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SUMMARY

1. **PURPOSE.** To provide security and policy review on the document at Tab 1 prior to release to the public.

2. **BACKGROUND.** C2C Allison Egan, C1C Ashley Christ, C1C Tobiah Kroskob, and C1C Jessica Adams have all prepared presentations for Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum (CSURF). The presentations are titled respectively: REALITY OF VIOLENCE AS A PRODUCT OF IRRESPONSIBILITY; WILLIAM FAULKNER, DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY, AND THE OLD SOUTH; RAPE OF CHARLOTTE TEMPLE AND VICTIM-BLAMING; AMERICA, LINEARLY CYCLICAL
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Tabs:

1. REALITY OF VIOLENCE AS A PRODUCT OF IRRESPONSIBILITY
2. WILLIAM FAULKNER, DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY AND THE OLD SOUTH
3. RAPE OF CHARLOTTE TEMPLE AND VICTIM-BLAMING
4. AMERICA, LINEARLY CYCLICAL

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English 343

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The Reality of Violence as a Product of Irresponsibility

Throughout history, mankind has continually adjusted the powers of domination. Capable of influencing and coercing those around them, men created rulers, leaders, and social classes – all dependent on the establishment of an authoritative structure. However, the process of establishing dominance relied on the brute force and violence of the men purporting it. Using the element of fear, the men of the 18th century adopted violence as a means of control. In *Evelina*, Frances Burney demonstrates that the men who exhibit forms of sexual aggression towards women also lack an interest in responsibility. These men, influenced by libertine lifestyles and their unfamiliarity with the idea of accountability, utilize sexual aggression as an acceptable method of interaction with women. Without responsibility, these men are free to act on their own accord, and without strong opposition, they are capable of doing so. Thus, the men of *Evelina* who do not harbor much responsibility, act the most aggressively, and consequently, use violence as a customary method of procuring their intentions.

As a part of the culture, violence was an acceptable form of behavior in 18th century society. However, the stigma associated with women existed long before that era. The *Journal of International Women's Studies* published an article dissecting the origins of male superiority over women in the *Historical Perspectives on Violence Against Women* written by Vivian Fox. By analyzing historical behavioral patterns, Fox explains how the origins of male superiority emerged from an “ideology of ‘patriarchal privilege’” and influences from the Judeo-Christian

religion (Fox 16). Thus the result of the strong prevailing over the weak established women as trophies – easily defeated and amassed through strength. Additionally, Genesis left Eve depicted as the “representative of her sex, weak, and lustful,” further introducing the idea that women were naturally inferior and in need of “wiser and superior male figures” (18). Thus, Fox concludes that violence became a natural expression for male dominance. However, the “strength” in the 18th century is not only physical, but also a part of the psychological abuse harbored by influential upper-class members of society. In *Evelina*, Sir Clement Willoughby actively exploits Evelina – physically and psychologically – as he establishes control in manners that aim to evoke responses from Evelina. However, the 18th century had its own alterations to the development and reduction of violence. Robert Shoemaker’s *Male honour and the decline of public violence in eighteenth-century London*, analyzes the regression of severe public violence. Citing author Anna Clark, Shoemaker summarizes that the violent culture of the libertines “of some London artisans was transformed...as working-class radicals adopted new ideals of respectability and domesticity” (Shoemaker 207). Yet, the most important aspect of this decline was its personification in the character of Lord Orville, a nonviolent and established man. Shoemaker further explains that this new prospect allowed “men to reject violence and find new ways of asserting their social position,” allowing characters like Orville to be realistic figures in Burney’s novel (207). However, this change was a gradual one, and violence prevailed as a man’s God given right to establish his authority in society.

Another adaptation to the culture of violence in the 18th century was the creation of gangs and their tyranny over society. Known as the “Mohocks,” young groups of men found themselves bound together by their common interest in violence. In a review article of Jeannine Hurl-Eamon’s *Gender and Petty Violence in London, 1680-1720*, history professor Joanne

Bailey writes that “male sexual violence was more socially defined rather than legally defined,” introducing the dangerous leniency of violence in 18th century London (Bailey 2). To further understand the Mohock Scare of 1712, Elizabeth Veisz, provides insight on the creation and sustainment of such an elite group. Named after “the most Cruel of the [Indians] of North America,” the Mohocks were known for their “unprovoked violence,” typically “committed by roving gangs of well-dressed young men” (Veisz 19-20). Distinguishable acts of the Mohocks were of “debauchery (mostly drunkenness)” and randomness when selecting victims (29). Additionally, Shoemaker discloses that the Mohocks seemed to be motivated by the need to “impress their friends and confirm their social and gender identity” (Shoemaker 199). Although *Evelina* does not specifically reference the Mohocks, the formations of men which terrorize her in open gardens starkly parallel the fearless attitude of such gangs. Evelina’s account of meeting some men is explained as they appeared “very riotous, and...were hallowing, leaning on one another,” indicating signs of the drunken qualities of Mohocks as they “rush[ed] suddenly from behind some trees...and formed a kind of circle” around Evelina and her companion (Burney 197). The panic Evelina felt was further heightened as one of the men seized hold of her as she “struggled with such vehemence to disengage...from him” only to escape into the realm of “another party of men” (197). The physical liberty or restraint these men took with Evelina shadows the origins of “patriarchal privilege” and the vehement need to establish an identity.

Ranging from abusive to protective, the men of *Evelina* embody very different roles as it correlates to their responsibilities in life. In *How to Read Like a Gentleman: Burney’s Instructions to her Critics in Evelina*, Gina Campbell reviews Burney’s plea for men to take on more protective roles in regards to the opposite gender. To understand the reputation women had to protect, Campbell explains that women are judged by their “moral worth” as it pertains to her

market values of “virtue and intelligence” (Campbell 563). Since women cannot protect themselves on their own, men must take an interest in preserving them. Consequently, Campbell concludes that “if women are to be innocent, men must be protective,” indicating that one cannot exist without the other (564). Thus, Burney’s characterizations of the men in her novel are to display the consequences of irresponsible men who harbor influence and how their actions affect the women around them.

The most responsible of Burney’s characters is the Reverend Villars, a man of the Church and Evelina’s guardian. Maintaining the responsibility of raising Evelina, Mr. Villars subsequently does not commit any sort of aggressive behavior upon Evelina and thus fulfills the position of the noblest role model in her life. Lord Orville takes on a protective role in that he constantly defends her position as a woman from the country and similarly, makes no sexual advances toward Evelina. His character is drastically different than the company he keeps for he represents the emerging and rare “reformed” gentleman in London’s society, also noted as the ideal nonviolent man (Shoemaker 207). However, the rest of the men in the novel harbor very little responsibilities –aside from taking care of their own interests. Sir Clement Willoughby, an English baronet, has no responsibilities associated with his occupation in society and yet maintains power amongst the upper-classes. Lord Merton, a “forward and bold” character, is described to have “a look of libertinism towards women,” explaining his relentless conduct toward Evelina (Burney 115). Engaged and financially unstable, Lord Merton recklessly persists in making Evelina feel uncomfortable with his sexual suggestions and forthrightness. His irresponsibility not only explains his situation in life, but his perspective on it as well. The male figure with arguably the most responsibility is that of Captain Mirvan who is a father and military commander, but does not display many of the qualities of being either, as he is

characterized as “surly, vulgar, and disagreeable” (40). He is away at sea most of the time, and remains quite detached from his family. However, the lurking issue with these men is that they all maintain such powerful positions in society where they can easily abuse their authority without much opposition.

The key in understanding these men is to analyze their actions while detecting particular patterns in their behaviors. Highlighting this pattern with the use of titles, Burney depicts the men as “Sir” or “Lord,” correlating those with inherent power as the ones who can exploit it. Thus, women in *Evelina* find themselves as victims to the violent nature of these men, whom frequently targeted a woman’s physical and psychological vulnerabilities. However, the most shocking element of *Evelina* is not the public torment and taunting of the women, but the liberty the men take in abusing them. Evelina’s grandmother is relentlessly persecuted by Captain Mirvan; however, the most violent behavior exhibited by the Captain is when he targets Evelina and her grandmother for a feigned kidnapping and robbery. Escalating beyond the realm of verbal slanders, Captain Mirvan’s method of torment evolves into a physically hostile assault by attacking the carriage the women are traveling in. Sir Clement separates Evelina from her grandmother while “the [Captain] tore poor Madame Duval out of the carriage” (Burney 147). After Sir Clement and the Captain depart, Evelina searches for her grandmother. Upon finding her, Evelina explains how she found her with her “feet tied together with a strong rope, which was fastened to the upper branch of a tree...which ran along the ditch where she sat” (149). Left for dead or worse, the Captain’s actions did little to consider the harms of leaving an unattended woman in a ditch. Evelina notes that her grandmother’s linens were falling off of her body as she was left in the dirt while the “dust from the road, were quite *pasted* on her skin by her tears” to the extent that “she hardly looked human” (150). Yet, the Captain celebrates the success of the

“robbery” and Madame Duval’s distress, truly disconnected from the notion and reality of responsibility.

Similarly, the other men in the novel abuse women with verbal slanders and sexual innuendos, pushing the limits to see how far they can get with a woman. For example, Lord Merton’s libertinism influences the way in which he envisions women. Engaged to Lady Louisa, Lord Merton openly disregards the importance and responsibility of being a fiancée. As he finds Evelina alone in the drawing room, he quickly shuts the door and expresses his excitement of finally encountering her in private. Although his fiancée is just a few rooms away, Lord Merton seizes her hand and exclaims, “How glad I am, my sweet girl, to meet you, at last, alone!” (310). Lord Merton is free to pursue who he pleases – regardless of who he affects because he is not held accountable to his responsibilities as a faithful companion or gentleman. A self-professed libertine, Lord Merton is a man unfamiliar with the idea of consequences.

For a man interested in distressing women, the easiest way for him to control her is by threatening her with her reputation. In the forms of verbal slanders, a man could easily manipulate and deface a woman’s “delicacy.” Susan Staves’ *“Evelina;” or, Female Difficulties*, communicates the topic of female delicacy in the 18th century. With a woman’s reputation being her only source of merit, they reacted in ways to defend themselves, oftentimes allowing men to act sexually and violently in order to protect their image. Staves explains that Evelina’s anxiety is a product of the psychological threats of these men, causing her to worry “that her delicacy will be wounded or that it will appear to be compromised” (Staves 371). Surrounded by men aiming to seduce her, Evelina is constantly guarding her delicacy for fear of losing face with those she respects, particularly with Lord Orville. Staves further reinforces the importance of sustaining a woman’s delicacy as it is “more fragile and precarious than virginity, since it can be

eroded by the social ambiance in which one finds oneself” (374). Thus, the looming presence of Sir Clement greatly threatens Evelina’s social status in society. In a time where a woman’s associations could destroy her, women often acted out of desperation and panic. Upon leaving the theatre, Sir Clement relentlessly insists that Evelina ride in his carriage, and hurriedly sweeps her into the carriage and shuts the door behind him. Throughout the duration of the ride, Sir Clement seizes Evelina’s hands on multiple occasions, causing her to become apprehensive and uncomfortable. Upon realizing that the carriage is going in the wrong direction, Evelina persists trying to correct the route, however, Sir Clement further pushes her discomfort while trying to quiet her with a passionate kiss on her hand. However, Evelina notes that “Never in my whole life, have I been so terrified,” further solidifying her terror by exclaiming that had she seen another “human being...[she] should have called for help” (Burney 100). Upon reaching her home, Sir Clement further humiliates her as Lord Orville sees them emerge from the carriage together. Embarrassed, she explains that she felt “shame and confusion; for I could not endure that he should know how long a time Sir Clement and I had been together, since I was not at liberty to assign any reason for it” (101). The greatest threat to her sincere intentions, Evelina cannot protect her delicacy without stepping out of character and purging herself of Sir Clement once and for all.

Combating men hungry for dominance, women faced violent behaviors as a result of London’s social culture. In *Evelina*, there is a strong correlation between the men with little responsibility and how that responsibility influences their lifestyles. Furthermore, the purpose of this research analysis was to expand Burney’s concerns of the crude and manipulative behavior of common men influencing society. Through the depiction of an upper class group of individuals, Burney highlights the characteristics of responsibility and the powerful reign and

possession it held over women in society. With a woman's delicacy at stake, Burney writes to promote the good nature and nobility of protecting women through responsible and civil characters. By exaggerating the foppish and unattractive qualities of irresponsible men, Burney's novel aims to encourage them to take on responsible and moral roles in society in hopes of decreasing the physical and psychological abuse of women while inspiring a change for women beyond the society of 18th century London.

Documentation

C2C Ian Sweeney suggested a few corrections regarding word selection and grammar issues. He also pointed out a trend that I had failed to address – the men who abuse the most also hold the most prominent titles, reflecting their power over these women, and I went back into my paper to fix that. He pointed out that all the prominent men were also the ones who were being abusive, and I tried to make an effort to emphasize that fact in my paper.

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