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John Fox, Jr.'s Commentary on the Roles of Women in the Progressive Era

A thesis
presented to
the faculty of the Department of English
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts in English

by
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ABSTRACT

John Fox, Jr.'s Commentary on the Roles of Women in the Progressive Era
by

Heather Mac Sykes

John Fox, Jr. provides commentary on the changing roles of Progressive Era women in The Trail of the Lonesome Pine, The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, “A Cumberland Vendetta,” and “The Pardon of Becky Day.” Fox’s portrayals provide evidence that although he recognized the changes in his society with women spearheading reform, he did not entirely approve of these changes or of women taking an aggressive role in advocating change.

This thesis provides textual examples and analysis demonstrating Fox’s beliefs regarding women and gender roles. Chapter two focuses on the stories of “The Pardon of Becky Day” and “A Cumberland Vendetta.” Chapter three analyzes The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come and focuses on the relationships of Chad Buford, Margaret Dean, and a mountain girl named Melissa. Chapter four analyzes the relationship between June Tolliver and Jack Hale from The Trail of the Lonesome Pine. Chapter five concludes the thesis and completes the analysis of Fox’s commentary on women and gender roles.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

John Fox, Jr. lived in a time of great change. The world Fox presented in his novels and short stories was vastly different from the world of his readers. Fox's works deserve a closer analysis against the backdrop of social, cultural, and political reform of his time. The works of Fox examined in this thesis are "A Cumberland Vendetta," "The Pardon of Becky Day," The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, and The Trail of the Lonesome Pine. The women in these works are for the most part presented as subservient to men and/or instigators in feuding. Fox's portrayals of women and gender roles lead the reader to believe that Fox, although recognizing the changes in his society with women spearheading reform, did not entirely approve of these changes or of women taking an aggressive role in purporting change.

The second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century were eras of social reform, with women at the helm demanding change. John Fox, Jr. was witness to a great deal of social reform during his life, and perhaps this is where the most intriguing aspects of his work lie. During the 1890s and the early 1900s, women approached social reform with new vigor. Glenda Riley notes in her book Inventing the American Woman that during that era the "traditional image of women as domestic and passive beings, uninvolved in larger society outside of their own homes, was about to undergo extensive revision" (153).

The Civil War, which began in 1861 and ended in 1865, further strengthened the resolve of women that the need for change was at hand (Riley 121). Women played an integral role during the Civil War by becoming involved in a variety of activities. Riley notes that "women were drawn into the war effort by requests for huge amounts of foodstuffs, bandages, and other

sanitary goods” and that “by the end of 1861, there were approximately 20,000 women’s aid societies in the United States Confederacy” (121). Clearly, women played a very active role in the war effort on both sides. Women were involved in the war as “spies, couriers, guides, scouts, saboteurs, smugglers, and informers” (Riley 124).

Fox, who was born in 1862 during the Civil War, was obviously too young to remember the war but grew up during a time of social reconstruction. Many hoped that the expanded roles of women during the war would influence the perceptions of women at its conclusion. Women’s rights advocates, burdened by the restrictions of society, saw the post-war era of Reconstruction (1865-1877) and the Gilded Age as a great opportunity for social change. Women did make strides in many professional areas, with the most noted being in education. Women teachers increased from 25 percent in 1860 to 60 percent in 1880 (Riley 130). This increase put pressure on colleges to meet the need of educating young women. In Disorderly Conduct, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg notes, “Many young women saw in higher education an opportunity for intellectual self-fulfillment and for an autonomous role outside the patriarchal family” (247). However, society still viewed women as inferior with the ultimate duties lying within the confines of domesticity. Smith-Rosenberg observes:

Parents and male college administrators had originally intended the college years to constitute but a pause in a woman’s normal progression from girlhood to marriage. From their perspective, the college years constituted a socially contained ritual that prepared the young woman for the predictable and conventional role of educated wife. (253)

Although society was experiencing change, the patriarchal institutions held on to the established gender roles with women serving subordinate roles to men. Robert Daniel, author of American

Women in the 20th Century: The Festival of Life, references the origin of the belief of women's subservience to "The Judaic-Christian heritage—based on the creation story in Genesis" (4).

Both the Gilded Age and Progressive Era placed further demands on the roles of women. Riley notes that the Gilded Age was "marked by enormous expansion in industrialization, urbanization, and immigration" (143). As a result, the roles of women were rapidly changing with women entering colleges and the general work force as never before. Women were becoming more than wives and mothers, and this alteration of the women's role was challenging the patriarchal traditions. The Progressive Era continued to be a trying time for American society. According to Riley, "The nation suffered a debilitating depression between 1893 and 1897" (153). Fox was greatly affected by this depression in 1893 when the coal boom came to a halt in the mining town of Big Stone Gap with investors pulling out and leaving Fox and his brothers broke. Titus observes, "Instead of everybody getting rich, almost everybody, including the Fox brothers, was left broke and in debt" (38). With industry, urbanization, and immigration growing at an alarming rate, American society was unable to meet the needs of many citizens. In response to these issues "middle-class women's groups lobbied for social, economic, and political reforms that touched the lives of women, children, and family" (Daniel 8-9).

Women were more active than ever before in trying to gain the right to vote, and various feminist scholars and lecturers were making their voices heard. For example, Charlotte Perkins Gilman argued in 1898 for the economic independence of women and the restructuring of society in her work Women and Economics (Daniel 15-16). According to Daniel, Gilman's book was important in "positing ways by which a woman might fulfill her role as a wife and mother while fully realizing her humanity" (16). Gilman saw women as separate entities aside from men and fully capable of having fulfilling lives while incorporating the roles of wife and

mother. Gilman argued for day care centers, communal kitchens, and numerous other revolutionary ideas (Daniel 16). As a leading feminist of her day, Gilman's concepts were not implemented and were considered radical by many (Daniel 16).

Although women were entering the work force in vast numbers and urging change, they were in many ways hindered by social doctrine from the past. One area of interest, especially when considering that these writers were Fox's contemporaries, is the advancement of women in literature. Some of the foremost women authors were writing as contemporaries of Fox. In addition to Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Sarah Orne Jewett, Willa Cather, and Kate Chopin overlapped Fox's writing career. Chopin's controversial feminist novel The Awakening was published in 1899 preceding Fox's publication of The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come in 1903. Yet in Fox's work, no hint of the social fabric of his time is distinguishable.

Although not focusing on the time in which he lived, Fox's work was immensely popular. What drew American society to read with such vigor local color writing like Fox's? Was it because society needed a break from the reality of its trials; or did society need a bygone era and people in which to lose itself? Darlene Wilson observes that "Many historians and other cogent critics have come to agree that between 1890 and 1920, white native-born Americans experienced several severe social and economic traumas" (100). Henry Shapiro notes in Appalachia on Our Mind that "American interest in the southern mountains, indeed, became part of a larger dialogue of the nature of America, its history, its current situation, and its future" (65). After the Civil War, America continued to experience change and reorganization while seeking a unified nation of brothers. Shapiro finds that Appalachia became a focus for the incongruous as many in society attempted to unify America. This incongruity was encouraged through local color writing and home missionaries to the Appalachians who used these

“differences” to generate continued support for their projects in the mountains. After the 1890s it became necessary for the local colorists to explain the “otherness” of Appalachia. According to Shapiro, “What made Appalachia interesting after 1890 were the implications which the fact of its existence held for an understanding of America itself. [. . .] Appalachia appeared [. . .] as the exception which challenged the rule of progress and of national unity and homogeneity” (65).

Shapiro proposed that one’s attitude regarding Appalachia during the 1890s and early 1900s reflected one’s notion of what America was or ought to be. Shapiro posits:

Those who approved of American civilization as it was at the end of the century, or as it was becoming, necessarily disapproved of the characteristics of mountain life. Those who were ambiguous in their judgment about American civilization, on the other hand, characteristically saw in Appalachia an alternative pattern of culture from which Americans might learn to recognize their own faults. [. . .] Those who regarded American civilization as the product of historical processes the outcome of which was uncertain, on the other hand, saw Appalachia as the product of the same historical processes operating in a different environment and/or among a different people. (65-66)

For Fox, local color fiction, set in Appalachia, provided a countervision to changing ideas about women’s roles. Through Appalachia, Fox could explore the issues of gender facing the nation from a safe and seemingly detached perspective and present his attitudes and views through his characters.

Fox’s attitude regarding changing women and gender roles of the 1890s and early 1900s can only be determined through an analysis of some of his work. Fox never condemns the social

and political reforms led by women during the 1890s and early 1900s. Actually, Fox never provides direct commentary at all regarding his opinions and views of any of the societal changes that took place; however, Fox did indeed indirectly write a commentary regarding women and gender roles in society. Fox's women are presented as subservient or troublemakers. Fox's women characters who do exhibit signs of independence do not keep their freedom; they always return to a subordinate role. In applying Fox's characters to the context of his time, Fox seems to be discreetly stating that a woman's place is subordinate to a man's and that women who fight for change are merely troublemakers disrupting a set, tested, and workable patriarchal framework. Fox, as a local colorist, crafted his women with a purpose as he tackled, through his writing, the issues of gender and the changing roles of women in his society. As a local colorist, Fox was not alone in exploring issues of gender. Another example of a local colorist exploring the gender issue in her writing, although not of Appalachia, was Sarah Orne Jewett.

Because Fox's fiction is classified as local color, criticism regarding Fox has been too narrow in scope. Fox, coming towards the end of the local color movement, helped instill the stereotype of the Eastern Kentucky, Southwest Virginia mountaineer. Merrill Maguire Skaggs notes in "Varieties of Local Color" that "Not because he [Fox] was first or best, but because he was among the last to mine the mountains for his literary materials [. . .] John Fox, Jr. provides the most convenient source of mountaineer stereotypes" (283). Consequently, many critics analyze Fox's writings for stereotypes of the mountaineer and then move on. Fox deserves to be examined beyond the view of Appalachian literature; this thesis examines his views regarding the changes affecting women and gender roles and applies them on a national level.

The chapters of this thesis provide textual examples and analysis demonstrating Fox's beliefs regarding women and gender roles. Chapter two focuses on the stories of "The Pardon of

Becky Day” and “A Cumberland Vendetta.” Chapter three analyzes The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come and focuses on the relationships of Chad Buford, Margaret Dean, and a mountain girl named Melissa. Chapter four analyzes the relationship between June Tolliver and Jack Hale from The Trail of the Lonesome Pine. Chapter five concludes the thesis and completes the analysis of Fox’s commentary on women and gender roles.

CHAPTER 2

STRONG WOMEN CANNOT LAST: “THE PARDON OF BECKY DAY” AND “A CUMBERLAND VENDETTA”

Fox presents women in an overall negative light in both “A Cumberland Vendetta” and “The Pardon of Becky Day.” Two of the women, Becky Day and Old Mother Stetson, are presented as perpetrators of discontent by consistently stirring hate among the families in order to maintain feuding. The third woman, Martha Lewallen, a character in “Vendetta,” although not perpetuating hate and discontent, is influenced greatly by the feuding of opposing families and is ultimately denied the potential for independence as a character. Fox confines these characters’ development; the discontent of these characters parallels that of Progressive Era women.

“The Pardon of Becky Day” involves two feuding families with two women serving as catalysts for the feud. The story opens with the description of a young missionary woman who is “on her way to the sick-bed of Becky Day” (152). Through the young missionary’s eyes, the reader learns that the little town in which she is now living has seen many and recent battles. Fox writes that the “fervor of religion was struggling with feudal hate for possession of the town” (153).

Fox indicates that women seem to have a great deal of freedom in the Cumberland and are able to do basically as they please. Fox notes that the young missionary “went when and where she pleased as any woman can, throughout the Cumberland, without insult or harm” (154). Although the women seem to have a great deal of freedom, the community, much like Fox’s Progressive Era society, was in turmoil as a result of women’s behavior. Fox clearly places the

blame for the feud and its continuation on the women. Concurrently, Fox seems to be saying that women are the catalysts for discontent and ill will in his society as well.

The feud between the Marcums and the Days lies in the enmity of the two women. In their youth, the widow Marcum lies about Becky Day's moral uprightness in order to steal her boyfriend. The lie works and the widow marries Jim Marcum, Becky's true love. The men (one from each family) eavesdrop on the conversation between the widow and Becky Day. When the missionary discovers the men's presence, Fox writes, "'Shame!' she said, looking from one to the other of the two men, who had learned, at last, the bottom truth of the feud" (164). Fox presents the men as passive figures merely reacting to the stimuli of hate and discontent around them without knowing why they act as they do. Fox, who was raised in the patriarchal traditions of the past, seems unable to understand the motivations of women. Much like the men in his tale, Fox and many other men were incapable of reacting to the actions of the women around them with any real understanding of the issues or need for change.

Fox furthers the image of the women as the driving forces of hate as the story progresses. The young missionary pleads for Becky to grant peace to the community by forgiving Mrs. Marcum and urges the men to agree. She asks each man if he will shake hands and end the feud. Jim's brother responds to the missionary's inquiry saying, "I've got nothin' agin Dave. I always thought that she [widow Marcum] [. . .] caused all this trouble. I've got nothin' agin Dave" (167). Dave's only response is "I'm waitin' to hear whut Becky says" (167). Fox makes it clear to the reader that Becky Day clearly is the dominant character in this conflict and that whatever death-bed oath she makes will be honored by her husband.

Becky agrees to forgive her enemy, stating, "Yes, I fergive her, an' I want 'em to shake hands" (167). The men remove themselves from the windowsill, and the reader is left with the

assumption that they do shake hands and that all is forgiven. After all, Fox makes it clear that neither man has a vested interest in the feud. The missionary takes the widow from the room only to return to find Becky Day with “a faint terrible smile of triumph” on her face (168). Becky states, “I know whar Jim is. [. . .] An’ I’ll—git—thar—first” (168). It is clear that although Becky has forgiven, her ultimate victory is in the fact that she will arrive in the afterlife with Jim before his widow. So, with her words of forgiveness but malice still in her heart, Becky Day ends the feud. Through her inability to truly forgive, Fox presents Becky as a less than admirable character. Fox does not present Becky as a motivating, liberating force. She is presented as a bitter woman who is willing to enslave her community in her feudal hate. Such a representation of Day certainly does not reflect positively on the plight of the Progressive Era woman. Perhaps Fox saw women of his society who were challenging the traditional roles as bitter and selfish as they pursued their desires for change.

It is also interesting to note that Becky, as the dominant female character, dies. Fox cannot allow this woman who wields so much power to maintain her position of control. The only way for peace to ensue is for Becky Day to die. Day’s death is significant when considering that peace comes as a result of feigned acceptance and forgiveness. Through Becky Day and her death, Fox is suggesting that the road to peace and social stability comes from acceptance of circumstances. As a reader applying Fox’s logic to the women of the Progressive Era, women should accept their role as it was in the patriarchal society and thereby prevent discontent, ill will, and social instability.

“A Cumberland Vendetta” also deals with feuding families. Fox first published “A Cumberland Vendetta” in Century magazine in June, July, and August of 1894. In 1895 the story served as the lead tale in Fox’s book A Cumberland Vendetta and Other Stories.

Evidently, the story proved rather popular because it was published in a single-volume edition in 1899 and 1900 (Titus 30). According to Titus, the editions were sold in America and England.

Titus states that the plot for “A Cumberland Vendetta” was “inspired by events Fox had seen in Harlan, Kentucky” (31). The tale focuses on two feuding mountain families: the Lewallens and the Stetsons. According to Fox, the origin of the feud dates back to the Civil War with the Stetsons being Southern sympathizers and the Lewallens being Union supporters. Fox writes that after the Civil War “Peace found both still neighbors and worse foes” (125).

The main story focuses on the forbidden love between Rome Stetson and Martha Lewallen. Rome’s father was murdered while Rome was only a small boy by Martha’s father, old Jasper Lewallen. Old Jasper and Young Jasper, Martha’s brother, are at the head of their family in leading the feud, and Rome and his Uncle Rufus Stetson are at the head of their family. Obviously, one can see the dilemmas in a relationship between Rome and Martha. Rome and Martha’s quandary is similar to that of Shakespeare’s classic Romeo and Juliet; family names separate the two. Although Rome’s name is similar to that of Romeo’s, no other significance seems to be placed on this similarity.

Fox traces the history of the feud and presents the women as the catalytic factor in the ongoing hatred among the families. Rufus Stetson went West, and peace ensued among the families for three years, but “the hatred burned in the heart of Rome’s mother, and was traced deep in her grim old face while she patiently waited the day of retribution. It smouldered [sic], too, in the hearts of the women of both clans who had lost their husbands or sons or lovers” (126). Fox’s women are much like predators waiting for the right moment to strike their prey. The previous quote places the blame for the continuation of the feud with all its barbarism and savagery solely on the women. Fox focuses on the characters of Martha Lewallen and Rome

Stetson's mother and thereby allows each a certain sense of identity. Fox presents these two as women of power and in complete control of the events that have taken and will take place. The role of each is reminiscent of a puppeteer standing above the stage leading the characters, specifically Rome, to the next level of action.

Rome's mother is the matriarch of the Stetson family and has an unspoken power, especially regarding Rome, as a result of her never-dying hatred for the Lewallen family. Through her words and actions, she always has the feud and her desire for revenge at the forefront of her thoughts. In Chapter three, as Rome leaves to go to Hazlan, his mother gives him a Winchester rifle. Fox writes, "Usually he [Rome] went unarmed, but he took the gun now, as she gave it, in silence" (128). This action shows not only her desire for violence and retribution but also the escalating sense of danger with Rufus' return from the West to Hazlan. Rome, without question, accepts the rifle from his mother and thereby accepts the responsibilities of the family's feud with the Lewallens. Although unable to participate in the feud on a physical level, Rome's mother sees her opportunity to fight vicariously through Rome.

The old Mother Stetson, as Fox refers to her, is Rome's only commitment to the feud after he learns Martha's identity. Martha was sent away as a child to live with relatives and returns only after her father's second wife passes away. Fox states that old Mother Stetson's "look was a thorn in his [Rome's] soul" and that she "was growing pitifully eager and restless. Every day she slipped like a ghost through the leafless woods and in and out the cabin, kindling hatred" (158). Fox draws a clear picture of the vital role old Mother Stetson plays in perpetuating and "kindling" the hate. Her presence always preys on Rome as he cannot think beyond his mother and her hatred. Even when trying to escape her hate, Rome is constantly reminded of her discontent. Fox compares her to a ghost and the imagery of the old mother

slipping wraith-like in and out of the woods suggests power and control, yet also anonymity. The mother, whom Fox never names, along with the comparison to a specter dehumanizes her. By dehumanizing the mother, Fox makes it difficult for the reader to feel any sympathy for her. Thematically, when analyzing the mother as a feud instigator and drawing a parallel to the women of Fox's time, his representation allows no compassion for the causes or motivation of these women. Rome even contemplates ending the feud after acknowledging his feelings for Martha. Fox writes:

He closed his eyes, and for one radiant moment it all seemed possible. And then a gaunt image rose in the dream, and only the image was left. It was the figure of his mother, stern and silent through the years, opening her grim lips rarely without some curse against the Lewallen race. He remembered she had smiled for the first time when she heard of the new trouble [. . .]. She had turned to him with her eyes on fire and her old hands clinched. She had said nothing, but he understood her look. And now—Good God! what would she think and say if she could know [. . .]. (172)

The image of his mother and the never-ending hatred she has kept for the Lewallens prevent Rome from dreaming any further of a life with Martha.

Fox presents the mother as a pathetic creature whose only motivation for living is vengeance and who is sustained by the hatred she nurtures for the Lewallen family. Rome's mother prevents him from moving forward with his life and beyond the feud; he feels bound by duty to his mother and family to continue and end the feud between the Lewallens and Stetsons. In Chapter Nine, Rome's Uncle Rufus returns to the Stetson home, thereby igniting the fury of the feud. With Rufus' return, Rome's mother sees her vision for vengeance coming to fruition.

As the men discuss past wrongs of the Lewallen family and murdering Old Jasper and Young Jasper, Rome's mother demands, "Yes; n'I want to see it done befoh I die. I hain't hyeh fer long, but I hain't goin' to leave as long as ole Jas is hyeh, n' I want ye all to know it. Ole Jas hev to go fust. You hear me, Rome? I'm a-talkin' to you; I'm a-talkin' to you. Hit's yo' time now!" (180). At this point, Rome is spurred further into the feud and makes an oath to kill Old Jasper and Young Jasper by etching an "x" for each Lewallen on his Winchester rifle. Fox writes, "The wild-eyed old woman was before him [Rome]. [. . .] The mother had the knife outstretched" (181). Old Mother Stetson's role as the matriarch of the family holds Rome within her power until her death shortly after her need for Jasper's death is fulfilled. Fox presents Old Mother Stetson, like Becky Day, as a feud instigator and perpetrator of discontent. Just as he did with Becky Day, Fox finds it necessary to kill old Mother Stetson. Both Becky Day and Old Mother Stetson are presented negatively with their discontent being the root cause for the problems in their community. Paralleling the women of the Progressive Era, women who were discontent with the traditional patriarchy and its roles were considered the root cause for problems in their community. Therefore, as a dominant figure, Old Mother Stetson cannot remain and peace exist in the mountains, just as peace could not exist for Fox in a society with women aggressively pursuing change as a result of discontent.

Martha, similarly, holds a great deal of power over Rome and his actions. Rome's first vision of Martha captivates him. He sees her from a distance as she rides Young Jasper's gray horse. Fox writes, "With a half-smile he watched the scarlet figure ride from the woods, [. . .] she halted, half turning in her saddle. [. . .] still as statues, the man and the woman looked at each other across the gulf of darkening air. [. . .] he laughed aloud. She was waving her bonnet at him" (122-23). Martha in this encounter is seen as the more powerful of the two. She initiates

recognition and communication with Rome by lifting her bonnet and waving it in the air at him. At this point, Martha is a self-possessing woman admired by Rome.

Martha maintains her position of power with Rome merely reacting to her throughout the novella until the end. During their second encounter Rome approaches Martha and feels the sting of her wrath. Fox writes, “the friendly, expectant light in her face kindled to such a blaze of anger in her eyes [. . .]. The girl had evidently learned who he was” (131). Martha, aware of who Rome is, tries to ignore her initial interest and attraction to him from their first encounter when she waved her bonnet at him. Fox presents Martha as in control; Rome merely reacts. In this case, his only response is withdrawal as he is surprised by Martha’s changed demeanor.

Regarding Fox’s views of gender roles, Martha and Rome’s third encounter is rather revealing and clearly defines the roles of each gender. Rome, in a heightened sense of anxiety regarding the feud, is at the mill discussing matters with Gabe. Rome, believing he is about to be ambushed by Young Jasper, has his rifle drawn and aimed at the door when Martha enters. With eyes “fixed in two points of fire on Rome” she taunts him by saying, “Why don’t ye shoot!” (141). Rome, with rifle in hand, certainly would appear to be the character in control; however, Martha’s words place her in the position of power, and Rome is left yet again to react. Rome lowers the rifle and proceeds to watch Martha while attempting to deal with the emotions that she stirs within him. Fox writes, “He [Rome] was angry [. . .] because he felt so helpless, a sensation that was new and stifling. The scorn of her face, as he remembered that morning, hurt him again while he looked at her” (142).

Martha’s power over Rome is evident as she sits in the mill waiting to get her corn. Fox writes, “Every toss of her head, every movement of her hands, seemed meant for him, to irritate him” (143). Although he is truly captivated by Martha, Rome realizes that he has no control

over the situation or Martha. As Rome watches Martha sitting in the mill refixing her hair, “his brain whirled with an impulse to catch the shining stuff in one hand and to pinion both her wrists with the other, just to show her that he was master, and still would harm her not at all” (143). By an aggressive approach to Martha, Rome feels he could gain authority and show her how easily he could dominate her. Progressive Era women, much like Martha, boasted of independence and the ability to be an equal to any man. Although Martha never directly states her belief in her equality, the manner in which she addresses Rome makes it clear. It is interesting to note that Fox does not allow Rome to even consider Martha as being an equal. His only vision of Martha comes through subordination. Although Rome does not have the power, Fox seems to be alluding to the fact that in a female/male relationship the man traditionally has been seen as the dominant figure. When examining Rome’s desire for mastery in the context of the Progressive Era, Fox seems to endorse the traditional patriarchal gender roles with women playing the submissive one.

Fox allows the reader another glimpse of Martha’s power through her independence. In Chapter eight, Martha plans a trip to the corn mill (with secret hopes of seeing Rome), and her father admonishes her with orders to not go to Gabe’s mill across the river but to one more local. Martha does not take Jasper’s orders seriously. She responds in a low undertone “Yes dad; I heerd ye [. . .] But I don’t heed ye” (162). Fox then observes, “In truth, the girl heeded nobody. It was not her way to ask consent, even her own, nor to follow advice” (162). Fox does not present Martha as a submissive woman willing to dutifully follow orders. On the contrary, Martha is represented as an independent woman with a mind of her own. At this point, Fox seems to present Martha without any indication as to whether this independence is positive or negative.

Martha becomes very aware of the power she has over Rome when he reveals his feelings to her. During another meeting at the mill, Rome follows Martha over the river to reveal his feelings to her. Rome states, “Y’u’ve witched me, gal! I forgits who ye air n’ sometimes I want to come over hyeh n’ kerry ye out’n these mount’ins n’ nuver come back” (169). Martha’s reaction to Rome’s revelation is interesting in that Fox remarks on her understanding of the power she wields over Rome. “The girl was a little frightened. Indeed, she smiled, seeing her power over him; she seemed even about to laugh outright” (169). Fox sexualizes and thereby lessens Martha’s power by presenting her as a coquette who is exceedingly pleased with her sexuality that enables her to have power over Rome. Fox places Martha in the expected traditional role assigned by the patriarchy as a young woman who is able to captivate a man through her sexuality that places no emphasis on intellect whatsoever. Therefore, Martha does not fit with the feminist model on this issue of power through sexuality. Feminists, then and now, often minimize the emphasis placed on sexuality as a factor of power.

Martha is presented as a heroic figure coming to the service and rescue of her family when the feud breaks out in Hazlan. Rome, unable to retaliate, threatens any man who fires at her declaring, “We hain’t fightin’ women!” (195). Martha’s bold feat, much like her other encounters with Rome, leaves him unable to react. During the ensuing skirmish, Rufus is injured and Old Jasper is killed. At the Stetson home, watching his dying mother and injured uncle, Rome ponders his quandary:

Her [Martha’s] face that day had again loosed within him a flood of feeling that drove the lust for revenge from his veins. [. . .] He grew heartsick at the thought of it all; and the sight of his mother in the corner, close to death as she was filled him with bitterness. [. . .] There was the grim figure in the corner, the implacable

spirit of hate and revenge. [. . .] and yet—God help him!—there was the other cross, the other oath. (199)

Even in death, Rome's mother wields power and control. Rome, having no desire to fight Young Jasper, is spurred on by the image of his mother and all that she stands for—hate and revenge. Rome, aware of his oath to kill Young Jasper which was spurred by his mother, is left with no choices regarding his future, which certainly won't be with Martha if he kills her brother.

Fox drastically changes the image of Martha from an independent to a frail young woman who has the appearance of being lost after the deaths of the two men in her life (her father and brother). After the death of her brother, Rome resigns himself to start a new life without Martha, stating, "I reckon I've got to go. She's ag'in' me" (220). Unable to comprehend the possibility of her forgiveness, Rome makes his plans to head West. As Rome begins his departure, he is drawn to the Lewallen homeplace in hopes of seeing Martha. Martha arrives and Rome reveals himself to her. Fox writes of Martha's transformation:

The figure of the girl parted the pink-and-white laurel blossoms, [. . .] walking slowly, and stopped for a moment to rest against the pillar of the porch. She was very pale; her face was traced with deep suffering, and she was as old Gabe said, much changed. Then she went on toward the garden, stepping with effort over the low fence, and leaned as if weak and tired against the apple tree, [. . .] she stood there listless [. . .]. The sun lighted her hair, and in the sunken, upturned eyes Rome saw the shimmer of tears. (226-227)

Martha has made a complete transformation from the strong young woman Fox has presented throughout the story to a frail, weak young woman without a home or family. Because Martha's power over Rome is based on her sexuality, she does not fit the Progressive Era model.

Regardless of her power's origin, Fox cannot allow Martha to be the dominant figure in the story and she loses her independence. This transformation allows Rome to assume the dominant role and become Martha's caretaker and protector. Fox's inability to allow Martha's independent nature to endure confines Martha to the accepted gender role of the Progressive Era. By allowing Rome to assume the caretaker role, Fox endorses the patriarchal system of the Progressive Era and presents Martha's "rescue" as the appropriate resolution to the situation. As a young woman, could she not take care of herself? Evidently not, according to the ideal proposed by Fox through Rome's character.

On both occasions where Rome opens his heart to Martha, Fox does not reveal Martha's heart through words. She never verbally reciprocates the heartfelt expressions that Rome shares with her. Martha is not allowed to have a voice to state her own feelings in the story and is thereby robbed of a very important aspect of her identity. The only identity Martha has is through the eyes of Rome. As women of the Progressive Era struggled not only for voices of their own but also identities outside of the ones assigned by the patriarchal tradition, it is imperative to note Martha's lack of both by the story's resolution. The apparent lack of Martha's identity can be transferred to Progressive Era women's aggressive search for identities of their own. Evidently, a woman's identity beyond the accepted one in his patriarchal society is not appropriate for Fox. Fox places Rome as the dominant figure with Martha's identity being dependent on Rome's.

In conclusion, Fox clearly portrays Old Mother Stetson and Becky Day as feud instigators. In relation to the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century women's movements, Fox seems to be saying that these modern women are instigators of ill will and a general malaise resulting in social discontent. The feuds, as a parallel to the discontent of

women in society, are rooted in the emotions of women and would not exist if the women would just be quiet and accept their given circumstances and roles. Also, the endings in both “A Cumberland Vendetta” and “The Pardon of Becky Day” place men in charge. Rome assumes the caretaker role for Martha whose independence is completely removed by Fox, and the husbands in “The Pardon of Becky Day” take the accepted patriarchal roles of control in their households and community.

CHAPTER 3

“STAND BY YOUR MAN”: THE WOMEN OF THE LITTLE SHEPHERD OF KINGDOM COME

Fox's novel The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, which was serialized in Scribner's Magazine in 1903 and became a best selling book, presents the tale of Chad Buford (Hall vii). Chad, the protagonist of the novel, rises from the backwoods of Kentucky to become a Bluegrass gentleman (thanks to nobility of blood) with the devotion of not one but two women. Although there are many disparities between these two women, Margaret and Melissa, both are deeply devoted to Chad Buford and appear to be motivated to live their own lives contingently on the decisions Chad makes regarding his own. Clearly, their actions are based solely on a male for whom they both share a mutual devotion. Perhaps, when analyzing Fox's praise of devotion of these two women, one can see Fox as clearly believing that the fate of a woman should be based on a man's decisions and actions. In trying not to be too clichéd, one can almost hear the crooning lyrics of Tammy Wynette's "Stand by Your Man" as a theme song for Fox's novel.

From Fox's first mention of Melissa, she is clearly set up as a secondary figure in the shadows waiting to respond to the characters around her. Fox first introduces Melissa as a "figure as motionless [. . .] with a bare head, bare feet, a startled face and wide eyes—but motionless only until the eyes met his" (18). No further identification is given to the figure as it flees from Chad's sight over the hill. Melissa, even as Chad approaches the Turner homestead where she lives, remains merely as a shadowy figure in the backdrop of the scene. Fox states that Chad "saw a slim scarlet figure vanish swiftly from the porch into the house" (25). Fox portrays Melissa in animalistic simplicity. Later, as Chad sits by the Turner fire, Melissa "came

shyly out of the dark shadows behind and drew shyly closer and closer, until she was crouched in the chimney corner with her face shaded from the fire by one hand and a tangle of yellow hair, listening and watching him with her big, solemn eyes” (26). Melissa is like some type of wild animal taking in a new visitor to her territory. Neither Chad nor anyone else in the Turner family addresses Melissa, and she remains a silent observer and mystery to him.

Fox presents the relationship between Melissa and Chad as one of childhood playmates, with Chad often serving as Melissa’s protector. Fox writes, “When not at school, the two fished and played together—inseparable” (46). When Chad first attends school, it is with the order to “Take good keer o’ that gal” (33). Because it is not acceptable for Melissa to attend school alone, Chad is appointed as her protector. A clear picture of the little mountain boy is presented as Fox writes:

Chad [. . .] stalked ahead like a little savage, while Melissa with her basket followed silently behind. [. . .] and not once did he look around or speak on the way up the river and past the blacksmith’s shop and grist-mill just beyond the mouth of Kingdom Come. (34)

Chad, the “little man” as Fox refers to him repeatedly, enjoys his role as Melissa’s protector. Fox writes, “how he [Chad] wished that a bear or wild-cat would spring into the road! He would fight it with teeth and naked hands to show her [Melissa] how he felt and to save her from harm” (38). Once again, Fox is presenting Melissa as a backdrop to any real action. Chad is in charge of her safety to and from school, and even though they seem to play together as equals, Chad is placed in a position of authority.

Fox perpetuates the idea of Chad as Melissa’s protector by focusing on Chad’s obsession with the ideal of chivalry, which he learns about from Caleb Hazel, the local school teacher and

Chad's mentor. "And the boy drank in the tales [. . .] and the conscious reverence for women that make the essence of chivalry as distinguished from the unthinking code of brave, simple people," writes Fox (47). Certainly, the medieval code of chivalry being embraced by the protagonist in Fox's story lends one to wonder about how Fox applied these codes and this reverence for women to his own life. Although the chivalric code only seems to benefit women by putting them on pedestals, the code places women in passive roles with their admiration being the prizes won by their men. Chad's attempts at chivalry in the mountains are unheeded and not appreciated: "He [Chad] tried some high-sounding phrases on Melissa, and Melissa told him he must be crazy. Once, even, he tried to kiss her hand and she slapped his face" (47). Melissa does not have the capability to appreciate the endeavors of Chad's devotion placing her as his lady according to the chivalric code. According to Fox, no one in the mountains could appreciate Chad's attempts at chivalry and consequently "That ended Chad's chivalry in the hills, [. . .] chivalry could not thrive there, and Chad gave it up; but the seeds were sown" (48). Although Fox seems to be saying that chivalry has no place in the Kentucky mountains and only in the Bluegrass, he may also be saying something about changing gender roles. During the time in which Fox was writing The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, women were challenging the mores of society and claiming more independence. These women demanding change did not honor the patriarchal established roles. The lack of appreciation in the mountains for the chivalric code seems to parallel Fox's society with women seeking an alternate path from the accepted patriarchal one. These women of change evidently could not, according to Fox's perspective, appreciate the patriarchal traditions of his society. Much like Chad regarding chivalry, in which the "seeds were sown," Fox, seems hesitant to relinquish the past and embrace the changing world around him.

As Chad and Melissa's relationship continues from childhood into young adulthood, the dynamics change; the relationship is very one-sided because of Melissa's self-sacrificing, romantic devotion to Chad. Chad, after a trip to the Bluegrass, returns to the Turner home, where he has no shame about the unanswered questions regarding his parentage. Chad refuses to return to the Bluegrass for fear of harming the reputation of Major Buford, even though Major Buford came to the mountains to retrieve him. Melissa's selfless devotion can be seen through her desire to have Chad pursue a life beyond the mountains—even though he would have to leave her to accomplish this. Fox writes, "Even Melissa urged him" (143). When she questions why he will not return to Major Buford, Chad informs her that it is because he has no mother or father. At this point, Fox unites Chad and Melissa with a very common bond. Melissa informs Chad that she too "was a waif, and Chad looked at her with a new wave of affection and pity" (144). Chad informs Melissa that he plans to stay in the mountains. Of course, Chad's resolve to remain is temporary and Fox soon has Chad longing for the Bluegrass. Melissa recognizes Chad's desire and her selfless devotion to Chad becomes clear. Fox writes:

It was curious how Melissa came to know the struggle that was going on within him, and how Chad came to know that she knew—though no word passed between them: more curious still, how it came with a shock to Chad one day to realize how little was the tragedy of his life in comparison with the tragedy in hers, and to learn that the little girl with swift vision had already reached that truth and with sweet unselfishness had reconciled herself. He was a boy—he could go out in the world and conquer it, while her life was as rigid and straight before her as though it ran between close walls of rock as steep and sheer as the cliff across the river. One thing he never guessed—what it cost the little girl to

support him bravely in his purpose, and to stand with smiling face when the first breath of one sombre [sic] autumn stole through the hills, and Chad and the school-master left the Turner home for the Bluegrass, this time to stay. (147-148)

Melissa's willingness to encourage Chad to leave the mountains is truly a sacrificial and selfless act. Melissa abandons her own hopes and dreams and encourages Chad to pursue success and happiness. In presenting Melissa's sacrifice positively, Fox alludes to the sacrificial role of a woman regarding her man. Melissa's plight, one of Fox's only acknowledgements regarding the dilemma of the young American woman of the late 1800s, provides no options by which she can improve her place in life. Fox confines Melissa's options to who she can marry, and, although her choice is Chad, she selflessly supports his desire to leave the mountains. Although Fox presents Melissa's plight as a tragedy, he offers no means for change and does not empower Melissa in any way; Fox simply abandons the young heroine to her plight and focuses on the good fortune of Chad as he goes to make his way in the Bluegrass. Melissa's consolation prize for her selfless devotion is Jack, Chad's dog. Chad leaves Jack behind for Melissa because "how incomparably lonelier than his life was the life that she must lead" (168). Once again, Melissa becomes a character in the backdrop of the plot patiently waiting for Chad with the diminishing hope that she may one day be with him.

Like many local color writers, such as Mary Noalles Murfee, Fox adheres to the picture of the mountain woman faced with a life of toil and loneliness. Regarding the goals of the Progressive Era woman, however, Fox's portrayal of the woman as self-sacrificing for the advancement of her man is disturbing. Fox subjugates the desires and needs of his female characters, in this case Melissa, in order to meet the needs of his male characters. Furthermore, Fox presents this subjugation as the expectation, not the exception. Fox may have been aware of

the struggle of the young American woman, but he by no means encourages change as many during the era did.

It would appear that Melissa's devotion for Chad ends with his decision to fight for the North; however, as the story progresses Fox presents her devotion as steadfast with her response to Chad's decision being interpreted as an emotional one rather than an intellectual one. As Chad anticipates Melissa's reaction, Fox writes, "Mentally he shrank from the fire of her eyes and the scorn of her tongue" (193). Although Chad has concern for Melissa's reaction, he is unwavering in his determination to fight for the North, and Melissa reacts much as Chad imagined, with anger and bitterness, as she demands Chad leave the home, accusing him of "goin' to do all you can to kill us" (209). In an effort by Chad to reconcile their differences, Fox relates the following:

On one side of the walk Chad saw a rose-bush that he had brought from the Bluegrass for Melissa. It was dying. He took one step toward it, his foot sinking in the soft earth where the girl had evidently been working around it, and broke off the green leaf that was left. "Here Lissy! You'll be sorry you were so hard on me. I'd never get over it if I didn't think you would. Keep this, won't you, and let's be friends, not enemies." He held it out, and the girl angrily struck the rose-leaf from his hand. (209-210)

Not only does Melissa lash out in anger at Chad, but she also is limited to a nonverbal response that seems to enforce her reaction as one based on emotion, not intellect.

Melissa is further seen as a character ruled by emotion, with submissiveness being her true nature, when she saves Chad's life much to the detriment of her own. Melissa saves Chad and his Yankee troops from an ambush by Daws Dillon by sneaking over the mountain in the

middle of the night to warn them. Although Melissa seems to be a strong character by taking the initiative and moving beyond the Southern pickets, she is merely adhering to the protocol set forth with her first introduction as a shadowy figure only responding to, not initiating, situations. With women aggressively pursuing change in Fox's society, the presentation of a character that merely responds rather than initiates situations is interesting. Through Melissa's emphasis on emotion rather than intellect and on her character as one who does not initiate situations or change, Fox seems to be placing the emphasis on Progressive Era women as emotional responders to the situations in which they find themselves.

Ultimately, Melissa's sacrificial midnight journey for Chad is the catalyst for her death. Melissa, ill after her midnight picket line crossing, learns of Chad's legitimacy and proceeds to the Bluegrass to inform the second woman Fox includes in the tale, Margaret. After the war, Chad goes to the mountains to see Melissa only to find that she has passed away shortly before his arrival. As a tribute of Melissa's devotion to Chad the old mother tells:

How, all through the war, she [Melissa] had fought his battles so fiercely that no one dared attack him in her hearing. How, sick as she was, she had gone, that night, to save his life. How she had nearly died as a result of cold and exposure and was never the same afterward. [. . .] How she had learned the story of Chad's mother from old Nathan Cherry's daughter and how [. . .] she had slipped away and gone afoot to clear his name. (320-321)

Fox illustrates in the above excerpt how Melissa's life focuses on and revolves around the actions and decisions of Chad. Melissa is never a character unto herself but merely an attachment to Chad's character and thereby a secondary figure in the novel. Symbolically illustrating Melissa's reliance on Chad's character, Melissa treats Chad's aforementioned shoe

print by the rose bush as something almost sacred. Fox writes that the old mother leads Chad to the edge of the porch “where once had grown the rose-bush he had brought Melissa from the Bluegrass, and pointed silently to a box that seemed to have been pressed a few inches into the soft earth, and when Chad lifted it, he saw under it the imprint of human foot—his own” (321). Melissa’s devotion to Chad is unending; the old mother informs him that she died with “his name on her lips” (321).

Fox makes it obvious that Chad’s romantic affections truly lie with Margaret Dean and that Melissa, although devoutly loyal to Chad, is not his first choice. In considering both women, Chad muses, “Melissa was the glow-worm that, when darkness came, would be a watch-fire at his feet—Margaret, the star to which his eyes were lifted night and day—and so runs the world” (145). Margaret, with her Bluegrass bell coquetry, is a complete contradiction of Melissa’s mountain simplicity. Wade Hall astutely observes that “Fate eliminates one of the contenders” (xiii). However, even if Fate did not play a part, ultimately Chad would have chosen Margaret because she is the epitome of the patriarchy’s chivalric ideal.

Fox portrays Margaret as a child-like innocent. Chad, in reverence and awe of Margaret, finds out where she attends church and attends every Sunday in order to see her. Fox writes, “He would watch the little girl come in with her family, [. . .] rising when she rose, watching the light from the windows on her shining hair and sweet-spirited face, watching her reverent little head bend in obeisance to the name of the Master, though he kept his own held straight” (157). The image is angelic and full submission to authority. Note also Fox’s reference to Margaret as a “little girl.” Margaret is of the age to attend social galas and court young gentlemen and, therefore, beyond the reference of “little girl.” However, Fox refers to Margaret repeatedly as a little girl, with men frequently addressing her as such. Also, Fox, on more than one occasion,

refers to the color of Margaret's dress as pure white. Once again, the image of child-like almost angelic innocence is presented. Another interesting aspect is that Margaret's most vivid description comes from Chad's first encounter with her as a young child. It would seem that Fox cannot move beyond Margaret as a child-like innocent and, therefore, it brings into question how the image of Margaret relates to Fox's images of women in general. Fox's references to his women characters as "little girl" are not limited to Margaret only: he presents most of his women characters, including Melissa, June Tolliver, and Martha Lewallen, as child-like innocents. Fox seems incapable of presenting his women characters as self-willed, intellectual, independent young women. Through his inability to present these characters beyond their child-like portrayals, Fox does not allow them the opportunity for self-growth and acquisition of their own identities. Such a representation of women during the Progressive Era contradicts the changes women were so diligently seeking. If society, like Fox, could not view a woman as more than a child-like innocent, then the roles available to her would be severely limited.

Fox seems to admire the type of woman he presents through Margaret's character. Chad's devotion and admiration of Margaret are presented by Fox as perfectly founded and appropriate. Fox writes, "It was only with Margaret that that soul [Chad's] was in awe. He began to love her with a pure reverence that he could never know at another age" (165). Margaret, through her passive and "perfect" nature, is presented as the ideal recipient for Chad's or any man's affections; thus, Fox presents her as the object of not only Chad's affections but also the affections of Richard Hunt, who appreciates her "sweet, frank, gracious, unconscious" demeanor as well (308). Margaret's perfection lies in her willingness to assume the innocent and submissive role expected by the patriarchal traditions. In order for a Progressive Era woman to be self-possessed, she would have to break free of the patriarchal mores of her society and

thereby lose the homage of perfection placed on the ideal of the submissive and innocent woman. Through his exaltation of Margaret, Fox demeans the women challenging the accepted patriarchal role of women in his society.

Margaret's character is presented as completely submissive to the patriarchal codes and expectations for women. During Chad's first stay in the Bluegrass with Major Buford, he befriends the Deans and enjoys their company. In the Bluegrass, Chad once again explores the practices of chivalry by persuading the Dean children to have a jousting tournament with two rams. Dan is injured in the incident; as a result Chad's illegitimacy comes into question, and the Dean children are forbidden to associate with Chad. Margaret, who is fond of Chad, follows the orders of her father and does not associate with him. After learning the legitimacy of his parentage from Nathan Cherry, Chad returns to the Bluegrass with the dark hues of shame removed from his name. At this point, social mores dictate that Margaret can associate with Chad, and their friendship renews with a new aspect of courtship that was not previously present. Fox writes, "The past between them was not only wiped clean—it seemed quite gone" (181). Chad wins Margaret's heart, but the structured patriarchy and social mores are in place as she reveals her affections for Chad. Margaret states:

I'm so glad what you are, Chad [a gentleman]; but had you been otherwise—that would have made no difference to me. You believe that don't you, Chad? They might not have let me marry you, but I should have cared, just the same. They may not now, but that, too, will make no difference. (184)

Clearly, Margaret reciprocates Chad's affections, but she is so steeped in submission to her father and the social mores of a patriarchal society that she is willing to sacrifice her love in order to remain the submissive daughter. Fox does not even present Margaret as questioning the

social mores in regards to her love for Chad. For Margaret, any path besides the accepted one already chosen for her is not an option. Margaret's complete submission to the mores without even questioning them is significant against the backdrop of Fox's time when women were challenging the mores Margaret accepts. Margaret's willingness to submit in order to be obedient to her father is an indication that Fox believed that a woman's duty was to accept the patriarchal roles and traditions without question.

Perhaps in one of the most poignant scenes in the novel, Margaret and Melissa meet and the realization of the devotion of each is evident. Fox writes, "The two girls looked deep into each other's eyes and, for one flashing moment, each saw the other's heart—bared and beating" (303). Melissa imparts her knowledge of Chad's legitimacy and then scathingly rebukes Margaret for holding Chad's past against him. Melissa scolds, "An' you oughtn't to a' keered what he was—and that's why I hate you [. . .] fer worryin' him an' bein' so high-heeled that you was willin' to let him mighty nigh bust his heart about somethin' that wasn't his fault. I come fer him—you understand—fer *him*. I hate *you!*" (304). Although devoted to Chad and submissive to him, Melissa seems to be challenging the status quo of the time through her attack of Margaret. Melissa could be viewed as a fragmented reflection of the women of the Progressive Era challenging the accepted mores of their time. It is interesting to note that the female character who could be viewed as one challenging the accepted standards is the character Fox kills off, leaving the docile and submissive Margaret waiting for Chad's return. By eliminating Melissa, Fox eliminates the questioning of the patriarchy that she stands for as a result of her confrontation with Margaret.

With Chad's return from the war, Margaret rededicates herself to him and becomes self-sacrificing in her devotion. Chad returns to the Bluegrass with plans to go West for an

indeterminate time, leaving Margaret with her mother and brothers. Margaret stoically looks forward saying, “And then some day you will come again and buy back the Major’s farm [. . .] I think that was his wish Chad, that you and I—but I would never let him say it” (318). Margaret is completely submissive to Chad’s plans to go West and seems unconcerned about what this decision implies for her future. Chad asks her what she will do if his trip takes too long and she replies, “I will come to you, Chad” (318). Margaret is completely enveloped by Chad’s identity, and her entire future depends on his actions and decisions, exactly as Melissa’s did. Fox leaves no room for Margaret to be an individual, and she merely blends into the backdrop of Chad’s plans for himself. After returning to Kingdom Come to find Melissa dead and learn of her unwavering devotion, Chad determines that he must go directly West and not return to the Bluegrass to see Margaret again. Fox writes, “He could not go back to Margaret and happiness—not now. It seemed hardly fair to the dead girl down in the valley. He would send Margaret word, and she would understand” (322). Chad does not even question Margaret’s ability to understand his motivations and Fox gives only the indication that Margaret, docile and submissive as ever, will wait for Chad as he embarks on his new life without her. Hall observes:

the pure hero must not besmirch the pure love of his mountain lady by going immediately into the arms of the other woman. [. . .] Indeed Margaret will understand, for this novel belongs as well to the tradition of romantic fiction in which sentiment motivates selfless acts of love. (xiii)

Fox leaves the novel as he starts it, with Chad heading on a journey alone, this time without his faithful dog Jack but with the confirmation that Margaret, dog-like in her faithfulness, will wait for him as long as needed. In relation to women and gender roles, Fox presents Chad as the

director of the future for both himself and Margaret, with Margaret subordinating herself to his authority.

Fox clearly minimizes both women in The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come by placing them as secondary figures in the novel. Both women are truly flat characters who show no development as the novel progresses. The feelings of both women incapacitate them to any action in their lives beyond that involving Chad. Chad serves as the common thread in both of these women's lives and their selfless devotion (although late in coming on the part of Margaret) is presented as the appropriate behavior for both. For Fox, women fulfill duties of complementing a man in his goals and decisions. Fox leaves little, if any room, for his women to develop by focusing on the development of Chad Buford. Any action on the part of his female characters is solely in relation to Chad, which thereby places them in an unimportant role. In relation to Fox's time, women wanting change were going beyond the role of playing a complementary aid to the man and were becoming primary figures instead of secondary ones like Melissa and Margaret. Melissa, who shows the potential to be a compelling character and more than a secondary figure (by questioning the status quo with Margaret), is erased from the equation because of her selfless devotion for Chad. Margaret never rises to question things as they are and is presented as an admirable heroine and counterpart to Chad through her selfless act of waiting for his return as he heads westward to blaze new trails. Why can't Margaret blaze new trails and forge a new life with Chad? Apparently, it is not her place as a woman to pioneer. As a woman, her place was to subordinate herself to her man. Change, in any form, would be the product of men purporting the need for it. Evidently, based on Fox's women characters, he saw no real need for change regarding the roles of women.

CHAPTER 4

A MISSED CHANCE: JUNE IN THE TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE

The Trail of the Lonesome Pine is set in and around Big Stone Gap, Virginia, during the coal boom and its aftermath in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The novel evolves from the relationship of John (Jack) Hale, a Bluegrass Kentucky engineer, and June Tolliver, a young mountain girl. Fox illustrates the onslaught of the coal industry and the impact it had on the mountains and people who inhabited them. Despite his suggestion that industrialism brings progress to the mountains, Fox confines the novel's women to subservient domestic roles, with only June having the opportunity to move beyond them. Although Fox provides June the opportunity to become a Progressive Era "new woman," he ultimately confines her and reinstates her to a domestic role much like the other mountain women in the novel.

Emma Bell Miles and Margaret Ripley Wolfe are excellent resources when examining Fox and his portrayals of gender. The Spirit of the Mountains by Miles was published in 1905 (approximately three years before Fox's novel The Trail of the Lonesome Pine). Certainly, many similarities can be found among the portrayals of women offered by Miles and those proposed by Fox. Miles presents the average life of the mountaineer and the hard life for the women of the mountains. Miles writes of the mountain woman, "Her lot is inevitably one of service and suffering, and refines only as it is meekly and sweetly borne" (66). Miles goes on to describe the mountain woman as the keeper of tradition and heritage. Miles posits that "the woman's experience is deeper [. . .]. Her position means sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice, for her man first, and then for her sons" (70). Miles presents the mountain woman as subservient to her husband, but is critical of this limitation. Margaret Ripley Wolfe, a contemporary scholar of

southern women, writes in Daughters of Canaan that “the great majority of southern farm women of this era were dogged by isolation, loneliness, and drudgery” (127). The roles of the mountain farm wife kept her close to home, watching children, tending crops, and preparing meals for her husband and family. Wolfe also writes, “Women served husbands, sons, male relatives, and occasional hired help first, then made do with the leftovers for themselves” (127). Fox’s perception of the roles of women agrees with Miles’ and Wolfe’s. However, by writing fiction, Fox has the opportunity to criticize the perceived roles of women but chooses to adhere to the patriarchal tradition by confining his heroine to the accepted roles.

The majority of mountain women in The Trail of the Lonesome Pine are nameless, faceless participants in a man’s mountain world. Even June, the novel’s heroine, is blindly led along and initiated into both the rural and urban patriarchal world. June is a young girl of approximately twelve or thirteen years at the novel’s beginning. The opening chapter begins with June on a precipice looking down into a distant valley, straining to see signs of the outside world that she has heard is coming towards her home in Lonesome Cove. Fox writes, “It was a big world, though, that was spread before her and a vague awe of it seized her, [. . .] and she began to wonder more than ever before whether she would ever go into it and see for herself what was there” (2). As Riley notes, the three main factors which were at an accelerated rate during the Gilded Age were “industrialization, urbanization, and immigration” (143). Along with industrial and urban changes (via the railroad and coal mines for June), the roles of women were undergoing change as well, and Fox was undoubtedly aware of these changes. By focusing on June at the novel’s opening, the reader is left to ponder how these changes might affect her.

Fox sets the novel during the Gilded Age, which Riley states challenged “the customary stereotype of the American woman” (143). As the novel begins, Fox describes June in terms of

nature and compares her to animals in the first few chapters. June's animalistic simplicity is reminiscent of Fox's description of Melissa in "A Cumberland Vendetta." Fox equates June with the wildness found in nature; June is a daughter of the mountains that she inhabits. Fox writes that June is like "a great scarlet flower" as she stands beneath the lonesome pine viewing the unknown world (2). Fox's imagery of June as a woodlands creature continues:

The little creature dropped of a sudden to the ground and, like something wild, lay flat. [. . .] With a thumping heart she pushed slowly forward through the brush until her face, fox-like with cunning and screened by a mulberry bush, hung just over the edge of the cliff, and there she lay, like a crouched panther-cub, looking down. (3)

As women were challenging the stereotype of the American woman, Fox's objectification of June as a wild creature motivated by instinct takes all intellectual relevance to her actions out of the scenario. Perhaps Fox believed that, in his own society, women were pursuing change, but lacked an intellectual and cultural foundation on which to base change.

John (Jack) Hale's first impressions of June continue the theme of June as a wild and untamed part of nature. Hale notes to himself during his first encounter with June that she was "a pretty little thing" (11). Hale sees June as a thing, as an object to admire. Hale's interest in June is immediate, and he recalls how her hair reminds him of "the wing of a wild turkey that he had shot the day before" (16). By comparing June's hair to a dead turkey's wing killed at the hand of Jack Hale, Fox immediately places Hale in a position of authority with the ability to subdue her. Cunningham notes, "His [Hale's] love for this bit of wild Nature is already eroticized and already tinged with aggression" (30). From the beginning, Hale is presented as a figure having power over June. The man, in this case Jack Hale, is ultimately in control.

Fox presents the women as subservient laborers to the men throughout the novel. Jack Hale follows June to Lonesome Cove with an invitation from her father, Devil Judd Tolliver, to stay for supper, and June prepares the meal for the men. Fox writes, “She had not only cooked but now she served as well, and when he thanked her, as he did every time she passed something to him, she would colour [sic] faintly” (31). June is rather smitten with Hale, but she also is unaccustomed to being thanked as she serves the men’s meals. Another example is that June, returning home from Big Stone Gap, helps her step-mother and cousin Loretta serve the men visiting the home. Fox notes, “The men ate and the women served, as in ancient days” (199). Later, during the same visit, June helps serve another meal and wonders for the first time about the mountain culture she has taken for granted her entire life. Fox writes, “She saw her father and Bub ravenously gobbling their coarse food while she and her step-mother waited, and she began to wonder. The women sat at the table with the men over in the Gap—why not here?” (205). This example is one of the few in Fox’s works where Fox seems to approve of a changing culture for women. June, prompted by Hale, has been attending school in Big Stone Gap for some time and has, therefore, had exposure to a different society from what she has always known. Fox presents two different cultures and shows June as she wavers between what she has always known and what she is learning. Through leaving Lonesome Cove and living in the Gap while attending school, June has had the opportunity to see women’s and men’s roles that are different from those she has always known. When examining the above in the social context of Fox’s day, one can see the bigger picture of June’s questioning the status quo. Fox provides the potential for what Carroll Smith-Rosenberg calls the “new woman” equipped with an education. However, with only a secondary education June’s potential is very limited and she maintains her subservient role.

Unlike June, Mrs. Tolliver, June's step-mother, has no exposure beyond the life she lives on Lonesome Cove. Fox never once refers to June's step-mother by name, but as June's stepmother or "the old woman" (205). The absence of a proper name for this character raises the question of identity. Fox gives this mountain woman no identity, a convention reminiscent of Fox's portrayal of Old Mother Stetson in "A Cumberland Vendetta." June's step-mother remains a nameless, faceless character throughout the novel. John Ed Pearce writes in his forward to The Trail of the Lonesome Pine that June's step-mother "shuffles through the background, a shadowy drudge, waiting on men, eating after them, too submissive even to resent the harshness and isolation that have crushed her" (viii). The first encounter for both Hale and the reader with June's step-mother is on his first visit to the Tolliver cabin on Lonesome Cove. As Hale enters the cabin he sees the "outlines of a figure lying under a brilliantly figured quilt" on the bed in the corner (22). Hale never sees the figure of the step-mother emerge from beneath the quilt during his entire visit. Such anonymity presented by Fox leads one to surmise that the identity of a mountain woman or perhaps any woman is of little importance. Although June challenges this identity placement, ultimately she falls back into the paradigm of anonymity with Hale assuming the patriarchal role in their new household.

Throughout the novel, Hale is viewed as an instrument by which June can escape the confining patriarchy of mountain culture. Hale contemplates taking June from Lonesome Cove to Big Stone Gap to acquire an education and reasons, "The little girl back there was born for something else than slow death in that God-for-saken cove, and whatever it was—why not help her to it if he could?" (87). A romance blossoms between June and Hale, and the vast majority of the novel focuses on the ensuing love affair of these two characters and events such as the Tolliver-Falin feud. Fox presents Hale as June's keeper and the means for her to attain a better

life while escaping the existence she has always known. Roger Cunningham presents an analysis of Jack as representative of America and June as representative of Appalachia. He writes, “Hale has engulfed June just as America engulfs Appalachia. He has reduced her to absolute receptiveness in a sort of rape, surrounded with the glowing rhetoric of love, as America rapes Appalachia” (42-43). Assuming Cunningham’s parallel is accurate, a larger conclusion can be drawn in analyzing June’s receptiveness to Hale. Hale’s “sort of rape” as a patriarchal figurehead subdues June and any opportunity she has to overcome the accepted and social expectations of her culture. When examining the battles of women for new roles in Fox’s society, if the patriarchy, like Hale, engulfed women demanding change, these women would become like June and be reduced to absolute receptiveness.

Although June may escape the role of the typical mountain woman by leaving Lonesome Cove for Big Stone Gap, the “civilized” world that she enters is also patriarchal. Hale serves as June’s guide in this new patriarchy, and his role of educator begins as soon as he removes her from Lonesome Cove. As Hale and June begin the descent toward the Gap, Hale begins correcting June’s mountain dialect. Cunningham notes, “He [Jack] literally initiates and inserts her into a master-discourse to which he holds the key” (29). Hale also comments that June may like clothes similar to those of the people in the Gap. June, in a fury, states, “Ef you don’t like my clothes an’ the way I talk, I reckon I’d better go back home” (114). Hale calms June by telling her that he loves how she talks and dresses but that other people may find her odd. Although Hale seems to like June the way she is, he insists on sculpting her to fit the mold of the typical “civilized” woman.

Hale’s tutelage of June continues as she begins her formal education in the Gap. Fox writes, “Hand in hand, Hale and June followed the footsteps of spring from the time June met

him at the school-house gate for their first walk into the woods” (160). Fox recounts long walks in the woods with June eagerly asking Hale about all the plant life along the trails. Fox writes, “For every walk became a lesson in botany for June [. . .] and he rarely had to tell her the same thing twice, since her memory was like a vise—for everything, as he learned in time” (161). Hale, as a patriarchal figure, is clearly seen passing on knowledge to June and serving as a primary figure in her educational process. Fox acknowledges June’s intelligence and her potential for learning, but he places Hale in control of the knowledge that she will receive. Fox does not seem to be condemning the education of June or women in general; however, he does seem to imply that men should be in control of this educational process.

In order for June to be a suitable mate for Hale, she must become educated. The need for this education echoes the observations of Carroll Smith-Rosenberg regarding a woman’s purpose in acquiring an education. According to Smith-Rosenberg, the role of a woman’s education was to make her a suitable wife (253). June’s first trip home from the Gap, which was discussed earlier, contains an important confrontation with Dave Tolliver. Dave, whose pride has been injured by June’s lack of interest in him romantically, taunts June about Hale’s insistence that she better herself. Dave reproachfully asks, “So you ain’t good enough fer him jest as ye air—air ye? He’s got to make ye all over agin—so’s you’ll be fitten fer him” (201). Although Dave’s statement seems harsh, truth can be found in it. Hale loves June’s simplicity and naïve nature, but he does not want a typical mountain woman as a wife.

Hale’s desire to mold June into a lady is further substantiated when he takes her to the Bluegrass of Kentucky. June is to live with Hale’s sister and “absorb another new life like a thirsty plant” (231). As Hale and June arrive in the Bluegrass, Fox writes, “And at last had come the big city, with more smoke, more dust, more noise, more confusion—and she [June] was in

his world. That was the thought that comforted her—it was his world” (223). June’s total submission to Jack is evidenced by Fox’s statement. Jack takes June away from the mountains to educate her further, but the real comfort for her comes from the fact that it is his world. Much like Martha and Rome in “A Cumberland Vendetta,” gender roles are clearly defined with the man being placed in a dominant position. Fox presents Hale as an omnipotent educator of June wielding all the power and control of the situation.

When Helen Hale meets June, Fox writes, “for a moment the two stood facing each other—the still roughly clad mountain girl and the exquisite modern woman” (223). Although presented as a modern woman, Helen is to be June’s keeper until she leaves to attend college in New York while Jack returns to the mountains to work. Potentially a matriarchal figure, Helen is nevertheless subservient to men. Helen Hale recognizes her brother’s love for June and resigns to help cultivate June into a suitable mate. Fox states, “Her brother had been long away from civilization; he had become infatuated, the girl loved him, he was honourable [sic] and in his heart he meant to marry her” (228). Fox notes that June continues her role of subservience and allows Helen to take over with her “civilized education.” Fox writes, “Straightway she fell under as complete subjection to her as she had done to Hale” (226). All of June’s motivations are rooted quite simply in pleasing Jack. Fox notes, “It was plain that June’s timidity sprang from her love of Hale—her fear of not pleasing him” (227). Although no longer under the submission of mountain culture, June submits to Jack in order to please him. June is a young woman experiencing a new education, but her desires lie in relation to a man. Fox does not present June’s education as anything beyond a young woman’s desire to please the man she loves. June, therefore, does not fit the role of a trailblazing reformer of the Gilded Age era; she simply wants to please Jack Hale. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg notes that many women “saw in

higher education an opportunity for intellectual self-fulfillment and for an autonomous role outside the patriarchal family” (247). Clearly, with Hale’s happiness and approval as the goal, June falls terribly short of this “new woman” ideology.

After some time in the “outside world,” June returns to the Gap and Lonesome Cove as a refined young woman. Hale no longer sees June as a mere child but as a young educated woman. However, June’s affections for Hale have somewhat waned. Fox observes that Hale “was the ardent one [. . .]. He was to discover that he must now win again what, unasked, she had once so freely given” (239-240). June appears to be a young woman who has finally taken possession of her own feelings and ideals. June appears to be on the precipice of self-discovery and autonomy that Smith-Rosenberg writes about. However, although a changed woman in many ways, June is still dependent on Jack and seeks his approval. The juxtaposition of June and Hale’s characters presents Hale as the mountaineer from whose culture Hale was attempting to remove June. Cunningham relates a formal theory that Fox believed in regarding environmental degeneration. In other words, if exposed to savagery and barbarism for too long, one will become less civilized and perhaps savage or barbaric (28). Fox purported his theory of environmental degeneration through Jack’s gradual change from a Kentucky engineer to a mountaineer. When analyzing Fox’s beliefs regarding environment and the role it plays in development or degeneration, June’s development can be credited to her education in New York. June’s disillusionment with Hale and a life in the mountains is a direct result of her educational experiences. Considering the importance of education in the development of the New Woman of the Progressive Era, Fox alludes to the danger of education by its abilities to change the goals and ambitions of women from those of domesticity to challenging the patriarchal distribution of power. As Jack and June are reunited when she returns from New York, Fox illustrates the

potential dangers of a well-educated woman. June's feelings for Hale and a life in the Gap have changed:

“June!” he [Hale] cried in amazement, but his face lighted with joy and he impulsively stretched out his arms as though he meant to take her in them, but as suddenly he dropped them before the startled look in her eyes, which, with one swift glance, searched him from head to foot. They shook hands almost gravely.
(262)

Hale recognizes June's altered feelings for him and releases her from their engagement saying, “I would not have married you as you were—I've got to be honest now—at least I thought it necessary that you should be otherwise—and now you have gone beyond me, and now you do not want to marry me as I am” (276). Hale admits that at least part of his “teaching” of June was to make her a suitable companion for him. June's utter submission to Hale was no mistake.

The romance of June and Jack becomes further complicated when Jack enforces the law and hangs June's uncle. At first, June refuses to see Hale, and when her anger subsides and her feelings begin to return for Hale, she is driven by loyalty to her father and the Tolliver clan. Fox writes, “There were times when she would have gone to him, [. . .] she grew calmer, gentler still, and more determined to follow her own way with her own kin, though that way lead through a breaking heart” (366). Although June has all the education and opportunity to leave the Gap, she remains dutiful to her family and serving her father and brother. Her role as a woman is, therefore, one of submission and service as she martyrs herself for her family's well-being. The Tollivers, including June, head West. With Fox placing the emphasis on June's dedication to family, parallels to the late 1800s and early 1900s can be made. Many women were exploring new roles beyond those of a wife, mother, or daughter. June fulfills her domestic role by serving

as her father's caretaker in his ill health. Fox does not allow June to pursue her own desires until her father's death and her domestic duties are fulfilled.

Of course, Fox neatly weaves his tale and supplies the romantic ending to meet the reader's desire. June learns of the many sacrifices made by Hale to ensure that she received the finest education and was supplied with the utmost luxuries. Hale and June are reunited at the base of the lonesome pine after a year's separation. June returns from the west to confront Jack about his role as her protector from the harsh realities of the coal bust. June cries, "*You* did everything for me. It was *your* money. *You* gave me back the old cabin in the Cove. It was always you, you, *you*, and there was never anybody else but you" (405). At this point in the novel, June returns to the role of the submissive mountain woman. Hale, again, regains his stronghold as the dominant male protector of his love interest. June and Hale return to the cabin on Lonesome Cove with plans of marriage. June abandons her fashionable clothes and puts on "the last crimson gown of her girlhood—her sleeves rolled up and her hair braided down her back as she used to wear it" (412). Cunningham observes, "She is, in fact, as much as possible exactly as Hale first saw her. This wildly improbable bit of schematism (how can she possibly still fit in that dress?) not only emphasizes the erotic element in Hale's relation to June from the beginning but shows that she has never been more than a child in his eyes" (40-41). Happiness for June comes from Fox placing her in a domestic role with Hale as the patriarchal figurehead. June's fulfillment being linked to a domestic situation is interesting when considering feminist writers of the day. Such writers as Chopin and Gilman were challenging women and society to look beyond domestic roles in order to find fulfillment. Chopin's heroine in The Awakening, for instance, is presented as being very unhappy in her domesticated life. Gilman, as well, was searching for ways for women to serve in domestic roles while being productive participants of

society beyond the confines of home. June is the closest Fox ever comes to portraying a Progressive Era woman, and he allows her to fall terribly short of the ideal. June, without hesitation or thought, assumes the submissive role and in essence removes all the formal education and training she has received to become what she once was—less than Hale. Hale takes possession of June embracing her with the phrase, “You’re mine now, little girl, mine—do you understand that?” (413). By taking ownership of June, Hale places himself in the dominant role of the relationship and then clearly identifies himself at the head of the family by referring to her in the terms of a child.

June’s submission and reversion to the submissive relationship with Hale continues as she prepares Hale’s supper and insists on serving him his meal. June states in true submission, “Now my lord!” and motions for Hale to be seated (415). Hale does not want June to serve him, but she refuses and promises that she will eat with him after this meal. Based on June’s promise, Fox is allowing June’s role as the mountain woman to be altered, but the submissive nature of June’s relationship with Hale is firmly established. Although June’s duties as a mountain woman may be different from those she grew up with, she will still be subservient to Hale. June suggests that she could teach in the Gap to provide income, but Hale flatly refutes the idea. June will not work and, therefore, Hale must be the primary bread winner and head of the home. June later makes the comment to Hale that “Your least wish is now law to me, my lord” (420). Rodger Cunningham remarks that June is “flattened into a female stereotype, ruled by emotion and sexual desire” (39). The novel ends with Hale and June planning a surreal but happy life together.

Although Fox allows June a brief showing of independence, he then places her in a domesticated role which negates all her advancements towards self-reliance. Fox, through

June's character, mimics his society's attitude toward women attending college and having the potential to move beyond the patriarchal roles of domestication. Through June, Fox allows the reader to see the potential of the new, educated, potentially self-autonomous woman of the Progressive Era. Ultimately, however, June's character is not allowed to pursue this new Progressive Era role and Fox places her in subordinate roles to first her father and then Hale. June does not forge on to become an independent woman but succumbs to the desires of Hale and herself and delights in the submissive role she has assumed with Hale from the beginning. In relation to the Progressive Era, Fox presents the potential advancements of women through June's character as pointless. After all, Fox allows for her true happiness to be found in a world of domesticity and subservience to the man she loves. Therefore, according to Fox, a woman's place and true happiness can be found in a life of domesticity and subservience to man, who should and does serve as the caretaker and protector in the relationship. Consequently, Fox does not seem to believe that women need wider roles in society and alludes to this belief through June's character, who finds her ultimate happiness as a housewife.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Regardless of Fox's absence from the literary canon, his writing is a fascinating commentary on the affairs of the nation during the time in which he lived. As the country faced great upheaval, Fox provided commentary on contemporary events in his local color representations of women and gender roles.

According to Danny Miller in Wingless Flights: Appalachian Women in Fiction, many writers of fiction saw the Appalachian woman as "a pathetic victim of patriarchy" (26). As part of a patriarchal structure, Fox's women are presented as acceptors of their place in the social structure. June Tolliver is the only character given the opportunity to rise above the predetermined social mores. Through June's education, she has the ability to be what Carroll Smith-Rosenberg terms "the single, highly educated, economically autonomous woman" (245). Smith-Rosenberg also states that the "new woman" of the Progressive Era shunned marriage, "fought for professional visibility, espoused innovative, often radical, economic and social reforms, and wielded real political power" (245). Although June has the capability to be this "new woman," Fox never allows her. Fox, by limiting June to the domestic role of an adoring and educated wife, places himself alongside the college administrators and parents who believed college was a "socially contained ritual that prepared the young woman for the predictable and conventional role of educated wife" (Smith-Rosenberg 253). Fox's limitation of June leaves no room for the type of change that women of the Progressive Era were struggling for. Hale even admits to June that he would not marry her as she was before he sent her away to acquire an education. By bringing June back to Big Stone Gap and reuniting her with Jack Hale, Fox is

confining June to the accepted social code of the time. Ultimately, Fox seems to be condoning the education of women as long as the end result is to make her a well-educated wife. Fox leaves absolutely no room for June to be one of the “new women” of the Progressive Era and defines her role as subordinate to Jack Hale.

In “The Pardon of Becky Day” and “A Cumberland Vendetta” Fox presents women as relentless forces and main factors in the continuation of feuding families. Fox’s women are responsible for maintaining hate and breeding discontent among their kin; therefore, the women’s role is to maintain upheaval. Becky Day serves as a catalytic force for the feud in “The Pardon of Becky Day.” Old Mother Stetson, much like Becky, is the driving force for the feud in “A Cumberland Vendetta.” Through Old Mother Stetson’s death, peace comes when Rome is set free from the bonds of hatred imposed by his mother. With the Old Mother’s death, as with the death of Becky Day, peace ensues. By drawing parallels to the late 1800s and early 1900s, Fox is scoffing at those women who press for change and cause social upheaval and discontent. Silence and acceptance, portrayed through the deaths of those characters with ill will, seem to be the means for peace. Fox suggests through his characters that silent acceptance is perhaps the best means of resolution for the women of the Progressive Era.

Fox’s other women characters that were examined in this thesis all present the potential for being independent women of varying degrees. Unfortunately, Fox keeps a tight reign on these characters and does not allow them the ability to develop their independence and become individuals. Martha in “A Cumberland Vendetta” is initially presented as a strong-willed young woman who possesses the potential to be Rome’s equal, not his subordinate. However, by the end of the story Fox has stripped away Martha’s independent nature and has transformed her into a weak young woman without a voice of her own. The reader is left with the impression that

Rome will indeed take care of Martha and that she has already succumbed to the submissive role. Margaret Dean, much like Martha, has the potential to be more than Fox allows. Margaret is an intelligent young woman but a flat character whom Fox never allows to grow beyond the stereotypical southern belle. At the end of The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, however, Fox leaves Margaret patiently waiting for Chad's return so that she can begin her life. Of course, Chad heads west to begin his life, but Fox does not allow Margaret to accompany him on the journey because this act would place her as his equal. Instead, Margaret, like his dog Jack, must wait for Chad's return in order to be complete. Melissa, much like Margaret, has unending devotion to Chad. Fox keeps Melissa as a flat character without any development as well. Melissa, like Margaret, bases her decisions and choices on those of Chad. Melissa, being the true self-sacrificing woman, encourages Chad to leave the mountains and return to the Bluegrass to acquire an education.

Fox never allows any of his women characters to be fully independent and actually strips the independence away from those who show any glimmers of hope. By subjugating his women characters, Fox provides insight to his reader on his view of the position of women in society. Fox's views place him as part of the patriarchal system, which felt that the roles of women did not need to undergo change in order for them to find fulfillment and happiness. Fox purports that a woman's true happiness can be found through adhering to pre-established gender roles set forth by a patriarchal society with women ultimately subordinating themselves to men and seeking fulfillment through accepted domestic roles and service to family.

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