
12th LUMEN International Scientific Conference Rethinking
Social Action. Core Values in Practice | RSACVP 2019 | 15-17
May 2019 | Iasi – Romania

Parental Roles in The Portrait of a Lady: Matches and Mismatches

Nicoleta-Mariana IFTIMIE

<https://doi.org/10.18662/lumproc.162>

How to cite: Iftimie, N.-M. (2019). Parental Roles in The Portrait of a Lady: Matches and Mismatches. In C. Ignatescu (ed.), *12th LUMEN International Scientific Conference Rethinking Social Action. Core Values in Practice, 15-17 May 2019, Iasi – Romania* (pp. 152-163). Iasi, Romania: LUMEN Proceedings. <https://doi.org/10.18662/lumproc.162>



Parental Roles in *The Portrait of a Lady*: Matches and Mismatches

Nicoleta-Mariana IFTIMIE^{1*}

Abstract

The doctrine of the 'separation of spheres', prevalent in 19th century Victorian England, attributed to women the roles of obeying daughters, submissive wives and dutiful mothers. Such roles were to be played within the narrow confines of the house, symbolized by the domestic, private sphere. The ideal woman, the 'angel in the house', was seen as a pure, pious, weak, dependent, fragile, self-sacrificing wife and mother. She was bestowed the major role in raising the children and taking care of the house. Men, the bread-winners, belonged to the social or public sphere and were seen as active, independent, strong and dominant.

The Portrait of a Lady, belonging to James' early period of creation and regarded as one of his best novels, introduces a wide gallery of feminine and masculine characters: sisters and brothers, wives and husbands, mothers and fathers. Thus, Isabel Archer, Madame Merle, Lydia Touchett, Mrs. Osmond and Amy Gemini, apart from other roles played in the novel, appear, to a greater or lesser extent as mothers in James' text. On the other hand, Daniel Tracy Touchett, Gilbert Osmond and Isabel's father are attributed the role of paternal figures.

To what extent do these characters comply with the parental roles attributed by the patriarchal 19th century Victorian society? How motherly are the mothers and how fatherly are the fathers that populate James' novel? The paper analyses the characters in The Portrait of a Lady in terms of their conformity to and/or departure from the mother and father roles prescribed by the society of the time.

Keywords: *The Portrait of a Lady; biological mothers; denied mothers; motherly fathers; parental roles.*

1. Introduction

The Portrait of a Lady, one of Henry James' masterpieces, was first published in parallel in serial form in two magazines - *The Atlantic Monthly* and *Macmillan's Magazine* - that targeted readers on both sides of the Atlantic. A year later, in 1881, the novel appeared in book form.

¹ "Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iași, Romania, nicoletaiftimie@yahoo.co.uk.

Corresponding Author: Nicoleta-Maria IFTIMIE

Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of the conference



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited

At first sight, *The Portrait of a Lady* revolves round the conventional themes of courtship and marriage, placed against 19th century patriarchal society. Such a theme was familiar to the readers of the time, for the doctrine of the ‘separation of spheres’ which was prevalent at the time attributed to women the specific roles of obeying daughters, submissive wives and dutiful mothers, roles which were to be played within the narrow confines of the house that symbolized the domestic, private sphere. This domestic ideal was epitomized by queen Victoria, who “came to represent a kind of femininity centred on the family, motherhood and respectability.” [12 p4] When such a young woman from the upper class became of age, her parents were supposed to find an ‘eligible’ younger or older man for their daughter, i.e., a man with material means and a high rank in society (an aristocrat). According to accepted norms, it did not matter whether the daughter had been previously introduced to her future fiancé and husband-to-be. Such a point of view is clearly asserted by Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest*: “An engagement should come on a young girl as a surprise, pleasant or unpleasant, as the case may be. It is hardly a matter that she could be allowed to arrange for herself”. [15 p331] Thus, the parents, and especially the mothers tried to ‘sell’ their daughters to the highest bidder, thus perpetuating what may be called “the cycle of sale and sacrifice.” [3 p42]. On the other hand, the last decades of the 19th century were marked by the development of the feminist movement in America and Britain alike. Women started to fight for their civil and political rights. Thus, the 1860’s and 1870’s witnessed the setting up of women’s suffrage associations and committees on both sides of the Atlantic. The right to vote was to be obtained, however, about half a century later: first in America (1920) and later on in Britain (1928).

Henry James, a man of his time, offers his readers in *The Portrait of a Lady* the well-known themes of courtship and marriage, set mainly against Victorian England. However, the writer takes good care to avoid simple interpretations of the text, populated with feminine and masculine characters who play various gender roles throughout the novel: sisters and brothers, wives and husbands, mothers and fathers. Apart from other roles they play in *The Portrait of a Lady*, Isabel Archer, Madame Merle, Lydia Touchett, Mrs. Osmond and Amy Gemini have all in common the fact that they *are* or *were* biological mothers at some point in their lives. On the other hand, apart from their social or narrative roles, Daniel Tracy Touchett, Gilbert Osmond and Isabel’s father are attributed the role of paternal figure.

A question arises: how much do these characters comply with the parental roles attributed to them by the patriarchal Victorian society? This paper aims to analyse the characters in *The Portrait of a Lady* in terms of their

conformity to or departure from the mother and father roles attributed to women and men by the society of the time.

2. Theoretical Background

The characters in James' novels (*The Portrait of a Lady* included) have generally been approached from two perspectives: a) as representatives of the so-called 'international theme', embodiments of the clash between the American identity and the European culture [see 1;4;10;11;13]; b) as representatives of the feminine and masculine gender, of femininity and masculinity, set against the patriarchal society of James' time [2;3;5;6;7;9].

According to the former perspective, in his earlier works, "[t]he heroes and heroines created by James represent beauty, innocence, freedom, vitality, and freshness as they are open to experience and they seem to be more morally evolved. On the other hand, Europeans are characterized by cynicism, corruption and sophistication. The Americans in Europe are projected in contrast with the Old World's way of life" [11 p82].

Regarded from this perspective, Americans populating James' earlier works, such as Roderick Hudson, Daisy Miller, Isabel Archer are all innocent victims of "deracinated, cosmopolitan, Europeanized Americans" [13 p89]. There are authors who claim that in the 1900's, when James returned to the international theme, his view became completely different, i.e. "it is now the Europeans or Europeanized Americans who are the victims of the Americans." [*Ibid.*]

According to the other perspective, *The Portrait of a Lady* stands out as a result of "James' handling the gender roles" [9 p103]. Thus, Isabel Archer, the heroine of the novel, is an epitome of the New Woman, characterized by an emancipated view on life, independence and thirst for knowledge. Reading novels (usually romantic novels) and travelling can quench Isabel's thirst of knowledge. Instead of staying at home and assuming the passive roles bestowed by the patriarchal society of the time, Isabel, as well as other women in the novel, such as Lydia Touchett, Henrietta Stackpole and Mme Merle, travels a lot. As a result, "[s]ince public space, movement and travel were regarded in the Victorian epoch as attributes of masculinity, the frequent travels of Isabel Archer and of the other three female characters mentioned above may be 'read' as an attempt to enter the masculine public space, be accepted on equal terms with their male counterparts and thus reconstruct or redefine their social identity and gender roles" [6 pp475-476].

This paper continues the excursion related to the gender roles in *The Portrait of a Lady*; this time, however, the focus is on parental roles played by

the feminine and masculine characters in the novel. Such a topic has been tackled only incidentally in other studies devoted to the novel under discussion. Since being a parent constituted an important role in the Victorian domestic sphere, it would be relevant to see how parenthood is reflected in a novel whose protagonist is a woman.

3. Argument of the Paper

As shown above, *The Portrait of a Lady* presents a wide range of mothers and fathers. One of the main maternal interests of the time was to marry one's daughter with an eligible man, a man who might have both status and money. Smith Rosenberg speaks even of an apprenticeship system whereby "the daughter followed the mother into a life of traditional domesticity", being trained in "the arts of housewifery and motherhood" [14 p65].

This paper will aim to show that in the novel under discussion, such training in domestic affairs and the interest taken in 'selling' one's daughter on the marriage market is characteristic to American expatriate parents, i.e., Mrs. Osmond, Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond.

4. Arguments to Support the Thesis

4.1. *The Mothers*

The Portrait of a Lady displays a wide gallery of mothers: Isabel Archer, Madame Merle, Lydia Touchett, Mrs. Osmond and Amy Gemini. Although all *are* or *were* biological mothers at some point in their lives, they can be placed into several categories, according to the manner in which they play their role of a mother and the social acceptability of their mother status in James' novel:

- *Conformist mothers*, mothers that play the role expected from them (Mrs. Osborne);
- *Denied mothers*, those who were refused the role of a mother because the child died soon after its birth (Countess Amy Gemini and Isabel Archer);
- *Absent mothers*, those who apparently neglect their role as mothers (Lydia Touchett);
- *Hidden mothers*, mothers who cannot disclose their mother status as a result of social conventions, i.e. the child resulted from an illegitimate relationship (Madame Merle). The term 'hidden mother'

was taken from the photographic field: it refers to a type of photography specific to the Victorian epoch which featured babies or young children with their mother present in the studio, but hidden in the photograph.

4.1.1. The Conformist Mother

Mrs. Osmond, an American relocated in Europe after her husband's death, is a woman who performs her role of mother, as stipulated in the social norms of the 19th century society: she raises her children, Amy and Gilbert by herself in the absence of the father, who died when the children were very young. When the daughter, Amy is of age, she resorts to the "marriage market" [14 p66], gives her daughter a dowry and marries her with Count Gemini, "a member of an ancient Tuscan family" [8 p350], but somehow financially restrained at the time. Due to the "modest dowry" [*Ibid.*] offered by the future mother-in-law, the Count "had been glad to accept Amy Osmond, in spite of the questionable beauty that had yet not hampered her career" [*Ibid.*].

Mrs. Osmond thus conforms to the stereo(type) of the conventional 'motherly' mother in the Victorian epoch, who 'sells' her unattractive daughter for a nobility title and a position in society.

4.1.2. The Denied Mother

This category includes two characters: Countess Gemini and Isabel Archer, the heroine of the novel. Both women gave birth to children who died very young. Thus, Amy Gemini "had lost three children within a year of their birth" [*Ibidem*]; Isabel, on the other hand, to quote Madame Merle, "had a poor little boy, who died ...six months after his birth" [*Ibid.* p451].

The roles of the two women are, however, different: while Countess Gemini, a woman married by her mother and a "highly compromised character" [*Ibidem* p.349] remains a denied mother (and an ostracized 'woman with a past' in certain circles of society), Isabel Archer becomes Pansy's stepmother. As a result, Isabel plays the part of Pansy's "surrogate mother" [3] and "mentor" [2] after her marriage to Gilbert Osmond. According to these roles, Isabel is expected by both her husband and by Madame Merle (Pansy's biological mother) to continue the cycle of marital sale and arrange her stepdaughter's marriage to Lord Warburton, a member of the royalty. As Gilbert Osmond says in a conversation with Isabel, "it lies in your hands... With a little good-will you may manage it. Think that over

and remember how much I count on you” [8 p.523]. At first Isabel seems to be tempted to ‘do her duty’ and arrange the marriage between her stepdaughter and Lord Warburton: “It seemed to Isabel that she could make it her duty to bring about such an event she should play the part of a good wife” [*Ibidem* p515]. When she realizes that this might turn into a loveless marriage (Pansy does not love Lord Warburton), Isabel breaks this cycle and removes herself from the process. Her husband sees his expectations are baffled and accuses her “[o]f having prevented Pansy’s marriage to Warburton” [*Ibid.* p595].

Isabel’s behaviour demonstrates that, as an American who has not lived for too long in Europe, she has not been completely acculturated and has not adopted her prescribed (step)mother role in its entirety. She loves her stepdaughter a lot and her fondness for Pansy is one of the reasons why she is willing to continue her marriage to Pansy’s father, Gilbert Osmond, but she does not want to arrange a loveless marriage (like her own) for Pansy.

4.1.3. The Absent Mother

The representative of this category is Isabel’s aunt, Lydia Touchett. A “strong-willed, cosmopolitan woman, an unusual mother and wife with a very clear yearly schedule” [*Ibidem* p478], Isabel’s aunt is miles away from the ‘angel in the house’ image attributed to women in 19th century society: Much more active than her husband, who is confined to a wheelchair, Lydia Touchett has taken over the family investments and travels a lot, both for business and pleasure, spending only a month per year with her husband and three months with her son, Ralph, who has serious health problems.

An absent, albeit loving mother, ‘crazy aunt Lydia’, as called by Isabel’s father, seems to ‘redeem’ herself as a mother by taking Isabel out of the domestic sphere in Albany and giving her the possibility to travel all over Europe. However, even in this situation, she is reluctant to take responsibility for Isabel’s future. When asked by Ralph about her future intentions regarding Isabel, she answers: “I shall do absolutely nothing with her, and she herself will do everything she chooses” [*Ibid* p68].

However, Lydia Touchett is not as unconventional a woman as she may seem. She has adopted the European rules of conduct regarding young women’s behaviour in society. Thus, at the beginning of Isabel’s stay at Gardencourt, when Lord Warburton pays them a visit, Lydia Touchett does not let her niece alone with Lord Warburton and Ralph. She stays with them until Isabel goes to bed and reprimands her dryly, pointing to the differences

in accepted behaviour between America and England: “You can’t stay alone with the gentlemen. You’re not – you’re not at your blest Albany, my dear” [*Ibidem* pp95-96].

4.1.4. The Hidden Mother

The ‘hidden mother’ in *The Portrait of a Lady* is Madame Merle. A cosmopolitan American expatriate, she is Pansy’s real biological mother. Due to social conventions, she cannot disclose her blood relationship with her own daughter because Pansy Osmond was conceived as a result of an illegitimate affair: at the time the girl was born both Madame Merle (the mother) and Gilbert Osmond (the father) were married to other partners. The ‘perfect’ woman Serena Merle appeared to be when Isabel first met her changes to fit the ‘woman with a past’ stereotype. Since she cannot overtly display her relationship with her own daughter, Madame Merle chooses the next best role, i.e. she poses as the family friend: “Am I not your great friend in Rome?” [*Ibidem* p296] – asks Serena Merle in a rhetorical manner. She visits her unknowing daughter while she is educated by nuns in a convent in Rome, she gives elusive advice to Mr. Rosier, Pansy’s most ardent suitor, and plans Pansy’s marriage to Lord Warburton, who has both status (he is a nobleman) and money, without risking to raise suspicions.

Since she cannot act as a proper mother in order to make sure Pansy will have enough dowry to marry into nobility, Madame Merle has to find a substitute mother for her daughter. When, due to Ralph’s intervention, Isabel receives a substantial inheritance of seventy thousand pounds from Mr. Daniel Touchett, Serena Merle decides to manipulate Isabel into marrying Gilbert Osmond, her former lover, in order to ensure Pansy a proper dowry.

Thus, Madame Merle assumes the role of a mentor or surrogate mother for Isabel, introducing Gilbert Osborne to her mentee, while manipulating both Isabel and Gilbert into marrying each other. When Isabel marries Gilbert, Serena Merle tries to convince her to intervene and make Lord Warburton marry Pansy. Her mask falls down and she almost imposes Isabel to fulfil this plan: “I want to see her married to Lord Warburton...Especially...if you make him” [*Ibid.* p512]. When Isabel, somewhat vexed, agrees to the idea of this marriage, but not necessarily to the plan involving her doing, Madame Merle reacts with surprising satisfaction, embracing her “more tenderly than might have been expected and triumphantly withdrew” [*Ibidem* p513]. However, it is only when Serena Merle comes to find out the reason why the marriage arrangement between Lord Warburton and Pansy proved to be a failure that Isabel realizes the real

nature of the relationship existing between her husband and Madame Merle. The harsh answer - “Everything” [*Ibid.* p635] given to Isabel’s repeated questions “Who are you – what are you? (...) What have you to do with my husband?” [*Ibidem* p634] rips off Serena Merle’s mask and deconstructs her fake social identity.

4.2. The Fathers

The fathers appearing in the novel – Daniel Touchett, Isabel’s father and Gilbert Osmond - could be placed apparently in one category, that of *caring fathers*. However, if we look deeper into the text, we realize there are great differences among them.

4.2.1. The Motherly Father

Daniel Touchett is what might be called the *motherly father*. As mentioned above, in his relationship with Lydia Touchett the traditional gender roles are placed upside down: there is a shift in gender identities, whereby the wife has taken over the active roles traditionally attributed to the husband, while the husband seems to have taken over the domestic roles attributed to the wife. This curious shift is also acknowledged by Ralph: “His father (...) was the more motherly; his mother, on the other hand, was paternal, and even, according to the slang of the day, gubernatorial” [*Ibid.* p 60]. Ralph is fond of, admires and respects his father whom he considers “a man of genius” [*Ibidem* p.62].

4.2.2. The Nonconformist Father

Adored by his daughters, particularly by Isabel, the heroine of the novel, “her handsome, much loved father” [*Ibidem* p55] is the epitome of the *non-conformist father*. His wife dies when the three girls are very young, so he is supposed to play the roles of mother and father at the same time. Instead he either sends them to “superficial schools” [*Ibid.*] or hires “nursemaids and governesses (usually very bad ones)” [*Ibidem*], one of which elopes with a Russian nobleman, so that the girls remain without any supervision for about three months. On the other hand, he tries to widen his daughters’ horizon by letting them see “as much of the world as possible” [*Ibid.* p56]. With this purpose in mind, he takes them three times to Europe before Isabel is fourteen.

Public opinion is generally harsh on Mr. Archer: he is regarded as a person indifferent to everyday problems, indifferent towards those he owes money to, and even indifferent as far as the education of his three daughters is concerned: “A few very harsh critics went so far as to say that he had not even brought up his daughters...they had been at once spoiled and neglected” [*Ibidem* p55].

4.2.3. The Possessive Father

Gilbert Osmond offers another facet of the caring father. Although he plays the part of the mild father “as paternity was an exquisite pleasure to Gilbert Osmond, he had always been luxuriously mild” [*Ibid.* p504], love of his daughter, Pansy, as noticed by Ralph is just another pose, another artifice: “Everything he did was pose(...) His solitude, his ennui, his love for his daughter, his good manners, his bad manners...” [*Ibidem* p490].

Pansy Osmond is very fond of her father and even admits that “[i]f he were not my papa I should like to marry him; I would rather be his wife than the wife of-of some strange person” [*Ibid.* p395].

But Pansy is for Gilbert only another piece in his collection of beautiful objects and artefacts, the more so as she is used to obey – a consequence of her spending many years in a convent in Rome, being raised by nuns. He does not care about her feelings for Edward Rosier and does not care about the fact that his own daughter does not feel anything for Lord Warburton. Together with Madame Merle, his former mistress, Gilbert Osmond takes the decision to make Isabel intervene and arrange Pansy’s marriage to Lord Warburton. When his plans are not fulfilled, he does not hesitate to send his daughter to the convent again, in spite of her misery.

Therefore, Gilbert Osmond is not such a caring father as he might appear at first view. He has delegated his parental role to the nuns and is willing to do it again when he realizes that Pansy’s prospects of marriage with Lord Warburton will not be fulfilled. He epitomizes the possessive and conformist husband and father who asks for love and obedience from his wife and child, without returning their affection. Moreover, he takes active part in ‘selling’ his daughter to the highest bidder on the job market, thus paralleling Madame Merle’s mercantile actions.

5. Arguments to Argue the Thesis

The paper presented a series of mother and father figures that populate James’ novel *The Portrait of a Lady*. The analysis tried to show that in the novel under discussion, the interest taken in ‘selling’ one’s daughter on

the marriage market is characteristic to a certain category of characters, i.e., American expatriates (Mrs. Osmond, Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond). These characters conform to the social and gender role norms of time, according to which the main role of parents was that of finding an eligible man to marry their daughter.

Some may argue that other characters, not only American expatriates, may have done so. Even Isabel Archer, The American heroine of the novel, seems to be tempted by the idea of marrying her stepdaughter into nobility. At first she considers it is her duty to agree to her husband's wish, irrespective of her or Pansy's feelings. After analysing the situation Isabel realizes that she has to refuse being a go-between on the cycle of "sale and sacrifice" [3 p42] and give Pansy the possibility of a future marriage for love.

6. Dismantling the Arguments Against. Conclusions

The discussion about and analysis of mother and father figures in the text converged to the idea that the thesis put forward in the paper is correct: interest taken in 'selling' one's daughter on the marriage market is characteristic to American expatriate parents (Mrs. Osmond, Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond).

One could wonder why American expatriates in the novel seem to conform more to the social norms of the time as compared to others. This might be because they want to appear completely integrated in the European culture and adhere more to the social norms and practices than native Europeans.

Much more than the other characters, these three try to conform to the social rules of the time, to keep up appearances and to conceal behaviour that might be contrary to public opinion expectations. Each of them tries to find a proper husband for their daughter, thus acknowledging the fact that "female survival in the (male)/public/social realm beyond the borders of the (domestic-based) mother-daughter relationship depends on the combination of men, money, and marriage" [3 p48].

References

- [1] Bhawani Dutta Roy. The Portrait of a Lady: An American classic revisited. *Journal of Literature*. [Internet].2009. July-December; vol. 1, no 2: 166-173. Available from: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.822.3213&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.
- [2] Boockoff E. Leading women: Henry James and feminism in *The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Bostonians* and *The Golden Bowl*. 2015. 46 pp. In *BSU Honors*

- Program Theses and Projects.Item 85. Available from: http://vc.bridgew.edu/honors_proj/85.
- [3] Brown M. A. Modes of female social existence and adherence in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*. Retrospective Theses and Dissertations. Paper 7079; 1996. 69p. Available from <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=8078&context=rtd>
- [4] Drobot I. A. The image of a corrupt Europe as dystopia in *The Portrait of a Lady* by Henry James. 7p. Available from https://www.academia.edu/12102603/The_Image_of_a_Corrupt_Europe_as_Dystopia_in_The_Portrait_of_a_Lady_by_Henry_James
- [5] Halbert C. A. Henry James: Ethnographer of American women in Victorian patriarchy. Master Degree Thesis. Duke University. 2011. 83 pp. Available from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.906.3471&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- [6] Iftimie N. M. Travelling women: The reconstruction of self and gender roles in *The Portrait of a Lady*. EpSBS [Internet]. 2016. Published by Future Academy: 474-48. Available from <https://www.futureacademy.org.uk/files/images/upload/WLC2016FA060F.pdf>.
- [7] Izzo D. Setting a free woman free: *The Portrait(s) of a Lady*. *American Studies*. [Internet]. vol. XXII: 101-122.
- [8] James H. *The portrait of a lady*. London: Harper Collins, 2011. 723p.
- [9] Kemaloglu A. B. Travelling and gender: *The Portrait of a Lady*. 103-120. Available from <http://www.sbed.mu.edu.tr/index.php/asd/article/>
- [10] Lupu D. G. The innocent American girl in Henry James's international novel. [Internet]. *Gender Studies*. 2012 Jan; 11(1): 258-269. Available from <https://content.sciendo.com/view/journals/genst/11/1/article-p258.xml>
- [11] Popa (Lupu) D. G. Europe and America in Henry James's international novels. *Research and Science Today*. [Internet]. 2011. Dec. no. 2: 80-88. Available from <https://www.rstjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Nr.2-Revista-RESEARCH-AND-SCIENCE-TODAY.pdf>.
- [12] Remi-Hébert B. The first women's movement. Suffragist struggles in the 19th and early 20th centuries. 15p. Available from https://www.jfki.fu-berlin.de/academics/SummerSchool/Dateien2011/Papers/juncker_remy.pdf
- [13] Roberts P. The geopolitics of literature: the shifting international theme in the works of Henry James. *The Int. History Rev.* 2012 Mar. 29; 34:1, 89-114, DOI: 10.1080/07075332.2012.668337. Available from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07075332.2012.668337>

- [14] Smith-Rosenberg C. *Visions of Gender in Victorian America*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985. 357p.
- [15] Wilde O. *The importance of being Earnest*. In *The complete works of Oscar Wilde*. London: Collins; 1990. 321-384 p.