Familicide as a result of instabilities in eighteenth and twentieth century social structure: an examination of the changes in patriarchy, in Charles Brockden Brown's 'Wieland', and masculinity, in Stephen King's 'The Shining', and how these changes led to family violence

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An examination of the changes in patriarchy, in Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland*, and masculinity, in Stephen King’s *The Shining*, and how these changes led to family violence

By

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Thesis Advisor

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Chairperson of Department
Acknowledgment

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Abstract

The following paper is an examination of the rise in familicide, which occurred between 1780 and 1850 and again in the 1980s. Familicide is the killing of the family, usually by the patriarchal figure. Social changes, such as those occurring with employment, politics, child/parent relations and marriage deeply impacted the state of patriarchy during the Revolutionary era and masculinity during the Vietnam era. Patriarchy was a system in which men were in control of all elements of society, both private and public. Masculinity, the more internal and less public element of the two, was a socially developed ideology in which men seek power, but also feel emotional strain and guilt. Some men struggled immensely with the shifts occurring in the public and private social systems and sadly experienced mental turmoil, which led some to commit familicide. While history is a vital part of the discussion within the paper, it is Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* and Stephen King's *The Shining* that are directly examined in an attempt to prove that some men committed familicide because of their insane state of mind that resulted from the shifts in patriarchy in the eighteenth century and masculinity in the twentieth century.
**Introduction**

Insanity and violence have been as much a part of society as family and politics. In fact, it was safe to say that the social systems of family and politics have contributed to insanity and violence within society, particularly the instances experienced by men. Many of the violent acts committed by men have been driven by mental insanity and acted out on their "loved ones." The eighteenth and twentieth centuries in American history were eras in which familicide was present and reflected in the literature of the time period. It is in my opinion that the increase in violence in the late eighteenth and late twentieth centuries was, at least in part, a result of major societal changes that were connected to the era of the Revolution and to the era of Vietnam.

The American Revolutionary era plagued the late eighteenth century while the Vietnam era filled the later years of the twentieth century and were no exceptions in creating extreme social change. Among the most extreme changes were those involving men. Before the era of the American Revolution, America was a relatively solid patriarchal society, but as the Revolutionary era progressed patriarchy became unstable creating turmoil, distress and in the end change.

In addition to the social adjustments made as a result of the Revolutionary era, the Vietnam era also required some adapting to changing societal positions. Like patriarchy, masculinity was a system strongly ingrained in American culture. With the Vietnam era came controversy, uprising and change that affected men.

While factual research surrounding the eighteenth and twentieth centuries will be extremely beneficial to us in exploring this issue, works of fiction produced during these
time periods will also be very useful. As we explore the topic of men, and how their changing role led some to become insane, two important novels will be examined. In exploring the late eighteenth century we will use Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland* - a major novel about the Wieland family and the effects of an outsider, Carwin, who uses his talent for ventriloquism to cause chaos and disorder. Theodore Wieland, who desperately clung to his patriarchal authority, was deeply affected by Carwin and found his microcosmic world and his mental state to be crumbling. Wieland struggled to maintain stability and control in his family, while the nation around him faced instability and uncertainty.

When turning to the late twentieth century, Stephen King’s *The Shining*; a very popular twentieth century novel that was reproduced twice as a movie will be explored. Readers were told the story of the Torrance family, which included Jack, Wendy and their son Danny. Jack decided it would be best for his family to flee society and spend the winter snowed in at the Overlook Hotel located deep in the mountains of Colorado. Jack’s hope was that he would be able to repair the damage he caused his wife and child through physical abuse, mental distress and his inability to hold down a job and provide for his family. Again, the main male character, Jack was the most affected by this experience and as a result battled with his masculinity only to find his mental state and his family slipping through his hands. Together Theodore and Jack provide ideal examples of how men were dealing with changing social systems, which included patriarchy.
Insanity, violence and social disorder were major themes reflected in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries and resulted from, as well as created, changes in social structures. By examining Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland* and Stephen King’s *The Shining*, it will become apparent that major eras like the Revolutionary era and the Vietnam era, shifts in patriarchy in the eighteenth century and masculinity in the twentieth century, as well as instabilities in social structures caused some men to become violently unstable, directing that violence towards their families.

Before beginning the exploration into this topic, I want to be sure readers understand the focus of this paper is very much on gender. I recognize the fact that the Revolutionary and Vietnam eras went much deeper than this focus and were responsible for many changes beyond just altering the lives of men. While these eras go very deep, it is not my intent to explore topics outside of the gender-based focus I am taking on. I will be putting my effort towards this exploration of men in the late eighteenth and late twentieth centuries in hopes of better understanding why some of these mentally disturbed men committed familicide.

**Familicide**

Before beginning to examine any part of familicide and why men were driven to commit such a horrible crime, a basic definition and brief history is needed. Simply stated, familicide is “the slaughter of an entire family by its patriarchal head” (Halttunen 139). This violent act was often committed because of tense situations, which included infidelity, annoyance, disobedience, refusing to have sex, command by a higher being and alcohol (145). While it was more common for men to commit familicide, women too
have been recorded as slaughtering their husbands. Familicide had no boundaries and was committed by people of all ages in all locations (Cohen 725).

The two most prominent increase in familicide occurred from 1780 to 1850 (Halttunen 139) and again in the 1980s (Cohen 752). The first rise in familicide that began in 1780 and ended in 1850 was ironically a result of the change in the family. This was an era in which family was becoming more sentimental in all aspects. People married by choice and for love and children were raised with a gentler hand (Halttunen 141-142). The family was becoming more private and moving away from the public surveillance that was previously very common (140). It was the element of sentimentality and the privatization of the family that made it an ideal place for murder as no one expected that the more loving and caring father who showered his children and wife with affection would turn around and brutally murder them (143). Familicide was unexpected because the community was prevented from being allowed to see in and observe the major familial problems that existed as a result of the changes in family structure.

While the rise in familicides in the 1980s was not as prominent as those from 1780 to 1850, they were still just as brutal and unfortunate. Familicide of the 1980s, while not as heavily explored, occurred among men who all experienced failure in social systems in some way (Cohen 752). They felt betrayed and let down by a government that was supposed to support them. The cases of the 1980s implied there was a "...fraying in our modern social safety net..." (752) and for the men who experienced this let down, their families paid the price.
While familicides were often very violent and extremely gory, publishing direct accounts of them or fictional stories where familicide was a major part of the plot, became very popular. People wanted to read accounts of familicide for numerous reasons. One of the biggest reasons, especially within the eighteenth-century, was because it allowed them to know if their families were successful in conforming to newly formed sentimental ideals (Halttunen 169). Some authors published these tales as a way of showing the problems associated with changing social structures, such as patriarchy and masculinity (163). Finally, on the most basic levels the published tales, either fictional or factual, served as entertainment. People were very interested in hearing tales of “...families run amok...” (161). The fact that familicidal fiction was popular “...suggest something more significant, pointing to pervasive fears and anxieties accompanying...” the vast amounts of changes in both the private and the public world (169).

**Defining Patriarchy**

Patriarchy in the late eighteenth century was a blurred concept that was a socially constructed ideology. Up until the late eighteenth century patriarchy had been a prominent form of rule within society. With the arrival of the American Revolutionary era patriarchy experienced a shift leaving so many men to rediscover what it truly meant to be a patriarch.

In order to understand exactly what was happening with patriarchy during the American Revolutionary era, it is best to establish a definition. The most basic definition of patriarchy was rule by man, but it actually goes much deeper. Patriarchy was first and
foremost a system (Johnson 78). A system is a group of elements that interacted, interrelated and depended on one another to form a whole. For example, in order for patriarchy to exist men had to rule over all elements including the home, government, religion and social situations. At times these elements acted so neatly together that we didn’t even realize the system existed. In other words, society has lived, and continues to live, under a patriarchal system where the majority of people accepted it because it fit nicely and discreetly into society (Johnson 79). The system of patriarchy also involved oppression, privilege, dominance, authority and control in and outside of the home. If patriarchy was practiced in the private home it was also most likely to be the accepted form of rule for society. A patriarchal home, as well as society, was “…male-dominated, male identified and male-centered” (Johnson 5). We see that positions of authority and power were reserved for the male gender. Finally, patriarchy bases “…what [was] considered good, desirable, preferable or normal…” on the ideas of men (Johnson 5-6).

The American Revolutionary era and the years following, threw these ideas about patriarchy into a state of confusion. While patriarchy will never disappear completely, men of the eighteenth century were in search of new ways to maintain their positions as leaders in the private and public realm. Unfortunately, this was not as easy as so many men expected it to be. Society was altering quickly and, for men, catching up with the changing notions of patriarchy was mentally and emotionally challenging.

Defining Masculinity

Like patriarchy, masculinity of the late twentieth century was a blurred social concept. It was the late twentieth century that saw a rise in the interest of masculinity and
can be credited with developing ideas and meanings in regard to what it meant to be the modern masculine man (Franklin 1). So many men were confused by masculinity and knew that they must come to their own definition in order to make it work for their lives. The biggest challenge for many men was that masculinity was a socially constructed ideology. It was important to understand before defining masculinity that it was an ideology or a set of ideas developed by society and its structures. Ideologies were often unachievable for the majority of people, yet most of society aimed to fit themselves into this mold. Masculinity was no exception and because of this many men spent great amounts of emotional and physical energies desperate and failing to be truly masculine.

Masculinity was an individual, multi-faceted, system that carried numerous ideas, views and opinions. The theories of masculinity can best be viewed by being broken down into three social groups that were prominent in society. The first of these groups were the radicals and can be credited with carrying the ultimate stereotypical view of masculinity. They believed all men were controlling and abusive and lacked any respect for the female population. In other words, as Kenneth Clatterbaugh tells us, the radicals saw masculinity as "...a set of behaviors among which are violence and woman hating that allows men to have power over women" (64). Basically, this group saw men as barbarians, especially in regard to their treatment of women. The radicals were viewed as selfish and power hungry.

The liberal profeminists, our second group, presented a more moderate view of masculinity. This group saw masculinity as a socially developed stereotype or ideology in which men were thought to be the foundation of the family and the ultimate provider. 
Kenneth Clatterbaugh emphasized the socially developed side of this definition of masculinity when he saw masculinity as "...a set of behaviors and attitudes that [were] limited by rigid social stereotypes of what it [meant] to be a man" (64). Socially based ideas and beliefs were key in defining masculinity for the liberal profeminists.

The final group that presented a definition of masculinity during the late twentieth century were the newly formed men's rights proponents. This group viewed masculinity in the most negative light out of all three groups. The men's rights proponents considered masculinity to be a social structure in which the roles men played caused them emotional strain. According to this group women took advantage of the ideology produced by masculinity resulting in power for women and a loss of power for men. Clatterbaugh emphasized the guilt and negativity associated with this group's definition when he told us they believed masculinity to be "...a set of behaviors, attitudes and conditions, prominent among which are overwork and guilt, that allow men to cope with the condition of their powerlessness in the face of the considerable power of women" (164-165). This group arose as a response to the women's rights movement. They saw women as working to overpower men rather than working to be equal with them.

When these three definitions were examined it was difficult to choose one to approach this paper from. Instead, it is best to take a prominent element from each group and wrap them up to form an appropriate, yet workable definition. Using the ideas of the radicals, liberal profeminists and men's rights proponents, a workable definition of masculinity consists of a socially developed ideology in which men were under emotional strain and experience feelings of guilt as well as a desire for power, because society said
they must rule, especially over their families, and be in control at all times. I am choosing to omit some of the more extreme views of masculinity, such as men who believed their masculinity was defined through violence or men who believed masculinity included an overthrow or dominance by women, because they are the opinions of the smaller groups in American society and as a result the majority of people do not agree with their definitions of masculinity.

**Patriarchy Versus Masculinity**

Putting the terms patriarchy and masculinity side by side brings up the question of what is the difference? After all, they were both socially constructed ideologies that involved men. Aren’t patriarchy and masculinity the same thing and why the shift from the term patriarchy in the eighteenth century to the term masculinity in the twentieth century?

While patriarchy and masculinity both involved and affected men, there was a major difference between the terms. Masculinity, unlike patriarchy, was internal and individual and included working to define selfhood. Basically, masculinity was a social ideology that acted on the individual. Patriarchy, on the other hand, was a social system in which the individual was a vital part. Patriarchy involved society as a whole rather than just individuals. It was a set of behaviors established by men that included dominance and power. In patriarchy men were the leaders and the primary decision makers. Societies that were patriarchal had men that were convinced they were the rulers in and outside of the home. They were the ones who were the most qualified to make decisions and the ones best prepared to provide the correct guidance.
Masculinity and patriarchy are ideal terms to be used within the gender and violence-centered context that will be explored within this paper because of the private and internal, as well as public and social conflicts they created. The appropriate nature of these terms will become apparent as the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries are explored through factual evidence, Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland* and Stephen King’s *The Shining*.

**The Approach**

The Revolutionary era and the Vietnam era created huge shifts in social systems, which were primary reasons as to why patriarchy and masculinity both went through extensive changes. Major social systems that caused these changes can be broken down into two separate categories: the public and the private. The public arena included such social systems as politics and employment, while the private included marriage and family. It is difficult to point to one system and lay all or most of the blame, so the goal will be to examine each one of these areas in both the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries in hopes of obtaining a better understanding concerning patriarchy and masculinity and how these social systems drove some men to insanity and familicide.

**Public Employment and Its Effects on Masculinity and Patriarchy**

The focus will begin on the area of employment in the public realm. The term employment here will mean work performed outside of the home for a paid wage. Employment was undergoing a change during this time from being performed in one’s home to being done in a centralized location. It was in the eighteenth century that we saw, not only a change in what it meant to be employed, but also a rise in the type of
employed man. The concept of the self-made man was introduced to us during the eighteenth century and became an element in the new ideas about patriarchy that were emerging. Because the self-made man was a new concept to patriarchy some men resisted the change and continued to cling to traditional patriarchy, which included surviving through inheritance and often doing minimal amounts of actual work, at least for the more elite classes. The self-made man, on the other hand, “...derive[d] identity entirely from a man's activities in the public sphere, measured by accumulated wealth and status [and] by geographic and social mobility (Kimmel 17). The self-made man was also mobile, competitive, aggressive in business...temperamental restless [and], chronically insecure...” (Kimmel 17). In other words, the self-made man, unlike the traditional patriarch, was dedicated to his profession in order to obtain wealth and be the breadwinner or provider to those who depended on him. Basically, being the patriarch in regard to employment, altered and came to mean men leaving their home to work aggressively and associate with other men, while earning your own income for your family's survival.

While the employed patriarch sounded like a dignified position, many men couldn't handle such a role. Some experienced mental insanity because they did not fit into the ideology of the self-made man, which made them feel as though they were not living up to the new patriarchal ideal. Some men did not have aggressive personalities or had little desire to spend large amounts of time away from their family, but because of the pressures of society they felt the need to make themselves, or at least attempt to make themselves, meet these standards. Men were very pressured by the introduction of the
self-made man, especially men of the upper class like Theodore Wieland. They had a hard time accepting the idea that things like inherited wealth were no longer what made a man patriarchal. It was pressures such as this that led men, as will be shown, like Wieland, to an insane state of mind and to eventually commit familicide.

**Theodore Wieland As The Breadwinner**

Theodore Wieland, the main character in Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland,* didn’t fit the role of the new self-made man, who earned his wealth aggressively from employment away for his home. It was not fair to say that Wieland wasn’t able to provide for his family because he did, but he did so mainly through an inheritance from his father and income from his property that he did very little work on. This clearly places him under the title of a patriarch. Clara, Theodore’s sister, narrates a section of the novel about the sudden death of their father and the death of their mother a few months later, which left them orphans at a very young age. Clara mentions that “[t]he property which [their] parents left was by no means inconsiderable. It was entrusted to faithful hands, till [they] should arrive at a suitable age” (Brown 22). After years of education and study

it was determined that [Theodore’s] profession should be agriculture. His fortune exempted him from necessity of personal labor. The task to be performed by him was nothing more then superintendence. The skill that was demanded by this was merely theoretical and was furnished by casual inspection, or by closet study. The attention that was paid to this subject did not seclude him from any long time…(Brown 23)

From this description of Theodore’s occupation it becomes obvious that he does not fit into being the self-made man ideal. As we can see, Wieland had a job in which he was only the supervisor and not the one performing the actual tasks to produce his agricultural
product. He had no need to be aggressive to ensure his success because he had people to do that for him. He went to work only on occasion and when he did leave his home to work, he didn’t go far and was therefore never gone for long periods of time like many of the self-made men of the eighteenth century. Self-made implies having to work long hard hours to be successful in business, which leads to success in the monetary sense. In addition to Wieland having to work much less than typical businessmen, Wieland’s financial position was not one earned by himself, but one given to him through his parents and their wealth. Once again, making him more of a traditional patriarch. Wieland remained very far from the traditional self-made man because he lacked the necessary competitive edge and as a result had no need to be insecure and aggressive. In addition to these traits, Wieland remained immobile, preventing him from interacting with the public, which was a necessary element.

Wieland resisted the new patriarchal ideal of the self-made man and because it was a popular ideology that so many men were striving to achieve, his attempt at resistance contributed to his eventual insanity. Wieland’s resistance was demonstrated in his relationship with his brother-in-law Pleyel who tried to persuade him to move to Saxony because Wieland’s ancestors “…were noble Saxons, and possessed large domains in Lusatia. The Prussian Wars had destroyed those persons whose right to these estates precluded [Wieland]” (Brown 42). It was Pleyel who informed Wieland, after carefully exploring this information, that Wieland’s “…claims were superior to those of any other person now living” (42). Pleyel encouraged Wieland to go to Saxony as a way of proclaiming himself to be a self-made man and in turn a more modern patriarch. If
Wieland claimed his land he would reap “...the privileges of wealth and rank, and [draw] from the servile condition of one class...” (43). Wieland felt this venture would not classify him as a self-made man because he would not meet the major requirement of earning something, in this case more land and more wealth, for himself. Instead, he would only inherit more. While Wieland knew he would meet some of the other requirements, such as separating himself from his family for an extended period of time, putting himself into the public realm, were he would be recognized for his wealth and status and be forced to be aggressive in order to survive, he clung to his traditional views and resisted Pleyel’s idea. Wieland felt

[p]ower and riches were chiefly to be dreaded on account of their tendency to deprave the possessor. He held them in abhorrence, not only as instruments of misery to others, but to him on whom they were conferred. Besides, riches were comparative...He lived at present in the bosom of security and luxury. All the instruments of pleasure, on which his reason or imagination set any value, were within his reach. (Brown 44)

It is obvious from this quote that Wieland was content in his current role and continued to avoid becoming the self-made man that, in part, defined the new patriarch. This resistance, however, caused Wieland a great amount of stress because much of society was caught in the idea of becoming the self-made man. Wieland's resistance to becoming the new patriarchal self-made man, which resulted from changes in the public social system of employment, caused him to a lot of stress, which in the end contributed to his mental instability and insanity.

The Ghostly Qualities of the Late Twentieth Century Working World

Employment was also an element in defining what it meant to be truly masculine. The working world of the twentieth century underwent numerous changes that had a deep
effect on men. The era of Vietnam contributed to these changes, but other factors also played a role in changing masculine conditions. The biggest changes with working in the twentieth century, especially in the later part, were the increase in the amount of stress and the increase in the amount of work done that did not produce a visible product. In other words, jobs were more pressured and instead of one man producing one good in one day, numerous men worked on only a piece of a product that took months or years to produce.

With the rise in stress came a change in the health of working men. Male health was on the decline, not only because of stress, but also because of societal pressures that included men needing to be strong and in power (Ehrenreich 69). In many ways, employment was responsible for giving men the title of the “weaker sex” during the late twentieth century because their jobs were becoming detrimental to their health. As a result of this women were being viewed as considerably healthier because their job (staying at home to rear children and care for the home) was seen as being stress free at all times.

With the responsibility of employment on men came the responsibility of being the breadwinner. Again, health became an issue because of the amounts of responsibility associated with the breadwinning role. Being the breadwinner created emotional turmoil because men feared not being an adequate provider. This in turn created stress and the weakening of the body, which led to eventual illness (Ehrenreich 70). Many of the stresses and illnesses experienced by men were invisible. White-collar workers, as we learn from Barbara Ehrenreich in her book *Hearts of Men*, did work that “...had a ghostly
quality that make it hard to quantify…” (74). In other words, what was produced on a day-to-day basis could only be seen on paper, not in an actual physical product. Men were aware of this and often felt as though their work carried an invisible element of satisfaction. Contentment was found only in the long term, contributing to the uneasiness in the mental state of some of the male population.

The same ghostly quality held true for illnesses. The number of heart attacks was on the rise, but no one could see them coming because the connection to stress had not yet been made. Ironically, “[t]he most hazardous environment turned out to be the one that all men were expected to strive for – the home and office of the successful middle class man. And the most vulnerable personality [to mental illness] appeared to be the best adjusted, most responsible and clearly masculine” (Ehrenreich 78). Striving for this ideal masculine role was detrimental to so many men. The pace of production of visible products and the rise in stress only made the masculine ideal of the late twentieth century harder to reach, which often contributed to insanity among some men.

**Jack Torrance As the Breadwinner**

Stephen King’s main male character, Jack, in his novel *The Shining*, was experiencing many of the ghostly stresses and illnesses associated with being the employed breadwinner in the twentieth century. In fact, it was these pressures that drove Jack to leave society and take his family to be snowed in at the Overlook Hotel. Jack’s job at Stovington Prep School carried the ghostly qualities of a late twentieth century breadwinner presented to us by Ehrenreich. He devoted large amounts of his time educating and guiding his students, only to yield little results in the short term. Jack’s
work as a teacher took months to produce visible success mainly because the nature of teaching, which often involved students who didn’t understand, immediately, what purpose their education served. Because Jack had to wait to yield results and satisfaction, any glitch along the way was very difficult for him to deal with.

Jack’s work with the school’s debate team is an example of one of the tasks that carried this ghostly quality and yielded success in the far future. Jack felt this was threatened when George, a star student, became a possible setback to his team. It was this time with the debate team that eventually led Jack to lose his job, which in turn robbed him of his breadwinning status and led to his mental illness, which coincidentally was invisible and qualified as a ghostly illness.

At the beginning of the novel Jack had lost his teaching job due to a violent confrontation with George. Jack’s lack of employment meant he was not able to provide for his family, creating some of the stress that led to his ghostly mental illness. His inability to be the breadwinner was causing him great stress. He desperately wanted to be able to care for Danny and Wendy because he would be able to maintain the male pride that came with being the breadwinner. Jack’s anxiety over being the breadwinner and his loss of this status became apparent when he said

...[t]hese days he almost always listened to what his pride told him to do, because along with his wife and son, six hundred dollars in a checking account and one weary 1968 Volkswagen, his pride was all that was left...A year ago he had been teaching English in one of the finest prep schools in New England...Things had been very good...All at once there was enough money left over at the end of each two-week pay period to start a little savings account...He and Wendy had begun to talk about finding a house and making a down payment in a year or so. (King 53)
This passage indicates Jack’s thoughts about his past income, which was solid and stable, and that lacking an adequate income and failing to provide was devastating to him. The pride and contentment in Jack’s tone was apparent as he described his job at the prep school and the income it provided for him and his family. He was excited about actually being able to save some money and give his family the gift of their own home.

It was obvious that Jack was upset about his current jobless situation and would have rather had a job that yielded no immediate results than no job at all. Jack’s stress level was rising, but due to its invisible quality in the beginning no one could see it and help him. He was very down on himself and felt bad that he couldn’t provide his family with what he felt they needed. In fact, Jack felt his family was falling apart emotionally and this was a result of his inability to provide them with material things. He believed that going to the Overlook Hotel would not only allow him time with Wendy and Danny to reestablish their family bond, but he would be able to earn some income and write a play that would lead to further income.

Jack’s job at the Overlook, like his teaching job at Stovington, had a ghostly quality to it. Writing a play was going to take him months and the rewards, in this case payment and a sense of accomplishment, might never be seen. Jack was using the Overlook to earn his breadwinning status back, but sadly he couldn’t avoid doing ghostly work that was going to place him back in a stressful and mentally detrimental position. Jack couldn’t run away and escape his ghosts and failures, which added to his mental insanity and violence.
Employment was a public social system that was constantly changing. Some men struggled with their role in employment because they were caught in the changing ideologies of patriarchy and masculinity. While Theodore and Jack's breadwinning status differed greatly, they both struggled with attempting to conform to new patriarchal masculine ideals. While the eighteenth century was not being affected by the twentieth century definition of stress and the self-made man phenomenon took on new meaning in the twentieth century, Theodore and Wieland still faced similar societal pressures in their attempt to conform. Through the lives of these characters, it becomes obvious that attempting to obtain the ideal employment situation under patriarchy and masculinity can easily contribute to insanity and eventual familicide because of the changes taking place that were out of their control.

Public Politics and Its Effects on Patriarchy and Masculinity

Politics, in addition to employment, was another public social system that caused men of the late eighteenth century confusion and stress over patriarchy and men of the late twentieth century confusion and stress over masculinity. The era of the American Revolution brought huge political stresses into the American social system, which deeply impacted men and patriarchal society. American colonists used the era of the American Revolution to become independent from England. American patriots wanted the right to form their own independent, republican government based on the authority of the people (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil 149). This attempt, and eventual success, of becoming independent, deeply impacted patriarchy. In this exploration into the changing political elements of the Revolutionary era, the focus is going to be very particular and narrow.
Only one small cultural and psychological aspect of politics in the era of the Revolution will be addressed. It should be recognized that this public social system went much deeper than what will be explored, but also that this examination remains important and is relevant to this topic.

The states looked to England for their political system prior to the start of the era of the American Revolution. England was viewed as the father country to the American states leaving them in the child-like, dependent role. Many colonists felt trapped in this child-like state, feeling that remaining in the position meant they would never get the chance to grow and be independent. Michael Kimmel, author of *Manhood in America* summed this idea up nicely when he told his readers that “...the white colonists felt enslaved by the English father, infantilized and thus emasculated” (18). Kimmel continued with this ideology of a father-son relationship between England and America when he said that the American Revolutionary era “… brought a revolt of the sons against the father – in this case the sons of Liberty against Father England” (18). Father England was placing the child-like states in a dependent position that compromised their relationship because the states were prevented from making many of their own decisions. As a result, conflict between the two countries arose and the relationship between the two countries, as well as the system of patriarchy, was never be the same again.

Because of their dependent ties to England, men of the American states were feeling deprived of their patriarchal roles. During the years prior to the start of the Revolutionary era “…patriarchs [of the American states] looked to England, not just for political and economic props, but also for cultural prescriptions of behavior” (Kimmel
“Americans used the same metaphors of age and family to describe imperial rule and social authority. They often pictured the colonies as the dependent offspring – the children – of Britain…” (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil 146). In other words, colonial men felt they had to look to their father figures in England and model their lives after them, which meant they themselves were not fostering a society of their own, which included their own system of patriarchy. They were not thinking and acting for themselves. To many of the male colonists “[b]eing a man meant being in charge of one’s own life, liberty and property” (Kimmel 18), which was something they by no means had because of their attachment to England. Colonial men began to struggle for their independence in the hopes of becoming their own patriarchs and running their country as they saw fit. Breaking their ties to the father country was the only way to achieve these goals and the era of the American Revolution was what allowed them to do so.

The American Revolutionary era allowed American men to develop a patriarchal system that differed from England’s. These differences were seen within the contrast of political systems. England was ruled under a monarchy, while the colonists instilled a republic that not only allowed them to become self-governing, but also provided “…an economic system and a cultural order that reflected many of the values of ordinary citizens” (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil 203). As the republic developed in the states, England’s monarchy was viewed as feminine. As a result of this it was considered less patriarchal because it limited choice involving “…ones own life, liberty and property” (Kimmel 18-19) that helped define what it meant to be a man and patriarchal. The colonists began to see the development of their own patriarchy when they realized
England's form of government was not what they wanted because it limited choice and in turn veered away from their patriarchal ideals. The states needed a republic that fostered independence in all facets of life if they were going to thrive.

While it appeared the colonists gained their independence, the issues of patriarchy were much deeper than it appeared. Patriarchy of the states was based around an independent man who made individual choices. This was much different than the patriarchy of England, which was based on choices made by the monarchical government that consisted of a very limited, elite group of individuals. Because colonial men now looked to themselves to determine what type of patriarch they wanted to be confusion and mental distress were on the rise. Basically, "[t]he birth of the Nation was also the birth of a New Man..." (Kimmel 20). This new man was independent, a provider, a decision maker and most importantly, the type of man he wanted to be.

The barrier in achieving these changes were other social elements that were rising and creating further changes. For example, the role women were playing in society was growing and changing. While women had no where near the rights of men, as they could not vote because they were not considered full citizens (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil 243), their roles expanded to include the gaining of a leadership position in the home and family (248). This new found leadership position was a moral one in which women became spiritual and moral leaders and were given the responsibility of carrying on the ideas of the republic by instilling them in their children (248). This deeply affected many men in regard to the type of man they wanted to be because the one group they thought...
they had complete control over, women, was, to an extent, beginning to take on a leadership position of their own.

In addition to women gaining limited power, allowing men to choose what type of man they wanted to be, rather than provide them with a model, created conflict. This conflict was an internal one because so many men couldn’t settle on what patriarchy was to them. They all agreed that it included personal choice, but what choices should they have made in order to be considered patriarchal? Some men found themselves settling on their ideas of patriarchy only to see another man living his patriarchal ideal and discovering they wanted to change something about themselves. This cycle of change was unending and caused some men mental instability.

Because of a lack in guidance or a patriarchal model, such as England, men became competitive with one another. The combination of women coming into their own and an increase in male competition caused men to become mentally ill because they felt they were losing the control they had worked to gain from England. As a result of this loss in control some men experience mental distress and in the most extreme cases kill the family they loved. Men always found a way to contribute the intense pressure and stress they felt to their families, even if the pressures were coming from a system outside the family such as politics.

Theodore Wieland’s Reaction to Revolutionary Era Politics

Charles Brockden Brown addressed many of these patriarchal issues, that resulted from the politics of the era of the American Revolution, in his novel Wieland. It was the main character of Theodore who was dealing with the changes in patriarchy and the
feeling of losing control, which contributed to his mental insanity and the eventual killing of his family.

Theodore Wieland was one of these men who began to panic about his family. He was struggling through Revolutionary era changes, feeling a new connection to his family and desperately clinging to any element of control he could find, and all the while searching for his definition of what it meant to be a patriarch. Wieland and his family remained secluded from the outside world so when a stranger, Carwin, entered into their family, Theodore experienced uneasiness and uncertainty as he feared Carwin would upset the limited balance he had created. As Shirley Samuels argued in her article “Wieland: Alien and Infidel,” Carwin can be blamed for threatening the control system within the Wieland family. Carwin did this by “...introducing sexuality, disorder and violence...” (49). Wieland, by choice, allowed few outsiders, like Carwin, to enter his home for fear they would cause disruption to something he felt he had control over.

When Carwin comes into the Wielands’ microcosmic world, he brought Wieland’s fears of losing control to the surface. Wieland, like so many other men of the late eighteenth century, was searching for his individual patriarchy based around what he saw would fit best into his life. Before Carwin’s arrival, Theodore felt he was in the patriarchal position, running his home the way he saw fit. When Carwin visits the Wieland family, Theodore becomes stressed because Carwin upsets his balance causing him to feel a loss in his patriarchal authority.

Carwin disrupted Wieland’s world through his sexual attraction to Clara. There was an incestuous attraction between Clara and Wieland and when Carwin entered into
the Wieland family, this attraction became much more apparent. It was Carwin who caused a disruption of Clara and Theodore's relationship, throwing Wieland's world into a further state of chaos. Theodore saw the attraction between Clara and Carwin and knew he had to use his authority to control the situation. There was a sense that Theodore felt like he would be able to make Clara go in the direction he would like her to go in regard to her feelings for Carwin. An example of this was when Clara was explaining to Wieland that she would not let her time with Carwin be "...injurious to [her] character" (125). When Wieland assured her that he believed her she threw her "...arms around him, and bathed his cheek with [her] tears" (Brown 125). It is apparent that Clara was desperately searching for Wieland's approval and this confirms the idea that he had control over her.

When Carwin appeared in the lives of the Wielands, Theodore Wieland felt his power over, and affection from, Clara dwindling. She was amazed and mesmerized by Carwin. This became more obvious during an evening with the Wielands when Clara observed Carwin and noticed that "[a]ll topics were handled by him with skill, and without pedantry or affection. He uttered no sentiment calculated to produce a disadvantageous impression: on the contrary, his observation denoted a mind alive to every generous and heroic feeling" (Brown 81). It was obvious from statements such as this one that Clara had feelings for Carwin and that Carwin could be a replacement for Theodore to whom she previously depended on for guidance, control and affection. Shirley Samuels also shared this same insight in her piece on Wieland when she observed that Clara was fascinated with "...Carwin as he interferes with her fantasy life..." (55).
Samuels was able to observe a very private element of Clara’s life that she allowed only Carwin to enter. Clara most likely never let Theodore into this fantasy world because, for her, it may have crossed the border from affection towards a sibling to sexual attraction.

It became clear that Carwin and Clara’s relationship frustrated Wieland. He didn’t like Carwin for his mischievous behavior and worried about the position his sister was being placed in. Carwin was much less obsessed with being the traditional controlling and dominant male, which confused Wieland and allowed the pressures patriarchy was placing on Wieland to become more apparent. He knew things were changing, but desperately clung to his traditional views involving men such as leadership, control and dominance. Little did Wieland realize that Carwin was going to be one of the elements that drove him to examine the kind of man he was, which in turn made him see an element he was avoiding, which resulted in a violent outburst towards his family.

In addition to sexuality, Carwin can be credited with bringing disorder to the Wieland family through his abilities to throw his voice. There wasn’t a single member of the Wieland family not disturbed by this skill; however, Wieland suffered the most. According to Anita Vickers’ article “Patriarchal and Political Authority in Wieland,” the events taking place in the microcosm of the Wielands’ world were mirror images or smaller representations of those that happened within the newly founded United States.

For example, Wieland questioned authority just as much as the country was doing. He thought he still had power within his family, but suspected that it had somehow been downgraded from its previous level. The states were also questioning where their authority was. They knew England still had some control, but they had managed to take
much of it into their own hands. For guidance Wieland turned to religion and a higher being just as many colonists did “…between 1790 and 1820, [when] a series of revivals planted the values of Protestant Christianity deep in the American national character” (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil 249). Wieland’s religious beliefs were so deep that when Carwin brought about disorder by pretending to be the voice of God, Wieland followed his advice and committed a horrible crime.

Connected to disorder and this idea of the Wielands’ lives mirroring the country as a whole, was violence. In this case, and in the case of the United States, disorder led to violence. In the Wielands’ case, Carwin took major elements of Theodore’s world and changed them to the point where he felt he had lost control, leaving his life in a state of disorder and confusion. The elements that changed in Wieland’s life and impacted him included distracting Clara’s love and obedience and bringing the outside world into Theodore’s secluded world. The American states, like Wieland, were experiencing disorder. After being successful in winning their independence from England, they found themselves in a state of disorder, especially in regard to patriarchy, because they were desperately trying to create and build their own country.

While Wieland found himself sifting through disorder and violence that became a part of his family, he was also searching for what kind of man he wanted to be during these rapidly changing times. Part of the problem for Wieland was that he experienced, as a young child, “…the absence of a familial authority” (Vickers 6). In Brown’s novel, the senior Wieland suddenly burst into flames and as a result was killed, leaving Wieland with little authority and no male guidance. As a result, Wieland had a difficult time
choosing the type of man he wanted to be because he had no man to model himself after. This stressful decision was further complicated by the introduction of an outsider and by the numerous pressures the changing nation was putting on all those who resided within it. The lack of ability to decide what kind of man one wanted to be contributed to the state of insanity that some men experienced.

The Vietnam Era and The Resulting Political Changes and How they Affected Men

While the era of the American Revolution can be credited with causing men political stress in the late eighteenth century, the Vietnam era was one of the factors changing politics for men and causing them emotional turmoil in the twentieth century. The Vietnam era was a very emasculating time for two major reasons. The first of these involved Communism. According to Barbara Ehrenreich in *The Hearts of Men*, it was the system of “Communism [that] kept masculine toughness in style for long after it became obsolete in the corporate world and the consumer marketplace” (105). In other words, Ehrenreich claimed Communism was a form of government that clung to traditional ideas of masculinity and expected that people would live up to these standards. In the case of the Vietnam era, women fell under the masculine title because they participated heavily in the war efforts for the Vietnamese.

One of the most devastating elements to American men, involving the political system of Communism, was that when they began fighting in Vietnam, after years of masculine competition in the cold war, men realized they were fighting against both Communist women, and children (Ehrenreich 104-105). Traditionally, women and children were viewed as innocent figures during wartime and so for Vietnam soldiers to
realize they were the enemy was emotionally detrimental to them. Masculinity and manhood were challenged in the era of Vietnam because men were forced to kill these women and children or they would have been killed by them.

The struggle with the killing of these traditionally innocent groups was ever more devastating for Vietnam soldiers because "...there was no entirely rational accounting for the war itself; some larger end to cover the atrocious means" (Ehrenreich 105). The men participating in the war, as well as the people back home in the United States, were given limited information in regard to why they were fighting or what we were fighting for. This of course meant there were feelings of negativity towards the soldiers who were over in Vietnam because they were using valuable resources and large amounts of money for reasons that were not completely clear. When the soldiers did get to come home their arrival was not a heroes' welcome, adding to their feelings of demasculinization.

In addition to facing confusion and protest over participating in the war, many Vietnam soldiers came home to a country that had undergone social movements. When the veterans returned home they felt displaced by these social movements. The biggest change resulted from the woman's movement. Many men felt that they had "...lost their place to women, the place of warrior, the place of wage-earner, the place of professional, the place of man" (Jeffords 117). Basically, so many of these men felt they were coming home to nothing, not even their masculine role, which they never would have thought could be taken from them. The United States government can be held accountable for keeping the important reasons and necessary details for the war from soldiers as well as civilians, leading to an even further demasculinization. Men in Vietnam were victimized
from every angle: the US government, US citizens, the Vietnamese and what they went through in combat (Jeffords 122-124). The politics of the American government and their need to drive Communism from Vietnam, regardless of the gender of the Vietnamese combatants, confused so many men in the area of masculinity. Along with their wartime experiences, and the unwelcoming homecoming, many men were plagued by mental distress in their search for their lost masculinity.

In addition to social movements, a second major political reason as to why the Vietnam era can be credited with demasculinization in the twentieth century involved the Men’s Liberation Movement, which occurred after the war’s end. The war was detrimental to masculinity, causing large amounts of mental distress and confusion about what it meant to be masculine. This spilled over into the post-war years with the men’s movement.

The Men’s Liberation Movement was a response to the feminist movement that so many veterans faced when they returned from war. The men’s movement believed the women’s movement made men look like evil, horrible members of society and that the woman’s movement was counter productive in ending sexism (Clatterbaugh 62). In addition to dealing with their war experiences, men felt they were being viewed as horrible, evil, woman haters. According to Kenneth Clatterbaugh, author of *Contemporary Perspectives on Masculinity*, the goal of the men’s movement was “...to free men from the double binds of masculinity as well as from the social and legal injustices aimed at them – that is, to liberate them from the restrictive role in which they find themselves, and to foster conditions under which they can define and choose for
themselves the behaviors and relationships with which they are most free” (73). In other words, the men’s movement was an attempt by men to eliminate the masculine ideology and allow men to be masculine according to their own standards.

The word “masculinity” was detrimental in itself to many men and even required men to be something they really weren’t. The men’s liberation movement saw men beginning to step away from traditional breadwinning roles and beginning to adhere to a set of standards that were more geared towards their own individual wants and needs. Men began this alteration in the hopes of saving their physical and emotional health (Ehrenreich 119). Men who participated in this movement claimed that it differed greatly from the women’s movement because “[m]en were only changing, not revolting, and the changes were understood by their partisans as internal, individual and therapeutic” (Ehrenreich 122).

The biggest challenge associated with the men’s movement was holding on to one’s masculinity while attempting to alter what it meant to be a man. Those involved in the movement wanted so much to step away from traditional male roles, such as lack of ability to show emotion and the responsibility of being the only breadwinner, yet wanted to still be considered masculine.

The era of Vietnam was very difficult on men and politics played a major role in the challenges they faced. The Vietnam War itself was the launching point of this difficulty as men struggled with killing women and children and were confused about their real purpose for the war effort. When the war ended, there was no escaping social change and the challenges for men in regard to their masculinity. The Men’s Liberation
Movement was an attempt by some men to deal with the social changes, like politics, that challenged their masculinity, but in the end, there was no escaping the changes and the adjustments that needed to be made. There were some men who struggled so deeply that mental insanity could not be avoided.

**Jack Torrance and His Search for Masculinity**

The effects of the era of Vietnam, such as the fall of Communism and the men’s liberation movement, were felt for years following the conclusion of the war. Jack Torrance from Stephen King’s *The Shining*, is a prime example of a man experiencing the political after effects of the war on his masculinity. His closest connection to Vietnam was his brother Brett who “…quit his job in the mill and joined the Army” (King 338). Jack mentioned he “…had been killed in Dong Ho province in 1965, the year when Jack Torrance undergraduate, had joined the active college agitation to end the war. He had waved his brother’s bloody shirt at rallies…” (338-339). Jack’s connection to war affected his world and even more his masculine self. He lost a brother who was masculine enough to escape their abusive father and was affected by social movements such as the men’s liberation movement. The impacts on Jack were great as he struggled with his own masculinity and the issues involving his family.

For Jack breaking out of the old definition of masculinity was very difficult. He was determined to be the caretaker of his family and their financial provider. In addition to Jack feeling the need to be the breadwinner, he was also the stereotypical aggressive male that was vanishing in the twentieth century as a result of the men’s movement. Jack went to work at the Overlook Hotel because of the loss of his teaching job due to a
violent confrontation with a student name George. This outburst occurred because of Jack’s need to be aggressive and to be competitive with a fellow male.

Jack introduces George and describes him as “[t]all and shaggily blond...[h]e had reminded Jack of a young Robert Redford...George had floated through his classes at Stovington. A soccer and baseball star...[h]e was a fierce field contender...” (King 163). It was obvious, through this description that Jack’s competitive and aggressive nature came out whenever George was around. In other words, George brought out the aggressive and controlling nature that was a part of Jack’s masculinity. George was the epitome of masculine, being that he was successful and in control, even though he was still of an age to be considered a boy and not a man. This became even more apparent when Jack kicked George off the debate team due to his stutter. Jack left Stovington after working all day and found George had slashed his tire and so Jack “…waded in [towards George] his fists held up in from of him…” and proceeded to beat George until “…Miss Strong, the French teacher, [began] holding Jack’s arms, crying, screaming: ‘stop it, Jack! Stop it! You’re going to kill him’ ” (King 169). In this scene with George, Jack’s stereotypical masculine trait of being aggressive come out. His first instinct on discovering what George had done was to beat him because masculine men were tough and needed to prove this to one another. Jack needed to come out on top to show George that he was the dominant masculine man. He needed to be the more masculine figure, even if it was over a boy who had not yet reached manhood.

While Jack clung to the ideology of masculinity, he did, at times, give in to more contemporary views regarding masculinity as presented by the men’s rights proponents.
According to traditional definitions of masculinity, showing emotion was frowned upon by society. Masculine men were not emotional, but held themselves in a position in which they were the emotional rocks. Men's rights proponents, on the other hand would view emotion in an entirely different manner. To them if an individual man felt being masculine included being the one to show emotion and the one to need support then that was fine. Jack, at times, slipped into his emotions, but never felt masculine, which supported what the men's rights proponents had presented and feared.

Jack and Wendy's relationship was one in which Jack would like to feel as though he was the emotional rock. He thrived on Wendy's dependence on him and very rarely showed her his emotions or shared his worries. While Jack thought he was the emotionally stable one in his marriage, it was in fact Wendy who should be credited with supporting Jack. Again, this supported what the men's rights proponents had proposed. Jack just didn't realize that being masculine to him included emotion and dependence on Wendy.

Jack becomes more emotional during a scene when he has had a horrendous dream and wakes Wendy, who was asleep in another room, with his piercing yell. When Wendy finds Jack he was a flood of emotions and in a very dependent state. When Wendy finally makes it to Jack

...she [saw] his true face, the one he ordinarily kept so well hidden, and it was a face of desperate unhappiness, the face of an animal caught in a snare beyond its ability to decipher and render harmless...Her own bewilderment and surprise were overlaid by shock; he was going to cry. She had seen him cry before, but never since he had stopped drinking...He was a tight man, drum-tight, and his loss of control frightened him all over again. He came toward her, the tears brimming over his lower lids now, his head shaking involuntarily as if in a fruitless effort to ward off his emotional storm and his chest drew in a convulsive
gasp that was expelled in a huge, racking sob. His feet...stumbled...and he almost fell into her arms making her stagger back with his weight. (King 344)

Jack’s emotions continue to flood out when “…he could do nothing…but sob, [and] cling to [Wendy], almost crushing the wind from her, his head turning on her shoulder in that helpless, shaking, warding-off gesture” (344).

This scene between Wendy and Jack made so many key statements about the changing notions of masculinity in the twentieth century. Jack, like many other men, felt that being masculine meant repressing your emotions so deeply that no one knew who you really were, but in the end craved the need to express their emotions in order to be human. When King described Jack’s face in this scene, he compared it to an animal that was trapped so deeply that it was disillusioned. Jack’s emotions were so buried that when they appeared Wendy finally saw his true self. This sudden ability to show emotions was so relieving that it was shocking.

This scene also showed that masculinity had kept men trapped inside themselves for so long. Wendy’s reactions cannot be ignored in this scene because of what they have to say about masculinity. In particular, Wendy was shocked when she saw this side of Jack that had been trapped as tight as a drum for so long. She was taken aback and could not believe she was really seeing the true Jack. While Wendy may not realize it, she saw the negative effects of masculinity. Through Wendy it becomes apparent that the change in masculinity involving emotions was so shocking for those around the man that coping with this altered person was challenging. The attempt by men to make a change in their masculinity often posed difficulty in adjustment and created pressure they didn’t know
how to help their loved ones deal with. In this case the masculinity took on a more emotional form and Wendy struggled with seeing Jack’s true self.

The politics of the era of Vietnam extended into society not only during the war for the Veterans, but after the war for those who had no part in the fighting. While we had been successful in defeating Communism and beginning to allow men to be who they needed to be, none of this came without a price. The pressures on men, such as a shift in masculinity that included approving of men showing their emotions, created pressures on men that contributed to the insanity some men felt. In Jack’s case, the pressures of a change in masculinity altered his mental state so severely that he attempted to kill his family.

**Private Family and its Effects on Patriarchy and Masculinity**

In addition to the public social systems, private life of the eighteenth and twentieth centuries was being affected by the Revolutionary and Vietnam eras and contributed to the changes in patriarchy and masculinity. Men were faced with as many challenges in the home as they were in the public sphere. This section of the paper will examine the private systems of family, specifically child / parent relations, and marriage and see how these shifted during the times of war causing the systems of patriarchy and masculinity to change. For many men, the relationships with their children and wives, and their roles as father and husband, changed so dramatically that they turned to violence to cope with the system that was contributing to their mental turmoil. Again historical fact, as well as Brockden Brown and King’s, fictional books will be the major
sources. Through the use of this material an understanding as to why familicide resurfaced during the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries will become clear.

**Defining Family**

I would like to begin this section with examining the private system that encompassed family and fatherhood. A definition of family will need to be developed if a complete understanding of how this system could create turmoil and violence within men is to be achieved. Again the ideology of family will be examined because of the challenges associated with trying to reach this ideal. It is good to be reminded at this point that the majority of people will never fit themselves into an ideology, but some will continue to strive to do so regardless. For the purposes of the paper the traditional view of the family will be looked at, but it will also be necessary to keep in mind that there have been many other definitions and ideas beyond what will be used here. Family has traditionally been an organized group of people who live in the same space with one another and are related through blood or marriage. It is this idea of family that will be examined to see how it contributed to the changes in patriarchy and masculinity and why this affected some men.

From this brief exploration into what family means it is obvious that the meaning of family is complex. Because it has traditionally been men who are heads of these families any changes that occurred, and there were many during the Revolutionary and Vietnam eras, had deep effects on them. Any changes that occurred happened quickly and affected all elements, leaving men confused and disillusioned in regard to their role as father and husband. As we begin to explore the male role of father and husband of the
late eighteenth and late twentieth centuries, we will be able to see how these elements were encompassed in patriarchy and masculinity and how they contributed to the insanity and violence experienced by some men.

A Shift in Authority

As was done previously, this section of the paper will start by exploring the eighteenth century family, specifically father/child relations. It is safe to say that fatherhood and child rearing were experiencing just as many changes as the states themselves. The first of the parent/child relations that were changing dealt with authority. Prior to the start of the Revolutionary era men held most authority within the family. With the rise up of America against England, fathers found themselves losing some of their authoritative status. The loss of power felt by many men, was due, in part, to their children. Society was pointing out to families, specifically fathers, that guiding your children step by step, in a manner that was very harsh, and not letting them make their own decisions was preventing them from growing into independent and confident adults (Fliegelman 1). Because men were authoritative and patriarchy had not previously required them to be nurturing, some men experienced great stress and left many not knowing how to deal with their children.

According to Jay Fliegelman, author of Prodigals and Pilgrims, “...before 1775 virtually all extant family portraits present[ed] the father standing above his seated family, after that date the vertical or hierarchal composition [gave] way to a horizontal or equalitarian composition in which all family members [were] show on the same plane” (10). From something as simple as a family picture the shift that occurred in most
families can be observed. This shift included the father parting with some of his authority and harshness in order to allow his children to become independent and hope that they would be successful, contributing adults.

**Child Development**

Logically, this shift in authority also created a shift in the relationship between fathers and children. These shifts in authority that we have talked about led the relationship between fathers and children to move from a strict and harsh environment to one that was considerably more compassionate and affectionate (Fliegelman 1). Prior to the American Revolutionary era, affection and compassion were not elements that were often shared between fathers and children. Mothers tended to be the more compassionate of the two parents leaving the father to his role as the dominant figure. It was very challenging for men to draw a line between being the authority and being the compassionate caregiver. Many spent long periods of time searching for this balance, and learning how to become compassionate, as this was not traditionally a part of the patriarchal personality.

In addition to fathers reducing their authority over their children and showing them more affection, theories in regard to how children developed into adults were also appearing. With the introduction of child development theories, parents realized they were the ones who could shape and mold their children and, to an extent, help them become the kind of adult they thought they should be. Children were now being viewed as shapeable and able to be influenced.
We can credit John Locke with introducing child development theories to the eighteenth-century. Locke showed society that there was in fact a transition period from childhood to adulthood called adolescence (Fliegelman 2). He theories encouraged parents to use this transition period to influence and mold. Locke's biggest contribution encompassing this adolescence idea was that of Tabula Rasa. Tabula Rasa presented the idea that “...a child’s character [was] not inherited at birth, but rather [was] ‘created’ by the sum total of sense impressions and experiences written on the blank slate of [their] mind[s]” (Locke as quoted in Fliegelman 2). In other words, the way a parent treated their child and what they taught them would determine who they were (2).

Locke's theory of Tabula Rasa was not in existence, prior to the American Revolutionary Era. In fact, it was thought that children in the pre-Revolutionary era came into this world with predestined personalities and traits (Fliegelman 1). John Locke and his theory of Tabula Rasa proved the predestined theory wrong forcing society, to adjust and begin influencing and molding their children. In summary, during the years of the American Revolutionary era it was nurture, not nature, that became the way to raise children (Fliegelman 2).

Through Locke's introduction of Tabula Rasa we can, once again, see how men could be driven to a point of mental insanity that could have led to familicide. For so long, fathers were told that their children would become certain types of adults and there was nothing they could do to alter this. With the rise of the Revolutionary era, parents were being told they could encourage, influence and develop their children into well respected, functioning adults if they provided a good example, taught them moral lesson
and were available for guidance (Fliegelman 10). The biggest challenge for many fathers
involved the rise of work away from the home. Just as children were being viewed as
moldable beings, men were no longer there to mold them. While this task was left to the
mother, men still felt it was, in part, their duty to mold their children, but knew it was
compromised because they had to work away from their home to provide for their family.
The balance between family and work became a more difficult one to find, creating
further pressure for men.

Family life, especially fatherhood, altered so much during the Revolutionary era.
Everything from authority to child rearing practices changed and men appeared to suffer
the greatest because of the impact it had on their patriarchal status. Patriarchy was
comprised with the changes occurring within family because. The loss in power by many
fathers, over their homes and children, led some men to experience mental stress. They
were giving up their authority for the benefit of their children, but had a difficult time
adjusting to the sudden changes that included a decrease in their authority.

**Theodore Wieland as a Father**

In Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland*, Theodore was going through many of the
changes, involving a loss in authority and an increase in affection, with his children that
occurred in the Revolutionary era. As a result of these changes he struggled and
experienced mental turmoil. Part of his own struggle was connected back to the
premature death of his own father. This created a sense of loss in authority for Wieland
that he was never able to regain and as a result was challenged in the raising of his own
children. Family is an area in which men, like Wieland struggled a great deal.
Patriarchal fathers were very quickly required to become affectionate and less authoritative, which created a great deal of stress and drove some to an insane state of mind.

When Theodore lost his father, his world was altered. At a very young age, when children were most impressionable and most in need of guidance, Theodore lost his major form of guidance and his authority figure. The elder Wieland died when “[f]ever and delirium terminated in lethargic slumber which in the course of two hours gave place to death” (Brown 20). Clara and Theodore’s father died suddenly, leaving his children with no vital fatherly guidance, which impacted Theodore emotionally. He became a very disconnected and isolated individual. He shared his life with only his immediate family and very close friends. Wieland was much more comfortable in a secluded and non-social environment.

Theodore and Clara dealt with the death of their father in very different ways. Clara was not mentally affected on a long-term basis by the death of her father. “The impressions that were made upon [her could] never be effaced. [She] was ill qualified to judge respecting what was then passing…” (Brown 21). In other words, Clara was too young to have this loss affect her as an adult. She was able to find guidance, love and support in other adults, especially her brother Theodore. Wieland, on the other hand, was deeply affected by the early death of his father. Wieland’s emotions in his adulthood, were “…grave, considerate and thoughtful,” yet there was something, not visible by his family members that deeply affected him (Brown 25). Clara observed that “[t]he images [that] visited [the family] were blithesome and gay, but those with which [Theodore] was
most familiar were of an opposite hue. They did not generate affliction and fear, but there diffused over his behavior a certain air of forethought and sobriety” (Brown 25). It is obvious from Clara’s description that there was something lacking in Wieland’s life. Because the elder Wieland’s death was so sudden, it was traumatizing, and left Theodore with a lack of guidance and authority from his father. The lack of a patriarchal figure in Wieland’s life made him unable to deal rationally with his own role as a father because his father died when he was growing into the type of adult he would eventually become. The lack of authority in Wieland’s childhood, as well as the lack of male guidance, contributed to his personal struggles with emotion, society and the rearing of his own children, which led to his insanity and the killing of his children.

Fatherhood, as with many eighteenth century men, was a challenging role that caused confusion and mental stress. Wieland struggled with fatherhood because of the loss of his own father. When viewing Wieland’s position today it is apparent he struggled with Locke’s idea of Tabula Rasa and this deeply affected him as a father. He felt the pressures associated with molding his children, to the point where he believed the only way to escape was to kill them. It was Clara who mentioned Wieland had “[f]our children, three of whom were of an age to compensate by their personal and mental progress, the cares of which they had been, at a more helpless age, the objects, exercised by [Wieland’s] attention” (Brown 29). Wieland was obviously making the attempt to become the more affectionate and less authoritative father, but the end result, which was the killing of his children, proved that he was not successful in achieving this.
Wieland was fond of his children and so concerned with their development that he refused to spend lengthy amounts of time a part from them. This became clear when Pleyel discovered Theodore’s inheritance in Saxony and that he would have to go there and claim it. Wieland refused to leave and his reasons included “...the sacredness of ...parental duties” (49). Using the word “sacredness” to describe family, particularly parenting, showed readers how much Theodore loved his children. As Brockden Brown’s story progressed, however, Wieland’s feelings towards his children became blurred when he thought he was told by a higher being that “…thy children must be offered – they must perish” (197). Wieland had a genuine love for his children, but as with the other elements in his life, he couldn’t break free from the traditional patriarchal roles associated with child rearing. Theodore felt so much pressure to become more affectionate to his children and to be less of an authority, something he struggled greatly with in every aspect of his life, that the only way to eliminate his struggle was to murder his children.

While mental disease had yet to have the names they have today, during the late eighteenth century, they did exist. It is most likely that Wieland suffered from schizophrenia. Schizophrenic, or acutely psychotic, people tended to have delusions and hallucinations, which played a direct role on a person’s actions (Cohen 744). The higher being heard in Wieland’s schizophrenic mind told Theodore that “…all is not done – the sacrifice is incomplete – thy children must be offered – they must perish…” (Brown 197). Theodore is mentally stressed and believes this voice is telling him the right thing to do is to kill his family. Theodore listened and took the lives of his own children.
Family life, especially father/child relations was being transformed as a part of the change in patriarchy. The transformation was very challenging and pushed some men into mental turmoil. Because family was a private sector of society, men felt alone in their adjustments and for this were driven to madness and violence.

**Chaos and Contradiction in the Late twentieth century**

Late eighteenth century patriarchal shifts changed the state of the private family forever. New theories that included a willingness to foster the personal growth of children as well as the decline in male authority within the family, stressed men to their breaking point. In an examination of the twentieth century the focus remains on the family, specifically parent/child relations and how the alterations in family life contributed to the changes in masculinity. Just as in the late eighteenth century, late twentieth century family changes contributed to the shift in masculinity and the difficulties men had in adjusting to what it meant to be masculine. We will see, through the use of Stephen King's character Jack Torrance in *The Shining*, changes in family caused men confusion in regard to their masculinity, led some men to an insane state and others to extreme violence that included the killing of their families.

Family of the late twentieth century was in a state of chaos (Harwood 38) and society itself was in a similar state as a result of the Vietnam era and its repercussions. These repercussions included a change in masculinity, which involved various social movements such as the Men's Liberation Movement. For many families, men were an integral part and so when their masculine world was turned upside down, as it did in the late twentieth century, so too was the family. It was safe to say that the state of family
and the state of society were in a similarly chaotic situation allowing them to be extremely compatible (Harwood 38). Just as men found their social roles in an uneasy state so too were their roles within family.

Child rearing in the eighteenth century became a very delicate task and this continued into the late twentieth century where men were feeling pressure from their social role as breadwinner as well as their role as father. While male dominance was on the decline in the late twentieth century men were still, by far, sitting in the dominant position in society and in the home. With this dominance came pressure. It was very important, if you were to be considered masculine, that you were a well-rounded male. This included being both the provider and a good father figure as well as a respectful husband. Being successful in the public realm, as well as in the family, was key to being considered masculine and to being a man. As we learn from Clyde Franklin's book The Changing Definition of Masculinity, men could be immensely successful in society, but they were “...often castigated for not participating in the childrearing process...” (14). In other words, you had to be successful in your private and public roles or face ridicule. This, of course, put men under tremendous amounts of pressure.

The late twentieth century, as examined in the previous sections of this paper, saw a rise in invisible health problems, including heart attack, because of the introduction of stress and white collar work that took months to produce a visible product. Men were devoted to their role as provider and because of this, time with their children was sacrificed or left to the mother to fill in. Just when men thought being the provider was the best thing they could do for themselves and their families, they were ridiculed for not
being devoted fathers. The constant contradictions were very challenging leading men into this mode of self-hate (Franklin 14). The ability to juggle this contradiction was what many men felt classified them as masculine. Unfortunately, for some, the end result was an inability to be both an adequate provider and nurturer, which led many men to a state of insanity and violence towards their family.

**Using Fatherhood To Become More Masculine**

The late twentieth century, in a similar fashion to the eighteenth century, glorified fatherhood. Being devoted, affectionate and caring classified you as masculine and helped men feel more complete. As a result of this view of family, many men turned to their family to rediscover a masculinity that had been lost as a result of the Vietnam era and the social shifts it created. According to Sarah Harwood, author of *Family Fictions*, public images such as television and movies, portrayed the search many men were going through in order to reestablish their masculinity. This search included a deeper involvement in the childrearing process (45). In other words there were popular representations, through movies, television and magazines, that showed men rediscovering their masculine selves through fatherhood. While many felt that fatherhood was the answer to confusion about what it meant to be masculine in the late twentieth century, it in fact complicated the situation, contributing to the changes in family and the changes in masculinity.

The greater presence of men within the lives of their children did not come without challenges that contributed to this alteration in masculinity. The fact that many men used their involvement with their children to search for their masculinity, and in turn
reestablish their authority within the home and family, was responsible for an increase in family violence during the late twentieth century (Harwood 45). This search for masculinity, conducted by a large part of the male population, fostered the need for dominance. Regardless of the fact that some men were out purely to dominate, society was placing emphasis on the fact that “...children need[ed] fathers for their proper development – however abusing or violent those fathers might be” (Harwood 46). The point was, according to society, that a male figure was in the household and a part of the family.

While the family, mainly children, suffered negatively from an abusive male in the home, the abusive male also experienced a cycle of guilt, in regard to his actions that further complicated the changes occurring in masculinity and the resulting insanity. When this guilt cycle is referred to it means the need men had to dominate and the fact that they could do so over children. Often times this dominance was portrayed in physical ways. The physical dominance created guilt in many men because, while they were in power, the only way they could maintain it was through physical force or lashing out verbally, and this was in no way a very masculine action to be proud of. Eventually, these abusive males felt guilt and a loss in their sense of masculinity because of their actions, which further created mental stress and violence within the family. Basically, the cycle of abuse was difficult to break. It temporarily satisfied men’s’ masculine cravings, but most certainly complicated the situation, again forcing the innocent victims, in this case children, into a deadly position.
Jack Torrance As a Father

When examining Stephen King’s *The Shining*, many of the private family challenges for fathers are being portrayed through the main character, Jack Torrance. He was the epitome of the struggling twentieth century family man in that he struggled with his masculine self, but found he could remain somewhat satisfied if he maintained control over his family. We saw Jack wanting to be the breadwinner and the ideological father figure who gave his son Danny all that he needed. Sadly, however, Jack slipped into the guilt cycle because his feelings towards his family went back and forth and he became abusive towards them. One minute he adored them, but the next he felt trapped and pressured by them and wanted to hurt them to eliminate his stress and mental anxiety.

The best example of Jack’s wavering feelings towards Danny was when he decided it would be a good idea to take him and Wendy to the Overlook for the whole winter. King led his readers to believe that Jack’s reasons for doing so revolved around the damage he caused his family because of his drinking and abuse addictions. The Overlook Hotel was Jack’s ideal place because the snow would trap them together forcing them to bond and reestablish their family unit. While Jack wanted himself, his readers and his family to believe he was going to the Overlook for the benefit of his family, his motives were in fact very selfish. Jack needed to appease his guilt for all that he did to Wendy and Danny. He thought that by forcing himself to spend time with them and by being away from all temptations this would be accomplished.

Jack’s second reason for wanting to go to the Overlook was because it would allow him to regain his breadwinner status. Again, Jack had guilt over losing his job at
Stovington because he could no longer provide for his wife and child. Jack felt that going to the Overlook would be his way of reestablishing his breadwinner status for the time they were there and getting the chance to finish his play, so he could earn more money in the future. Sadly, however, Jack’s breadwinning reasons for going to the Overlook were again, purely selfish. Just as he wanted to reestablish the lost bond between him and his family because he was the one who broke it, he wanted to appease his guilt and give them monetary items to prove to himself that to himself that he was still the breadwinner.

Sadly, what the Torrances, mainly Jack, didn’t realize was that the Overlook was only going to make their situation more complicated. The hotel itself was a representation of the society Jack was trying to escape. It was filled with rich items and successful people, which represented Jack’s time at Stovington and the beating of George. The hauntings that took place were representations of Jack’s greatest fears and his biggest failures, including his time as an alcoholic and how much Wendy disapproved of his actions and the fact that he was abusive towards Danny.

Eventually, the hotel took over Jack so deeply that he began imagining there was alcohol there tempting him. At one point in the novel Jack went into the Colorado Lounge that had been stripped of all alcohol and convinced himself that he “...saw ranks and ranks of bottles twinkling mutedly behind the bar and syphons, and even beer dripping from the spigots of all three highly polished taps. Yes, he could even smell beer, that damp and fermented and yeasty odor...” (King 356). In addition to his alcohol hallucinations, the hotel continued to remind Jack of the time he broke Danny’s arm. He
remembered “[w]hen we went back into his study and saw Danny standing there, wearing nothing but his training paints and a grin, a slow, red cloud of rage had eclipsed [his] reason...He had whirled Danny around to spank him, his big adult fingers digging into the scant meat of the boys forearm, meeting around it in a closed fist, and the snap of the breaking bone...” (King 23-24). In the end, the hotel, a representation of society, closed in so tightly on Jack that his masculinity no longer existed and mental turmoil overcame him. He couldn’t take the pressures of society that were represented in the hotel. Everywhere Jack went his mistakes followed him. The Overlook hotel was no exception to this, which implied that Jack, no matter how hard he tried or where he went, would never be able to escape his mistakes and the effects they had on his masculinity. As a result of these pressures and the inability to find relief, Jack crumbled and attempted to kill Wendy and Danny in the hopes of eliminating what he believed were the biggest connections to his own failures.

In addition to Jack trying to fit himself into the breadwinner and father roles that were so crucial during the late twentieth century, he is also the abusive male using his role as a father and dominant male to regain his masculinity. Unfortunately for Jack, this abusive fatherly role was what got him caught in the guilt cycle and contributed to his mental insanity and attack on Wendy and Danny.

An important example for readers who were trying to see the abusive male in Jack and how this led to his guilt and added to his mental instability occurred when the Torrance family was trapped in at the Overlook because heavy snow had arrived. Danny experienced one of his spells, which Jack and Wendy could never understand or see
coming. When he came out of it “[h]e saw his father kneeling before him, Wendy standing by the wall. What? Danny asked again, with rising alarm. W-W-Wuh-What’s wr-r-r- and before Danny knew what was happening he heard Jack scream “Don’t stutter… Danny cried out in shock, his body going tense, trying to draw away from his father, and then he collapsed into tears. Stricken, Jack pulled him close. ‘Oh honey, I’m sorry. I’m sorry doc. Please. Don’t cry. I’m sorry. Everything’s okay’” (186)

This scene provides Jack’s reasons for going to the Overlook as well as information about his past. First, it is obvious that Jack has the need to dominate over Danny. He was already stressed because he didn’t understand Danny’s spells at this point in the novel, so when Danny comes out and stutters he is furious and wants nothing more than to stop him. Jack couldn’t stand stuttering because his student George, the one he beat and lost his job over, had a bad stutter. Jack came to the Overlook to get away from his Stovington memories and what he did there. When Danny unconsciously reminds him of his mistake, he lashes out and verbally abuses Danny. In this particular scene Jack feels guilty and less masculine immediately for the way he treated Danny. This was apparent because of his immediate apology. Jack feels bad and less of the masculine compassionate man he had hoped to become during his time at the Overlook. While Jack’s lashing out in this scene was only minor, it played a big factor in what would eventually be his mental insanity and violence towards his family.

Parenting was shifting greatly during the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries. This private social change resulted from shifts in both patriarchy and masculinity contributing to the confusion and stress of many men. Fathers were becoming more
important in child rearing, being expected to show their children physical affections, while fostering moral growth, yet they were also required to maintain their breadwinning status with ease. Through these explorations of Brockden Brown’s *Wieland* and Stephen King’s *The Shining*, it is apparent that men had difficulties in adjusting to the changes in fatherhood. This resulted in a contribution to their mental insanity and the incidents of familicide that occurred in the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries.

**The Public Social System of Marriage and Its Contribution to Insanity**

In the previous section on family, the focus was more specifically on parent/child relations. Also included in the private family, though, is the institution of marriage. Marriage, while certainly related to parent/child relations, was a social system in itself that experienced a great deal of change during the shifts in patriarchy and masculinity. We will again see that men were deeply affected by shifts in the private social system of marriage, including a gain in independence for women and the ability to choose a marriage partner.

Marriage is another contributing factor to men’s insanity because, while there were some benefits for men, it was women who gained the most from the changes in this social system. When looking at the changing state of marriage in the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries, there will be times when women will be examined, as it is important to include them in this section because they too were affected. While the focus will include women, men and their reactions will be the primary focus.

While I will be looking at the changes in each era separately, the changes that occurred in the late eighteenth century resurfaced in the twentieth century. While
Theodore and Jack were separated by a two hundred year time span, and their relationships were with two different women, they both struggled with the changes in marriage and the effects this had on their patriarchy and masculinity respectively.

**The Revolutionary Era Changes Marriage in the Eighteenth Century**

The era of the Revolution created social change that led to these shifts in marriage. The late eighteenth century brought many changes in marriage in the hopes that the support for the new republic would continue from both women and men.

Marriage changed a great deal, especially for women who found themselves gaining limited independence and control as a result of their marriage and the running of their household. In support of the republic women were becoming less accepting of a single dominant being over them and their home (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil 245). They craved a chance to share in the authority within their homes and as a result became less accepting of men who wanted to dominate within marriage and the home because it “...seemed arbitrary, and at odds with their belief in equal natural rights” (249).

The Revolutionary era depended heavily on society if it was to be a successful movement and marriage was no exception. Social systems, like marriage, were required to mirror the goals and efforts of the Revolutionary era if freedom and independence were going to be achieved. As a result of this need for social systems to mirror the Revolutionary era marriage became an independent choice. Jay Fliegelman put this idea nicely when he told readers...”[t]he point of the Revolution [was] not...simply to dissolve an intolerable union but to establish a more glorious one founded on the most primary of social unions – the voluntary marriage contract” (127). In other words,
marriage became a personal choice. Marriage mirrored the Revolutionary era in that it became more sentimental, more emotional and based less around the leadership of one person. While the Revolutionary era allowed people to make individual choices regarding marriage, society continued to stress its importance because of the bond it created (Fliegelman 127). A major societal goal was to remain in a union where authority was spread among more than a few people, rather than an elite group, and marriage was an ideal system in which to foster this idea.

The ability for young men and women to follow their hearts in regard to their marriage partner was a big social development filled with new pressures (Fliegelman 132). Instead of depending on their father to choose their partner, it was now up to them to make the right decision. Marrying for love was considerably more complicated then marrying because a father figure said it was time. The choice to get married or not was also included in these newfound pressures. Young people were exploring one another carefully and putting great pressure on themselves to find that perfect union with one another.

The “choice” element now included in the institution of marriage impacted the state of patriarchy because of elements such as the search for personal happiness and newfound independence by women. Women were successful in eliminating some of the patriarchal authority because they gained a level of equality in choice, and eventually when it came to running the household. (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil 245). Women were the beneficiaries of the changes in marriage because of the impact on patriarchy in the late eighteenth century. While men also benefited because they were given newfound
choices and independence, they struggled because of the loss of complete power. This was the first time men were having to share some of their authority with women. This loss in power, especially patriarchal power within the home, created a sense of loss in the lives of many men. They no longer felt dominant and as needed, which resulted in some men experiencing mental instability and eventual insanity.

**Marriage and Wieland**

Since the story of the Wieland family in Brockden Brown’s novel was set in the Revolutionary era, marriage, newfound independence and the resulting patriarchal shifts, were all topics touched on. It was Theodore’s sister Clara who tested these new freedoms and, as a result, played a part in altering Theodore’s patriarchal role, which contributed to his eventual insanity.

When Clara first appeared in the novel, her independence became very apparent right away. She was not yet married and chose to live in a house by herself, handling her own finances and upkeep. While Clara valued her brother Theodore’s opinions and did look to him as a patriarchal figure when she was in need of advice, she chose to maintain her independence as a way of participating in the changes being brought about by the Revolutionary era, which included women gaining limited power within their own homes. Clara took control of her own life when her

...father’s property was equally divided between [her and Wieland]. A neat dwelling, situated on the bank of the river, three quarters of a mile from my brother’s was now occupied by me...I can scarcely account for my refusing to take up my abode with [Theodore], unless it were from a disposition to be an economist of pleasure. Self-denial, seasonably exercised, is one means of enhancing our gratification. I was besides, desirous of administering a fund, and regulating an household of my own. (Brown 24)
This example showed that Clara was determined to do things her own way, especially in regard to her living space and her finances. She loved her brother and was willing to listen and consider his ideas in regard to her actions. In the end, however, Clara did what she thought was best for herself, benefiting from the changing social system of marriage that came about as a result of the era of the American Revolution.

In addition to Clara exercising her independence in regard to her living situation, she also took on many of the new marriage ideals created by the Revolutionary era. Clara was of an age where she could have been married, but by her own choice was not. She does, however, make the decision to be ready for marriage to Pleyel when she asks herself “[w]as not the hour at hand, which should render me the happiest of human creatures?” (Brown 89). Clara made the decision to be single and then decided when it was best for herself to be married, proving once again that she was enjoying her freedoms of choice and independence.

Just as Clara decided it was her time to get married she found herself in an equal amount of control when it came to being in a relationship with Pleyel. She knew that in order to get Pleyel to show her his feelings she

...must not speak. Neither eyes, nor lips, must impart the information. He must not be assured that my heart is his, previous to the tender of his own; but he must be convinced that it has not been given to another; he must be supplied with space whereon to build a doubt as to the true state of my affections; he must be prompted to avow himself. The line of delicate propriety; how hard it is, not to fall short, and not to overlap it! (Brown 90)

Clara knew exactly what she was after and how best to go about getting it. She was in control of her relationship with Pleyel and was convinced that she had enough power to
get him to confess his love before he ever realized how much she loved him. Clara was the epitome of the late eighteenth century independent and in control woman.

While Clara benefited immensely from independence and newly formed ideas on marriage as a result of the Revolutionary era, Theodore struggled with this sister’s independence. Clara’s actions in regard to her own life contributed to Theodore’s loss in patriarchal control because he attempted to cling to control over Clara by making sure she visited his home on a daily basis, and by protecting her from Carwin when he entered into their lives. While Theodore attempted to be the traditional patriarchal figure in Clara’s life, her independence and choices in regard to marriage, have proved that she has been successful in resisting his complete control. Theodore struggled greatly with his inability to control Clara. He wanted complete control and when he realized that Clara would never give this to him he felt his traditional patriarchal role slipping away.

**The Tense Tone of Late Twentieth Century Marriage**

As we know, Theodore Wieland and Jack Torrance were separated by two hundred years. In the late twentieth century, like the late eighteenth century, the institution of marriage was still undergoing changes. These changes developed because of the changes that occurred between men and women as a result of the era of Vietnam. As was mentioned before, Vietnam was an emasculating war. Men went over there to fight for reasons that were not always clear. When they returned to the United States, their masculinity was further strained because they were not considered heroes and were mistreated through the denial of financial aid and adequate jobs. Because the era of Vietnam was so stressful on men and society as a whole, the relationships between men
and women in marriage shifted into a similarly tense tone. As a result of this change, divorce became more prominent throwing the system of marriage into a state of chaos.

Relationships of the late twentieth century between men and women were caught in a cycle of power and dependence that neither the male nor female could escape from. While many men felt robbed of their masculinity during the Vietnam era, they were still dominant figures in society and in the home. This dominance included marriage. While men were considered to be in power, it did not mean they didn’t depend on women, which put women in a power position of their own. One of the biggest changes in the system of marriage in the late twentieth century was the way in which men came to depend on women. Women were needed to approve or disapprove of the actions that made men fit into the male gender (Franklin 13). In other words, women played the role of making a man more masculine through her actions, including being dependent on him. In addition to making men feel masculine, women were also used as outlets for men to express their emotions (Franklin 13). Basically, as was explored before, men avoided depending on other men because it was unmasculine. It wasn’t until the Men’s Liberation Movement that men found solace in other men and freedom to express themselves. It was expected that when a man showed his emotions to his wife, that she would, in return, comfort the man (take on a power position) and remind him what made him masculine and as a result boost his confidence (take on a dependent position). This can obviously be an unending cycle of power and dependence and jumps back and forth to the male and female of the relationship.
Because men found their masculinity threatened and challenged during this time period, adding in these changes with their spouse only caused them further stress and confusion. Just as late eighteenth century men struggled with giving women independence and choice in regard to marriage, men of the late twentieth century struggled with having to share the power and dependence cycle with women. As a result of sharing this cycle with women, many men fought to take on all the burdens of marriage themselves, preventing women from enforcing their gender roles and losing their emotional outlet. It will become obvious, through Jack Torrance, that this was what led, in part, to many men experiencing mental insanity and attempting to kill their families.

Before examining Jack and Wendy’s marriage to see how they were experiencing these changes, it is necessary to look at the way in which divorce was altering the state of marriage in the late twentieth century. With the late twentieth century came an increase in the divorce rate (Harwood 37). This increase occurred for several reasons some of which included an increase in the ease of the process, including the lessening cost, an increase in the need to be an individual and increased lifespan, which resulted in couples spending more time together after their children left home (Harwood 37). As was mentioned previously, it was men who suffered the most from this increase in divorce. Men reaped the bigger reward for staying in marriage and as a result were more likely to enter into marriage and stay there (Harwood 38). The reasoning for this lies in what was discussed previously about men depending on women to bring out their masculinity and
act as their emotional outlets. It is possible to go as far here as to say that it was men who depended a great deal on women, while women were desperate for their independence.

Because men benefited so much from marriage, when divorce occurred it threw their lives into a very unsettled state resulting in a lot of guilt. To many men divorce was the price they paid for "...failing, as fathers, as husbands, [and] lovers. Instead of freeing men from dependency and guilt, divorce frequently increase[d] their guilt, self hatred and self destructive behavior" (Clatterbaugh 67). In other words, divorce, of the late twentieth century brought all the other failures of men to the surface resulting in self-anger, which only lead to an unsettled state of mind and for many to familicide.

While the changes that occurred between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries in regard to marriage were somewhat different, there were several similarities emerging that were the primary reasons for men going insane. One of the biggest ones was the craving so many people, women in particular, had for independence. Men relied on women for support, especially in the emotional realm and so when this was held back from them, either through the delay of marriage in the late eighteenth century, or divorce in the late twentieth century, men didn’t know were to turn, keeping all their emotions and problems inside leading them to mental distress.

A second similarity within this two hundred year time span was the gaining of some power by women. In the late eighteenth century this consisted of the choice in marriage partners and the decision to marry or remain and individual. For women of the twentieth century this was about the power and dependence cycle that was discussed. While women were in no way completely dominate they did find themselves in control
because of the self-hatred and violence that ensued in many men when women failed to supply them with masculine reassurance and emotional support in their time of need. Men were also aware of this limited control and, while it was limited they still feared losing the support they had been privileged to have for so long.

**The Torrance’s Marriage**

Jack and Wendy’s relationship in King’s *The Shining*, was very much caught in the power and dependence cycle, which eventually became a contributing factor in Jack’s insanity and attempt to kill his wife and son. While Jack remained in the dominant position as provider and caregiver, he and Wendy, at times, slip into the power and dependence cycle. It was here that Jack depended on Wendy, and in turn gave her power, but in the end returned her to the dependent role as she reassured Jack of his masculinity and dominant family position.

One of the biggest ways in which Jack put Wendy in the power position involved forgiveness of his past actions. Jack needed Wendy to forgive him for the mistakes he made that included drinking, abuse and failure to hold a job. Wendy was the one who had to make up her own mind to forgive Jack, but he encouraged it by setting his mind on writing. This seemed to be working to his advantage when Wendy observed that Jack’s typing of his play

...was music to her ears; Jack had not been writing so steadily since the second year of their marriage, when he wrote the story that *Esquire* had purchased. He said he thought the play would be done by the end of the year, for better or worse...He said he didn’t care if *The Little School* stirred any excitement...didn’t care if it sank without a trace, and Wendy believed that too. The actual act of his writing made her immensely hopeful, not because she expected great things from the play but because her husband seemed to be slowly closing a huge door on a
room full of monsters. He had had his shoulder on that door for a long time now, but at last it was swinging shut. (King 179)

While it appeared that it was up to Wendy to forgive Jack, and this was masked as a power for her, it was in fact Jack who was the one to make the move to change his ways so she would forgive him. Jack being the one to change his ways, allowed Wendy to have the power to forgive him and put him back in his masculine role where he could continue to provide for his family and dominate.

The cycle continued with Wendy’s willingness to assure Jack’s masculinity by encouraging him to keep writing. When Wendy and Danny returned from one of their final trips to town before the snow trapped them Wendy greeted Jack by calling him “...the Eugene O’Neill of his generation, the American Shakespeare...” (King 173). Having Wendy encourage and coo over Jack’s authorial achievements made him feel like he had returned to his position of power and that he was thought of by his family as masculine. Jack’s power over Wendy was also reinforced here because he realized that he got her to begin forgiving him for his past actions. What Jack fails to see is the distrust that remains within Wendy.

While Wendy claimed that this was “...the happiest [she’d] been since [they] were married” (King 175), her suspicion of Jack and his behavior continued through her remembrance of the past. After Danny was put into a trance by Tony and locked himself in the bathroom Jack got very angry and threatened to knock the door down. It was here that Wendy realized he was “...losing his temper...He had not touched Danny in anger since that evening two years ago, but at this moment he sounded angry enough to do it” (King 184). In this example, it was apparent that Jack was not in as much control over
Wendy as he originally thought. She doesn’t trust him and eventually Jack will see this and in the end fail to overcome it.

The cycle of power and dominance fills Jack and Wendy Torrance’s relationship. Jack was very troubled by his past and knew that it had caused great pain and setback within his family. For Jack to have caused this much pain to his family riddled him with guilt and robbed him of his masculinity. When he finally decided to go to the Overlook, he knew it was his chance to heal the damage he had done, especially to his relationship with Wendy, as well as regain his masculinity. What Jack wasn’t prepared for was how the changes of late twentieth century marriage were going to affect him. He wasn’t prepared for Wendy’s independence or his loss in masculinity that was only temporally maintained through the power and dominance cycle. It was because of the changes in late twentieth century marriage, including a rise in the need for independence by women, that Jack experienced mental insanity and the eventual attempt of familicide.

In addition to the power and dominance cycle divorce was an issue addressed within *The Shining*. While a divorce never actually took place, it was mentioned throughout the plot showing readers how it was a prominent theme of the era and the ease with which many people turned to it to escape the marriages that deprived them of their independence. It was divorce that led many men to see their other failures, which lead to guilt, self-hate and violent behavior.

Wendy had many thoughts of divorce from Jack because of his violent behavior and her need to become independent so she could raise Danny the best way she knew how. Wendy knew that “[t]he divorce was necessary...for her son’s sake, and for herself,”
if she was going to salvage anything…” (King 74). While divorce was going to give Wendy a better life of independence, it was going to further Jack’s guilt and self-hate. He was aware of his detrimental actions and the changes of late twentieth century marriage. Jack couldn’t deal with Wendy leaving him and he couldn’t take the pressure of his guilt leading him to insanity and eventual attempted familicide.

Just like marriage in the late eighteenth century, marriage of the late twentieth century was very delicate. Independence, divorce and the constant shift between being the one in power and the one in need all played a large part in the fragility of marriage. Through the exploration of Jack in King’s novel it has become apparent that men were deeply affected by the changes in marriage because their masculinity was threatened. Many men couldn’t handle the possibility of not being in the dominant position or reliving their past mistakes if divorce occurred. As a result of this, many were driven to insanity and, as in Jack’s case, attempted familicide.

Conclusion

Insanity and violence as a part of American history are often difficult topics to discuss, but necessary because they help us to understand how changes in social systems, both public and private, have affected members of society. With the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries many instances of familicide occurred. They resulted from changing notions of patriarchy and masculinity that took place because of the shift in social systems that resulted from the Revolutionary and Vietnam eras.

It was men who were deeply affected by the wars, the social changes and of course the resulting shifts in patriarchy and masculinity. While women and children were
not blind to the social changes, men were hit from all angles. They were affected in the public world of employment and politics as well as the private worlds of family and marriage. It was extremely difficult for men of the eighteenth as well as the twentieth century to adjust to these changes because they happened quickly and all at once.

In any paper, historical fact is of the utmost importance. In the case of this paper, we were better able to understand the wars and the social changes that resulted, as well as what it meant to be a patriarch and what it meant to be masculine and how these things combined to create mental insanity and familicide among men. A great compliment to history is that of literature. Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* and Stephen King's *The Shining* have provided excellent examples of men dealing with eighteenth and twentieth century social issues. These novels were excellent sources for us to see the changing social systems, the mental confusion and the violence that resulted from the changes in patriarchy and masculinity. There is no better way of gaining a complete understanding of a topic then to combine history and literature and this has become evident within this paper. It was through the combination of history and literature that we have come to understand that men were driven to insanity and familicide because masculinity and patriarchy shifted due to the social changes caused by the Revolutionary and Vietnam eras. Interdisciplinary work holds the key to complete understanding, regardless of subject, topic or interest.
Works Cited


Works Cited Continued


Vita

The author of this paper, Sarah R. Lucot, was born at the Booth Maternity Center located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on March 12, 1979. Her father was Richard Lucot and her mother was Marcia Groover. She received her Bachelors degree in English, with minors in History and Economics, from Lehigh University where she graduated with Departmental Honors in May of 2001. She went through her graduate studies on a Graduate Assistantship from Residential Services where she was responsible for many of the financial aspects associated with fraternities and sororities. Her future plans included a job in the publishing industry with the hopes of eventually working for a magazine where she could motivate and educate readers.

This paper was written under the guidance of Dawn Keetly, Assistant Professor of English and Monica Najar, Assistant Professor of History. Life at Lehigh during this time was bright and energetic, but filled with uncertainty due to events such as September 11th and the war with Iraq. The economy was taking a down turn, making the job market a difficult one to enter. Despite these downfalls, the paper was produced in a smooth manner with support from her advisors, co-workers and loved ones and her degree of Master of Arts obtained at the University Day Commencement on May 19th, 2003.
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