This honors thesis reviews the development of the fields of obstetrics and gynecology during the nineteenth century, and the subsequent changes that occurred in the cultural understanding of the female body. Women, once regarded as naturally hedonistic, were instead refigured as undesiring, supportive, and spiritual. Motherhood became their primary purpose. This mostly had an impact on middle-class mothers, who were depicted as saintly. Working-class women, on the other hand, assumed the bodily aspects middle-class women were expected to reject. In order to draw out this progression, I explore three novels that respond to the trope of the ideal mother.