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In Honor of
Donald Pizer

PREFACE

On June 2, 2016, members of The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature gathered in East Lansing for its forty-sixth annual meeting. At the awards luncheon on June 3, Donald Pizer was named the 2016 winner of the MidAmerica Award for distinguished contributions to the study of Midwestern literature, and Michael Martone won the Mark Twain Award for distinguished contributions to Midwestern literature. Mary Minock was the winner of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Prize for "If You Loved Me Half as Much as I Love You," and Douglas Sheldon won the Paul Somers Prize for Creative Prose for "Leather and Wool." Highlights included panels on Ernest Hemingway, Willa Cather, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and contemporary Midwestern short fiction, and a roundtable of editors of the Dictionary of Midwestern Literature, volume 2, published in August of 2016 by Indiana University Press.

SSML is currently operating at a loss due to increased expenses in publishing its journals and convening its annual symposium. Major gifts from the late Jane S. Bakerman, David Diamond, and David D. Anderson have enabled us to continue our work while we seek to establish a more stable financial footing for the work ahead. SSML is also grateful to the following members and friends who have made contributions in addition to their dues. As more such contributions are received, and earlier ones are discovered in searching the archives, we will add more names to this Honor Roll: Walter Adams, Robert Beasecker, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ray B. Browne, Mary Ellen Caldwell, Louis J. Cantoni, G.B. Crump, Bernard F. Engel, Kenneth B. Grant, Philip A. Greasley, Theodore Haddin, Donald Hassler, Janet Ruth Heller, Ted Kennedy, Jean Laming, Barbara Lindquist, Larry Lockridge, Loren Logsdon, Bud Narveson, Marcia Noe, Mary Obuchowski, Tom Page, E. Elizabeth Raymond, Herbert K. Russell, James Seaton, Guy Szuberla, Doug Wixson, Melody Zajdel, and the family and friends of Paul Somers.

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SELF-PORTRAIT

JOHN BEALL

Then fourteen, she draws her self-portrait in graphite,
No color, just penciled shaping and shading.

What am I to make of this girl I used to take
Every morning to PS87 and pick up in the afternoon?

Now she looks in her self-portrait like an enigma,
Her cropped hair bent around her eyes,

Her eyes bent as if half looking at her viewer,
Half askance. Her nose firm, solid,

Her lips fully shaded and lightly lit, a
Chiaroscuro half-smile. She still has that

Mona Lisa smile, but all she draws is her face,
Hair, neck, and shoulders—her neck accented

By cross-hatchings. She leaves her forehead bare,
Not a single line or smudge except for a light

Patch above her left eye. Her eyebrows are
Thin, unadorned streaks of pencil.

What am I to do for my daughter
Who draws herself as if beyond reach

Of anyone who does not see her strong,
Firmly curved, darkly shaded chin?

Below her right shoulder her self-portrait
Is signed EB, 2015.

Collegiate School

WHERE AM I WHO?

JANE L. CARMAN

She's sitting on the ground in a garden, legs crossed, wondering how she got there, wondering where the tomato plants are, how they escaped their tight cages, how the cages sunk away. She considers why tomatoes have names instead of numbers. Why Rutgers instead of 22 or Mr. Stripey instead of 11 or Abe Lincoln instead of any number.

She recalls her father's rule about livestock: *Never name something you are going to eat,* a rule that clearly does not apply to vegetables.

She imagines having butcher packets that say things like "Fluffy" instead of "lamb chops" or "Wilbur" instead of "ground beef" or "Dolly" instead of "roast." But even without a name, she thinks about those packets in the freezer following her down the fence line begging with round, brown eyes for clover just out of reach, how those nameless pieces and parts lean into her scratches.

What does a name matter? A person hit by a truck is still a person whether or not it has a name. The puddle of blood trickling into a patch of ditch lilies is the same whether it belongs to your mother or to your mother without a name. The twisted-up boy in a powder blue casket is still your brother whether or not his name is Rex.

She always buys tomato plants without regard to name. She searches the garden shop for unlabeled pots. If there are none, she removes the tags from the pots and leaves them behind. She doesn't care about names, about the statuses they carry. She is herself whether or not she is called Anna or Amma, Mom or Mamma, Ammu or Ameri, Mary Anna Maria or nothing.

As she plants the tomatoes, she is sure to place one cup of sugar and a single banana in the bottom of the hole like her uncle that admired her "Dolly Parton" boobs taught her. She is sure the cages are tight and the fence around the garden secure against raccoons who seem to like bananas, sugar, and tomato roots very much.

Today she is sitting cross-legged in a garden with no tomatoes. Yesterday or was it the day or year, decade or hour before, she was tied to a bed, screaming, surrounded. She was looking at a bloody floor crying things like, "What have you done to me?" And, "Let me go." And, "You can't do this to me. I am a citizen. I am a US citizen." And, "Why are you doing this?"

She is fighting. Yesterday or was it the day or year, decade or hour before, she was in a room full of old people flapping their gums, some of them screaming, others staring off silent. She is in the delivery room a doctor at the foot of the bed telling her he is missing the game, telling her to push to come on and get it over. She is being chased by a big bully brother with a spider, with a snake, with the head of a dead kitten. She is beneath a football team saying things like, "Stop." And, "Help." She is on top of a Ferris wheel impressing a boy with facts about Galesburg and trains and inventors of giant wheels.

She is taking her first look at the ocean unable to blink or breathe. She is tearing up at a waterfall.

She is examining the way a funeral home artist put together a boy's face that had been peeled away by the shrapnel of a roadside bomb.

Other than knowing she is sitting cross-legged in a garden, she doesn't know where she is, doesn't know where the tomatoes or peppers are. She tries to remember what it is she knows and does not remember.

A hound nuzzles her side. She reaches for it. It falls to its back, feet in the air, tail tapping dust clouds into little messages in the sky. She shakes the dog's paw, "Nice to meet you." And, "Do I know you?"

For a moment the dog is her childhood friend Buster who used to ride in a cart behind her bicycle. Buster, collector of fleas and ticks, collector of girl hugs and kisses, collector of boots to the ribs and worms

in the belly. “O, Buster,” she cries. She makes parts in his hair looking for ticks. She strokes his muzzle. She is looking into his dark eyes. She finds nothing.

For a moment, the dog is an old hunter that her father trades a Stetson for at a horse show. Her father names the dog Once because the trader claims the dog will tree a coon every time he takes it hunting but that the dog will only bark once. The trader, an old man with no front teeth and half a right hand that includes a thumb and forefinger only, is as tall as a combine but has the feet of a small child, according to her father.

She is coon hunting with her father. Once barks and sits motionless beneath an oak. Above a coon is rolled into a tight ball. She holds the spotlight. Her father shoots. The coon falls, hisses, snarls. Once jumps as her father yells, “Get back.” The gun echoes so it is hard to tell whether there is silence or deafness.

They are hunting and Once disappears. She walks the woods for three days calling him, but he’s already barked. He’s waiting.

Her father is wearing a long coonskin coat and Liberace sunglasses. His hair is full of Brill Cream and his mouth full of gold. “Where are you going?” she asks. “To see a man about a dog.” This was his way of saying, “None of your business.”

On the fourth day of walking the woods, she finds Once dehydrated beneath a tree. He is still sitting, still looking up. He won’t break the trance. She carries him away, his eyes still fixed on the brown-gray ball dead or resting above.

For a moment the dog is in a painting on her great-grandmother’s wall. Her grandfather is eating pickled pigs’ feet. Her grandmother is at the sink pumping water to boil corn. She is eating the grapes out of homemade wine. She is getting tired. The dog has a card between its toes; it is handing the card beneath the table to its partner. The grapes are the ones she picked last summer; their sweetness replaced by a burn in her throat.

She is sitting in a tomatoless garden. Her legs are crossed. She hears voices coming toward her. They are sharp but not dangerous. She is

patting a dog that is, for the moment, hers. She calls it Buster, calls it Once, calls it

She is sitting cross-legged

The dog wags its tail shaking her understanding of

She is patting

There is a dog.

There is

There is a garden.

There are no tomatoes, no fathers or brothers or mothers or grandparents. There is no homemade grape wine or pickled pigs' feet.

She is in the bed of a pickup surrounded by dead raccoons wondering if they will come back to life.

She is sitting, legs crossed, picking through mulch looking for squash beetles.

She is moving her fingers through a dog's coat looking for ticks, looking

She is sitting in her room, legs crossed, combing the carpet. There are voices saying things like, "Did you fall?" And, "Do you need help?" And, "What are you doing?"

She is sitting crossed-legged in her garden, tomato plants towering above her, a dog at her side, tail tapping. The sun is shining.

She is

"ONCE MORE, THE ROUND": THEODORE ROETHKE'S LAST WORD

WILLIAM BARILLAS

Certain poems by Theodore Roethke bear consideration as pivotal statements in the author's *Collected Poems* (1966, 1975).[1] In addition to their intrinsic qualities, they offer keys to this poet's body of work, opening doors to what he called, at the beginning of his career, the "open house" of his continuously developing spirituality and sense of self. Some appear as the first or last poems in books, like "Open House," the curiously hermetic and cautious first and title poem of his inaugural volume of 1941, and "Night Journey," the closing poem in that book, which emphasizes the quest motif that became central in Roethke's vision. "The Waking," the last poem in the Pulitzer Prize-winning 1953 volume by that same title is the essential self-reflexive *ars poetica* by the poet from Saginaw. As Frank J. Kearful avers in his forthcoming essay on the poem, "It is as if all of Roethke's poetry thus far, the prior work selectively represented and the new poems culminating in 'The Waking,' had been a learning process leading to the title poem on the last printed page."

The same may be said of "Once More, the Round" (243), the last poem in Roethke's last book, *The Far Field* (1964), published shortly after the poet's death in 1963.[2] In this short, loosely metered, and mostly slant-rhymed poem, as in other late verses, Roethke seems to know that his remaining days are few; it reads like a last poem. Touching on motifs, themes, and literary influences familiar to his readers, he alludes to his psychological and spiritual struggles, the subject of major poems like "The Lost Son" and "In a Dark Time." He speaks affectionately of flora and fauna, the simultaneously literal and figurative fellow beings that provide so much of the imagery in his best work, from the greenhouse poems of *The Lost Son and Other Poems* (1948) to the expansive "North American Sequence" that opens *The Far Field*. Moving through a landscape at once inner

and outer, Roethke, in this final poem, takes his leave of the reader and of the world, yielding himself to a joyful and mystical union with all creation, a symbolic dance referred to in the poem's title and suggested by the repetition in the last line, Roethke's last words as a poet.

The spiritual quest in "Once More, the Round" is, of course, consistent with Roethke's romantic perspective. Roethke saw himself as working in the main line of English-language romanticism from Blake to Yeats, with Emerson and Whitman being especially influential on his thinking about nature and the numinous, eternal reality beyond and within the physical world. Emerson's *Nature* (1836) was for Roethke a guide, even a sacred text, emphasizing as it does the Platonic doctrine of correspondence by which everything in the material world stands for an abstract, ideal, and eternal reality. "Nature is the symbol of spirit" (20), Emerson famously wrote in that essay, and, like other American poets since Whitman, Roethke strove to identify and develop a symbolic language suited to the particularities of his own experience. Roethke's major symbols, as Jay Parini notes in his classic study of Roethke's romanticism, consist of the father, the greenhouse, and the field. "These images," Parini asserts, "became the signposts of his secret planet, and we can know Roethke best by knowing his entire work, by following his personal development from unrealized potential to self-discovery and, ultimately, self-transcendence" (4). Other symbols are also crucial; Parini mentions the wind, the stone, and the tree, a list to which may be added the nouns in "Once More, the Round" that Roethke capitalized so as to identify them as archetypes—Pebble, Pond, Hill, Bird, Leaf, Fish, Snail, and Eye—along with the abstractions Unknown, Love, and One, and the overarching motifs of the circle and the dance. By means of these figures, familiar from poems throughout his body of work, Roethke recapitulates and extends his poetic and spiritual journey in "Once More, the Round."

The poem's title introduces the archetypal "round," whose eternal, universal persistence, as well as previous development in Roethke's poetry, is communicated by the adverbial phrase "Once More." A number of meanings inhere, including forms of song and dance in which the speaker and his fellow beings may be said to be participating in unison. In regard to song, the round is an arrangement of multiple voices singing the same melody, with each voice beginning at a different point. ("Row, Row, Row Your Boat" is perhaps the most familiar round, easy to teach to schoolchildren because it fea-

tures only one chord). Two types of dances are referred to as "round dance," the simplest involving many dancers holding hands in a circle. "Round dancing" otherwise refers to many dancing partners following the steps called out by a leader. The reader may imagine any or all of these song and dance forms being enacted in the poem. Roethke is both singing and dancing with the myriad elements of nature, which in his world have selfhood and voice, as in the poem "Unfold! Unfold!" when he exhorts his fellow beings: "Sing, sing, you symbols! All simple creatures, / All small shapes, willow-shy, / In the obscure haze, sing!" (86). Perhaps the round dancing specified at the end of "Once More, the Round" begins as partnered, with Roethke taking a turn with William Blake, his mentor in mysticism and poetry, before the poets join all living things in a circle in which "everything comes to One . . . ."

In the poem's first line the alliteration of Pebble and Pond places them in parity as aspects of nature and consciousness, as does the rhetorical nature of Roethke's question as to which is "greater." Neither is greater or more significant; the speaker honors each equally as an emblem of self—not ego, bound by desire, fear, memory, and hope, but the universal self of which Emerson speaks in *Nature* when he declares himself "part or particle of God" (10). Roethke's Pebble and Pond recall the first lines of the poem that Emerson places as an epigraph at the beginning of *Nature*: "A subtle chain of countless rings / The next unto the farther brings . . ."(5). Although the absence of concrete nouns makes the scenario implicit rather than explicit, Emerson is evoking the ripples that extend in every direction when a stone is tossed into a body of water. This image serves as the first illustration in *Nature* of Platonic correspondence, by which (as the third line in Emerson's poem has it) the "eye reads omens where it goes" (5). Roethke employs the same image at the end of "The Far Field," where a "ripple widening from a single stone / Winding around the waters of the world" concludes a catalog of natural images illustrating the transcendentalist assertion that "[a]ll finite things reveal infinitude" (195). The image also appears in "Praise to the End!": "The rings have gone from the pond. / The river's alone with its water" (81). Later in that poem, Roethke says, "I lost my identity to a pebble" (84), a statement that illustrates Parini's assertion that for Roethke "the stone [is] associated with transcendental experiences" (4). Selfhood is imagined not as separate but as relational, represented by an image (a pebble being thrown

into water) that suggests consciousness, bodily gesture, motion through space, immersion in a greater whole, and persistent effect on the world at large. "What falls away is always," Roethke assures us in "The Waking" (104), a phrase that in this context supports a reading of "Once More, the Round" as an *ars poetica*. "Throw a stone into the stream," Emerson writes in Chapter 4 of *Nature,* "and the circles that propagate themselves are the beautiful type of all influence" (21).[3] The pebble in this regard stands for Roethke's immortality in verse, with the pond representing the world and eternity.

The two questions that open "Once More, the Round" strike Neal Bowers as being "very much like riddles or koans . . . . To the first question there is no answer, and the answer to the second is vintage Roethke and standard mystical doctrine" (198). The second question, "What can be known?" recalls another line from "The Waking": "We think by feeling. What is there to know?" (104). Roethke suspends that question in "The Waking," having stressed the primacy of emotion and intuition over rational thought. In the second line of "Once More, the Round," however, he supplies an answer: "The Unknown." Alluding to "The Waking," Bowers contends that "[b]y abandoning his attempts to know, the speaker [of 'Once More, the Round'] learns by going, and as he progresses, the Absolute he seeks becomes more visible" (199).

Spiritual insight and perspective come in lines 3 and 4, in which the speaker's "true self" (as opposed to the false self of his fearful and possessive ego) "runs toward a Hill." The hill recalls the experience of "prospects" in eighteenth-century English topographical poetry, which the Romantics, Wordsworth in particular, later sublimated into mountaintop epiphanies in which emotional and aesthetic ecstasies supersede mere description. "A prospect," as John Wilson Foster defines it, "is a view into the distance (space); it is also a view into the future (distance in time), often with the suggestion of opportunity or expectation: in each case, a prospect is a view of something beyond, yet to be achieved or satisfying merely in the spectacle" (238). In Roethke's poem, that "something beyond," the Unknown, includes life, death, love, and eternity. For Richard Allen Blessing, the hill "is, perhaps, both the elevation leading upward to God and the grave"; he implies that Roethke's speaker does not attain the hilltop with its prospect of time and space, at least within the poem itself (218). We are free, however, to imagine that he does, that the anapest in the last foot of line 3 ("toward a Hill") conveys his ecstatic momen-

tum toward the height.[4] That rising rhythm and the hard stresses that begin line 4 ("More! O More!) imply the widening of his view; that he takes in a full prospect of the landscape is also suggested by how the last word in the line (and in the stanza) reverses the previous line's final metrical foot. The dactylic "Visible," with a heavy stress followed by two unstressed syllables, reinforced by an end-stop and the expanse of a stanza break, acts as a falling away and an auditory manifestation of the speaker's elevated view of the circling horizon and the landscape around and below him.

The second stanza begins by hinting at the shadow of memory as well as the daylight of the soul's illumination. By saying "*Now* I adore my life" (emphasis added) the speaker implies that he has not always so felt. He may have reached the top of a hill but the summit recalls its antithesis, the valley of despair traversed in "The Lost Son" and "In a Dark Time." The word "now" resonates with what Christopher Giroux identifies as a "tension between spiritual unity and spiritual despair" in "Once More, the Round," an emotional oscillation in which "the joy of unification with the One is tempered" by darker feelings (45). Reading the litany that follows ("Now I adore my life / With the Bird, the abiding Leaf, / With the Fish, the questing Snail . . ."), one recalls that in earlier poems these and other totemic beings sometimes failed to answer the poet's calls for spiritual succor. The first stanza of "The Lost Son," for example, concludes with the speaker summoning three familiar presences:

> Snail, snail, glister me forward,
> Bird, soft-sigh me home,
> Worm, be with me.
> This is my hard time.

The subsequent stanza break conveys the silence that follows his requests. Snail, bird, and worm do not speak, sing, or even approach. In the next stanza, the refusal continues:

> Fished in an old wound,
> The soft pond of repose;
> Nothing nibbled my line,
> Not even the minnows came. (50)

Closed in by grief and mental illness, the isolated speaker finds himself unable to communicate with his fellow beings, to access those aspects of his soul that would help him advance in his quest. "The

Lost Son" then proceeds with Roethke's most harrowing and memorable evocation of mania and despair, an experience that he portrays as a spiritual crisis as much as a psychological one.

The Lost Son's descent, however, makes possible the ascent in those poems in which Roethke moves toward joy and affirmation. In an oft-quoted passage from his essay, "Open Letter," Roethke emphasizes how in the soul's quest, "the method is cyclic. I believe that to go forward as a spiritual man it is necessary first to go back . . . . There is a perpetual slipping-back, then a going-forward; but there is *some* 'progress'" (*On Poetry and Craft* 51). Both regression and progression are represented in Roethke's poetry as plants and small creatures either retreating from or advancing towards a heightened state of consciousness. In "The Longing," for example, "the spirit fails to move forward, / But shrinks into a half-life, less than itself, / Falls back, a slug, a loose worm / Ready for any crevice, / An eyeless starer" (181). By contrast, in "A Light Breather," the "spirit moves, / Yet stays . . . / Moves, like the snail, / Still inward, / Taking and embracing its surroundings, / Never wishing itself away, / Unafraid of what it is, / A music in a hood, / A small thing, / Singing" (97). Forward movement may convey one toward apotheosis, always and necessarily accompanied by the fellow beings that Roethke collectively identifies, in the titles of two poems, as "The Minimal" and "The Small." In such wise the speaker of "The Longing" presents his response to alienation in modern industrial society: "I would with the fish, the blackening salmon, and the mad lemmings, / The children dancing, the flowers widening . . . . / A leaf, I would love the leaves, delighting in the redolent disorder of this mortal life . . ." (182).

This primary motif in Roethke's work—the "lovely diminutives" of nature (60)—can best be understood in relation to Taoist philosophy. *"Tao,"* as Julian F. Pas defines it, "is the eternal reality beyond, but also within, the visible universe." It is "deepest mystery; it cannot be grasped by the rational mind only, but intuitively, if the mind is still and desires are controlled" (308-309). Sometimes visualized as the great river of existence, the Tao is both creator and creation, the universe itself and something beyond and within all forms. Roethke's affinity with Taoism may be gauged by the first sentence of *Tao Te Ching*, the ancient classic attributed to the legendary Lao-Tzu: "The Tao that can be told / is not the eternal Tao" (Mitchell 3). Roethke echoes that fundamental truth in "Once More, the Round" when he invokes the knowable Unknown. His primary way of telling

the Tao, however, was to speak of the virtue and power of the infinite multitude of forms referred to in Chinese tradition as the "ten thousand things," which appear in Roethke's poetry as small elements of nature: mineral, vegetable, or animal. Perhaps more than any Anglo American poet, Roethke was a poet of *Te,* the second word in the title *Tao Te Ching*. Pas's definition of *Te* is particularly apt in relation to Roethke's imagery of nature:

> If Tao is the overarching reality and cosmic energy, *Te* is what all beings receive from Tao; it is their own nature, with its specific talents and potentials, that enables them to act in their own way as if by their inner compulsion . . . . *Te* is the power of Tao, individualized, as, for example, in a seed, which has the inner potential and unfailing power to sprout and grow into a preprogrammed plant or tree. (332)

Roethke's greenhouse poems in *The Lost Son and Other Poems* illustrate precisely that principle, although when it came to propagation, Roethke favored images of cuttings and bulbs over seeds. Whether implicitly or explicitly, he always linked what we may call the *Te* of plants to the transcendent life force he hoped to sustain in himself. "I can hear, underground, that sucking and sobbing," he wrote in "Cuttings (later)" of the horticultural starts in his father's forcing house. "In my veins, in my bones I feel it . . ." (35).

That same identification with small organisms recurs in the litany of "Once More, the Round," with the verb "adore" recalling Christian-derived diction in "Cuttings (later)," in which the "resurrection of dry sticks" figures as more miraculous than any events recounted in the Bible: "What saint strained so much . . . ?" (35). Using "adore" in the sense of worship and prayer, Roethke praises and expresses gratitude for his life and all life. Boundaries between himself and the ten thousand things dissolve, as the parallelisms of lines 5 through 10 (noun phrases and clauses beginning in "with," "and," and "for") configure selfhood as situated, mutual, and participatory. The Bird, traditionally an archetype of the soul's freedom and joy,[5] also invokes the actual birds of Roethke's life and poetry: heron, crow, sparrow, wren, lark, phoebe, killdeer, and many others, mostly species native to Michigan, Roethke's home state, and the Pacific Northwest, where he lived the last decade and a half of his life. The "abiding Leaf" stands for all plant life, recalling the orchids, roses, cyclamen, and carnations of the greenhouse poems; it also

echoes Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855-1892), in which the single leaf, simultaneously distinctive and part of a greater whole, represents the self as organic, democratic, and immortal. The Fish embodies what Carl Jung calls a "'nourishing' influence of unconscious contents, which maintain the vitality of consciousness by a continual influx of energy" (142). Consistent with his borrowing of Christian terms to express his decidedly non-Christian spirituality, Roethke declares in "Unfold! Unfold!" that his "mission became the salvation of minnows" (86). Named in Roethke's poems more than any other fish, the diminutive minnow complements the horticultural starts of the "Cuttings" poems as an emblem of Te, the power and grace inherent even (and, for Roethke, especially) in small beings. In "Cuttings," "[o]ne nub of growth / Nudges a sand crumb loose . . ." (35). Similarly, in "The Sequel," the poet evokes how "a minnow nudged its stone" (233). The subtle actions of plant and animal in these passages involve interaction with and alteration of their environments. Growth and creativity presuppose purposeful movement, whether so subtle as nudging or as active as the running and dancing in "Once More, the Round." Like the pebble falling into the pond, these natural images represent Te as individual, bodied selves participating joyfully in Tao, the sacred mysteries of life.

The last figure, "the questing Snail," draws on traditional associations of snails with patience, sensitivity, fertility, healing, androgyny, self-reliance, and change. It also harkens back to "The Waking," in which "the lowly worm climbs up a winding stair . . ." (104). The snail, in Roethke's iconography, resembles a worm that carries its own winding stair in the form of its shell, which spirals outward and around itself as it grows. The quests of both creatures involve a steady ascent to a higher state of consciousness. "[T]he unfolding life-cycle is well conceived as a spiral staircase," Anthony Stevens observes in *Archetype: An Updated Natural History of the Self* (2002), "each stage of the cycle being a landing or 'secure base' which, once reached, provides a temporary resting place before yet another rite of passage moves one onwards and upwards to the next" (196). By such means, analogous to the adaptations that occur in biological evolution, the worm, the snail, the poet, and every other being may fulfill more exalted destinies.

Roethke's image of the worm and the staircase builds on literary precedent. Kearful cites William Butler Yeats's "A Dialogue of Self and Soul"; Roethke was undoubtedly familiar with "the winding

ancient stair" (234) to which Yeats summons his soul at the beginning of that poem and which provided the title of his 1933 volume *The Winding Stair and Other Poems*. The "winding stair" in "The Waking" almost certainly alludes to that poem and book. Yet even closer intertextuality is evident with the poem that introduces Emerson's *Nature*. After the concentric waves, the eye reading omens, and the rose that "speaks all languages" (surely a motif to inspire the greenhouse keeper's son), Emerson concludes with a final archetypal image: "[S]triving to be man, the worm / Mounts through all the spires of form" (5). The affinity of those lines with Roethke's "lowly worm" that "climbs up a winding stair" almost certainly reflects repeated readings of *Nature,* with its initial poem whose motifs so closely parallel Roethke's own. This resemblance is a wave washing up on the shore of "The Waking," propagated by Emerson's essay hitting the water a century earlier.

Roethke, however, would never have said that the worm strives "to be man." Such anthropocentrism is inconsistent with Roethke's pantheistic, panpsychic faith, in which all beings have their own identities and evolutionary paths. In his essay "On Identity," Roethke stresses that he regards humble creatures like the worm and the questing snail not only as signposts on his own journey toward self-identity, but also as conscious, intrinsically valuable selves with their own relationship to the eternal: "If the dead can come to our aid in a quest for identity, so can the living—and I mean all living things, including the subhuman. This is not so much a naïve as a primitive attitude: animistic, maybe. Why not? Everything that lives is holy: I call upon these holy forms of life . . . . Therefore, in calling upon the snail, I am calling, in a sense, upon God . . ." (*On Poetry and Craft* 40). An uncredited citation of Blake appears here: "[E]very thing that lives is holy" is the last line in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790-1793), a text of Blake's that profoundly influenced Roethke's poetry, both in its aphoristic and archetypal style and in its prophetic mysticism (*Complete Poetry and Prose* 45). When it comes to the allusion to Blake in line 8 of "Once More, the Round" and Roethke's outright naming of the English poet in line 9, it is important to keep in mind that he "dance[s] with William Blake" as a fellow poet and earthly being, not as a mere acolyte.[6] In regard to writing what he called "the referential poem," Roethke advised taking "what you will with authority and see[ing] that you give it another, or even better life, in the new context" (*On Poetry and Craft* 56). Just as he converted

Emerson's worm mounting the spire to become human into the more biocentric symbol of the worm climbing up a winding stair, so, too, with his Blakean references, Roethke emphasizes what is congenial to his own idiosyncratic vision of nature and spirit.[7]

The "Eye altering all" in line 8 comes from Blake's esoteric poem, "The Mental Traveller" (ca. 1801), which "describes the whole of the fallen time-world where innocence and experience shade into one another [and e]verything travels around the wheel of existence . . . (Adams 77). The poem's mythic narrative involves the mutual tormenting of a boy and an old woman, whose malevolent spell causes the boy to grow rapidly through manhood and old age and her to become young, before he does the same to her and the cycle starts again, apparently to repeat endlessly. The sixteenth quatrain reads as follows:

> The Guests are scatterd [sic] thro' the land
> For the Eye altering alters all
> The Senses roll themselves in fear
> And the flat Earth becomes a Ball (*Complete Poetry and Prose* 485)

Jesse S. Cohn sees the altering eye as "the pivot for the revolving whole" envisioned by Blake, who "regards the consequences of empirical philosophy as a kind of materialistically legitimized selfishness; the infinite cruelty of this universe Blake describes is a consequence of the narrowing of the senses" (131-32). In asserting the superiority of imagination over reason, Blake rejected eighteenth-century rationalism, which he characterizes in terms of "Single vision & Newtons [sic] sleep," as opposed to his own double and even "fourfold vision" of a material world charged with spiritual energy and significance (*Complete Poetry and Prose* 722).[8] As he wrote in "There Is No Natural Religion" (1788), "If it were not for the Poetic or Prophetic character the Philosophical & Experimental would soon be at the ratio of all things, & stand still, unable to do other than repeat the same dull round over again" (*Complete Poetry and Prose* 3). That soul-deadening round is the world of "The Mental Traveller," in which "Single vision," rationalist, materialist, and unimaginative, reduces all of creation, including human beings, to the status of possessions with merely instrumental value. Only through the imagination's "mental travelling" may humanity perceive the world as bright rather than dull, ecstatically alive rather than spiritually dead.

Roethke, in keeping with his theory of giving poetic borrowings "another, or even better life," reverses the action of Blake's altering eye so that imagination revitalizes the world. His is not the "dull round" of Blake's nightmarish allegory, but a reciprocal cycle in which Roethke's own poetic and prophetic character dances with all beings, including "William Blake / For love, for Love's sake . . . ." Emerson, alluded to earlier in the poem, also joins the dance, though he goes unnamed: the line "The eye altering, alters all" appears in his writings more often than any other passage from Blake (O'Keefe 28). Clare Elliot, who points out that Emerson started reading Blake in the early 1840s, argues that this "crucial passage . . . summarizes both writers' obsessions with the relationship between the 'eye' and the 'I'." Like Blake before him and Roethke after, Emerson found the homophony of "Eye" and "I" instructive, collapsing as it does vision and the self, so that the world is only properly seen with the imaginative faculty, which can alter all for the better as well as for the worst. "Vision," Elliott continues, "for Blake, is imaginative, not merely ocular, and this is the instruction which Emerson gleans from his reading of Blake's poetry" (81). So, too, with Roethke, whose gleanings from both Blake and Emerson are on self-conscious display in "Once More, the Round." The "love" which he names twice in line 10 is synonymous with imaginative vision, which as lines 3 and 4 have it, makes "More! O More! Visible" to his I/Eye, his "true self."[9]

The poem's concluding couplet should be read with the entire poem in mind, particularly the foregoing pairs of complementary motifs and ideas: Pebble / Pond, Known / Unknown, Self / Hill, Past / Present, Human / Animal, Roethke / Blake, and Everything / One. The dualities culminate in that ultimate pairing in line 11, which expresses the speaker's mystical perception of unity: "everything comes to One . . . ." Roethke's monism reflects his readings in Asian literature, Neoplatonism, Yeats, and scholars of mysticism like Evelyn Underhill (Parini 135). His primary models, however, were Blake and Emerson, both of whom, as Richard A. O'Keefe observes, "thought dialectically—that is, contraries for them were generative or creative. Dualism, polarity, dichotomy—these modes of perceiving and organizing human experience not only appear throughout the major literary productions of both writers but also seem to produce those works, both poems and prose" (6-7). As Blake wrote in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (the title of which is notably dialectic), "Without Contraries is no Progression. The progression of which Blake speaks

is from materialism to idealism, from a world that is fallen because it is *seen* as fallen, to a world in which "Energy is Eternal Delight" (*Complete Poetry and Prose* 34). Emerson, for his part, asserts in "The Over-Soul" (1841) that "[w]e live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE" (386).[10] Such a formulation, echoed by Roethke in line 11 of his poem, may seem to devalue the physical world of nature in all its multiplicity. But Roethke forestalls that misreading: none is greater, Pebble or Pond, Te or Tao, particular or universal, material or ideal. Roethke's "One" should be understood in light of the valorization of the Earth and its denizens that permeates his poetry. "God bless the Ground!" he declares in "The Waking" (104). Even more to the point is his exclamation in "A Field of Light," that emphasizes the sacredness of nature's discrete minimals: "I saw the separateness of all things!" (60).

In the last line Roethke, Blake, and their fellow beings "dance on, dance on, dance on." Blessing describes this as "an ending that does not end. The dance goes on and on, like a musical round, like a spiraling gyre, like the evolutionary process" (218). Audrey T. Rodgers, in her study of the dance motif in the work of Roethke and other modern poets, identifies this final moment as "a resolution of the vexations of the spirit and the affirmation of a truth he had struggled a lifetime to accept: the unity of all things in nature and in man. Perceiving the cyclic pattern of life in Papa's greenhouse, he knows himself to be one with life, bird, fish, and snail" (133). Don Bogen, who has done the most thorough investigation to date of Roethke's working methods as evidenced in the poet's papers, tells us that "Roethke considered *Dance On, Dance On, Dance On* as a title for his last volume," a fact that "shows how central this affirmative vision was for him" (168). It is fitting to cite so many scholars of Roethke in concluding this essay; they, too, have their part in the dance, their turn in the round. Roethke's last poem, his last word, along with of all his work, still commands the admiration of readers and the attention of scholars, its impact continuing like that of a "ripple widening from a single stone / Winding around the waters of the world" (195).

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NOTES

[1]Pagination varies between the original 1966 hardcover edition of *The Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke* and the 1975 paperback. The paperback remains in print and has become the standard edition for scholarly citation; all quotations and citations of Roethke's poems in this essay are from the 1975 paperback. Parenthetical references to the book have been dispensed with here; only page numbers are cited.

[2]Roethke and his wife Beatrice sent "Once More, the Round" to friends as their Christmas greeting for 1961. The poem had its first journal publication in *Encounter* 18.5 (May 1962): 45, and subsequently appeared in the January 1963 issue of *Harper's Bazaar* (117).

[3]The image of concentric waves emanating from a center appears elsewhere in Emerson's writing, as in "Circles" (1841): "The life of man is a self-evolving circle, which, from a ring imperceptibly small, rushes on all sides outward to new and larger circles, and that without end" (403).

[4]Pronunciation of "toward" varies according to dialect, including whether it is spoken with one syllable or two, and if two, whether the stress should go on the second syllable or the first. In most of the United States, including Roethke's (and my) native Michigan, "toward" is monosyllabic. I scan "My true self runs toward a Hill" as iambic trimeter with an anapestic substitution in the last foot: U/ U/ UU/

Those who take "toward" to be a two-syllable word may scan line 3 as either iambic tetrameter or iambic tetrameter with a trochee in the third foot. In any case, the line ends with a rising rhythm, like nine out of twelve lines in the poem. My point about the speaker's topographical and spiritual elevation being reflected in the meter stands regardless.

[5]In her study of bird symbolism, Beryl Rowland writes that the "idea of the soul as a winged creature is not new . . . . It is a widespread and extremely ancient belief that the soul assumes the form of a bird, or, put more extremely, that all birds are human souls" (xiii).

[6]Compare the dancing with Blake in "Once More, the Round" to these lines from Roethke's poem "The Dance": "I take this cadence from a man named Yeats; / I take it, and I give it back again . . ." (101). Each reference honors its subject by viewing poetic tradition as an exchange, a cycle, a rhythm, a song, or a dance.

[7]See, for example, Roethke's poem "The Slug," which begins with the exclamation "How I loved one like you when I was little!" and ends with the poet asking that "most odious" creature "Would Blake call you holy?" (145). Roethke thus expresses uncertainty about the extent to which Blake would have agreed with his animistic creed. The question calls to mind the line of criticism that sees the Platonic idealism of the Romantics as fundamentally human-centered and potentially anti-ecological. Both Emerson and Blake have been characterized by some critics as concerned with the human relation to the supernatural at the expense of the natural world. Fredrik Chr. Brøgger, for example, asserts that Transcendentalism "proves to be a very shaky ground for the interpretation of natural phenomena. It tends to cater to an anthropomorphic and even anthropocentric inclination that is hazardous to the health of the language used to describe the natural environment, and perhaps, ultimately, to the health of that environment itself" (31).

Recent ecocriticism, however, has argued for a green Romanticism. Acknowledging that "it has been customary to categorize [Blake] as a 'gnostic' visionary who treated the natural or 'vegetative' world with contempt," Lawrence Coupe reminds us that "we must bear in mind that it was the dead universe of Newton's physics that he was rejecting; what he believed in, by contrast, was nature as a mode of revelation" (13). Kevin Hutchings makes a persuasive case for a "distinctively Blakean view of the relationship between humanity and nature, a

view that productively challenges the traditional Western notion that humans should exercise a hierarchical and narrowly anthropocentric 'dominion' over the entire non-human portion of creation" (3). Also see works by Lussier and McKusick, listed in Works Cited. Ecocritical reassessment of Roethke needs to consider conclusions drawn in such studies of his Romantic precursors.

[8]A passage in the untitled poem Blake sent to Thomas Butts on November 22, 1802, is indicated:

> For double the vision my Eyes do see
> And a double vision is always with me
> With my inward Eye 'tis an old Man grey
> With my outward a Thistle across my way (721-22)

[9]Emerson approvingly quotes Blake in his essay "Poetry and Imagination" (1883): "He who does not imagine in stronger and better light than his perishing mortal eye can see, does not imagine at all. . . . I assert for myself that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it would be a hindrance, and not action. I question not my corporeal eye any more than I would question a window concerning sight. I look through it, and not with it" (qtd. in Elliot 80). Elliot compares Blake's statement to the famous "transparent eyeball" passage in Emerson's *Nature*.

[10]This is the Eleatic One of Parmenides, subsequently discussed and developed by Greek philosophers from Plato to Plotinus.

A CAREER BEGINS: TED KOOSER'S OFFICIAL ENTRY BLANK AND AN EMERGING VOICE

JEFFREY HOTZ,

Ted Kooser's first collection of poems, *Official Entry Blank* (1969), published when the thirty-year-old poet worked as an insurance underwriter with Bankers Life of Nebraska at the beginning of what would become a successful thirty-five-year business career, is eclectic. A number of poems like "Beer Bottle," "Abandoned Farmhouse," "Rooming House," "Homestead," and "Wild Plums" may be read as harbingers of Kooser's unique poetic voice, defined by lyricism, visual detail, metaphor, and deep interest in local communities, which would emerge over the next five decades. As significantly, *Official Entry Blank* contains an underlying sense of alienation, a mood that is less evident in his later work, across poems characterized by ironic authorial detachment, sardonic treatments of family, and anxious political commentary. While disquieting elements can be found throughout his *oeuvre,* including works like the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Delights & Shadows* and his two memoirs, Kooser's more skeptical and doubtful stances tend to be understated and nuanced in his middle and late career. For a writer recognized for his attentive perceptions of people and places, as well as of flora and fauna, that enable meaningful connections, many of the poems in *Official Entry Blank* express surprising disconnections, leading to apparent dead ends. *Official Entry Blank* stands as a worthwhile collection in its own right, particularly in its artful balancing of varied, discordant elements, and provides a glimpse into the early formation of a major contemporary American poet committed to a hopeful but realistic vision of the world.

Kooser has described his *ars poetica* eloquently in his prose writing and numerous interviews. For example, in *Local Wonders: Seasons in the Bohemian Alps* (2002), Kooser explains his predilection for finding pleasure and wonder in that which lies right in front

of him: "I delight in the things I discover right within reach" (13). In *The Poetry Home Repair Manual: Practical Advice for Beginning Poets* (2005), Kooser highlights the first five words of the opening line of Jared Carter's poem, "Fire Burning in a Fifty-Five Gallon Drum," "Next time you'll notice them . . . . " (6-7), as being instructive for young writers. The poet, according to Kooser, must notice what others miss and convey the experience of discovery so as to deepen and refresh a reader's perception. Seeing the purpose of poetry as promoting a social good, Kooser quotes Nobel Prize winner Seamus Heaney in *The Poetry Home Repair Manual*: "The aim of the poet is finally *to be of service*" (Kooser's emphasis, 6). In place of wonder and service, a number of Kooser's early poems turn toward rejection and judgment. In these poems, the knowledge and insights that come from careful observation spark dislike and separation. Kooser's later poems strike a more delicate balance found in the play of light and shadow as a delight.

In addition to Kooser's process of discovery as an artist realizing his values and identifying his aims, biographical experiences likely also contributed to the unsettled tone of *Official Entry Blank*. Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Karl Shapiro had nominated Kooser's *Official Entry Blank* for publication with the University of Nebraska Press just before Shapiro left his teaching position at the university (Stillwell 58). While a University of Nebraska graduate student, Kooser had studied closely with Shapiro, an important mentor who would become a lifelong friend. After Kooser dropped out of the graduate program, he worked full time to support his family before the birth of his son. As he continued to write poetry and prepare his manuscript for publication, his marriage to Diana Tressler was failing (Stillwell 61). Just after the publication of *Official Entry Blank*, their seven-year marriage ended in divorce in 1969 (Stillwell 70). Kooser, a single father, had to adjust to new circumstances, including day-to-day separation from his three-year-old son, Jeff, who stayed with his mother on weekdays and spent weekends with his father (Stillwell 70). The tone of *Official Entry Blank* reflects anxiety and ambivalence, as well as anger, at a time when his life was changing profoundly and unexpectedly.

Kooser poignantly alludes to this difficult personal period in his 2004 essay, "Small Rooms in Time," which describes his stunned emotional response after reading a news story of a homicide of a fifteen-year-old boy in the same house, 2820 R Street, Lincoln,

Nebraska, where Kooser, his wife, and son had once lived thirty years before his divorce. Kooser revisits the pain his family endured in that house as a metaphorical murder: "At the site of where only the most common, most ordinary unhappiness had come to us—misunderstandings, miscommunications, a broken marriage like thousands and thousands of others—there had been a murder" (*Splitting an Order* 79). The upsetting memories stirred up by the murder of the teenage boy led Kooser to reflect on the compartmentalized "small rooms in time" of memory, related to "how it feels to be a young father, frightened by an enormous and threatening world, wondering what might become of his wife and son" (*Splitting an Order* 82). He adds, "For thirty years I had put it all firmly behind me, but like a perfect miniature it had waited in a corner of my heart, its room packed with memories" (81). After the teenage boy was shot—an innocent victim of a robbery attempt to steal a pound of cocaine that was never in the house—he turned toward the basement door leading to the cellar, the place that Kooser had once used as a study (*Splitting an Order* 79). Kooser relates the teenage boy's relationship with his father to his own relationship with his son, Jeff: "From time to time Jeff came to visit me at the home of friends who had taken me in. The dead boy, too, had gone to visit his father" (*Splitting an Order* 82). Although Kooser is not explicit on this point, the fifteen-year-old homicide victim had also presumably grown up with separated or divorced parents and had been on a visit to his father when the tragedy occurred.

The depictions of suffering families in a number of the poems from *Official Entry Blank* suggest facets of Kooser's own autobiography and the poet's processing of his experiences. "In "The Father," "Suicide," "Conjugal Solitude," and "Abandoned Farmhouse," for instance, emotional disturbance surfaces as the speaker addresses anxieties about fatherhood and marriage. The shadow self of the speaker is often on display, which is more unusual in his later poetry. In *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (1954), Carl Jung describes the "shadow" as a conflict between one's higher ideals of the spiritual man and the day-to-day responses that fall short of noble intentions amid the frustrations of life (273). Jung explains the phenomenon by quoting the lament of Goethe's Faust, "Two souls, alas, dwell in my breast apart" (273), a phrase that could perhaps apply to Kooser's emotional state as he put together *Official Entry Blank*.

In the final four lines of the single-stanza poem, "The Father," the speaker touches the wetness left by his young son's mouth on his

chest, where the father had positioned the child to soothe him before putting the boy back to bed. In that spot of tender embrace, the father feels lingering hurt:

> Touching the wet spot where his cheek
> has pressed I feel it turn to ice;
> beneath the numb and tingling ribs
> my heart shakes in a cage of bone. (22)

In the haiku-like six-line "Suicide," the speaker describes, without apparent affect, a husband who beholds the body of his hanged wife. The final two lines merge the speaker's and the widower's eerie detachment in an unspeakable irony that suggests possible relief: "love was her feet / hanging down" (44). "Conjugal Solitude," an aphoristic treatment of marital estrangement, describes the radio playing as a sound wall that separates a couple and irritates one spouse, becoming "a target" (59) of his resentment, which is symptom rather than the cause of their discontent. "Abandoned Farmhouse," a poem that critic William Barillas reads perceptively as Kooser's pastoral vision and "eye for social history, writing . . . about small farms that failed, or were failed by the industrial economy" (211), touches personal registers, too. Although the husband and wife in "Abandoned Farmhouse" are farmers from a bygone agrarian age, evident in the long abandoned, dilapidated homestead, the poem tells the story of a suffering nuclear family comprised of husband, wife, and son. The exact cause of their pain remains unknown, illustrated in the speaker's unsatisfactory twice-repeated phrase in the final stanza, "Something went wrong" (53). The poem ends with a vision of a child *in absentia*, a son around the same age of the poet's own son, who once playacted as a farmer with "a rubber cow, / a rusty tractor with a broken plow, / a doll in overalls" (53) and whose "toys are strewn in the yard / like branches after a storm" (53).

Perhaps to contain and conceal the personal dynamics inflected through the poetry, Kooser arranged the eighty poems of *Official Entry Blank* around the ironic conceit of the collection as a submission to a contest. The nearly eponymous opening poem, "Official Entry Form," serves as the supposed entry form to which the poet's collection responds. "Official Entry Form" purposefully differs from the book title, *Official Entry Blank*, which Kooser emphasized in a January 1969 letter to his editor, Virginia Faulkner, after he had reviewed the book proofs: "There is no poem in the book called

'Official Entry Blank.'" (qtd. in Stillwell 61). Rejecting the book title that appeared on the proofs at that time, "Official Entry Blank and Other Poems," Kooser stated his larger intention for the collection, explaining his reasoning for this preferred title: "*Official Entry Blank*, by itself, would refer to the collection as a whole—to the collection as a formal entry into the competition between books of poems" (qtd. in Stillwell 61). "The use of the title," Kooser added, "should imply that, as in an entry to a contest, the person entering has employed everything in his bag of tricks in the hope of success. This aspect reflects the heterogeneous nature of the book" (qtd. in Stillwell 61). The term "official entry blank," a phrase that largely dropped from American use in the late 1980s, is synonymous with a standard cover letter that must provide stipulated information outlined in an announcement. The book title, *Official Entry Blank,* and the title of the first poem, "Official Entry Form," imply an empty, unnamed, and potentially unremarkable submission, signaling further ironic distance.

"Official Entry Form," the opening sonnet, places an ironic mirror to the poet's endeavor to achieve success in the, at times, detached business of poetry publication. With alternating rhyme (ABAB, CDCD, DEDE, FF), the poem begins disjunctively with a near-slant rhyme from the unusual consonance of "January 1st" and "Editors" in the first and third lines. The poem, at the same time, conforms to the traditional Shakespearean sonnet structure with iambic pentameter, despite a slight irregularity in the eighth line, which has eleven syllables. The concluding rhyming couplet states the preference of the "Editors"—a term Kooser capitalizes to signify their sense of self-importance—for free verse. The poem provides no explanation why, however, making this an arbitrary choice, not a thoughtful artistic judgment: "Good luck! And please remember that we all / Prefer free verse to the traditional" (3). The third quatrain establishes the peremptory, capricious power of Editors, selected by virtue of their "fame," not their ability, who will acquire copyright for the successful poems, "winners," while they will incinerate all poems that do not come as stipulated: "All entries lacking postage will be burned" (3). With a playful yet mocking tone, Kooser satirizes the work of editors who enjoy the god-like power both to destroy and to possess.

The speaker of the poem "A Contribution to My Magazine," dedicated to A.W., ironically adopts the problematic persona of an editor himself, the recipient of another poet's contribution. The poem

possesses a subtle structure, a precursor to a style that Mary K. Stillwell identifies as a "Kooser sonnet," defined as "typically a poem of ten to twenty lines that generally follows the sonnet structure" through which Kooser "takes liberties with the sonnet form" (Stillwell 119, 64). Kooser's "A Contribution to My Magazine" works through a series of "or" appositive-like statements that rename the places from which the submission has been sent. The speaker's own poem about the young woman poet who has submitted her poems for review reflects the preference of the supposed "Editors" in "Official Entry Form" for "free verse to the traditional" (3). The speaker of "A Contribution to My Magazine" achieves the expectations that the young woman poet fails to reach. Kooser's speaker takes on the role of the judgmental, critical reader who knows the name and the address of the aspiring poet and then invents her history, making her the subject of his own poem. The poem, with its associative renaming, operates on a level akin to reverse psychological transference in which the speaker, a poet operating as editor, transfers his own insecurities onto the young woman, an aspiring poet like himself. The editor as poet becomes the force he fears: the critic. Psychologist Benjamin Wolstein describes transference in the clinical context as follows: "new editions or facsimiles of the tendencies and phantasies . . . are aroused and made conscious during the progress of the analysis; but they have this peculiarity . . . that they replace some earlier person by the person of the physician" (53). The speaker of "A Contribution to My Magazine" unconsciously sees himself in the young poet and, in a patronizing manner, responds to her in the way he himself fears, with rejection.

Developing his impression of the female poet based on the return address, "a dormitory room" (37), that she has dutifully included with her submission, the older editor and poet indulges in a male fantasy, imagining the writer's room suggestively, commenting on "desks and beds," each mentioned twice in the poem, as well as on randomly "drying brassieres" in a dorm room that is "trying to be the room / she grew up in" (37). The speaker envisions the young woman's dorm room as conforming to parental expectations, "with a picture from one of her parents' walls" (37), while the young woman herself struggles to challenge these expectations with a wall hanging "that one of her parents would never have hung on a wall / for one of their reasons" (37). The speaker of the poem searches hopefully for signs of transgression, not in the poem itself, as an astute editor would be

expected to, but in the person of the poet herself and her relationship to parental authority.

The turn of this Kooser sonnet, beginning in the middle of line ten and continuing to the finale in the sixteenth line, is a variation of the traditional sestet of the Petrarchan sonnet. In the final six and a half lines, the male poet and editor finds the poet's loneliness irresistibly enticing, as he revels in her vulnerability away from home. "Half home and half not," he notes, "the poem has made her / terribly alone with herself" (37). Kooser uses enjambment to emphasize the speaker's interest in the female poet and his consciousness of the power he wields over her poem: "I love her, / There sitting and writing her terrible poem / not so much to me as to her address. I love her, / there sitting and writing her wonderful poem" (37). Twice affirming his "love," the speaker exercises in a new way the "right to claim / all rights" like the arbiters of taste in "Official Entry Form" as he makes herself and her failed poem the subject of his poem. The sense of mastery in which the speaker indulges discloses the speaker's own vulnerability.

In *The Poetry Home Repair Manual*, Kooser expresses hesitation about confessional, first-person poetry, advocating instead "a different manner of poetry writing: the writing of impersonal observation" (*Poetry Home Repair* 97). Kooser observes, "Beginning writers, looking for subjects, are frequently advised to write about what they know, and since they know themselves better than anything else, they write about themselves" (97). He then asks, "But what about writing about things other than ourselves?" (97). Poems like "A Contribution to My Magazine" may be the kind of poetry Kooser has in mind for the beginning poet to avoid. Critic Wes Mantooth sees "impersonal observation" as a key component of Kooser's later poetry in which "readers must guess at the inner of life of the subject" (32).

Yet Kooser's confessional poetry in *Official Entry Blank* is ironically impersonal as the speaker presents himself as both the subject and object of his own detached observation, incorporating the external point of view in the confessional mode. The speaker in the seven-line "Home Town," for example, identifies himself with his hometown as opposed to the aspects that make him a unique individual. In the opening and mildly hopeful declarative line, "You may have seen me; maybe you did" (40), the speaker depicts himself as he may have been seen. The poet then paints an unflattering portrait of himself as an unoriginal attention seeker who "usually looked like some of the rest—" (40), who feigns being a town tough with "bleached-

out Levis, boots with chains, / leather jacket, and duck's ass hair" (40), before he announces honestly, "I would've been looking like I was looking / for fights but I wasn't" (40). The double use of "looking" in the fifth line achieves a mirror effect related to seeing and seeing oneself reflected. Similar to the poet who wishes for recognition in the supposed contest of *The Official Entry Blank* but who realizes the hollowness of the prize and the process that confers it, the speaker of "Home Town," admits in the final lines with ironic enjambment, "I was looking / to see if you'd see me, and so were the rest" (40). The speaker seeks authenticity through the ironic act of unmasking his inauthentic self.

The placement of the next poem, the fourteen-word "Cornflower," ingeniously reveals the speaker's self though impersonal observation. "Cornflower" describes in spare language the blueness of the cornflower, a plant that, unlike the speaker of "Home Town," is what it professes to be, "blue," and nothing else. Shifting suddenly from the self-revelation of "Home Town" to the natural description of "Cornflower" may seem a deliberate movement away from introspection. However, when juxtaposed with "Home Town," the blue in "Cornflower" suggests not just a color but a feeling that corresponds exactly with the speaker's sadness related to the experience of neither being oneself nor feeling like oneself.

Kooser's final poem in *Official Entry Blank*, "Man Opening a Book of Poems," underscores the poet's sense of ironic detachment from the collection, drawing a humorous analogy between a reader discovering a poem in a book and a man lifting up a rock to find a bug beneath: "Waving its wet antennae to the light, / a poem in its narrow track / stops dead and lifts its mossy mouth to him" (83). Just as Mr. Samsa in Franz Kafka's masterpiece, *The Metamorphosis,* shuts the door on his son Gregor after he transmogrifies into a bug, the male reader depicted in this poem decidedly turns down the invitation of the "mossy mouth" of the poem: "He lets the page fall softly back on it / and presses down the cover with both hands" (82). The placement as the last poem, however, subtly undercuts this rejection because readers who come to the final poem, more likely than not, have accepted the invitation, only closing the book after having completed it.

Kooser revisits the theme of the poet reaching a reluctant reader in his well-known poem, "Selecting a Reader," which appeared first in *A Local Habitation & a Name* (1974) and was later republished as the opening poem for *Sure Signs* (1980). Changing the gender of the

imagined reader from male to female, now conceived as a woman at a bookstore who chooses to spend her money to have her raincoat cleaned rather than to purchase the book of poems, Kooser depicts once again the rejection of the poem and the artist. In "Selecting a Reader," however, the speaker chooses her, of all his possible readers, as his ideal—the everyday, nonacademic reader whom Ted Kooser has purposely and successfully addressed for decades.

In addition to complex ironic detachment, which paradoxically reveals and conceals, *Official Entry Blank* contains sardonic studies of the family, a sacrosanct subject in his later poetry and prose. The tone in *Official Entry Blank* differs from that of Kooser's classic memoir, *Lights on a Ground of Darkness: An Evocation of a Place and Time* (2005), which depicts childhood and family with stunning, refined discernment. In *Lights on a Ground of Darkness*, Kooser paints complicated, three-dimensional pictures of family members in precise miniatures, showing their strengths and weaknesses with care. The book title, a phrase taken from a longer quotation from the Scottish poet Edwin Muir that Kooser uses as the epigraph, signifies the impermanence of the past and the vagaries of memory, which demand humility from the writer: "Our memories of a place, no matter how fond we were of it, are little more than a confusion of lights on a ground of darkness" (*Lights on a Ground* xi). In contrast, in *Official Entry Blank* Kooser inserts astringent closing lines in his poetry, set up with subtle diction, to turn poems from evident, though tense, appreciation of the family to complaint and criticism.

In the eleven-line "Gifted Hands," for example, the speaker notes the family's admiration of others' "gifted hands," a metonym for artistry and worth, and their sense of superiority in the hands of "Sister," a word the speaker capitalizes without giving the sister's name. The family is in awe of Sister's ability to paint horses' heads on coffee cups: "she painted hundreds, everyone alike, / with the same wild-stallions glass eyes / and petal pink flared nostrils. We were proud" (9). The final two lines of the poem, however, suddenly undercut the family's pride in Sister: "we gave her horses to the relatives / until a cousin said they looked like cows" (9). The poem sets up this shift with the repetitive, unchanging nature of Sister's painting, a foreshadowing of her mediocrity. Significantly, the extended family rejects the nuclear family's naïve conceitedness about Sister's abilities, and the speaker goes one step further by making the sister's lack of skill a poem. As if to reverse these sentiments, in the two-qua-

train, "To My Younger Sister," written in iambic tetrameter with alternate rhyme, the speaker expresses regret about their relationship: "I had forgotten you were there;" (76). The speaker asks his sister to guide him back to his former, presumably better, self: "Please lead me back to where we were / Before my first mistake" (76).

The six-line mock elegy, "Cousin Sue," also questions the accomplishments of family members. Kooser mismatches irregular line length with a consistent ABABCC rhyme scheme to mirror the poorly written poetry and letter writing of cousin Sue, referred to as "dear Sue" (58). The speaker's own poetic talents parody his cousin's failed prosody. With a sing-song internal rhyme in line five followed by parentheses in the concluding sixth line—techniques that are inappropriate in a funeral poem—the speaker concludes the poem by conflating cousin Sue's lack of writing talent with an apparently failed life: "Whoever knew dear Sue before she died / can say (with reservations) that she tried" (58).

"Letter from Aunt Belle," "Aunt Johanna the Spinster," and "Snapshot from a Reunion Picnic" depict eccentric aunts who find solace and meaning through flowers. "Letter from Aunt Belle," presented as a found poem from an actual letter written by the aunt to her nephew, reveals through dramatic monologue Aunt Belle's limited, callous perspective. Without empathy, Aunt Belle recounts how the neighboring Samson family's stove exploded, killing their daughter, as an *aide-mémoire*, having "reminded me of . . . Sarah's wedding!" (ellipses in original, 7). Showing no concern for her neighbors' bereavement or how this news will impact her nephew, Aunt Belle describes the corpse of the dead daughter, "who always made me think of you," in terms intended, in fact, to solicit sympathy for herself, looking "as old / as poor old me" before she announces, "I have to go—" (7). Aunt Belle understands the meaning of the fatality as an unwelcome interruption as she tries to fulfill her promise to water violet slips for her nephew. The letter ends, despite the inconvenience, with the completed task: "The violet slips are ready— / Write." (7). The five-quatrain "Aunt Johanna the Spinster" reveals another aunt without self-knowledge who clings, according to the speaker in the first two lines, to memories of a false lover from her youth: "How many times has your memory embraced / the supple innocence he seemed that night" (73). Like Aunt Belle, Aunt Johanna comforts herself with flowers, which the speaker comments on in an

imagined address to his aunt: "Yours is the single answer to regrets— / a sunny window banked with violets" (74).

The ten-line "Snapshot from a Reunion Picnic" portrays Aunt Veenie unflatteringly as she attempts to preserve a family picnic through flower clippings: "Aunt Veenie fondles the violets / she'd dug out of the picnic grounds" (52). The speaker, meanwhile, takes a picture of Aunt Veenie as she packs the picnic items in the car trunk: "I let the shutter snap / On Veenie, holding the trunk lid up / to pack the picnic and the day / by the hot spare tire" (52). The scene appears tranquil and worth preserving until the speaker introduces a different "snap," a quotation in italics in the final two lines: *"The cousins hissed / Oh let the old fool have her goddam way"* (52). The poem expresses the seething family resentment and unwillingness to empathize reminiscent of Flannery O'Connor's fiction. Aunt Veenie clings to a family memory that her relatives see as an annoyance.

In three poems, "Scope," "The Anti-Mosquito Campaign," and "Story Problem," Kooser directly addresses political subjects, which is uncommon in his middle and late career, and he does so without any resolution. In a 2012 interview, Kooser commented that political messages are not a major part of his writing: "I have written a few poems with political messages, but they are far from my best work. That kind of poem falls into the category of occasional verse, and writing for occasions just doesn't work for me" (qtd. in Hotz 51). A challenge of occasional verse on current political topics is the writer's inability to know what will happen next. The three overtly political poems of *Official Entry Blank* rely upon speakers who are distressed by their witness of world's events and unable to respond, overwhelmed both intellectually and emotionally. The three poems end with an emerging yet incomplete insight.

The eight-stanza "Scope," comprising unrhymed couplets, dramatizes Martin Luther King's assassination of April 4, 1969, in a detached manner that suggests a benumbed speaker who cannot mentally process the event. The speaker's perspective is distanced from Dr. King in a third-person point of view that merges instead with actual viewpoint of the hateful assassin, James Earl Ray, Jr., through the rifle's scope. Dr. King appears in the assassin's scope in the moment right before and immediately after the horror of the assassin's pressing the trigger. The poem combines the Christian imagery of the crucifix with the crosshairs of the scope itself, "under the ignorant cross / in the hideous scope" (34), centering on Dr. King and the

contrast between black and white, suggested by Dr. King's white shirt collar and his neck and throat, "white against black— / where the collar circled / the throat throbbing / with freedom" (34). The poem ends by suggesting complicity with Dr. King's murder that encompasses the speaker, the reader, and the nation as a whole. In the final stanza, the speaker asks for divine intervention, "God save us, again, / your stupid children" (34), but the entreaty arises more from despair than faith. The word "again" renders Dr. King as a martyred savior like Jesus Christ.

In the environmentally conscious "The Anti-Mosquito Campaign," the speaker feels overwhelmed by the damage he sees being done to nature yet is unable to take action. The poem ends with a muted plea for divine help through a biblical allusion to a Genesis-like flood. In tercet stanzas that constrict exposition, "The Anti-Mosquito Campaign" depicts the aftermath of mosquito spraying as a human-inflicted horror. In the opening lines, the speaker recounts how he hears the pesticide spraying, "All night long, / trucks hissed in the trees" (39), but does not see the process. The next day at dawn and at noon, and then in subsequent days, he beholds the aftermath of the spraying, described in three concise stanzas. Just as he fails to witness the spraying, the speaker fails to examine the causal relationships and human actors behind the spraying, but he suggests, to borrow Rachel Carson's term, an unchangeable "biocide" (8) that threatens all life in a desiccated world that can only be purged through an apocalyptic flood: "After the town / was as dry as a skull, / it rained bucketfuls" (39). The foreboding observation of aftereffects expresses, at best, a pessimistic, qualified faith born from despondency, not conviction, which ends in unavoidable yet purifying devastation.

In the four-quatrain Vietnam War protest poem, "Story Problem," the speaker envisions the corpses of eleven soldiers, "cold and dead" (55), being transported by rail to the soldiers" home towns for burial, as an incalculable algebraic word problem like those found in high school math textbooks. The presentation of the abstract math problem, coupled with the poem's AABB rhyme scheme reminiscent of the nursery rhyme, jars with the somber subject matter and the tragedy of the eleven deceased soldiers. After trying to relate the variables A, B, and C to different place names in order to arrive at some deflected answer related to speed and travel, the speaker arrives at an abrupt conclusion, asking the immediate, personal question:

"Which of the soldiers looks like me?" (55). The logical answer, which the poem does not supply, is that all of them look like the speaker, the unsettling truth of warfare. After fifteen non-sequitur lines in a math question focused on the train travel itself, not the larger political and social circumstances of the eleven soldiers' death, the poem arrives at the appropriate question in the last line, a starting point for an understanding of war.

While Kooser is not known for explicit political commentary, his later work retains a subtle political consciousness where the speaker maintains control of the subject matter and the emotional impacts while offering political messages for sensitive readers who engage with the writing on an imaginative level. In *Delights & Shadows* (2004), for instance, Kooser's "Four Civil War Paintings by Winslow Homer," a four-poem ekphrastic series, offers a prescient study of the myriad human impacts of war that correspond to the unfolding tragic dynamics of the 2001-2014 war in Afghanistan and the 2003-2011 war in Iraq. In his memoir, *Local Wonders*, Kooser begins the section on "Summer" by sympathizing with the two contracted men who, lacking proper protective clothing and the health-care protections of county employees, risk future deadly cancers as they spray herbicides from the back of a 1978 Ford truck. Kooser criticizes the county's policy, which, in addition to killing weeds, results in death of flora and fauna, as well as unpleasant human impacts because "they're spraying nearly everything else" (40), a vision that corresponds with "The Anti-Mosquito Campaign." Kooser's children's books, *Bag in the Wind* and *House Held Up by Trees*, advocate for environmental protection and a symbiotic connection between people and the natural world. In each book, respect for the environment leads to human connection, whereas disrespect causes social disruption.

Any assessment of these early poems must take into account Kooser's stated ambivalence about *Official Entry Blank* in particular and, to a lesser extent, his two follow-up collections, *A Local Habitation & a Name* (1974) and *Not Coming to Be Barked At* (1976). In *The Poetry Home Repair Manual*, Kooser, describes himself as a beginning poet with self-deprecation: "I was an artificial poet, a phony, when by rubbing shoulders with poetry, I gradually became interested in writing it" (4). More recently, in an interview after his October 2, 2014, reading from *Splitting an Order* for the Seattle Arts & Lectures series, Kooser referred to *Official Entry Blank* disparagingly as "really an embarrassment." In a June 24,

2015, interview with John Stanizzi at the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival at the Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington, Connecticut, Kooser answered an audience member's question about his poetic voice by differentiating his early works from middle and late career works: "I think the most important thing as a writer is to figure out how to be yourself, and I think I figured out how to be myself, maybe I started to, when I was in my forties. My poems before are a little bit more derivative of other poems." Eliciting the audience's laughter, Kooser stressed the weakness of *Official Entry Blank* in personal terms: "My first book, which if I find one at a garage sale, I buy it and hide it. It's a terrible embarrassment to me." The autographed and inscribed copy of *Official Entry Blank*, which I borrowed from Marshall University in West Virginia to write this article, suggests this discomfort is not new. Kooser's inscription reads, "For John—This Ancient Embarrassment—Ted, 7/8/84."

Among contemporary poets, Kooser's knowledge of himself as a poet and of prosody is unequaled, but his assessment of *Official Entry Blank* is overly critical, reflective, in my opinion, of Kooser's exacting standards. Readers will conclude that Karl Shapiro was right to recommend *Official Entry Blank* for publication. In the late 1960s, Shapiro saw Ted Kooser, based on the quality of his poetry, as a promising young writer with a powerful emerging voice. Shapiro's introduction to Kooser's follow-up, *A Local Habitation & a Name,* highlights Kooser's artistic prowess: "Few poets have captured the spirit of place as he." While Kooser's middle and later career work differs from the poems found in *Official Entry Blank*, especially with respect to the sense of unease and uncertainty of these early poems, numerous points of continuity remain. The evolution of the career begins with *Official Entry Blank*. Kooser's decades-long view of the unfitness of the first book is consistent with the self-consciousness that pervades the first collection. With an understanding of the collection as an incomplete first step, he named his book *Official Entry Blank*. Kooser's artistic priorities and values would gradually emphasize a holistic, unifying artistic vision based in human dignity and respect for the natural world. His later poetry would incorporate the kinds of vexed and ironic meditations that emerged in his first collection within orientations that, on the surface, afforded more constructive possibilities.

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WORLDLY TEMPTATIONS, BOTH URBAN AND RURAL: J. F. POWERS'S *MORTE D'URBAN*

JEFFREY SWENSON

The frontispiece of J.F. Powers's *Morte D'Urban*, winner of the 1963 National Book Award, presents the reader with a comic coat of arms for the novel's protagonist, Father Urban Roche. The heraldry contains many ironic references to the novel, including a dented helm alluding to Urban's position as a holy knight and his head injury on a golf course, a stag's head crest connected to one of his final challenges, and the banner "BE A WINNER" slung below the shield, a motto instilled in Urban by his mentor, the worldly and winning Father Placidus. The coat of arms also forecasts a central plot device, as the shield is supported on either side by the contrasting modern line drawings representing the novel's key settings: the skyscrapers of Urban's Chicago and the towering pines of rural Minnesota. This illustration of country and city within the coat of arms foreshadows the significance of the urban and rural dynamic in the text, and especially the importance of both settings in Urban's moral development. The image suggests the fish-out-of-water scenario that will drive much of the humor in *Morte D'Urban*, but more importantly, it posits the worldly difficulties that will plague Urban in both the country and the city, hinting at how Powers will playfully complicate and subvert standard expectations of the urban/rural dichotomy. And, as a novel about a nonconventional priest set upon a comic holy quest, *Morte D'Urban* ultimately questions deep assumptions of materialism and redemption, of the home and the cosmopolitan, and, finally, of friendship.

Powers's framework in *Morte D'Urban* is straightforward: Urban is a priest of a third-tier fictional Catholic holy order, the Clementines, who "were unique in that they were noted for nothing at all. They were in bad shape all over the world . . . . Their college was failing, their high schools were a break-even proposition at best, and their parishes, except for a few, were in unsettled parts of Texas

and New Mexico where no order in its right mind would go" (15). While the rest of his order is filled primarily with substandard men seemingly content with their lot as priests and brothers in a failing order, Urban is obsessed with being a winner. He has spent much of his adult life as a travelling priest based in Chicago, filling in at parishes for vacationing pastors, leading spiritual retreats and missions, and cultivating benefactors along the way. Urban's greatest win to date, Billy Cosgrove, a crass but wealthy native of Chicago, will prove to be his greatest spiritual challenge. While Billy's largesse allows the Clementines to move their office out of the slums of the Chicago Loop to a storefront in a more affluent location, the Provincial—the leader of the Clementines—rewards Urban's fundraising success with an assignment to the order's "latest white elephant," an abandoned sanatorium in rural Duesterhaus, Minnesota, that has been renamed St. Clement's Hill and now serves as a "retreat house for laymen" (15, 64). The plot follows Urban's struggles to find his footing as a doer in a setting where it seems there is little to be done. Against these odds, Urban achieves great things, promoting a new church building in a nearby parish and building a golf course on the grounds of St. Clement's Hill, making the retreat highly popular among the laity.

For good reason, much of the literary criticism of *Morte D'Urban* concerns the book as a distinctly Catholic and religious novel that follows the worldly temptations of Father Urban, or his concern with the daily and monetary needs of his order, as opposed to more lofty sacred goals. As Thomas Merton notes: "His clerical zeal, though energetic, is based on an assumed equation between his own enlightened self-interest and the interests of the Church . . . . In a word, he is a public relations man, an operator, a ham" (150). Unlike the other members of his order, Urban's work as an itinerant preacher sets him up well to cultivate donors:

> While others talked of *more*—more time on the air, more publications, more schools, ever more activity of the kind that had already overextended their lines—Father Urban stumped the country, preaching retreats and parish missions, and did the work of a dozen men. And still he found the time and energy to make friends, as enjoined by Scripture, with the mammon of iniquity. (16)

Mammon generally refers to any worldly action or material good that would distract one from a connection with God, as in, "You cannot

serve God and mammon" (*Douay-Rheims Challoner Bible,* Matt. 6:24). The scripture Powers refers to on the mammon of iniquity, however—the parable of the unjust steward—is not so straightforward, as therein Jesus enjoins, "Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity; that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings . . . . If then you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon; who will trust you with that which is the true?" (Luke 16: 9, 11). Urban himself calls the parable "a difficult text," and thinks perhaps that "Our Lord . . . may have been a little tired on the day he spoke this parable" (231). Despite his worry over the meaning of the parable, Urban clearly places some value in his skill with "unjust mammon," and as such is frustrated at being pulled from the city and placed at St. Clement's under the supervision of Father Wilfred, a priest stingy and ungifted in his worldly stewardship. How can Urban be expected to be trusted "with that which is true" after working with Wilfred, who, in renovating the retreat house, cuts paint with thinner so much that it "tinkled like water" and ends up having to redo the job because that thin paint bled?

The conflict between Urban's stewardship in this world and Wilfred's stewardship in the next prompts one of the critical debates about the novel: Is Urban simply a too-worldly priest, or does he learn a spiritual lesson? James Wood asserts the former of both *Morte D'Urban* and Powers's second novel: "The relentless emphasis on worldly parish activity, or on petty vices, at the experience of any discussion of spiritual aspiration becomes a little stultifying" (118). To read the novel as lacking a spiritual core, however, means that the reader has to identify more with the perspective of Father Urban than with the narrator. John Hagopian distances himself from Urban's worldly view in order to find a lesson in the novel; he notes that stripped of Urban's wry and hilarious perspective, "the plot can be seen as the experience of a man who uses the priesthood as an instrument for worldly success until a traumatic event shocks him into awareness that compromise with the mammon of iniquity is morally and spiritually degrading" ("Irony" 159). Both of these poles—either identifying with Urban too much or discounting his perspective as too worldly—run the risk of turning the novel into a didactic one, portraying Urban's journey either as exclusively morally empty or exclusively spiritually triumphant. Instead of drifting into didacticism, Powers's novel instead delves into the tricky ambiguities of attempting to live both in the world and beyond it.

Part of the difficulty in seeing this complexity within *Morte D'Urban* is its narrative voice, one Patricia Hampl has compared to that in Jane Austen's novels (21). Like Austen, Powers writes a slight, sly distance between his third-person narrator and Urban's perspective on the world, adding a wink and a nod, allowing the reader to understand the sometime folly of Urban's judgements and actions. Readers rightly wince when Father Urban rationalizes his benefactor Billy Cosgrove's boorish behavior, such as when Cosgrove uses Urban's presence in his car as an excuse to get out of a speeding ticket (9). At the same time, Powers sculpts Urban's perspective on his world as sympathetic and even alluring: when Urban first comments on the scruffiness of St. Clement's Hill, and of Father Wilfred's consistently cheap and short-sighted approach to dealing with the maintenance of the retreat—when the reader sees the shoddiness of the place through Urban's eyes—it is difficult not to agree with his assessment.

One standard note in critical approaches to the novel is to mistrust this alluring assessment, as does Hagopian: "An alert reader can see everything qualified by context and tone, rather than naïvely accept the neurotic narrative view of Urban as definitive" (154).[1] Following this impulse, many critics have taken the reader's easy identification with Urban's attention to mammon as a signal that *Morte* is a didactic novel, as Walter Clark claims: "The reader who accepts the author's bait judges Urban by conventional American standards of success throughout the first half of the novel, only to have his interpretation stultified by the events of the second half" (21). To fully retreat from Urban's perspective, however, is to flatten the novel, to iron out ambiguity: Powers offers readers more than that.

At the same time, Powers sets those readers up to expect a more simple theme; the urban/rural dynamic of *Morte D'Urban* seems on face to bolster a didactic reading, as many of Urban's spiritual deficits do stem from his attachment to an urbane and cosmopolitan lifestyle. It should be good for Urban to have his dinners at the Pump Room and jaunts in red convertibles stripped from him when he is shipped off to Duesterhaus. D.H. Stewart observes, "Urban twentieth century American life determines [Powers's] character's every deed" (31), while Thomas Preston notes that in *Morte D'Urban* Powers "sets the conflict between this-worldliness and other-worldliness in the traditional opposition of city and country" (97). Robert Benson goes even further in this construction:

> The great Midwestern cities such as Chicago and St. Paul are in Powers's fiction emblems of the world, the world of the tripartite formula that includes the flesh and the devil—three things that the Christian must reject; . . . Powers opposes to Chicago and St. Paul remote rural churches and monastic foundations where the bleak cold of winter offers the clearest view of the way of sanctification, a chill *via negativa* of discomfort and daily self-denial in such places as St. Clement's Hill, Duesterhaus, and Ostergothenberg. (184)

While this construction of the rural as antidote to the sins of the city is as alluring as Urban's own perspective in the narrative, the urban/rural dichotomy fails to recognize that the relocation that fuels conflict—Urban's forced move from a travelling priest's life based in Chicago to a more monastic existence at a rural outpost in Minnesota—does not actually solve his spiritual problems. Whether he is stationed in the city, at a suburban parish, at the rural retreat of St. Clement's Hill, or even in the wilderness of northern Minnesota, Urban is beset by this-worldly temptation—of vanity, of flesh, and of mammon.

Far from being a pastoral celebration of the simplicity of the rural as opposed to the complex and tempting cosmopolitanism of the city, Power's novel actually posits a constant and ever-present temptation of the worldly. Powers interrogates dichotomies that link temptation with the city and Franciscan holiness with the rural, positing instead a more comprehensive—and challenging—vision of worldly temptation in modern life. In short, the novel complicates a simple understanding of both simple country life and spiritual retreat.

Part of the reason it is so easy to read *Morte D'Urban* as a novel that celebrates the rural is that Powers so deftly constructs Father Urban as a character who loves the city. Beyond the obvious symbolism of Father Urban's taken name, Powers works throughout the novel to establish his protagonist's delight in all Chicago has to offer. When Urban finds that his friend Father Jack has also been assigned to Duesterhaus, he takes them—on Billy Cosgrove's dime—out to Chicago's Pump Room, a restaurant famous for its exotic fare of shish kabob and for its celebrity diners. When Jack gapes at the coffee served by a "colored boy got up in turban, white breeches, and green hose," Urban admits he has been to the restaurant before, not disclosing that "he had been there many times, and was known there even before he met Billy" (28-29). Jack is obviously ill at ease with the outlandish display of the restaurant, as he jumps back when "a

Turk passed with a piece of meat on a flaming sword," but Urban remains blasé: "Oh, that's all part of coming here" (29). Urban's tastes tend toward the luxurious, including dinners at French restaurants like Chicago's L'Aiglon, good scotch, and Cuban cigars (19). But it is important to note that while he enjoys high living, Urban does not horde his delicacies, instead spreading them as treats, as with his taking Jack to the Pump Room and sharing gifts of liquor with Father Wilfred and the others at St. Clement's Hill. He also uses his mammon to grease the wheel, as when he soothes Monsignor Renton—a powerful rural priest—with a fine cigar (207). Urban's appreciation for worldly goods is surely suspect, but readers should also be aware of how Urban turns the worldly to the work of the Church, often if not always to benign effect. Urban's urbanity may be his defining characteristic, but Powers determines to make that urbanity an ambiguous mix used for both good and ill.[2]

And again, while Father Urban's appreciation for worldly goods appears unseemly, his frustration at the grubbiness and inefficiency of his order and the Church in general is both a wellspring of humor and a gateway to sympathy from the reader. In the first pages of the book, Urban massages Billy Cosgrove first by giving him a tour of the Clementines' dilapidated offices in the Chicago Loop: "The old building occupied by the Clementines had been in receivership for years and looked it—looked condemned, in fact . . . . That nothing . . . like painting or washing had been done in all the time of their tenancy, was now a matter of pride with some of his colleagues" (9). While the reader does have to view with skepticism the perverse "pride" that Urban sees in his colleagues' feeling, the office visit—coupled with a gift to Billy of firewood of some split oak logs from the novitiate lands—does produce a reciprocal gift from Billy, a new office in Chicago. The slick new space, provided for only the cost of a "prayer" and "three cords of oak firewood annually," fails to evoke the kind of pride within the Clementines that Urban had hoped: "Father Urban was annoyed that so few of the men seemed to appreciate the new location, except for its nearness to the lake. They went for interminable walks just as if they were at the novitiate. Among themselves they jeered at the neighborhood's smart shops, at its restaurants with foreign names" (13). Urban dines at those restaurants, and while his attachment to the "smart shops" may be suspect, so, too, is his fellow Clementines' reaction to the "foreign" names of the restaurants or the fact that men treat their time working in the city

the same as if they were at the novitiate. Powers's narrative structure makes it difficult to determine the meaning of their long walks: readers are likely not to trust completely Urban's skewed perspective on their rejection of the upscale restaurants, but their walks clearly do not involve going out to do good works. And judging the relative value of actions is difficult even within the rules of a holy order. For example, the Clementines not only forego all possessions, but also pockets, as "St. Clement of Blois, the Holy Founder of the Order . . . regarded pockets rather than money as the root of evil" (10). Who is more holy, these jeering Clementines who neither take nor give as they move through the streets of Chicago, or Urban, who both takes and gives prodigiously? Pockets or no, urban or rural, a priest must live in the world. Relations with the world are more complex and problematic than a simple avoidance of worldly goods.

Whatever distance readers are supposed to keep from Father Urban, in chapter four, "Gray Days," Powers's narrator offers sympathy in describing the young Harvey Roche—the boy who will become Father Urban. Roche—literally "rock" in French—has been born in that part of Illinois where Catholics were outsiders in a world run by Protestants: "If you were a Catholic boy like Harvey Roche, you felt that it was their country, handed down to them by the Pilgrims, George Washington, and others" (75). Evoking F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams," Harvey is a caddy at the country club where his father works as a greenskeeper, and where he learns "that the best people, though Protestants, didn't always use the best language, or the best balls" (76), and where he is besieged by bullies who rip the buttons off his fly and hit him on the bony parts of his arms, "all because he could outplay them at golf" (81). Here Powers prompts the reader to empathize with the Harvey-who-will-become-Urban, and these foundational experiences are the rock upon which Urban the priest's unique perspective and personality are born—a strange combination of American Dream success story and religious man. For Harvey responds to the Fitzgeraldian desire to rise in social class and best those who mocked him on the golf course as a child by embracing the Catholic religion that makes him stand out even as he strives for success.

Harvey's situation is not one where religion offers retreat from the competition of the modern world, but instead one where his Catholicism makes him strange, even mysterious:

> It wasn't that [Protestants] remembered what tyrants (not all of them Catholics) had done to non-conformists in the past. They did not see themselves as descendants of the poor and oppressed. No, although that might be the history, that was not it. What troubled them was the hocus-pocus that went on in the Catholic churches. (75)

Harvey himself can see how the Protestants might see Catholics as bizarre: "Wasn't it all very strange there, in that place, at that time, the fancy vestments, the Latin, the wine?" (75). Harvey's embrace of the Catholic church itself is a move toward the cosmopolitan—in this case the old-world European and the exotic—instead of a move toward something safe or homelike. Powers never allows his readers to settle into easy interpretation here, as the mystery of the Catholic Church plays against the rock of Urban's rural Illinois upbringing. Harvey sticks to his religion even though it puts him in exotic company, at least in dominantly Protestant country: "He knew, too, that Catholics were mostly Irish and Portuguese, and that their religion, poverty, and appearance (especially in the case of the Portuguese) were all against them" (78). This difference—this diversity—drives people in the faith to leave it, to get rid of the differing stigma of Catholicism, but Urban clings to this cosmopolitan vision.[3] Powers thus presents a Midwestern landscape already awash in cosmopolitan identity flowing beneath the surface.

Beset by these conflicting drives, Harvey falls under the mentorship first of Monsignor Morez, a priest who "was the first to suggest to him that there might be better places" than rural Illinois (76), and who cultivates his cosmopolitan demeanor: "Nobody had lived longer in the town by the time he died, a very old and even tinier man, but the idea persisted that he was a foreigner. His name was strange, and also his dress—his frock coat, homburg, and pince-nez" (76). Beyond Morez's exoticism, Harvey is impressed by his fortitude even in the face of a hooded mob:

> Harvey was present one summer night when the old man admonished a hooded mob from the porch, then fired off a shotgun, which did the job as words hadn't, and then broke a bone in his foot kicking over the fiery cross that had been planted on the lawn. Where the cross fell and burned out, spoiling the grass, the old man had a bed of red geraniums blooming the next day. (77)

These are not lessons of the beatific simplicity of rural life, but rather of the ability of cosmopolitan religious figures to survive in a largely

rural and bigoted America that Morez describes as a "missionary country" (76). Urban's attachment to the city and finer things does not spring from being to the cosmopolitan manner born, but rather from complex drives based both in the Protestant American Dream and an exotic Catholic Church.

As Harvey grows up under Morez's influence, he finds himself contemplating life as a priest, and he worries about the dangers that might come from doing that work in a rural parish: "[Harvey] knew that the hands and heart of a priest could be occupied anywhere, of course, but he also knew that many were paralyzed by the possibility of scandal there, or, what was the same, were driven to drink by it, or, like Monsignor Morez, were turned in on themselves" (77-78). As Harvey begins to doubt, enter Father Placidus the Clementine, another kind of worldly priest, "a man from Maynooth [Ireland] by way of Chicago, sixteen stone and every ounce a priest" (78). Placidus's magnetic personality cuts a wide swath in town: "Everybody he met during his short stay seemed much better for the experience, including even the chief of police and also the sheriff and the mayor, on all of whom he (attended by Harvey) paid courtesy calls" (78). Harvey sees a brighter world with Placidus in it, and the odd characters of the world beat a path to the Clementine's door: "[O]ne evening, after benediction, the two of them swiftly repaired to the Opera House, and there, during curtain calls, members of the Chicago company of *Mlle Modiste* recognized the great man in his box and saluted him and his young companion" (78-79).[4] In Placidus, Harvey sees the combination of priest and worldly gentleman, of man of God and man of the world. Harvey follows Placidus to the Clementine Novitiate, hoping to enter a society peopled by men like his new mentor, but there Harvey finds persecution similar to that which he found in his hometown. Among other indignities, one of the professors, "mimicked Harvey's drawl, denied him the best parts in plays, and never stopped trying to cast him as a yokel" (81). Powers ends this section of the novel with the older Urban reflecting on the fate of the boys and men who mocked and tormented him: they end up defamed or defrocked, and Urban the adult thinks to himself, "Revenge is mine," even going on to worry slightly over Father Boniface—the man who assigns Urban to Duesterhaus—"now that he'd joined the select little group of people who'd made life unnecessarily difficult for Father Urban" (82). In the long flashback, the reader's sympathy thus runs the gamut from identifying with the

young Harvey Roche to viewing skeptically Father Urban's *schadenfreude* at the demise of his enemies. And in this, the reader is left to both trust and mistrust Urban's viewpoint, neither seeing him as fully justified in his vision of the world or fully discounting it. Thus, as Urban shapes himself in Placidus's image, floating as a travelling man rather than linking himself directly to the community, readers can see both the strength and weakness of this position: Urban the cosmopolitan figure and Urban the man without a home.

The long setup of Urban's urbane lifestyle in the city and on the road makes it easy to see why many critics have viewed the rural landscape as Powers's antidote to worldly temptations. Powers depicts the country landscape, however, only in ironic descriptions of home and simple rural comfort. The train journey to Duesterhaus is bleak: "November was winter here. Too many white frame farmhouses, not new and not old, not at all what Father Urban would care to come home to for Thanksgiving or Christmas. Rusty implements. Brown dirt. Gray skies. Ice" (36). The rural setting offers neither respite nor charm to Urban, as he cannot even imagine the unremarkable farmhouses—neither historic nor new—as homelike. This ironic unhomeliness of the rural setting is further emphasized when Urban reaches the empty train station in Duesterhaus; he asks directions to the Order of St. Clement and learns that St. Clement's Hill is locally referred to as "The Home," as it previously served as a poorhouse and a sanitarium. Urban's worries about being attacked by dogs on the journey are comic—"Hounds. Mastiffs. Dead, perhaps eaten. Anything could happen here"—but his overblown fears are followed by a description of the horrific history of the home where a double murder and suicide took place (39, 42). Powers creates humor by putting his urbane fish in a backwater pond; this relocation is funny because readers see some truth in the sometimes bleak horror of the rural setting. Moving to the country does not always mean returning home.

Urban's view of the landscape contrasts with that of Father Wilfred, Urban's superior at St. Clement's Hill. When they first stand together on the porch and survey the November scenery that Urban sees as "bare trees and bushes, the dead fields, the trees in the distance like black whiskers on the winter horizon," Wilf says, "A grand place, this" (44). But this contrast does not mean that Wilfred is meant to be the antidote to Urban's worldliness. Despite all his rural affectation, Wilfred also concerns himself with mundane affairs, if

only in a miserly way. Wilf sets Urban, Jack, and Brother Harold to the task of renovating the rec room of the old Victorian house that makes up the main building at the Hill, but Wilf is relentlessly cheap, ordering war surplus paint—so thick that it is difficult to stir, a stiffness Wilf attributes "not to old age but richness" (88). But ordering by mail from a Minneapolis supplier rather than buying from a local lumberyard has put Wilf on the wrong side of the local hardware store that resents his asking for free materials such as spatulas and paint caps. Urban's pragmatic stance on Wilf's "penny wise and pound foolish" approach to renovation is reasonable (88). While critics such as Walter Clark have posited Father Wilfred as yin to Father Urban's yang, for all of his do-it-yourself work ethic, Wilf is still concerned with the world. As many home renovators have done, he and Brother Harold spend their off hours staring at the paint drying on the walls and making plans for further renovations, fully immersed in the mundane pleasures of fixing up the old house (86). Tightfisted actions don't equal godly ones, and thus the rural paradise of the Hill is consumed with day-to-day life just as much as Urban is in Chicago.

The rural setting is not so much a rural antidote to Urban's Chicago as home to a provincial worldliness. Under orders from Wilfred, Brother Harold has been taking sign-painting correspondence courses, and before Christmas he takes on a sign project for Rudy, Wilf's grocer brother:

> [Harold] was now working on a commission . . . turning out signs that read "Rudy sez 98¢" and "Rudy sez $1.98" and so on. Some of the signs had ears of corn and straw hats drawn on them. The idea in all this was that Rudy was a country-storekeeper type, which, to Wilf's chagrin, Father Urban had professed to believe was the truth. ("What's the matter—can't your brother spell?"—"Oh, that's just a merchandizing stunt.") (106)

The point here is not that Wilf is attempting to make money to help support St. Clement's Hill, but rather that his provincial perspective—or the quasi-provincial, in Rudy's case—is as much a worldly worldview as Urban's cosmopolitanism. Marketing the rural is still marketing, quaint and kitschy as "Sez Rudy" may be.

These urban/rural dynamics are further complicated when Father Urban is sent off to work as a visiting priest in a suburban church faced with a growing parish due to a new housing development. This suburban space further complicates the idea of a worldly urban ver-

sus an idealized rural space by creating a third, suburban setting that brings further—but distinct—worldly challenges. The housing development and parish growth prompt worries in the priests who had grown used to a rural parish; they willfully ignore the parishioners that stand in the aisles at every mass as they question the need to build a new church. Even Urban's worldly coup, his elicited donation from Billy to fund the creation of a nine-hole golf course on the land at St. Clement's Hill and the skillful negotiation with a retiring farmer who sells his land to them, itself presents a strange amalgam of the country and the city, of a land fully sculpted, yet green and natural. The course, built as it is on former farmland, is the epitome of suburban development, and the success of the Clementine retreat follows not because it is a place of spiritual respite, but because of its destination as a place of outdoor recreation. Finally, without the growing suburban population of the surrounding parishes, there would be few pious golfers to fill St. Clement's fairways. The suburban is no easy middle ground between country and city, instead presenting its own temptations of mammon.

Power's novel further questions the easy dichotomy of city bad, rural good in its last chapters when Urban is faced with ardent spiritual tests of his faith, each set in wild or remote settings. These tests of faith begin after Urban's pivotal golf match on the St. Clement's fairway—a mock battle that pits Urban against Father Feld, a ringer brought in by the Bishop of the Great Plains Diocese. The battle has to do with control of the Hill, a property that the local Catholic diocese had no interest in when it was a run-down former asylum. As a holy order, the Clementines are beholden to the local diocese, and the bishop begins to show interest in the Hill as soon as the golf course is constructed and it becomes a popular retreat. On his first tour of the Hill, the Bishop "demonstrated that he was a poor sport as well as a lousy golfer," and he returns to challenge Father Urban, whose "near-professional game" he seems to regard as "unseemly and impertinent in a priest" (211). The duffer Bishop brings Father Feld to the match as his champion, while Urban is paired with another spectacularly bad golfer, and the foursome plays in a game described in terms of a duel:

> Father Urban's defeat was not a necessary part of the Bishop's larger plan of conquest, but Father Urban could understand its appeal—to create an omen, as it were, and then to act in accord with it. In Father

> Urban's mind, informed as it was by a good deal of solid reading, the match between him and Father Feld took on the appearance of a judicial duel. Victory for Father Urban in the field, however, would not mean victory for his cause. That was the hell of it. Father Urban had read of many ordeals by combat . . . but he doubted that history would reveal a parallel case. (244)

From the beginning, the battle is one that Urban has no foreseeable way of winning. If Urban bests the Bishop, he will maintain his grudge and claim the Hill for the diocese out of spite. If Urban tanks the match, the result is hardly better; the Bishop might simply take the Hill anyway, leaving Urban's sacrifice in vain. The match between Feld and Urban is even, and, as it progresses, a small gallery gathers as they seem to realize the unstated stakes. Despite the no-win scenario, Urban is unable to let go of his mantra of "Be a Winner," and though he enters the last three holes two strokes down, he preaches "a great sermon in golf" (246). He catches up, and as they face the final hole with the possibility of a tie, the Bishop suggests a sudden-death play-off to settle the match, to which Urban responds, "Sudden death it is, then" (248).

And as Urban is on the ninth green, well positioned to defeat Feld, he does prevail, though not through winning the match. Urban is struck down—a kind of sudden death—when the Bishop hits a stray shot right at him, the golf ball striking his head with a sound that Monsignor Renton later recalls makes a sound like "somebody'd opened a bottle of champagne," the blow rendering him unconscious (253). Feeling sorry for the accident, the Bishop retreats, and his guilt allows St. Clement's Hill to remain in Clementine hands.

After falling but achieving victory on the field, Urban unwittingly embarks on a series of comic spiritual challenges in the wilderness. As Marcia Noe well describes, Urban "is faced with three situations where he is required to either appease a lay benefactor by acquiescing in that person's immoral behavior or take a stand against that behavior and risk alienating the person" (114). Each of these situations places the worldly against the spiritual. He first spends time recuperating at the lake mansion of Mrs. Thwaits, the donor of the home and land that make up St. Clement's Hill. Hoping during his visit to gain Mrs. Thwaits's approval and subsequent patronage, Urban styles himself as St. Francis, going so far as to try to get a squirrel to take a green nut from his hand when he sees that Thwaits is watching him through the window (254). Urban soon learns, how-

ever, that Thwaits has been gambling and winning at dominoes with Katie, her young Irish house servant, and keeping all of the maid's salary as a result. When Urban questions Thwaits's behavior, she ignores him, silently retreating behind a wall of three simultaneously running television sets. Despite Urban's holy authority and the beatific setting on the shores of the lake, Mrs. Thwaits is locked into mammon, a wall of television easily separating her from any rural beneficence.

Urban's second challenge comes in his relationship with Billy Cosgrove, one that similarly disintegrates in a rural setting. On a fishing trip to "Henn's Haven" in northern Minnesota, Billy"s bad behavior—hard drinking, bullying the owner, and adultery with the owner's young wife—becomes a pressing moral issue that Urban struggles to address obliquely and with tact. But Urban's relationship with Billy comes to a head when they are on the lake, fishing. Billy's behavior has Urban reflecting in the boat on sermons he has given on "saints who had really asked for the martyr's crown," and thinking it might be better to celebrate "those who remained on the scene and got on with the job" (285). As Urban is driving the boat, Billy spies a deer swimming across the lake. Billy asks to go closer, and when Urban complies, Billy reaches out and forces the head of the deer underwater, attempting to drown the animal. Understanding that "his relationship with Billy was going to be a lot better or a lot worse from now on," Urban revs the outboard motor, spilling Billy overboard and freeing the deer (286-87). Upon getting back in the boat, Billy dumps Urban overboard and leaves him stranded on the shores of the lake. While the wilderness is the setting for what might be called Urban's spiritual test, the test itself—as with Urban's third and final, sensual temptation soon to come from Mrs. Thwaits's attractive daughter—is one of pressing worldly concerns, of money and of the flesh. These concerns are in no way lessened in a rural setting. Urban's spiritual growth, his learning to turn from the world, comes after being more clearly confronted with the worldly in the rural, not in retreating from the world. In Powers's novel, there is no retreat from mammon.

This lack of a rural retreat is complicated by Father Urban's fate at the end of the novel, one set into motion in a scene where he plays his most knightly role as champion, battling for the fate of St. Clement's Hill. When Urban is hit on the head by a golf ball, he saves the Clementine retreat, at least temporarily, from the hands of the Bishop. If this resolution has a *deus ex machina* feel, it also triggers

a change in Urban: resulting headaches from the concussion render him a man who values peace and quiet much more than he does the company of others. The worldly priest thus at the end of the novel quite literally retreats from the world. This transition makes Urban seem to be a much more reverent man than he is at the beginning of the novel, though what this retreat means in the context of Powers's intensely ambiguous novel is unclear.

In a 1959 letter to longtime friend and benefactor Father Harvey F. X. Egan, Powers talked about the title and a central theme of what he was then calling his Duesterhaus novel: "I have considered from time to time the title *Morte D'Urban* for my Duesterhaus novel. Whether that will be it, I don't know, but in any event I intend *to play upon the idea of dying to this world*" (*Suitable Accommodations* 334, emphasis added). And most critics have seen the novel's ending, one where Father Urban becomes the provincial of the Clementines but ends up retreating from his benefactors and most all visitors, as a death of Urban's worldly connections and a spiritual triumph. But overwhelming evidence points to a conclusion not of Urban simply "dying to this world" but to Powers's intention "to play" with that concept. Reading any one section of the *Morte D'Urban* without the context of the whole can lead to an easy misreading, as Flannery O'Connor noted: "The whole adds up to a great deal more than the parts would suggest" (496). Powers's novel is not a morality play. Urban's state at the end of the novel prompts more questions than it answers.

Even those who read worldly ambiguity in the rest of the novel tend to see redemption for Urban at novel's end. Stanley Poss confesses that Urban always has a foot in both world and spirit: "The point hardly needs arguing that the most visible Father Urban in the novel is the one who knows the way the world goes . . . . But this Urban is also the later Urban potentially, because along with his fondness for expensive cigars . . . he is a good man, a man of charity" (71). Still, Poss believes in the death-to-the-worldly reading: "The real point of the novel is the death of Urban the glad-handing opportunist" (73). Long claims that Urban's lack of "true" intimacy leaves him alone with God: "Having lived a life of aggressive friendliness but no intimacy, he now has to face God in silence and alone. In Powers's hands, a reader feels that Urban is prepared for the encounter" (12). Both of these readings ignore the complexities of where the novel leaves Urban. Preston argues that in the final chapter, "Dirge," when Urban

sees St. Clement's Hill as "home," Powers has promoted "a final vision of the Christian life [that] is uncompromisingly other-worldly and perhaps for this very reason repugnant to modern eyes" (106). For while Father Urban manages to achieve many of his worldly aims—building a golf course at St. Clement's Hill and thus making it a popular retreat and being elected the Provincial, or head, of his order—he is left a shadow of his travelling self, a man so plagued with headaches that he is unable to converse with people for any length of time. Robert Benson reads the ending this way: "So at the end of *Morte D'Urban* Father Urban Roche, who became a priest because he wanted 'to stay in the best hotels, to meet the best people, to live like a Protestant,' . . . becomes the provincial of his order, and in removal from the world he finds peace and his true vocation" (184).

While Urban's retreat to a quieter life certainly is the death to the world that the "Morte" of the title speaks to, it is less certain that this death to the world is peaceful. As Provincial, Father Urban is plagued by administrative decisions that the Clementines' previous provincial neglected, such as cutting down the Ceratocystis-infected "Avenue of Elms" at the Novitiate (333). At his most unworldly point in the novel, Urban still deals directly with worldly concerns—concerns he would be remiss if he did not address. And Benson's idea of "peace" is even more questionable, based only on these triply ambiguous few sentences discussing his behavior with visitors when harboring one of his many migraine headaches:

> They arrived and departed like sections of the Twentieth Century Limited—three or four times on some days, a dozen on others—and left him with a dazed and run-over feeling. When somebody was in the office, and he felt the first section coming down the tracks, he swiveled around in his chair, saying, "I'll be with you in a minute, Father," and opened his breviary, and closed his eyes, and waited until both sections had come and gone. Thus he tried to disguise his condition from others, and thus, without wishing to, he gained a reputation for piety he hadn't had before, which, however, was not entirely unwarranted now. (334)

First, these headaches ironically recall Urban's time on his favorite train—the Limited—even as the headaches' arrivals and departures keep him sequestered in his office. Second, while Urban gains a reputation for holiness in his frequent retreats to his breviary, these retreats are clearly not holy—only excuses for taking a moment away

from people. "Not entirely unwarranted" holiness is the best that Powers offers us, giving Urban a glancing chance at transcendence but snatching it away.[5] Urban experiences no pure transcendence here, and if he is supposed to be triumphant in dying to the world, then why are we left with the image of a broken man in pain?

Urban's final state in the novel leaves a conundrum unresolved by declaring him dead to the world in a spiritual sense. The ambiguous ending is made more opaque because of Powers's classification as a Catholic novelist. As David M. LaGuardia suggests, despite writing about a Catholic subject, Powers's artistic aims were broader: "In his most serious moments of critical reflection, Powers intimates that he is quite concerned with the problem of achieving fictional universality despite thematic specificity" (268). LaGuardia goes on to mention an interview Powers gave to the *American Benedictine Review* in 1964, wherein he said, "I want to deal with things that I regard as important, like life and death . . . but I write about priests for reasons of irony, comedy, and philosophy. They officially are committed to both worlds in the way that most people are not. This makes for stronger beer . . . I just start with a priest, with a man with one foot in each world. It's as simple as that" (qtd. in LaGuardia 268). In other words, the "stronger beer" of the novel results from the uncertainty of Urban's end: has he truly changed, turning from the world to the spiritual, or is he simply a man who suffers bad headaches? The truth lies in both of the above descriptions: a man who seeks to be holy and yet lives in the world wherever he may reside. Urban or rural, on a train or in a rural retreat, Powers's hero struggles with a "foot in each world." Powers leaves the reader with no place of comfort, no firm resolution, neither country nor city, not cosmopolitan or homely. The rejection of the easy dichotomies is the central point of the novel, not the embrace of one side or the other.

In the end, *Morte D'Urban* is a novel of comfort and transcendence only in snatches: an act of bravery in Monsignor Morez standing up to a mob or a man being dumped in a lake—twice—for standing up for his values. The one consistent arc of Urban's development over the course of the novel lies in the growth of his attachment to his unlikely friends that he serves with at St. Clement's Hill—Jack and Wilf. Thomas Merton observes that the Urban of the first chapters of the novel is gregarious but lonely: "[I]f we tune out the other sounds and listen to his thoughts as they are relayed to us by Mr. Powers, we find in [Urban] empty gregariousness, not friendship" (150). When

Urban is forced to slow down and actually live with other men, he finds moments of true friendship. He plays—and loses—at checkers with Father Jack, and he even begins to think fondly of Father Wilfred, as Urban ultimately understands and sympathizes with Wilf's attachment to a dog that becomes a sticking point in the negotiations for the farmland necessary to build the golf course. The final line of the novel suggests that these connections are almost familial: "Oddly enough, although for many years he'd travelled out of Chicago, he seemed to think of the Hill as home" (336). And it is this connection to his friends, to the home of St. Clement's Hill, that holds redemption for Urban, connections begun in Chicago over a dinner with Jack and continued even after he leaves the Hill to head the Novitiate. These bonds, not the rural setting, allow Urban to grow. In Urban's friendships—not in the country—he finds a home.

Morte D'Urban is a novel that embraces no easy endings, even for priests. Powers creates not a novel about a priest dying to the world and finding transcendence, but a novel about the difficulty of any of us—even the priests—finding those moments which enhance our daily states of grace. It's a novel about struggle, plain and simple, to find the moments of connection and godliness that pull us above the worldly fray, no matter who we may be or where we may stand.

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NOTES

[1]In defense of Hagopian and others, many of these readings reacted to secular critical responses to Powers's novel like that of William Gass, who said, "I cannot imagine a book in which religious feeling would be more conspicuously absent" (qtd. in Hagopian 154). In response, many critics doubled down on the religious message of the novel, stressing too secular a reading as misreading, as does Joseph Hynes: "The novel's point of view is likely to encourage readers to sympathize with Father Urban's private point of view" (453). For more critics in the misreading camp, see Poss, Sisk or Henault.

[2]For more on this charity, see Stanley Poss: "But this Urban is also the later Urban potentially, because along with this fondness for expensive cigars . . . he is a good man, a man of charity" (71).

[3] While many critics have identified Powers's Irish American heritage and themes, John Murphy notes that Powers layers his narrative with priests with Irish surnames while restraining himself to doing so "indirectly and sporadically" (80).

[4]*Mille Modiste* itself is an operetta a young Urban would have been impressed by, it being a story of a young milliner in a Paris hat shop who dreams of becoming a famous opera singer.

[5]Critics have noted how Urban's struggle in rural Minnesota echoes that of Sir Lancelot in Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur.* Like Lancelot, Urban moves from being a man of the world to being a man of the spirit. John Hagophian summarizes their parallel journeys as follows: "Like Lancelot, Urban first chooses the earthly road instead of the heavenly and thus fails to

find the Grail (sanctity). But having weathered his temptations, again like Lancelot, he can through three trials, occurring on or near lakes, at last achieve salvation" (141-42). Hagophian's reading of the Arthurian motifs in Power's novel is deft and revealing, but he and most critics fail to account for the empty feeling the reader is left with at the end of the novel.

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GOING TO PARIS WITH DONALD OGDEN STEWART AND THE HADDOCKS OF OHIO

GUY SZUBERLA

Donald Ogden Stewart wrote the novel *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad* while living in Paris during the spring and early summer of 1924. Some fifty years after writing it, he would remember this time as one of "the happiest summers that I have ever enjoyed." Perhaps it was. He had composed his novel under conditions almost any writer would envy:

> It was terribly easy to write (sitting in my little room at the Hotel Montparnasse) and what was even more fun was to trot every evening with what I had written over to Place St. Michel where Gerald and Sara Murphy were living and where the audience of listeners usually included their friends Ernest and Hadley Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and Gilbert Seldes, aided by certain magic drinks which Gerald and Sara devised. (MA 271)[1]

On some nights, Ada and Archibald MacLeish joined the group of expatriates at the Murphys (BL 130). They were all there to laugh at Stewart's story of the Haddocks, a hapless and comically adventurous Ohio couple and their young daughter, Mildred. The novel's loosely drawn plot—with generous infusions of Crazy Comedy and surrealistic detours and flourishes—followed their zigzagging progress as the three traveled from Columbus, Ohio, to France.

Those who now remember Donald Ogden Stewart (1894-1980), it seems safe to say, think of him as the model for Jake Barnes's friend Bill Gorton in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). Most of us, that is, first find our way to Stewart's humor through Hemingway's novel, encountering it second hand in Gorton's comic speeches, his riffs on stuffed dogs and expatriates, and his other assorted verbal hijinks. For others, Stewart's reputation as a writer largely rests on the screenplays he wrote in 1930s and 1940s. Film buffs recall that he wrote the

screenplays for *Laughter* (1930), *The Philadelphia Story* (1940), and the 1939 film, *An Affair to Remember* (a source for *Sleepless in Seattle*). "During the 1920s," Scott Donaldson notes, Stewart "was probably the nation's most widely read humorist" (99). But today the titles of some of his best-selling books—*A Parody Outline of History* (1921), *Perfect Behavior* (1922), and *The Crazy Fool* (1925)—command little or no significant recognition. Apart from those who follow footnotes closely or turn search engines up to full speed, few readers or scholars have heard of the two books focused on here, *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad* (1924) and *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Paris, France* (1926).

Stewart set out, he said in his autobiography, to write *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad* as "a whole book in the nonsense idiom" (BL 129). Years before the genre of Crazy Comedy had earned its name or an agreed-upon definition, he was writing "crazy fool humor," or "lunatic comedy"—what his friend Robert Benchley dubbed "dementia praecox" humor (Blair 433-36). Readers in the 1920s, those already attuned to Stewart's humor, would not have puzzled long over moments like the one in which Mr. Haddock studies a book of instruction on swim strokes as a guidebook to Paris (MA 93). Nor would they have been surprised that, near the beginning of their journey, Will Haddock runs into a "jolly fat gentleman . . . brushing his teeth and part of his left ear in order to battle pyorrhea" (MA 24). That the Haddocks think that Medoc wine is French water, believe that the French don't bathe ("they use perfume"), and that their hotel runs "a one-way elevator"—all this, read through the narrative logic and incongruous juxtapositions of Crazy Comedy, makes perfect comic sense (MP 22-3, 65).

Readers of the Haddock books in the 1920s—those who made the two novels into best sellers—were laughing at some familiar caricatures of the American tourist and the innocent Midwesterner abroad. It was easy enough to feel superior to the self-inflicted comic suffering and humiliations of the Haddocks, to laugh at this family of provincials far too far from the comforts and security of the heartland. Like Mark Twain in *Innocents Abroad* (1869), Stewart was pitting his naïve travelers against old-world sophisticates, playing for laughs the moments when their ignorance of foreign languages and customs resulted in comic confusion, and, now and then, toying with titillating scenes in which their native American puritanism blinded them to social and sexual realities.

Stewart may have exaggerated when he said the trip with the Haddocks had been "a journey into the Middle-West subconscious" (BL 129). But he was defamiliarizing some familiar character types and well-worn story lines. Through the distorting yet corrective lenses of Crazy Comedy and with the occasional shocks and surprises of the surreal, Stewart remade both the type-character of the Midwesterner and the narrative conventions that, since the nineteenth century, had defined the American innocent abroad. Retelling these tales in his "nonsense idiom" transformed a character type and altered a fixed and traditional school of humor. Midwestern characters, who were expected to strike comic postures identified with old-fashioned common sense and plain speaking, now acted with zany and lunatic carelessness, spoke nonsense, and spun their comic logic into what some reviewers described as "Dadaistic."[2]

"A GENTLE FROLIC"

No matter how silly or naïve the Haddocks appear under the stress and strangeness of travel, they never quite descend into the simple, brute state of "ugly Americans." Behind the caricatures of the Haddocks and just beneath the comic distortions of their Midwest provincialism, Stewart held fast to a few nostalgic memories of Columbus friends and neighbors. Born in Columbus in 1894, Stewart grew up with his parents in an apartment-hotel in the city's downtown, attended Douglas grade school with James Thurber, and, all in all, felt for a time that the "Stewarts were 'in Society' in Columbus" (BL 12-17). In his autobiography, *By A Stroke of Luck!* (1975), he looked back on this world, the Columbus of his childhood, as "a very small world but very complete" (BL 16-7). Called on to create a radio play in the patriotic days just after Pearl Harbor, he drafted a sincere tribute to the people and democratic values of a small town in Ohio, titling his work "This is the Real America" (BL 260).

Stewart broke with Columbus and rebelled against the values of Middle America during the 1920s. In 1923, returning home after traveling to Europe and living in New York, he discovered at Christmastime that he no longer felt at home in the "solitudes of Columbus." "Columbus," he concluded with self-mocking humor, "wasn't in the least interested in the artistic ferment of Greenwich Village or Paris" (BL 127). Like the many American expatriates who had fled to Paris after World War I, he believed that by leaving America he might, as he later said, be "freed . . . of the New England

Puritan heritage" and escape from "Main Street Babbitry" and "anti-cultural Normalcy" (BL 106). He had read Harold Stearns's *Civilization in the United States* (1921), and, as his restatements of its main arguments should suggest, he "was ready to join the angry young men of 1921" (BL 93). His third book, *Aunt Polly's Story of Mankind* (1923), gave voice to the "great bitterness in my generation." He satirized and savaged the American Legion, the Ku-Klux-Klan, "Christian nations," anti-Semitic prejudices, Prohibition, the American brands of nativism, racism, and overblown patriotism, and all else that stood for "'The Glorious Present' and 'Mankind'" (BL 120-23). Sales, to his great surprise, turned out to be miserably small. Readers expecting another clever set of parodies or spoof of contemporary manners—the kind of urbane and witty sendups he had delivered in *Perfect Behavior* (1922)—were bound to be disappointed.

Arriving in Paris in April 1924, with the disappointing reception of *Aunt Polly's Story* fresh in mind, he resolved to abandon "any pretense of despair, of anger, of political criticism." The Haddocks novels were to be "a gentle frolic, aimed at promoting laughter" (BL 130-31). Shortly after the publication of the first Haddock novel, Hemingway wrote to his good friend Bill Smith, urging him to "Get Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad"—a "really funny book" that had "the old Lardnerers Stuff" (Baker 138-39). Hemingway was about half right. Stewart's mock travelogues—both *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad* and the sequel *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Paris, France*—did owe something to Ring Lardner's *Gullible's Travels* (1917) and *The Big Town* (1921). Some of the "old Lardnerers Stuff" filtered into Stewart's comic narratives of tourist travel and the scenes of the Haddocks' domestic life and squabbles. Like Lardner's traveling couples, the Gullibles of Chicago and the Hoosier Finches, the Haddocks are Midwesterners who, once they lose touch with the flat, friendly ground of the Midwest, become confused, disoriented, and quarrelsome. Their social sense, and their common sense, fail them in strange and foreign places.

It was not, in the end, Lardner's old Stuff that liberated Stewart's comic demiurge. Through his reading of Lardner's nonsense plays and acting a part in one of them during the winter of 1924, he was discovering and perfecting his own experiments with "crazy" humor. In the 1975 afterword to *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad*, Stewart acknowledged the influence of Lardner's "marvelous piece called *I Gaspiri—or The Upholsterers* which had introduced me to what was

beginning to be known as 'Crazy Humor.'" He spoke of Lardner and this nonsense play with gratitude, offering an almost solemn benediction: "To Ring, God Bless him . . . I particularly owe the creation of Mr. and Mrs. Haddock and their daughter Mildred" (MA 271).

What Stewart owed to Lardner and *I Gaspiri* may not be immediately evident in the opening pages of *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad*. Lardner's nonsense plays verged on "Dada or surrealism," as many critics in the twenties pointed out (Yardley 272). Consider his stage directions for Act I of *I Gaspiri*: "A man named Newburn comes out of the faucet which has been left running." Naturally enough, Newburn promptly "exits through the exhaust" (qtd. in Yardley 270-71). The opening lines in Stewart's novel, by comparison, seem almost coherent and downright conventional:

> Mr. and Mrs. Haddock were very excited about going abroad. It was the first time either of them had ever been abroad to Europe, although Mr. Haddock had been to Chicago eight times, Kansas City five times, St. Louis four times, Denver four times, and New York City twice, but it had rained four times out of five.
>
> Mrs. Haddock had been to St. Louis once and Chicago twice, in Pullman cars, named respectively, Edgar Allen Poe, Sweet Juniper, and Spauldingopolis. She had not slept very well the first two times and the third time she had not slept at all. She slept very well at home, though, mostly on her back and left side. Her mother's maiden name had been Quetch. (MA 11-12)

The humor here largely depends upon overcomplication or on what Jesse Bier, in his study of American humor, terms "the service of unholy complication." Such humor "makes simple events or situations unforeseeably complex" (Bier 3). We watch as one irrelevant detail follows another in a dizzying whirligig. The itemizing of the Haddocks' travel experiences spirals off into a final and inconsequential notation on Hattie Haddock's sleeping habits and her maiden name. Rube Goldberg could not have cranked up a more comically complex piece of machinery or equipped it with more cogs, tiny wheels and meshing gears. Stewart was blessed with a gift for "unholy complication" and misdirection.

Until this trip, the Haddocks' world had been a small one, bounded by and tied to Columbus, Ohio. Once outside the city's limits, they will be, to labor the all-too-obvious pun, fish out of water: Ohioans traveling too far from Ohio. They seem, at first, to fit pre-

cisely into the caricature and type-character of the Midwesterner: bland, boring, and normal, representatives of a middling middle class. They are certainly naïve, innocent of all cosmopolitan vices and virtues. On the other hand, Stewart does not use Will Haddock, a Columbus lumberyard owner, his sometimes daffy wife, and his twelve-year-old smarty pants daughter to represent "Main Street Babbitry" or what he and others of his generation liked to call "anti-cultural Normalcy." If *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad* holds a bitter protest, it is one that Stewart deflects and disguises through Crazy Comedy and his excursions into the surreal (BL 106).

The Haddocks' preparations for their trip illustrate, with an artful and comic imbalance, their innocence of a wider world and a certain ingrained and local narrowness. Hattie Haddock, faithful to her hometown prejudices, gathers "much useful information" about France from her Columbus friends:

> PARIS—H.K.W. says French laundries useful, but make list. Chemise is a shirt in French. No starch best. Notre Dame best by moonlight. Evenings cool (Will—overcoat). Take full half-day for the Louvre. Venus de Milo on first floor. Good corsets (Cora) at "Au Printemps" near Opera pronounced O Prantom. French hard to understand. Don't let Will shout. Mona Lisa on second floor. Elevator—tip. Stairs not hard. Don't touch with white gloves. Louvre free on Sunday. Good Presb. Church near Arc de Triumph. Notre Dame catholic.
>
> *Cora* says Notre Dame best in the morning and always check up on the waiters about the bill. Bill is addition, waiter garçon but pronounced differently. Bread dirty. Versailles-fountains play once a month. Don't drink French water. Vin blanc a good white wine . . . . French meals different. Will's pills. Napoleon's tomb sure.
>
> Aunt Flora says Notre best in the afternoon. Always rains in the morning . . . . Eiffel tower unsafe. Morgue gone. French men unsafe. French immoral. No bathtubs. Catholics. (MA 18-9)

Mrs. Haddock's list is long and, with time and travel, will grow longer. It ends here with the clinching observation that "Mrs. Gueminder saw bugs" (19). Her jumbled catalog and stray comments—set down in a rush of laughably incongruous juxtapositions and expressed with wonderfully comic innocence—are being compiled in a notebook titled "My Trip Abroad." The resulting collection of notes exposes Columbus, Ohio's constricted, if altogether conventional, view of Paris and the French. From this fund of mis-

information and the itemized listing of xenophobic prejudices, Hattie intends to guide herself and her family safely through strange and foreign lands.

The Haddocks, as Hattie's catalog indicates, already fear that they will feel disconnected and disoriented outside Columbus. When they arrive in New York on their way to Europe, they neither have a hotel reservation nor any idea where they want to stay—other than Mrs. Haddock's preference for a hotel "near Grant's Tomb." Mr. Haddock decides, with a desperate and comically distorted logic, that "a white clad Street Cleaner" working the street in front of the Yale Club could help them. Exchanging introductions with the Haddocks, Mr. Perkins, the Street Cleaner, removes his white hat and one white glove, bows politely, and asks:

> "Not the Boston Haddocks?"
> "No," said Mr. Haddock, "We're from the middle west."
> "Ah yes," said Mr. Perkins, "I see." And the tone of his voice became somewhat more reserved. (MA 43)

Perkins will snub the naïve Midwesterners a second time. He asks if they are sailing on the Aquitania, and, "after an embarrassing pause," Haddock admits they could not book passage. Perkins greets this answer "with a slight smile." But he goes on, with generous and quiet condescension, to describe the several highlights of his and Mrs. Perkins's Paris visit, telling the Haddocks: "You *must* go to Longchamps for the races" (44-5).

Away from home, the Haddocks are conscious of their "middle west" origins and sometimes expose that self-consciousness in odd ways. On board the steamship bound for France, Hattie Haddock sees a bearded young woman sitting on deck. She turns to her husband to say that the sight is "sort of funny":

> "My dear Harriet," said Mr. Haddock, you must remember that we are after all, strangers here—practically guests of this boat. And furthermore, we are from the middle west, and have had practically no contact with European life. So please, my dear Harriet," he said patiently, "let's try and not to be too provincial."
>
> "All right," said Mrs. Haddock. "But I don't see why you have to make a fool of yourself over the first young chippet who comes along with a beard." (MA 75-6)

Almost everything about this exchange between Will and Hattie sounds a bit crazy, though it is not the craziest conversation or

moment in the two Haddock novels. What makes the Haddocks sound dizzy and daft and what gives their words and the situation its comic spin is Will Haddock's solemnly spoken belief that the sight of the bearded "young chippet" somehow represented "contact with European life." He fears his wife's failure to understand this was all "too provincial," an unmistakable sign of "middle west" innocence and ignorance.

No guide or guidebook could ever have prepared the Haddocks for their periodic encounters with the surreal or, as Stewart put it, their excursions into "the daydream region" and "cloud cuckoo-land" (BL 129-30). One occurs, with rather spectacular and grandly operatic flourishes, midway during the Haddocks' transatlantic crossing. Waiting in line to rent deck chairs, Will Haddock stands behind "two very large women" who haggle over the rental, disagree with each other, insult the deck steward, and then, for no apparent reason, begin to quarrel about tickets for a matinee. Before long, the line behind Will and the two women "had extended half way around the boat and out into the street and included men and women from all walks of life . . ." (MA 85, 88). The crowd grows impatient and angry, and, suddenly, in a strange and surprising turn, Will begins to speak in Old Testament diction and, of course, begins to intone his words with prophetic authority: "If there is a god . . . He will give us a sign." His prayer, if that's what it is, is answered. With "a terrific flash of lightning and a deafening peal of thunder," a white whale floats up out of the deep. The crowd joins Will in "joyously" shouting:

> "A miracle!" they all cried. "A miracle." So they took Alice and her friend and threw them into the ocean, and the whale swallowed them, and a choir of 300 mixed voices from the South Bethlehem Tonkunst ad Liederkranz Society burst into the final chorus, "Gott ist ewig," and the whale slowly lifted out of the ocean and gradually but jerkily ascended into heaven with a slight creaking of ropes, and the afternoon was over. (MA 90-91)

We can read this passage and the extended scene as a parody of biblical narrative, as ersatz grand opera and its stagecraft or, better yet, as an insincere homage to *Moby Dick*.

An "elderly gentleman," perhaps responding to the "creaking of ropes" and the jerking ascent of the whale, compares the action and the clumsy mechanics to the polished spectacle produced at the Bayreuth opera. He complains to Will that "there aren't any good

whales any more," and, though Will admits he's never been to Bayreuth, he agrees. He has begun to feel "the broadening influence of the trip" (MA 91). That's an illusion. He is no more sophisticated or cosmopolitan at the end of his transatlantic crossing than he was on the first day when he warned his wife "not to be too provincial."

"A CONSCIENTIOUS MIDWESTERN HUMORIST"

Other writers in the twenties drafted comic tales of Americans in Paris, lampooning or satirizing the Americans who had joined what journalists soon named "the great migration." The expatriate Samuel Putnam, writing in *The Chicagoan*, ridiculed the mass migration as an "invasion" of Americans come "to 'do' Paree" (13). Novelists, taking cues from the humor magazines and newspaper stories, retailed their own comic tales of wine, women, and the naughty nightlife of Paris. The Missouri writer Homer Croy wrote about the misadventures of "plain Pike Peters" and his family in *They Had to See Paris* in 1926 (48). And Lyon Mearson, in *The French They Are a Funny Race* (1931), has a Chicago bank clerk, Edgar Bowman, discover, to his amused surprise, that "the French are practically as human as almost anybody else" (159). Even the sober Sinclair Lewis, midway through the novel *Dodsworth* (1929), rounded up some of the usual jokes and old type-characters. At an expensive Paris restaurant, Lewis has "Tub" Preston of Zenith, Winnemac (the fictional state of Wisconsin/Minnesota), insult the "Frog" waiter and ridicule the French food. He feels obliged, out of some sense of patriotic duty, to kid "the lives out of these poor old . . . Europeans." Tub thinks of himself as playing the part of "a conscientious Midwestern Humorist" (284-85). Having read Booth Tarkington's *The Man from Home* (1908), a play in which the Hoosier hero, Daniel Vorhees Pike, sneers at vodka, caviar, and titled European nobility, Tub knows that he must loudly express his Americanness and shout out his distaste for any food or drink sporting a French name.

Stewart certainly knew these character-types, the old narrative tropes, and the national animus underlying many of the period's standard jokes and comic journalism about the French. In *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Paris, France*, as in the first Haddock novel, he refined worn-out jokes, translating some of the more common and common sense ones into the nonsense idiom of Crazy Comedy. Take, for example, the Haddocks' train ride to Paris in the first chapter of the novel. As the train speeds through the countryside, Will Haddock

turns to his wife: "Well Hattie," he said, patting [her] on the hand and pointing to a sign which read "Lucky Strike Cigarettes," "we're in France at last" (3). Will has an innocent eye and an overexcited imagination; he can, in the ripeness of the moment, extract wonder from the banal and the familiar. The words "Lucky Strike" on the sign advertising American cigarettes do not, in a conventionally ordered world or narrative, signal arrival in France or create a reason for Will's tender, sentimental gesture. (In *Finn and Hattie,* the 1932 film version of Stewart's two Haddock novels, the director announces arrival in Paris by rolling out stock footage of the Eiffel Tower, the grand boulevards, sidewalk cafés, and the Arc de Triomphe.)[3] Stewart, in dramatizing the Haddocks' daydreams and wild exaggerations, presents the Lucky Strike advertising as foreign and romantic, associations as comic as they are nonsensical.

Cartoonists and comic journalists, in the 1920s, joked about American tourists being thrilled to find an "American Bar" in Paris. Homer Croy, writing for *Life,* the old humor magazine, jabbed lightly at those who searched for a Paris café or bistro where they could order an American breakfast "with pancakes and maple syrup" (21).[4] Haddock, more like the characters in Robert Benchley's short nonsense pieces and S.J. Perelman's *New Yorker* essays, wrenches the "make believe world of commercial advertising" into a fantastic and literal truth (Blair and Hill 434-35).

The Haddocks do sometimes act like typical American tourists, performing as representative, if comic, type-characters. Repeating a common cliché, Mr. Haddock says he had "come over . . . to have a good time" (MP 237). He was, as his recital of this cliché suggests, joining the crowds of American tourists in the 1920s who chased favorable exchange rates and freedom from Prohibition's restraints. From the moment they board the train to Paris, though, the Haddocks begin to feel unwelcome and, despite their naiveté, recognize that they are the butt of jokes and ridicule directed at "*Américains*." One and then another French woman, each "dressed in black and carrying a small dog," looks in on the Haddocks' compartment, says "*Américains*," and slams the door (MP 13). When they have lunch, a polite Frenchman tells them that Paris "is the most wonderful city in the world . . . but it is not Paris any longer. No. It is too full of Americans" (MP 26). When the train nears Paris, a lady from New York in their compartment, shaking her head, says "Paris . . . isn't Paris any more." And Mr. Haddock, primed and ready with an ironic

riposte, replies: "I know . . . . The Americans have spoiled it" (MP 38). Hemingway used almost the same wisecrack and scripted scene in *The Sun Also Rises*. Madame Lecomte, the owner of a Paris restaurant—one now filled with Americans—reminds Jake Barnes that he "never comes here anymore." Jake's comeback line sounds well practiced: "Too many compatriots" (76). *Life* played a version of the same joke in a full-page cartoon showing a packed crowd of Americans on the terrace outside the famous Café du Dôme (Figure). Pointing to a passing French *flâneur,* one American looks up from his drink to exclaim with sincere surprise: "Look, Bill, a Frenchman!" (11).

Through most of *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Paris, France*, Stewart holds to the design and the intentions he summed up in his autobiography: the Haddock novels were to be "a gentle frolic, aimed at promoting laughter, and the friendly satire was directed only at certain lovable American traits and laughable customs" (BL 130-31). His satire sounds friendly enough, when he shows the Haddocks consulting guidebooks and planning a trip to the Louvre. Their conversation drifts inevitably into vaudeville patter and the absurdities of Crazy Comedy. Mr. Haddock asks:

> "Do we want to go inside?"
> "Of course," replied Mrs. Haddock, "that's where the Mona Lisa is."
> "It oughtn't take long," said Mr. Haddock, "to look at the Mona Lisa. How big a picture is it?" (MP 31)

No more than four years later, Parke Cummings's "A Guide to Historical Paris" boasted, with similar comic logic, that one Joe Gilch had "covered the whole [Louvre] in six minutes, eighteen and two-fifths seconds without the aid of starting blocks" (21). Stewart and *Life*'s columnists were drawing on a common fund of comic lore about American tourists and their customary, innocent, and laughable indifference to art and culture.

In somewhat the same way, American tourists' resistance to French dining customs—their suspicions of Paris waiters and French food—supplied Stewart, other novelists, and comic journalists with a rich source of humor. Take, for example, the gaffes of Edgar Bowman, Lyon Mearson's main character in *The French They Are a Funny Race*. At a Paris brasserie, he has to communicate with his waiter in a "funny" sign language, mistakes horsemeat for steak, and puzzles over the practice of reusing numbered napkins (138-42). At breakfast, he stares disconsolately at the meager ration of two crois-

Figure: "Look, Bill, a Frenchman!," *Life* 5 April 1929, 11.

sants and a pat of butter, and sniffs at the strong and repugnant smell of the warm milk and coffee. His friend Harry, dining with him at the famed and revered La Tour d'Argent, observes innocently that Des Moines could use "a place of this class." He knows "there's nothing of this kind in any of our middle-western cities," plans to talk with the proprietor, and put before him "a good chain-store proposition" (78).

During their first dinner in Paris, the Haddocks become disturbed over the French custom of serving meals in separate courses. They would like to eat, as Americans eat at home, with all their food put before them at once. Moreover, Mrs. Haddock will not eat anything listed on the *carte,* and demands "bread like the bread we have at home." After strained discussion with two waiters, she "reluctantly" concedes that she must eat "'French bread'" while in France (MP 87).

Mr. Haddock, striving to have Hattie's spinach and rice served together, negotiates again with the waiters: "So, after a consultation of three waiters and the head waiter, it was decided by a vote of three to one that the request of the American lady to have two vegetables served simultaneously should be granted, provided that the payments of interest on the French debt to America should be suspended until 1975" (MP 88). Will Haddock's mediation re-enacts the kind of wrangling and diplomacy that marked the Paris Peace Conference of 1920 and the creation of the Dawes Plan of 1924. Mixing the discourse of high-level international diplomacy with talk about serving vegetables, Stewart transforms the waiters into serious diplomats and carries off the Haddocks, once more, into a surreal world.

"A MAD, MAD BOOK"

Critics in the 1920s found it hard to settle on a name for Stewart's humor or to fix it in place with a stable generic definition. *The Chicagoan,* in a short note on the second Haddock novel, called it "Dadaistic style, if you know what we mean" ("The Bookshelf" 31). The young Herman J. Mankiewicz, reviewing for *The New York Times Book Review*, spoke of *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad* as a "wild piece of writing," and predicted that Stewart would soon emerge out of "the pack of automatic humorists." His novel, for all that, was confounding, new, and pleasing. What he was writing, Mankiewicz concluded, was "a mad, mad book . . . and as funny as can be imagined" (6).

Two years later, Edwin Clark, reviewing *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Paris, France,* said that, "the Haddocks are those mythical people,

the average Americans" (39). That said too much and too little. Stewart had, in creating the Haddocks, transfigured the stock character of the average American and recast the conventional narrative of the Midwesterner abroad. Booth Tarkington, Sinclair Lewis, Homer Croy, and magazine jokesmiths and cartoonists, among many others, continued to tell the tale of American innocents abroad who, in a forthright and plain spoken manner, displayed sturdy rural virtues and the moral certainties of small-town Midwesterners. Tarkington's Daniel Vorhees Pike and Lewis's Tub Preston, as we have seen, spoke what they thought to be common sense, struck the comic postures identified with old-fashioned "hoss sense." Their wisdom and wit were expressed in dialect speech and dispensed in down-home proverbs. Readers of American humor—since at least Twain's *Innocents Abroad*—had come to expect such characters to triumph over Europeans, to expose Old World affectations and venality, and to take down the haughty and the effete cosmopolitan.

These narrative conventions, comic postures, and stock characters disappeared in the rush and chaos of Stewart's Crazy Comedy. Small-town Midwesterners the Haddocks might be, but their daffiness disguises their Middle-American normalcy. The Haddocks speak nonsense, not "hoss sense." Stewart has—in firing up the imagination of these innocent, provincial, and slightly lunatic Midwesterners—created a crazily skewed perspective on the Paris of the 1920s. His humor, his Crazy Comedy, simultaneously illuminates the City of Lights and the American innocents who, in traveling there, journeyed into a "mad, mad" world.

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NOTES

[1]References to Donald Ogden Stewart's two novels, *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad* (MA) and *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Paris, France* (MP), will be cited parenthetically in the text, as will references to Stewart's *By A Stroke of Luck!: An Autobiography* (BL).

[2]See, for example, the brief note on *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Paris, France* in "The Bookshelf," *The Chicagoan* 1 Dec. 1926: 31. In *By A Stroke of Luck!* Stewart recalls that the critic Gilbert Seldes encouraged him to "explain my 'crazy humor' to [Tristan] Tzara as the American equivalent of Dada" (116-17). All future references to *The Chicagoan* will be cited parenthetically in the text. Web. http://chicagoan.lib.uchicago.edu/xtf/search?static=home.

[3]The two Haddock novels sold well and were popular enough to warrant the making of a film, *Finn and Hattie* (1932). Not too surprisingly, the screenwriters and director erased almost every trace of Stewart's Crazy Comedy, replacing it with commercial slapstick, some conventional bedroom farce, and the cute comic antics of two child stars. This film version

of the American tourist's journey constituted a comforting return to 1920s normalcy and stereotyped Midwestern characters.

[4] The humor magazine referred to throughout this essay is the old *Life* magazine, published from 1883 until 1936. There are no references in this essay to the *Life* magazine published by Henry R. Luce, who purchased the old *Life* magazine's title for his new venture in photojournalism in 1936.

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"I'M A ROOTLESS MAN": RICHARD WRIGHT AND THE LIMITS OF MIDWESTERN REGIONALISM

JON K. LAUCK

The life and work of Richard Wright can be examined by way of his career's various stages: surviving Jim Crow Mississippi, the Great Migration north, life on Chicago's South Side, the familiar literary move to New York, decamping to Paris, becoming allied with other activists organizing a transnational movement to promote decolonization, relations with other intellectuals and writers, etc. To keep pace with recent efforts to promote the study of the American Midwest, it now seems appropriate to again pay particular attention to Wright's years in the region and his subsequent commentary on the Midwest, or, more specifically, on Chicago. "Wright's Chicago years were his maturation years," as his fellow Southern-migrant-turned-Windy-City-writer Margaret Walker recalled (Walker 53). Chicago is where he began the climb toward the heights of international fame and, along the way, became the first prominent African American writer and the "most influential African-American writer of the twentieth century" (Moskowitz, "Enduring" 58). To the African American writers who followed, "[h]e proved it could be done," as Wright's friend/rival James Baldwin recalled (qtd. in Moskowitz, "Bizarre" 20). More particularly, he proved it could be done from the Midwest and for a moment displayed some regionalist leanings that might have blossomed into a prominent component in his work. But after his time in Chicago, Wright turned away from the Midwest and any regionalist inclinations that might have animated him during his time there, and this transition may reveal the limitations of Midwestern regionalism or explain the erosion of movement by the mid-twentieth century and, more generally, help further explain some of the republic's enduring racial dilemmas.

While seldom thought of as a regional thinker in any formal sense, Wright, in his work, burns with a regional consciousness, or a

hatred of the Jim Crow South, especially its extreme Mississippi version.[1] Unlike some of his youthful peers, who sought to recognize the color line in the South in order to keep the peace and avoid violence, Wright always bristled at the strictures of segregation, or more often openly rebelled against them. This rebellion led him to join the Great Migration to the North and to his settlement on Chicago's South Side, where he started on his path, as *Time* magazine said, toward becoming "the dean of Negro writers." In contrast to the brutalities of the South, Wright said, "I feel grateful that I'm in the cold, impersonal North where the whites just pass you by and let you alone" (Rowley 303). Indeed, Wright was shocked to find that when white women in the North brushed up against him, there were no consequences and that they would even ask him to tie their apron strings, all simple and forgettable moments in the North that could have sparked a riot in the South (Wright, *Black Boy* 270). When he went to work for a Jewish couple at a Chicago deli and they treated him like an equal, Wright had a hard time admitting or realizing what was happening (Rowley 55).

Passage between regions—or the escape from South to North—was essential to Wright's story and family history. Wright's maternal grandfather ran away from Mississippi in the spring of 1865 to fight in the Civil War, and, after crossing the Ohio River, he joined the Union navy in Cairo, Illinois. Wright's close relatives joined the Great Migration north and decamped to Chicago and Detroit when they could make a getaway. As a boy in Jackson, Mississippi, Wright delivered the famously anti-Southern and pro-Northern newspaper, the *Chicago Defender,* which made its mission the deliverance of blacks out of the South to the Northern promised land.[2] "Richard would talk incessantly about the North," his biographer Hazel Rowley notes, and constantly recite stories of the North from the *Defender* (Rowley 32). Wright's friend, Joe Brown, recalled Wright explaining "[h]ow Negroes and white folks could swim together in Lake Michigan and that they sat down beside white women on the street cars and that you could go to the libraries and get any kind of book you wanted to read. He would always say, 'I'm gonna leave Mississippi and be long gone up north one of these days'" (Rowley 32).

During his early career, Wright would draw on his personal experience and expertly convey the story of this massive regional relocation of peoples. He would capture the story of the millions of blacks who fled the South in the book *12 Million Black Voices* (1941), which

featured Farm Security Administration photos of the Great Migration accompanied by Wright's prose. "What emotions, fears, what a complex of sensations we felt when, looking out of a train window at the revolving fields, we first glimpsed the sliding waters of the gleaming Ohio!" (Wright, *12 Million* 98) Wright recorded the transition between regions, explaining how migrants would "notice with attention and hope that the dense southern swamps give way to broad, cultivated wheat farms" and the "spick-and-span farmhouses done in red and green and white crowd out the casual, unpainted gingerbread shacks" (Wright, *12 Million* 98). Midwestern farm silos came into view, paved highways replaced Southern dirt roads, and the "cheeks of the farm people [were] full and ruddy, not sunken and withered like soda crackers" (Wright, *12 Million* 98). In one of Wright's most memorable lines in his autobiography, he wrote about how Southern blacks would take a "part of the South to transplant in alien soil [in the North], to see if it could grow differently, if it could drink of new and cool rains, bend in strange winds, respond to the warmth of other suns, and perhaps, to bloom."[3] Isabel Wilkerson would adopt these lines for her prize-winning account of the Great Migration, *The Warmth of Other Suns,* which does much to emphasize the stark transition from South to North and to describe the celebrations of blacks once they crossed the Ohio River into the North.

As Wright recognized, the central purpose of the migration was to flee from one American region to another, an exodus premised on a deep commitment to a vision of regional differences and driven by "Northern fever" and a corresponding hatred of the South (Spear 133). Southern blacks routinely recounted the horrors of the Jim Crow South as a basis for leaving—they wanted to go "anywhere north," "anywhere but the south"—and were drawn by the "powerful image of the North as the Promised Land" (Grossman 99, 110). They saw Midwestern cities as a "New World" (Wilkerson 214). Wright described the trek as "going to another country" (Wright, *12 Million 99*). As Wilkerson has explained, they hopefully moved "into a new world called the Midwest," a "foreign region of essentially another world" (190, 226). After crossing the Ohio River, black migrants from Mississippi stopped and held "solemn ceremonies" and rejoiced, and others embraced their new freedoms by sitting next to white people on the train (Spear 137; Wright, *12 Million* 99). When a Chicago commission surveyed Southern black migrants and asked why they left, they cited the "better conditions" in Chicago and the

need "to get away from the South" (Wilkerson 217; Drake and Cayton 99-102). Black migrants such as Wright declared, "We'd rather be a lamppost in Chicago than the president of Dixie!" (Barnes 56). Wright was immediately struck by the absence of "racial fear" in Chicago and noticed how blacks and whites sat together on streetcars with nobody noticing, "as though this were a normal thing to do" (Wright, *Black Boy* 262; Wright, *12 Million* 100). Wright recorded that the "white men seem impersonal and their very neutrality reassures us": "O sweet welcome indifference!" (Wright, *12 Million* 99). Ida Mae Brandon Gladney, a migrant who left Chickasaw County, Mississippi, and was profiled by Wilkerson, said Chicago "looked like heaven to me then" (226). Gladney was following a common interregional migration stream that took blacks like Richard Wright and his family from Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama to Midwestern cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland (blacks from coastal states, in another regional dynamic, tended to move to New York and Philadelphia).[4]

The regional divide was immediately visible to Southern black migrants, and their "vision of Canaan" in the Midwest "put into sharper focus the tyranny of Egypt" back in the South (Spear 138). In Chicago, for example, blacks and whites went to the same parks, theaters, race tracks, and bars, played together on baseball teams or played each other in front of interracial crowds, used the same YMCA, went to the same African American doctors, and even intermarried. Many black clubs, lodges, and churches existed, as did four black newspapers. Chicago housing was much better than the shacks of the South. Blacks could bring lawsuits to enforce their rights under the Illinois Civil Rights Act and, perhaps most shocking of all for recent black migrants from the South, they could vote in elections and participate actively in politics.[5] Despite a more recent and less hopeful history, as Elizabeth Dale has noted, there was a "time when African Americans still held some hope for an integrated existence" in Chicago (Dale 313).

That some African Americans might finally come to grief in the North cannot erase the hopeful early moment of the Great Migration or the migrants' recognition of the deep regional differences over the treatment of African Americans or the post-migration cultural flowering that followed in northern cities and that yielded a quasi-regionalist body of work. From the 1920s to the 1950s, the new freedoms of Chicago's South Side, which Richard Wright fully embraced, fos-

tered a black renaissance that elevated several African American writers to national stature. Gwendolyn Brooks, who had moved from Topeka, Kansas, to Chicago as a young girl, would describe in fine detail the life of the South Side in books such as *A Street in Bronzeville* (1945). She also wrote poems for the *Chicago Defender,* but her big break came from a review by the Iowa regionalist Paul Engle, who praised her book in the *Chicago Tribune* as a form of "genuine Midwestern writing."[6] Another Kansas transplant, Frank Marshall Davis, worked for the Associated Negro Press in Chicago and published widely about Chicago, including *47th Street Poems* (1948), and generally sought to promote the work of Midwestern writers against the "effete" East. Langston Hughes, who was Missouri-born, Kansas-raised, and Cleveland-educated, also wrote a weekly column for the *Chicago Defender* and a novel, *Not Without Laughter* (1930), whose main character is a young African American who grows up in Kansas and moves to Chicago. Margaret Walker, an Alabama migrant-turned-writer, a friend, biographer, and, later, critic of Wright during the 1930s, also flourished in Chicago. The work of these writers demonstrates that the ingredients of a broader Midwestern regionalism, one that included African American voices which were intimately familiar with interregional distinctions, were present by the time of World War II. These ingredients could have mixed together and led to a flowering of Midwestern regionalism in the postwar era but it never came to pass.

Wright, perhaps better than all his fellow African American writers in Chicago, explained the reasons to flee the South and get to the North in grim detail in his famous autobiography *Black Boy* (1945). He sets forth the severe strictures of Jim Crow Mississippi and the various forms of submission African Americans made to the system. Wright is also forthright about how ripped apart his family life is and openly describes his own various forms of rebellion. *Black Boy* also addresses Wright's escape north and explains the close link between his intellectual development and Midwestern literature. During a short stint in Memphis, which he had heard wasn't as bad as Mississippi, Wright encountered jazz and blues and bookstores and Mencken's *American Mercury* (244, 248). He also discovered *Main Street* by Sinclair Lewis, the "first serious novel he had ever read" (Rowley 47). Wright's biographer argues that "Carol Kennicott's restlessness in a small, philistine Minnesota wheat-town was not unlike his in that stifling Southern environment" (Rowley 47). Soon

after, Wright read Lewis's *Babbitt* and then the books of Sherwood Anderson and Theodore Dreiser. He was reading the canonical works of the early-twentieth-century upsurge of Midwestern writing. "These books made [Wright] want to write himself," Rowley explains, and would make Wright a writer in coming years (47).

Wright finally moved to Chicago in 1927. While Wright had discovered the world of literature and had decided he wanted to be a writer, he had little formal schooling and no literary training. The next crucial stage of his literary development came when Wright fell in with the Communist Party and, more importantly, the left-wing writers and intellectuals of the John Reed Club in Chicago, which became "Wright's university" (Rowley 78). While the Reed Club exposed Wright to other writers and books and gave him an intellectual scene in which to grow, the CP came to be an oppressive force, a constraint on his literary ambitions, which often deviated from the party line. Wright nevertheless joined the CP and would actively write for its organs, but he later broke with the party in a public fashion in 1944.[7]

Since the CP allowed little room for dissent from Moscow's pronouncements, it contributed to some regionalist stirrings in Wright. For example, when the CP decided to terminate the regionally oriented journal *Left Front*, the journal of the Reed clubs in the Midwest that Wright had written for and edited, he was angered (Wright, *Black Boy* 316-17, 321, 323, 342-43). Wright and others "argued hotly for the importance of local magazines," as any committed regionalist would do (Rowley 79). When the CP also voted Chicago's John Reed Club out of existence, Wright sided with the Chicagoans during the intense debate over the merits of literary "regionalism" versus the limitations of "proletarian literature" (Rowley 85). During the debate Philip Rahv, who edited the New York club's magazine *Partisan Review,* took a dim view of literary regionalism and "criticized the Midwestern delegates for their romanticism about the land," a common characteristic of Midwestern regionalism (Rowley 85).[8] During these years, Wright seemed to be slowly acclimating to his new home region. When Wright made his first trip to New York (for a literary congress), he even felt the transition from "the flat western prairie" that he had become "used to" (Wright, *Black Boy* 346).

When the CP killed off their regionally oriented literary outlets, Wright and his fellow writers in Chicago were not deterred. Many African Americans came together to form the South Side Writers

Group, which was consciously regional and bristled at restrictive ideologies or outside influences, especially from New York, which had been considered the home of African American arts and letters. "Heavily influenced by Wright," Hazel Rowley noted, "the young black Chicago writers consciously distanced themselves from their Harlem Renaissance predecessors" (117). In the South Side Writers Group, Wright worked to hone the stories that would be collected in his first book, *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938), and he began to develop the ideas for his first major novel, *Native Son* (1940), which would famously feature the Chicago-based antihero Bigger Thomas and, as James Baldwin noted, would become the "most powerful and celebrated statement we have yet had of what it means to be a Negro in America" (Baldwin 111). The idea for Bigger was specifically prompted by Wright's job as a relief worker at the South Side Boys' Club, which housed "a wild and homeless lot, culturally lost, spiritually disinherited, candidates for the clinics, morgues, prisons, reformatories, and the electric chair of the state's death house" (Wright, *Black Boy* 341). As part of the South Side Writers' Group, Wright came to know more deeply his fellow writers, such as Margaret Walker, Frank Marshall Davis, Gwendolyn Brooks, and others.

During the depths of the Depression in Chicago, Wright was able to find welfare jobs with the help of Mary Wirth, the wife of the famous sociologist Louis Wirth. This soon led Wright to explore the world of sociology with the help of Professor Wirth, who was a key component of the famed sociology school at the University of Chicago. Wirth prepared a reading list for Wright and was delighted when Wright took the assignment very seriously. Wright also came to know the Chicago-trained African American sociologists St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton and would write the introduction to their famous book about Chicago, *Black Metropolis* (1945).

The next major intellectual development for Wright was being hired by the WPA's Illinois Writers Project in 1935, again with the help of Mary Wirth. The IWP was headed by the Iowa-born Midwestern regionalist John T. Frederick and was filled with Wright's old John Reed Club friends. Wright was tasked with working on the history of Illinois and African Americans in Chicago. Wright became the project's first black supervisor and personally helped promote a great deal of work on African American history. As part of the IWP, he wrote reports, for example, about life on a section of State Street in Chicago: "the beer taverns predominate, there being

about twenty-five. Dingy cafes and restaurants are a close second, there being about twenty. There are eight pool-rooms, seven drug-stores, four smoke-shops, and two movies" (Hathaway 96). Through his IWP connections, Wright became associated with the emerging journal *Prairie Pages,* for which he worked on a play entitled "Song of the Prairies" (Fabre 134). He also used his time working for the IWP to write his first novel (a story of life in the Chicago post office, where Wright also worked for a time, which was published in 1963, after his death, under the title *Lawd Today*), the stories for *Uncle Tom's Children,* and his first important essay, "A Blueprint for Negro Writing." The IWP was formative for Wright, as his fellow Chicagoan Nelson Algren recalled, and Wright was the "writer whom the Illinois project helped the most" due to his devotion and diligence (Mangione 121).

The Illinois Writers Project naturally promoted a great deal of work on Chicago, a topic and a place and an experience that were never far from Wright's mind during these years. He expounded on life in Chicago in his original version of *Black Boy*, which first included sections not only on the South but also on his new northern home. Wright's publisher suggested that the Chicago material be cut and that the book focus on his early life in the South, but the Chicago section was later published as *American Hunger* (1977). By using the South Side as the launching pad for becoming the nation's first prominent African American writer, Wright ensured Chicago's place on the literary map. Nelson Algren said that Wright's "impact upon Chicago has been more enduring than that of any merchant prince, mayor or newspaper owner." In her biography, Margaret Walker explains how Wright was a member of five Chicago writing groups in which he forged his skills; she deems Chicago the "womb of the great naturalism of Richard Wright" and Wright "a classic example of the transfer of Afro-American folklife to the streets of urban, middle western life" (80). Noting how "American naturalism seems to have been born in the Middle West," Walker explains how in Chicago "Wright developed within the pattern and trend of American naturalism, particularly the middle western brand" (81).

But Wright lost faith in Chicago by the late 1930s. He was sent to work for the Federal Negro Theater in Chicago, for example, and the stint ended poorly. Wright pushed for hard-hitting productions, such as Paul Green's "Hymn to the Rising Sun," that focused on the miseries of chain gangs in the South. To Wright's great dismay, the

African American actors and actresses objected to the play because it was so grim and "indecent" and because they had never heard of chain gangs (Wright, *Black Boy* 365). Wright began to think that Chicago— "the Chicago of Sandburg, of Dreiser, of Anderson, of Masters"—which he thought had been so revolutionary, was becoming reactionary (Rowley 115). Wright soon after bolted for New York and then, after the war, Paris. In later years, Wright said Chicago had become a "dim memory," and when he returned, he was immediately struck by its "ugliness" and by how "dull and grey" it was in comparison to his tree-filled and orderly Paris. While noting the greater prosperity of the South Side in the postwar era, Wright thought "it still remained an undissolved lump in the city's melting pot." He explained how a "majority of Chicago Negroes derive from the Deep South and they are justifiably defensive" about being portrayed in a "degrading light" by outside observers. Wright's assault on Chicago was made in the pages of *Ebony,* which simply wanted Wright to reflect on his years in Chicago. After nearly killing the article because it was so negative, *Ebony* decided on a middle course of complementing Wright's article with an editorial rebutting it. *Ebony* decided to reject outright another article by Wright that made the case for exiling oneself from the United States.[9]

The conflict between Wright and *Ebony* and other writers and critics over the proper portrayal of African American life is central to Wright scholarship and to making sense of Wright and reveals Wright's central literary and personal failures. His unyielding negativity and his unwillingness to allow the faintest glimmers of light into his work was the source of routine and legitimate criticism. The regionalist writer Dorothy Canfield Fisher, who was highly sympathetic to Wright, had to beg him to remove a few passages from *Native Son* so that it could be chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club for broad distribution. For *Black Boy*, Fisher wondered if Wright could note the American authors from which he found a "tinge of warmth" and who led him into a literary career; he finally added references to Dreiser, Masters, Mencken, Anderson, and Lewis (Rowley 289). Criticism of Wright extended beyond those who simply wanted him to craft his books to appeal to a broader, middle-class audience. Ralph Ellison had doubts about *Native Son*'s "view of reality" and thought *Black Boy* was "exaggerated" (Ellison, "Remembering" 670, 672). Wright's brother Leon also did not like the "misrepresentations in *Black Boy*" (Rowley 325). Langston Hughes objected to *Native*

Son's promotion of images of "defeat and death" and its focus on "caged animals who moan, who cry, who go mad, who are social problems, who have no guts" and he wanted greater recognition of the proud people working to loosen the constraints of Jim Crow (Hughes, "The Need"). W.E.B. Du Bois also thought Wright "a loathsome brat" and despised *Black Boy* and its unwillingness to recognize good people, black and white, who were working to improve race relations (Rowley 311). Some critics thought Wright was peddling negative stereotypes of African Americans in *Black Boy* to "make a buck" or, worse, that he believed them (Bradley).

Wright's unyielding interpretations are also linked to his ultimate failure as a regionalist, or his inability to maintain regional and cultural distinctions. Wright came to think, in short, that every place was Mississippi. His friend Ralph Ellison, who was from the regionally confusing borderland state of Oklahoma, could see the distinctions between his home and Wright's Mississippi. As Hazel Rowley noted, Oklahoma "was not the Deep South, and [Ellison] considered himself fortunate to have avoided that hell" (130). In a speech to the University of Iowa's Institute for Afro-American Culture in 1971, Ellison explained the Mississippi/Oklahoma distinction and noted how his home state "lacked many of the intensities of custom, tradition and manners which "colored" the institutions of the Old South, and which were important in shaping Wright's point of view" (Ellison 659). Wright's failure to see interregional distinctions is related to his full-throated embrace of cosmopolitanism and his parallel disdain for backward Southern blacks or for older traditions and folkways and long-standing tribal cultures, revealed most clearly during his later travels in Ghana and Indonesia: "I'm not yet one of those people who can get excited over primitive people"(qtd. in Rowley 197). He would proclaim "I'm a rootless man," a man who didn't need "many emotional attachments, sustaining roots, or idealistic allegiances" (Wright, *White Man* 647).[10] Wright was eager to leave the States for Paris and to be a "citizen of the world," as Rowley recounts, and leave old identities behind (354). He embraced intentional exile.[11] *Time* magazine deemed Wright "another Davisite," or an adherent of the philosophy of the ex-American GI Garry Davis, who after the war famously abandoned his passport and declared himself a "world citizen" (Rowley 377).[12] Wright warmly embraced the new age of global thinking during the postwar era that Mark Greif has expertly chronicled.

In addition to his cosmopolitanism, Wright also lost touch with the nuances of American life due to his long commitment to the Communist Party. Because of the demands of instrumentalist literature and doctrinal politics and the world of Communist organizing, Wright "allowed himself to become further estranged from a sense of being part of a people, of a landscape, of songs and rhythms and gestures that made up the Negro American folk heritage" (McCarthy 100). As Harold McCarthy notes, Wright "had become a city man, an intellectual," and thus displaced from his home and people (104). Even when many intellectuals were fleeing the CP, Wright stayed true. Even after the horrors of the Moscow show trials and the betrayal of the Nazi-Soviet pact, Wright remained a committed party member (Rowley 126, 179, 254-55). By the time of World War II, Wright "still felt that Stalinist discipline was necessary, despite the Trotskyite trials of the thirties" (Fabre 138). Wright's at least partial surrender to the constraints of the CP surely limited his range and did damage to his artistic development and constrained his ability to see regional variations or forms of racial progress.

Wright's abandonment of a budding regionalist sentiment in favor of Communist doctrine and cosmopolitanism and exile and international efforts to promote decolonization can be explained by his increasing radicalism and personal bitterness over the state of American race relations. He was "cynical" about "uplift and hope" and notions of racial progress (Wright, *Black Boy* 285). He thought "white America" was "too superficially optimistic" and unwilling to acknowledge the nation's deep racial traumas (Wright, *Black Boy* 272). The *Ebony* editor thought that "[d]own deep inside of [Wright] there manifestly burns a relentless, insatiable loathing for white people and America that erupts whenever he sits down at a typewriter," which he thought fueled Wright's "hate school of literature" (Burns 21). Instead of racial reconciliation, Wright thought in terms of revenge and retaliation and developed, as Baldwin recalled, "an ever more unrewarding rage" (Baldwin 112). His best biographer linked his "rage" to the "many mangled, dead white women in Wright's fiction" (Rowley 410). John Houseman, who directed the movie version of *Native Son*, noted how he could see Wright's "deep, almost morbid violence that lay skin-deep below that gentle surface" (Rowley 216). In Chicago during the years when his thoughts on *Native Son* were congealing, Margaret Walker thought Wright's "pent-up neurotic anger . . . had grown to a peak of black rage" (Walker 53-54).

Throughout the 1950s and the victories on desegregation and civil rights legislation, Wright remained a nonbeliever, incapable of acknowledging the various forms of slow but sure racial progress. When the civil rights movement turned toward Black Power, Wright became relevant again and Bigger Thomas was "rediscovered . . . as forerunner of the Watts rebels" (Fabre vii, xvi). Wright's radical critique helps explain his new popularity during the more recent tumult of the "Ferguson era."[13]

Wright is a reminder that in the transition from the early civil rights activism of the postwar period to the Black Power era, the regionalist sentiments that had once been embedded in the Great Migration—and for a time flickered in the minds of migrants such as Richard Wright—were ultimately lost. If the first generations of the Great Migration of African Americans to the Midwest were impressed with the signs of the region's racial progressiveness, or at least awed by its absence of strict Jim Crow apartheid, these hopeful signs were forgotten in the years after World War II. Prior to the Great Migration, when the African American population in the North was relatively small and when the Midwest took some regional pride in its non-Southern approach to civil rights, there was hope of building a decent regime of race relations in the region. But with the large influx of Southern blacks into the Midwest during the war and the pressures of post-World War II economic deconversion beginning to be felt, the previously weak color line in the North began to harden, especially in the area of residential segregation. The resulting creation of African American-dominated enclaves in Chicago (the South Side), Detroit (Paradise Valley), and other Midwestern cities gave rise to social pressures that would detonate in the late 1960s. What two sociologists described as the "general air of optimism" of the early Great Migration generation in the Midwest became a distant memory (Drake and Cayton 80).

African Americans were less and less impressed with the Midwest's regional progressiveness relative to the South and more focused on joining a national and international effort to promote civil rights for blacks and people of color more generally.[14] The one-time prominence of South/Midwest distinctions slowly dimmed, and public discourse relating to African Americans in the Midwest became focused on a more generic "urban problem" that seemed to grow in severity in the late twentieth century as whites fled cities and deindustrialization killed jobs and urban cores disintegrated into drug-

fueled shooting galleries. While the plight of African Americans in urban America became a major focus of intellectual life and public policy research in the post-World War II era, this focus had few regional dimensions and African American culture increasingly reflected frustrations "with the North's failure as a Promised Land" (Reich 121). Migrants to the North such as Richard Wright and Langston Hughes, who found their arrival in Chicago exhilarating and might have become Midwestern regionalist writers, instead joined national and international movements, embraced radical politics, and became voices protesting oppression writ large in an era of global decolonization efforts and pan-Africanism.[15] Wright, who could have become an essential voice of the Midwest, instead decamped to Paris for the rest of his life, where he "stood by the pride of his rootlessness" (Howe 182). Gwendolyn Brooks abandoned her traditional poetry focused on the quotidian lives of blacks in Chicago, became radicalized in 1967, and followed the call for black writers to embrace a "literature of transformation" and to promote "black separatism, black pride, and identifiable black literature."[16] Frank Marshall Davis became more involved in radical causes and in 1948 abandoned the Midwest for Hawaii, not to emerge again until the high tide of the Black Arts Movement.[17] Along with Davis, many other African American writers and intellectuals joined the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and, following Wright's early lead, became wedded to black nationalism and transnational decolonization movements.[18] Chicago, once a city which abetted regionalist inclinations, would spawn movements such as the Black Panthers and the Nation of Islam that were decoupled from place. African American literature, as Elizabeth Schlabach has demonstrated, came to be populated by the "uprooted and orphaned" and dominated by themes of "homelessness and impermanence" (91).

It might have been different. Richard Wright, who was the undisputed leader of the African American intellectuals of the mid-twentieth century, might have taken a different path and others might have followed him. He might have more fully embraced a form of regionalism that promoted civic engagement and social rootedness and shunned rebellion and exile, a path that might have been more conducive to racial reconciliation and social peace. But the failures of the urban North may have made this impossible. Northern residential segregation surely weakened any budding regionalism. Perhaps African Americans in Northern cities have a weaker sense of place,

as Houston Baker has noted, because if a group is limited "by and within boundaries set by another, then one is not a setter of place but a prisoner of another's desire. Under such conditions what one calls and, perhaps, feels is one's own place would be, from the perspective of human agency, *placeless*" (Baker 87; Wright, *Native Son* 222, 354). Or perhaps the self-perpetuating and self-reinforcing combination of *de facto* segregation in Northern cities, a crippling form of placelessness, African American resistance and radicalism, and the resulting embrace of rootlessness and exile, or a rejection of regionalism, all knotted together in a confusing and chronic jumble whose origins are forgotten best explains our present difficulties.

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NOTES

[1]On various aspects of Wright's regional thinking, see Jeff Karem, "'I Could Never Really Leave the South': Regionalism and the Transformation of Richard Wright's *American Hunger*," *American Literary History* 13.4 (Winter 2001), 708. On the recognition of place in African American culture, see Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations (*New York, Viking, 2010), 238.

[2]See Ethan Michaeli*, The Defender: How the Legendary Black Newspaper Changed America from the Age of the Pullman Porters to the Age of Obama* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

[3]See the discussion in Ralph Ellison, "Richard Wright's Blues," *Antioch Review* (1945), 200, where Ellison quotes from the original version of *Black Boy.*

[4]On these migrations, see Spear, *Black Chicago,* 140; Jack Temple Kirby, "The Southern Exodus, 1910-1960: A Primer for Historians," *Journal of Southern History* vol. 49, no. 4 (November 1983), 592; Kimberly L. Phillips, "'But It Is a Fine Place to Make Money': Migration and African-American Families in Cleveland, 1915-1929," *Journal of Social History* vol. 30, no. 2 (Winter 1996), 395-96; James N. Gregory, *Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 49-54.

[5]On race relations in Chicago during these years, see Elizabeth Dale, "'Social Equality Does Not Exist among Themselves, nor among Us': Bayles vs. Curry and Civil Rights in Chicago, 1888," *American Historical Review* vol. 102, no. 2 (April 1997), 315, 324; Robert H. Zieger, 'Northern Exposure," *Reviews in American History* vol. 37, no. 4 (December 2009), 573-74; Spear, *Black Chicago*, 6, 187-91; Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 50, 74, 109, 117-19, 136-37; Christopher Robert Reed, "Organized Racial Reform in Chicago During the Progressive Era: The Chicago NAACP, 1910-1920," *Michigan Historical Review* vol. 14 (Spring 1988), 75-76; Christopher Robert Reed, *Knock at the Door of Opportunity: Black Migration to Chicago, 1900-1919* (Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 2014); Fabre, *Unfinished Quest*, 74; Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 53-54; Grossman, *Land of Hope,* 136-37. Joel E. Black, "A Theory of African-American Citizenship: Richard Westbrooks, the Great Migration, and the *Chicago Defender*'s 'Legal Helps' Column," *Journal of Social History* vol. 46, no. 4 (2013), 896-915. Several Midwestern states passed civil rights laws during the late nineteenth century: Illinois (1885); Iowa (1884); Ohio (1884); Indiana (1885); Michigan (1885); Minnesota (1885); Nebraska (1885); Kansas (1905).

[6]Engle, who had recently presented Brooks with the Midwestern Writers Conference Award for Poetry, hoped Brooks would become a "permanent talent" of the Midwest. See George E. Kent, *A Life of Gwendolyn Brooks* (Lexington, KY, University of Kentucky Press, 1990), 74.

[7]On Wright's experiences within the CP, see Wright, "I Tried to Be a Communist," *Atlantic Monthly* (August 1944 and September 1944) and Earle V. Bryant (ed), *Byline, Richard Wright: Articles from the Daily Worker and New Masses* (Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 2015).

[8]On the anti-rural and anti-regional focus of *Partisan Review,* see Terry A. Cooney, "Cosmopolitan Values and the Identification of Reaction: Partisan Review in the 1930s," J*ournal of American History* vol. 68, no. 3 (December 1981), 582-84. 182; Moses Rischin, "When the New York Savants Go Marching In," *Reviews in American History* vol. 17, no. 2 (June 1989), 289, 292. The leading New York Intellectual Philip Rahv accepted the idea of "rural idiocy." James Atlas, *Bellow: A Biography* (New York, Random House, 2000), 300.

[9]These later opinions of Chicago were set forth in Wright, "The Shame of Chicago," *Ebony* (December 1951). The *Ebony* affair was explained by *Ebony* editor Ben Burns in "'They're Not Uncle Tom's Children," *The Reporter,* March 8, 1956 (noting Wright's rejected essay entitled "I Choose Exile"). The exile essay is available from Kent State University's Special Collections and Archives.

[10]See also Alexa Weik, "'The Uses and Hazards of Expatriation': Richard Wright's Cosmopolitanism in Process," *African American Review* vol. 41, no. 3 (Fall 2007), 459-75 and Eve Dunbar, "Black as a Region: Segregation and American Literary Regionalism in Richard Wright's *The Color Curtin*," *African American Review* vol. 42, no. 1 (Spring 2008), 109-12 (arguing that Wright substituted "blackness" for a form of literary regionalism).

[11]See Wright's unpublished essay "I Choose Exile," 1-11, available from Kent State University's Special Collections and Archives.

[12]On Davis, see Atossa Araxia Abrahamian, *The Cosmopolites: The Coming of the Global Citizen* (New York, Columbia Global Reports, 2015).

[13]See the recent essay by Benjamin Anastas, "Teaching the Controversy: James Baldwin and Richard Wright in the Ferguson Era," *New Republic* (June 2015).

[14]On the growth of internationalism, see Spear, *Black Chicago*, 193-200 (on the appearance of Marcus Garvey and the "New Negros" and their militant black nationalism and their limited success displacing the middle class black leaders of Chicago during the interwar years); Adam Ewing, *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2014), 193 (noting efforts to diminish regional attachments in favor of pan-Africanism); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anti-Colonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1997) (explaining the prominence of anti-colonial and pan-Africanist efforts among African-American intellectuals); Davarian L. Baldwin, *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 10; James H. Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2002); P.O. Esebede, *Pan-Africanism: The Idea and Movement, 1776-1963* (Washington, DC, Howard University Press, 1982); William J. Maxwell, *New Negro, Old Left: African-American Writing and Communism Between the Wars* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1999).

[15]See Grossman, *Land of Hope,* 117; Finley C. Campbell, "Prophet of the Storm: Richard Wright and the Radical Tradition," *Phylon* vol. 38, no. 1 (1977), 15-18; Daniel Wongu Kim, "'We, Too, Rise with You': Recovering Langston Hughes's African (Re)Turn 1954-1960 in An African Treasury, the Chicago Defender, and Black Orpheus," *African American Review* vol. 41, no. 3 (Fall 2007), 419-20 (explaining Hughes's embrace of the "new, decol-

onizing Africa and its writers" and "anti-colonialist nationalism and pan-Africanism" and how Hughes "sought to lead the broader radicalization of the US black political imagination"); Anthony Dawahare, "Langston Hughes's Radical Poetry and the 'End of Race,'" *MELUS* vol. 23, no. 3 (Autumn 1998), 27-38; Charles P. Banner-Haley, *From Du Bois to Obama: African American Intellectuals in the Public Forum* (Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 2010), 18-19; James Smethhurst, "'Don't Say Goodbye to the Porkpie Hat': Langston Hughes, the Left, and the Black Arts Movement," *Callaloo* vol. 25, no. 4 (Autumn 2002), 1226-34; Scott, "Langston Hughes of Kansas," 7; James Smethhurst, "The Adventures of a Social Poet: Langston Hughes from the Popular Front to Black Power," in Steven Tracy (ed), *A Historical Guide to Langston Hughes* (London, Oxford University Press, 2004), 141-68; Anthony Dawahare, "Langston Hughes's Radical Poetry and the 'End of Race,'" *MELUS* vol. 23, no. 3 (Fall 1998), 21-41; Brett Hayes Edwards, "Langston Hughes and the Futures of Diaspora," *American Literary History* vol. 19, no. 3 (Autumn 2007), 689-711; Jonathan Scott, "Advanced, Repressed, and Popular: Langston Hughes during the Cold War," *College Literatur*e vol. 33, no. 2 (Spring 2006), 32-36; Barnes, "'I'd Rather Be a Lamppost in Chicago,'" 52-54.

[16]On Brooks's transition, see Kent, *A Life of Gwendolyn Brooks,* 197 (transformation); Philip A. Greasley, "Gwendolyn Brooks: The Emerging Poetic Voice," *Great Lakes Review* vol. 10, no. 2 (Fall 1984), 19 (black), 16 (noting Brooks's "massive reversal in poetic orientation" beginning in 1967); *Gwendolyn Brooks, Report from Part One* (Detroit, Broadside Press, 1972), 45 (announcing herself as "essentially an essential African" and rejecting integration); Yomna Mohamed Saber, *Brave to Be Involved: Shifting Positions in the Poetry of Gwendolyn Brooks* (Bern, Peter Lang, 2010), 139, 154, 169); Annette Debo, "*Signifying Afrika*: Gwendolyn Brooks' Later Poetry," *Callaloo* vol. 29, no. 1 (Winter 2006), 168-72; Karen Jackson Ford, "The Last Quatrain: Gwendolyn Brooks and the Ends of Ballads," *Twentieth Century Literature* vol. 56, no. 3 (Fall 2010), 371-72; Angela Jackson, "In Memoriam: Gwendolyn Brooks," *Callaloo* vol. 23, no. 4 (Autumn 2000), 1166, 1168; John F. Callahan, "'Essentially an Essential African': Gwendolyn Brooks and the Awakening to Audience," *North Dakota Quarterly* vol. 55, no. 4 (Fall 1987), 59-60, 65; Philip A. Greasley, "Gwendolyn Brooks's 'Afrika,'" *MidAmerica* vol. 8 (1986), 12.

[17]In Hawaii, Davis tutored a disconnected Barack Obama, who would later move to Chicago in search of a deeper grounding in black culture and politics. See generally Kathryn Waddell Takara, "Frank Marshall Davis," in Steven C. Tracy (ed), *Writers of the Black Renaissance* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2011), 161-181.

[18]See Debo, "Signifying *Afrika,*"168 (describing the Black Arts Movement as "the artistic arm of the Black Power Movement); David Lionel Smith, "The Black Arts Movement and Its Critics," *American Literary History* vol. 3, no. 1 (Spring 1991), 102; Interview of Gwendolyn Brooks, *Great Lakes Review* vol. 6, no. 1 (Summer 1979), 51 (noting the Black Arts Movement's emphasis "on Blackness and on Black unity; on Black family—Blacks all over the world as *family*") (italics in original); Greasley, "Gwendolyn Brooks," 19 (explaining how "black writers [were] abandoning the integrationist-assimilationist philosophy" of earlier years and embracing the "poetics of President Leopold Senghor of Senegal," the "poetics of Negritude," the writings of Franz Fanon and Malcolm X, and the solidarity of "Black Writers' conferences" such as the one at Fisk University in 1967 that transformed Gwendolyn Brooks); Kevin K. Gaines and Penny M. Von Eschen, "African Americans in Literature and the Arts," in Robert L. Harris and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn (eds), *Columbia Guide to African American History since 1939* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2006), 18; James Smethhurst, *The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Lisa Gail Collins and Margo Natalie Crawford (eds), *New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 2006), 5-9.

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"TIME IS THE FOURTH DIMENSION OF SPACE": THE RADICALISM OF PAUL GRUCHOW'S THEORY OF TIME AND PLACE

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In *Grass Roots*, Gruchow's literary nonfiction essays divulge the inner mind of a conservationist who has passionately attempted to bring together a love of nature, battles with his own personal demons, a waxing nostalgia for a childhood that is in many ways regular and special in and of itself, and a philosophy of social justice that reconciles being and time and place. At first glance, the physical text of *Grass Roots* belies the radicalism found within. The cover of the 1995 Milkweed paperback edition, designed by Adrian Morgan, showcases a photograph by Michael Melford, Inc. of a lonely prairie dotted with small white flowers opening to the expansive horizon upon which rests a tall cumulus cloud. On one side, the statuesque cloud is cast in the brightness of an unseen sun, and the other side shaded in a deep, heady blue. The prairie is depicted as expansive, untouched, wild but serene, and, most importantly, without a trace of human interaction, save for the viewer looking through the portal of the photograph. So, too, the key words listed in the Library of Congress Catalog-in-Publication Data depict a book that is more about a quaint communion with nature and the down-home people of the Midwest than political philosophy or revolutionary aims. The topics under which one should find *Grass Roots* are: "Farm life—Minnesota," "Minnesota—Social life and customs," "Gruchow, Paul," and "Natural history—United States." Yet, all one has to do is flip a page and see essay titles such as "Guerilla Warfare to Revive the Countryside" and "Corn Is Not Eternal" to know there is more to this Gruchow character than the cover artwork and bibliographic information give away. And when we dig only a little bit into Gruchow's title, *Grass Roots*, which so clearly argues for the "Farm life" or "Natural history" moniker, it also argues for a radical read-

ing, a grass roots political organizing—a radicalism that is grounded, but also comes from the ground up.

This reconciliation is nowhere more apparent than in the first two paragraphs of his piece "Home is a Place in Time." In this opening essay of the book, Gruchow asks: "What if one's life were not a commodity, not something to be bartered to the highest bidder, or made to order? What if one's life were governed by needs more fundamental than acceptance or admiration? What if one were simply to stay home and plant some manner of garden?" (1). Already in these first few lines, Gruchow links place and social justice in that he juxtaposes the neoliberal valuation of life as a commodity in contemporary capitalism with simply "staying at home," a place that can be, its suggested, out of the reach of neoliberal capitalism. In the broadest sense, social justice is an organizing principle founded on equal opportunity and human rights, which then should translate to collective well-being as identified by economic, intellectual, and emotional prosperity. Thus, Gruchow's linking of place and social justice creates the conditions for the triumph over other organizing principles, such as neoliberal capitalism, which are reliant on individuality translated into the stratification of winners and losers, rather than collective well-being. He continues in this vein of collective well-being over time by proposing: "To plant a garden is to enter the continuum of time. Each seed carries in its genome the history that will propel it into the future, and in planting it we stretch one of the long threads of our culture into tomorrow" (Gruchow 1). In *Grass Roots*, readers are shown that time is place, and living knowingly in time and place is social justice, which, for Gruchow, means a type of ethical living that is amiable to humans and the natural world in which they live. My argument here is presented in two parts: 1) that Gruchow presents a radical theory of time in the radical tradition of Midwestern literature and socio-political theory, a theory which has emerged from a postmodern late-capitalist socio-economic analysis married with an ecological approach to social organization, and 2) that Gruchow's theory of evolutionary time allows for an ethics of place in the Midwest that underpins a new approach to the praxis of contemporary organizing for the purpose of social justice.

THE THEORY OF TIME AND PLACE

Gruchow's ethics of place signify an ethics of time that transcend, or perhaps revise, the mythology of the past, present and future to

encourage a more suitable symbiosis of time and place, which is the nature of *being*. Such an account of existence cannot rely simply on being and time; it must consider being and time and place, since being is within the confines of time and, as Gruchow and physics tell us, time is the fourth dimension of place. Therefore, one cannot *be* without *place*. To *be* means to *be somewhere*. Thus, when Gruchow writes that "the particular promise of evolutionary time is that it calls us to place," he means that evolutionary time creates a space for the ethics of *being somewhere*, and, Gruchow hopes, that particular *somewhere* is what we will come to call *home* (142). Such an assertion requires the consideration of space as a material product, as Manuel Castells argues in *The Urban Question* (1977). Not only is space a material product, as Castells asserts, but it exists "in relation with other material elements—among others, men, who themselves enter into particular social relations, which give to space (and to the other elements of the combination) a form, a function, a social signification" (115). I argue that theories of time, too, give social relations a form, a function, and a social signification; therefore, a radical theory of social justice requires not only a theory of space, but also a theory of time. This is why Gruchow's praxis is underpinned by a radical theory of evolutionary time, and his praxis looks to be organized through ecological principles, which are spatial and temporal, thereby supporting form, functions, and signification of social revolution writ as ethical principles and able to be supported in the long term.

Similar to Castells, Edward J. Soja in *Postmodern Geographies* (1989) also takes up a materialist approach to time and space. Soja argues that "From a materialist perspective, whether mechanistic or dialectical, time and space in the general or abstract sense represent the objective form of matter. Time, space, and matter are inextricably connected, with the nature of this relationship being a central theme in the history and philosophy of science. This essentially physical view of space has deeply influenced all forms of spatial analysis" (79). Moreover, Soja argues, "[s]pace in this generalized and abstracted physical form has been conceptually incorporated into the materialist analysis of history and society in such a way as to interfere with the interpretation of human spatial organization as a social product, the key first step in recognizing a socio-spatial dialectic" (79). Paul Gruchow, although not explicitly, utilizes a materialist approach not only to space, but also to time. Gruchow, taking a page

from a Foucaultian genealogical analysis, begins with the cyclical model of time that supports a seasonal version of social and ecological material relations, which, coincidentally, also assumes that civilizations and natural resources rise and fall organically, allowing for the justification of everything from the inevitability of colonization to the "natural" and historical cycles of global climate change. He then moves to the linear progression of time, which underscores the hope of modernity in that the new modernization would lead to perfection, and the horror of postmodernity, where theorists such as Fredric Jameson see the signs of late capitalism. In response to both of these failed versions of time, failed in that they neglect to take into account a socio-spatial dialectic that allows for the interpretation of human spatial organization as a social product, as Soja suggests, Gruchow develops a theory of evolutionary time, a theory of time that connects time, space, and matter in the hope of developing a contemporary praxis of social justice, a time and a place for people and ecologies (after all, as Gruchow argues, people are simply part of the ecology of the place in which they live) to exist in a mutually beneficial and productive relationship. Ultimately, Gruchow's ethics of *being somewhere* engenders a view of regionalism, and particularly the Midwest, that creates a radical space not only for the consideration and critique of place, as in the ecological themes of Midwestern literature that critics have considered for decades, but also for the people who live in these ecologies as a part of them in time and place.

THE MIDWESTERN TRADITION OF RADICALISM

In *The Midwestern Pastoral: Place and Landscape in Literature of the American Heartland* (2005), William Barillas identifies Gruchow's *Grass Roots* as an argument "for a renewed land ethic and aesthetic, putting forth specific recommendations for land use, education, and community revitalization in the rural upper Midwest" (219). In what Barillas calls Gruchow's "most incisive as well as his most personal book" due to its "polemic and narrative aspects," he places Gruchow's contemporary narrative in the tradition of the Midwestern pastoral, putting him in conversation with the likes of Jane Smiley and Leo Marx. Barillas's point is that Gruchow's analyses and proposals fuse pastoral theory and environmental justice in "the contemporary coalition between economically disadvantaged people and environmental activists who recognize class structure and racism as sources of environmental degradation as well as poverty"

(223). While the few scholars who engage with Gruchow's works focus mainly on his ecological themes, I will focus on his radicalism and, more specifically, his radical philosophy of time and place.

If one digs far enough, or sometimes not really at all, the Midwest can be defined in terms of radicalism. The Midwest is often considered a kind of utopia; it is a provincial, flat, and undifferentiated landscape, which is the perfect setting for a revised origin myth, not the true origin myth inscribed on the land of the East Coast, but, rather, a sequel to the national public imaginary: a do-over, a self-fulfilling prophesy of moral, economic, and personal triumph writ large against a backdrop of unremarkable landscapes and normal peoples. The Midwest may be the perfect place at the heart of a perfect union in a nationalistic public imaginary, but it is also a "no place" in this same imaginary—a place to fly over or drive through, not a destination: a cultural waste land of nothingness. And because the Midwest is not perfect, these are only imaginary attributes; it contains within its borders a healthy undercurrent of culture and socio-political unrest, which titillates and disturbs even our most modern sensibilities. The history of the Midwest and its peoples is a history of radicalism. Although many may view the Midwest as bland, indistinct, and featureless, the people of the Midwest operate in a paradoxical state that leaves ample room for radicalism. In his book S*acred Land: Sherwood Anderson, Midwestern Modernism, and the Sacramental Vision of Nature* (2014), Mark Buechsel argues that while some, like Andrew R.L. Cayton, have observed that "the burden of life in the Midwest has been to deny any kind of difference," the Midwest is actually a place of an "at least superficially conflicting sense of existential turmoil; it is the site of the nation's very heartbeat, the place where big dreams are dreamt, crushed, and reenvisioned, a place where truth is defined in opposite, clashing ways, a spiritual battlefield" (47).

The paradoxical bedfellows of "featureless, statistically average, middle-class lives" and radical lives exist and flourish in the Midwest, as they have for at least 150 years (Buechsel 47). Many have documented the Ku Klux Klan's influence in the Midwest, especially in Indiana, but other extremism exists as well.[1] My interest here is in how the Midwest became a place where radical thought and practice, particularly as related to labor struggles, not only survived, but flourished. David D. Anderson's "The Origins and Development of the Literature of the Midwest" in the *Dictionary of Midwestern*

Literature Volume One: The Authors (2001) gives an important lineage of ethos and thought as it relates to the people of the Midwest. Anderson asserts that the Midwest is a creation influenced by eighteenth-century rational thought (11). Moreover, he connects the Midwest with socio-political progress:

> From the beginning, evolution of the Midwest has been marked by a faith in progress, an acceptance of change, a willingness—perhaps even an eagerness—to move on, and by a search for success and for order and a confidence in human ability. All of these have marked its political history from the beginning. Consequently, the Midwest has been in the forefront of political and moral movements ranging from Jacksonian democracy through abolition to populism and prohibition and beyond. (Anderson 12)

These political movements have led to a variety of lived existences and experiences in the Midwest. The most visible, and perhaps one of the most ubiquitous origin myths of the lived existences and experiences America at large has clung to as representative of a national identity, is that of the "good farmer" who embraces a wholesome lifestyle of hard work, living off the land, and faith that doing right will lead to both a reward in heaven for the individual and a better life for one's progeny. This mystical "good farmer" identity is one that overtook the national picture and remains a mythic version of the Midwest, even in an era of intense material and agricultural industrialization, the disappearance of the great middle class (if it ever really existed in the first place), environmental desecration, and a shift in moral and ethical codes throughout the United States.

Like nineteenth- and early twentieth-century radicals, reformers, and populists who shaped the historical and political trajectory of the Midwest, Paul Gruchow continues a tradition of regional radicalism that for him is rooted in, but not subsumed by, place and ecology. As Jon K. Lauck writes in his breakthrough book *The Lost Region: Toward a Revival of Midwestern History* (2014): "The Midwest also became a site of the great nineteenth century evolution of American capitalism. The dominance of small farm and small town capitalism of the prairie was later diminished by the rise of big business and urban centers" (26). Gruchow's radicalism, at least in *Grass Roots*, is not only informed but also driven by the colonization of big business (for Gruchow, namely, agribusiness) in the rural Midwest. His radicalism, which does not seem all that radical to many, is about a return

to the "dominance of the small farm and small town capitalism of the prairie" (26) as Lauck puts it. Thus, while it is correct to assert that Gruchow's radicalism emanates from his environmentalist ethics, I argue that his environmentalist ethics is only one confluent factor among many others, including shifting economic modes, social relations, and a philosophical commitment to social justice, which, for Gruchow, includes his environmentalist ethics, since he views people as a part of, rather than separate from, the environment in which they live, use, and, especially in the case of agribusiness, abuse.

THE ETHICS OF PLACE AND TIME: A FORMATIVE SOCIAL JUSTICE PRACTICE

How can a radical philosophy of time underpin an expansive ethics of social justice? The second part of my argument here is that Gruchow's theory of evolutionary time allows for an ethics of place in the Midwest that underpins a new approach to the praxis of contemporary organizing for the purpose of social justice. As stated previously, Gruchow's theory of evolutionary time creates a space for the ethics of *being somewhere*, and, Gruchow hopes, that particular *somewhere* is what we will come to call *home* (142). Evolutionary time, according to Gruchow, is based on seeing the earth and everything on it as a whole:

> Just as a new myth of earth is emerging—one in which we see earth as a single, interdependent, self-regulating organism—so a new view of time has recently become possible. One might call it relative time, or evolutionary time. It would understand time neither as static—as in the old myth of cyclicity—not as mechanical—as in the more recent myth of progress—but as dynamic: an unfolding set of creative variations upon a finite set of basic materials. Such a view would allow us to accept both change and continuity as aspects of time without vilifying or deifying either, freeing it from the straightjacket of our neo-Victorian fundamentalism, which sees the past as villainy, the present as conspiracy, and the future as tragedy. (142)

Gruchow's evolutionary time has been made possible by the same globalization that has begun to wreak havoc on his home, turning small, imperfect family farms into massive industrial centers that destroy the land and culture of the rural Midwest. Evolutionary time is not pre-industrial; it is not based on the "old myth of cyclicity," such as the changing of the seasons or the cyclical calendar of festi-

vals, births, and deaths. Nor is it industrial, based on what he calls "the more recent myth of progress." Evolutionary time is not invested in the myth of forward, linear progress toward a more certain future; it is not the theory of time upon which manifest destiny nor empire is supported. Rather, Gruchow's evolutionary time is dynamic: it is "an unfolding set of creative variations upon a finite set of basic materials," i.e., what goes around comes around, but you can never step in the same river twice. Evolutionary time is a synthesis of past theories of time that allows for, as Gruchow puts it, "both change and continuity," accepting both, allowing both tradition and innovation, the old and the new.

One of the most beautiful things about Gruchow's theory of time is that it frees the individual from an authoritarian requirement of both tradition and innovation, thereby liberating the individual from the hegemony of the expectations of time marked by culture, but without disavowing tradition. The expectations of dynamic time are left up to the individuals to decide for themselves what works and what does not. Since social justice is an organizing principle founded on equal opportunity and human rights, Gruchow's theory of time supports an organizing principle of social justice in that it liberates the individual, thus allowing for the possibility of equal opportunity and the recognition, if not the expansion, of human rights. In short, Gruchow's evolutionary time is the disavowal of authoritarian politics of time and thus a disavowal of authoritarian politics of place. For Gruchow, the lure of the promises made by the globalization of wealth, prosperity, and efficiency are characteristic of perhaps the most authoritarian politics of all, in which local control, both political and social, is wrested away and placed in the domain of neoliberal capital, which plunders and funnels wealth from the rural to the urban, from the so-called third world to the first world.

Gruchow is not the first, nor certainly will he be the last, to notice this phenomenon of the loss of local control, which Fredric Jameson details in his book, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991). As Jameson sees it, late capitalism includes features such as transnational business as well as "the new international division of labor, a vertiginous new dynamic in international banking and the stock exchanges (including the enormous Second and Third World debt), new forms of media interrelationship (very much including transportation systems such as containerization), computers and automation, the flight of production to advanced Third World

areas" (xix); moreover, these economic and cultural features promulgate "all the more familiar social consequences, including the crisis of traditional labor, the emergence of yuppies, and gentrification on a now-global scale" (xix). Although Jameson is nowhere nearly as optimistic as Gruchow with regard to the potentiality of overcoming or even beginning to confront late capitalism, they are both tuned in to the symptoms of the same malady. The ultimate cure, for Gruchow at least, is his materialist version of time and space, which opens new vistas for a social justice organizing principle that takes for its foundation already known ecological principles.

The result of evolutionary time, according to Gruchow, is that it calls us home, to live our lives in particular places. Thus, we all live some place, and many of them are similar, but none of them are exactly the same, and this is as true over cartography as it is over space time. To be called to "particular places" means that individuals must have the power to choose where and when to find their homes; and it is in this incisively personal choice, in calling a time and a place home, that Gruchow's ethics of being somewhere can yield what he calls "the emerging idea of ecology as an organizing principle," which "opens new standards for judging the suitability of our social arrangements" (143). I argue that when Gruchow identifies ecology as an organizing principle, he identifies it as an organizing principle under the umbrella of social justice, not as a separate organizing principle. Conserving the land is also about conserving the culture and lives of the people who inhabit it. It is also about promoting equal opportunity and the rights of the land *and the people who live there* in order to create a time and place in which the people and the land can prosper. Gruchow explains, "The more abstract our organizing principles are, the more distant from the disciplines of nature and of local need, the more aggressively extractive and exploitative our lives become" (143). Globalization, then, has been a driving force of exploitation of local ecologies, but also an exercise in the exploitation of human beings, since both ecologies and people need to exist somewhere, which is always local, and can never truly be global. This is not to say that Gruchow is supporting a return to nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century regionalism as an organizing principle; rather, he is advocating for a more anarchic plan of local consideration of control: the ethics of *being somewhere*. In short, Gruchow is often rightly classified as an environmental conservationist, but his true potential is in his theory of time and place, com-

bined with his knowledge of ecological principles, which yields a social justice defining "suitability of social arrangements" (143).

This is not all just theory for Gruchow: as a man rooted in place and time, he has real "action items" that would come from the ethics of *being somewhere*, which also means being at home. He lists five main criteria for judging the "suitability of social arrangements" under this new organizing principle, and all are based in place and time. His second criterion echoes the inclusive philosophy and pedagogy propounded by theorists such as bell hooks and disability studies advocates and scholars. Gruchow declares, "We will judge the health of local communities on the basis of its most vulnerable members' needs" because "[a]pparently ephemeral constituents of human communities may also have vital roles to play in their health, invisible though they may be in analyses that depend upon averages and means" (143-144). Diversity, even diversity that represents "apparently ephemeral constituents" of communities, has an important role to play, even if it defies what we have always been told about organizing principles. Gruchow's ethics of *being somewhere* do not measure the health of communities as statistical averages in short-sighted timelines; instead, the vitality of communities rests in their diversity, not in their consolidation to promote efficiency or what conventional thinking would connote as vitality. Variation, redundancy, and multiple strategies for survival over time, all of which Gruchow discusses in his five criteria, work against the conventional wisdom of social policy and public planning.

Consideration of local control and authority continues to be of the utmost importance throughout Gruchow's organizing principles, as seen in his fourth criterion:

> We will come to understand that we have the adage "Think globally, act locally" backwards. A good abstraction may be made from an adequate number of particulars, but it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to make a good particular from any number of abstractions. We will learn to think locally and to act globally—to act, that is, as if what we do locally matters globally, as indeed it does. This is one of the useful insights to be gained from chaos theory. (Gruchow 145)

This criterion shows that not only place is important, but also time. "Thinking locally" is where time melds with place, i.e., the consideration of social justice at a local level will come to affect the intercon-

nected world on a global scale. Rather than think about the whole and choose actions based on that, Gruchow argues that all change must happen first at home and, if sustainable and workable, will emanate to a global level. As Gruchow writes at the very beginning of *Grass Roots*: All one needs to do is stay at home and plant some manner of garden to enter into the continuum of time; time is as local as place, and, by focusing on the sustainability of the individual and local, one is actually focusing on the sustainability of the global whole.

This sentiment of "think locally, act globally" is reflected fully in the title of the book *Grass Roots: The Universe of Home*. *Grass Roots*, as mentioned earlier, is both a social justice and ecological title. It evokes the idea of grass roots organizing, i.e., the kind of local organizing—going door-to-door and talking to people one by one—that has, in recent years, yielded massive successes on the national political stages for men like Barack Obama and Bernie Sanders. It also calls forth the literal grass roots of the prairie, a place that is made of billions of root systems of billions of grasses, grasses that lie fallow and come alive each year if left unfettered, always the same, but always a bit different. Gruchow's evolutionary time is exemplified by the prairie, for the prairie itself is comprised of billions of creative variations based on a finite set of basic materials. When Gruchow's evolutionary time calls us to live our lives in particular places, which he hopes we will call home, we are also being called to an ethics of responsibility for our homes, our places, our times, and, ultimately, our people. With evolutionary time, the power and responsibility no longer rest in the authoritarian politics of time dictated by culture, but with individuals, with Midwesterners, who are being called home to their grass roots to plant some manner of garden. But what kind of garden? Gruchow won't tell us, because each of us will have to decide what and how and when for ourselves.

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NOTE

[1]For further reading on the Ku Klux Klan's rise and influence in the Midwest, I recommend Richard K. Tucker's *The Dragon and the Cross: The Rise and Fall of the Ku Klux Klan in Middle America* from Archon Books (1991), and for a state-specific study of the Klan in Michigan, particularly the influence in Michigan by the Klan from Indiana in the 1920s, I recommend Craig Fox's *Everyday Klansfolk: White Protestant Life and the KKK in 1920s Michigan* from Michigan State University Press (2011).

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WHOSE BOOK IS THIS?: TEXTUAL UNHOMELINESS IN TONI MORRISON'S *HOME*

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Throughout the storied history of African American literature, themes of home and cultural displacement have played a central role. From slave narratives to contemporary novels, we can see the societal friction that arises out of racial violence and discrimination. The frequency of this occurrence in fiction has led to a number of texts that highlight the unwelcoming nature of the United States to native-born individuals. Within this canon, an ironic, titular home appears in Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem* (1928), in which Jake Brown spends as little time in Harlem as possible, and Langston Hughes's short story, "Home," (1934) presents Roy Williams's unsuccessful and tragic attempt to reintegrate into the United States after years in Europe. Thematically, Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* (1928) and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952) demonstrate the complicated nature of home in relation to race, as each protagonist fails to find true satisfaction and acceptance. Toni Morrison's recent novel, *Home,* published in 2012, creates an interesting addition to this trope, as Morrison similarly represents home ironically by emphasizing instability and literal homelessness.

Although published only a few years ago, the novel's 1950s setting examines the racist American society prior to the civil rights movement. Protagonist Frank Money finds himself struggling to construct his self-identity, and his return to America following his deployment in Korea presents him with the challenges of undiagnosed PTSD and racial stereotyping. While Frank's tale obviously demonstrates this intersection of race and a lack of home, there is more at play due to the novel's distinctive narrative strategy of alternating between first-person and third-person chapters. Ultimately, Frank's first-person chapters underscore the tension in his quest for belonging and self-identity, whereas the narrator's third-person chap-

ters create inconsistencies with Frank's personal narrative, thereby forcing him to become textually unhomed in his own story.

In 1997, fifteen years prior to the debut of *Home,* Morrison published an essay by the same title in the collection *The House that Race Built*. Here, while Frank Money's story was nowhere near its nascence, Morrison candidly examines the importance of home to her writings and personal beliefs. Even though this essay predates her 2012 novel, it nonetheless provides relevant insights into Frank's eventual plight. According to her theory on the topic, home equates to "a-world-in-which-race-does-*not*-matter . . . . [T]he term domesticates the racial project, moves the job of unmattering race away from pathetic yearning and futile desire; away from an impossible future or an irretrievable and probably nonexistent Eden to a manageable, doable, modern human activity" (3-4). With this working definition, then, the insatiable quest for home so prevalent in African American fiction can be seen as the attempt to locate a space in which race (or racism) does not detract from the quality of life. Morrison continues by expanding this theory and emphasizing its modern relevance:

> [M]y own writerly excursions and my use of a house/home antagonism are related to . . . legitimacy, authenticity, community, belonging. In no small way, these discourses are about home: an intellectual home; a spiritual home; family and community as home; forces and displaced labor in the destruction of home; dislocation of and alienation within the ancestral home; creative responses to exile, the devastations, pleasures, and imperatives of homelessness as it is manifested in discussions on feminism, globalism, the diaspora, migrations, hybridity, contingency, interventions, assimilations, exclusions. The estranged body, the legislated body, the violated, rejected, deprived body—the body as consummate home. In virtually all of these formations, whatever the terrain, race magnifies the matter that matters. (5)

Indeed, in each of these instances the race factor complicates and amplifies the situation for an unhomed individual. As Morrison stresses, home allows for personal freedom in every conceivable category. Historically, racism has worked to remove such freedom, thereby establishing the complex nature of race in modern artistic production. In this way, Morrison's earlier thoughts on the concept play a key role in our understanding of a racial home within *Home*.

Central to my claim here is the textual structure of the novel, so before diving further into my argument and parsing out my terms and methodology, I will establish the parameters of the physical text. Of the seventeen chapters in the novel, nine are presented through a third-person narrator. These chapters are the meat of the book. Set entirely in the 1950s, they are lengthy sections that provide the majority of the novel's plot, dedicating space to detail the lives of Frank, his sister Cee, his step-grandmother Lenore, and his girlfriend Lily. As a counterpoint, the remaining eight chapters are written from Frank's contemporary first-person perspective and are visually set apart in the text through italics. They are much shorter than the other chapters, with the average length being two pages. The relationship between these sets of chapters is interesting, as Morrison inserts a writer-character whom Frank directly addresses at times during his sections. The effect is a documentary-style text in which the reader gets the sense that Frank is relating his life story for the purpose of its retelling. In other words, the italicized chapters appear as if part of an interview, while the nonitalicized chapters act as the narrative constructed by the interviewer. For the sake of avoiding confusion, I will refer to Morrison by name when discussing her compositional choices relating to the book as a whole, and I will refer to the narrator as such when discussing the implied character-author of the third-person chapters. Throughout the novel and specifically at the intersection of these constituent parts, we discover Frank's persistent unhomeliness.

Unhomeliness is a concept that Homi K. Bhabha defines in *The Location of Culture* (1994) as "the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world . . . that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations" (9). Frank is an African American veteran returning to the United States from Korea, and this transnational and transcultural move inhibits his sense of belonging in his native country. Bhabha continues, "The recesses of the domestic space become sites for history's most intricate invasions. In that displacement, the borders between home and world become confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorienting" (9). This final characterization of unhomeliness is especially relevant vis-à-vis Morrison's novel. Throughout *Home,* when only considering the third-person chapters, the narration is indeed divided and disorienting, frequently jumping from one character to the next with little

to no context for the shift. When these chapters are juxtaposed with Frank's alternating first-person chapters, a tension presents itself. This tension is characteristic of unhomeliness, which we can see throughout the entirety of the novel, both thematically and textually.

Morrison's epigraph to the novel is a telling framing device that speaks to Frank's racial liminality. Its brevity and ambiguity contribute to the disjointed narrative that follows. The epigraph reads:

> Whose house is this?
> Whose night keeps out the light
> In here?
> Say, who owns this house?
> It's not mine.
> I dreamed another, sweeter, brighter
> With a view of lakes crossed in painted boats;
> Of fields wide as arms open for me.
> This house is strange.
> Its shadows lie.
> Say, tell me, why does its lock fit my key? (xi)

This introduction sets the tone, as Frank finds himself both perpetually in motion seeking a home and also questioning any perceived home he discovers. Melissa Schindler, in "Home, or the Limits of the Black Atlantic" (2014), succinctly delineates the dichotomous nature of home, particularly in connection to diasporic peoples. She claims, "[T]he idea of home, which can refer variously to a physical place one inhabits (with or without kin) [and] to a figurative national or transnational community, walks the line between public and private, masculine and feminine, self and other, center and periphery" (74). Returning from the Korean War to an unfamiliar United States, Frank exemplifies the plight of mid-twentieth-century black veterans. Like the binaries Schindler offers, Frank's existence is rife with opposition and contradiction. Rosemary Marangoly George, in *The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations and Twentieth-Century Fiction* (1996), explores this concept of "home" and the innate spatiality in its quest. She writes, "The politics of location come into play in the attempt to weave together a subject-status that is sustained by the experience of the place one knows as Home or by resistance to places that are patently 'not home.' 'Location' . . . suggests the variable nature of both 'the home' and 'the self,' for both are negotiated stances whose shapes are entirely ruled by the site from which they are

defined" (2). Liminality, therefore, emerges as a direct result of this external/internal tension in the individual, removing agency from the subject. Racial liminality—or perhaps more accurately racist liminality—is forced upon an individual through prejudiced societal practices. Having no control over this marginalization, the subject, in this case Frank, attempts a resolution by means of embodied movement. While this transition may initially occur intranationally, its result is necessarily unsatisfactory, as the perceived movement is essentially static. An international move, therefore, becomes the logical next step, and the liminal perspective emphasizes the arbitrary nature of these invisible national borders, thereby emphasizing a transnational worldview. It is no coincidence, then, that the Korean setting plays such a large role in Frank's attempt to escape his broken home life initially, and later through the traumatic aftereffects of the war.

Throughout the third-person chapters, of which the first four utilize different primary characters, the narrator's apparent motivation is to establish the hardships of Frank's life. We learn of his close-knit relationship with his sister Cee, with whom he endured a difficult childhood at the hands of their step-grandmother. Thus, the absence of a welcoming home begins during his earliest years. He uses the opportunity to enlist in the military as a means of removing himself from the hostile home, thereby putting into motion his geographical movement from one place to the next in search of a satisfactory environment. As a result, Frank endures the trauma of the Korean War, which leaves him with flashbacks that result in violent outbursts and sudden wanderings. The horrors he experiences negatively impact all future human interaction, magnifying the liminality and ostracism he feels at each turn. Frank's girlfriend Lily offers him the first glimpse of hope and normalcy, as they rent an apartment and attempt to begin settling down and establishing a life together. Frank understands the beneficial effect her presence has on his life, recognizing that she "displaced his disorder, his rage and his shame" (108). Unfortunately, he has the inverse effect on her, souring her happiness with his laziness and unreliability. As their relationship progresses, Lily becomes unnerved by his idleness and she comes to resent the fact that she must take responsibility for all household chores. She attempts to convince Frank of the importance of their situation and his needed contributions, explaining to him, "This place is ours" (79). Nonetheless, Frank cannot live up to Lily's expectations and their relationship meets its inevitable conclusion. With Lily, he has

achieved a place of his own but he finds it unable to resolve his liminal state. When Frank leaves to find and help Cee, who has become ill at the hands of an experimental doctor, Lily gains the freedom to grow and succeed unimpeded by Frank's emotional baggage. What follows is Frank's coast-to-coast journey from Washington to Georgia as he seeks to save the only remaining light in his darkened existence. His transcontinental trip does not progress without obstacle, as he finds himself homeless, imprisoned, and penniless at varying points. By all accounts, Frank is an outsider who finds himself the victim of a nation that has no place for a veteran of color. Ultimately, the only thing that keeps him going is his motivation to rescue his sister.

Sidonie Smith, in *Where I'm Bound: Patterns of Slavery and Freedom in Black American Autobiography* (1974), provides insightful commentary on the connection between movement and liminality. While she employs this perspective in relation to black autobiography, applying this lens to Frank's situation yields a fruitful analysis. Smith suggests, "With no geographical place of freedom, the exile may be forever plagued with a lack of at-home-ness. Such total alienation is a devastating burden. Or he may, in fact, be running from himself and his past. Either way, the act of running becomes a new form of imprisonment . . . . The ultimate place of freedom lies within the self, which alone must be content to create its own 'free' consciousness" (75). As she succinctly explains, the black subject experiences liminality and transition following the forced exile from the overarching society, a society that shuns the racial minority into a marginalized existence. Regardless of the impetus for motion, individual quests for identity and freedom are just as internal as they are external. This is clearly the case for Morrison's Frank Money, who never truly remains stationary throughout the novel. Indeed, following his initial departure from Lotus, he enlists in the military. As the novel opens, we watch Frank begin his meandering cross-country journey from Washington to Georgia, appearing as a vagrant at each of his fleeting stops. Only in the final chapter does Frank seem to have located a permanent home.

The purported message of the novel is that Frank overcomes the hindrances that result from his hostile environment to arrive on the other side a better man who has forged his own home. Frank has come full circle, returning to Lotus, Georgia, and mending his broken family through the reunion with Cee. The novel begins with a scene of

horror, as young Frank and Cee witness the burial of a black man whose death, we later learn, was at the hands of his own son, forced by threatening white men. When he learns the truth about that night, Frank knows he must rectify the injustice. As one of the final scenes, Frank leads Cee back to that location, digs up the man's bones, and then gives him a proper burial under a bay tree beside a stream, hanging a sign that reads "Here Stands A Man" (145). For Frank, this symbolic act rehumanizes the nameless man while also affirming Frank's own personal journey. The seventeenth and final chapter, a single page from Frank's perspective, seems to cohere with this idea. It is the shortest of the entire novel, just ten terse lines. As the concluding page to the book and Frank's final personal statement, it appears to provide closure and a sense of redemption:

> *I stood there a long while, staring at that tree.*
> *It looked so strong*
> *So beautiful.*
> *Hurt right down the middle*
> *But alive and well.*
> *Cee touched my shoulder*
> *Lightly.*
> *Frank?*
> *Yes?*
> *Come on, brother. Let's go home.* (147)

For the first time in the novel, a home is presented unironically. The feminist reading of these concluding chapters would point to Cee's role in establishing the sanctuary in Lotus and the fact that Frank can only find resolution after he has rejoined his sister. If nothing else, Cee exhibits more strength and determination by not accepting alienation as a livable circumstance. However, all readers have not accepted the purported positivity of the novel's conclusion; Sarah Churchwell claims *Home* creates "one of the least satisfying 'redemptions' I can remember" in her review of the novel for *The Guardian*. While I agree that the brevity of the novel as a whole leaves room for additional plot development and a more convincing conclusion, the textual reality of the book contradicts any such outcome by questioning Frank's credibility in his first-person chapters. If we are to view the third-person narrator's chapters as reliable, and if Frank's first-person accounts disagree with them, then how are we to understand the text without allowing it to completely discredit itself?

Frank makes the relationship between the two sets of chapters obvious from the outset. At the conclusion of his opening chapter, he addresses the narrator of these other sections, directing the retelling of his story: "Since you're set on telling my story, whatever you think and whatever you write down, know this: I really forgot about the burial" (5). He goes on to provide more guidelines, but the important part for my argument here is the tension between the two storytellers. As the novel progresses, Frank conveys his antagonism and disbelief in the narrator's literary prowess and ability to capture his true story. Some of his comments include: "Describe that if you know how" (41); "Don't paint me as some enthusiastic hero" (84); and "You can keep on writing, but I think you ought to know what's true" (134). Mary Dudziak, in the essay, "The Limits of Empathy in Toni Morrison's *Home"* (2012), also underscores this pivotal element in the novel, positing that "the most jarring moments in *Home* aren't Frank's flash-backs to Korea. It is when he speaks directly to the author, criticizing her inability to understand him, and momentarily breaking the spell of the novel's fictive spaces. In those moments, this novel about war and home becomes an engagement with a broader human failing, one that will mar contemporary homecomings." In fact, at one point roughly halfway through the novel, Frank quite directly questions the narrator's truthfulness. As the reader, we are forced to reckon with the consequences of this altercation: "Earlier you wrote about how sure I was that the beat-up man on the train to Chicago would turn around when they got home and whip the wife who tried to help him. Not true. I didn't think any such thing. What I thought was that he was proud of her but didn't want to show how proud he was to the other men on the train. I don't think you know much about love. Or me" (69). The textual tension, at play as Frank's chapters pointedly address the narrator's earlier accounts, creates the same sort of hostile environment from which 1950s Frank attempts to distance himself.

Aitor Ibarrola, in "The Challenges of Recovering from Individual and Cultural Trauma in Toni Morrison's *Home*" (2014), agrees with the reading that emphasizes Frank's inconsistencies and unreliability in his chapters. Ibarrola highlights the novel's narrative structure, "which alternates the voices of the mentally unstable protagonist . . . and that of a more traditional—and apparently objective—scribe" (111). Clearly disregarding any healing Frank may have undergone, Ibarrola instead chooses to label the present-day Frank as "mentally

unstable," someone therefore unable to provide reliable commentary. He goes on to claim that the "juxtaposition of these two voices . . . allow[s] Morrison to investigate the complications of representing trauma in fiction" (111). The implications of war trauma are significant here, something that Evelyn Jaffe Schreiber notes in relation to Morrison's earlier novels: "Home—the psychic support for the 'self' or subjectivity—develops (or fails to do so) in connection with trauma, community, and memory" (2). Nonetheless, Ibarrola merely contributes to the removal and discrediting of Frank's voice, finding the relationship between Frank's chapters and the narrator's chapters a sort of symbiosis, contending that the "presence of somebody willing to bear witness and to assist in the recovery of those memories is crucial for the victim's reconstruction of a sense of self. But the witness/scribe must show the kind of empathy necessary to become a 'true sharer' of the traumatic memories" (117). Through this, he implies that the third-person narrator has achieved this status of empathetic true sharer, yet I contend that the tensions in the novel undermine Frank's progress toward agency and humanity. Frank's own chapters are subverted and made secondary to the narrator's more polished and traditional narration, thereby eliminating Frank's agency and voice.

As a result, Frank remains textually unhomed in his own story, one in which he should maintain authority and credibility. To emphasize this point, we need look no further than the conclusion of the book itself. If we are to abide by Ibarrola's reading and grant the narrator objectivity while placing Frank's personal memories and claims under the microscope, then the ending does not hold up. The closing scene presents the reader with a positive portrayal of the 1950s Frank as a reborn man of morals and reliability, yet the two narrative viewpoints create a disconnect, implying that current-day Frank has lost, or else never achieved, the resolution in conjunction with Cee. However, if we resist the urge to give the narrator highest authority and instead give Frank's voice more power (which a sympathetic text would presumably beseech us to do for the protagonist), then we must become skeptical of the book as a whole for attempting to invalidate Frank's present-day authority on his past. What we are left with, then, is a complex and imperfect work, but one that mirrors the social problems with which it takes issue. Nonetheless, the discrepancies and problematic components of the novel merely create more space for our continued analysis of the incompatibility of racism and

belonging, something that is rife with scholarly and pedagogical gems. Truly, if we view home as a space in which race is not absent but is no longer a defining and inhibiting factor—something Morrison seemed to consider fifteen years earlier in her essay "Home"—then we still have progress to make in the coming years. The fact that Frank finds no home in the text of *Home* itself is perhaps the greatest irony of all.

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HEMINGWAY AS CRAFTSMAN: REVISING "FATHERS AND SONS"

JOHN BEALL

Hemingway ended each collection of his stories with a Nick Adams story: "Big Two-Hearted River" to conclude *In Our Time,* "Now I Lay Me" as the final story of *Men Without Women,* and "Fathers and Sons" to end *Winner Take Nothing* as its "anchor story" (Reynolds, *1930s* 138). His extensive revisions for each of these culminating stories provide a window into how carefully he crafted them. In revising "Big Two-Hearted River," Hemingway worked to capture Nick's American idiom, his watchful eye, and his keen sense of touch.[1] In revising "Fathers and Sons," Hemingway enriched the portrait of Nick Adams as son and father with a lyrical elegy of the Midwestern landscapes where his father and the Ojibway taught him. As Paul Smith observed, "No other manuscripts show more extensive and detailed revisions . . ." (*Reader's Guide* 310). If Hemingway's fishing story, "Big Two-Hearted River," portrays Nick Adams in solitude, "Fathers and Sons" is a story crowded with a father's evening memories of *his* father, memories of his son's innocent questions. In a letter to his editor, Maxwell Perkins, dated 13 July 1933, Hemingway wrote from Havana, Cuba, that he was rewriting "The Tomb of His Grandfather" (the earlier title of the story) as "either next to last or last in the book." He added, "Damned good story—Wrote it down here" (Bruccoli 192).[2] In a letter to Hemingway dated 22 September 1933, Perkins wrote: "I do not think you ever wrote a story better than 'Father and Sons'" (Bruccoli 200).

Surprisingly, "Fathers and Sons" has received relatively little attention from scholars writing about Hemingway.[3] His revisions of "Fathers and Sons" show that Hemingway, again at the height of his art, transformed what began as a tale about a sexual initiation into a comical and elegiac story about Nick Adams's recognition of his responsibilities as a son remembering his father, as a man remem-

bering the Ojibway people, as a father responding to his son, and as an artist crafting his work of art.

This essay will focus on Hemingway's careful and complex process of drafting and revising his story, examining closely six different stages in his composition: the earliest draft, a pencil manuscript fragment (folder 382 in Box 44 in the Hemingway Collection at the John F. Kennedy Library); two different fragments in pencil on two different numbered pages (folder 384); an extensive pencil manuscript titled "The Tomb of My Grandfather," twenty-five pages (folder 383); a typescript, fourteen pages, with three inserted, handwritten pages (folder 385A); the "setting" copy for "Fathers and Sons" as located with the "setting" copies for the stories collected in *Winner Take Nothing* (folder 222); and the print edition, including material not present even in the handwritten revisions to the setting copy.[4] The narrative structure of "Fathers and Sons" is as complex and nuanced as any in Hemingway's collection of stories—with at least nine different flashbacks in Nick's memories, several different interior monologues during which Nick reflects upon his responsibilities as a father and as a son and as a writer, and a two-part conversation with his son presented mostly as dialogue. Thus, the extent of Hemingway's careful revisions and additions over several different stages of composition reflects the richness evoked by the plural nouns in its title. Hemingway's revisions to "Fathers and Sons," like his extensive work in composing "Big Two-Hearted River," are consummate examples of artistic craftsmanship.

FOLDER 382: THE EARLIEST FRAGMENT

In the draft that Paul Smith determined was "clearly the earliest fragment" (*Guide* 307), Hemingway begins with the first-person, unnamed narrator answering his son's spoken question about what it was like growing up with the Ojibway people when he was a boy. In the final version of the story, Nick Adams's son does not speak until the final section of the story, breaking what until that point are mostly flashbacks cast as interior monologues. In contrast, this earliest fragment ends with the narrator's asking himself his own version of his son's question; that is, the narrator wonders what *his own* father knew "besides the nonsense he fed me" (fragment in folder 382, qtd. in Smith, *Guide* 308). In the beginning of this fragment Hemingway makes clear that the "nonsense" from his father was "about sexual life." The narrator answers his own question about what his father

knew by attributing his father's useful knowledge to his keen, inborn eyesight, and to his connection with the Ojibway people. In this earliest draft, Hemingway presents the narrator's conversation with his father as free indirect discourse: " . . . when I asked him what the Indians were like when he was a boy he said that . . . he was very fond of them and that they called him Me-the-ta-la which means Eagle Eye" (folder 382, qtd. in Smith, *Guide* 308). This fragment presents the narrator's conversation with his son first, then his inward meditation; in the version of the story published in *Winner Take Nothing,* these elements are reversed.

In the middle of this draft is the evocative and explicit interior monologue in which the narrator remembers what he cannot tell his son—his sexual initiation with a girl whose "plump brown legs, flat belly, hard little breasts" are physical memories that evoke the metaphoric "great bird flown"—details in the published story that are present in this very first draft (Hemingway, *Stories* 375-376).[5] Thus, from its beginning, this untitled draft is focused on sexual activity as a revelation, an awakening to flight in a story that, unlike "Summer People," Hemingway decided to publish. Perhaps most striking of all the elements in this original version of "Fathers and Sons" are the references to the smell of Trudy. If one bears in mind the offensive references that the Garners make comparing the odor of native Americans to that of skunks in "Ten Indians," then the narrator's lyrical evocation of Trudy's smell could not be more distant from the Garners' racist derision (see Hemingway, *CSS* 253-257). In "Ten Indians," Nick Adams's friend Carl Garner taunts him about his knowledge of skunks: "You ought to. You got an Indian girl" (*CSS* 254).[6] Neither the younger Nick nor his father speaks or thinks with similar derision about Prudence Mitchell. Likewise, in "Fathers and Sons" an older Nick explicitly rejects "any jokes about them nor old squaws" (376). In "Fathers and Sons," a mature and adult Nick Adams strongly rejects either racist jibes at, or stereotypes of, Ojibway women.

Furthermore, even in this earliest draft, Hemingway portrays Nick as remembering the "smell" of the Ojibway people, not just Trudy, as so powerful that "all the empty pain killer bottles and the flies that buzz do not turn against the sweetgrass smell . . ." (376). Hemingway's language in the print version of the story is close to the language in this earliest draft referring to the narrator's memory of the Ojibway. To the language in the original fragment about "empty

pain killer bottles" that could not expunge the fragrance of the Ojibway, Hemingway added another rare simile: ". . . the smoke smell and that other like a fresh cased marten skin" (376). Their smell is what the narrator knows from direct experience and remembers fondly. Thus, this original draft contains at least five kernels of "Fathers and Sons"—the narrator's son's asking him about his youthful experiences with the Ojibway, the narrator's memories of his father's "nonsense" about sexual life, Nick's interior monologue about his sexual initiation, his memory of the fragrant aroma of the Ojibway, and his memory of his eagle-eyed father.

NEXT FRAGMENTS: FOLDER 384

In what Paul Smith has identified as the "second fragment" of the story, Hemingway actually has *two* separate fragments, one numbered page five and one on page six of a manuscript (EH/KL, folder 384). Although Smith quotes at length from the first fragment and almost all of the second fragment (*Guide* 308-309), he does not point out that Hemingway crossed out *all* of the first fragment on page five but did not cross out the second fragment on page six. Smith characterizes the first fragment as approaching "uncontrollable rage" (*Guide* 308), and one can see why, even at this early stage, Hemingway canceled entirely a passage in which he advises his father to "get rid of" his wife "with whom he has nothing in common" (quoted in Smith, *Guide* 308; Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway* 102; and Reynolds, *1930s* 136).[7] The narrator's anger at the mother is searing as he hears her remind him how "mother carried you, darling, over her heart all those months and her heart beat in your heart" (EH/JFK, folder 384, cited in Reynolds, *Young Hemingway* 102; Smith, *Guide* 308). The frostiness in the Adams' marriage, a chill that Hemingway keeps relatively under the surface in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" and in "Now I Lay Me," is in this manuscript fragment an iceberg.

In the second fragment, the first-person narrator is baffled by his father's surprising weakness. Tired from rowing a boat in the evening, the father asks the narrator to take over the rowing "because it was uncomfortable." The father in this fragment seems to feel "uncomfortable" out of fatigue. The narrator cites his father's explanations for his discomfort: "It's the hot weather," he said, "And the exercise." The unnamed first-person narrator—eventually to become Nick Adams in the third person—then describes himself in

a boat looking at his father sitting in the stern, a reversal of the position of Nick and his father in a boat at the end of "Indian Camp." The narrator describes his father as black: " . . . sitting in the stern the bulk of him, the blackness of him, he was very big and his hair and beard were black, his skin was dark and he had an indian nose and those wonderful eyes . . ." (EH/JFK, folder 384; cited in Smith, *Guide* 309). Although the narrator wonders why his father turned over the oars to him, he seems more focused on his father's bulk, black skin color, and Ojibway features than on his physical weakness.

The narrator's vision of his father as other than a white, middle-class professional stands in tension with his comical summary of his father's sexual education as tantamount to claiming that "masturbation produced blindness, insanity and death" (EH/JFK, folder 384, printed in Smith, *Guide* 309; *CSS* 371). The fragment ends as the narrator indicates that his father's warning about prostitutes and venereal disease came when they were squirrel hunting (the passage in folder 384 ends in mid-sentence with the word "squirrel"). In this early version of the story, squirrel hunting provides the context for his father's lectures about the maladies to follow sexual misconduct. These lectures are what seemed to make the narrator begin "to feel uncomfortable" in his father's presence. In this second fragment, Hemingway suggests the fragility and weakness of the narrator's father—first physically, as he seems too tired or weak to row, and then emotionally, as his efforts to educate his son about sex seem feeble and lead the narrator to awkward discomfort. As he revised his story, Hemingway removed the first fragment about the narrator's parents' marriage completely. He preserved part of the second fragment now in folder 384. Although he did not retain the vivid portrait of his father's black beard and black skin color in describing Dr. Adams's "big frame" (370), he did include, almost verbatim, the father's lessons about the dire consequences of masturbation and sex with prostitutes (371). This second fragment in folder 384 deepens the contrast in the earliest draft between the narrator's admiration for his father's keen sight and his bemusement at his sexual teachings. Taken together, these two fragments show Hemingway's early ventures in this story towards a stark narrative of his parents' marriage.

"THE TOMB OF MY GRANDFATHER": FOLDER 383

The first full-length pencil manuscript of the story, still in the first person but for the first time identifying the narrator as Nicholas and

Nickie, is titled "The Tomb of My Grandfather" (EH/JFK, folder 383).[8] This twenty-five-page manuscript incorporates key elements of the earlier fragments: Trudy's sexual initiation of the narrator, the contrast between the father's eagle eyes and advice about masturbation and prostitutes, and the memory of the fragrant "sweetgrass smell" of the Ojibway (*CSS* 376)—evocative language that is mainly present in the earliest manuscript and retained in "Tomb of My Grandfather." Hemingway continues to tell the story of "Tomb" in the first person and refers to his father as "my father," rather than as "his father." However, for the first time, "The Tomb of My Grandfather" begins with the narrator's driving in a car. For the first time, this draft develops the contrast of settings between the "main street of this town" (*CSS* 369) surrounded by fields where the cotton had been picked in the story's present (locating the start of the story in the South) and the Midwestern landscapes of the narrator's past—both those landscapes in which his father and he hunted, and the forest where he spent time with the Ojibway. In this draft Hemingway crossed out by hand the only reference in the first paragraph to his son and did not refer to his son's presence (here named "Schatz," as in the story "A Day's Wait," *CSS* 332) until the end of the story. The conversation between Nick Adams and his son at the end of the story in this draft is almost identical with the ending in the print story, except that in "Tomb" Nick's son doesn't mention his grandfather's gift of an air rifle (*CSS* 376).

In this stage of revising the story, Hemingway significantly expanded the conversations between Trudy and the narrator, as well as the conversation at the end between the narrator and his son. In this draft of "Tomb," Hemingway adds a striking simile, "like an owl in the twilight," to the metaphor for his sexual initiation, "the great bird flown" (*CSS* 376). This added simile, with its evocation of an owl's evening flight, deepens Nick Adams's nostalgic memory of sexual activity with Trudy during "daylight in the woods" (*CSS* 376). Conversely, Hemingway kept out of the story a searing, graphic indictment of Dr. Adams's marriage to his wife. In "Tomb" Hemingway again considered including—and then cut—references to the narrator's mother. On the bottom of page four of this manuscript Hemingway crossed out with a large X a passage referring to the narrator's father as a coyote married to a "white French poodle"—another return to the topic of his parents' marriage that he

struck out in the first of two earlier fragments preserved in folder 384 and that he deleted from the draft of "Tomb" now in folder 383.

Whereas the earliest fragment of the story begins with a conversation between the narrator and his son, Hemingway moved that conversation to the end of "Tomb." Furthermore, at the beginning of this draft, Hemingway appears to struggle with the decision about how to introduce the narrator's son as a character. As has been noted, he struck out the narrator's reference to "my sister" as present in the car (Smith, *Guide* 309); moreover, he twice crossed out references to the narrator's son as sleeping on the seat beside him in the car. Eventually, Hemingway decided to restore some of the language referring to "the boy asleep" that he struck out in "Tomb": " . . . his son asleep on the seat by his side" (369). Likewise, the son in "Tomb" does not speak until he startles his father with a question near the end of the story—virtually the same question he asks in the very first drafted fragment of the story: "What was it like, Papa, when you were a little boy and used to hunt with the Indians?" (375). Noteworthy is that, once he introduces the narrator's son as a speaker near the end of "Tomb," Hemingway renders the conversation almost exactly as it remains in the print version, from "You might not like them but I think you would" (376). And the ending of "Tomb" is identical (punctuation aside) to the print version—from the son's question, "Why do we never go to pray at the tomb of my grandfather?" to the father's answer at the end: "I can see we'll have to go" (377). Thus, unlike his process of revising "Big Two-Hearted River," when Hemingway made major deletions and revisions to his initial ending of the story, with "Fathers and Sons" he settled firmly on the ending of the manuscript draft titled "Tomb of My Grandfather." The final revisions of "Fathers and Sons" leave intact most of the conversation when Nick Adams, instead of being guided by his father, becomes the struggling mentor for his son.

In comparison to the earlier drafts and fragments, Hemingway fleshes out his portrait of the narrator's father substantially in "Grandfather's Tomb." For instance, to the initial references to his father's eagle eye, he adds the flashback of a vignette about Dr. Adams's asking Nick if he can see that his sister has run the flag up the flag pole and about his father's counting sheep that, to Nick, appear dimly as a "whitish patch" on the hill (370). This vignette sharpens the portrait of the father's keen vision. However, Hemingway included in "Tomb" three different comparisons of the

narrator's father's physique to pictures of James J. Jeffries, a heavyweight boxing champion who was coaxed out of retirement as the "great white hope" to face Jack Johnson, the African American heavyweight who defeated him (Rozen). In the third reference, Hemingway's narrator remembers his father, undressed to go swimming, as resembling the pictures of the heavyweight boxer. Deleting such comparisons from his final version of the story keeps the focus on Nick's father's temperament and vision rather than on his physique or weakness. "Tomb" also retained the scene when the narrator's father asks him to take over the rowing of a boat on a lake and explained his discomfort with rowing as a combination of the heat and the "exercise." In contrast, the final version of "Fathers and Sons" leaves out references to his father's physical stature, focusing instead on Dr. Adams's emotional and mental conditions as 'very nervous" and "sentimental" (*CSS* 370)—language not present in "Tomb."

Likewise, in addition to the father's attempts at sexual education in the earliest fragment of the story, Hemingway included two comical anecdotes as narrative flashbacks in "Tomb." First, the father's definition of "bugger" as "a man who has intercourse with animals" leads the narrator to think "of various animals but none seemed attractive or practical"—language quite close to the anecdote as added in "Tomb" (371). The father's reference to bestiality ironically incites, rather than curbs, his son's sexual imagination. That the father seems unaware that "bugger" is also British slang for sodomite is surely part of the humor added to the story in this manuscript version.[9] The references to the flagpole scene and to the father's definition of "bugger" intensify the contrast between the father as keen hunter and as fumbling sex educator. Even funnier is the anecdote associating Enrico Caruso with "mashing"—a vignette present for the first time in "Tomb." Hemingway's comical reference is to the arrest of Caruso for allegedly groping women in the Monkey House of the Central Park Zoo in 1906, a front-page story in *The New York Times* when Hemingway was a young boy ("Signor Caruso," Bauerle 140, note 2). In portraying the father's account of "mashing" as "the most heinous of crimes," Hemingway presents the mature narrator as mocking his father's hyperbole. His portrait of the narrator's reaction is laughable: as a boy Nick assumed that Caruso did something "strange, bizarre, and heinous with a potato masher to a beautiful lady." Thus, in language present for the first time in "Tomb," the first-person narrator "resolved, with considerable horror, that when

he was old enough he would try mashing at least once" (371). Again, his father's effort to curb his son's imagination only spurs his wayward thoughts—an ironic dimension of the story present for the first time in "Tomb of My Grandfather."

Hemingway's original source for the anecdote may well be his father, the model for Dr. Adams, but another source for this story in his comical portrait of Nick's sexual education is probably James Joyce. In the "Sirens" chapter of *Ulysses,* Joyce puns on both meanings of "mash": as turning ripe potatoes into a liquid form of "mashed potatoes," and as sexually accosting another person.[10] At the same time as Leopold Bloom hears Blazes Boylan's "flick of whip" on his "mare's glossy rump" as Blazes rides towards his assignation with Bloom's wife Molly, Bloom "mashed mashed potatoes" as he dines in the bar of the Ormond Hotel (Joyce 222). Bloom is mashing potatoes, while Boylan rides a carriage towards Bloom's wife, whom he will "mash." Hemingway's recounting of the "mashing" incident with Caruso seems to follow Joyce in his sexual puns, albeit from the older Nick's viewpoint in bemusedly reflecting on the story about Caruso.[11] Hemingway's jocular allusion to the Caruso "mashing" would seem to place Joyce over his father as his mentor in such matters of sexuality. Hemingway presents the narrator's remembering himself as an innocent American boy, caught in an intrigue that excites his imagination but eludes his understanding. In the manuscript of "Tomb," with the anecdotes of "bugger" and "mashing," Hemingway builds a comical portrait of a father's flawed teachings about sexual malpractice.

The other fully developed relationship in "Tomb" is the sexually active one between the narrator and Trudy. Building on the minimalist dialogue of the earliest draft, in "Tomb," Hemingway richly evokes the landscape, the "virgin forest" (372) in Michigan where he hunts squirrels with Trudy and her brother Billy and has sex with her. This powerful evocation of the lost landscape of the Ojibway serves in "Tomb," as in "Fathers and Sons," as a poignant transition between the comedy of his father's miseducation and the narrator's sexual initiation with an Ojibway girl. Among the many vivid aspects of this passage is the narrator's reference to the hemlock bark "piled in long rows of stacks, roofed over with more bark, like houses, and the peeled logs lay huge and yellow where the trees had been felled" (372). This sentence, with a couple of commas added later by Hemingway, is present at this point in "Tomb" as the Edenic setting

in a forest of sexual freedom. Hemingway's comparison of the bark to the roofs of houses seems ironic, connecting the narrator's sexual dalliances with the Ojibways' loss of their home. Furthermore, while the peeling of tree bark in "Indian Camp" may have as much to do with native medicine as with industrial production (*CSS* 67), here the narrator explicitly indicates that the Ojibway people are stripping and selling their native forests to a "tannery at Boyne City" and leaving those forests "open, hot, shadeless, weed-grown slashing" (372)—language in the print version that is identical to that in the "Tomb" manuscript.[12] The setting suggests a contrast between Dr. Adams's civilized sense of "heinous" sex crimes discussed with Nick during their squirrel hunting and the narrator's sexual initiation, in which hunting for squirrels seems a pretext for sex in the forest that is becoming a paradise lost for the Ojibway people.

A central section of "Tomb" returns to a focus of the earliest draft: the narrator's flashback to Trudy's encouraging him to have sex. While this draft retains what Marc Kevin Dudley termed "broken descriptors" (60), Hemingway revised and deepened his portrait of Trudy in a scene of mounting intensity and climactic power. In "Tomb," she addresses the narrator as "Nickie," first by encouraging him to shoot a squirrel (*CSS* 373), later in insisting that the narrator leave her half brother alone. Initially, Trudy denies that her half brother is doing anything more than bluffing to temper her brother Billy's claim that their half brother Eddie said that he is going to sleep with the narrator's sister Dorothy. Trudy reacts strongly when the narrator brutally threatens to inflict a stereotypically Indian execution on Eddie. In both "Tomb" and in the print version, the narrator repeats: "'I'll scalp him,' I said happily" (373). Trudy's responses are as strong and insistent as Nick's are brutally demeaning. After Nick's threat to scalp Eddie, Trudy responds by fondling Nick as a means of persuasion, with Hemingway even more explicit in his print version that she " . . . was exploring with her hand in Nick's pocket" (373). At the same time, she responds with a direct judgment about scalping that ironically subverts the stereotype of Native Americans: "'No,' said Trudy, 'That's dirty.'"[13] And when Nick responds with even more savagery, "'I'll scalp him and send it to his mother,'" Trudy's reply is insistent, pragmatic, and personal: "'His mother dead . . . Don't you kill him, Nickie. Don't you kill him for me'" (373). (In "Tomb" at this point of the story Hemingway has Trudy address the narrator more formally as Nicholas). Despite her plea,

Nick's threats become more brutal and dehumanizing: "'After I scalped him I'd throw him to the dogs'" (373). Nick then acts out in pantomime how he would scalp "'that half-breed renegade,'" perhaps the ugliest slur Hemingway has Nick speak in any of the Nick Adams stories, present verbatim in "Tomb" (373). Hemingway portrays the young Nick here as a blustering brute. Billy's response to Nick's threats is morose. Based on his facial expression, Nick observes that he "was very depressed." After Nick's threats, Billy speaks ominously about Eddie in language present in "Tomb" and in the print version of the story: "'He better watch out plenty'" and then "gloomily" repeats "'He better watch out'" (373). While Billy does give voice to a possible warning he may carry to Eddie, his weak response underscores how forcefully Trudy checks and diverts Nick from his savage threats.

As was the case with his manuscript of "Tomb," Hemingway's language in this scene of "Fathers and Sons" clearly shows Trudy's physically opposing Nick's blustering threats. Viewed from Nick's perspective, he shifts from being "pleased with the picture" of his contemplated act of murder to falling "backward against the tree, held tight around the neck, Trudy holding, choking him, and crying, 'No kill him! No kill him! No kill him! No. No. No. Nickie. Nickie. Nickie!'" (373). In the climax of this scene—arguably the climax of the entire story—Trudy has thrown herself upon Nick, pushed him back onto the tree, and begun strangling him to literally beat sense into him. The major difference in this scene between "Tomb" and the print version of the story is the shift from first-person to third-person narration—from "I fell back" to "he fell backward" when Trudy reacts powerfully to Nick's threat. Indeed, in the print version Hemingway restored language that he struck from the manuscript of "Tomb"—whereas he crossed out "holding tight" in the draft, he makes clear in the final draft that Trudy began to strangle Nick—"held tight around the neck . . . choking him . . ." (373). Her own physical action shifts, that is, from gently erotic caresses to actions and words that are among the most forceful of any of Hemingway's female characters. That Nick presents the scene as if he fell backward, for no apparent reason, indicates how shocked he was, as suggested by his feeble question, also present in the "Tomb" draft: "'What's the matter with you?'" Trudy's response to his question is to repeat her three-word command: "'No kill him'" (373). Her words suggest that nothing is the matter with her; what is wrong is

Nick's threat of killing Eddie Gilby. Trudy's speech may be fractured and basic, but it is clear, moral, and effective. The girl's strong speech in English leads me to question Dudley's claim that "[i]n 'Fathers and Sons,' English is the domain of Nick and Nick alone" (60). Trudy's English is as forceful as any words spoken in the story. My reading of this scene in "Fathers and Sons" is also quite different from Flora's reference to it as "an amusing account" of Nick as a "sexual athlete" (*Adams* 241). Trudy is neither a mute spectator nor a passive receptacle for Nick's sexual sport. Rather, Hemingway has constructed this scene, first present in "Tomb" and largely preserved in "Fathers and Sons," as a powerful and mounting portrait of interracial conflict where an Ojibway girl revolts against a white boy's threat to scalp her half brother.

Even the young Nick shows signs of having been deeply affected by Trudy's vehemently repeated command. One sign of Nick's disturbance is his insisting that her brother leave before their next act of sex. When Hemingway first mentions her as a partner for Nick, both in "Tomb" and in "Fathers and Sons," her brother serves as a kind of panderer, asking: "You want Trudy again?" When she affirms that she wants to have sex, Nick bids her come away: "Come on." When he objects to having sex in front of Billy, she responds: "He my brother" (372). Since that part of the scene ends there, Hemingway implies Nick's acquiescence in having sex in the presence of Trudy's brother. After the three-way conflict about Eddie Gilby's interest in Nick's sister, Billy is far less accommodating, and Nick is insistent that Trudy send her brother away. Clearly perturbed by Nick's vicious threats about Eddie, Billy responds with disgust that his sister is willing to make love to the young man who just threatened to kill their half brother. After Nick concedes that he will not kill Eddie "unless he comes around the house," Trudy seems to offer herself as a reward for his change of mind: "'That's good,' Trudy said. 'You want to do anything now? I feel good now.'" Nick responds that he will "do anything" only "[i]f Billy goes away." Billy's response is the most obscene oath spoken in the story: "'Son a bitch,' Billy said. 'I get tired this. What we come? Hunt or what?'" (372). Although rendered in broken English, Billy's response in "Tomb" and in later drafts evokes his anger at Nick and his sister. He is not "all but mute," as Marc Dudley claimed (60). He acquiesces and takes Nick's offer of a gun, but he swears, utters his frustration clearly, and asks harsh questions.

Moreover, a simple narrative comment about this exchange suggests the adult Nick's distance from his boyish self. After the younger Nick's condition for sex, "If Billy goes away," the narrator adds: "Nick had killed Eddie Gilby, then pardoned him his life, and he was a man now" (373). In "Tomb" Hemingway includes this sentence, but uses the first-person point of view. In shifting the narrative point of view from the first person of "Tomb" to the third-person limited narrator, Nicholas Adams, Hemingway enhances his story by implying a distance between the younger and older Nick. The older Nick Adams seems to be mocking the ease with which, as a boy, he convinced himself of his manhood by a sexual conquest after acceding to Trudy's pleas in defense of her half brother. Hemingway's shift from the past perfect ("had killed Eddie Gilby") to the past tense ("then pardoned him") to the imperfect ("was a man now") is more effective in the third-person perspective of "Fathers and Sons." Nick even offers to let Billy take his gun—an offer that seems part of the sexual comedy after a deeply serious interracial conflict.[14] While most of this exchange is contained in the earlier draft, "Grandfather's Tomb," Hemingway's crucial change from the first person of "Tomb" to the third person in "Fathers and Sons" distances Nick Adams as the ruminating father from Nickie as an irascible, sexually aroused, and hypocritically protective brother.

UNTITLED TYPESCRIPT WITH PENCIL CORRECTIONS AND THREE-PAGE PENCIL INSERT: FOLDER 385A

The next significant stage in Hemingway's composition of "Fathers and Sons" is the untitled fourteen-page typescript contained in folder 385a of the Hemingway Collection at the Kennedy Library.[15] This typescript shifts the narrative point of view from first to third person. As is the case in the print version, Nicholas Adams is named in the winding first sentence of the story. In this typescript Hemingway introduces the presence of Nick Adams's son in the opening paragraph. This typescript takes out all of the narrator's references in "Tomb" to his father as physically resembling the boxer James Jeffries; likewise, the rowing scene in which the father feels too "uncomfortable" to row the boat is completely cut except for the reference to his father's counsel about masturbation, prostitutes, and venereal disease. To the anecdote about "mashing," in this typescript Hemingway has the young Nick imagining the "beautiful lady" as

resembling "the pictures of Anna Held on the inside of cigar boxes," a fine touch he added to "Tomb" that he kept in the print edition (371).

Some of the revisions and additions to this typescript that Hemingway made by hand are striking in their references to Nick Adams as a writer. In the paragraph that begins "Like all men" (in both the typescript and print version) Hemingway adds a crucial phrase to a sentence when Nick refers to himself as a writer. In the typescript, Nick refers to the "trap" that led to his father's death. With just a slight change, Nick's reference to writing remains in the final print version: "Nick could not write about him yet . . . " (370). By hand, Hemingway added to Nick's interior monologue a shift to the future that he retained in the print version: " . . . although he would, later" (370). This addition contributes a moment of metanarrative early in the story, as Nick reflects upon his knowledge that he would, in the future, write the story of his father's death, even if he is not yet ready to do so in the present. Later in this typescript, Hemingway adds another reference in Nick's interior monologue to his writing. After the sentence when Nick muses over his father's advice that he should keep his "hands off of people," Hemingway added, by hand, much of the sequence in the print version from "On the other hand" to "If he wrote it he could get rid of it. But it was still too early for that" (371). In this monologue, Hemingway's revisions by hand evoke Nick's inner conflict as a writer—between the catharsis of his pain that writing could bring and the pain that his writing might bring to others—hence, making it "too early" for Nick to write the story yet. By deepening the portrait of the older Nick Adams as a writer with a sense of responsibilities, Hemingway enriches and complicates the portrait of the younger Nick in the woods with Trudy and her brother.

In by far the most substantial revision to this typescript, Hemingway wrote "insert" in reference to three hand-written pages that he placed between two pages of the typescript. He inserted these pages after the scene with the three-way exchange between Billy, Trudy, and Nick Adams about Eddie Gilby that ends with Trudy's asking Nick for a "kiss on the face" (374). After portraying the young Nick Adams as a blustering boor, Hemingway's addition of another flashback humanizes Nick as loving the father who taught him how to fish and hunt, but also as hating the father whose body odor repulsed him. His addition evokes Nick's revulsion—with almost the fury of Swift's Gulliver at the end of his travels—at the smell of

his father. This hand-written addition complicates the portrait of the young Nick. His murderous hatred of the father who beat him for hiding the underwear he forced his son to wear seems a world apart from the tenderness Nick shows towards his own son at the end of the story. The three pages Hemingway added at this stage of composition are comparable to the three pages Hemingway added about Nick's watching a kingfisher fly above the trout stream in "Big Two-Hearted River."[16] Yet there is a world of difference between three pages added to "River" of Nick's silently and carefully observing a kingfisher and trout in a Michigan stream and three pages added here with Nick's thinking of blowing his father's brains out with the gun in his hands.

In the first section of his handwritten additions, Hemingway presents a poignant elegy to Nick's father. In a 118-word sentence that begins "His father came back to him," Hemingway wrote by hand a gorgeous word painting of the Midwestern landscapes where he remembered his father in various seasons and places: " . . . by grist mills, cider mills and dams and always with open fires" (374-375). Hemingway evokes the landscape here as a nurturing presence—working mills, warming fires—that sets a different scene from the denuded setting at the beginning of "The End of Something," the burnt-out terrain at the beginning of "Big Two-Hearted River," or the "weed-grown slashing" that replaced the "virgin forest" of the Ojibway people in the earlier section of this story (372). Here, in Nick's interior monologue, the mills are working, literally and figuratively, as these mills are the places where Nick remembers sensing his father's spirit. Among the most important revisions after the manuscript of "Tomb," this handwritten addition to the typescript, preserved in the print edition, records Nick's flashbacks of his father's visitations:

> His father came back to him in the fall of the year, or in the early spring when there had been jacksnipe on the prairie, or when he saw shocks of corn, or when he saw a lake, or if he ever saw a horse and buggy, or when he saw, or heard, wild geese, or in a duck blind; remembering the time an eagle dropped through the whirling snow to strike a canvas-covered decoy, rising, his wings beating, the talons caught on the canvas. (374)

Here Hemingway's repetition of "or when" underscores how Nick remembers his father's presence in different seasons and in a variety

of hunters' landscapes. The repetitions in this winding crescendo affirm that Nick's father *did* return to him in spirit when Nick found himself in landscapes like those where he learned to hear, see, and hunt the wild geese and ducks.

This elegy is rhythmically rhapsodic, poetically memorializing how a variety of seasonal scenes helps Nick in his interior monologue as a father see *his* father. Hemingway portrays Nick's memories as lyrically bringing his father to his consciousness, "suddenly, in deserted orchards and new-plowed fields" (375).[17] After a fall harvest and before a spring planting, Nick's father appears to him with arresting force. This sentence in the handwritten addition to folder 385a continues to include not only the rest of that paragraph but also the following paragraph, beginning "His father had frost in his beard" (375). Hemingway's later decision to end the paragraph with the sentence "the talons caught on the canvas" underscores Nick's associating his father with an eagle before the transition to the vignette about his father's underwear. Here Hemingway remembers his father as an eagle—not only as powerfully sharp-sighted and swift, but also as misguided, striking a "decoy" and catching its talons on the decoy's canvas. At times the eagle's eye that Nick compares to his father's vision seems myopic.

This powerful elegy is a prelude to Hemingway's evocation of Nick's deep hatred of his father's smell in contrast to the sweet smell he remembers of the Ojibway people with whom he grew up. In this three-page hand-written insertion, Hemingway adds layers of narrative complication. After the part of the addition that memorializes his father's spirit in the landscape, Hemingway follows his pastoral elegy with Nick's memories of holding a gun in his hand and thinking, "I can blow him to hell. I can kill him" (375). These simple thoughts echo Nick's earlier thoughts about killing Eddy Gilby. Nick's holding the gun as he thinks of shooting his father are far distant from the restraint Dr. Adams shows in placing his shotgun behind the dresser in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" (*CSS* 75). In these three pages Hemingway completed after "Tomb" and added to the typescript preserved in folder 385a, he set in Nick's interior monologue those two memories as a powerful juxtaposition of extreme emotional conflict between love and hatred.[18] Moreover, his portrait of Nick's reflecting upon his memory of hating his father turns the story from an interracial conflict with Eddy Gilby into a fierce family duel, with the unmentioned mother below the surface.

"FATHERS AND SONS" SETTING COPY WITH HANDWRITTEN TITLE: FOLDER 222

The next substantial stage in Hemingway's composition of "Fathers and Sons" is the setting copy on which the author worked while assembling separate stories into the collection *Winner Take Nothing*. This setting copy is preserved in folder 222 in the Hemingway Collection of the Kennedy Library. Some of these are tear sheets of previously published stories, and some are typescripts. Hemingway left a story like "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" intact without a single change in the tear sheet. On the other hand, to a typescript of "The Light of the World," Hemingway made a total of almost thirty changes by hand—none of which seems to alter the story substantially. To the typescript of "A Way You'll Never Be," Hemingway made roughly forty changes. Of all the stories he was assembling in *Winner Take Nothing*, the most substantial revisions come in the typescript of "Fathers and Sons," also contained in folder 222. In a letter to Maxwell Perkins dated September 2, 1933, Hemingway apologized for the extent of his late revisions on the setting copy: "Sorry I had so much correcting on last story. Please go over that very carefully before sending final proof. It's a damned good story—It's a good book. Having just read it for 6th straight time feel pretty good about it."[19]

There are three layers of revision between the untitled typescript contained in folder 385a and the final version of "Fathers and Sons" printed in *Winner Take Nothing*. First, there are the changes Hemingway made between the typescript contained in folder 385a and the typescript in the setting copy of folder 222. Second, there are the changes he made by hand via insertions and cross outs on the typescript in folder 222. Third, there are the changes in "Fathers and Sons" evident only in the first edition of *Winner Take Nothing*—changes that were not present even in the handwritten revisions in the folder 222 typescript. In these late revisions Hemingway fleshes out the intense ambivalence in Nick Adams towards his father—vacillating between deeply fond memories and increasingly horrific details about his death. Nick's aversion to his father's smell contrasts even more strongly with Nick's positive memories of the smells he associates with the Ojibways with whom he grew up. As Hemingway continued to revise "Fathers and Sons," he associated Nick Adams more with the Ojibways and the father of his childhood, and less with

the father whose death he suggests was an act of violence plastered over by a mortician's cosmetic art.

Another vital layer of revisions came in the framing of the scene with Nick, Trudy, and Billy with a reminiscence of his father *after* that scene. Hemingway first added the flashback in the transcript preserved in folder 385a, the next version after the manuscript, "Tomb of His Grandfather." While a substantial part of that addition appears in the typescript of folder 385a, the later typescript in folder 222 includes several important revisions. For instance, Hemingway added, by hand, a sentence that remains in the print version: "The end of the day never made him think of him." After editing this typescript, Hemingway added another sentence to the final print version: "The end of the day had always belonged to Nick and he never felt right unless he was alone with it" (371). These two sentences—one added by hand to the typescript in folder 222, one added later—are richly ironic. Even as Nick banishes his father from his evening reveries, the paragraphs that follow show Nick's being haunted by the presence of his father in various scenes of hunting, wild life, and "cider mills and dams" (375), as if the father's spirit brings Nick back to pastoral landscapes. Hemingway bracketed the nostalgic lure of these memories with another pair of sentences that did not appear in any manuscript or typescript until the first edition of *Winner Take Nothing*: "The towns he lived in were not towns his father knew. After he was fifteen he had shared nothing with him" (375). Thus, Hemingway's last revisions of "Fathers and Sons" qualify Nick's romantic memory of his father as an eagle-eyed hunter visiting him in spirit. Instead, the revisions emphasize his firm recognition of the distance he had drifted from his father after his childhood, culminating with his break with his father when he was fifteen and ultimately ending with his appearance at his father's funeral.

Hemingway makes that distance most palpable in the scene when Nick's father forces him to wear his underwear and Nick recoils at the smell. However, Hemingway's revisions to this scene also intensify the guilt Nick feels in remembering his thought of shooting his father, after his father had whipped him. In the transcript that he used as a setting copy for "Fathers and Sons," Hemingway inserted a paragraph symbol to set apart the paragraph beginning "Afterwards, he had sat inside the woodshed . . . " (375). Setting that paragraph apart places an emphasis on its contents: Nick's murderous thought that "I can blow him to hell. I can kill him" (375). Furthermore,

Hemingway's revisions make Nick's guilt at remembering these patricidal thoughts more graphic. He wrote by hand in the typescript in folder 222 the words "that his father had given him," preserved with another slight addition in the print version as " . . . he felt a little sick about it being the gun his father had given him" (375). Again, Hemingway sharpens the contrast between young Nick, full of murderous fury, and the older Nick, wincing at having pointed at his father the very gun his father had given him for hunting. Such a contrast enriches the later conversation when Nick's own son asks him when he can have a gun, as the layers of fathers, guns, and sons deepen. Moreover, Hemingway's late revisions paint an even starker picture of the death of Nick's father. In one of the most important revisions included, for the first time, in the setting copy in folder 222, Nick refers to "[t]he handsome job the undertaker had done on his father's face . . . " (371). That language, contained in the typescript of folder 222 of the Hemingway Collection, was not present in earlier drafts. At some point, while working with this setting copy, Hemingway added by hand the sentence that "There were still too many people" for Nick to write the story of his father's death completely. Hemingway's revisions make clearer Nick's sense of responsibilities as a writer.

Finally, in three phrases coming in his handwritten revisions to the transcript that served as the setting copy for "Fathers and Sons" in *Winner Take Nothing*, Hemingway conveys the retrospective affection the older Nick Adams feels in remembering Trudy, the girl who "did first what no one has ever done better" (375). First, after "hard little breasts" in the typescript in folder 222, Hemingway added by hand, "well holding arms" to make the blazon of Trudy's body include the very arms with which she had wrung his neck for threatening to scalp Eddie Gilby (375). That the thirty-eight-year-old Nick Adams remembers her arms as "well holding" suggests his fondness for her physical intimacy. Second, again by hand, Hemingway added to the typescript the word "smell" twice, to leave the sentence in the print version as: " . . . all the pain killer bottles and the flies that buzz do not kill the sweetgrass smell and the smoke smell . . . " (376). Nick's repeating "smell" amounts to an incantatory recollection of the Ojibways' fragrance as an antidote to his father's rancid odor. In context, the reference to "smell" is not just to Trudy, but to all of the Ojibway who have vanished: "So that when you go in a place where Indians have lived you smell them gone . . . " (376). Nick's thought here mourns the passing

of the aromas of the Ojibway in his childhood and regrets their replacement by the smells of his father's underwear.

Moreover, to the transcript in folder 222, Hemingway added by hand the following sentences in Nick's meditation on the loss of the Ojibway from his childhood home: "They all ended the same. Long ago good. Now no good" (376). These curt sentences are virtually the final thoughts the elder Nick Adams has in reflecting upon his childhood before his son's question breaks his reverie: "What was it like, Papa, when you were a little boy and used to hunt with the Indians" (375). Ironically, these late additions give the mature Nick Adams the fractured English that Trudy and Billy spoke earlier in the story. The narrator seems to adopt the English that the younger Nick's Ojibway lover and her brother might have spoken.[20] "Long ago good. Now no good," sounds like a father's private meditation about a lost paradise of childhood before turning to his son with fatherly, simple, deferential comments. In a delayed response to his son's question about whether he would like the Ojibways, Nicks says, "You might not like them . . . But I think you would" (*CSS* 376). When asked when he will be old enough to handle a shotgun and hunt by himself, Nick answers: "Twelve years old if I see you are careful" (*CSS* 376). After his son confides that he doesn't "feel good never to have even visited the tomb of my grandfather," Nick says, "I can see we'll have to go" (*CSS* 377). In each case, Hemingway presents a two-way conversation, not a father-to-son lecture. He portrays Nick as acceding to his son's wishes, but tentatively, until the boy's open desire to see his grandfather's tomb elicits an absolute concession. Nick Adams's final words in the story, presented as directly spoken, are caring words from a father in response to his son's queries and lament.

"FATHERS AND SONS": THE FINAL DRAFT

Even later than his handwritten revisions to the setting copy preserved in folder 222 did Hemingway add Nick's explanation of why he could not yet write the story: "It was a good story but there were still too many people alive for him to write it" (371). This sentence is not completely present in *any* draft before it appeared in the first edition of *Winner Take Nothing*. Thus, only in his final version of the story does Hemingway make clear what kept Nick from feeling free "to write it" (the story of Dr. Adams's death)—his concern for the living members of his family. Moreover, earlier in that paragraph, Hemingway added a sentence, not present before the print version,

explaining why he would like to write about the death, at some point: "He had gotten rid of many things by writing them" (371). Thus, these two additions *after* the handwritten revisions made in the typescript used as the setting copy convey the conflict in Nick Adams as a son for whom the memory of his father carries responsibilities to his family *not* to record his father's cause of death. On the other hand, writing about his father's death would be cathartic, a way of setting troubling memories to rest (Meyers 249; Young 61). However, he had to consider the feelings of other "people alive," his family members. Only in the version published in the first edition of *Winner Take Nothing* does the sentence that begins "The handsome job the undertaker had done . . . ." end with the words " . . . and all the rest of it was quite clear, including the responsibilities" (371). This carefully crafted paragraph portrays the older Nick—even more clearly than in the earlier typescripts—as a mature writer aware of his responsibilities about what to tell and what not to tell now. That portrait of Nick as an adult writer is a vital prelude to the depiction later in the story of the much less responsible younger Nick who blusters about scalping Trudy's half brother to protect his sister and his sense of racial purity. Hemingway's final revisions to "Fathers and Sons" balance such bravado in the younger Nick with the older, more responsible writer, Nicholas Adams.

At the same time as Hemingway's final layers of revision portray Nick Adams as son and writer, they also offer more grotesque details about Dr. Adams's appearance at his funeral. Even as he depicts Nicholas Adams as a writer restrained about what to include about his father's death, Hemingway added, after editing the transcript in folder 222, details that strongly suggest a gunshot wound to Dr. Adams's head: "He had complimented the undertaker. The undertaker had been proud and smugly pleased. But it was not the undertaker who had given him that face. The undertaker had only made certain dashingly executed repairs of doubtful artistic merit" (371). This entire excerpt does not appear until the publication of "Fathers and Sons" in the first edition of *Winner Take Nothing*. Hemingway's repetition of "the undertaker," with particular emphasis on his smug pride in his cosmetic art, suggests that his art is a sham—one can see its marks and one can see the signs of the wound it does not completely efface. Even though Hemingway restrains from identifying how Nick's father died, he implies that a gunshot wound led to "dashingly executed repairs," an art that Nick ponders mockingly.[21] Nick

admires his father's face as having fashioned itself, more than the false face doctored up by an undertaker's cosmetics: "The face had been making itself and being made for a long time. It had modeled fast in the last three years" (371). Again, this language is not in the text of the setting copy. Hemingway must have added this passage even after marking that copy by hand. The phrase, "modeled fast," ironically implies a swift decline in the face of Nick's aging father, as opposed to the mortician's cosmetic illusion.[22]

CODA

In Nick's conversation with his son at the end of the story, the shift in verb tenses marks how central the memory of past time and anticipation of future time is to the story. The very first fragment of the story is dominated by the past tense, as in the question the narrator's son asks him, "What was it like, Papa . . ." (*CSS* 375). The first reference to evening as the time when Hemingway sets the story comes near the end of "Tomb," as the transition between Trudy's asking young Nick for a "kiss on the face" and the older Nick's interior monologue that begins with a reference to the presence of the past: "Now, as he rode along the highway in the car, and it was getting dark . . . " (374). Although the narrative viewpoint in "Tomb" is first-person, the clause "it was getting dark" is present in that draft and in the final version of the story (374). In "Tomb" Hemingway crossed out by hand the only reference near the beginning of the story to its being the end of the day. Not until the next draft does Nick refer early in the story to "his son asleep on the seat by his side, the day's run made" (369). Thus, as of the draft written after the manuscript "Tomb of My Grandfather," Hemingway frames "Fathers and Sons" as an evensong, a lyrical meditation at the end of a day (Flora, *Adams* 248).

Once his son wakes up and asks his father near the end of the story about what the Ojibway were like, Nick's interior monologue records what he will not confide in his son—his memory of sexual climax with Trudy as "fully, finally, unendingly, never-endingly . . . suddenly ended" (376). After the rhapsodic rhythms evoking Nick's memory of orgasm, he compares it to a symbolic "great bird flown like an owl in the twilight, only it was daylight in the woods"—comparison of sexual climax to a bird's flight present from the first fragment of the story to the final draft (376). Even though Nick knows that Trudy and he made love in the daytime, in his memory he associates the time with the evenings when he saw the "great bird" fly. Twilight

becomes associated in Nick's memory with his initiation into sexual climax and its aftermath. At the same time, the story, so dominated by layers of memories, ends in the present and future—the present of Nick's son's feelings about his grandfather, the conditional future of his son's contemplated prayers "at the tomb of my grandfather on the way to the ranch," and the imperative future of Nick's promise: "I can see we'll have to go" (377). From the manuscript of "Tomb" to the printed version of the story, Hemingway deftly interweaves verbs in the present, future conditional, and future tenses, as the father and son look ahead to visiting the tomb together.[23]

The final revisions of "Fathers and Sons" leave intact most of the conversation when Nick, instead of being mentored by his father, becomes a mentor for his son. Particularly as he revised the story, Hemingway presents Nick in "Fathers and Sons" as a rounded, humane, and complex character. As such, the Nicholas Adams of this story brings *Winner Take Nothing* to a close with a far less cynical figure than the loners and misfits that generally populate the collection—doctors who cannot heal a self-mutilated boy ("God Rest You"), Nick at the front as an hysterical advance man showing the American flag ("A Way"), a son whose father shot himself (Part III of "Homage to Switzerland"), and a writer whose "nerves are bad now" ("The Gambler, The Nun, and the Radio," *CSS* 365). The Nicholas Adams of "Fathers and Sons" is closer, I think, to the Nick of "Indian Camp," "Cross-Country Snow," and "Big Two-Hearted River"—independent, complex, and caring for his father (and, in this case, his son). The brilliance of this story is Hemingway's placing Nicholas Adams as a father meditating about two stories he cannot tell his son—the erotic story of his own sexual initiation and the grim story of his father's death. The story blends elegy with comedy, as Nick remembers his father and, with a quiet smile, accommodates his son's wish to pray at his father's tomb. Hemingway's revisions to "Fathers and Sons," like his extensive work in composing "Big Two-Hearted River," are consummate examples of artistic craftsmanship.

Collegiate School

APPENDIX

Note: all references to folders are to Box 44 in the Hemingway Collection at the John F. Kennedy Library.

Folder 382: early pencil manuscript, untitled (partially reprinted as "clearly the earliest fragment" in Paul Smith, *Reader's Guide* 308).

Folder 384: early pencil manuscript fragment, two pages discarded, untitled (partially reprinted as a fragment in Smith, 308-398, actually two different fragments)

a) First fragment—partially quoted in Smith, crossed out by hand with a big "X"—not included in the print edition of the story.

b) Second fragment—mostly quoted in Smith, not crossed out. In a scene that echoes the ending of "Indian Camp," Nick remembers rowing in a lake with his father, who in this fragment has asked his son to take over the rowing.

Folder 383: "The Tomb of My Grandfather," pencil manuscript, titled, twenty-five pages—the full story beginning with Nick's driving in a car.

Folder 385A: typescript, fourteen pages, with three inserted, handwritten pages.

Folder 222: the "setting" (or proof) copy for "Fathers and Sons" as placed in *Winner Take Nothing*. This copy includes Hemingway's relatively extensive, handwritten revisions.

Print Edition: the print edition includes material not present even in the handwritten revisions to the setting copy contained in folder 222.

NOTES

[1]I gave an earlier version of this essay at a panel on "The Short Fiction of Ernest Hemingway" at the 46th annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature on June 3, 2016. I would like to thank my co-presenter, Donald A. Daiker, for reading and offering suggestions. I discuss Hemingway's extensive revisions to "Big Two-Hearted River" in "Hemingway as Craftsman: Revising 'Big Two-Hearted River,'" forthcoming in *The Hemingway Review* 36:2 (Spring 2017).

[2]In a later letter to Perkins from Madrid, dated 31 August 1933, Hemingway settled on "Fathers and Sons" as the title of the final story of the collection (Bruccoli 199).

[3]The most extensive discussions of "Fathers and Sons" as a work of art are by Dudley, Flora, and Smith, *Guide*. More often, as most skillfully in Reynolds's *1930s,* scholars focus on the biographical dimensions of the story.

[4]Subsequent references to the contents of folders in the Hemingway Collection will list EH/KL followed by the folder number. To avoid copyright issues, I reproduce passages from manuscripts only if they have previously appeared in print. I am grateful to Stacey Chandler for her help during my research in the Hemingway Collection at the Kennedy Library.

[5]I will cite subsequent references to Hemingway's *Complete Short Stories* as *CSS,* followed by the page number. Although Hemingway does not rename Prudy as Trudy until the typescript draft contained in folder 385a, I will refer to her as Trudy.

[6]For a fine reading of "Ten Indians," see Daiker.

[7]Michael Reynolds cites this fragment in full in *Young Hemingway*, 102-103. However, at the end of his citation, he includes part of the first sentence of the second fragment—a fragment separate in folder 384 from the first fragment. This second fragment begins where Reynolds's citation ends: "I've seen him when we used to row in the boat in the evening, trolling, the lake quiet, the sun behind the hills . . . " The second fragment in folder 384 continues from there.

[8]Hemingway probably referred to "Tomb of My Grandfather" as the "24 page story" that he mentioned in his letter to Maxwell Perkins on 13 June 1933 from Havana, Cuba, as having finished the previous day (Hemingway *Selected Letters* 394). Hereafter I will cite this collection as SL. In a later letter to Perkins, dated 13 July 1933 and also posted from Havana, Hemingway referred to "The Tomb of His Grandfather" as "one more story I am re-writing,"the same story he described as "Finished" in his letter of 13 June.

[9]"buggery, n. and adj." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, June 2015. Web. 9 September 2015. Ironically, the young Nick's swearing at the squirrel that bit him as a "bugger" also fits the sense of "bugger" as a coarse insult. "bugger, n.1." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, September 2015. Web. 10 September 2015.

[10]"mash, v.1." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, June 2015. Web. 9 September 2015. "mash, v.2." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, June 2015. Web. 9 September 2015.

[11]As Bauerle argues about the arrest and trial of Caruso, "The event gained immortality when Joyce drew upon it for scenes in Bloom's trial in *Ulysses* . . ." (125). Hemingway showed a substantial knowledge of Caruso by the time he wrote his parents from Toronto on 22 April 1920 (Hemingway *Letters* vol. 1, 231 and notes 3 and 4). See also Beall, "Ernest Hemingway's Reading of James Joyce's *Ulysses*."

[12]Susan Beegel connects this stripping of the landscape with a "forestry holocaust enabled by new forms of transport, felling, and mill technology . . ." (238).

[13]As Carl Eby notes, "The threat is clearly ironic"; he further suggests a "fetishistic dimension" to Nick's threat (293). Nick's reaction is both violent and hysterical. Mark K. Dudley posits that in "Fathers and Sons," Hemingway "violently confronts the prospects of miscegenation" and depicts Nick's "quite violent defense of his own sister's maidenhood" (12). In contrast, Amy Strong defends Hemingway's portrait of Trudy in "Fathers and Sons" as an example of Hemingway's "openly defying white anxieties over miscegenation" (326). Strong argues further that Hemingway "made a point of humanizing Indians through his writing" and "challenges the entrenched stereotypes of American Indians that had flourished in popular culture" (326-7).

[14]As Nancy Comley and Robert Scholes argue, "Nick is trading one sign of manhood for another" (12). On Nick's struggle to assure himself of his masculinity, see McCann (271).

[15]Hemingway probably wrote this version of "Fathers and Sons" after 26 July 1933. In a letter on that date to Maxwell Perkins, Hemingway indicated that he plans to "start re-writing The Tomb of My Grandfather today" (*SL* 395).

[16]See my discussion of the three pages Hemingway inserted in a draft of "Big Two-Hearted River," in my essay "Hemingway as Craftsman: Revising 'Big Two-Hearted River,'" forthcoming in *The Hemingway Review* 36:2 (Spring 2017).

[17]See Flora's observation that in "Fathers and Sons" Hemingway swerves from the "clipped, staccato" sentences of *In Our Time* and "The Killers" and instead writes in "sentences tending to be long and even languid" *(Study* 46).

[18]See McCann on Nick's being "torn between love and guilt" about his father (267-8).

[19]Archives of Charles Scribner's Sons (C0101), 1786-2004 (mostly 1880s-1970s), Box 770, Folder 13. Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

[20]In his preface to his edition of Hemingway's letters, Carlos Baker quotes Hemingway's comment that "he had picked up from an actual old Indian: 'Long time ago good, now heap shit'" (*SL* xi-xii).

[21]Anne Edwards Boutelle observes that "[t]here is no explicit mention of his father's suicide, but there are enough heavy hints for the reader to feel that it is the true subject of the story . . . " (142). For discussions of the depression and suicide of Hemingway's father, see Reynolds, "Home," and Donaldson.

[22]Erik Nakjavani describes Hemingway's portrait of the father's remade face as a "still life," pointing to the irony that the French phrase for "still life" is "*nature morte*" (99). See also his discussion of the Oedipal triangles in the story, particularly his discussion of Nick's revulsion at the smell of his father's underwear.

[23]Thomas Strychacz claims in his essay, "Masculinity," that "[n]one of Hemingway's major male characters deals with children in any significant way" (281). However, "A Day's Wait" and "Fathers and Sons" are two stories in *Winner Take Nothing* with narrators as fathers who care for their children.

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HELEN FERGUSON AND FRIENDS IN *A FAREWELL TO ARMS*

CHARLES J. NOLAN JR.

Although in recent years critics like Sandra Spanier, Peter Hays, Jamie Barlow-Kayes, and Suzanne del Gizzo have thoroughly discussed Catherine Barkley from differing perspectives, not much has been written about Catherine's nursing colleague, Helen Ferguson. Only two full-length articles have been devoted to her: in a thoughtful piece, Fern Kory has provided the usual reading of Fergy's distressing response to Frederic Henry when he catches up with Catherine and her friend in Stresa, whereas Miriam Mandel has seen Fergy's actions as motivated by lesbian love. Others, of course, among them James Mellow and Debra Moddelmog, have touched upon Helen in their discussions of the novel, but she has not otherwise engendered much comment. Surprisingly, no one seems to have noticed how Hemingway uses Fergy and the other women surrounding Catherine (Miss Gage and Miss Van Campen) in the same way that he creates male characters around Frederic (the Priest, Rinaldi, and Count Greffi) in order to develop his central figures and to highlight his major meaning in the book. In each case, a collection of characters functions to achieve Hemingway's larger aims.

Those aims, of course, are what make *Farewell* more than just a war novel. Yes, the book deals with World War I and its horrors and dislocations, but it is also and more importantly a novel about the way things are in the modern world, a world quite different from and less stable than the one that existed before the Great War. It is an existential world in which the values and the way to live in it are hammered out by each person, based on his or her experience, a world uncomfortable with absolutes and aggressively malignant, one that "kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially" (Hemingway 249). We are all alone in this world and struggle to make sense of it; in the process, we grow and develop, adapt to what life

does to us, and, if we are lucky, learn how to live in it. So *Farewell* is a maturation novel as well. The characters surrounding Catherine and Frederic help to develop them and assist both them and the book's readers in understanding the universe in which we all live.

First among these characters is, of course, Helen Ferguson. Our introduction to Fergy comes in a short sentence when Frederic and Rinaldi come to the hospital in Gorizia to meet Catherine, who is sitting in the garden; Frederic tells us that, "Another nurse was with her" (18). As Frederic and Catherine become acquainted in their rather awkward and sometimes painful first conversation, Fergy and Rinaldi spend their time chatting. After Frederic has learned the details of Catherine's earlier romantic view of meeting her betrothed at the front and of his subsequent loss ("He didn't have a sabre cut. They blew him all to bits" [20]), the two, soon-to-be lovers return to their friends. Rinaldi is confused when Fergy tells him that she doesn't love England because she is Scottish, though when Rinaldi wonders if she therefore does not like Catherine, Fergy tells him, "Oh, that's different. You mustn't take everything so literally" (21). As Frederic and Rinaldi walk back to their quarters, Rinaldi notes that Catherine likes Frederic better than she likes him but, perhaps in compensation, that Fergy is "very nice." Frederic obligingly agrees but thinks to himself that "he had not noticed her." So in her first appearance, Fergy—for Frederic and for the reader—is just an afterthought, suggesting Catherine's superiority and importance.

The next evening when Frederic calls on Catherine, he once again finds both women in the garden. After initial greetings, Helen generously excuses herself so that her friend can be alone with Frederic, observing that, "You get along very well without me" (25). Though Catherine protests, Fergy understands that the other two would prefer some privacy. In the conversation that follows between Frederic and Catherine, we learn another important detail about Fergy: she is a trained nurse and not, like Catherine, a V.A.D. (Voluntary Aid Detachment). "A nurse is like a doctor," Catherine explains. "It takes a long time to be. A V.A.D. is a short cut" (25). Helen's next appearance occurs when Frederic calls on Catherine after he has been away for a few days doing his job in the mountains. As he waits for her in the reception hall of the British villa, Fergy comes down to tell him that Catherine cannot see him because "She's not awfully well" (41), alluding to the depression from which she is still recovering (Nolan 109). When he asks Ferguson if she thinks it would be possible for

him to see Catherine the next day, Fergy signals that it would be a good idea. Here, as in the couple's second meeting, Helen seems to encourage their further relationship, in contrast to the way she will act later on.

After Frederic's wounding and his transfer to the American hospital in Milan for evaluation, treatment, and recuperation, Catherine and Ferguson get posted there so that Catherine can be with Frederic. In discussing the unpleasantness of his preparation for surgery, Frederic notes that he wishes that Catherine did not have to get him ready for the event, but she prefers to perform the task herself, she tells him, because "I don't want anyone else to touch you . . . I get furious if they touch you" (103). "Even Ferguson?" Frederic asks. "Especially Ferguson and Gage and the other [Walker] . . . ," she replies. Although Fergy is aware of the couple's growing relationship, including perhaps Catherine's sexual possessiveness, she goodheartedly carries notes back and forth between the lovers during the day. Frederic, however, who notes that Fergy is "a fine girl," never makes much of an effort to learn anything about her except that she has two brothers in the war and is "very good" to Catherine (108; Mandel 22). Clearly, Fergy is of only secondary importance to Frederic, once more highlighting Catherine's specialness.

But, in what appears to be a bit of an overreaction, Fergy, despite her helpfulness, is clearly upset with Frederic. Her anger and sense of bitterness come out when she lectures Frederic about his relationship with Catherine, telling him that he will never marry her and that the couple will "fight before [they'll] marry (108)," then warning Frederic not to get Catherine pregnant. She also urges him to ask Catherine to take some time off from night duty because she is exhausted. In what may then be just fair warning, Fergy tells Frederic that Miss Van Campen has taken notice that he sleeps in every morning, presumably because he is up all night making love to Catherine. That warning, however, may be tinged with a bit of aggression.

When we next hear of Fergy, we learn that she goes to the horse races with Catherine and Frederic and Crowell Rodgers, another patient (127). After learning that the expected pay off on a horse they had bet on would be significantly diminished, Catherine is disappointed, but Fergy seems outraged: "It's crooked and disgusting" (130), she tells her friend indignantly, reflecting a greater sense of moral rigidity than Catherine, who is more flexible and who reminds Fergy that they wouldn't have bet on that particular horse if they had-

n't already known that the races were fixed. Unlike Fergy, Catherine is clearly attuned to the new reality, having learned from experience that old codes do not fit the world in which they live now.

Much later, after Frederic deserts and finds Catherine and her friend in Stresa, Fergy is distraught, and the scenes involving her are especially revealing. In the first, Catherine and Fergy are eating dinner in their hotel when Frederic finds them. Almost immediately, Ferguson goes on the attack: "My God . . . . You're a fine mess . . . . What are you doing here?" (246). But then with a kind of ambiguity of feeling that runs throughout the scene, she asks with apparent concern, "Have you eaten?" After Frederic sits downs and orders his meal, Fergy attacks again, telling him that he is in "some mess" and observing that she "know[s] the mess [he's] gotten this girl into."

But when Catherine remarks that she has gotten herself into her own mess, Ferguson unloads on him instead of on her friend. To Catherine she announces: "I can't stand him . . . . He's done nothing but ruin you with his sneaking Italian tricks. Americans are worse than the Italians." When Frederic asks her, "Am I sneaky, Fergy?" she replies, "You are. You're worse than sneaky. You're like a snake. A snake with an Italian uniform: with a cape around your neck." When Frederic notes that he isn't in uniform, Fergy blasts him again: "That's just another example of your sneakiness. You had a love affair all summer and now I suppose you'll sneak off" (247). Then when Catherine tells her friend that they will sneak off together, Fergy attacks her: "I'm ashamed of you Catherine Barkley. You have no shame and no honor and you're as sneaky as he is." After this tirade, Catherine tells Fergy not to denounce her, observing that Fergy knows that the two nurses have been friends. This comment brings another angry blast: "If you had any shame it would be different . . . . You've no shame and no feelings." At this point, Fergy breaks down. Catherine tries to comfort her, asking her not to cry, but this attempt at consolation brings another attack on Frederic: "I hate you . . . . You dirty sneaking American Italian."

Ultimately, when Catherine calmly tells Fergy that she is being "unreasonable," Fergy accedes: "I know it," she sobs. "You mustn't mind me, either of you. I'm so upset. I'm not reasonable. I know it. I want you both to be happy." But when Catherine tells her that she and Frederic are happy, Fergy complains that she does not want the couple to be happy with their current status, asking Frederic why he doesn't marry his lover. Catherine then tells her that they will get

married if it will "please" her (248), but Fergy argues that Catherine should want to get married, not just marry to make her friend happy.

Catherine jokes that the couple has been busy, to which Fergy replies, "Yes, I know. Busy making babies." Then she slips into bitterness, commenting that she supposes that Catherine will leave with Frederic, and when Catherine agrees that she will go if Frederic wants her to, Fergy cries out, "What about me?" Catherine tells her that she will stay if Fergy prefers, but Fergy demands that the lovers leave now, that she is tired of seeing them. When it becomes clear that Catherine does want to go, Fergy breaks down again: "I've always wanted to go to the Italian lakes and this is how it is." When Catherine tells her friend that she will not leave her, Fergy switches back to being less self-absorbed: "No. No. I want you to go. . . . I'm so unreasonable. Please don't mind me." This whole scene suggests Fergy's instability in contrast to Catherine's awareness of and accommodation to modernity. The passage also shows Fergy's powerful needs, so far unnamed, in her relationship with Catherine and their ability to break through when they are denied.

The next morning Catherine goes to see Fergy at her hotel. When Catherine brings Fergy back for lunch, she asks Frederic to be nice to her friend, reminding him of how much love the two of them share and that Fergy does not have anything. Frederic suggests that Fergy does not want what the lovers have, to which Catherine thoughtfully replies: "You don't know much, darling, for such a wise boy" (257). This exchange occurs just after Catherine has made a link between Frederic and Othello, noting that, without being part of the Ambulance Corps, Frederic is like "Othello with his occupation gone." Frederic replies, in part: ". . . I'm not jealous. I'm just so in love with you that there isn't anything else." The couple then goes down to lunch with Fergy, and the wine helps all of them feel better. After lunch, Fergy goes back to her hotel to lie down for a time. Ultimately, Helen disappears from the novel in a comment that Catherine makes to Frederic as they row across the lake to Switzerland: "Poor Ferguson . . . . In the morning she'll come to the hotel and find we're gone" (271).

I've recounted these events in some depth because of the contrary opinions that critics have advanced about Fergy. When she seems so bitter about romantic relationships in the hospital in Milan, we suspect that it is just her unwillingness to see her friend hurt that motivates her, a common enough reason for her to be wary of Frederic.

But Fern Kory suggests that an earlier painful experience with men may lie behind her anger: "The emotional mixture of protectiveness, and, especially, bitterness . . . hints that these emotions come from some experience beyond, or, more likely, previous to the present situation" (23). Later, in Stresa, Fergy's feelings about the lovers' relationship are more intense, suggesting that there may be more than just friendship involved. Miriam Mandel (19), James Mellow (384), and Debra Moddelmog (15) have all pointed to a homoerotic attraction that Fergy feels for Catherine that sparks her strong reactions. As Moddelmog, echoing Mandel, convincingly notes, "Although Helen probably has never professed her love for Catherine—she may not even have named it herself—her behavior (following Catherine from place to place, being so upset when their plans are interrupted) indicates that if it were possible, she *would* want what Frederic has: a romantic relationship with Catherine . . . " (16).

For Miss Gage, however, another of the nurses in Milan, the emotions are much simpler. We meet her shortly after Frederic arrives at the hospital and rings for assistance in his room; she comes in looking "young and pretty" (84). As they are talking, she undresses him "except for the bandages" and washes him "very gently and smoothly," a procedure that Frederic tells us "felt very good." As Mandel notes, "Her ministrations to him are tinged with the sexual flattery that Henry understands, enjoys, and can recall in accurate detail . . ." (22). After Miss Van Campen peremptorily tells Frederic that he cannot have wine with his meals unless the doctor approves and Frederic is abrupt with her for her officiousness, Miss Gage questions him about why he was so rude. Later she brings him a glass of eggnog that Miss Van Campen had put some sherry in, telling Frederic again that he should not treat her superior so badly. The next day when Frederic awakens and Miss Gage comes in, he thinks that "she looked a little older in the bright sunlight and not so pretty" (89), though he soon learns that she had protected him while he slept by hiding both a bottle of vermouth with which he had fallen asleep in bed and another bottle he had put under it. When she asks why he had not asked her for a glass and he tells her that he was afraid that she would not have let him have the alcohol, her response reflects her flexibility and perhaps her interest in him: "I'd have had some with you." But she warns him that it is not good for him to drink alone. She also tells him that Catherine has arrived but states directly, "I don't like her" (90).

Later, after Fergy had suggested that Frederic should let Catherine take some nights off and also warned him about Miss Van Campen's negative view of his sleeping late, he calls Miss Gage in to learn more. When he asks her about why Catherine does so much night duty, Miss Gage immediately calls him on his attempt to manipulate her, telling him that she is a friend of his—something she does three more times during this conversation—and not to talk to her in that way. Perhaps to make up for having offended her, he offers her some vermouth, and she accepts, retrieving the bottle and a glass from the armoire. As they drink, Frederic also questions her about Miss Van Campen's irritation with his sleeping late. When Miss Gage tells him that her superior just "jawed about it" (110), calling him their "privileged patient," Frederic expresses his animosity. But Miss Gage notes that Miss Van Campen "isn't mean," "just old and cranky," observing that her superior never cared for Frederic; Miss Gage also claims that she is his friend. Frederic then tells her that she is "awfully damned nice," but she rejects the compliment, noting that she knows who Frederic thinks is nice (i.e., Catherine), and asserts her friendship again. As they continue their conversation, she asks Frederic how his leg is, remarking that she will bring some cold mineral water that he can pour over his cast to help with the itching. Finally, she adjusts the sandbags that are immobilizing his leg, telling him again that she is his friend. When Frederic responds that he knows she is, she rejects his comment: "No, you don't. But you will some day" (111).

Miss Van Campen, however, is not so friendly. After Frederic comes down with jaundice and she discovers empty liquor bottles in his room, she accuses him of drinking to produce jaundice so that he will not have to return to the front. When he tells Miss Gage why Miss Van Campen is so angry with him and that she may try to have him court-martialed, Miss Gage vows to support him: "Pooh. I'll swear that you've never taken a drink" (145). She also gathers up all the remaining liquor bottles and puts them in a rucksack to give to the porter to dispose of, but Miss Van Campen, porter in tow, interrupts them, telling the porter to take the bottles away because she wants to show them to the doctor when she writes her report on Frederic.

In fact, of all the nurses in Milan whom Frederic encounters, the worst is clearly Miss Van Campen, "the superintendent" (86), who is in charge of the nurses and the hospital (88). As Frederic reflects,

"She did not like me and I did not like her. She was small and neatly suspicious and too good for her position" (86); "snooty" (87), Frederic calls her, after their first meeting, in which she rejects his request for wine with his meals unless the doctor prescribes it. Perhaps reconsidering her nastiness, she later sends up some eggnog with sherry in it, but that act of kindness is the last we see her perform for him. Miss Gage explains, "She's not young and this hospital is a big responsibility for her" (88). Although Miss Van Campen does eventually accept Frederic and Catherine's relationship as "great friends" (118), she does so because Catherine works so hard and because she believes that Catherine "comes from very good people"; her snobbish bias in favor of family status is very clear. But when she sees the porter carrying out liquor bottles and finds more in Frederic's room, she immediately assumes that Frederic has brought on his jaundice by drinking so that he can avoid further combat. When he disputes her accusation by asking her if she has ever known anyone to "disable himself by kicking himself in the scrotum" (144), a sensation, he tells her, that very few women have felt, she is furious and leaves the room. Later, she interrupts Frederic and Miss Gage's attempt to get rid of the rest of the liquor bottles; she confiscates them so that she can show the doctor. Although, as noted earlier, Frederic worries that he may be court-martialed, the worst that Miss Van Campen can do is to get his leave cancelled.

This recitation of the details of the three nurses is necessary, perhaps because readers, focusing on Frederic, the narrator, tend to overlook the role that Fergy and her colleagues play in the novel, a role that may seem less important than that of the three male characters surrounding Frederic. Framing him and his development are his two friends in Gorizia—the priest and Rinaldi. The priest lives—ideationally—in a medieval world. In Abruzzi, he tells Frederic, "the peasants all called you 'Don' and when you met them they took off their hats" (73). It is a place where they were "always honored" if the upper class dropped in and ate with them, a place where the authorities prohibited the playing of the flute at night because of its power to arouse the girls sexually, a place where the trout were plentiful and the birds were plump. Most important, this paradise is a theocentric world, one in which, because God is at the center, there is order and purpose and meaning, one in which the priest is "not a dirty joke" (71) but a respected person. It is a universe quite unlike the chaotic, violent, modern one that most of the characters of the

book are living in, the universe that is Rinaldi's. His is essentially a nihilistic world, in which he is happy only when he is working. As he tells Frederic, there are just two other things that give him pleasure—alcohol and sex (170). When his friend suggests that he will find other things to enjoy, Rinaldi rejects the possibility: "No. We never get anything. We are born with all we have and we never learn. We never get anything new. We all start complete" (171). In his world of whorehouses and drunkenness, Rinaldi suffers the emptiness that is modern life, and though he is not on the front lines, he probably contracts and certainly worries about syphilis. As Moddelmog also points out, "There is . . . [as well] more than a hint of the homoerotic in [his—and the priest's—] attachments to Frederic and in his to them" (14). Though these feelings are never consummated, they do perhaps explain some of the loneliness that Rinaldi and the priest experience.

Frederic, of course, is a man in transition. Although when we first meet him, he is already closer to Rinaldi's view of life than to the priest's, he was presumably raised, if not Catholic, at least in some Protestant denomination and therefore started out as a believer. And despite the fact that he tells Count Greffi that he doesn't "know about the soul" (261), he also comments that he might become devout and that he will pray for the Count if he dies (263). Later, after the baby is stillborn, he notes flatly, "I had no religion but I knew he ought to have been baptized" (327); and after Catherine hemorrhages, he pleads with God: "Please, please, please, dear God, don't let her die" (330). This prayer—born of desperation—seems, however, merely a return to a psychological mechanism that in an earlier time had the power to allay fear. At the end of the novel, with its devastating conclusion, he seems at that point completely without God and fully nihilistic.

For such bleakness, the Count, who has earned his wisdom during his ninety-four years, will offer Frederic a new way of dealing with a world in which "[t]hey threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you" (327). As the two play billiards in Stresa, he asks Frederic what he values most, and when Frederic replies, "Someone I love," the Count tells him that it is the same for him (262). He then asks Frederic if he values life, to which, of course, he replies that he does. Count Greffi notes, "So do I. Because it is all I have." These, then, are the values—love and life—that replace the earlier religious and traditional ones Frederic

had brought out of his childhood, new values that will allow him to survive in the modern world. In the old terminology, the Count is the "code hero" (Young 63-64), who is here teaching Frederic how to live in a world gone to smash, one in which the earlier ways of thinking are irrelevant because they no longer explain the lives he and the others are leading. This is, after all, a maturation novel in which Frederic becomes painfully aware of the modern world's devastating power and must learn new ways of coming to grips with it.

Just as Hemingway uses these other characters to reflect Frederic's development and to point us toward his larger meaning about the nature of the universe and life in our time, he also uses those around Catherine in a similar way. It's a mistake, I think, to push the similarities too far, but there are some parallels worth noting. The first is that Catherine, like Frederic, is framed by two other characters—Miss Gage and Helen Ferguson—who function to show readers alternate ways of dealing with what life offers us. Of the two, Miss Gage is the less problematic. As Mandel notes, "Henry can appreciate and understand the friendly, uncomplicatedly heterosexual Gage . . ." (22), whose attentions to him are compassionate and thoughtful. No doubt because of her attraction to him, she initially dislikes Catherine, whom she recognizes immediately as a rival. Nonetheless, as we have seen, she is continually helpful to Catherine and Frederic, especially in his uneasy relationship with Miss Van Campen, and remains their good friend throughout, even though Frederic apparently does not fully recognize the depth of Miss Gage's feelings for him (Hemingway 111). Fergy, on the other hand, is all trouble. Traditional and rigid, she is irritable and unstable because of her homoerotic, though perhaps unacknowledged, love for Catherine and sees Frederic as a rival for Catherine's affections. Her ambivalence in her feelings for the lovers is tinged with envy, though she is basically good-hearted, as her occasional recognition of and apology for the nastiness of her behavior indicates. So Miss Gage and Fergy, like the Priest and Rinaldi, offer contrasting approaches to dealing with life in the twentieth century.

Besides framing Catherine, both Fergy and Miss Gage point us toward another aspect of the nature of the modern world that Catherine and Frederic must come to grips with besides its violence and horror: the importance of relationships and the centrality of and confusion about sexuality in them. It was, of course, desire that led Frederic to Catherine initially, and the result of their love affair will

lead to Catherine's death. As Catherine remarks, "It's just a dirty trick" (331). But, as Fergy makes particularly clear, desire is uncontrollable; we cannot help whom we love and sometimes it makes us do unproductive things. Though Catherine recognizes the underlying basis of Fergy's attentions to her, she is not judgmental; she remains understanding of Helen's needs and open to her friendship. Miss Gage, on the other hand, whom Mandel calls Fergy's "literary foil" (22), reinforces Catherine's choice of lover in her straightforward interest in Frederic. Catherine's willingness, ultimately, to "get rid of" Helen in Stresa after she and the lovers have lunch so that the two can be together romantically (257-58) emphasizes the priority—for Catherine—of Miss Gage's sexual preference and, in part, the reason Miss Gage is in the novel.

Another similarity in the way Hemingway uses the characters around each of his lovers involves the fact that, like Frederic, Catherine is also a person in transition, though not of the kind he is undergoing. Having already been through what her lover is experiencing and no longer a believer (19, 313), she is moving from illness to health with the help of Frederic's love. "A little crazy" (154) at the beginning, she is fully recovered by the time they are living in the mountains at Mrs. Guttingen's outside Montreux (300). Like Frederic as well, she has a third person available to her—Miss Van Campen—whom we might expect to provide a function similar to the one that Count Greffi does for Frederic. Miss Van Campen is, after all, older and in some ways more experienced than Catherine, given her position as superintendent of the hospital, but she is hardly satisfactory in the role of mentor. Snobbish, rule-bound, "cranky," and stressed by her responsibilities, she has much too narrow a worldview to have anything to offer to Catherine. Though she likes Catherine because she gets a lot of work out of her and because she comes from a good family, her attitude toward Frederic and her actions against him hardly mark her as someone who has anything to teach Catherine, who has moved far beyond Miss Van Campen in understanding the world.

It may be that Hemingway does not give Catherine a wise role model as he does for Frederic in order to heighten the sense of doom that surrounds her. There is no one to guide her to a set of values that will help her survive in this world, so she has to come to those values on her own. In fact, because of Catherine's coming to grips with her earlier traumatic experience, she is fit to be a mentor herself and

plays that role at times for Frederic (Spanier, "Soldier" 80). Almost from the first—in fact, in their second encounter—Catherine foresees their life together. She asks him to be good to her because, as she tells him, "we're going to have a strange life" (Hemingway 27). Delbert Wylder (87, 91, 94, 226) and later Michael Reynolds (254-55), Joyce Wexler (112-13, 116-17), Sandra Spanier ("Code" 132, 134; "Soldier" 76, 80, 98), and Peter Hays (16) have all seen Catherine as Hemingway's hero, in one form or another, in the book. If in no other way, Catherine will fulfill that function in teaching Frederic how to die with dignity. These secondary women characters, then, help us to understand the complexity of Catherine Barkley as she and Frederic meet a world that "breaks everyone" (249).

A Farewell to Arms remains one of the great books of our time, in large part because in it Hemingway shows us how to live in an aggressively hostile universe in which we are mere ants on a fiery log. Frederic and Catherine are the principal figures through whom Hemingway achieves his ends, but the characters who surround them play a significant part in *their* development. Along with the priest, Rinaldi, and Count Greffi, Helen Ferguson and her friends help us understand just how grim our world can be and just how important it is to endure its travails with stoicism. In that way, Hemingway tells us, we wrest a little dignity from the bleakness of our time.

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ANNUAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MIDWESTERN LITERATURE, 2014

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This bibliography includes primary and secondary sources of Midwestern literary genres published, for the most part, during 2014. Criteria for inclusion of authors are birth or residence within the twelve-state area that defines the Midwest. Fiction and poetry using Midwestern locales are included irrespective of their authors' ties with this region. Primary sources are listed alphabetically by author, including (if applicable) designations of locale within square brackets at the end of each citation. However, because of space constraints, primary source materials are limited to separately-published works; those appearing in literary journals and magazines are generally not included. Secondary sources, usually journal articles, books, or doctoral dissertations, are listed by subject.

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Abbreviations used in the citations denoting genre and publication types are as follows:

A	Anthology	juv	Juvenile fiction
bibl	Bibliography	lang	Language; linguistics
biog	Biography	M	Memoir
corr	Correspondence	N	Novel
crit	Criticism	P	Poetry
D	Drama	pub	Publishing; printing
I	Interview(s)	rev	Review essay
jrnl	Journalism	S	Short fiction

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The Friends of Lorine Niedecker are pleased to announce the formation of an editorial board to oversee the creation, production, and distribution of monographs on the life and work of Lorine Niedecker. The series is titled, *What Region?* in homage to Niedecker's response when she learned that the library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee had cataloged her work under local or regional poetry. "What region?" Niedecker asked. "London, Wisconsin, New York?" The editorial board for the series consists of Tom Montag (Managing Editor), Chuck Stebelton (Production Editor), Nancy Rafal, and Karl Gartung. The editors envision publishing two monographs per year, intending to solicit writing about Lorine Niedecker that is personable, insightful, and appropriate to an encounter with Lorine. The first two monographs were launched on May 12, 2015. They are available for sale at Woodland Pattern Book Center in Milwaukee and through the Woodland Pattern website.

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Dimensions of the Midwestern Literary Imagination
Edited by Philip A. Greasley

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