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## "Harry Will be the Gentleman" : The Nature of Men and Their Relations with Women in Regency English Culture

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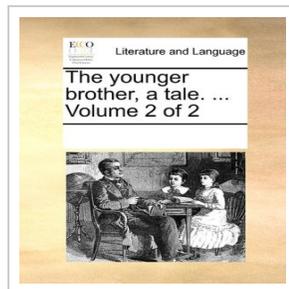
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# Pride and Prejudice: The Student Blog

Thursday, March 7, 2013

## "Harry Will be the Gentleman" : The Nature of Men and Their Relations with Women in Regency English Culture

F. Newberry's *The Younger Brother* (1770) demonstrates the perceived actions and lifestyles of two young men in Regency English culture. More specifically, the text illustrates assumed levels of intelligence in sons Harry and Bobby, particularly in relation to womanly figures. Bobby is the younger brother and is depicted by his father as "...a perfect model of innocence and undebauched morals..." (375) whereas Harry is his eldest son. "Harry will be the gentlemen" (375). The doctor and father discuss numerous possibilities that might occur within Bobby, the younger, more naïve brother of the two, being away from home and likewise surrounded by the company of several women. Writes the doctor, "...he should be sent home a worse scholar than he now is, if his innocence once seduced he loses all sense of religion and virtue..." (375). Retorts Bobby's father, "...I have a very good opinion of Bobby's docility; and, therefore, I am willing to hope, that it will be no difficult matter to guard him against the seductions of the loose and vicious" (375). As also seen in *Pride and Prejudice*, characters like Lydia and Mrs. Bennet have a "vicious" mindset that is fixed on reeling in a man. Newberry's story implies that the success of Bobby and Harry are perpetually linked to their attitudes toward women, and thus hinders on whether they can effectively resist these "loose" or "vicious" women as well as their seductive natures. However, it is interesting to note that there is no emphasis on the specific type of woman that Harry or Bobby should entertain, except arguably the opposite of loose or vicious, that being a woman of "amiable" nature.



Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) illustrates numerous romantic relationships between young men and women. Of Mr. Collins, Austen writes, "Having now a good house and very sufficient income, he intended to marry; and in seeking a reconciliation with the Longbourn family he had a wife in view, as he meant to chase one of the daughters, if he found them as handsome and amiable ..." (ch. 15). Although Mr. Collins first wishes to marry Elizabeth, he quickly desires Charlotte after being turned down. On the other hand, Bingley and Darcy take their time finding and eventually marrying women, but Wickham, much like Mr. Collins, wastes no time pondering on a woman of good repute and marries the loose and wild Lydia Bennet.

In terms of young men and their choices regarding women, *The Younger Brother* seemingly argues that the type of woman a man should desire is amiable, gracious and good-natured. Austen illustrates this notion in *Pride and Prejudice* with the tenuous courtships of Darcy and Elizabeth and Bingley and Jane. However, Mr. Collins and Charlotte marry hastily, as do Lydia and Wickham. Since *Pride and Prejudice* offers no further insight into any of the marriages of any of its characters, it is impossible to say what Austen's opinion of a "good woman" actually is. Perhaps she agrees that a good woman should be of amiable nature, as seen in a character like Jane Bennet. On the other hand, Austen might just as well have believed, as she illustrates in *Pride and Prejudice*'s main character, Elizabeth, that a good woman should be entirely free.

Citations: Newberry, F. *The Younger Brother*. Britain, 1772. Google Books. Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. 1813.

### About

A blog site featuring original research by undergraduate students at Wright State University enrolled in Crystal B. Lal's *Pride and Prejudice* (Spring 2011).

We hope you enjoy reading about the novel and historical contexts surrounding the famous novel. And be sure to participate in CELIA's Bicentennial events on October 2013. Click [here](#) for more information.

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