaking with the voice of a well-educated American. "He was proud most of all, though he would never have admitted this, of his perfect

English, no trace of an accent" (p.236). David succeeds educationally and economically. "He had made a certain amount of money...." (p.239). His career lives up to his own expectations. He hopes that it has lived up to the expectations of his father. "He was never quite sure he had made as much as his father had expected...But since his father was dead now he would never know exactly how great those expectations had been. In any, case, he had made enough" (p.240). In addition to considering education a tool for upward mobility and success in America, David enjoys learning for its own sake. For example, the law is much more to him than a vehicle enabling him and his family to live a prosperous life style. It becomes a religious passion.[19] It is clear that he studies it with an interest far beyond the practical. "He responded to the Constitution as an artist to an old master" (p.238).

In his commitment to the American dream, David is quite similar to Sara Smolinsky in *Bread Givers*. Despite the fact that the writing of these two works is separated by almost sixty years (*Bread Givers*, 1925; "Opiate of the People, 1984) they describe similar immigrant outlooks on America. Both David and Sara are immigrants who arrive in the United States as children. Both work very hard and succeed economically as well as educationally. Both Sara and David are committed to American culture and its values. They are immigrants who prove their worth with extra hard work. They seek and find upward mobility in America. Sara enjoyed the honor of being a public school teacher to immigrant children. She is especially committed to teaching them to speak English correctly. David honors his teachers, it is from them that he learns English. "At school he had imitated the way the teachers spoke and stored their phrases in his keen ear" (p.236).

---

[19] David's religious issues are further and more fully discussed in the following chapter.

David demonstrates a lower standard by which to gauge the educational achievement for women than he does for men. Although this is a fictional piece, David portrays an example of an historical trend evident in the acculturation of Jewish immigrants in America. His educational aspirations for Lucy are not the same as he anticipates for his sons.(p.238) Lucy also has the additional expectation to be attractive. (p.238) David notices those same differences in expectation in his family of origin. David's education was remarkably different from that of his sisters. After the family arrived in America, David's sisters worked in the factories to support their brothers. All the brothers receive an education, learn proper English, and become wealthy businessmen.(p.237) In contrast, "His sisters, already grown when they arrived, and pushed promptly into factories so that the boys might go to school, would always sound foreign" (p.237). David indicates that his own standard for a girl's success is lower when says he considers his own daughter impressive, for a girl (p. 247).

Generally, David seems to hide information from his daughter. For example, Lucy says, "she grasped that David was keeping something back from her, something that touched herself as well as him" (p.234). When it comes to education, David's behavior contrasts with his usual manner. His intellectual side is public and he is proud of it. Unlike other areas, he freely shares this side of himself with Lucy. He loves to teach her and enjoys explaining new words and ideas. David "spoke with an authoritative air, in well-sequenced paragraphs expounding his views to his thriving family...Lucy looked raptly attentive. Now and then he might stop to paraphrase something for her in simple terms and she would nod gravely..." (p.239).

Lucy has her father's intellect and educational interest. She does not need to strive for upward mobility, yet she succeeds academically nevertheless. She studies hard, attending an exclusive and "classy" college. (p.240) There, the reader sees her interest in education and her drive for success. In one example, she takes a Russian literature

class. She works very hard, penciling in the accent marks and repeating the words over and over, trying to make her pronunciation perfect. (p.241) She uses her intelligence and her education in order to please her father. Even as a small child, she knows that intelligent comments will appease David. For example, "she could see the edge of his smile and knew he was smiling because she had used the word 'symbol'. She felt clever to have charmed away his annoyance" (p.234). As an adult, Lucy tries to use her academic and financial achievements to make her father David proud. Yet she is never quite sure if she succeeds. "'This is my daughter, Lucy,' said David, pushing her before him. 'My scientist,' he added, with his special blend of pride and mild mockery; she never could tell which was dominant" (p.244).

Even without knowing if she succeeds in her father's eyes, Lucy is able to become autonomous through her education. She moves away from studying the foreign languages which are part of her father's realm and his identity and instead chooses a field unrelated to his - bio-chemistry. Lucy associates foreign languages, particularly Russian, with her father. Russia was his country of origin and he speaks the language fluently. Science is her field alone. Lucy becomes independent through politics and uses politics to confront David and thus develop a separate identity. In David and Lucy's family, unlike the Darwin family, it is the daughter who is idealistic and the father who tries to remind her of the real and ordinary world. Lucy uses her education in a politically active way which brings her into conflict with her father. Through her politics, she becomes autarchic. She literally raises her own voice in order to argue with him. Lucy's voice contrasts with David's. Lucy is angry with her father's lack of principles. David is concerned that his daughter's crusades are dangerous.

> Sometimes she made him worry, though. It was one thing to quote Marx and Lenin with righteous indignation - David did that himself - but another thing to take them seriously, especially here where matters were arranged otherwise, and it was just as well, too, for people like themselves. Lucy took it

> all far too seriously. She joined groups and recklessly signed her name to endless dubious petitions. When David and Anna refused to sign or even read those long sheets of paper she waved in their faces - for once you has signed your name who could tell where it would end up, no country is perfect, look at the business with McCarthy not so long ago - she got angry and made passionate speeches. And if David defended the way things were, she retorted that his narrow-minded and selfish mode of thinking was precisely the trouble with this country.

Despite the fact that Lucy has gone to considerable lengths to successfully establish her own identity, her father remains a model for her. Like her father David, who uses his intellectual interests in the practice of law, she also uses her intellectual interests professionally, working with ideas. She becomes a scientist,"...she had a job in a laboratory, working on an epilepsy research project and making good money..." (p.247). Like her father, she is professionally successful. She is also financially independent. In many ways, a scientist is like a lawyer, both have status and respect, both require dedication and hard work, both require considerable intelligence. Lucy's educational curiosity and intellectual drive are modeled upon her father David's. She applies them in a different field, thus successfully developing an autonomous personality.

"Electricity"

In "Electricity" by Francine Prose, the protagonist, Anita, is well educated with intellectual interests. She is a college graduate, educated in the American secular tradition (p.310). She loves literature, working in the field of publishing for several years (p.312). In her leisure, she reads long novels. "She took to reading long novels - anything, so long as it went on for more than four hundred pages..." (p.313). Anita is intellectually curious. When she has a question, she goes straight to the New York Public Library looking for an answer. "Juggling baby and purse, she pulls out some reference books on Hasidism and sits down. She is surprised by how much she already knows..." (p.310). Yet Anita is ambivalent about academic or any other type of

achievement. "Anita wonders what she does want" (p.316). Anita is heterarchic. She is unsure about how or whether to use her intellectual abilities.

In this story, Lynne, Anita's sister, serves as a direct educational contrast with Anita herself. Lynne is described in a stereotypical way.

> Anita feels disloyal for thinking that Lynne is just like Valerie Harper playing Rhoda. But it's true, and it's not just the curly hair, the tinted glasses, the running shoes, and the tight designer jeans. It's Lynne's master's thesis, 'The Changing Role of Women as Reflected in Women's Magazines, 1930-1960.' It's her job as a social worker in a family planning clinic and her boyfriend Arnie, who's almost got his degree as a therapist and is already practicing on the Upper West Side.(p.311)

Despite the stereotypes, it is obvious that Lynne's academic and intellectual success is considerable. Yet regardless of Lynne's obvious achievements, Anita's description of her sister is not totally positive. Rather, Anita is amused at Lynne's efforts. Lynne has become a "type". She seems silly, trying too hard to play a Jewish, feminist, intellectual part. The reader can tell by the description that Anita finds her sister's "type" unnatural. Anita does not want to succeed on these terms.

Anita is dissatisfied with the typical goals of an education. Education for achievement and intellectual stimulation are exemplified by Anita's sister Lynne. For Anita, these are not worthy goals. She is not motivated by these societal measures of success. Unlike several of the other daughters under study, Anita is not educationally motivated in order to please her father or anyone else. She is frustrated and angry when she sees her baby son, Bertie, struggling to learn for reasons she considers phony - to please other people and in order to get a positive reaction. "Last week she caught Bertie practicing smiles in the mirror over his crib, phony social smiles for the old ladies who goo-goo him in the street, noticeably different from his real smile" (p.304). She finds her baby son's effort to succeed irksome. She is immobilized, doing nothing to overcome her feeling of failure. Why should he succeed when she cannot? Life as an upper

class wife, another goal occasionally offered for a woman's education (especially in the 1950s) does not work for Anita when her relationship with her husband Jamie crumbles. Heterarchy worked for her when she was able to depend on her husband. Now Jamie wants to leave her. "Jamie was offering to move out of the house they had rented for its view, for their vision of children standing at the Victorian Bay window watching boats slip up the Hudson..." (p.306).

As the story begins, Anita's father Sam has made some drastic lifestyle changes. An American secular education has become unimportant for him. He searches for soteria in the heterarchy of traditional Judaism. He now seeks traditional Jewish learning. He spends his spare time listening to the Rebbe, studying Jewish texts, learning about and practicing traditional Judaism. "In the morning,...Anita's father goes off to the *bet hamidrash*, the house of study...." (p.305). He is trying to reach the religious (and educational) ideal personified by ultra-Orthodox Judaism. Anita is not willing to follow her father's model. "That's another reason she could never join this sect: being female, she'd never get closer to the rebbe than this. She turns to say this to her father, but he's gone - drawn, she imagines, toward his rebbe" (p.319). She finds faults with several aspects of Sam's religion and his behavior. Yet she remains ambivalent, as she also sees beauty and some advantages in her father's new commitment. (p.318)

Anita remains heterarchic, yet she has no one to depend upon. Her father Sam has considerable educational curiosity, for a Jewish education. She is quite ambivalent about whether she wants to use him as a model and to follow his path. Anita is ambivalent about both Jewish and secular education. She has not decided which aspects of her education are important to her. She is unable to choose goals. She remains unable to choose her father as a model, yet unable to choose another model to replace him. Her intelligence remains undirected. She continues to struggle for a focus, for resolution, and for self-identity.

Conclusion

All four of these daughters have chosen their fathers as educational models. Two of these daughters, Sara (*Bread Givers*) and Lucy ("Opiate of the People") use their educations in order to achieve autarchy. While using their fathers as models, both of these daughters have managed to differentiate themselves from their fathers in significant ways. The other two daughters, Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") and Anita ("Electricity") remain heterarchic. Neither one has been able to define a clear and distinct self identity. Both remain dependent upon their fathers. In these works, the most severe conflict between father and daughter is found in *Bread Givers*. Sara's acculturation in America and Moishe's lack of acculturation lead to significant conflicts which frequently focus upon education. Education is less of a source of strident conflict between daughters and fathers in the other works under consideration. These three fathers: Sid Darwin in "Dreamer in a Dead Language", David in "The Opiate of the People", and Sam in "Electricity" are much more comfortable in America than Moishe Smolinsky. Sociologically, these families fit into typical patterns of Jewish families progressively acculturating with each generation. David is a first-generation American, like Sara Smolinsky. Sid Darwin and Lucy in "Opiate of the People" are typical of the ideological second generation. Faith Darwin, in "Dreamer in a Dead Language" and Sam and Anita in "Electricity" represent third and fourth-generation American Jewish families who are fully American. Conflict arising between these American daughters and fathers, in contrast with Sara's fight with Moishe Smolinsky, is only indirectly about education. All three of these daughters: Faith, Lucy and Anita, question the American, intellectual, secular, and Jewish culture in which they were nurtured. In questioning the culture and goals with which they were raised, these daughters also question the priorities of their fathers.

These literary works describe education sought for specific goals as well as education undertaken for the love of learning. When discussing specific goals, all the

first-generation Americans who immigrate as children agree. For them, upward mobility is a significant reason to pursue an education. The other characters are not particularly intrigued by material success. Many are searching for a meaningful existence, for soteria. These characters often pursue an education for its own sake. Aside from any attempt to achieve upward mobility, each of these four fathers loves to learn and is driven to learn. Moishe Smolinsky and Sam demonstrate their love for learning by studying Jewish texts. David and Sid Darwin love western intellectual learning. All four fathers communicate their love of learning to their daughters. All of the daughters in these works are college educated. Each daughter has absorbed her father's intellectual passion into her own life. In three of the four works, it is the father who is a dreamer.[20] In two cases,[21] the daughter is angry at the difficulties caused by her father's ideology. Sara is furious at her father, Moishe, for his refusal to give up the piety of strict Orthodox Judaism. Sara believes that if Moishe could compromise his ideals, he would work and help to provide food for his starving family. His idealism keeps them hungry. Sid Darwin is the head of a family of intellectual idealists. Both the intellectualism and the idealism are carried to a fault. These traits are about to break up his marriage. He argues with his daughter, Faith, about the role of idealism. (p.344) In Anita's family too it is the father who is the idealist. Unlike Sara and Faith, Anita is not angry at her father Sam. She is puzzled and upset about the changes at home. She considers some of his behavior silly. Yet she sees beauty and appeal in his commitment.

The generations of Jewish Americans described in these works of literature make a full circle. Sam, in the 1980s, wants the educational life lived by Moishe Smolinsky. Sam is no longer interested in the earthly measures of success which once

---

[20] *Bread Givers*, "Dreamer in a Dead Language", and "Electricity".

[21] *Bread Givers*, and "Dreamer in a Dead Language".

had value for him. This is the life angrily rejected by Moishe's daughter Sara in the 1920s. Sam's daughter Anita, like her father, questions the American work ethic. She has lived life by those rules and has not reaped the rewards she expected. "Lately she's often embarrassed for herself" (p.304). Faith and Lucy are not totally comfortable with material measures of success. While neither has reacted as extremely as Sam, both Faith and Lucy are searching for other meaning and motivation for their hard work. They are not sure of the ingredients of a meaningful life. Lucy searches for her heritage, trying to learn more about her family's Eastern European Jewish past (p.235).These daughters know that material success alone will not bring them soteria.[22] They are not sure of the ingredients of a meaningful life.

While it may seem that these fathers and daughters conflict over education, they all demonstrate a love for learning. All are driven to learn, and their education helps them in many ways throughout life. The similarity in educational interest often helps to bring peace to the frequently complicated daughter-father relationship. While these daughters disagree fundamentally with their fathers in many ways, each father is able to pass on an essential aspect of his identity to his daughter, his love of learning. The role and purpose of education in their lives is a significant and distinguishing characteristic of each of these daughters and fathers. It is part of their self definition and their identity.

---

[22]Dr. Alvin Reines defines soteria as "The state of ultimate meaningful existence that is attined when the conflict of finitude has been resolved..." *Polydoxy, Explorations in a Philosophy of Liberal Religion*, (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1987) p.63.

CHAPTER 4

JUDAISM AND THE DAUGHTER-FATHER RELATIONSHIP

In all four of the works discussed in this thesis, there are conflicts between daughters and fathers over Judaism. Sometimes, these conflicts reflect a variety of psychological and sociological causes. Despite these other causes, Judaism is a major focus of confrontation. The characters who question American culture use Judaism as a critique of the dominant society around them. Those characters who are attracted to American secular culture view Jewish tradition as a barrier to be overcome in order to take economic, social, and intellectual advantage of America. These characters often have rejected a heterarchic belief system. They no longer believe the Pentateuch to be infallible. Thus they must reject Orthodox Judaism, based as it is upon textual infallibility and a heterarchic belief structure. Many of these characters show significant Jewish growth, change and development. They move in both directions, from traditional Jewish observance to complete secularism, and from secularism to traditional observance. While some of the characters display religious attitudes which develop and change, others are stagnant in their relationship to Jewish tradition. In these works, personal growth is often demonstrated by a changing attitude toward Judaism. For each of the daughters choosing her own relationship with Jewish tradition, different from that which her father has chosen for himself and for her, is an important statement which helps her to become autarchic. The position of each of these characters on the spectrum of Jewish tradition is a significant constituent of their identities.

Characters in these stories are positioned at different places along the continuum from traditional Jewish belief and observance to secularism. Moishe Smolinsky

(*Bread Givers*) is a traditional, observant Jew from Eastern European culture. In comparison, three of the characters discussed in this thesis, Sara (*Bread Givers*), David ("Opiate of the People") and Sid ("Dreamer in a Dead Language"), love American secular and intellectual culture. Two of them, Sara and David, share a perception of themselves fighting to throw off the yoke of an oppressive or unsatisfactory religious Judaism. Each of the other four characters Sam ("Electricity"), Anita ("Electricity"), Lucy ("Opiate of the People"), and Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") was raised in secular American culture, and is dissatisfied with it. Sam, Anita and Lucy investigate their Jewish heritage as a possible solution to their problems with American society.

The Religious Lives of These Fathers and Daughters

Sara (*Bread Givers*), Lucy ("Opiate of the People"), and Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") directly question the religious lifestyle choices of their own fathers. While these three women would disagree with each other about where to stand on the religious spectrum, these women share being in religious conflict with their fathers. For each in her own way, the conflict is radical. Each of their three fathers has defined the religious and cultural choices he wants his daughter to make. Each daughter refuses to accept the role her father has chosen for her. Each daughter fights for the right to make decisions which in her own family are quite radical. Sometimes, these choices bring the daughter away from the traditional Judaism of her father (Sara). Other times these choices bring her toward a traditional Judaism her father has worked hard to leave (Lucy).

In *Bread Givers*, Moishe Smolinsky occupies one end of the Jewish spectrum. With little interest in adjusting to American society, he maintains traditional, Orthodox, Eastern European, Jewish culture. Moishe is described below:

The black satin skullcap tipped on the side of his

> head set off his red hair and his long red beard. And his ragged satin coat from Europe made him look as if he just stepped out of the Bible. His eyes were raised to God. (p.15)

He learns Talmud full time. This is the highest occupation available in traditional Jewish culture. He is valued for his learning and religious study. His family considers religious study so important that despite the crowded apartment, he is given his own room so that he has the space to learn. (p.8) Talmud study remains an occupation of great status in the Smolinsky family. Yet the esteem for Moishe's learning declines as the Smolinsky family acculturates. After some time in America, Talmud study is no longer worthy of its own room in a crowded apartment. The extra room becomes used for worldly rather than heavenly purposes, income rather than prayer. In a discussion with him, his wife insists:

> 'Take your things out from the front room to the kitchen, so I could rent your room to boarders.'... 'But where will I have quiet for my studies in this crowded kitchen? I have to be alone in a room to think with God.' 'Only millionaires can be alone in America.'(p.13)

Moishe is angry about the acculturation of his family members. He disapproves of his daughter Sara's move from traditional Judaism toward secular American culture. He wants her to continue to be heterarchic, dependent upon him as he is dependent upon God. He considers respect for himself an extension of respect for God. For him, American culture is no improvement over European, Orthodox Judaism. He tries to prevent Sara's change of priorities. "'How dare you question your father...What's the world coming to in this wild America? No respect for father. No fear of God.' His eyes flamed as he shook his fist..." (p.137). Despite the difficulties his Orthodoxy causes himself and his family, Moishe never changes. "In a world where all is changed, he alone remained unchanged - as tragically isolate as the rocks" (p.296).

In comparison, Sara (*Bread Givers*), David ("Opiate of the People") and Sid ("Dreamer in a Dead Language"), relish the American secular and intellectual culture which surrounds them. They are identifiably Jewish. Each of them maintains attachment to some aspects of Judaism. For example, each chooses another Jew as a partner. Yet each character is drawn to and involved in American secular rather than Jewish culture. When we meet Sid Darwin, he has already made the transition from the centrality of Jewish religious tradition and practice to a focus on the Western and American intellectual cultures. Sid is a leftist, an idealist and an intellectual. At the stage of his life described in "Dreamer in a Dead Language", leaving traditional Judaism behind is no struggle for him. Sid is not culturally divided: Western culture is his culture.

Sid Darwin is Judaically ignorant while well educated in the western tradition. "Black is Beautiful", the slogan, (p.335) intrigues him in its African-American context. He does not know its roots in the Biblical Song of Songs.[1] He is Jewish, yet not religious in terms of devotion to any particular god. In ideology, he is a universalist. His concern is for the advancement of all of humanity. His self-definition as a member of the Jewish people is a secular definition. He is enamored with Western secular culture. He is secular in the sense that prayer and devotion are apparently irrelevant for him. The faiths to which Sid is devoted are universalism and intellectualism.

Sid defines himself as one of the "People of the Book." While historically, "The Book" is understood to be Hebrew Scripture and thus is a religious term referring to a religious people who live by a religious text, Sid no longer lives in a traditional religious Jewish culture. He uses this term in direct contradiction to its original usage. He takes Jewish love for traditional Jewish (religious) learning and applies it to the Western tradition. (p.340). For him, what makes himself and his cohorts Jewish is their

---

[1] Dr. Susan Einbinder helped me to develop this idea.

intellectual prowess, and their love of Western literature and ideas. He contrasts himself with his daughter Faith, claiming that for her Judaism is more traditional and more religious. Referring to first class Western literature, he says:

> Are we or are we not the People of the Book? I admit by law we're a little non sectarian, but by and large we are here living mostly People of the Book. Book means mostly to you Bible, Talmud, etc. probably. To me, and to my generation, idealists all, book means BOOKS. (p.341)

Among these characters, Sid Darwin is one of the least committed to traditional Jewish structures. He is a socialist, committed to universalism rather than particularism. His life's partner, Faith's mother, is Jewish. Yet their relationship is far from a traditionally Jewish marriage. They never actually officially married. "We were never married...I think if you live together so many years it's almost equally legal as if the rabbi himself lassoed you together with June roses. Still, the problem is thorny like the rose itself. If you never got married..." (p.343-344). His daughter, Faith, was married to a man named Ricardo. It is implied that Ricardo is not Jewish. Because of his universal outlook, his daughter's intermarriage does not trouble Sid. Sid likes Ricardo for his interest in poetry; his religious and ethnic background are unimportant. Sid is the only one of the fathers discussed in this thesis for whom a Jewish match and a Jewish wedding for his daughter are not significant. When Faith discusses her conflict with Ricardo, we can see Sid's lack of concern about this aspect of his daughter's marriage. He defends Ricardo. "On the subject of Ricardo, you're demented," he says to her. (p.342)

Two separate characters, Sara (*Bread Givers*) and David, ("Opiate of the People") were raised in traditional, Eastern European, Jewish households. Neither one of these characters is able to maintain the heterarchic stance necessary to continue believing in Orthodox Judaism. Each views American secular culture as advanced compared to the culture of his/her childhood. Excited about what American culture has to

offer economically, educationally, and socially, these two characters do not believe that the departure from traditional Jewish culture is a loss. Sara Smolinsky associates traditional Judaism with her father's tyranny and dominance, and with economic deprivation. She considers Talmud study an awful waste of time. Sara is autarchic in all other aspects of her life. She wants to be religiously autarchic as well. In her eyes, her father uses religion as a justification for oppression. Angry that her father holds on to a rigid, oppressive tradition which is impractical in America, Sara knows that his religious practices create a great burden for the family. "Father, in his innocent craziness to hold up the Light of the Law...was as a tyrant more terrible than the Tsar from Russia" (p.65). Sara hates God (p.66) who she associates with Moishe's despotic religious tradition. She wants desperately to leave her father's traditional Judaism and to become American. Leaving the Jewish community to study and to live, she does leave traditional religious practice, and she happily tries to adopt American culture. She says, "Thank God, I'm not living in olden times. Thank God, I'm living in America!" (p.138) She replaces Jewish learning with secular learning and religious Jewish culture with secular American culture. Although Sara tries to free herself from the ghetto of her father's religious practice, she never completely leaves Jewish culture. "Even in college I had not escaped from the ghetto...Was there no escape?" (p.220)

Moishe and Sara agree that knowledge is crucial and both love to learn. They disagree about which type of knowledge is important. For Sara, life in America is superior to the traditional life she leaves behind. Thus she absorbs aspects of American social status. For example, she believes public school teaching is of higher status than Talmudic study. (p.155) By leaving traditional Jewish culture, she can become autarchic and resist her father's tyranny. She says, "This is America, where children are people" (p.135). Yet, as Sara moves along the continuum from traditional Judaism to secular Americanism, she continues to consider herself Jewish. She decides not to leave

Judaism completely behind. She stays in the Jewish community by marrying a Jew. Without choosing it for herself, she makes peace with her father's Orthodoxy (p.296).

In "The Opiate of the People," David connects Judaism with his Eastern European heritage. With great effort, David moves himself and his family away from these, in his mind, unpleasant and heterarchic roots. For David, the memories of his shtetl past are painful. He is embarrassed by the hasidim he sees on the streets of New York. He says, "They have no business looking like that. They give the rest of us a bad name" (p.235). At family weddings, he keeps his suit unwrinkled as he watches the passionate Jewish dancing from the rear of the room. "David did not dance these dances. She saw him at the edge of the circle, his tie neatly knotted, observing keenly, lighting an olive-colored cigar. He waltzed..." (p.234). He is thankful to have been able to take advantage of the offerings of American culture. He is pleased that his daughter Lucy looks American rather than Jewish. "David liked her to look like everyone else" (p.241). When David is a boy, America replaces Judaism as the religion in his family. David's father, who was a Talmud scholar in Russia, replaces his daily שׁעור in Talmud with a daily lesson studying the *New York Times*.

> His father sat at the kitchen table learning English from the *New York Times*....Every two or three minutes he would look up a word in a black leather-bound dictionary, wetting the tip of his forefinger to turn its pages, which were thin and translucent...in that pose, hunched in the unshaded glare of the kitchen light, studying as he used to except back there it was the Talmud and here the *Times* (p.237).

David has mastered English and the *New York Times*. He turns to the United States Constitution and displays as much zeal and acumen for it as his father once did for the Talmud. For David, study of the US Constitution became like Talmud study.

> A nonbeliever, in this he believed; he even admitted to feeling awe for the men who wrote it, ...He learned the Constitution by heart and remembered it...when the Supreme Court...struck down or upheld laws in accordance with David's interpretation of the Constitution, he was

happy, and on those days he danced for his children. (p.238)

David's Americanness does have boundaries defined by his Jewish heritage. He will not permit a Christmas tree in his home. (p.233) He is thankful that Lucy's boyfriend is Jewish, (p.248) and optimistically anticipates his daughter's Jewish wedding. (p. 248) Thus despite the movement in David's family from Talmud, to the *New York Times*, to the Constitution as articles of faith, David's life is not only bound by the US Constitution. He still wants to be Jewish, in an autarchic way, and is clear about the exact boundaries of that Judaism.

Each of the other four characters Sam ("Electricity"), Anita ("Electricity"), Lucy ("Opiate of the People"), and Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language"), was raised in secular American culture. Each finds this culture in some way empty and unsatisfactory. Sam, Anita, and Lucy turn to Judaism as they search for soteria. Sam believes that his search is over. Until recently, Sam was not observant at all. His daughter Anita reminds him that, "You never went to shul in your life. Aunt Phyllis and Uncle Ron didn't speak to us for a year because on the Saturday of Cousin Simon's bar mitzvah, you *forgot* - you said - and took us all to Rip Van Winkle's Storybook Village" (p.307). Despite his secular lifestyle, Sam begins to be dissatisfied with American culture. He is frustrated, lonely, unhappy. Sam finds the culture of his native New York unpleasant and strange. This feeling solidifies after the following experience on the New York City subway.

> Looking up, he saw three Puerto Rican kids in sneakers, jeans, and hot pink silk jackets which said 'Men Working' on the fronts, backs, and sleeves. When he realized that the jackets has been stitched together from the flags Con Ed put up near excavations, he found this so interesting that it took him a while to notice that the kids had knives and were working their way through the car, taking money and jewelry from the passengers and dropping them into a bowling bag. Then he thought: Only in New York do thieves wear clothes which glow in the dark. (p.308)

Sam turns to ultra-Orthodox Judaism and finds it fulfilling, becoming happier and more relaxed. (p.318) He is willing to make drastic lifestyle changes in order to be observant and is now attentive to every detail of Jewish life. Those details even include using special kosher soap. He rushes to the shul every morning and sleeps there on Shabbat. (p.309)

Lucy ("Opiate of the People"), Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") and Anita ("Electricity"), are still exploring. They still struggle to resolve their religious identities and to find soteria. Lucy's search, like Sam's is active. Her own lifestyle is significantly more American than Jewish. As a college student, the Jewish holidays are unnoteworthy for her. When she visits her parents, she names those visits for the Christian holidays which fall during the vacation. (p.241) Lucy is fascinated by her heritage especially its foreign (and thus Jewish) components. "What was it really like back there?" (p.235) she asks repeatedly. Her knowledge of Jewish culture is limited. Yet she is very interested, always asking questions and seeking more information. She is angry that her father has never told her. "Lucy leaned up close; her hasty whisper was like a hiss. 'Would it have cost you so much to tell me some of those things? Would it?'" (p.251) Each little clue revives her interest.

Both Anita ("Electricity") and Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") are caught in their own ambivalence. Like Sam ("Electricity") and like Lucy ("Opiate of the People"), each of them has found the secular culture in which she was raised dissatisfying. Yet unlike Sam and Lucy, neither Anita nor Faith actively seeks an alternative. Faith is irresolute. Even in comparison with Anita, she is more caught, more immobilized. She questions her father's confidence in intellectualism and leftist ideals. Her father's ideology does not work for her. She is unsure with what to replace it. Among all the characters discussed in this thesis, Faith is the least Jewish. It is difficult to find anything about her that is Jewish. She has religious questions. She wonders about

meaning, about relationships, about marriage. She sees an emptiness in her life, but she is not looking toward Judaism for an answer.

Anita is so much a part of the American mainstream, that Phil Donahue spouts the details of her life, describing it exactly. "The week Anita came home, there was a show about grown children moving back in with their parents....she hates to think that her life is one of those stories that make Donahue go all dewy-eyed with concern" (p.305). Anita understands the dissatisfactions of contemporary American secular culture. Her life had been emptier than she realized. Her reality, as the wife of a lawyer living in the suburbs, evaporates the instant she discovers the emotional immaturity of her husband, Jamie. She no longer wants to return to that lifestyle. (p.316) Yet she remains unsure about to what she wants to turn.

Anita's father encourages her to examine Jewish tradition. She is disappointed with the level of her Jewish literacy, yet dissatisfied with her past experiences with Orthodox Judaism. Her lack of Jewish competence is so upsetting to her, that years later she remembers an embarrassing incident which occurred when she was with Jamie. He was ashamed when he was unable to wrap tefillin at the Mitzvahmobile.

> Apparently, the Hasidim had tried to teach him how to lay *tefillin*, but he just couldn't get the hang of it. He froze, his hands wouldn't work. Finally they gave up. They put the phylacteries in his hands, then covered his hands with theirs and just held them, one on his forehead, and one on his arm near his heart. (p.311)

The Mitzvahmobile is again a religious hindrance years later when she travels to the New York Public Library. To better understand her father and for her own religious journey, she tries to learn about hasidic Judaism by doing library research. Yet she cannot concentrate, "Ironically, the reason Anita can't concentrate is that she's being distracted by the noise from the Mitzvahmobile parked on Forty-second Street, blaring military-sounding music from its loudspeaker" (p.310). On the other hand, Anita also has good experiences with Orthodox Judaism. Like her father, Sam, she sees the beauty

of a traditional Jewish culture. She and Sam attend a hasidic wedding in Crown Heights. There, Anita notices the contrast of Judaism (the wedding canopy) with the secular and mundane, "... kids in sweatshirts and down vests idly hump their girlfriends as they watch the Hasidim assemble" (p.319). She appreciates the warmth of the hasidic community at the wedding reception.

> No one's saving places or jockeying to be near friends. The ladies just sit. Anita stands for a minute or so, then sees two women beckoning and patting the chair between them, so she goes and sits down...it doesn't matter where they sit, no one stays put for more then two seconds. They kiss and gab, then get up, sit next to a friend at another table, kiss and gab some more...'Look at this baby smile...(referring to Anita's son Bertie)...Look at this sweetheart!...every woman who sits down offers to hold Bertie for Anita, or to cut her roast beef. (p.320-321)

Anita's own wedding is not described in nearly as warm terms. In comparison, it sounds lonely.

> Anita and Jamie got married impulsively in a small town on the California-Nevada border. What she mostly remembers is sitting in a diner in Truckee, writing postcards to all their friends saying that she'd just been married in the Donner Pass by a one-armed justice of the peace. (p.320)

She has not yet decided if she wants to be a part of the hasidic community in Crown Heights. While she finds aspects of it appealing, she still has some doubts. She is indecisive and hesitant.

Daughters and Fathers, Religious Conflicts and Resolutions

When Anita first returns home, she is troubled at the differences that her father's Orthodoxy have created in their relationship. She misses his hug when she walks in the door. "He opened the door for her and waited while she unstrapped Bertie from his car seat, then sidestepped her embrace. He'd never been a comfortable hugger, but now she missed his pat-pat-pat" (p.306). Despite this change, Anita

appreciates the peace of mind her father now seems to have (p.309). Anita and Sam agree in their conflict with American secular society. Both father and daughter question the customary beliefs and social forms of the American culture in which each had been comfortable. Their relationship with each other has now changed. Anita realizes that her father's new traditional behavior has positive results. The prayers over all the food, which seem silly when Anita first hears them (p.307) actually give her a feeling of well being. She misses her father and the prayers when he is not home. "Without their father's blessing, the meat tastes greasy, the potatoes lukewarm; the gelatin has a rubbery skin."(p.312) Anita and her father have a moment of connection when a kind of electricity passes between them. It is Jewish electricity, the result of her father's prayers. (p.323) Perhaps it also signals the beginning of a new channel of communication between daughter and father.

Unlike Anita and Sam in "Electricity," the daughters in the other three of these literary works conflict significantly with their fathers. While David pushes toward American secularism and away from European Jewish culture, his daughter, Lucy pushes in the other direction. David's post-American image is cultured, as he would see it, "civilized". He has another image as well and it is one Lucy loves. This is his rarely emerging pre American image. Lucy remembers when he would dance "in an absurd parody all his own, blending a horse's gallop and a Parisian cancan" (p.233). He considers it absurd, but Lucy considers it wonderful. She tests her father David's religious boundaries, both toward and away from traditional Judaism. She tests his boundaries away from traditional Judaism as a child when she asks, "why can't we have a Christmas tree?" (p.233) Her request is refused. As an adult she continues to test her father's secular boundaries by living with her boyfriend. When she says, "'As a matter of fact (Allan's) sharing the apartment.'" (p. 247) David believes she has gone too far. He responds with fury. "He flung his arms about and ranted" (p.247). Lucy tests his

attitude toward traditional Judaism by asking many questions, always looking for information about Eastern European, Jewish culture. Lucy is attracted to the traditional culture her father has left behind. This attraction contrasts the dynamic in the relationship between Moishe and Sara. Moishe tries to convince Sara to maintain traditional religious Jewish culture, but Sara is drawn toward American culture with its increased secularism.

Problems of Women within Judaism

All four of the women discussed in this thesis encounter problems with their own status as women within Judaism. Anita ("Electricity") describes her frustration when she realizes that as a woman, even a hasidic woman, she could never approach the rebbe as a man could. "That's another reason she could never join this sect: being female, she'd never get closer to the rebbe than this" (p.319). Anita knows that her father's newfound observance is difficult for her parents' marriage. In some ways it is unfair to her mother (p.305). Yet she also knows that American secular culture has been difficult for her own marriage (p.313). Because his idealism has a self serving component, Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") sees her father's intellectual idealism, the extension of his Judaism, as part of his hypocrisy. Sid now has an excuse to abandon Faith's mother, leaving a sick and elderly woman alone at the end of her life (p.344). Faith sees women, her mother and herself, abandoned because of the hypocritical ideals of the men in their lives. These ideals are her father's religion. Lucy ("Opiate of the People") knows that her father David's disapproval of her choice in living with her boyfriend is rooted in a double standard in his European traditional background. David says, "Back there, women who did that were called those names, and when respectable women saw them they crossed to the other side of the street" (p.248). She finds that her exploration of Jewish culture leads her into unpleasant territory as a woman. She dances with one of the men who knew her father long ago, one

of her teachers in her study of Eastern European Judaism, and is revolted by his lechery on the dance floor. "'Christ, that one is the original dirty old man! Who let *him* in?'" (p.250)

The problem of women in Judaism is particularly acute for Sara (*Bread Givers*), the only one of these women raised in a traditional Jewish family. In many ways, she sees traditional Judaism as an excuse for men to oppress women. Sara is taught that God does not listen to women. (p.9) She sees traditional Judaism as an excuse for her father's tyrannical economic priorities. Because he studies Talmud rather than working, Moishe's presence is an enormous economic drain on his family. It is his old-fashioned religion which has kept them poor and hungry. She sees her father using God as an excuse for keeping women in powerless roles. He says, "It says in the Torah, only through a man has a woman an existence. Only through a man can a woman enter Heaven" (p.137). Sara sees her father's traditional background as his excuse in choosing poor husbands for her sisters. She contrasts this with the power that women have in America to choose their own husbands. (p.135) Sara is also sure that Moishe's Judaism has kept him from appropriately contributing to the economic support of his family.

Making Religious Judgments

The ability to interpret Jewish law into practice is historically and by Orthodox Jewish law reserved for men and not for women. Men have always judged acceptable Jewish practice, for men and for women. In communities which live by Jewish law, this is a great power indeed. Sara struggles against her father Moishe's psak[2]. Moishe will never listen to the decisions of women. This has terrible personal repercussions for his daughters, three of whom end up in extremely poor marriages

[2] פסק is literally a judgement or a verdict.

because their father's choices override their own. Moishe will not listen to his wife's judgment and this results in devastating economic consequences for the family. As she struggles for autonomy, Sara struggles for the right to make her own personal decisions and judgments, both religious and secular. With much hard work, she finally earns the right to teach and interpret tradition. She becomes autarchic, interpreting American tradition, for herself and for school children.

In their family, both Lucy and David ("Opiate of the People") make their own life decisions, both are autarchic. Both can give psak. As a child, Lucy listens to her father. By adolescence her identity emerges and, to her father's pride and dismay, she makes her own religious and moral decisions. The same is true in the relationship between Sid and Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language"), except that Faith hides her moral decisions from her father. She is less confident then Lucy. Faith's parents question her ability to make adult decisions. (p.339) Perhaps as a result, she lacks confidence and struggles with her life decisions. Faith announces her decisions only in anger. (p.344) Sam, in "Electricity", is like Faith in "Dreamer in a Dead Language", both search for the ability to decide for themselves. He is finding the confidence to move in a world where religious judgments are important. Yet in his new world of ultra-Orthodox Judaism, the last religious decision a member needs to make is to join the hasidic group. Once an individual joins, religious judgments are given from above, from the rebbe. Anita ("Electricity") is not sure what she wants. Life cannot return to "normal" as she remembers it. She searches for the ability to make those life decisions which loom before her.

In conclusion, the religious lives of these characters vary tremendously. The religious searches of these characters are part of their life searches. The religious movement of these characters is not uniform. Sometimes they become less traditional and more American as they adjust to American culture. Other times, they become more

observant and more committed to Jewish culture as they question American society. All of the daughters experience particular issues as women which affect them religiously. Over time, we see a recurring pattern of generational disagreement about Judaism and confrontation between daughters and fathers about their religious differences. These daughters often disagree with the religion of their fathers. Two of the daughters Sara (*Bread Givers*) and Lucy ("Opiate of the People") become religiously autarchic. Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") begins to move in that direction. While their actual religious judgments vary tremendously from the decisions of their fathers, these daughters resemble their fathers in their confidence to make their own religious decisions. Among these three daughters, Faith remains the least able to make her own religious judgments. Anita remains unable to resolve her relationship with her father and ambivalent and divided about her own religious judgments. She remains heterarchic.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

These four literary works describe daughters and fathers whose relationship is affected by education and religious issues. Yet even more significant than those two themes, the father-daughter relationship is created by its own psychological dynamics. These in turn affect these fathers and these daughters educationally and religiously. All daughter-father relationships, even those considered "normal" have underlying dynamics containing a sexual tone. These stories demonstrate several of the following themes: Daughters have an erotic longing for fathers. This erotic longing is mutual; fathers also have an erotic longing for daughters. When this eroticism remains unresolved, it frequently leads either to a psychological seduction of the daughter or to a father who attempts to control his daughter in sexual and other ways. Daughters who overcome this sexual tension and build their own independent identities achieve autarchy. Ironically these successful daughters develop their own identities while still choosing their fathers as role models.

Analysis of the themes of education and the role of Judaism in these stories further supports this paradigm. All of the fathers and daughters in these stories are highly educated. While some of these fathers and these daughters value education in order to reach economic and social goals, all of them love to learn. Education is central to the identity, personality and behavior of each one of these characters. It is both a source of pride and a source of conflict between daughters and fathers. It is a source of pride because each of these daughters has an eagerness for education which resembles her father's educational drive. She is often able to please him with her educational achievement. Through education the daughter can identify with her father, thus helping

her to resolve the relationship. When, however, the father and daughter favor different types of education or try to use education to achieve different goals, they come into conflict. One example is Sara and Moishe Smolinsky's vehement disagreement over the value of an American education in *Bread Givers*.

In contrast to education, which can be charged either positively or negatively in the context of the father-daughter relationship in these stories, Judaism is portrayed as a source of constant tension. Each of these daughters is frustrated by the religious limitations she feels as a woman. Each directly questions the religious life style choices of her own father. Each also disagrees with the religion of her father but in a different way. Each father has defined the religious and cultural choices he wants his children to make. Each daughter radically refuses (or in the case of Anita -"Electricity"- at least questions) the religious role her father has chosen for her. The growth and change displayed by these characters affects their attitude toward and their practice of the Jewish tradition. All grow and change Jewishly throughout these fictional works as they struggle with Jewish issues, a struggle which helps willing characters to grow in a wide variety of religious ways.

These characters occupy a different place along the Jewish spectrum from traditional observance to secularism. Moishe Smolinsky (*Bread Givers*) begins and ends his life as a traditional Eastern European Jewish immigrant, showing little change. He will not adjust to modern society. As his daughter Sara says, he remains unchanged by the changing currents of life. (p.296) Sid Darwin ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") also shows little religious growth. Throughout the story Sid remains enamored with his religion of American left-wing intellectual idealism. Some of these characters, like Sara Smolinsky (*Bread Givers*) and David ("Opiate of the People") who are attracted to American secular culture, try to abandon aspects of their Jewish heritage to take advantage of the opportunities of the secular world. These are principally the characters

who immigrated to America as children and who try hard to leave the ghetto of traditional, heterarchic, Judaism behind. American born characters like Sam ("Electricity") sometimes become observant. Both Sam and Lucy ("The Opiate of the People") are interested in and drawn to aspects of the Jewish tradition. The latter question American values and American society and turn to traditional Judaism with all its heterarchic aspects for its critique of American culture.

Three of the daughters in these works (Sara, Lucy and Faith) confront their fathers in a search for self identity. For each of these three, the confrontation itself helps them to move toward autonomy. Sara and Lucy manage to become autarchic. Sara Smolinsky (*Bread Givers*) is the only daughter among them who is able to confront her father loudly and in anger. Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") and Lucy ("The Opiate of the People") confront their respective fathers only in a whisper. Faith's confrontation is incomplete. Faith is still in the midst of her struggle for autonomy. Her father forces her to lower her voice. For her, the result is a symbolic death. "So bury me, she said, lying flat as a corpse ...." (p.347). Lucy's whisper is voluntary rather than demanded by her father. She has found her voice, but continues to use it with ambivalence. Anita ("Electricity") never confronts her father and never achieves autarchy. She remains the most ambivalent of these daughters and is farthest from achieving autonomy.

When able to resolve their relationships with their fathers, these daughters choose their fathers as models. Sara (*Bread Givers*) and Lucy ("The Opiate of the People") have their fathers' confidence in making religious, educational and life style decisions. They have their fathers' strength of character and love of learning. They also resemble their fathers in the authority each holds in the community. Their confrontation with their respective fathers helps to resolve their relationships. Faith ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") still has difficulties making her own judgments. Just as she has not

yet been able to resolve her relationship with her father, she has not yet achieved her own voice. If Faith ever does achieve her own voice, it will be a written voice. Faith has chosen her father as a model; the model he provides is a literary one. Anita ("Electricity") has chosen no model for her own development. Her relationship with her father and her identity are the least resolved. Faith and Anita, those daughters who remain unresolved in their relationships with their fathers, struggle for a focus. Their drive remains undirected.

This thesis presents a paradigm of daughter-father relationships, molded by sexual ambivalence. These daughters remain under the control of their fathers until they are able to achieve autarchy. Each does so educationally, personally and religiously by confronting her father. This is the first step toward successful resolution of relationships with their fathers. When they become autonomous, they are able to establish their own identities. They have modeled their own identities using their fathers as role models.

Does this thesis make a statement about the American Jewish Community?

The relationship between fictional literature and reality is a complicated one. On the one hand, by definition, fiction is art. It grows from the imagination of the author, its link to reality is tenuous. The only reality which can be proven by studying fiction is the reality in the mind and imagination of the author. Thus we cannot base historical truth upon literature, or make a statement about women in the American Jewish community based upon the study of these literary works. On the other hand, since the author lives in the real world, she creates fiction which mirrors reality as she knows it. Literature's ability to mirror the world is especially prevalent in realistic literature such as these four pieces. These works do represent a perspective about women in the American Jewish community. They mirror the reality of Jewish American women and demonstrate that their achieving autarchy is difficult. Autarchy develops through

change and confrontation. This theme, the primary one in these stories is not distinctively Jewish.

Despite the seemingly radical nature of the conflict between daughters and fathers in these four stories, the results are rather conservative. In literature Jewish American women do not usurp the power of their fathers in order to create drastically new structures in the family or society as a whole. They do not find or invent new role models. Their fathers maintain influence over their lives because they often use their fathers as models. While this literature challenges cultural assumptions about passive or powerless daughters, it actually reinforces cultural assumptions about the power of the father. The most radical solution offered is for these daughters to be like their fathers.

The above discussion is in no way meant to imply that mothers do not play a significant role in the development of daughters. The daughter, in fact has a choice of modeling her own identity after her father, her mother or a combination of both. Less than issues of sexual ambivalence and seduction, mother-daughter relationships are often molded by issues of separation and emotional intensity.[1] Some girls turn toward their mothers as models to a greater extent than toward their fathers. A discussion of this issue would need a full thesis to develop completely.

This literature comes from the early canon of Jewish American Women's Literature and is limited by that canon. Even in the wider scope of world literature, we have far less literature by women then by men. Perhaps it is due to its early and exploratory nature that these works are restrained rather than radical in their suggestions of solutions. The conservative nature of the works considered may be a consequence of the conditional nature of any early compilation. Joyce Antler's and Sylvia Barack Fishman's anthologies are the first attempts to bring together stories by Jewish

[1]Deutsch, I, p.253.

American Women. The amount of literature written by Jewish American women is currently increasing.

In addition, the retrained nature of these works may be influenced by a focus upon marketing. Publishing is an industry. The decision to publish a book is governed by the market. Fiction is published because it will make money for the company which publishes it. A literary piece about a daughter who kills or even significantly overcomes her father might be unprofitable to produce. We may never have the chance to read it.

Does this thesis make a statement about universal daughter-father relationships?

The paradigm of sexual ambivalence between father and daughter and the father's attempt to control his daughter's sexuality is seemingly universal. It is found in the Biblical narrative about Laban, Rachel and Leah.[2] Laban dictates his daughters sexuality and refuses to let them separate from home, literally running after them with an army to bring them back into his control. He cannot let them go. Rachel and Leah also find their own voices, through naming their sons.[3] The outcome is again quite conservative, but the sexual ambivalence between father and daughter is ancient indeed. Perhaps the Bible describes a universal phenomenon. On the other hand, perhaps our culture has absorbed Laban's example. Rather than reflecting universal culture, the Bible may have created universal culture. In addition to reflecting reality, literature, including the Bible, also helps to shape it.

The paradigm of strong daughters choosing their fathers as role models does not seem to be particularly Jewish. Carolyn Heilbrun finds a similar pattern in her dis-

---

[2]Another Biblical example of sexual ambivalence appears between Lot and his daughters in Genesis 19:31-36. Lot is unable to control his daughters sexuality and is seduced by them.

[3] My thanks to Karla Goldman who pointed out to me the importance of naming for Rachel and Leah.

cussion of the biographies of exceptional women. In addition to commenting upon the similarity between these women and their fathers, Heilbrun claims that women of distinction were often treated by their fathers as honorary sons.[4] They generally did not have brothers and often inherited their fathers' professional mantel. Their fathers had high and unusual expectations of them from childhood. Treated as sons, they looked to their fathers as role models. Interestingly, all of the daughters discussed in this thesis received special treatment from their fathers and none of them were raised with brothers. In *Bread Givers*, Sara comes from a family of four daughters. It is understood in the family that Sara is the one with her father's head, (p.20). Faith Darwin ("Dreamer in a Dead Language") is an only child. She has a special and close relationship with her father. Anita ("Electricity") like Sara (*Bread Givers*) is from a family of all daughters. Her father, Sam, tries to convince Anita to follow the path that he himself has already chosen. Lucy ("The Opiate of the People") has two brothers. Yet it is clear that she was raised as an only child, with special attention from her father, (p.238). Her brothers were much older than she. While this paradigm holds true for the stories that I have analyzed here, the fact that it is also universal is a sign that insofar as daughter-father relationships, the distinction of Jewish literature may be superficial.

Extraordinary women do not fight, kill and overcome their fathers, rather they simply absorb their fathers into themselves. The four stories discussed in this thesis fit into the general cultural tradition of daughters who struggle to break away from the control of their fathers. We see this theme in the Bible and in Western myth. (e.g. Rapunzel). Daughters do not overthrow their fathers. Perhaps the idea of the literary daughter overthrowing or slaying her father is still too radical or terrifying to contemplate. Perhaps in a patriarchal society, daughters have little to gain in killing the

---

[4] Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Hamlet's Mother and Other Women*. (New York:Columbia University Press) 1990.

father, for they cannot succeed to his place of power which requires another male.[5] Such a tale might have brief renown as a horror story (like the story of Lizzie Bordon) but would probably not have the lasting impact of the story of Agamemnon or Oedipus. It may be too frightening for our society, whether Jewish or Western, to contemplate. Women who kill, like Medea or Clytemenestra, are considered evil rather than tragic or sympathetic figures like many the male patricide in the Western canon.

---

[5]My thanks to Dr. Alvin Reines for this insight.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Cahan, Abraham. *The Rise of David Levinsky*. 1960; rpt. Gloucester, Mass., Peter Smith, 1969.

Paley, Grace. "Dreamers in a Dead Language". 1985; rpt. in *Follow My Footprints: Changing Images of Women in American Jewish Fiction*. Ed. Sylvia Barack Fishman. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1992.

Prose, Francine. "Electricity." 1988; rpt. in *America and I: Short Stories by American Jewish Women Writers*. Ed. Joyce Antler. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990.

Schwartz, Lynne Sharon. "The Opiate of the People." 1984; rpt. in *America and I: Short Stories by American Jewish Women Writers*. Ed. Joyce Antler. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990.

Yezierska, Anzia. *Bread Givers*. 1925; rpt. New York: Persea Books, 1975.

Secondary Sources

Adelman, Janet. *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to the Tempest*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Adler, Ruth. "Mothers and Daughters: The Jewish Mother as Seen by Jewish Women Writers." *Yiddish* 6 (1987): 87-92.

Alter, Robert. *Defenses of the Imagination: Jewish Writers and Modern Historical Crises*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1977.

Antler, Joyce. (ed.) *America and I : Short Stories by American Jewish Women Writers*. Boston : Beacon Press, 1990.

Barker, Adele Marie. *The Mother Syndrome in the Russian Folk Imagination*. Columbus: Slavica, 1986.

Baum, Charlotte, Hyman, Paula and Michel, Sonya. *The Jewish Woman in America*. New York : Dial Press, 1976.

Baumgarten, Murray. *City Scriptures: Modern Jewish Writing*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Boose, Lynda E. and Flowers, Betty S. (ed.) *Daughters and Fathers*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

Boose, Lynda E. "The Father and the Bride in Shakespeare." *PLMA*, Vol. 97, No.3 (May 1982).

Daiches, David. "Some Aspects of Anglo-American Jewish Fiction." In *Jewish Perspectives*, Ed. Jacob Sontag. London: Secker and Warburg, 1980.

Daly, Ann. *Inventing Motherhood: The Consequences of an Ideal*. New York: Schocken Books, 1983.

Deutsch, Helene. *The Psychology of Women. A Psychoanalytic Interpretation*. New York: Grune and Stratton, 1944.

Dudley, David L. *My Father's Shadow: Intergenerational Conflict in African American Men's Autobiography* Philadelphia: Univ. of Penn. Press, 1991.

Ezer, Nancy. abstract of "The Mother-Daughter Dialectic: The Book of Internal Grammar by David Grossman." The paper was given at the NAPH Methodology Conference in Berkeley, California in June 1994.

Fishman, Sylvia Barack. (ed.) *Follow My Footprints : Changing Images of Women in American Jewish Fiction*. Hanover : University Press of New England [for] Brandeis University Press, 1992.

Flax, Jane. "The Conflict Between Nurturance and Autonomy in Mother-Daughter Relationships and within Feminism." *Feminist Studies 4*, No. 1 (February 1978): 171-89.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961.

Gross, Theodore. *The Literature of American Jews*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952.

Guttman, Allen. *The Jewish Writer in America Assimilation and the Crisis of Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

Gallop, Jane. *Feminism and Psychoanalysis The Daughter's Seduction*. London: The Macmillan Press LTD. London, 1982.

Harris, Alice Kessler. Introduction to *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska. New York: Persea Books, 1975.

Hartman, Geoffrey. "On the Jewish Imagination." In *Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History*. 5, (September 1985), 201-220.

Heilbrun, Carolyn G. *Hamlet's Mother and Other Women*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

Herman, Judith Lewis with Hirschman, Lisa. *Father-Daughter Incest*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Horney, Karen. *Feminine Psychology*. New York: WW Norton and Company, Inc., 1967.

Janowsky, Oscar I. (ed.) *The American Jew, a Reappraisal*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1967.

Katz, Amy Rose. "The Power of Jewish Immigrant Voices: Tell Me your Stories." In *The Cincinnati Judaica Review*, July 1994.

Moskowitz, Faye. *Her Face in the Mirror Jewish Women on Mothers and Daughters*. Boston: Independent Publishing, 1994.

The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition Unabridged. New York: 1987.

Reines, Alvin J. "Ontology, Demography, and the Silent Holocaust." *Judaism*, Vol. 38, Num. 4, (Fall 1989), 478-487.

----------. *Polydoxy, Exploration in a Philosophy of Liberal Religion*. Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1987.

----------. "Reform Judaism: The Shock of Freedom." In *Jews in a Free Society: Challenges and Opportunities*. Ed. Edward A. Goldman. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1978, pp. 128-141.

Rising, Catherine. *Darkness at Heart: Fathers and Sons in Conrad*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990.

Smith, John H. "Fathers and Daughters." In *Man and World* 13:385-402. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1980.

Steinmetz, Devorah. *From Father to Son: Kinship, Conflict and Continuity in Genesis*. Louisville: 1991.

Storch, Margaret. *Sons and Adversaries: Women in William Blake and DH Lawrence*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tenn., 1990.

Wirth-Nesher, *What Is Jewish Literature?* Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1994.