

The Female Gentleman and the Myth of Englishness in the Detective Novels of Dorothy L. Sayers and Margery Allingham

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ABSTRACT

Golden Age detective fiction by women offers insights into the competing gender ideologies of the 1930s and early 1940s. The female protagonist these novels delineate is called “the female gentleman” by Melissa Schaub, who describes her as the detective’s equal based on her intellectual abilities and independence. Although the female gentleman seems a revolutionary figure as she is forward-looking in gender politics, her strong belief in class hierarchy, her Victorian morals and relationship with the gentleman detective relocate her in the heritage of the English pastoral. This essay focuses on the female gentleman as a bridge figure whose marriage to the detective not only restores him to his masculinity but also portrays the woman embedded in the pastoral idyll of the English landscape. Her decision to accept traditional femininity reinforces the female gentleman’s role in the recreation of the stability and security of pre-war England. (RZs)

KEYWORDS: Golden Age detective fiction, female gentleman, Englishness, lieu de mémoire, nostalgia, middle class, British middebrown fiction

Margery Allingham and Dorothy L. Sayers were both acclaimed authors of Britain’s Golden Age detective fiction¹. These queens of crime not only earned their reputation by creating a nostalgic atmosphere with glorious houses and eccentric gentleman detectives but also by inventing a female character, the detective’s partner, whom Melissa Schaub calls “the female gentleman.” Schaub claims that the female gentleman is an alternative version of the New Woman, someone who is virtuous and honorable, which makes her worthy of becoming the detective’s partner. Allingham’s Lady Amanda Fitton and Sayers’s Harriet Vane are both regarded as female gentlemen portrayed as ideal women whose manners, success, and class backgrounds lift them above the others. According to Schaub, these female figures differ from the pre-war New Woman in being successful and independent, and thus they unproblematically represent feminist ambitions in the interwar period. Also, they are recurring characters in the novels of the two writers that show stages of not only the growth of their love relationship with the detective but also their development into mature womanhood. I argue, however, that

considering the female gentleman as a product of contemporary feminist views would give an incomplete portrait of this character since her attachment to the detective and her predispositions to aristocratic privileges raise ambivalence relative to the woman's place after the Great War. The female gentleman is an example of what Alison Light understands under "conservative modernity" (10) by accommodating the past in the new forms of the present.² She appears as a confident, modern, and successful woman, but her value system, respect for the past, and gentlemanly virtues also allow her to be part of the conservative myth of Englishness. She is also an ideal candidate to restore the detective to his masculine self which draws on a sense of nostalgia, recreating the illusion of pre-war England by the end of her journey. This article explores these controversies in Sayers's *Strong Poison* (1930), *Gaudy Night* (1935), and *Busman's Honeymoon* (1937) and in Allingham's *Sweet Danger* (1933), *The Fashion in Shrouds* (1938), and *Traitor's Purse* (1941).

Six years after the crime incidents in Margery Allingham's *Sweet Danger* (1933) and *The Fashion in Shrouds* (1938) Mr. Albert Campion, Allingham's gentleman detective, once again meets Lady Amanda Fitton, who works as an engineer.³ Campion's attraction to Amanda has not abated since their first encounter in *Sweet Danger*, and a mere glimpse of her early in the novel leads him to the following conclusion: "Her manners were irreproachable. Amanda was, as ever, the perfect gent" (76); and later she is described as making a noise like "an angry old gentleman" (96), someone with "disinterested intelligence" (214). These references endow her with male, more exactly, gentlemanly features—and she is far from being alone in this among characters in Golden Age detective novels. Dorothy L. Sayers's *Busman's Honeymoon* (1937) also draws on the representation of the woman as a gentleman, illustrated in the following conversation between Sayers' gentleman detective, Lord Peter Wimsey and Harriet Vane:

[HARRIET VANE.] "My husband would do *anything* for me. . . . It's degrading. No human being ought to have such power over another."

[WIMSEY.] "It's a very real power, Harriet."

[H. VANE.] "Then," she flung back passionately, "we won't use it. If we disagree, we'll fight it out like gentlemen. We won't stand for matrimonial blackmail."

...

[WIMSEY.] "Harriet; you have no sense of dramatic values. Do you mean to say we are to play out our domestic comedy without the great bedroom scene?"

[H. VANE.] "Certainly. We'll have nothing so vulgar." (344)

Harriet's vision of her own gentlemanliness excludes traditional femininity and the usual role a woman is meant to play in a marriage. She refuses to resort to womanly tricks, such as manipulation or blackmail, and is desperate to emphasize intellect over flesh in their married life. While the two characters differ in many respects, it seems that both of them are financially and existentially independent and value intellect more than the traditional feminine attributes: as Schaub argues, they distinguish themselves from other women by acting and thinking differently. Amanda and Harriet are representatives of this recurring type, but one also finds "dozens of non-recurring characters" as well, women who "all distinguish themselves as heroines by acting like gentlemen. . . . Not all of them use the word explicitly, but all embody a remarkably consistent code of behavior and set of personality traits" (1). Schaub introduces the term "female gentleman" to refer to this character type "depict[ed as] a consistent ideal of female behavior, [which she sees as] a feminist reappropriation of the Victorian ideal of middle-class masculinity. The female gentleman unites old ideas about class with new ideas about gender, in a combination that sheds light on today's feminisms" (2). Her analysis of this female character not only reinforces Light's theory of conservative modernity, presenting her as a hybrid figure, but also underpins Nicola Humble's claim according to which the gender crisis in post-World War I Britain resulted in the renegotiation of male and female roles: "The new man of this moment rejected the old masculine values of gravitas and heroism in favour of frivolity and an effete and brittle manner. The new woman took on the practicality and emotional control once the province of the male: she was competent, assured, and unemotional" (197). While Humble's argument applies to a great deal of interwar fiction, classic detective fiction emerges as a key site of the literary representation of this phenomenon. Amanda and Harriet not only embody these traits but embody them in contradistinction to the weakened gentleman figure. The fact that these women were explicitly represented as empowered after World War I and as able to appropriate gentlemanly ideals can suggest a reconsideration of the female gentleman as a site of memory. Does the renegotiation of female roles also imply that the female gentleman should replace and take on the role of the gentleman to maintain and continue the traditional value system as well as occupy her place in the myth of Englishness? Schaub holds that these women are successful because they are self-reliant, competent, and courageous (8) and achieve a respectable social

status—usually through the gentleman detective’s intervention—which is understood in class terms. The female gentleman, thus, is elevated to the gentleman detective’s status and is worthy of his company because she is his intellectual and moral equal. Although Schaub’s thorough analysis of female characters in the novels of Golden Age queens of crime proves that it is a challenge to establish firm categories that would equally apply to all the figures she would call a female gentleman, she still feels compelled to narrow down their diversity to some basic features that they commonly share:

- 1) upper-middle-class in birth, with some exceptions;
- 2) physically and/or morally courageous (resulting in self-reliance and economic independence);
- 3) honorable, in all the many senses that the term has acquired over the years;
- 4) possessed of strong emotions and the desire for emotional connection, but able to subordinate emotion to reason and present a reticent surface (62)

Her categories, however, start to lose their contours immediately after being established, for several reasons. She enumerates the contradictions of the term “gentleman” and its distortion by the Victorians, who turned it into a moral category, and her other ideas also become questionable as she expands her investigation. Another problematic aspect of her analysis is the supposition that recurring characters, like Allingham’s Amanda and Sayers’s Harriet are unchanging portraits of the female gentleman from their first appearance. While she emphasizes that their transformation into a fully developed portrait of the female gentleman gradually takes place in the course of events, she still applies the designation to the few available traits they possess at their first encounter with the detective, such as Harriet’s intellectual capacity or the “gamin element” in Amanda’s character (Schaub 76). I would argue, however, that Amanda and Harriet are not female gentlemen when they first appear despite some of the qualities that are indeed those of a gentleman: Amanda is only a teenage girl in *Sweet Danger* while Harriet is a suspect in a murder case in *Strong Poison* (1930). Schaub’s list of criteria suggests that they both acquire the position of the female gentleman only later, through their cooperation with the gentleman detective.

As regards gender concerns, Schaub claims that “[i]t is always marriage or nothing for the female gentlemen—but marriage played out between equals who embrace the same standards and values” (51). While the ideological battle about the gender crisis and the question of marriage certainly affected Golden Age authors, whose female heroines constantly

reflect on such dilemmas, I would not restrict the category to those who embrace marriage, especially because marriage seems to be almost the final stage in their character development. It is her journey or agony until this final resolution, the process of coming to terms with herself and her own values, that provides a more fertile ground for the analysis of the female gentleman.

Schaub's argument that the female gentleman is a new, modern form of femininity precisely because she, as a male woman, can become the gentleman detective's—the female man's—partner/equal (108) is not echoed by Megan Hoffman, who studies not only the female gentleman but female characters in general in her monograph. Her focus is more on the “the changing models of femininity” (1), which turn out to be more ambivalent than it would seem on the surface.

Hoffman sees these female characters as models of modern feminine agency incorporating all the advantages that the first feminist revolution achieved; nevertheless, marriage with their ideal partners reinforces their loyalty to domesticity and a heteronormative order (2). Schaub calls it a utopian alliance, which Hoffman regards as a sign of retrograde ideological retrenchment. It is not necessary to insist on either of these two opposing views, especially because for all the similarities, the gentlemanliness of the female gentleman takes different forms in the novels of two writers. Amanda's and Harriet's marriage to the gentleman detective raises more questions than reassuring answers. Unlike Schaub, Hoffman suggests that one possible interpretation of the equivocal position of this female character can be carried out by placing her at the intersection of the old and the new, advocating neither “a radical feminist dismissal of social conventions [n]or a return to a Victorian ideal of submissive domesticity” (2). Drawing upon this observation, the female gentleman is seen as no less ambiguous in terms of the memory politics of Golden Age writing than the gentleman detective, and similarly to him, she becomes an in-between figure in a no man's land. Schaub also remarks that the female gentleman in the 1920s and 1930s is represented as a modern and more successful woman than her New Woman predecessors. Taking these two arguments into consideration, it is obvious that there is something definitely new about the female gentleman and that this novelty is recognized in her success as an independent woman who can live up to her own ambitions without grim consequences. The female gentleman, thus, appears as a more radical but unique figure, whose revolt is directed not so much against the traditions of her own class as against misconceptions about women. The fact that she is in possession of gentlemanly traits such as honor, courage, common sense, restraint, and self-

control foreshadows the fact that her character plays a similar role in the symbolic and narrative economy of Golden Age fiction as the gentleman detective. Her narrative and symbolic function is to embody as well as ease the tension between the past and the present, with the additional remit of softening contemporary views of radical feminism. The female gentleman portrays herself as an advanced modern woman, whereas her family background, manners and firm belief in class hierarchy create the impression of a desire to restore or reclaim pre-war England. The nostalgic atmosphere around this female figure is further enhanced by the encounter with the gentleman detective.

All of these factors point towards a more nuanced analysis of this recurrent character type, with special regard to the connection between memory politics and war traumas. This recognition opens up the possibility to view the female gentleman embedded in the memory of Englishness, an idea which Susan Rowland hints at in *British Women Crime Writers* only to leave it entirely undeveloped. She asserts that modernist fragmentation offers “opportunities for the feminist writer. Now free of a unified masculine model of identity, she can explore more relational and provisional modes of being, bringing the feminine out of the dark other of realist representation. . . . Psychic construction through detection, in this argument, is a feminine modernist strategy” (24). Although Rowland describes several factors that can contribute to the psychic construction of the detective,⁴ here I shall focus on the role of lovers who stand against the fragmented male ego in this process. Analyzing Sayers’s *Busman’s Honeymoon* she concludes that Wimsey returns to his essential self as an English gentleman through his attachment to Harriet: “Only alliance with Harriet, with otherness as the feminine, can superimpose a delicate restitution of paradise” (77). Rowland’s short remark seems to reconnect with and modify my previous claim about the female gentleman’s position as a site of memory and the possibility that she may replace the role of the gentleman. Such a replacement certainly does not happen in the selected novels; the mission of the female gentleman is definitely not to undermine the heroism of the gentleman but quite the opposite: she helps him to come to terms with himself and restore him to his former self. The female gentleman adopts the role of a bridge figure between the detective and his psychic reconstruction, or, his reappropriation of a modified masculine sexuality. This, in turn, allows the female gentleman to avoid having to decide between the two roles—the equal partner or the domestic wife—since she can have both. Critics disagree as to whether this unusually harmonious romance can or needs to take place between the two

without upsetting the dynamics of the formula, and offer various explanations. Schaub argues that this perfect love affair is meant to sustain the illusion that such marriages between equal partners can be “models for others implying that they will produce a more honorable next generation through motherhood or education” (87). Conversely, Hoffman and Catherine Kenney claim that elaborating on the love interest is a sign that these writers returned to an earlier tradition that could successfully combine the detective formula with romantic elements, a return seen as the sign of the return to the old order in gender relations.

Sayers’s *Busman’s Honeymoon* and Allingham’s *Traitor’s Purse* both depict the female gentleman as a kind of “eternal Englishwoman,” a figure embedded in the heritage of the English pastoral. By the time she identifies herself with this role, she has gone through a series of violent adventures, which strengthens the desire for security and stability on the detective’s side. Although Susan J. Leonardi suggests that Harriet “embraces domesticity to a limited extent in *Busman’s Honeymoon*” (96), it is in this final novel that she comes to terms with herself by marrying an English aristocrat who has also been exposed to the cruelties of the world. In her analysis of the role of the lover in the detective’s identity construction, Ariela Freedman remarks that Harriet’s holding Wimsey close to her breast at the end of the novel is a “utopian answer to the continued problem of integrating shell-shocked soldiers into society —through the figure of the . . . infinitely forgiving woman” (383). Hoffman assumes that this scene endows Harriet with the role of a symbolic mother (100), which is precisely what Gill Plain claims about Amanda in Allingham’s *Traitor’s Purse*. In Allingham’s book, the amnesiac Campion finds his way back to himself and his beloved England through his female partner who “fits the iconic template of Kristeva’s virgin mother” (Plain 68). According to Plain, Wimsey’s holding on to Harriet in the last completed novel resembles the way Campion feels about Amanda in *Traitor’s Purse*: “The infant Campion yearns for the security of the pre-symbolic dyad. If he has a wife, he has a mother, and he can retreat into this idealised place” (68). This is not Allingham’s last novel to feature Campion and Amanda, but it is the last one to take place before their married life, which suggests that, similarly to Harriet, Amanda is going to take on a double role, that of wife and mother. The female gentleman’s acquisition of her new role seems to have terminated her journey as the detective has come to terms with himself and no longer needs her as a partner. Although they find themselves relocated in the domestic sphere, their decision does not entail the

renunciation of their professional career, which will be thoroughly explored in the selected novels.

Harriet Vane becomes a female gentleman

Sayers was committed “to explore the possibilities of the modern for women” (Evans 59), but not without foregrounding all the contradictions of her perception of the New Woman in Harriet Vane’s character. She first meets Wimsey in *Strong Poison*, where she is being tried at court, accused of killing her lover, Philip Boyes, with arsenic. This novel introduces Harriet as a problematic woman whose free spirit and independence challenge the established patterns of contemporary society. She holds a first-class degree from Oxford, maintains herself as a writer of detective stories, and has cohabited with her murdered partner. Apparently, Harriet has violated the boundaries between the sexes in all respects. She is not only financially independent, but she has also chosen a profession which was traditionally reserved for men. Harriet’s unorthodox lifestyle is openly criticized by the judge, who does not fail to emphasize that he considers her to be a wicked woman who does not only write “detective” stories that “deal with . . . methods of committing murder” (4) but has also “consented to live on terms of intimacy with him [Philip Boyes] outside the bonds of marriage” (5), which “was anything but an ordinary, vulgar act of misbehaviour” (5). The judge also emphasizes that for free love, “the woman always has to pay more heavily than the man” (5), reiterating the age-old imperative according to which it is the woman’s duty to demonstrate sexual chastity and refuse sexual advances. Although Sayers’ competent, independent, and university-educated women are honest and self-respecting, in *Strong Poison*, Harriet is presented by the authorities as dangerous both to men and to the social order.

The way Harriet is described by the judge seems to be very far from the qualities of the female gentleman. Before attaining her final and more domestic femininity in the concluding scene of *Busman’s Honeymoon*, she goes through three different stages as the novels chronologically unfold her adventures with Wimsey, and her trajectory as a woman is the reverse of the temporal linearity of the events. While in the first novel she is portrayed as a modern and sexually liberated woman who is forced to face the prejudice of the public and stigmatization for living with a lover, *Gaudy Night* (1935) portrays her as a deeply wounded person who is uncertain about the priorities in her life.

Schaub remarks that “[a] true gentleman recognizes a Female Gentleman despite any obscuring circumstances” (67). Despite the fact that

Harriet is publicly denounced as a bad woman, Wimsey intuits that she is not the kind of woman the judge wants the public to consider her to be. Although his successful investigation of the case rescues her from death, it leaves a long-lasting discomfort in her that she should be indebted to Wimsey for the rest of her life. Discussing the lack of balance between them, Hoffman argues that Wimsey's proving her innocence in the murder case serves more to declare "her innocence of symbolic criminality[, which is as] much an affirmation of her potential for marriage as it is an exoneration of nonconforming sexuality" (67). It is not simply that the incident forces Harriet to play the extremely traditional role of the persecuted maiden who can only be rescued by the heroic knight: it is as if Wimsey were reconstructing her (public) personality after its denigration by the judge. By reinventing her, Wimsey, as it were, appropriates Harriet, which might explain her reservations and subsequent desire to keep away from him, while it also implies that the woman can only enter the unique world of gentlemanliness if she is endowed with all the symbolic traits that the gentleman detective finds appropriate and desirable in a woman. It is, in this sense, only due to the gentleman detective's intervention that Harriet can be regarded as his equal, it is only through his cleverness and eloquence that one learns about the values of the female gentleman, which creates an irremediable imbalance between the two and which Harriet fights against in *Gaudy Night*.

Also, the fact that that innocence in a criminological sense and sexual chastity are interconnected in the novels show a strong resemblance between the female gentleman and her Victorian predecessors. Although there is considerable sexual tension between the detective and his partner, it seems that the two can only achieve their goal together if they remain sexually abstinent until they are reconciled in marriage. Sexual restraint appears to be a necessary attribute of the female gentleman. As Schaub contends, "Sayers requires that her hero and heroine have an honor of the body and of the mind" (92). Harriet's understanding of the honor of the body guarantees Wimsey's observation of the codes of gentlemanliness, too, while also giving Harriet the opportunity to start her life all over again. Although they are each other's equals in intellect and humor in *Strong Poison*, it takes another book, *Gaudy Night* (1935), before Harriet can finally grow into the role of the female gentleman.

The opening scene of *Gaudy Night* shows Harriet feeling nostalgic about Oxford as she is staring at the invitation to the Gaudy, a reunion of former students in Shrewsbury College.⁵ In her mind, Oxford is an idealized place, like a fairy land of moral purity. Looking at the letter, she is filled with

nostalgia for a time when she was not yet tainted by notoriety, before she was tried for murder or stigmatized for an immoral relationship with a man. Oxford enters her mind as the site of glory which has been able to reconcile and synthesize tradition with the present—meaning primarily the female presence among the ancient buildings. Oxford, “the haven for the intellectual life and a ground for the establishment of male relationship” (Leonardi 20), tolerates the intrusion of Shrewsbury College: “She saw a stone quadrangle, built by a modern architect in a style neither new nor old, but stretching out reconciling hands to past and present” (1). Oxford, as she reconstructs it from the present, is like an isolated, unspoiled place with a utopian community where one can feel safe and do one’s job without the distractions of the outside world. In Harriet’s mind Oxford ceases to be a real place and emerges as an idea, a concept where intellect rules over emotions, where women are given the opportunity to show that, in terms of intellectual abilities, it is impossible to distinguish between male and female, they are on an equal platform since it is the (androgynous) mind and pure reason that guide everyday life. She feels that the years in Oxford seem so far and intangible as if they had never happened: “It was all so long ago; so closely encompassed and complete so cut off from the bitter years that lay between” (2). Nevertheless, it is the idealized image of her old school that not only prevents her from seeing it as part of the real world but has also prevented her from participating in former Gaudies for fear that she would be insulted or discriminated because of the Boyes case. When Harriet finally decides to go this time, she expects a painful confrontation between the past she left there and her present life, yet her experience at the Gaudy not only exposes her to facing her own misconceptions about Oxford, but also makes her reconsider the rigid but safe structure she has forced her life into. The disturbing incidents of the poison-pen letters start on the first night of the Gaudy and require Harriet’s full involvement as a detective, which means that Oxford becomes a place that very much belongs to the present. As the investigation proceeds and the memory world of Oxford slowly disappears she also becomes a more accepting and emotional woman who realizes how much her judgments were distorted by her preconceptions about life and people.

When Harriet arrives at Shrewsbury, she feels anxious about her encounter with her former teachers and mates. Although the Dean, Miss Martin, greets her with pleasure, she still feels bound to say that the female educators might think it a daring act that she is present: “Rather brave of me, don’t you think?” (10). This is one of the first signs of Harriet’s

misconceptions about the faculty of Oxford, since she projects her own fears and insecurities over her environment, assuming that the others have the same view of the horrible things in her past. “Oh, nonsense!” said the Dean. She put her head on one side and fixed Harriet with a bright and birdlike eye. “You mustn’t think about all that. Nobody bothers about it at all. We’re not nearly such dried-up mummies as you think” (11). Mistaken in her belief that Oxford would judge and condemn her, she can still hold on to the principle of professional integrity in this “quiet place, where only intellectual achievement counted” (18). Female scholars are seen as the equals of their male colleagues, possessing the same capacity to think rationally and stick to the facts without being swayed by emotions. Nevertheless, the old myths that discriminated and stigmatized women for centuries still seem to be at work, leading to violence and confusion in the community. Also, Sayers displays her fondness for parallels and oppositions that dynamically interact with each other and lead to conflicts inside and between the characters. One of the most severe conflicts she delineates in the book originates from the clash between the past and the present regarding the role of women in society, in professional pursuits, and the possibility of maintaining a balance between marriage and a professional career.

All of these issues are brought into play on the first night of the Gaudy when the case of the poison-pen letters begins. Walking in the quad after dinner, Harriet finds a piece of paper in the trim turf which shows the image of a “naked figure of exaggeratedly feminine outlines, inflicting savage and humiliating outrage upon some person of indeterminate gender clad in a cap and gown. It was neither sane nor healthy” (40). One day later, she comes upon another message that has been hidden in the sleeve of her gown, with the words: “You dirty murderess. Aren’t you ashamed to show your face?” (62). Harriet cannot help associating the culprit with the women’s community of Oxford by stating rather than claiming: “Oxford, thou too?” (63). The idealized place devoid of corruption, as she has imagined it to be, transforms into a haunted castle where ancient myths of the independent woman start to creep up, as Leonardi claims: “The reversion to the mythical reinforces the depth, the cultural pervasiveness, of the fear of the unnatural woman. . . . the dread of the independent, assertive woman is ‘ancient,’ rooted in the myths of the civilization that Oxford exists to perpetuate” (94). Although Harriet is trying to do her best in the investigation of the case, her efforts prove to be futile. One possible reason for her failure may be that she is afraid to discover that the intellectual side of life she has trusted so much might betray her Oxford, which would equally justify the ancient anxiety that educated women

are dangerous. Harriet's fears that women's independence and education may not be natural are echoed by Miss Hillyard, a history tutor at Shrewsbury, who is savagely critical of women having both a family and a profession. The female community at Shrewsbury is far from homogeneous in its ideas about a "proper" life for a woman and, with the exception of Miss Hillyard, they are not discriminative with married women. Harriet's experience of married women at the Gaudy leads her to conclude that it is rare for a great woman to find a great man who appreciates his partner's intellect "since the rule seemed to be that a great woman must either die unwed . . . or find a still greater man to marry her. And that limited the great woman's choice considerably . . . indeed, it was often found sweet and commendable in him to choose a woman of no sort of greatness at all" (57).

Harriet's inflexibility and fears rooted in generalizations and prefabricated ideas about either married or intellectual women reveal a hidden parallel between her and the scout of Miss Lydgate, the English tutor, Annie, who eventually turns out to be the author of the poison-pen letters. Although they are each other's exact opposites at first sight, they are also secret sharers, sharing some of the misconceptions and rigidity in their attitude to women's role in society. A conversation with Annie, in which Annie reveals her anxieties concerning women's education and women's scholarly activity, does not only compel Harriet to reconsider what is meant by a natural and unnatural woman, but could also be the clue to solve the mystery: "But it seems to me a dreadful thing to see all these unmarried ladies living together. It isn't natural, is it?" (134). The difference between natural and unnatural, which is also analyzed by Leonard, is turned on its head when a "natural," that is, traditional woman, turns out to be the perpetrator, someone whose mind is totally blinded by her infatuation with her husband mixed with social prejudice against learned women. As it later turns out, Annie's hatred of educated women is based on her personal experience, which also corrupts her ability to distinguish between the members of Shrewsbury and see them as individuals rather than a group of women with identical features. Her husband lost his job as a professor due to the intervention of Miss de Vine, who noticed that the thesis was grounded on a false argument as a result of its author's suppression of evidence. The husband, unable to cope with this shame, finally committed suicide.

Annie hates educated women, because she is convinced that they put professional integrity above personal interests in all circumstances. The fact that she wants to take revenge on all educated women for her husband's suicide proves not only how dangerous "womanly women" can be but also

the grotesqueness of being overpowered by anger, revenge, and personal bias. According to Leonardi, "*Gaudy Night's* claim is quite clear: the unnatural woman turns out to be the civilized human being and the hope for a saner society; the natural woman, the womanly woman, not the educated woman, is the real danger" (93). As indicated earlier, Harriet's discomfort may be nourished by the fear of the unnatural, independent woman, "the ancient dread [that] clouds her judgement" (Leonardi 94). Failing to solve the case, she feels compelled to ask for Wimsey's help. While Wimsey is right about Harriet's fears and rejection of personal involvement in a case that would totally override the principles she has relied on so much, she realizes that she cannot escape any longer from the revision of her own emotions. The conversations with Wimsey make her realize that the whole project should be carried out through her authorship of crime fiction, which she has used so far to conceal her feelings and live up to a professional ideal of objectivity:

[WIMSEY.] "You would have to abandon the jigsaw kind of story and write a book about human beings for a change."

[H. VANE.] "I'm afraid to try that, Peter. It might go too near the bone."

[WIMSEY.] "It might be the wisest thing you could do."

[H. VANE.] "Write it out and get rid of it!"

[WIMSEY.] "Yes."

[H. VANE.] "I'll think about that. It would hurt like hell." (348)

While Harriet elaborates on revising and reinterpreting the pattern of her novels, she does the same regarding the choice between marriage and a career. Harriet not only becomes a more mature woman due to all the incidents in *Gaudy Night*, but she is also more convinced by the end that her profession as a writer is more important for her than anything else. What she also needs to understand, though, is that Wimsey does not require her to give up her life and identity. Just like her vision of Oxford as an unchanging ideal calls for revision, she must also get rid of her prejudices about Wimsey. Although Oxford has not let Harriet down regarding professional integrity, it has taught her that intellectual women are not unemotional or indifferent to the outside world. Harriet realizes that marrying Wimsey does not mean embracing traditional domesticity and wifely duties, but a unique chance to reinvent the institution by pushing its boundaries towards incorporating both roles, the woman as a professional and the woman as a wife. With this, Sayers has created a utopian relationship between the male and the female gentleman, with the latter seeming to have retained her career while also gaining a loving

partner. *Gaudy Night* also prepares Wimsey and Harriet for their shared life in *Busman's Honeymoon* after they have revealed their virtues and weaknesses to each other. Having thus experienced the world, they are prepared to return to the beginnings by retiring to Talboys, which stands for the England they are about to retrieve.

Harriet Vane as a bridge figure

Both Hilary Hinds and Alison Light argue that in feminine middlebrow novels the domestic sphere is depicted as a place to recreate the sense of Englishness, which does not only involve a “realignment of sexual identities” (Light 8) but also the construction of a more inward-looking, more domestic and more private England. Light’s argument is obviously grounded in the wartime traumas that lingered on into the interwar years, accelerating the need to establish pre-war standards in the home for the agonized male. Hinds confirms Light’s thesis, elaborating this feature in feminine middlebrow novels:

If the home was conceived as a proper space for the formation, reproduction, and celebration of the masculine self . . . to threaten its stability could be understood as undermining of masculinity itself. And if the home was newly identified with . . . the epitome of what was best about the English, then self-sacrifice for the good of the nation could no longer be seen only as a masculine matter undertaken on the battlefield . . . (313)

The concluding scene of *Busman's Honeymoon* shows the gentleman detective and his wife in the self-contained little world of Talboys, an old country house in Harriet’s native county, Hertfordshire. The sub-text of this final completed novel describes Harriet’s fight to find her position in the Wimsey family and continue the tradition as the wife of an English aristocrat, despite the fact that their marriage is a symbol of “social mobility in an increasingly bourgeois world” (Kenney 105). The opening chapter includes some correspondence between friends and family concerned with the marriage of Wimsey and Harriet and her personal qualities. Among the many hostile comments about Harriet quoted from Helen’s—Wimsey’s sister-in-law’s—letter, Bunter’s, Wimsey’s manservant’s, observations in his letter to his mother suggest a more promising perspective on Harriet’s new role among aristocrats: “I was very pleased with her new ladyship’s behaviour towards the guests . . . but of course, his lordship would not choose any but a lady in all respects. I do not anticipate any trouble with her” (9).

Bunter's calling Harriet a "lady" highlights and foreshadows a shift in Harriet's status at Wimsey's side and raises questions about the survival of her gentlemanly traits, which Schaub sees as a "reappropriation of Victorian masculinity" (2). This confirms Kenney's claim that Harriet's marriage to Wimsey is a sign of the middle-class adoption of aristocratic manners, and the appellation "lady" is one of the symbols or symptoms of this social phenomenon. Bunter's reassuring comment on Wimsey's ability to recognize a lady no matter what her background may be draws a parallel between Harriet and Jane Eyre, or even the princesses of the Grimm brothers' fairy tales, where the prince recognizes the true value of the poor or suffering girl and rescues her from her deprived condition. Geraldine Perriam analyzes Allingham's *Sweet Danger* from the same perspective, pointing out that detective novels featuring a romantic love interest have a strong resemblance to fairy tales. The love affair of Harriet Vane and Lord Wimsey is also seen as a medieval romance where Wimsey appears as a knight who saves the lady from danger and disgrace and wins her heart by defeating all the enemies, finally buying Talboys as a wedding present, enabling Harriet's return to the village next to her own birthplace and to the old house she has longed for so much. The village and the house symbolically reverse chronology by returning Harriet into her familiar environment and, in a broader sense, to a feminine role—confined to the house—of an earlier period. Harriet's restoration is, however, a slow process.

In the process of acquiring the art of being a wife, Harriet asks her mother-in-law for advice, deferring to her authority, and, by implication, accepting her own position: "She wondered whether her own decision 'not to be wifely and solicitous' had been a wise one. She wrote, asking for counsel" (442). Harriet's reliance on her mother-in-law's judgment and experience in attempting to fit in represents the power of the past, which she is ready to embrace, but the most evident example of this continuity is probably their move to the countryside and establishing themselves in Talboys. Nevertheless, Harriet is still full of uncertainties about the success of their marriage as ancient ghosts haunt her mind when she thinks of the word "husband," "the man in possession" (38). The murder case they investigate during their honeymoon, however, resolves all of the doubts about their marriage, and the house is transformed into a shelter where the two deeply wounded people can make a new start.

The house is an old mansion and with its grim atmosphere it is shown as a typical setting for murder mysteries. Talboys has the same ghastly atmosphere about itself as all the other houses in classical whodunits; it is as

if the house had been transformed into a battleground of good and evil, waiting for either its eternal doom or salvation. The crime interest in the book obviously lies in the discovery of the dead body of Mr. Noakes, the former owner, in the locked house, but it may also symbolize the obstacle of the Wimseys in their regaining their past selves. They need to eliminate the dead body in order to take up their roles as wife and husband, but the investigation brings up past traumas. Harriet wants to make sure that, by fulfilling a woman's duty to marry, she will not be expected to "accept that traditional union of male and female which privileges the male and represses the female" (Leonardi 96), but Wimsey, too, has his own worries. He is afraid that his engagement in the criminal investigation might corrupt their relationship as a result of which he will be more of a troublemaker than a protective husband. Their final reward for solving the puzzle of the murder is that their anxieties about married life are dispelled, and Talboys is transformed into a fairy land where the past and the present can be reconciled. Although Harriet's insistence on spending their honeymoon there may appear at first selfish on her part, it proves to be the right thing for them to do, for it is here that they can begin to recognize themselves as belonging to England, as carriers of the memory of Englishness. Not long after their arrival in the countryside, Harriet's vision of Wimsey changes for good. Nowhere else does Harriet allow herself to be so emotional as in the scene where she recognizes Wimsey as *a lieu de mémoire*.⁶ He turns out to be a familiar, reassuring figure implanted in the English countryside, which provides an everlasting warmth and comfort for the female gentleman:

He belonged to an ordered society, and this was it. More than any of the friends in her own world, he spoke the familiar language of her childhood. In London, anybody, at any moment, might do or become anything. But in a village—no matter what village—they were all immutably themselves: parson, organist, sweep, duke's son and doctor's daughter She was curiously excited. She thought, "I have married England." (105)

For Harriet, Wimsey recreates the atmosphere of her childhood which she associates with an "ordered society" where everybody knew their place and role. Wimsey speaking the language of her childhood might imply the sense of innocence that the countryside could embody, preserving pre-war values. Once again, the motif of innocence seems to return in the reconstruction of the woman's identity, which is induced by the gentleman detective's presence. Harriet's recognition of the fact that Wimsey belongs to the England she

knows from her past brings her a sense of relief that impels her to disclose her deepest romantic feelings in a somewhat melodramatic fashion: “‘Oh Peter—’ . . . I have been wandering in the dark—but now I have found your heart—and am satisfied. . . . I love you—I am at rest with you—I have come home” (326).

Harriet’s confession is important in several respects. It seems that she finds her stable identity as a woman, a lady, at the side of the detective, which in turn enables her to restore the detective to his true self, reinforcing the aforementioned mutual dependence of the two. This is obvious from the closing scene of *Busman’s Honeymoon*. While Wimsey is away to attend the execution of Frank Crutchley, the murderer of Mr. Noakes, Harriet is waiting for him in the dark house. Wimsey’s final arrival at Talboys in an agonized state brought about by his shell-shock defines Harriet’s position as that of a caring and tender woman waiting for her tortured man to return to her from his “war”: “‘it’s my rotten nerves. I can’t help it. . . . I hate behaving like this. I tried to stick it out by myself.’ . . . ‘Well’, he said, with a transitory gleam of himself, ‘you’re my corner and I’ve come to hide’” (448–49). Once the house has been liberated from the taint of criminality, the female gentleman appears to have re-established herself in the domestic sphere, creating a home where they can both find shelter. Her body literally becomes part of the idyll of the country house, an image that was frequently used to bolster the semblance of national security and social stability in the post-war era, which also recalls Rowland’s claim about Harriet’s role in the psychic reconstruction of Peter “‘into signifying England” (77). Even if it is fiction constantly remade through these images, Sayers shows that it is through the female gentleman’s reoccupation of England that the detective can stay at home. The image of the lady keeping the gentleman safe in his habitat, the old country house, does not only satisfy post-war nostalgia but also deepens the sense of eternity these symbols add to the myth of Englishness.

Amanda Fitton: the growth of an adolescent into a female gentleman

The question of home and identity becomes an intriguing one in the representation and reconstruction of the gentleman detective and the female gentleman in Allingham’s novels that feature Campion and Amanda before their married life. They first meet in *Sweet Danger* when Amanda is only seventeen, a young, innocent member of the poverty-stricken Fitton family. Perriam reads Allingham’s novel as if it were a fairy tale, with the glamorous hero, Campion, starting to fall in love with an impoverished beauty who finally turns out to be the inheritor of an aristocratic title and valuable land:

“. . . as a fairy tale heroine in *Sweet Danger*, Amanda fulfils several requirements: she is beautiful, young, motherless, and of aristocratic birth but poor. Like Cinderella and other heroines of fairy tales, Amanda requires her ‘prince’ to restore her to her rightful place” (44). Without the gentleman detective’s intervention, the Fittons would never be able to regain their legal claim to their inheritance: raised to Campion’s status, Amanda will be referred to as Lady Amanda Fitton.

Although both Harriet and Amanda are praised for their intelligence, when the latter appears first, though adventurous, she is innocent and inexperienced. While she is an “unwomanly woman” inasmuch as she wears unfeminine clothes and is interested in engineering, she is also obviously beautiful. While Campion is aroused at the sight of Amanda, Wimsey begins by appreciating Harriet’s voice and charisma. Campion and Amanda’s love affair is described with more reserve than what Sayers describes, who is quite explicit about sexuality and marriage. As Julia Jones claims, “[Allingham] could write most convincingly of romantic love in her detective stories but rarely described its physical manifestations” (16). Perriam also notes the suppression of sexuality in Allingham’s main characters, suggesting that “sexual arrangements” could “defy logic and prediction” (45). She also adds that, while there is “mutual trust and affection between them and physical attraction,” there is “little sexual tension” (47). Amanda remains sexually rather passive, perhaps a sign of her Victorian chastity and ladylikeness, although she shows interest in a “real” relationship with Lee Aubrey in *Traitor’s Purse*.

As noted earlier, emotions are important in the development of the male and female protagonists into the traditional image of man and woman. Amanda, however, is not portrayed as a tortured woman who is fighting her own emotions. She seems more confident and determined in what she wants, a leisured aristocrat who is not afraid to express herself.⁸ At the end of *Sweet Danger*, somewhat less immature, she is astoundingly daring and easy-going in offering her assistance to Campion: “Don’t be frightened,” she said. “I’m not proposing marriage to you. But I thought you might consider me as a partner in the business later on” (250). Unlike Harriet, she seems openly conservative in certain issues concerning gender and women’s education: “No higher education for me” (251), she assures Campion. Amanda seems to be echoing the views of Allingham, who, as Jones states, “never attended or wished to attend a university and was perhaps all too ready to draw unflattering portraits of desiccated academic families: the Faradays in *Police at the Funeral*, the Palinodes in *More Work for the Undertaker*” (9). In *The Fashion in Shrouds*,

Amanda is proudly talking to Campion about her professional career which is even more unusual than Shrewsbury College: “It took me three and a half years to do it, but I’m a pretty good engineer, you know. I went straight into the shops when I got some money. I hadn’t sufficiently decent education to take an ordinary degree My title helped, though,’ she added honestly” (70). Her unusual occupation—as well as her title—might contribute to the fact that, unlike Harriet, Amanda is accepted straight away by Campion as his equal, while the former is struggling to forget the unequal beginning of her relationship with Wimsey.

The Fashion in Shrouds, set six years later, introduces Amanda as a more mature woman who works as an engineer for the famous aircraft designer, Alan Dell. Campion and Amanda set out on an investigation together once again, and it is this co-operation that makes Campion realize the extent of his devotion to Amanda. It is in *The Fashion in Shrouds* that Amanda becomes the most overt representation of the female gentleman. Her manners, common sense, intelligence, and sexual chastity are emphasized throughout and commented on by other characters. After Campion admits to himself that Amanda “had grown astonishingly good to look at” (74), he seeks physical contact with her, but Amanda keeps withdrawing from these situations: “Mr Campion dropped his hand over Amanda’s, but she drew it away from him and began to eat as resolutely and angrily as her Victorian grandfather might have done in similar circumstances” (78). The two pretend to be engaged throughout the novel, as if playing in a dress rehearsal for the real thing. It is important in this respect that, although her beauty and sexual appeal are foregrounded, as Alan Dell calls her a “Botticelli angel” (82), Amanda is not just a conveniently pretty appendix for Campion, who is involved in the serious work of detection: she is indeed his partner, and her intelligence—in true female gentleman fashion—is described not as the opposite but as an important aspect of her femininity.

Dell’s remark, however, also foreshadows Amanda’s final transformation into the image in which Campion recognizes the eternal woman he wants to re-unite with in his amnesiac state in *Traitor’s Purse*. Gill Plain remarks that “[t]his is a novel in which a woman’s devotion to man’s genius and the emotional constipation of the detective are subject to serious scrutiny, and both are found wanting” (65). Plain concludes that *Traitor’s Purse* is no longer a fantasy of the domestic ideal but a reinforcement of the needs that call for “structures of belief that represent a welcome point in an uncertain, ever changing world” (74). The novel starts with two severe obstacles to the successful union of Campion and Amanda in marriage. In

what Gill Plain calls “a rebirthing scene” (66), Champion wakes up in a hospital as an amnesiac, not knowing whether he is guilty of murdering a policeman or not, or who he exactly is. He believes Amanda to be his wife, but later realizes that she is his fiancée, who is about to break off the engagement and call off their marriage because of the appearance on the scene of a third party, Lee Aubrey. The tone of the novel is more serious, given the challenge of restoring Champion to his true self embedded in England, reinforcing a traditional image of Englishness as a guarantee of national safety and security. Amanda seems to fulfill two narrative and structural needs: she has to arouse what Hoffmann calls Champion’s “aggressive, sexually dominant masculinity” (95), and occupy the role of a mediator between Champion’s England and himself. *Traitor’s Purse* depicts the rebirth and reconstruction of the amnesiac detective through two of his protectors, Amanda and Lugg, Champion’s manservant. Having lost his memory, Champion is deprived of authority over the events. As indicated earlier, Plain sees Amanda’s figure as both a wife and a mother to Champion, a doubleness which she links with Kristeva’s theory of the virgin mother. Plain asserts that because “[t]he symbolic order is an unsuitable place for the woman” (70), what remains as available is “the memory or the idealisation of the mother, an ideal totality that no individual woman could possibly embody that is enshrined in symbolic representation. And while the ideal of woman is placed on a pedestal, the actual function of mothering within the symbolic is appropriated by men” (70).

Amanda and England become interconnected in Champion’s memory, which does not only justify the union between the innocent female body and eternity in the post-war years, but also a desire to return to the “symbolic mother, fixed and objectified” (72), that is, England herself, to whom Champion returns. Champion’s new-found and secure masculinity thus finds its true expression in his devotion to his country, in his patriotism, one of the carefully policed areas towards which “[c]onstructions of masculinity permit[s] [an] open expression of emotion . . .” (Plain 71): “Now it was awake all right and recognizable; a deep and lovely passion for his home, his soil, his blessed England, his principles, his breed, his Amanda and Amanda’s future children” (Allingham, *Traitor’s* 116). Nevertheless, Champion’s ability to recapture England, which becomes a national mission during wartime, is only possible through Amanda’s intervention in the restoration of Champion’s masculinity. Champion’s desperate obsession with Amanda, his “mother” is a sign of his re-experiencing “atavistic urges and destructive drives of infancy” (Plain 78): “She looked very young and very intelligent, but not, he thought with sudden satisfaction, clever. A dear girl. *The girl*, in fact. His sense of

possession was tremendous. It was the possessiveness of the child, of the savage, of the dog, unreasonable and unanswerable” (52). Susan Rowland also asserts that “Campion’s most sexually energised moments . . . desperately requir[e] the devotion of Amanda to restore not only his identity but also some stable structures of masculinity” (23). For Amanda, this means that she must first give up her love for Lee Aubrey, which is suggested to be foolish and potentially dangerous not only to Campion, but to the nation as well. Thus, she ceases to be an independent agent and resumes the traditional role of women placing the interest of others above their own. The elimination of Aubrey, the villain and the seducer, is crucial for two reasons: Campion will not only regain the lady of his heart but protect England as well.⁹ The motif of innocence, which recurs once again in this love triangle, is crucial in the context of the female gentleman. As she is meant to represent something stable in a chaotic world, Campion also recognizes himself in her: “Amanda was not only his: she *was* himself” (78).

Understanding that Campion can only find his non-fragmented identity in a mythical England, the woman entering the scene as a carrier of this memory is evidently a new phenomenon in the genre, as it requires that the female gentleman also be read as a *lien de mémoire* in the myth of Englishness. Amanda’s fixed position in Campion’s memory is reinforced by the fact that she is able to appear many times in emergencies and help him. In *The Fashion in Shrouds*, Campion suggests that Amanda should start using the word “comfort” as a middle name. In this novel, the mere thought of Amanda fills Campion with the sensation of comfort, which might imply that the woman as a piece in the recollection of Englishness stands against the present turmoil of history, just as much as does the English landscape as an image of the pastoral idyll. While Amanda is coping with her own frustration in an unconsummated relationship with Campion,¹⁰ it is exactly the implication of her virginity that relocates the female gentleman in the nostalgic body of England before the war, the only world Campion can rely on in his restoration of identity. This echoes typical essentializing ideas of femininity, for instance, those of Georg Simmel: “. . . woman is in fact positioned in Simmel’s writing as the overt object of nostalgic desire. . . . Woman emerges in these discourses as an authentic point of origin, a mythic referent untouched by the strictures of social and symbolic mediation” (qtd. in Felski 37–38). Simmel resuscitates the divine nature of the woman who is also an angel. Amanda appears to have been endowed with this angel-like status who does not only look like one but also becomes man’s savior and “God’s gift to anyone in a hole” (188). For Campion, “she had emerged as a

necessity, a lifeline, heaven-sent and indispensable. Now, with the full recollection of a long and sophisticated bachelor life behind him . . . he was startled to find that she remained just that; static and unalterable, like the sun or the earth” (190). Amanda is transformed into the figure of the divine woman whose innocent and unpenetrated body redirects the detective to his one and only true mother, England. Her final acceptance of Campion’s proposal is also a sign that she is ready to embrace the domestic ideal to perform the traditional role of the true lady with the reconstructed hero on her side.

Conclusion

Female middlebrow novelists excelled in the representation of interwar ideals such as the connection between heroism and domesticity, and the figure of the female gentleman in the work of these two Golden Age crime writers is best seen in this context. The female gentleman turns out to be a key figure in establishing the connection between the two despite all her modern femininity, independence, professional, and financial success. The role of the female gentleman as an ideal partner for the distressed hero is crucial in the restoration both of the fragmented male psyche and of a utopian memory world of the national imaginary. Her final reconciliation in marriage with the gentleman detective clinches her adoption of traditional social and moral values, yet without the repressed feminine ideal. The female gentleman’s moral disposition and sexual chastity equate her with the image of the innocent woman who becomes the ideal partner of the gentleman detective, embedded in the myth of Englishness.

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Notes

¹ The Golden Age of detective fiction refers to classical whodunits or locked room mysteries which started to flourish in the 1920s during the paperback revolution with leading authors such as Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, Margery Allingham, John Dickson Carr, and Anthony Berkeley. Given that detective fiction is traditionally written according to a formula that could somehow maintain a more homogeneous profile of the genre, it also faced critical neglect for being cheap and low-quality literature. Nevertheless, a smaller and a more talented group including Sayers and Allingham distinguished themselves as authors of quality literature by deviating from or violating the prescribed elements of the formula to create their own distinctive trademark in the Golden Age. Also, the term referring to “the very idea that detective fiction between the wars represented a ‘Golden Age’ seems like the misty-eyed nostalgia of an aged romantic hankering after a past that never existed” (8),

remarks Martin Edwards. The phrase “Golden Age of detective fiction,” coined in 1939, stuck. Although the period it covers is not precisely defined, most critics contend that the Golden Age of detective fiction took place between the two world wars. “Of course, Christie and her disciples continued to produce new books, and enjoy much success, long after that time, but most of the classic detective fiction appeared between the wars” (Edwards 106).

² Light’s idea of conservative modernity was her way of exploring how the “writing of middle-class women at home” (10) treated the contradictions and tension in English social life after the Great War, and how they related to “the ideologies of the home and womanliness which belonged to the virtues and ideals of the pre-war world” (10). The following passage from her book illustrates her point: “Janus-faced, it could simultaneously look backwards and forwards; it could accommodate the past in the new forms of the present; it was deferral of modernity and yet it also demanded a different sort of conservatism from that which had gone before . . .” (10).

³ *Sweet Danger* (1933) is the first novel with a love interest, with Campion meeting Amanda Fitton for the first time. It is not a typical detective novel as there is no murder at all until the end, and the entire plot follows a linear sequence to dispel the mystery around the heredity of the title of Averna, a piece of land at the Adriatic Sea. The land and the title of the principality are supposed to belong to the Fittons, who live in the village of Pontisbright, in Suffolk. Since their right to the land and the aristocratic title are strongly doubted as no living heirs are known, Campion and his team decide to see about the case.

⁴ It is “the argument that the self of the detective exists in an interconnecting web of emotional energy within the novel. . . . These male figures are construed as eroticised beings from a feminine point of view . . . by the narrative inclusion of lovers . . .” (22).

⁵ Shrewsbury College is a fictional place based on Somerville College, Oxford, where Sayers read Modern Languages.

⁶ This term was coined by Pierre Nora, who speaks about the adverse way in which modernity affected traditional social cohesion, including forms of memory. His concept of *lieu de mémoire* exceeds physical sites to include ideas, books, events, fictional, or historical figures.

⁷ She is wounded by a shot in *Sweet Danger*.

⁸ In *The Fashion in Shrouds*, Amanda ventures her views on the importance of class: “Class is like sex or the electric light supply, not worth thinking about as long as yours is all right but embarrassingly inconvenient if there’s anything wrong with it” (89).

⁹ Lee Aubrey is the principal of a scientific concern called the Institute. He is a powerful figure, implicated in political corruption at the expense of the working classes.

¹⁰ “You see, we’ve never had a love affair, have we?” says Amanda to Campion (30).

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