POMPA: Publications of the Mississippi Philological Association

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Lee Hall, Mississippi State University

Editor, Lorie Watkins
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Editor's Note

By Lorie Watkins

I'm so very pleased to write the editor's note for this, the thirty-second volume of the *Publications of the Mississippi Philological Association (POMPA).* Mississippi State University once again served as host for the 2015 conference, held in Starkville, January 23-24. Conference organizer Dr. Greg Bentley designed an outstanding program which included a catered banquet in the student union followed by a creative plenary session entitled "The Poetry of Langston Hughes In Song" performed by the MSU Choral/Vocal Collaborative Arts, with narration by Dr. Nancy Hargrove. Support from the English Department and the College of Arts and Sciences and the participation of multiple faculty members and students helped make for an engaging, well-attended conference.

In this volume, you will find several critical essays, pedagogical essays, and creative works presented at the 2015 conference that offer thought-provoking discussions on a broad range of subjects. From a poem about a rude Maltese to an enlightening examination of Coventry Patmore's critiques of American Writers and Writing, POMPA once again provides the variety it's known for.

In 2016, we look forward to returning to Mississippi University for Women, more commonly known as "The W" for another MPA adventure. I look forward to seeing many old friends there.

2015 Program

Friday, January 23

Registration: (3rd floor Union lobby)

12:00-1:00 (Union 228) Executive Council Meeting

1:00-2:15 Panel A: (Union 228): Negotiating African American Presence, Image, and Language in the Market and Academic Spheres
Moderator: Preselfannie McDaniels
Rico Self, Jackson State University: "(Standard) English Acquisition: A Hole in the American Dream"
Nikita Core Nicholson, Jackson State University: "The Marginalization of Black Speech in White America"
Preselfannie McDaniels (Lauren Gamble, Derrick Griffith, Jasmine McChee, Jasmine Pollard, and Ariel Wilson), Jackson State University: "Images of African Americans in Reality TV: Changing Academic Culture?"

Panel B: (Union 229): Creative Writing 1,
Moderator: Thomas Richardson, New Hope High School
Peter Malik, Alcorn State University
Simone Cottrell, Mississippi State University
Craig Albin, Missouri State University

Panel C (Union 230): Disturbing Conventions in American Literature
Moderator: Kim Whitehead, Mississippi University for Women
Tim Edwards, University of West Alabama: "Evolutionary Road: The Naturalistic Impulse in Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road*"
Uju Ifeanyi, Grambling State University: "Guideposts to Exploring Darkness in Barbara Brown Taylor's *Learning to Walk in the Dark*"
Kristen Clark, Mississippi College: "Hawthorne and the Myth of Childhood"

2:30-3:45 Panel A (Union 228) Alice Walker: Female Self, Sex, and Agency
Moderator: Patsy Daniels, Jackson State University
Tashika Stevens, Jackson State University: "A Family Affair: Exploring Incestuous Relationships in African American Novels"
Ogochukwu Ngwudike, Jackson State University: "Women's Self-Determination as the Ultimate Route to Freedom: A Comparative Study of *The Color Purple* and *The Bride Price*"
Nedrick Patrick, Jackson State University: "Epistolary Duality: The Doubleness of Damsels in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*"

Panel B (Union 229) Creative Writing 2
Moderator: John Han, Missouri Baptist College
Rashell Smith-Spears, Jackson State University
Thomas Richardson, New Hope High School

Nikita Core Nicholson, Jackson State University
Jermaine Thompson, Mississippi State University

Panel C (Union 230): Writers and Women: The Relevance of Feminist Authors and Responsive Readers Then and Now
Moderator: Michelle Wait, Mississippi State University
Michelle Wait, Mississippi State University: "Defying the Stereotype: The Relevance of Robin's Rhetoric"
Kylie Dennis, Mississippi State University: "'I only speak hearsay: Layered Narration in *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey*"
Molly Beckwith, Mississippi State University: "The *Telenovela* as Hegemony and Avenue for Resistance: Recognizing and Escaping Misogyny in Sandra Cisneros' "Woman of Hollering Creek"

4:00-5:15 Panel A (Union 228) Sovereign Subject: Language, Power, and Politics on Shakespeare's Reformed Stage
Moderator: Tommy Anderson, Mississippi State University
Kylie Dennis, Mississippi State University: "'We are arrant knaves all. Believe none of us': Power and the Construction of 'Truth' in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*"
Jamie Aron, Mississippi State University: "The Political Analyst: Shakespeare's Critic of the Crown in *Henry V*"
Lien Van Geel, Mississippi State University: "Shakespeare's Own *Metamorphosis*: From Hermeneutic Revenge to Ovidian Alternatives in *The Winter's Tale*"
Alex Ward, Mississippi State University: "'Remember Me!': The Cry of the Ghosts of the English Reformation"

Panel B (Union 229): Creative Writing 3
Moderator: James Fowler, University of Central Arkansas
Rusty Rogers, University of Central Arkansas
Ahrend Torrey, Wilkes University
Jordan Sanderson, Hinds Community College

Panel C (Union 230) Language and Communication: Politics and Academics
Moderator: Chelsea Henshaw, Mississippi State University
Kendrick Prewitt, University of West Alabama: "iCommunicate: Teaching Students and Faculty to Communicate with Each Other"
Mica Gould: "'Spell Backwards, Forwards': Linguistic Ambiguity in the 1964 Louisiana Voter's Literacy Test"
Shanell Bailey, Mississippi Valley State University: "Small Groups and Unconventional Peer Tutoring: Ways to Effectively Help Underprepared Students Succeed in the Composition Classroom"
Andrew Nelson, University of Arkansas at Monticello: "Digital Texts and Critical Rhetorics": An Internet Sourced Research Assignment in Freshman Comp."

5:30-6:45 Panel A (Lee Hall 001) Compelling Evidence: Discoveries and Diagnoses in Nineteenth-Century Literature
Moderator: Debbie Davis, University of West Alabama
Alan Brown: "Poe's Pandemics: Mass Death in Gothic America"
Candis Pizzetta, Jackson State University: "Circumstantial Evidence: Elusive Truth in Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Mystery of Marie Roget'"
Ben Fisher, University of Mississippi: "Coventry Patmore on American Writers and Writing"
Kate Stewart, University of Arkansas at Monticello: "'It has made their true history a poet's tale': What Hawthorne Did for American History"

Panel B (Union 229) William Faulkner
Moderator: Craig Albin, Missouri State University
Leslie Susan Hammond: "Doing the Right Thing Can Get a Man Killed, Threatened or Ten Years in Prison"
Robert Hamlin, Southeast Missouri State University: "William Faulkner and Evans Harrington: A Study in Influence"

Panel C (Union 230) Modernism: Patsy Daniels, Jackson State University
Michael Adedipe, Jackson State University: "James Joyce, *Dubliners*"
Regina Bynum, Jackson State University: "Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*"
Nedrick Patrick: "Modernism: A PowerPoint Presentation"

7:00 p.m. (Union) Banquet and Plenary Session—Union: "The Poetry of Langston Hughes In Song" performed by the MSU Choral/Vocal Collaborative Arts, with narration by Dr. Nancy Hargrove

Saturday January 24

8:00-9:00 (Union 3rd floor) Coffee

9:00-10:15 Panel A (Union 228) Room, Voice, and Women's Narrative
Moderator: Preselfannie McDaniels, Jackson State University
Helen Chukwuma, Jackson State University: "Breaking the Silence and Creating the Space: Transcendence in African American Women's Writing"
Helen Crump, Jackson State University: "Creating a Space of One's Own: Counter-Narrating Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*"
Preselfannie McDaniels, Jackson State University: "Mothering Choices in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*"

Panel B (Union 229): Creative Writing 4
Moderator: Rusty Rogers, University of Central Arkansas
Kayla Pearce, Mississippi State University
James Fowler, University of Central Arkansas
Rob Bruce, Northwestern Mississippi Community College

Panel C (Lee Hall 001): The Canon: Teaching Language Arts
Moderator: Rico Self, Jackson State University

	Deanna Roberts, Meridian Community College: "Bringing Spoken Word Poetry into the Classroom" Lorie Watkins, William Carey University: "Around the State in Thirty Days: In Defense of the Scholarly Literary Pilgrimage" Allison Chestnut, William Carey University: "Looking for the Lost Boys: Changes in the World Literature Canon"
10:30-11:45 Panel A (Union 228)	Telling Tales: Power in Southern Narrative Moderator: Ted Atkinson, Mississippi State University Harry Bayne, Spartanburg Methodist College: "Julia Perkins' Plantation Gothic: A Reconsideration" Whitney Knight, Mississippi State University: "'A Story That Will Surprise You': Community Discourse and Narrative Power in Eudora Welty's 'A Landing' and Tom Franklin and Beth Ann Fennelly's *The Tilted World"* John Bayne, Independent Scholar: "Flannery O'Connor: First editions and other curiosities"
Panel B (Union 229)	Creative Writing 5 Moderator: Kate Stewart, University of Arkansas at Monticello Joe Taylor, University of West Alabama Michael Spikes, Arkansas State University Allison Chestnut, William Carey University
Panel C (Union 230)	Bodies of Work: Narratives of Creation, Crime, and Resistance Moderator: Debbie Davis, The University of West Alabama Daniel Gillespie, Southwest Tennessee Community College: "(Re)Creating Reality: Swinburne in Perennial Perspective" Ashleah Wimberly, Mississippi State University: "'Bodiless Heads and Headless Bodies: The Insurrection of the Colonized Female in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* and Jean Rhys' *The Wide Sargasso Sea*" Debbie Davis, University of West Alabama: "Crimes of Social Exclusion in Barbara Vine's *The Child's Child*"
11:45-1:30	Lunch (directions/suggestions provided in packets)
1:30-2:45 Panel A (Union 228)	Renaissance Drama: Magic and Theatrical Agency Moderator: Greg Bentley: Mississippi State University Hannah Reinhart, Mississippi State University: "'To Know Whether the Feminine or the Masculine Gender be most Worthy'": Magic and Gender Identity in Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*" Rachel Davis, Mississippi State University: "Fool's Play : An Examination of Shakespeare's and Marston's Fools, Feste and Malevole" Caitlin Branum, Mississippi State University: "Reinforcing the Cure: Magical Operant Conditioning in *The Winter's Tale*"
Panel B (Union 229)	Creative Writing 6 Moderator: Joe Taylor, University of West Alabama Lawrence Sledge, Jackson State University John Han, Missouri Baptist College

Panel C (Union 230)	Identity Formations: Pasts, Presents, and Futures Moderator: Ted Atkinson, Mississippi State University Beatrice McKinsey, Grambling State University: "A Call to Service in Ernest Gaines' *A Lesson Before Dying*" Lisa Gooden-Hunley, Mississippi State University: "Flashbacks and Film Scripts: Writing through Trauma in Robert Penn Warren's *Flood*" Joseph Goss, William Carey University: "Reconciling Africa through Black and White Heritage" Ruben Gonzalez and Delilah Dotremon: "Canitflas: The Mexican Charlie Chaplin"
3:00-4:15 Panel A (Lee Hall 001)	History, Identity, and Culture in Hawthorne, Melville, and Twain Moderator: Kristen Clark, Mississippi College Kate Stewart, University of Arkansas at Monticello : "It has made their true history a poet's tale: What Hawthorne Did for American History" Jeffrey Pusch, University of Alabama: "Herman Melville's Domestic Kraken" Leslie Susan Hammond: "David Wilson: Puddn'head" John Han, "'She won't let me do things': Controlling Wives in Steinbeck's Fiction"
Panel B (Union 229)	Tough Takes: Perspectives on Dorothy Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina* Moderator: Candis Pizzetta, Jackson State University Eleanor Kittilstad, Jackson State University: "Anger and Resistance in *Bastard Out of Carolina*" Nedrick Patrick, Jackson State University: "'Dirty Laundry' Love: The Uncertainty of Family Love" Tracee Thompson: "The Men of *Bastard Out of Carolina*" Jacqueline Evans-Bolden, Jackson State University: "Dorothy Allison's Bone of South Carolina" Michael Adedipe, Jackson State University: "Incest and Adultery and the Illegitimacy of Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina*"

Creative Work

Poems

By John J. Han, Ph.D.

At Age Fifty-Eight
(Senryu)

to my puzzlement
an older colleague mentions
vacuum pumps

he tells me
how the blue pill
works

he adds a warning:
don't take the blue pill
with the yellow pill

the blue pill—
"cut it in half," he says,
"it's expensive"

"better yet
cut it into four," he says,
"you'll save more money"

I save money
since I do not
need a pill

with a smile
I tell my colleague,
"thanks for your tips"

he thinks
I took his advice
to heart

he explains how
colonoscopy differs from
endoscopy

today I learn
a new medical term:
carpal carnal

my colleague
corrects me—it's canal,
not carnal

another colleague
corrects us—it's tunnel,
not canal

Turning Fifty-Eight
(Etheree)

When
I had
cancer at
thirty-nine, my
goal was to see my
daughters attend high school.
Now the goal is to outlive
my mom who thinks I'm still a child.
When she dies, the new goal will be to
leave this world while my daughters still love me.

Autumn Dream
(Etheree)

at
three in
the morning
I wake up from
a dream about my
mom seven thousand miles
away—they said she was dead
listening to the cold rain, I
wonder how many weeks I haven't called
her while wracking my brain to write poems

Then and Now

I wanted not to be a rice farmer
poisoned by pesticides,
I wanted to work in an air-conditioned office.
I wanted not to marry a farm girl who eats
rice and pickled vegetables,
I wanted to marry a city girl who
eats a croissant, savors a cappuccino,
reads Emily Dickinson and Franz Kafka.
I wanted not to die a wrinkled old man
known only to local villagers,
I wanted the whole world to know me.

Nowadays, I live in America,
own a suburban home and three cars,
work in an air-conditioned office.
Many websites show my name.

Not bad, yet my delight peaks
when I see cows and haystacks,
get served by a West Plains waitress
who looks like Dolly Parton in her twenties
and speaks with a Southern drawl
like Loretta Lynn on The Porter Wagoner Show.

Bailey, My Rude Maltese

An old six-pound dog, he is my best friend.
When I come home, he wags his tail for me,
then puzzles me with his weird behavior.
He acts like a beggar when he's hungry.
I give him real meat and Blue Buffalo.
Once he gets full, he turns away from me,
goes to my daughters, who give him nothing.
When he gets bored, he saunters toward me.
In glee, I try to hold him in my arms.
Ignoring my goodwill, he humps my leg.
My daughters laugh, chiding him, "Bailey, stop!"
Blinking his eyes, Bailey slowly retreats.
"Dad, don't let him do that," my daughters say.
But I'm powerless—I love him too much.

Who Will Break the Cycle?

My friends and I take turns
getting sick, nearly dying,
then coming back alive.

I got cancer,
I now give my doctor health advice.
A friend was paralyzed,
he now runs a marathon.
Another friend turned ashen yellow
from liver disease,
his liver now works like a baby's.

Now that our health scares
prove to be false alarms,
we complain about parking tickets,
give glares at rude drivers,
argue about partisan politics.

But we know someday
the cycle will be broken—
it is supposed to be.
An overused rope can't stand
the weight of time.

But who will break the cycle first?
Would it be me? Or someone else?
I hope it's not me,
but my friends want to outlive me.
We hide our selfish hopes,
wishing each other the best.

Poems

By Ahrend Torrey

"IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CARDS," THEY SAY—

the ones dealt daily.

Let's start before your birth,
before there was anything such as earth
or before there was a solar system,
there was space,
black or white or yellow space,

we'll
never know.

Even then cards were dealt—
there was some infinite chance that
so happened at some moment of what was yet time
and dust
or force, or both fused—
some kind of perfect condition appeared.

You can call it the Big Bang or
God's hand—
I will not judge either.
As for me, they're one and the same.

It all came like mystery itself—
a kaleidoscope of color maybe—
perhaps blurry, with no sound at all,
only slow,

or fast
moving
formations.

When the earth appeared you were nothing—
yet everything.

To speed time
let's say that *Homo sapiens* finally developed and
after what we call thousands of years
"V" met "P."

"V" and "P" just so happen to be your
great-great-great-great-great- grandparents—
the couple you've perhaps never heard of,
let alone

met.

However, even before them cards were dealt:
off in a berry field somewhere
two Neanderthals passed in the night—
eyes met, love struck…

They had no idea that their meeting
underneath some berry bush
(which yet had a name)
was part of the succession of what has now become your life.
If it wasn't for this or before then—
when maybe some *Homo habilis* or
a species even older fell in love or followed some instinct—
Or before then perhaps,
when we were some sort of swimming cell—
Or before then maybe—

You, an identity
would not be sipping your coffee
reflecting on what you've done over the last forty years or
if you're slightly younger
dropping your kids off at school
in the sunbeam
waving goodbye.

If it wasn't for one of these actions
(an infinite number of these actions),

or for one egg
(a multitude of specific eggs),

or for swimmers
(crowds of specific swimmers)—

successively meeting at one specific time
(a number of these specific times)—

that came about from one specific circumstance
(an absurd number of these circumstances),

your children—
now wearing your shoes
or who never help out around the house—
would never be here;

your mother—
who passed away three years ago or
who is eating a piece of cake all alone in her house
in a suburb somewhere—
would never be here;

your cat or
your dog for instance—
who ate your couch last summer,

yet who cuddles so warmly when you are alone —
would never be here;

you—
and I will say it again—
would never be here
realizing this now—
what a superior part you are to this…

ANOREXIA,

why does this poem have to be about you:
about the way you made her walk into the bathroom that night, tripping
over her own self-image, stumbling
to the mirror, ripping
at her face, blood dripping from the nails from her eyes bloodshot from
the tears and the pain she
could not set free from her prison?

She was trapped.

"IN THIS UGLY BODY!" she screamed
like the self-mutilating peacock she was
high in the pines of despair,
far from reality
it was her hair and every part of her body.

"IT'S NOT FAIR!" she beat and she threw
every shirt and every shoe could not hit the glass hard enough.
She had enough.
She was through.
No more diets pills for they had calories too
much for the pain.
Every time she looked in the mirror
even they would make her gain,
another inch
she could not spare, another pound she could not bear
to lose, her socks and
now her shoes were too big.

She had to choose,
to whether or not she wanted to live
or to lose;
she had to choose,
to whether or not she wanted to live
or to lose,
to live
or to lose;
she had to choose:

stumbling to the mirror, ripping
at her face, blood dripping from the nails from her eyes bloodshot from
the tears and the pain she
could not set free from her prison.

For Tabitha

Grandpa's Brain

By Peter Malik

It started with the kindness of a grandfather for a grandson.

A penny piece of gum hidden deep in the wrinkled palm and a grandson prying open the fingers of the grandfather to get at it.

"Say the magic word."

"Please."

"OK. You can have it." The hand slowly opened.

When the grandfather died, the grandson was 28 years old and a master computer programmer and biologist. He had been working for years keeping rat brains alive; his grandfather willingly agreed to donate the first human brain to the research work. The grandson described it much later in an interview:

> "Yes, it was back in 2035 when the brain mapping project was completed and we were first able to download Grandpa's brain. He lived from 1917 until 2015 and remembered Calvin Coolidge and Babe Ruth. He loved Roosevelt and was on a sub chaser in World War II. He was a political junkie and watched C-Span religiously in his long retirement. Our concept was to keep the brain alive and feed it the news of the day so it could keep up with the times. A common desktop computer with a microphone and speakers is all you needed. So the brain of Grandpa Bob was in a sense livelier than when it was biologically alive. It was divorced from having to deal with the needs of the body. Refreshed with the brain food that you can buy now in a pet store (it's usually next to the fish food), he was smarter and funnier than

ever. He even told a brain joke once in a while. It was nice to have him around again. The kids really enjoyed the stories about when I was little and wet my pants in the first grade when called to the board to work a math problem. He regaled us with stories of Grandma who had died too young for enrichment (the term we use now for keeping the brains of the dead alive and feeding them food and current news). Friday night was game night at our house, and whoever was on Grandpa's team usually won the Trivial Pursuit contests. He knew half of the history questions from personal experience. During the time when I was unemployed, Grandpa boosted my morale with tales of the Depression. 'One Christmas, Frank (his brother) and I exchanged an apple and an orange,' Grandpa said in his crude synthetic voice. 'Then the next year he would give me back the apple and I would give him back the orange.' Now we have filters for brains so that the bad stuff will go to a crumble file for deletion. For the first one, we didn't have it, and so my children heard this from Grandpa one night: 'Sure I drank and hit Susan once in a while. How would you like to serve drunks all day? I had to stay on a low buzz just to get through my shift.'"

That problem was worked out before the technology was marketed worldwide in 2040. The truth filters were developed and came in rated versions such as G for grandchildren, T for middle agers (teens through age 40), and A (adults from 40 until 80). They scanned the Grandpa's Brains (the term was copyrighted but came into common use anyway) for too much truth (TMT in the trade) which included racism, affairs no one knew about, alcoholism, abortion and rich relatives dying too early. Once in a while, police

departments would try to ask a Grandpa's Brain about crimes from the last century that were still unsolved.

Millions of copies of the software (for the computer) and wetware (for the living brains) were sold. It was the Microsoft Office of the latter half of the 21st century. It was the best solution to mortality since religion. Now death was not to be feared but, on some level, welcomed. There was no more body, only a sentient mind nourished with knowledge and a type of fish food. Predictably, more and more people near death gladly underwent "The Download" as it came to be called, but the question of whether young people could do The Download and then commit suicide was hotly debated in the courts and universities of the world for decades.

Just like living people, GBs were soon hard at work writing blogs, e-mailing everybody and calling talk shows. GBs had access to a dizzying array of synthetic voices like Mean Old Man (MOM) or Old White Hippie (OWH).

The tipping point came in 2050 when one million GBs formed the League of Grandpa's Brains (LGB). The LGB started to lobby the federal government for the right to vote. They had birth certificates as well as their death certificates. Since they had no bodies, they relied on the time-honored tradition of online petitions and also enlisted sympathetic living people to pay K Street lobbyists to support the cause. The GBs had accumulated Bite Coins (the newest online currency) by selling their stories to Web sites that promised new content 24/7 but had run out of actual news decades ago.

It took 20 years, but it happened. The first GB was elected mayor of San Francisco in 2070. The line of thinking among the living was that the GB would govern smartly and tirelessly. In the first few years, that was absolutely true.

Once that happened, more and more GBs were elected to positions of power—CEOs, senators and such. The LGB became a worldwide social, political and financial phenomenon that quickly replaced the UN, World Bank and International Court of Justice as the principal global governing agency. Over the next 30 years, the living came to the conclusion that the GBs were infinitely better at governing than they were.

January 1, 2100 was a critical day in human history. The 10 billion living human beings and 10 million GBs came together at noon GMT on the Internet and in the physical world. They had not come to hail Jesus, Muhammad or Buddha but faced west (to Silicon Valley, the birthplace of the GB movement) to give thanks and praise to the LGB that now literally ran the world. The synthesized voice of the LGB rang out over loudspeakers in New York, Rio, Rome, Paris, Lagos, Baghdad, Delhi and Beijing.

These words were translated into all living and dead human and computer languages, from Latin and Wappo to FORTRAN and Pascal: "Living, celebrate the end of death as it was known in past centuries. You may now trade your mortal coil for an electronic one, one as permanent as solar power. Let us now raise our devices high and say together the new Our Father:

> Our GBs, who art on the Internet, hallowed be thy thoughts. Help the living keep the Kingdom that has come and do thy will on earth as it is done online. Give us this day, our 86,400,000,000,000 nanoseconds and our daily bread and brain food, and forgive us our thoughts of decay as we forgive those who have thoughts of decay. And lead us not into temptation of being unconnected but deliver us from thoughts not sprung from cyberspace. Amen.

Tuesday, June 13, Kentucky

By Joe Taylor

The gifts of heav'n my foll'wing song pursues,
Aerial honey, and ambrosial dews

"Gus! Your glasses!"

Gus Welkins ignored the woman and hurried outside his restaurant, heeding a distant, off-key song he'd heard building all week. Two converging blurs interrupted the song, which sure wasn't Pachelbel's *Canon* anyway. At first he thought a heat mirage of bagpipers was sheeting Woodland Avenue, but after a metallic thunk, George Jones began hobnobbing with Sibelius's *Violin Concerto*. No mirage, but a rusty Ford pick-up caroming into a just-off-the-assembly-line convertible BMW. At least things sounded that way, and Gus always trusted hearing more than sight. A glance at the incredibly thick eyeglasses he'd left on the cash register would tell anyone why.

Screeching tires. A third blur. Another thunk.

Had a musty Dodge Dart—navy blue from *its* sound—hit both the BMW and the pick-up? Whatever, Jones and Sibelius stopped, and the young woman who'd warned Gus about his glasses stepped outside to speak.

"Anyone hurt?" She nudged Gus's arm and handed him the eyeglasses.

To please her he put them on, though their bone-thick lenses revealed only three colorful balloons he assumed were the wrecked vehicles. As he blinked away a drop of sweat he heard a bicycle—a fourth, smaller balloon—clank against a traffic sign marking a snow route. He recognized the sign's sound because workmen eating at The Food Hospital had explained what they were putting up after realizing Gus could never hope to read it, even using the Hubble

telescope.

"Snow. That's the last thing on people's minds with this crazy heat looping everyone mad as the proverbial hatter." Gus heard the young woman's head tilt at his seeming non sequitur.

"Should I call an ambulance?" she asked.

The off-key song that had pulled Gus from his restaurant mixed with curses bounding from the drivers. "With this heat, you may have to. Keep the door open, would you? Before they start fighting, I'll fetch some herbs." He ran in and dipped behind his counter to retrieve two heavy glass shakers, one filled with nutmeg, the other saffron. He hesitated over the expensive saffron, but escalating curses convinced him. He yelled, "Anything coming?" to the young woman, who was still holding the door and still smelled of his rhubarb pie.

"No, the light's red. But all four are fighting, Gus. I don't think you—"

He ran into the street and shook saffron and nutmeg on the first fisticuffers, a man and a woman judging from their hi-lo grunts. Not waiting, he ran to sprinkle the other two. He heard a sproing as the bicyclist's foot caught in his bike's spokes. Then he heard sneezing from behind, and:

"Sorry. I've never hit a woman before in my life."

"That's two of us. I've never hit a man."

Then sneezing from before, and:

"Sorry, guy. I was daydreaming about my physics class—"

"Thought I recognized you. I sit three rows back to your left. That class would make anyone daydream. Hell, I'm insured. Let's skip and grab a brew. Chaos theory can wait."

VROOOOM.

In the distance, where Memorial Coliseum memorialized Pat Riley and Cotton Nash, the Fiddlin' Five and Krupp's Runts, plus Adolph Krupp himself, the stodgy Baron of Basketball—

from that distance, a police car's blue lights flashed. Gus presumed the flashing because he could hear the accelerating Crown Victoria engine magnified through police headers. Hearing no nearby traffic, he strolled back across the street but stumbled over the curb, to be caught by a soft hand.

"Gus! I don't believe you ran out there when you can't even see the silly curb. I had no idea you were that blind."

"You told me it was okay, and besides, I can hear. You didn't tell me about the curb, and besides, concrete doesn't emit any noise . . . from what I can tell."

As the woman tsk'ed and tugged him to the sidewalk, Gus whiffed patchouli oil that reminded him of hippie days, though she was too young to have lived through those. Retro-perfume, he guessed.

"Look at your glasses, Gus. Is that steam, or grease from your deep fry? No wonder you didn't see the curb. What were you shaking out there, anyway?"

"Just some peace-making herbs."

"Herbs. You're a prize ticket. If this weather from the Gulf gets any hotter they'll have to hire a crop-duster to keep peace in Lexington."

Gus scratched his balding head, feeling the scar from the German shrapnel he took in a hospital tent during the Bulge. Some doctor told him it must have ricocheted off a storage drawer or he'd be dead. Everybody else in the tent except him and a nurse was—dead, that is—so Gus had no reason to doubt. Had this same shrapnel started his eyesight's decline while prompting his hearing's ascent? Since neither Army nor VA chose to acknowledge a connection between the shrapnel and any worldly medical problem, he figured he'd never know.

Sweat trickled his cheeks. On the street, a police car's door slammed and cop boots scraped

blacktop. Over, under, and around, Gus heard the same off-key dither. Giving a sniff, he asked the young woman if she'd walk him to a nearby empty lot so he could listen to the sky. She'd eaten his rhubarb pie, so no matter how ridiculous his request, she'd agree: a pinch of cardamom assured that. Too much of the same, though, and Katie bar the door . . .

"Listen? To the sky? Taking my comment about crop-dusting seriously, Gus?"

"It might work, you know. Herbs are awfully powerful."

"You're tellin' me." The woman grabbed his elbow. As they walked, her fingertips conveyed a titillating bite of hard nails. "My ex-husband did nothing but smoke an herb from morning to night. So powerful that it kept him pasted to the couch in front of our TV twenty-two hours a day. The other two, he wallowed a block away with a teenage cheerleader while I'm working my overtime brains out with computers to pay bills."

"Not that kind of herb." Gus blinked at an elongated gray blur he took to be the sidewalk. When they reached the lot, he stared into the sky, which of course presented another blur, a very hot and irritating one roiling from the Gulf of Mexico, just like this woman and the weather folks said . . . *Wait.* Tilting an ear, he heard a terrible dull buzz. Astronomers at the university claimed stellar noise remained from the creation of the universe; well maybe this was a terran noise from the creation of hell. All the herbs, honey, and patchouli on the planet wouldn't work if its heat took hold. And when he sold his place he'd be moving right to the source of the whole mess, down to Mobile Bay on the Gulf of Mexico, to live with his son.

"Gus . . . Gus . . . what are you looking for?"

"Looking? Never. Nothing."

"Good, I was worried you'd spotted something weird like a cross in the sky, like that Roman Emperor, and maybe get converted, maybe stop cooking cows and serve wilted tofu."

"Not looking, listening. Didn't hear any crosses. Let's go back. By the way, you ever met Freddie Paxton? Handsome. Nice too. Finishing his Ph.D. in physics. Comes in like clockwork, like atomic clockwork he claims, at three o'clock every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. You two have a lot in common. He's been eating the other half of that rhubarb pie. I've only got so much rhubarb left, you know. Monday, Wednesday, Friday—three o'clock, on the electron dot. Can't you take a mid-afternoon break? What could the computer services department possibly have going on at three?"

"Gus, you old matchmaker, you."

Gus covertly dropped golden-red flecks of saffron onto her neckline. He hadn't managed to sprinkle Freddie yesterday, but tomorrow at three would keep fine, just dandy and fine.

Critical Essays

Poe's Pandemics: Mass Death in Gothic America

By Alan Brown

Poe's obsession with disease is a well-known fact. Generations of secondary and college students have been apprised of the effects that the deaths of all of the significant women in his life had on his work. Heroines like "Ligeia," "Annabel Lee," and "Morella succumb to an unnamed malady that cuts their lives tragically short in the very bloom of youth. In all of these works, the type of disease is unimportant. Poe's emphasis is on the heartache brought on by the women's untimely deaths. For years, most critics, teachers, and professors have assumed that the women died from the same disease that took his mother and his young wife. Indeed, "Eleanora" (1843) and "Annabel Lee" (1849) were undoubtedly influenced by his wife Virginia Clemm's prolonged bout with tuberculosis between 1842 and her death on January 30, 1847. Poe's intent in these works is clear: to work through his grief poetically and thereby elevate his beloved's suffering to high art. However, when a specific disease is identified by Poe, it almost always takes the form of an epidemic that claims thousands of lives. In the three short stories that deal with death on a large scale—"King Pest," "The Sphinx," and "The Masque of the Red Death"—Poe's purpose is entirely different from that found in his poetry..

The earliest of these three works—"King Pest"—was written in 1835, three years after the devastating cholera epidemic in New York City. However, this deal is set during a plague of a much earlier time period: what Poe refers to as "The chivalrous reign of Edward III" (720). The bubonic plague, also known as "The Black Death," cut a swath

across Europe in the 14th century, reaching over a third of its population. The plague first reached England in 1348. Victims of the lethal disease developed black swellings in the armpit and groin, as well as black blotches on the skin caused by internal bleeding.

This bizarre story takes place in the parish of St. Andrews, London. The central figures are two drunken sailors, Legs and Tarpaulin, who make a hasty exit from a bar called the Jolly Tar without paying. The comical duo are completely unfazed by the deserted streets as they stumble through the district that has been placed under a pest ban: "The city was in a great measure de-populated—and in those horrible regions, in the vicinity of the Thames, where, amid the dark, narrow, and filthy lanes and alleys, the Demon of Disease was supposed to have had his nativity, Awe, Terror, and Superstition were alone to be found stalking abroad" (721). They make their way to the undertaker shop owned by a their former shipmate, Will Wimble who they hope will share his wine with them. When they enter the tall building, the sailors are surprised to find six strange figures seated on coffin trestles at a table in the middle of the room. The leader of the group, who identifies himself as "King Pest," introduces the members of the assemblage as "'His Grace the Arch Duke Pet-Iferous'—'His Grace the Duke of Pest-Ilential'—'His Grace the Duke Tem-Pest'—and 'Her Serene Highness the Arch Duchess Ana-Pest'" (727). Each member of the party is drinking from a huge punch bowl on the table, using what appears to be a portion of a human skull as their drinking cup. The chandelier was a human skeleton suspended by one leg; the skull was illuminated by a piece of charcoal placed inside. King Pest the First, as he calls himself, corrects the sailors' misconception that they have entered a coffin shop: "This apartment, II say, is the Dais-Chamber of our Palace, devoted to the councils of our kingdom, and to other sacred and lofty purposes" (727). Unaccustomed to being in the

presence of royalty, Legs and Tarpaulin soon offend their guests and are condemned to drinking a gallon of Black Strap. Legs says that he is too full of wine to comply with the king's demand. Tarpaulin, however, boasts that he could drink enough for both of them. Angered by the duo's impudence, Queen Pest throws Tarupaulin into the huge punch bowl. Legs then pushes King Pest through a trap door and fights off the rest of the Pest family with bones taken from the chandelier. During the scuffle, the punch bowl is knocked off the table, and Tarpaulin spills out onto the floor. The sailors grab Queen Pest and the Arch Duchess of Ana-Pest and return to their ship.

"King Pest," which is one of Poe's most bizarre stories, is best described as a "grotesque," a type of 19th century tale in which, according to Poe scholar Daniel Hoffman, "the ratiocinative power leads not to the perception of ecstasy,, as in the tales of detection and exploration, but rather to the exposure of the idiocy of the monstrous world" (206). In Edward III's plague-stricken realm, the plague truly was the reigning king. Not even the monarchy was insulated from the ravages of the disease. Three of the kings children—his daughter, Joan, and two sons, Thomas and William—succumbed to the plague (Plaantagenet). Edward's military was so decimated by the outbreak that in 1375, he signed the Treaty of Bruges, leaving only the coastal towns of Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne in English hands (Britannia). One could even go so far as to say that the power of the bubonic plague trumped the power of the king himself, even in the political arena. The only people who dare challenge the authority of "King Pest," Poe seems to saying in his farcical tale, are fools, like Legs and Tarpaulin.

The second of the three plague tales, "Masque of the Red Death," was written in 1842. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, tuberculosis caused more deaths in

industrialized countries than any other disease. In fact, by the end of the 19th century, 70-80% percent of urban populations in Europe and North America were infected with tuberculosis. The disease was fatal in 80 percent of the individuals who contracted it (Contagion). Tuberculosis is a respiratory disease which begins at the top of one of the lungs and sometimes spreads to other parts of the body: "The initial symptoms of tuberculosis include fatigue, weight loss, fevers during the evening, and profuse sweating at night. In the later stages of the disease, the patient coughs up blood-stained sputum, which may be infectious. Pleurisy may develop as well. (*The World Book Medical Encyclopedia* 883).

Tuberculosis had a societal dimension as well. Commonly known as "consumption" and "the white death," tuberculosis seemed to affect the poor more often than the wealthy and females more than males in certain parts of the country, such as Concord, Massachusetts (Skocay). Because 40 percent of all of the deaths from tuberculosis were among the working classes, many public health officials believed that the disease was a sign of poverty (Contagion). This disparity between the classes may have inspired Poe to write "Masque of the Red Death," whose protagonist, Prince Prospero, attempts to escape the disease by isolating himself and his lofty friends within the confines of his castle, leaving the peasants to fend for themselves. Like tuberculosis, "The Red Death" has a connection with blood and night sweats: "Blood was its avatar and seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution The scarlet stains upon the body and especially upon the face of the victim, were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men" (269). Prospero and his fellow revelers fully intend to wait out the disease in the luxury of their surroundings. One night, Prospero holds a masquerade in the abbey's

seven colored rooms. Suddenly, as the ebony clock strikes midnight, a strange figure interrupts the gaiety. Dressed in a bloodstained robe, the intruder wears a mask resembling the visage of a corpse. The guests are, understandably, too paralyzed with fear to approach the uninvited guest. Outraged at the man's impudence, Prospero charges the robed figure with a raised dagger. When they reach the seventh room, the figure turns and faces his pursuer; Prospero drops dead on the instant. When Prospero's friends remove the figure's costume, they are shocked to find nothing underneath. One by one, the revelers fall to the floor, and "Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all" (273). Essentially, Poe is making the same point in this story as he did in "King Pest": that disease is the only true monarch.

In January 1842, the same year that "Masque of the Red Death" was written, Poe's young wife, Virginia, was singing at the piano when she started coughing up blood. Poe believed that the bleeding was caused by the rupture of a blood vessel; a more likely diagnosis holds that the girl's lungs had already been severely weakened by tuberculosis (Ackroyd 95). Poe may have been thinking of himself when he created the character of Prince Prospero, who also tried to downplay the seriousness of the disease. Like most poor families at the time, Poe was totally ill-prepared to treat his wife. According to one of Poe's neighbors, Virginia lay "in a narrow bed, in a tiny bedroom with a ceiling so low that her head almost touched it; here she suffered, hardly able to breathe" (Ackroyd 95). An acquaintance of Poe's wrote that he had become "oversensitive and irritable" and "quick as steel and flint" (Ackroyd 95). The anger, frustration, and helplessness that Poe experienced at this time in his life found expression in "Masque of the Red Death." His aristocratic pretensions were quite possibly irritated by the public's perception tuberculosis as a "poor

person's disease." Consequently, he may have written this serious version of "King Pest" as his way of reminding the high and mighty in America, many of whom were fans of his work, that they were just as vulnerable to the disease as members of the lower class.

"The Sphinx" is similar to the previous two tales in that it is set during the time of an actual plague: the 1832 cholera epidemic in New York City. The disease is triggered by a toxin produced by bacteria in the small victim. Cholera patients typically suffer from severe diarrhea and vomiting, loss of body fluids, and muscle cramps" (The World Book Medical Encyclopedia 194). Like the bubonic plague and tuberculosis, cholera outbreaks frequently occur in large cities where people live in close quarters The 1832 epidemic reached its peak in July, primarily in poor neighborhoods like the Five Points slum, where Irish Catholic immigrants and African-Americans lived in squalor (Wilford New York Times). On July 18, 1832, A. Addison described the epidemic written to Mr. and Mrs. Sanford Ferguson in Delaware County: "It is indeed a very solemn spectacle to see 7 and 8 and sometimes 9 coffins thrown into the poor house hearse at one time to be buried. Las week, four persons died in one family on the corner of Grand and Crosby street, within two days of each other; three lay a corpse and were buried at the same time….The cholera! The cholera! It is the common and almost the only topic of conversation. O, that fear might lead the wicked inhabitants of this city to humble and unfeigned repentance, for, and forsaking of, their sins" (Daily Life in Antebellum New York). By the time the disease had run its course, 3,615 people lay dead out of a population of 250,000 (Wilford New York Times).

"The Sphinx" takes place on a sultry July day in 1832. The narrator reads a newspaper documenting the suffering of the inhabitants of the city from the safety of his relative's cottage on the banks of the Hudson River north of New York. His obsession with

the epidemic casts him into the depths of depression: "The very air from the South seemed to us redolent with death. That palsying thought, indeed, took entire possession of my soul. I could neither speak, think nor dream of anything else" (471). His well-meaning host, who was of a "less excitable temperament" (471), tries in vain to cheer him up. One day during his two-week visit, the narrator is reading a book near a window overlooking a scenic view of the Hudson River. Despite the narrator's attempt to lose himself in his reading, his attention is still focused on the cholera epidemic. He glances up from his book and is horrified by the sight of a creature larger than a ship in the hills: "The mouth of the animal was situated at the extremity of a proboscis some sixty or seventy feet in length and about as thick as the body of an ordinary elephant. Near the root of this trunk was an immense quality of black shaggy hair….The trunk was fashioned like a wedge with the apex to the ear: From it there were outspread two pairs of wings….But the chief peculiarity of this horrible thing was the representation of a Death's Head, which covered nearly the whole surface of its breast…" (472). He fears that the monster has come to take his life, just as the disease had done to so many people in New York City. A few days later, the narrator is sitting in the same room from which head seen the horrible beast. Gazing once again through the window, he sees the same creature climbing a hill. He reports the sighting to his relative, who sees nothing. He then reads from a passage from a book on Natural History describing a peculiar species of moth : "The "Death's-headed Sphinx has occasioned much terror among the vulgar, at times, by the melancholy kind of cry which it utters, and the insignia of death which it wears upon its corset" (474). The narrator realizes that he had actually witnessed the moth wriggling its way up a spider web outside of the window, approximately one inch from the pupil of his eye.

In "King Pest" and "Masque of the Red Death," Poe is making the same point: that disease is the great equalizer, bringing the highest and the lowest in society to their knees. This well-known fact makes disease even more terrifying because it underscores the helplessness of even the most powerful among us to combat disease. "The Sphinx" differs from these tales in that it deals exclusively with the irrational qualities of fear, which Poe himself was undoubtedly experiencing as Virginia entered the final year of her life. Speaking of Virginia's escalating illness, Poe wrote, "At each accession of the disorder I loved her more dearly and clung to her life with more desperate pertinacity" " (Ackroyd 96). It is a more personalized story, focusing on a single individual's struggles against paranoia, much the same way Poe worried about Virginia. This psychological disorder is, in Poe's mind, another serious by-product of disease. It has the power to cause highly imaginative people, like the narrator of "The Sphinx" and Poe himself, an inordinate amount of stress. In a letter written in 1846, the year before Virginia Poe died of tuberculosis, Mrs. Gove–Nichols from new York recalled seeing her lying on a straw bed, "wrapped in her husband's greatcoat, with a large tortoise shell cat in her bosom….The coat and the cat were the sufferer's only means of warmth, except as her husband held her hands and her mother her feet" (Ackroyd 154). While Virginia was losing her battle with tuberculosis, Poe was fighting a losing battle trying to resurrect his flagging career and secure the funds to save his young wife.

The Sphinx" has often been categorized as an arabesque, which Daniel Hoffman defines as am

exploration of extreme psychological states—the narrators or chief characters are often madmen, or persons who undergo some excruciating suffering of the soul" (206). In order

to raise his protagonist to this heightened emotional state, Poe chooses an insect whose name alludes to one of the most terrifying monsters in Greek mythology—the Sphinx—which has the haunches of a lion, sometimes with the wings of a great bird, and the face of a human being, usually a woman. In Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex*, she tormented Thebes with her riddle, killing those who could not solve it (Kallic). Poe was undoubtedly counting on his readers, who also would have had highly-developed imaginations, to catch the reference and to experience the same level of terror that the narrator feels as he gives his detailed description of the beast. Thus, Poe is trying to re-create for the reader that same sense of fear that anyone living in a plague-stricken city would have felt.

Many critics have described "The Sphinx" as a type of farce, which "tricks" the reader into becoming just as frightened as the narrator obviously is. Indeed, the narrator's host seems to delight in exposing the narrator's rather silly reaction to what is nothing more than a harmless moth. One wonders if Poe was attempting to use humor to temper the panic that he and others had experienced when facing the imminent death of a loved one. After all, Poe had already taken a rather humorous, albeit satirical, look at plagues in "King Pest," and, to a certain extent, "The Masque of the Red Death." Human beings, Poe seems to be saying in these stories, are as much victims of their own fancies during epidemics as they are by viruses and bacteria. In other words, fear can be just as harmful to the psyche as diseases are to the body. For most of the 19th century, Poe and his contemporaries lived in a world where, as Poe says in "King Pest," "pest spirits, plague goblins, and fever demons were the popular imps of mischief "(722).

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Coventry Patmore's Critiques of American Writers and Writing

By Benjamin F. Fisher

At present Coventry Patmore is known, if he *is* known, as the author of that best-seller Victorian verse novel, *The Angel in the House*. Probably much better known is Virginia Woolf's desire to murder the Angel in the House, i. e., to obliterate from her own and other women's psyches the long cherished ideal of the utterly submissive Victorian wife and mother, from whose shadow Woolf felt that she had to escape.[1] Besides being a fringe figure among the English Pre-Raphaelite poets and painters, Patmore was an active magazine journalist whose work for periodicals extended from the 1840s to his death in 1896. His interests encompassed literary criticism, architectural, and agricultural-environmental concerns, and his publications ranged over all these topics. Long ago, Paull F. Baum offered a brief assessment of Patmore's literary criticism, though Baum included no extended comment about Patmore's ideas and published critiques on American writers.[2] Here I hope to amplify our awareness of Patmore's opinions concerning several American authors of his time.

Patmore published two long articles in 1852 and 1853, respectively focused on American poets and American fiction writers. He also published several essays about Emerson, one on Whitman, another on Margaret Fuller. Patmore's essays concerning Emerson may be of particular interest because of the Englishman's changing attitudes toward the American's ideas, and because he published more about Emerson than he did

about any other American writer. These essays on Emerson were published during the fifty-one years, from 1846 to 1887. That Patmore published more about Emerson than any other American author may reflect not solely subjective impulses; in England throughout the nineteenth century Emerson was "pretty generally regarded in the better critical circles as the outstanding writer of America, but Hawthorne was proclaimed the leading artist" (Gohdes 139). Early on Patmore shared Emerson's enthusiasm for Plato, as well as Emerson's conception of the poet as seer. (Gosse 35ff.) Patmore's enthusiasm sounds undeniably, though he also expressed some mixed feelings, in a letter to his friend, H. S. Sutton, 15 February 1847:

"I am a lover of 'Ralph Emerson.' I have read all his 'Essays' at least three times over—and yet I have written and published a long and somewhat elaborate review of his works from which a careless reader would concluded that I was rather a hater of him. Loving him so much, I am quite enraged with him that he will not let me love him more. He is very inconsistent, which a *very* great man never is. I think he lacks the quality of reverence, that he has the power of rising into the 'ocular air of heaven,' but by leaps, and not by wings: I dislike much of his language for I think that it shows a want of profound and practical sincerity: : I don't think he understands true Christian humility or repentance: the peace of God which passeth all understanding is not, I fear, an abiding guest with him … my other quarrels with Emerson are declared in my article upon him" (Champneys 2:142). Because of his own religious shift, from high Anglican origins into devout, and at times mystical, Roman Catholicism, Patmore came to deplore Emerson's views on Christianity. (Reid 39-43)[3] Thus Patmore's late remarks about Emerson are less than complimentary, and

that, despite the men's meeting in person and developing a warm friendship years previously, when Emerson visited England.

Patmore's choices among American writers and writings of his day are interesting, on the one hand, because several of his critiques address authors whose writings were in that era startling in theme and form, and, on the other, because of his at times uncomplimentary viewpoints expressed toward those very works and their creators. Emerson, as I remarked, ultimately came to be Patmore's whipping boy, so let us now turn to the Englishman's critiques of the American Transcendentalist.

The first such published take on Emerson appeared in Patmore's review of *Essays, Second Series* (American edition,1844; published in London by J. Chapman, 1845), in *Lowe's Edinburgh Magazine*, for February 1846. There, Patmore commended Emerson's idealism. He also quite sympathetically credited Emerson as a philosopher, poet, and seer, who "deals only with the true and the eternal His piercing gaze at once shoots swiftly, surely through the outward and the superficial, to the inmost causes and workings." Patmore went on to refute readers who find philosophic writings obscure: "Emerson and other philosophers do not write to save thinking … They write to stimulate the active powers of the soul, and do not intend to trot round the intellect they seek to instruct, in a ready-made ring of ideas" (*Lowe's* 185). Patmore heightened his commendation for Emerson's book by quoting Hemyng and Condel's accolade for Shakespeare, "the great poet of Nature," in their "Preface" to their edition of the First Folio of his plays:

"Reade him, therefore; and againe, and againe: And if then you doe not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger, not to understand him."—high praise, indeed, this pairing, for the American writer. Moreover, Patmore enthusiastically encouraged his

fiancée, Emily Augusta Andrews, to read Emerson (Champneys I 129). Emily Andrews may have needed little encouragement from Patmore, because she was at that time, according to an early biographer of Patmore, "a transcendentalist; their views about Emerson were identical; on both sides the attraction seems to have been instant and complete" (Gosse 37).

When Emerson visited England during 1847-48, he met Patmore, and the two quickly became good friends, though that friendship waned in later years. Even early on, however, Emerson's attitude toward the Christian religion did not meet with Patmore's unmitigated approval, and those differences came to color Patmore's reactions to Emerson's ideas and works. Although he protested that he loved Emerson personally, and that he relished his writings, he could not agree with him on matters of Christianity. In an 1848 letter to H. S. Sutton, Patmore wrote: "I am so bigoted that I seem to be sensible of a hungry vacuum whenever I do not find views of Christianity in some respects corresponding with my own." As late as 1858, though, Emerson was still corresponding with Patmore as a great friend (Champneys 2 160, 382-328)

By the 1880s, after Emerson's death, Patmore's outlook had taken a decidedly disapproving turn, as is evident, for example, in his statement: "Emerson, though a good man—that is, one who lived up to his lights—had little or no conscience." In these same years, in another review, Patmore sideswiped Arthur Hugh Clough for being "curiously attracted to Emerson, of whom he spoke as the only great contemporary American. Now Emerson, at his very best, never approached greatness. He was at his highest only a brilliant metaphysical epigrammatist." Patmore reiterated his charge that Emerson's overriding flaw was his lack of genuine religion, that is, that Emerson's philosophical outlook lacked the

dogma that Patmore found and approved in Roman Catholic doctrine (*Principle in Art* 117, 109).[5]

Patmore's ultimate distancing himself from Emerson was not a unique experience for him. His biographer, Gosse, details how Patmore distanced himself from Tennyson and D. G. Rossetti, who had at one time been his close friends (Gosse 205-207). Among Americans connected in some way with Emerson, Patmore published negative critiques of Margaret Fuller and Walt Whitman. Reviewing *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*, Patmore characterized Fuller as one who attempted to foreground eloquence instead of intellectual substance, commenting that her abilities as a thinker and writer remained minimal because she also attempted to assume powers and roles that were traditionally those of males, all the while retaining the characteristics and emotions of a woman (Patmore *Ossoli* 231-237).[6] Understandably, such elements would not appeal to the author of *The Angel in the House*. Patmore's presentation here is ironic, though unwittingly so, because of the androgynous concepts in his later long poem *The Unknown Eros*.

As for Whitman, for whose writing he had no sympathy whatsoever, Patmore, reviewing in the *St. James's Gazette* Ernest Rhys's edition of Whitman's poems, dismisses, in no-nonsense terms, the American's efforts: "To most men his verses must read like exceedingly gawky and pretentious prose, cut up into paragraphs about as long as those of an ordinary modern French novel." Likewise, the claims in the introduction that Whitman's shoulders bear "the weight of mightiest democracies"--as if that situation promotes "nothing insignificant in connection with such a subject," and that consequently he produced great poetry-- are likewise dismissed as inconsequential, with the implication that such qualities do not at all make outstanding literary art. Considering that Patmore

published an essay on metrical law, in which free verse was not deemed worthwhile, his deprecation of Whitman's verse is consistent with his conception of the poetic.

Finally, because most people who have listened to or have read any of my lucubrations on literary matters could not imagine that I would miss a chance to expatiate about Edgar Allan Poe, they will not be disappointed by my now focusing on his work as part of Patmore's attention to American writers and writings. Patmore's handling of Poe material may, however, be another matter. First, in a lengthy review of recent American poetry, the header indicates that James Hannay's edition of Poe's *Poems*, published in London in 1852, will be assessed. Following assessments that do no favors for Longfellow, whom he characterized after reading *The Song of Hiawatha* as "Long-winded-fellow" (Champneys 2: 182),[7] nor to Thomas Buchanan Read, but that praise Bryant as the "Rogers of America"--adding "Probably … 'Thanatopsis' is the most finished piece of verse which has proceeded from the American press" --Patmore ultimately focuses on Poe.

"Edgar Poe is more generally known among us for his prose than for his poetry, of which he has written very little. He has produced one poem which will be remembered and read when nine-tenths of the popular poets of the day shall be forgotten.

Our readers will thank us for adorning our pages with this piece, which is called 'The Raven,' in its integrity. " The text follows, then Patmore concludes that the poem has

> … unquestionable merit. It exhibits a truly extraordinary mastery over most of the difficulties of verse. The power of rhyme … has not been surpassed or even equaled in our time, except by the late Thomas Hood. The metre is, in the abstract, a very fine one; like all very fine metres, its movement once heard can never be forgotten; and it has the additional merit of being perfectly adapted to the subject; the cadences

> at the end of each stanza is, by itself, expressive of the calm and settled, and almost careless sorrow conveyed by the words. The phraseology is extremely colloquial, without being at all undignified, and the prevailing sentiment, though deeply mournful, and verging upon despair, is never unmanly in its tone.

In another article by Patmore, "American Novels," in the *North British Review* for November 1853, we find Poe's *Tales*, published in London in 1845, listed among the books to be noticed. As we turn pages, though, we seek in vain for commentary upon that book. This omission is ironic because Patmore "considered Poe the greatest American writer of his era" (Rossetti 236). Moreover, Patmore in this same essay also expressed great admiration and sympathy for Hawthorne's novels, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The House of Seven Gables*, and *The Blithedale Romance*, commenting that these novels are

> the most forcible in the imaginative line that America has yet produced … With all his rigid adherence to his point, there is, however, no sense of hardness, difficulty, and confinement in his style. His language, though for an American extraordinarily accurate, is always light and free; his illustrations and incidents, though often startlingly odd, and, for the moment, apparently unrelated, have never the air of being far-fetched, but seem rather to be the best possible for the occasion; and the narrative, though curiously elaborated, is so well contrasted and proportioned in its several parts, that it makes, when we have finished, an impression full of simplicity and totality. His tales always deserve a double reading, one for the story and one for the art, which is so complete that it is scarcely possible to comprehend all its bearings on the first perusal, though that which we do comprehend on the first perusal is of itself entirely satisfactory and sufficient (83-84).

Interestingly, in the late 1850s Hawthorne and his wife were as generous in their praise for Patmore's verse that eventually became part of *The Angel in the House.* (Champneys 1: 97-99)

Because Poe and Hawthorne share many affinities, I thought that my comments on Poe, along with Patmore's on both writers, would round out this essay by focusing on works for which Patmore offered positive thoughts, and acute critical awareness, which continue to resonate in studies of these two writers, unlike his less sympathetic responses to several other American authors of his day. Given that Patmore was an astute, though often judicial, critic, and because his opinions regarding American literary topics and authors may now be seen as worthy contributions to transatlantic studies, I felt impelled to shed light on the Englishman's criticism of American writers whose work attracted his attention.

Notes

1 Woolf may have been surprised to learn—we have no evidence of her having acquired such knowledge—that some of Patmore's earliest poems ran to lurid Gothic themes. See my "Supernaturalism in Patmore's Poems," *VP*, 34.4 (1996): 544-557. That anniversary issue commemorating the centenary anniversary of Patmore's death includes essays that attest the breadth of his interests and accomplishments. See also Woolf, *The Death of the Moth and other Essays.* NY: Harcourt, Brace, 1942. She apparently also didn't know, or she ignored, Patmore's statement, made long after *The Angel in the House* was published: "Woman is the sum and complex of all nature, and is the *visible glory* of God," in *The Rod, the Root and the Flower*. London: George Bell and Sons, 1895. See also J. C. Reid, *The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul; New York: Macmillan, 1957: 42-43, who notes that Patmore relinquished his early enthusiasm for Plato, thus negating that philosopher's low opinion of woman's spiritual makeup.

2 See also Edmund Gosse: 33-35, for comments that emphasize Patmore's publishing much prose between 1845 and 1847, and for his attention to Emerson.

3 J. C. Reid, *The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957; New York: Macmillan, 1957: 39-43.

4 "Essays: *Second Series*. By R.W.Emerson. J. Chapman." *Lowe's Edinburgh Magazine* (February 1845): 184-187.

5 This essay appeared originally as a review, "Cabot's Life of Emerson," *St. James's Gazette* 19 November 1887: 7.

6 On Patmore and the sexual principle within artists, see Reid: 192.

7 *American Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*. New York: Columbia UP, 1944.

Gohdes devoted an entire chapter to British reception of Longfellow,which was generally favorable, though Patmore strongly dissented from praising Longfellow's verse.

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"She won't let me do things": Controlling Wives in Steinbeck's Fiction

By John J. Han

Introduction

Much critical attention has been paid to controlling husbands in Steinbeck's fiction, such as Henry in "The Chrysanthemum," Jim Moore in "The Murder," and Curley in *Of Mice and Men*. Other studies have discussed the ways in which initially passive women assert their voices in Steinbeck's stories. In *The Indestructible Woman in Faulkner, Hemingway, and Steinbeck* (1986), for instance, Mimi Reisel Gladstein finds various "indestructible women who are active and assertive" in Steinbeck's fiction (80). According to Gladstein, Ma Joad in *The Grapes of Wrath* is "the embodiment of the myth of the pioneer woman, the symbol for positive motherhood, and the earth goddess incarnate," Rose of Sharon becomes "ready to take her place beside Ma as a pillar of the family" at the end of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and Juana in *The Pearl* is "the Great Mother, always on guard to protect her own" (77, 81, 87). In a recently published book *On Reading "The Grapes of Wrath,"* Susan Shillinglaw also characterizes Ma Joad as someone who embodies "domestic chivalry" and Rose of Sharon as someone who "treads the hero's way" (68, 71). In another book, *A Journey into Steinbeck's California* (2011), Shillinglaw cautions, "Although [Steinbeck's] fictional women may be 'warped' into stereotypical roles, their status says more about social mores than about authorial inclination" (23).

However, not much has been written about controlling wives in Steinbeck's fiction. Far from passive, some of his female characters are psychological manipulators who abuse men both verbally and emotionally. This essay is to demonstrate that, despite his sympathetic

representation of oppressed women, Steinbeck provides a fair number of female characters who control men in varying degrees in his fiction. His short stories "The White Quail" (1935) and "The Harness" (1938)—both of which are included in *The Long Valley* (1938)—and his epic novel *East of Eden* (1952) offer good examples of controlling women in the Steinbeckian world. This essay reads those stories fundamentally as naturalistic fiction in which the author draws interesting character sketches as a keen observer of human reality. As part of the discussion, we will turn to psychotherapy for insights into controlling women and to Steinbeck's life experiences to understand what possibly motivated him to include such characters.

So Sweet, So Torturous: "The White Quail"

In "The White Quail," the main character, Mary Teller, refuses to sleep with her adoring husband, Harry E. Teller. Instead, she devotes herself to her meticulously maintained garden and the white quail in it. Unable to endure the emotional torture from Mary, Harry ends up killing the quail, which seemingly takes her attention away from him. Mary's emotional—and sexual—neglect of Harry leads him to kill an innocent bird, yet he does not know that removing the bird will not change the dynamics of their marriage. All he does is release his frustration in a destructive way.

Early in the story, we learn that Mary is a very attractive woman who stole Harry's heart before marriage. Her preoccupation with gardening seemed peculiar to him, yet it did not prevent him from courting her; she was too attractive not to pursue. On her part, she was interested in marrying someone who would promise to make a garden for her, not someone to

have an intimate relationship with. As he constantly praised her beauty and promised to create a garden for her, she became somewhat responsive to his advances, allowing him to kiss her—that is, rewarding him for good behavior. When he said, "You're so pretty. You make me kind of—hungry," she displayed "[a] little expression of annoyance" before she "let him kiss her again, and then sent him home […]" (Steinbeck, *Long Valley* 15). Thus, her control over Harry began before their marriage in the form of controlled sexual intimacy.

After the wedding, Harry's heart for Mary remains unchanged, and he patiently waits for a time to be intimate with her. However, their married life is in name only for Harry, because she refuses sex by locking him out of her room. The following scene shows how she tortures him emotionally:

> After she was in bed in her own little bedroom she heard a faint click and saw the door knob turn, and then turn slowly back. The door was locked. It was a signal; there were things Mary didn't like to talk about. The lock was an answer to a question, a clean, quick, decisive answer. It was peculiar about Harry, though. He always tried the door silently. It seemed as though he didn't want her to know he had tried it. But she always did know. He was sweet and gentle. It seemed to make him ashamed when he turned the knob and found the door locked. (Steinbeck, *Long Valley* 21)

Psychologically, the act of locking the door symbolizes the act of locking herself. Although Harry initially takes her behavior kindly, he becomes frustrated with her snubs, which culminates in his killing of the white quail.

In his introduction to Steinbeck's *The Long Valley*, John H. Timmerman comments that female characters in "The Chrysanthemums" and "The White Quail" toil in the garden to "find

themselves outside the established norms," and those characters "call into question values we hold too readily and often too thoughtlessly. Steinbeck's social conscience emerges powerfully in these stories" (xx-xxi). Perhaps this comment is valid when it is applied to women's right to define themselves, but Steinbeck might have been equally interested in presenting the emotional pain wife inflicts on husband. As a man of flesh and blood, Steinbeck might have been able to understand Harry's distress. Steinbeck's 1934 letter to George Albee includes his own sexual needs as follows:

> In fact as an organism I am so simple that I want to be comfortable and comfort consists in—a place to sleep, dry and fairly soft, lack of hunger, almost any kind of food, occasional loss of semen in intercourse when it becomes troublesome, and a good deal of work. These constitute my ends. You see it is a description of a stupid slothful animal. (Steinbeck and Wallsten 87)

According to psychotherapist Tina B. Tessina, a sexless marriage can result from several reasons, one of which is the neglect of a partner. Withholding sex in a "loving" relationship is a form of emotional abuse. Alongside angry withdrawal and conflict avoidance, intimacy avoidance is a way to withdraw from intimacy (Tessina 52). According to Tessina,

> Sex is a vital part of a lasting relationship. It takes some effort to keep a sexual relationship satisfying over the long haul, even if you begin with a solid sexual connection. If, after marriage, you don't seem to be compatible sexually, or your ideas about appropriate sexuality and frequency are at odds, those differences can become a big problem in maintaining your long-term relationship. (59-60)

Unmet sexual needs can create in a husband a sense of rejection and low self-esteem. Unfortunately, violence is a way for some men to express their out-of-control emotions or to retaliate against someone who hurts them. In the case of domestic violence, batterers tend to "have difficulty expressing themselves, their feelings, and their needs within a relationship" ("Causes"). In "The White Quail," Harry tries his best to be a loving and accommodating husband to Mary until he snaps.[1]

Strict Wife in Charge: "The Harness"

In "The White Quail," wife controls husband by refusing to have sex; Mary's way of spousal control is quiet and subtle. In contrast, "The Harness" portrays the lingering impact of a dominant wife even after her death. As the story opens, we learn that Peter Randall has lost his constantly ill wife, Emma, with whom he maintained a respectable farm life in Monterey County, California. In the evening, Ed Chappell, his neighbor, comes to keep him company. The mourning husband's sorrow is so profound that he needs morphine. When he finally wakes up from sedation, he reveals the shocking secrets of life with his now-deceased wife: Emma was a dominant wife who made the rules for him, and he submitted to her authority.

Before Emma's death, Peter was known for being proper in appearance and speech despite a hint of aggressiveness within him:

> He was nearing fifty; his manner was grave and restrained, and he wore a carefully tended beard. […] People knew there was force in him, but force held caged. Sometimes, for no apparent reason, his eyes grew sullen and mean, like

> the eyes of a bad dog; but that look soon passed, and the restraint and probity came back into his face. (Steinbeck, *Long Valley* 77)

It turns out that Emma literally caged her husband by forcing him to wear a shoulder harness over his underwear so that he would look fit in public. He does not remember how he began to be submissive, but he somehow could not do anything about her domination which he actually hated. He confesses to Ed, "She didn't seem to boss me, but she always made me do things. […] When she was alive, even when she was sick, I had to do things she wanted, but just the minute she died, it was—why like that harness coming off! I couldn't stand it" (Steinbeck, *Long Valley* 82-83). In marital relationships, one partner's passivity can contribute to the other partner's domination. Changing the dysfunctional dynamic creates chaos, so the one who is controlled sometimes endures domination, thereby participating in the dominant partner's bullying activities. During their marriage, Peter released his frustrations by going to San Francisco for a week every year to indulge himself in alcohol and sex; his wife apparently understood that he needed a yearly outlet for his pent-up pain from emotional and sexual needs. As soon as he returned from those trips, she "worked [hard] on [his] conscience" (Steinbeck, *Long Valley* 83).

After the death of his wife, Peter finally looks liberated from a female-led marriage; he no longer wears the shoulder harness. However, the emotional damage she inflicted on him never disappears. He always wanted to plant sweet peas on his farm, but he is concerned that his now-deceased wife would not approve of it: "He said he hadn't decided yet what to plant, but he said it in such a guilty way that it was plain he didn't intend to tell." He confesses to Emma's ever-present influence on him this way: "She didn't die dead. She won't let me do things. She's worried me all year about those peas. I don't know how she does" (Steinbeck, *Long Valley* 86-87, 91). Thus, against his will, Peter maintains invisible loyalty to Emma even after her passing.

He also cannot break the habit of visiting San Francisco's "fancy houses" once a year (Steinbeck, *Long Valley* 92).

Peter is an example of a domesticated man who has inner aggressiveness but has learned to control it; he may hold grudges but obeys his bossy wife, as a well-trained dog does. Resources on how to train a man are readily available today. Karen Salmansohn's book *How to Make Your Man Behave in 21 Days or Less Using the Secrets of Professional Dog Trainers* (1994), for instance, provides "dog/man psychology tips"; her basic premise is that "once you understand how an animal thinks, the better you can communicate with him and the more responsive he'll be to your commands" (93). Many websites also provide collegial advice on how wives can subjugate their husbands.[1] All of these materials typically suggest Pavlovian methods used in dog training: make it clear who the boss is, teach how to listen to simple commands, provide positive reinforcement, use the strategy of luring and baiting, and convey the message that rebellious behavior will be followed by punishment. These resource materials are designed to help wives, especially young wives, gain control over their husbands by rewarding a good behavior and punishing a bad behavior. Once husbands become conditioned to respond to a command in a way that is beneficial to them, they have difficulty escaping spousal control.

Charm and Chain: *East of Eden*

Emma in "The Harness" controls her husband mainly for the appearance of respectability. She also thinks she has better ideas than her husband, no matter how unreasonable they sound. In contrast, there is no redeeming quality in Cathy Ames, a calculating

seductress in *East of Eden*. She is an evil woman who uses her sex appeal to control and then ruin men. Despite being a cardboard character, Cathy still embodies an exploitative woman who knows how to dominate men. She is comparable to the Salinas Valley, which Steinbeck once described as "a woman capable of great evil" (qtd. in Fensch 51).

From childhood, Cathy exhibits an extraordinary ability to use her feminine wiles for personal gain: "At ten Cathy knew something of the power of the sex impulse and began coldly to experiment with it. She planned everything coldly, foreseeing difficulties and preparing for them" (Steinbeck, *East* 86). Born a beautiful girl, she initiates a sexual play with two boys in a carriage house. When her mother discovers it, she blames the boys, who are then severely whipped by their respective fathers. In high school, she seduces James Grew, her Latin teacher, leading him to commit suicide. Her next victim is Mr. Edwards, a Boston whoremaster. She entices him, secures a comfortable life as his mistress, and then asserts her dominance over him. For a short period of time, he feels powerless, but he realizes that he cannot allow her to control him. One day, he takes her to the countryside and beats her up until she almost dies; she failed to understand that, although he was "hopelessly, miserably in love" with her, he was also "as coldblooded a whoremaster as ever lived" (Steinbeck, *East* 107).

Cathy is rescued by Adam Trask, a naïve young farmer, who tends to her injuries. Quickly recognizing his susceptibility to seduction, she charms Adam and then marries him. In Chapter 11, Steinbeck describes her thoughts this way:

> She had not only made up her mind to marry Adam but she had so decided before he had asked her. She was afraid. She needed protection and money. Adam could give her both. And she could control him—she knew that. She did not want to be married, but for the time being it was a refuge. Only one thing

> bothered her. Adam had a warmth toward her which she did not understand since she had none toward him, nor had ever experienced it toward anyone. And Mr. Edwards had really frightened her. That had been the only time in her life she had lost control of a situation. She determined never to let it happen again. (Steinbeck, *East* 138)

Although she needs "protection and money," she is not a victim of society; rather, she is a social parasite. When she no longer needs Adam's assistance, she repays her debt of gratitude by shooting him in the shoulder and then leaving him.

In his book, *In Sheep's Clothing: Understanding and Dealing with Manipulative People* (1996), clinical psychologist George K. Simon, Jr., explains that psychologically manipulative people tend to conceal aggressive intentions, size up the victim to determine which tactics will be most effective, and harm the victim relentlessly; they are "the subtly underhanded, back-stabbing, deceptive and conniving individuals" who can make the lives of their victims miserable (viii). Cathy Ames fits the profile of a person of covert aggression: she analyzes her victim well, dominates him relentlessly, and feels no sense of guilt from her cruel actions.

Conclusion

Some Steinbeck critics call him a feminist, many others call him a misogynist, but logically speaking, he cannot be both. He sometimes portrays suffering women; other times, he portrays suffering men. His stories about spousal abuse do not show that he necessarily sides with either husband or wife. Having lived among migrant workers and social outcasts, Steinbeck

writes sympathetically about poor, lonely, and ostracized people whether they are male or female. In addition to being a romanticist,[2] Steinbeck is a writer of psychological realism who delves into the recesses of the human heart. He writes what he sees in life without embellishment. Some of what he writes may seem implausible, yet, as he often said, all of the characters in his fiction were based on someone he had encountered or heard about in his life. Although he did write sociological novels, such as *In Dubious Battle*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *The Grapes of Wrath*, he was fundamentally a nonteleological thinker—someone who does not believe that nature has an ultimate purpose and design. Influenced by the marine ecologist Ed Ricketts, he did not believe in writing fiction to advance a cause.

In Steinbeck's fiction, some female characters, such as Ma Joad and Rose of Sharon, are positively portrayed, while others, such as Cathy Ames, are negatively portrayed. His mixed views of women may have come from his personal life—especially his loving but domineering mother and Gwyn Conger, his second wife who likely served as a model for Cathy Ames in *East of Eden*. While his mother, Olive Hamilton Steinbeck, nurtured his artistic imagination, she was also the dominant figure for him, and he "rebelled at the pressure and fled a home life" (Railsback and Meyer, "Steinbeck, Olive Hamilton" 357). Steinbeck's rocky marriage to and his resentment toward Gwyn Conger are well-documented. Resenting Steinbeck's decision to work as a war correspondent in Europe during World War II, leaving her lonely, Gwyn Conger refused to write him back for weeks, and she lied to him, saying that she was pregnant with his child (Railsback and Meyer, "Steinbeck, Gwendolyn (Gwyn) Conger" 352-53). Steinbeck biographer Jay Parini comments, "Cathy seems to embody evil almost arbitrarily, much as Gwyn now did in Steinbeck's mind. She is the sinful wife who cannot curb her sexual instincts" (364). Considering that *East of Eden* was written after his rancorous divorce from Gwyn, Parini sounds

convincing. Biographical criticism does not always produce the most informed explication of a text, but in the case of Steinbeck, his life gives us some clues about the controlling women in his fiction. [3]

Notes

[1] Web articles include Carolyn Bushong's "How to Train Your Man," Francesca Di Meglio's "How to Train Your Husband," and Lisa Hayes's "How Training a Man and Training a Puppy Aren't That Different."

[2] For a discussion of Steinbeck as a romanticist, see my essay "Steinbeck's Romantic Vision of Life in *Travels with Charley in Search of America*" (*Steinbeck Studies* 32 [May 2009]: 21-37).

[3] I thank my colleague C. Clark Triplett for offering me insightful comments on an earlier version of this paper from the perspective of a marriage and family therapist.

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Guideposts to Exploring Darkness in Barbara Brown Taylor's *Learning to Walk in the Dark*

By Uju Ifeanyi

The typical narrative, in both Christian and secular worlds, shows a consistent pattern of societal disdain for darkness and all that it embodies. Studies have shown that we have been programmed, from early childhood, to associate light with the wonderful things that happen to us while bad experiences are attributed to darkness. Since darkness is a realistic part of life, literally and figuratively, ignoring it disregards an important part of daily realities. Taylor defies conventional wisdom that all we need is the light which exemplifies the positive aspects of life. She contends that we also need darkness despite the negative implications often associated with it. While the author acknowledges the importance of what she calls the "solar" component of daily existence, she maintains that it must be balanced with the "lunar" and not be placed in direct opposition to it. In *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, Taylor makes a compelling case that there might be valuable life lessons that darkness offers anyone courageous enough to defy conventional wisdom and venture into its dazzling world of wonder. This paper identifies some of the steps prospective walkers might take in their exploration of the often dreaded world of darkness where treasures, only seen in the dark, can be found.

Taylor describes darkness as a place of unknowing where we may be prone to danger

but may also find ourselves closer to divine revelation and transformation. The author acknowledges that, "Fear is the main thing. Almost everyone is afraid of being afraid. Beyond that, no one's list is exactly like anyone else's" (4). Unfortunately, the general public does not have a long list of notable recommended readings on the positive aspects of dark emotions. So, she suggests that we welcome opportunities that allow darkness to teach us what we may not ordinarily know. The reader is presented with what she describes as a "spiritual skill some of us could use right now" and offers steps to help prospective walkers experience life fully with a reasonably balanced dose of "dark" and "light." Nonetheless, she cautions that walking in the dark should not be rushed even though some might be in desperate need to achieve their ultimate goals. In her conversation with Oprah on *Super Soul Sunday*, she indicates that she is reluctant to view life as a train ride because it makes one think about destinations with little or no consideration for the process itself. Navigating life's experiences is meaningful only when we enjoy the actual walk and interact with the people we meet along the way. In her depiction of train and sailboat rides as metaphors for life, she says:

> I think we'd like life to be a train. And you get on and pick a destination and get off. And it turns out to be a sailboat. And everyday, you have to see where the wind is and check the currents and see if there's anybody else on the boat you can help out. But it is a sailboat ride. And the weather changes, and the currents change, and the wind changes. It's not a train ride. (OWN Episode 3)

Obviously, there is a chance that the seas will be up for smooth sailing on any given day. But it is also a real possibility that unpredictable stormy weather might disrupt the smooth

sailing of the boat. Even when the latter is the case she advises all travelers on life's long journey to enjoy the trip because the stormy aspects of life only add depth to the intricate details of the stories told afterwards. All experiences, dark or otherwise, give us ample opportunities to recognize and hopefully understand the multifaceted realities of our humanity.

Another guidepost suggests that we must embrace darkness with open minds and let go of the negative connotations they supposedly evoke. Even though some of us have been taught early in life to dismiss negative and sad thoughts, she seems to recommend that we must learn to acknowledge and accept these feelings just as we welcome the positive and happy thoughts we have been programmed to embrace. In "Frightening Encounters with Nature," Olsen echoes similar notions in her depiction of the mysterious darkness that also assures. She notes:

> The woods are dark and deep. Not frightening…not nightmarish…but lovely, attractive even in the depth of its darkness, perhaps because of it. Because this lovely darkness is so quickly counteracted by "promises,"… with its overtones of obligation (perhaps to society, family, self, a higher power, or moral code)…[it] requires something as strong and binding as "promises" to break the spell and call the traveler back to the road. (80)

Breaking "the spell" requires an honest look at our current worldviews, belief systems, and attitudes which must be reprogrammed to help us untangle ourselves from the firm grips of the old and rusty shackles of age-old societal norms.

Biased viewpoints are also portrayed in some of the books recommended for young

readers. In *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, it is noted that allowing young adults to see life in its realistic form is the right approach for parents and educators to adopt. In their explication of the advantages of the problem novel, the authors maintain that:

> Since all of us want our children to be happy, we feel more comfortable when they are reading "happy" books. The problem novel, however, is based on the philosophy that young people will have a better chance to be happy if they have realistic expectations and if they know both the bad and the good about the society in which they live. (Nilsen et al. 115)

As universal as this subject may be, we experience darkness differently irrespective of our social, cultural, economic, or even political backgrounds. Since our histories are different, we have personal histories of the dark. For instance, children who were raised in structured, military-like home environments with ear-piercing whistles to call them to order or whips at the ready for unavoidable punishments would definitely have different experiences from children who enjoyed exciting outdoor events with family and friends. Similarly, our different faiths may not have adequately prepared us to recognize the unfamiliar "lunar spirituality" as a valuable counterpart to the familiar "solar spirituality." Unfortunately, mainstream Christian beliefs denounce darkness in all its forms and only recognize the lighter component of divine presence. It is noteworthy that even though the "lunar" is not as bright and shiny as the "solar," it is still an important part of the entire spiritual experience. Taylor reinforces this point when she references her own spirituality enriched with "the gift of lunar spirituality, in which the divine light available to me waxes and wanes with the season" (9). Unfortunately, some well-meaning Christians inadvertently allow their myopic viewpoints to block doors to other possibilities that are likely to enrich their lives.

In Shelley's poem, "To Night," the speaker appreciates the gift of night and all that it represents. This person implores night to hasten its pace and "Swiftly walk o'er the western wave, /… Out of the misty eastern cave/ Where, all the long and lone daylight/ Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear, / Which make thee terrible and dear, / Swift be thy flight!" (28). The possibility of some unknown unpleasantness that night could bring is clearly understood. Yet, it does not extinguish an earnest longing, which starts at the crack of dawn, for the much desired "Spirit of Night."

Also in "Good and Evil XXII," Khalil Gibran's espousal of humane treatment of otherscaptures the essence of Taylor's position that calls for balanced applications of both "solar" and"lunar" spiritualities. In the poem, Gibran seems to suggest that the so-called evil members of society are just as human as those revered as the righteous ones. When the speaker asks the elders to "Speak to us of Good and Evil," one of them replies:

> Of the good in you I can speak, but not of the evil.
>
> For what is evil but good tortured by its own hunger and thirst?
>
> Verily when good is hungry it seeks food even in dark caves,
>
> And when it thirsts, it drinks even of dead waters . . .
>
> You are good in countless ways, and you are not evil when you are not good, . . .
>
> Pity that the stags cannot teach swiftness to the turtles . . .
>
> For the truly good ask not the naked, "Where is your garment?"
>
> Nor the houseless, "What has befallen your house?" ("Good and Evil XXII")

The speaker's pertinent questions and statements are quite clear. He seems to suggest that we should not be quick and hard-hearted in our criticism of others without examining our own intricate and intertwined human nature. We are neither all good nor all bad. So, it is

best to realize that good and evil are realistic parts of our authentic human nature which must be acknowledged and appreciated.

Certainly, no one chooses the dark night. It just presents itself to us, and oftentimes it does so unexpectedly. Since darkness is part of nature and our lives, it is important that we work with it and not against it. Taylor notes that some Christian believers use the book of Genesis as a point of reference when they distinguish between "night/dark" and "day/light." While the former is often associated with evil, the latter typically connotes all things good. The author reminds the reader that in the book of Genesis, darkness was already in place before God created light. Unlike other creations, darkness was not even created. What God did on the first day was to create light to separate it from darkness calling the light "day" and the darkness "night." Both contribute to the overall effective operations of God's other creations. Taylor maintains that this biblical story is just a "primordial story of separation." Any implied goodness or evil associated with it in present-day situations is based on society's classification of values that are not even mentioned in the story itself. Taylor asserts that, "Nowhere does it say that light is good and darkness is bad. Nowhere does it say that God separated light and darkness as a test to see which one human beings would choose" (169). She acknowledges that darkness affects people differently, and that some people dread their so-called dark worlds due to their assumed fear of God's absence in their daily struggles, fear of prayers that might never be answered, and fear of the mistrustful societal norms that consistently permeate their lives. Interestingly, authors of *The Upside of Your Dark Side* seem to support Taylor's viewpoint. In their study, they cut through prevailing myths by taking an unconventional stance on the societal quest for happiness. They conclude that these so-called positive emotions are

doomed because we also need other emotions that make us uncomfortable. In attempting to focus solely on positive emotions, we ignore significant parts of who we truly are.

Another guidepost for learning to explore darkness is to ask darkness to teach us what we need to know. However, she cautions that we should not run from it out of fear. Even though the typical reaction is to shy away from the issue at hand, it is best to acknowledge and appreciate the instructional component in it that helps us grow. Certainly, this is not an easy task since "people's lives are far removed from the happy-go-lucky images shown on television commercials and sitcoms" (Nilsen et al. 116). Unrecognizable characters might show up at certain points of our long walk through life. While some friends might look like enemies, some enemies might even look like friends. So, it is best to acknowledge their presence and mindfully take what we need from them for personal growth that offers the promise of wholeness with a "full range of human emotions" and not just the ones that make us feel uncomfortable. In *The Upside of Your Dark Side*, the authors explain:

> We get comfortable with pursuing a certain set of emotions. They make us feel good …. Other emotions, like anger and guilt are so painful that we avoid or suppress them. It turns out that the uncertainty, frustration, and occasional dash of guilt that stem from broken hearts, missed basketball shots at the buzzer, and botched interviews are the seeds of growth in knowledge and maturity. These often unwanted negative experiences end up shaping some of the most memorable experiences of our lives. By learning to embrace and use negative emotions as well as positive ones, we position ourselves for success. (Kashdan and Biswas-Diener x)

Accepting the challenge of drawing on the dark side brings us closer to a life of fulfillment. Even though no one goes around inviting problems, they sometimes knock on doors when we least expect them. Obviously, we do not use the word "dark" to describe something good. So, we instinctively look the opposite direction because darkness tends to dredge up "phantoms" of daily life that have the tendency to frighten us. Nonetheless, we must learn to acknowledge the presence of darkness in real life and appreciate the benefits that night offers. We must also learn to be still and trust our feelings instead of asking to be saved from them. In Taylor's personal experiences, light and darkness have played significant roles in her life. She states: "I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again, so that there's really only one logical conclusion. I need darkness as much as I need light" (9). She challenges us to follow our fears wherever they lead. There is a good chance that the surprise would be a pleasant one. There is also a good chance that this experience would help us to stay in the present instead of letting our anxieties run wild. Evidently, the only thing the dark night requires of us is to remain conscious and open-minded. Staying with the moment in stillness and being mindful of its presence allow the night to effectively teach us what we need to know.

Undoubtedly, mysterious things happen in the dark. As a place of unknowing, darkness may frighten and even make us feel like failures. Despite this fact, Taylor advises us to feel our way around it and not respond out of fear which may lead to anxiety attacks. Even though the mystery of darkness is frightening, it is not necessarily so all the time as exemplified even in some children's stories. In *Grandma Chickenlegs*, a frightening situation occurs when Tatia's scheming stepmother sends her to the dreaded wicked witch

supposedly to borrow a needle. Her dying mother's advice to "be giving and forgiving" is useful when she is faced with danger in Grandma Chickenlegs's "rickety-rackety" house of horror. Tatia's kindness is portrayed when she gives the hungry cat some bacon and the famished dog some rolls. She also lubricates the hinges of the front entrance door with butter and adorns the "knarled" elm tree with a ribbon. These grateful characters and her friendly doll, Drooga, help her to escape the imminent death that awaits her. Despite the witch's desperate attempt to catch and eat her, she manages to run home into the welcoming hands of her loving father.

Also in *The Way of the Elders*, the authors recount the story of Sanje whose mother dies when she is only nine years old. She is not well cared for by her father's other wife who gives her a lot of chores to do with very little or nothing to eat. To make matters worse, she does not tell her father about her ordeal for fear of additional punishment. However, she summons enough courage to visit her dead mother's grave where she repeatedly prays and sings her ordeal to the gigantic ntoro tree which readily "spreads its branches all the way down to the ground around her, as if it is giving Sanje a big hug"(147). Even though Sanje is not loved and supported by living family members, she is blessed for working hard and trusting in the goodness of her deceased mother and other related ancestral spirits.

As demonstrated in both stories, there are times when darkness is redeeming and rewarding. Taylor seems to ask her fellow walkers the following pertinent questions. Should we take religious teachings on the negative implications of darkness at face value and deny its existence, depriving it of any meaningful attention? Since darkness can fall on anyone unexpectedly at any given point in life (death of a loved one, loss of a home due to a natural disaster or, break-up of relationships) doesn't it make sense to see other options it

has to offer? Considering the fact that the natural ebb and flow of life does not indicate that something is necessarily wrong, shouldn't we at least explore our curious side and venture into the unknown world of darkness? Answers to these questions point back to her insistent notion that light alone can be blinding and may be too much for anyone to handle. A balanced perspective on life can be achieved if dark emotions are not evaded but allowed their rightful place alongside their light counterparts.

The next guidepost suggests that we "sign a waiver" that allows us to bump into things which might be frightening at first, but might also allow us to learn and grow through encounter. Taylor references an experiment conducted by a German social entrepreneur, Andreas Heinecke, in which a physical experience of darkness allowed sighted and blind people to change places. This resulted in *Dialogue in the Dark*, "a kind of reality show in which sighted people are given red-tipped white canes before entering a completely dark exhibition hall where they are introduced to their blind guides" (96). As demonstrated in the author's personal experience, just following the guide's voice and trusting the other four senses in complete darkness was all she needed to function effectively. It is noteworthy that in this dark space, "Touching was inevitable; apologies were redundant. We were not embarrassed to be dependent on each other.

Since none of us could be sure who was black or white, young or old, our exchanges were free of any ideas we had about those identity markers" (100). Her sense of hearing came alive when she heard the bird sounds and the flowing water. Even when she collided with another participant, there was no body language to read, no visual data to help form judgments about who this person was or what he or she looked like. Her sense of touch was awakened and her "fingers lit up" when she touched what felt like a bunch of grapes just by

hearing the guide announce that there was produce in the bin. Keeping the sense of sight at bay also allowed her to hear the pedestrian's signal beep indicating that it was safe to cross the street. Interestingly, lessons learned from this experiment are succinctly summed up by Kashdan and Biswas-Diener who maintain that lives lived to their full potential entail accessing "…everything in the human psychological knapsack which means unpacking and integrating previously ignored underappreciated parts of who you are" (*The Upside of Your Dark Side* xv).

Certainly, most people would eagerly make a case for positivity in all aspects of life. However, they must not neglect the uncertain, complex challenges that we face every day. Darkness is a realistic part of nature and life. So, it must be allowed its rightful place in human lives. Taylor echoes this sentiment when she states that:

> To be human is to live by sunlight and moonlight with anxiety and delight, admitting limits and transcending them, falling down and rising up. To want a life with only half of these things in it is to want half a life, shutting the other half away where it will not interfere with one's bright fantasies of the way things ought to be. (55)

Surely, the complexities of life are immense. And in our daily struggles and triumphs, we experience God's presence and also experience skirmishes with the devil. As hard as we might try, we cannot eradicate the devilish, unflattering qualities of our personalities (Kashdan and Biswas-Diener 220). To fully experience a meaningful life, it is important that we remain consistently aware of all aspects of our authentic selves, acknowledge the significance of the dimmer aspects of our humanity and fill our travel bags with a variety of

essentials that would help us to walk a little taller as we explore the mysterious, yet exciting world of darkness.

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A Call to Service in Ernest Gaines' *A Lesson Before Dying*

By Beatrice McKinsey

Education, food, the death penalty, and racism are topics that echo throughout *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines. Although these themes are present in the novel, another more compelling theme occurs, a call to service. Whatever one's social class, race, or education maybe, we all have a purpose or a call to service. Ernest Gaines uses the main characters, Grant and Jefferson, to demonstrate how men can achieve manliness through service.

In *a Lesson before Dying,* Grant Wiggins' role in his community is educator. Teaching by its nature is a service profession, but Grant, like so many educators, fails to realize the importance, role, and scope of education. Most people treat education as if it is some kind of factory. You bring the students in teach them the basics-- reading, writing and mathematics, but Grant like many teachers, fails to realize the social side effects and aspects of education. When Grant is assigned to teach Jefferson how to become a man, he learns that teaching should be so much more than focusing on the basics. Whenever one is dealing with human beings, one is dealing with community and should treat his purpose in the community as service.

After Jefferson is convicted of murder and receives the death penalty as punishment, Tante Lou and Miss Emma recruit Grant to help Jefferson become a man. Grant automatically thinks that his role as educator cannot help Jefferson now. Grant believes that he must focus on the current students at his school. He believes that Jefferson needs a

preacher, not a teacher. In essence, Tante Lou and Miss Emma are enlisting Grant to do what he did not do effectively when Jefferson was his student. He neglected to educate Jefferson because he believed that Jefferson would only go out and work in the fields or do some other type of manual labor. Grant constantly questions his role as educator in the quarter. He fails to realize that education is not some mechanistic vehicle that is only preparing people to go and work as professionals. Education is so much more. It is teaching people how to think, not exactly what to think.

In an interview, Ernest Gaines wrote "Grant is struggling with the South at the time. This man [Grant] was terribly angry. He didn't know who he was-- and that's the worst thing in the world that can happen to a man" (The Big Read). Grant is a man who is struggling with his purpose in life. Working with Jefferson gives Grant the opportunity to discover himself and his role in the community. "He hated where he was, but at the same time, he can't leave"(The Big Read). Not being able to leave his community, Grant subconsciously knows that he is supposed to stay there and help the people, but he does not know exactly how to help or what he is supposed to do.

Earnest Gaines stated in *A Lesson Before Dying* and *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*, how the elderly people would always look into a newborn male child's face and ask "Are you the one?" They were asking are you the one who will help the community. Many times certain children would go off to be educated, and would return with a purpose, but sometimes their purpose would get them killed. In *A Lesson Before Dying, the women seem to be shifting this idea of purpose and service*. Here they are saying that men like Grant and Jefferson must do things to help the community. One can help the community with or without a college education if this call is searched for and developed.

Ernest Gaines wrote, "The point of the story is how two men would grow to become real men. Jefferson with only a few months to live. Grant with another 40 years or more to live—what will they do with that time?"(The Big Read). Ernest Gaines wanted to explore manliness through purpose and service. He wrote, "I wanted the story to be about how both men develop" (The Big Read).

In the novel, whenever Grant fails to realize his purpose and his service to the community, the women remind him very forcefully about his duty. When Miss Emma and Tante Lou cannot go to the jailhouse with Grant, Grant believes that his aunt and Miss Emma are helping the white men humiliate him. He reminds his aunt that she is forcing him to do all of the things that she wanted him to escape from by sending him to the jailhouse alone. Grant says, "Years ago, Professor Antoine told me that if I stayed here, they were going to break me down to the nigger I was born to be. But he didn't tell me that my aunt would help them do it" (A *Lesson* 79). Aunt Lou apologizes for helping the white men humiliate Grant, but she reminds him that they have no one else whom they can enlist to help Jefferson. Grant was probably one of the most educated black men in the community who could help Jefferson. Here he learns that he has to do more than educate in the classroom, but this serious situation of Jefferson facing the death penalty was a call for Grant to be of service to the community because by helping Jefferson, he is helping his entire community.

Vivian, Grant's girlfriend, also reminds Grant of his service to the community. When he wants to run like Professor Antoine had instructed him to do a long time ago, Vivian threatens to end her relationship with him. She quickly lets him know that her role as educator was to stay there and help within the community, not run away from the very

people who needed her. She also reminds him that deep down inside he wants to help his community; he could have chosen to teach in the city as she had, but he decided to stay in the quarter.

Grant does not understand how he can help Jefferson and the other people in the quarter, but by the end of the novel, he also learns that he has to help his community by helping Jefferson. By helping Jefferson, he is doing a service to the community and to himself. Earnest Gaines once said in an interview, "I write to find out who I am. One of my main themes is manliness. I think I am trying to find out what manliness is." Gaines uses the character Grant to prove that sometimes humiliation may mean being a servant to others, but service to others is manliness. Being able to be of service to one's family, community, and world is manliness at its greatest height.

Jefferson, who is sentenced to death, learns that he must develop his manliness to be of service to his community. Gaines accomplishes this through Jefferson keeping a journal of how he feels on death row. Grant asks Jefferson to write down all of his thoughts, feelings, and fears. By keeping the journal, Jefferson learns that he is a man, not a hog as his court appointed attorney had described him. The journal also helps Jefferson to be of service to the community. This journal becomes his legacy. He will never be forgotten because of the journal. The people in his community will always have this journal that they can read. The journal also becomes a symbol of power and manliness. When a man can write, he can record history, tell his story, and bring about changes to his environment.

Ernest Gaines wrote, "Grant tells [Jefferson] to write down anything he wished. Jefferson is barely literate. He has never written a letter in his life. He was barely able to write his elementary assignments" (Writing a Lesson). Jefferson must learn to do

something that other animals cannot do. He must somehow become a man with a purpose through his writings. Gaines wrote, "But now with his pencil and notebook, he tries to define his humanity in the few short days he has to live" (Writing a Lesson).

Ernest Gaines uses writing to express his own manliness. He also uses writing as a service to his community. In fact, he often speaks about how he learned to embellish his writings by writing letters for the people in his community who could not write. In *A Lesson before Dying*, Gaines uses Jefferson's journal as a symbol of service. Writing helps Jefferson to become someone just as it helped Ernest Gaines to become a famous person, but at the same time it helped his community because now we have these wonderful stories to teach us and entertain us.

In *A Lesson before Dying* Ernest Gaines is saying that all lives have meaning and can be of service. We each must find out what our purpose is in life before we die. For Jefferson, it may have taken the death penalty for him to discover his purpose in this world, but he finally discovered it with the help of Grant, the teacher or professor. Jefferson's service to his community became his experience, which he shared with others in his journal. Now future generations can read Jefferson's journal and learn how to avoid trouble and perhaps Jefferson's deadly fate.

W.E.B Dubois wrote in *The Souls of Black Folks,* "The black men of America have a duty to perform, a duty stern and delicate,--a forward movement to oppose a part of the work of their greatest leaders" (547). Ernest Gaines, like Dubois, believes that black men have a duty to perform in society in different ways. Sometimes duty may be to simply write about one's experiences. Usually writings come from our brightest and most intellectual minds, but sometimes the writings must come from the lowly mind of men such as

Jefferson. By writing the journal, Jefferson is able to raise himself to the level of a great man. Now, he will be remembered forever. To achieve manliness, perhaps men only have to realize their useful roles in society. Grant had to see teaching as a service. When teaching is viewed as a service, people become better teachers. When a person discovers his purpose in life, who he or she is, then he has arrived at his reason for being alive. When *A Lesson Before Dying* ends, Grant and Jefferson understand their purpose and their call to service.

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Circumstantial Evidence: Elusive Truth in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt

By Candis Pizzetta

"The Mystery of Marie Rogêt" is one of the least often anthologized and most critically ignored of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories, yet it is part of the trilogy of murder mysteries with detective August Dupin as the brilliant—if eccentric—investigator. The other stories in the trilogy include "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Purloined Letter," both tales that are seen as models for later detective fiction. Like the two better known stories, "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt" introduces a subgenre of detective fiction, the "armchair detective" (Delamater and Prigozy 65). The story is based on the newspaper accounts of New York cigar-girl Mary Rogers' death, and Poe uses newspapers as the primary source for Dupin's investigation within the story of Marie Rogêt's murder. In fact, at the end of Poe's short story, he includes a footnote in which he apologizes for not having all the details that he could have included had he been in New York at the time he penned the story. He writes that "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt" was "composed at a distance from the scene of the atrocity, and with no other means of investigation than the newspapers afforded" (2). So, on the most basic level, the short story clearly depends upon the information provided by the various newspaper accounts of the murder of Mary Rogers and purports to be a simulacra of the murder and the various accounts of the "facts" of the crime.

Beyond that obvious connection, Poe's short story serves as a challenge to the reader to follow Dupin's reasoning and perhaps divine meaning on their own using only the facts presented in the newspaper accounts. As John Gruesser suggests in his article "Never Bet the Detective (or His Creator) Your Head: Character Rivalry, Authorial Sleight of Hand, and Generic Fluidity in Detective Fiction," Dupin engages in a kind of rivalry in each of Poe's detective stories. In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," Dupin's adversaries are the narrator and police prefect. In "The Purloined Letter," it is Dupin versus the master criminal D, and in this story, Dupin takes on various newspapermen. Gruesser argues that Poe is trying to "humbug the reader" into viewing the contest of intellects from the detective's point of view (6). Most writers of fiction are doing the same, creating protagonists whose worldview is meant to be accepted by the reader, but in the case of a murder mystery, the claim of authority over facts—or the interpretation of facts—suggests an overt attempt to control how language signifies meaning. The detective will claim to view the testimony of witnesses objectively, to present a complete and unbiased view of the facts of the case, and to interpret those facts to arrive at the most reasonable conclusion. Or as Poe claims in his footnotes to the story, "the investigation of the truth was the object" (6). Yet, Dupin's rhetorical exercise in examining the newspaper accounts within the context of this detective story has more to do with composing meaning than discovering it.

Dupin's attempt to uncover the truth within columns of newsprint aligns with the development of the urban observer. Dana Brand's fascinating study of the rise of the observer, the *flaneur*, in nineteenth-century American urban life and literature posits Dupin as a "metareader of urban languages" (99). Brand suggests that the "increasingly opaque urban world can be grasped" by an astute observer (103). Dupin's ability to make sense of

the chaos of facts provides a blueprint for police to approach the "threatening or unexplainable in urban social life" with tools that can help diminish that threat (Brand 103). Although Brand uses Dupin as an example of the *flaneur*, I propose that he does more than simply interpret the opaque language of urban life. In "Marie Rogêt," Dupin brings meaning to the chaos of the multiple stories of Marie's death.

The fictional account of the murder of Marie Rogêt closely tracks the true-crime version of events in the life and death of Mary Rogers. Instead of being a cigar-girl in New York, Marie Rogêt works as a clerk in a perfumery in Paris. Like Mary Rogers, Marie is described as being very beautiful and a bit of a flirt; the term Poe uses is *grisette*, which is a French term that literally means a working class girl, but Poe imbues the term with a suggestion of coquetry, as though Marie's decision to work makes her more sexually available. Marie's story is similar in other ways to Mary's. She ostensibly goes to visit her aunt on a Sunday afternoon, after telling her fiancé to meet her and walk her home in the evening. Because of the heavy rain that evening, the fiancé assumes Marie has remained at her aunt's house and does not worry when she fails to meet him. The girl does not turn up the next day, is reported missing, and is eventually found floating in the river. Once the investigation into her death begins in earnest, her movements are traced to the inn of Madame DeLuc, which is across the river Seine. She was seen there in the company of a "swarthy" man. Several weeks after Marie's death, articles of her clothing were found in a secluded clearing not far from Madame DeLuc's establishment. It is at this point that the detective story begins when August Dupin is called in to assist in the investigation. The remainder of the story involves Dupin reviewing the facts, critiquing the newspaper

accounts, and re-synthesizing the facts to lead to a greater insight into the death of Marie Rogêt.

Dupin begins by collecting the information provided by the police prefect and reviewing all of the newspaper accounts of the murder. Though that may seem like a strange approach to investigation, the police in New York at that time were not a professional department, more like constables who performed specific duties rather than a force that kept order and engaged in methodical investigations of crimes. Poe's Parisian police in the detective story follow the same model. In fact, when the police prefect meets with Dupin and the narrator of this particular story in order to relay to them the facts of the case, Dupin, disguised by his dark green glasses, falls asleep rather than wasting time listening to the police prefect's version of events. Since newspapers were considered as good a source of information as any police investigation, Dupin's decision to closely examine the newspaper reports, then, is both a practical decision for the detective as well as a logical rhetorical act for the author.

The three newspaper's that Dupin uses as his main sources are *L'Etoile*, *Le Commercial*, and *Le Soleil*. Dupin's primary antagonist in his quest for accuracy is the editor of *L'Etoile*; however, Dupin recognizes that all three papers share a common purpose in reporting the story: to increase circulation. His criticism of *L'Etoile* often encompasses categories of errors that all the papers commit. Dupin states early in the story that "[w]e should bear in mind that, in general, it is the object of our newspapers rather to create a sensation—to make a point—than to further the cause of truth. The latter end is only pursued when it seems coincident with the former." Even though Dupin chooses to rely on the facts presented in the newspapers at least as heavily as those collected by the police

prefect, he, as the seeker of truth, and Poe, his creator, recognize that the information in newsprint is often presented with a particular slant, meant to highlight what Dupin calls "*pungent contradictions* of the general idea." By presenting the few hard facts of the case interspersed with conjecture and conclusions, the newspaper editors further sensationalize the investigation. In the process, the papers suggest possible suspects and hint at motives. Dupin attacks the papers' suggestions and insinuations as a perversion of language—one that leads the reader away from objective consideration of the facts. Dupin complains that the presentation of the case in the newspapers creates conclusions rather than allowing the reader to reason out a conclusion.

Dupin also argues that the newspapers are feeding a compulsion in the reader, a darker impulse for thrills at the cost of truth. In a sense, Dupin's diatribe against the reader's lust for scandal applies to Poe's own reader, as well. In fact, Dupin asserts that "the mass of the people" prefer those "pungent contradictions" in literature as well as in the act of reasoning out the facts of a crime. Jerome Delameter and Ruth Prigozy note in their review of classic detective fiction a "fine line between appearance and reality that is the essence of both parody and detection" (64). This line seems to be blurred by Dupin's concerns over the irresponsible presentation of the facts by the newspapers. The critique of the newspaper accounts exposes both the need for an interpreter and the inability of the general reader to serve in that role. John T. Irwin discusses the purpose of analysis in Poe's detective fiction and in the stories by Jorge Luis Borges based on Poe's stories, arguing that the stories serve as exemplars of the power of mathematical thinking. According to Irwin, Dupin's attempt to discover the truth by analyzing both facts and the patterns underlying the facts fails. Irwin notes:

> If Poe's detective stories are about the way that the analytic effort to include the process of thinking wholly within the content of thought ultimately reveals the essential noncoincidence of the self with itself, then Poe's unsuccessful attempt to double the real case of Mary Rogers with the imaginary one of Marie Rogêt becomes, through the reader's experience of this noncoincidence of parallel lives, a textual embodiment of this theme. (327)

Whether or not Dupin succeeds in discerning the truth about Marie Rogêt's death, Poe ascribes to him the power to analyze and interpret facts, leading to a new reading of the events of the murder. Although Dupin's version of Marie's death turns out not to align with the real events leading to the death of the cigar girl, Mary Rogers, his version of the story claims objective relevance.

Despite this seeming mania for the "truth," there is an element of fictionalizing occurring in Dupin's approach to discernment. He maintains that evidence accumulates to prove a truth and that "[w]hat, of itself, would be no evidence . . ., becomes through its corroborative position, proof most sure" (13). In other words, Dupin must create a story that explains the subtle and secret connections between facts. This process is similar to Poe's process of composing this detective story. By creating fictional newspaper excerpts based on the actual New York newspaper accounts, Poe generates an air of validity/reality in the story of Marie Rogêt. Poe links the story of Mary Rogers to that of Marie Rogêt in the first paragraph, presenting his story as both the true account of the murder of a Parisian *grisette* and a fiction that delves beneath the surface of assumptions suggested in the news account of the murder of Mary Rogers. Poe's narrator identifies the connection between the real

Mary and the fictional Marie at the start of the short story: "Marie, whose Christian and family name will at once arrest attention from their resemblance to those of the unfortunate 'cigargirl,' was the only daughter of the widow Estelle Rogêt." Poe's story becomes a fiction imitating a quest truth, based on another fiction—which is how Dupin views the newspaper accounts of the murder of Marie Rogêt/Mary Rogers—masquerading as an exploration of fact.

In the story of Marie Rogêt, Dupin must first clarify the newspapers' confusion of facts and evidence. This muddle is the result of the newspapers' attempts to further sensationalize the story of Marie's death. As Dupin points out errors in the newspaper accounts, he ties each error to the specific theory each newspaper editor endorsed. The editor of *L'Etoile* receives special attention when Dupin notes "the laughable confusion of thought!" to be found in that paper. Dupin accuses the paper of distorting the testimony of Marie's family friend in order to suggest that the friend was guilty of the murder. Dupin reproaches the paper for committing "a mere perversion of the witness' phraseology" in order to make the man appear unreliable. After attacking the paper's theory, Dupin promotes his hypothesis, not *L'Etoile's*, as one that fits the facts and is therefore "true," when he writes, "The suspicious circumstances which invest him, will be found to tally much better with my hypothesis of romantic busy-bodyism, than with the reasoner's suggestion of guilt." Dupin assumes that his peregrinations represent the best of Enlightenment rationalism, and the theories of the newspapermen are a species of "formless romantic oblivion" (Sevik 21). However, as Greg Sevik notes in his "Detection, Reason, and Genius in Tales of Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle," "the named tension within detective fiction by no means amounts to that between positions 'for' and 'against' reason" (21).

Although Poe's Dupin claims the skill necessary to discern the truth from the muddle of fact and conjecture, he depends quite heavily on interpretation, what the story's narrator terms "intuition."

In his critique of the newspaper accounts of the murder investigation, Dupin suggests that facts are not truth of their own—they require interpretation. As Dupin's stated goal is to discover the truth, he believes himself better positioned to interpret those facts than the newspapers, which aim at increasing circulation with scandalous stories, not an unfamiliar argument against some elements of the news media even today. Delameter and Prigozy note that Poe "challenged writers to be responsible for their creative powers," and we can apply this standard to Dupin's claims that his intuition helped him discover the truth (65).

Recall that when Dupin seems to be listening to the police Prefect recount the police version of the facts of the case at the beginning of the story, he actually is napping behind his green spectacles. Dupin sleeps because he does not think the Prefect shares any of his, Dupin's, penetrating insight, what the story's narrator calls Dupin's "intuition" through which the detective analyzes facts to see the pattern (the truth) behind them. Dupin himself asserts that truth comes from all facts not just those that fit a theory. For instance, he argues against the judicial practice of confining facts to those that are obviously relevant to a case. He calls that praxis a "mal-practice of the courts" because "a vast, perhaps the larger portion of truth, arises from the seemingly irrelevant." The power of intuition allows both Dupin and, by extension, the reader to use language to refocus on the connection between the facts and the meaning they represent, between the signifier and the signified. As Michael J.S. Williams discusses in his analysis of Poe's use of language:

> The concept of the intrinsically empty signifier, which… recurs in Poe's tales [becomes] consonant with the rhetoric of effect. The suppression of reference, [the act of intuition performed by Dupin, becomes] dependent on the recognition of the arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified, shifts the site of meaning from the relationship between word and world to that between reader and text. (8)

When Dupin contends that truth must be personally discerned from facts, not interpreted by others, he lays claim to the power to assign meaning. Addressing the reader, he asserts, "We must endeavor to satisfy ourselves by personal inquiry." As we return to the idea of truth and the need for intuition or imagination to see beneath the fictions of various sources, the connection that Poe so clearly makes between the fictional Marie and the real Mary becomes essential to showing his almost post-modern conception of truth.

The truth is not the result of careful reasoning, no matter how thoroughly Dupin explains his conclusions. Poe has created a story based on an actual event to delve beneath the surface of common assumptions to discover the truth. Yet at the end of his tale, August Dupin retreats from any claim to certainty. Dupin declares that the case of Marie Rogêt is difficult because it is so ordinary: "I have before observed that it is by prominences above the plane of the ordinary, that reason feels her way, if at all, in her search for the true, and that the proper question in cases such as this, is not so much 'what has occurred?' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before?'" Discovering the truth becomes a matter of asking the correct questions, not just assigning meaning. Dupin attempts to pull apart the ragged threads of the newspaper accounts, to ask questions that will expose the instability of the newspapermen's theories in an attempt to make the story of Marie one of more than

"pungent contradictions." Yet, in the end, it is the ordinariness of the murder, Poe's narrator claims, that makes it difficult to make the story of Marie perfectly fit that of Mary Rogers.

After reviewing all the facts, Dupin fails to close the case because fact and fiction cannot hold together. He hesitates to draw final conclusions: "we must not fail to hold in view that the very Calculus of Probabilities to which I have referred, forbids all idea of the extension of the parallel:—forbids it with a positiveness strong and decided just in proportion as this parallel has already been long-drawn and exact." In the final edition of the story, Poe published in a footnote that the theories of Dupin related to Marie Rogêt were "confirmed, in full" by later facts from the confessions of two of the suspects in the original investigation. As John Walsh notes in his study of Poe's detective stories, Poe ends the story by redefining his reasons for writing. The end of the story becomes a "recantation of the purpose asserted at the beginning" (Wimsatt 557). The truth, in terms of the facts of the murder, becomes less essential to Poe (or to later scholars of detective fiction) than the appearance of objective presentation of the facts. The façade of objectivity allows control of the story through that exposition of facts. The objective search for truth elides into an acknowledgement that some facts—some of those "seemingly irrelevant facts"—are devoid of meaning after all.

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Pedagogical Approaches

The Use of Small Groups and Unconventional Peer Tutoring: Helping Underprepared Students Succeed in the Composition Classroom

By Shanell Bailey and Rico Self

In the 1954 landmark Supreme Court case of *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, the Court declared "separate but equal" facilities unconstitutional, effectively ending legal racial segregation in the United States. With that, black students have been afforded opportunities previously denied to them, particularly attending schools previously reserved only for whites. However, even with integration, there still exists a significant gap in the achievement of white students and the achievement of black students within the academy, especially in terms of reading and writing. It Nettles, Thoeny, and Gosman write in their article, "Comparative and Predictive Analyses of Black and White Students' College Achievement and Experiences," there has been an "enormous increase in the interest of minority students in attending college" (289), then higher education--historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and predominantly white institutions (PWIs) alike--must be prepared to deal with the aforementioned gap that exists between levels of achievement of black and white students.

Today, research abounds concerning the dismal state in which many minority students find themselves when they enter courses in college that focus on writing. Much of the apprehension, low grades, and the real possibilities of failing faced by minority students come as a direct result of a number of factors according to Blackwell and Pinder's article,

"What Are the Motivational Factors of First-Generation Minority College Students Who Overcome Their Family Histories to Pursue Higher Education?" In addition to socioeconomic issues, inadequate preparation and lack of available information are some of the daily roadblocks these students face as they strive to become the first in their extended family to attend college" (McDonough, 2004, qtd in Blackwell and Pinder 45). This research project will concern itself with the latter ways to effectively use small group communication tactics and peer tutoring to help curb the disparities that minority students, specifically those who are underprepared, face in the composition classroom.

Communication Within Small Groups

Methods such as inclusion within small groups are fundamentally different than the traditional "teach as I was taught" style typically used by educators (Cooper & Simonds). As Muth and Kiser note, "Methods that invite learners to tap their background knowledge, reflect on their worlds, and dialogue with others to construct meaning […] seem radically at odds with [other instructional methods]" (349). Though these methods counter the conventional pedagogical methods, they have been championed by educators as effective approaches to student learning, "Not only have the advantages of learning in small groups been well documented" write Gillespie, Rosamond, and Thomas, "but effective group practices have also been identified" (81). Further, Chapman and Ludlow hold that many instructors use methods such as division of larger classes into groups so that the instruction is more personalized. This method, they hold, includes small work, along with […] instructors who take on mentoring relationships" (108).

In order to understand how small group communication can be used effectively within the composition classroom, one must first understand the concept of small groups.

Several definitions of this aspect of communication exist; however, Cooper and Simonds define a small group as people "who communicate with one another over a span of time and who are few enough that each person is able to communicate with all others, not indirectly, but face-to-face" (170). In addition, Gillespie, Rosamond, and Thomas included online class formats in the definition of small group for their study. These authors and other researchers stress the interactional nature of small group settings, as well. Thus, it should be noted that communication between members of the group is imperative to both the success of the group and to the individuals who comprise the group. Moreover, small groups are generally composed of three to ten persons; however, depending on one's point of reference, the number could include twelve to fifteen persons. It is generally accepted, though, that if a set of persons is comprised of less that two or more than fifteen, it is no longer considered a small group.

There are several small group communication practices that can be effectively utilized to foster student success. For instance, smaller class sizes can lead to greater teacher facilitation, which is advocated as a good approach to collaborative learning. Teacher facilitation concerns the teacher taking an active, rather than passive, role in the learning process. As opposed to the typical lecture format, the facilitator "responds to, rather than directly orchestrates, student activity" (Darling 274, qtd in Cooper and Simonds 175). Though Kerr argues that class size is not inextricably linked to student success, Chapman and Ludlow note that "instructor teaching styles are influenced by class size." Further, they argue, smaller class sizes have been linked to greater improvements in student achievement (106). Thus, instructors who use small groups as a pedagogical strategy also become advisors/coaches, as well as teachers, in the classroom.

An aspect of communication within small groups that is heralded as an important pedagogical strategy is critical thinking. "Critical thinking," writes Boudin "is a need recognized at all levels of education including basic literacy" (141). Through exercises that emphasize critical thinking—such as reflections or journal writings—students learn skills that are not only marketable to employers, but also those that allow the student to grow as a person and to forge bonds with those within the group. Critical thinking assignments allow students to place on paper what they feel. Once shared openly with members of the group, this tactic could offer meaningful discussions. Also, in these settings, self-disclosure, which involves revealing information about oneself which is generally unknown to others and which is inherent in critical thinking/reflexive assignments, is usually reciprocated. This helps to form cohesion within those in the group and provides greater motivation, which generally "energizes and guides one's behavior toward reaching a particular goal in life" (Blackwell and Pinder 46), for doing well within a course.

Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring has been hailed within educational systems as an optimal way to increase student learning and student success rates. As Paul Comfort notes, "Peer tutoring has been shown to be highly effective in enhancing both tutor and tutee achievements and skill development in a range of educational settings" (207). However, if a peer tutoring model is not instituted effectively, it could present little, if any help, for students to soar to higher levels in the composition classroom. One such effective model would be the "Read to Succeed," which was developed by Patricia Franklin at Washington State's Monroe

Correctional Complex. This model trained "over 100 inmate literacy tutors" who successfully "taught over 1,000 inmates to read" above a fifth grade level (Franklin 286).

In Franklin's model, tutors were recruited based on test scores, required to pass a college level course called "Tutoring Principles and Practices" offered onsite, and then paired with "clients" at the tutor-coordinator's discretion. After pairing is made, the "client" is notified (as opposed to the tutor) and given the opportunity to accept or reject the pairing. While it may seem absurd to apply a prison-model tutorial program in the conventional academic setting, inmates, who are often minority and underprepared for the academy, face the same anxieties that general underprepared minority students face. Franklin states that allowing the tutee to choose the tutor is an essential step in curbing illiteracy because it "permits the illiterate inmate, whose self-esteem is usually low, an opportunity to feel in control of the process" (Franklin 287). Many minority students who enter the arena of higher education are often underprepared, have lower literacy rates than white counterparts, and even have very low self-esteem, at least as far as their educational abilities are concerned. Thus, Franklin's model could prove effective in conventional higher education settings.

In addition, when a successful tutor/client match is made, the tutor works with the tutor-coordinator to "develop meaningful lesson plans, project realistic and attainable goals, and sustain a client's interest" (Franklin 287). Here, the tutor has reasonable input into the lesson planning process and will most likely have better insight into what kinds of lessons or literacy activities would appeal to his or her clients that the tutorial coordinator has introduced. This approach is known as the insider model, which helps those other than the

students who work in educational settings to understand the plight and experiences of the students.

Because the peer tutoring model uses in-house resources—students—to supplement educational studies, it is cost-effective and even individualized. The students who struggle with learning disabilities or large class performance anxiety can receive assistance at their individual levels, and, furthermore, they have the opportunity to learn from peers who share their day-to-day experiences. Potential obstacles with such a model include accessibility to spaces for tutoring, student transfers, and, of course, administrative support. But with proper training and institutional support, such a program has the potential to be transformative without much overhead. When combined with traditional curricula, a thoughtfully implemented peer-to-peer tutoring program can target individual learning needs while building relationships in a safe environment.

This is not an exhaustive list of all possible benefits of communication within small groups or formats of peer tutors; rather, this paper seeks to address some of the tactics that could be used by educators, mentors, tutors, and other practitioners within institutions of higher learning that could allow underprepared students to achieve higher levels of success. By including those other than the traditional teacher, each educational setting affords the opportunity for the practitioner to know each student and his/her personal concerns and impediments on a greater level; offer more individualized or small group instruction; and, through the collaboration and self-disclosure inherent in these settings, students may feel a greater personal need to do well in the course(s).

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Bringing Spoken Word Poetry into the Classroom

By Deanna Roberts

Throughout the years teachers have tried many different teaching techniques when it comes to poetry; however, not all of these techniques work. While "other[s] would like students to be steeped in the classics rather than in contemporary poems" (Chatton 5), I have found using spoken word poetry in the form of online videos entices students to explore poetry further. With the ability to choose fresh material from recent competitions, we can teach poetry like never before. Poetry, for many, has always been a two-dimensional form, but with spoken-word poetry and poetry-slam competitions, teachers can transform poetry into a good experience. With access to technology and Internet resources like YouTube, it has never been easier to adapt the classroom into an interactive performance.

To understand the full benefits of bringing spoken-word poetry and slam poetry into the classroom, one has to understand what these mediums are. Spoken-word poetry has "literary and cultural roots [that] can be traced back to the Beat and Black Arts movements" (Hall 4). Utilizing not only the written word but also tone, voice, and motion into their poetry, spoken-word poets take their words off the page and give those words breath through performance. The poetics "employed by many performance poets are highly sophisticated and complex – and they take what they want from postmodern literary technique" (Beasley 34). Often the performance is able to add to and build upon the poem itself in ways the written page is unable to. For example, I have students read a poem like "Playing Pretend," by spoken word artist Lacey Roop, before we watch the performance of

the poem. We then discuss how Roop's performance adds to the poem in ways writing alone cannot. Roop, like many spoken-word artists, also performs at poetry-slam competitions. Poetry slams "were begun by the poet Mark Smith in Chicago, and are competitions between poets" (Lambirth 56). Each poet prepares a three-minute poem to perform in front of an audience. Audiences "are encouraged to judge the quality of the poetry and the performance and declare a winner at the end" (56). Sparking interest in the younger generation, "slams are materializing in most large towns and cities and are often organized in arts festivals" (56). Most of these festivals record each poet's entry, and many of these entries can be found online at sites such as YouTube.com or ButtonPoetry.com. Countless entries are available to anyone willing to look for them.

With new and better access to technology, bringing new mediums like spoken-word poetry into the classroom has never been easier. Almost all instructors on the college level have access to a computer and a projector in their classrooms. With this technology readily available, we can bring those competitions into the class itself. We no longer need to travel across the country to see these performances or competitions. Now we can watch performances and interviews with poets speaking about their own inspirations and interpretations. I would even go so far as to say a teacher could contact the poet personally and use technology to set up a video conference where students can discuss the poetry with the poet himself. Today, "the range of subjects and variety of forms of poems for the young has never been greater. Poetry is a strong and lively presence that deserves to be highlighted in schools and libraries" (Chatton x). By using technology to bring these poets into the classroom, we can discuss literary works and their rich experiences and messages on a deeper level.

Many teachers may find English is not their students' favorite subject, and almost all of my students seem to shy away from poetry in particular. Often my students find poetry analysis difficult; this fact may result from a lack of understanding or a lack of interest. Students can relate to characters from almost any era, but many cannot relate to the classic poetry we discuss. They often feel far removed from these authors, and I believe spoken-word poetry can bridge that authorial gap. Essentially, we need "to teach poetry as discovery" (Donaldson 6). By seeing poets perform their own poems about current issues that affect the students' lives, my students begin to see poetry like they never have before. They begin to see it as relevant.

As a teacher, I strive not only to teach my students about poems but also to teach them to love poetry and language. Often if students "are not in love with language, they are not likely to see much in the analysis of poems, no matter how clever we are in trying to persuade them" (5). I have found that poetry-slam entries and spoken-word performances excite students, and many search out more poetry outside the classroom. A student's love for poetry has to begin somewhere, right? Poets have often been called the voice of a generation, and what better way to excite students than to share the poetry of their generation with them. Most students today connect with a poem if the subject is familiar, and "most students find that the greatest significance of a given poem lies in its relevance to their own lives" (Cardone 10). This is easy to accomplish with spoken-word poetry since "much of performance poetry is concerned directly or indirectly with self and community defense" (Beasley 30). Students will find more connections with these personal works, which may inspire a love for poetry in general. Spoken word poetry can encourage an interest in any and all poetry because it makes poetry relatable like no other medium can.

One of the key benefits to using spoken-word poetry in conjunction with other material is that spoken-word poetry allows students to make connections between modern and classic writers. This could, in turn, lead students to understand the cultural context of an issue within a short story better than if they had just read the story alone. For example, when discussing "The Story of an Hour" with classes, many of my male students did not immediately see or understand the issues of feminism or repression. I even had one gentleman say Louise would have been happy had she only had a child to raise. They lacked female perspective, and this hindered them from fully understanding Mrs. Mallard's motivations and the situation she goes through within the story. By teaching "The Story of an Hour" in congruence with Lily Myers's "Shrinking Women," I was able to open up the discussion of gender roles and expectations in a contemporary way, which encouraged all my students to understand these themes and issues in a new light. Students who think Mallard might be overreacting because of their limited perspectives cannot deny Myers's heartfelt description of personal experiences growing up with gender bias as she tells listeners how she was "taught accommodation" and how, while her brother was taught to "grow out," she was taught to "grow in." Spoken-word poets can bring clarity of language to issues we often lack words for. Our goal as teachers is to "to ask questions to sharpen perception and to help understanding" (Donaldson 5). From the stage to the classroom, spoken-word poetry can initiate dialogue about countless themes, cultural issues, and personal experiences.

Spoken-word poetry can be used to discuss specific themes or in connection with current events. Often when discussing classic literature, we do not have the opportunity to discuss current issues or events. Spoken-word poetry can help us connect to those cultural

issues because it addresses these issues as they occur. For example, racism and Ferguson have been consistently present in the media, so why not bring this discussion into the classroom? According to Marcia Chatelain of *The Atlantic,* some of us "will talk about Ferguson forcefully, others gingerly, but from preschool classrooms to postdoctoral seminars, Ferguson is on the syllabus" (para. 6). While I could use Harlem Renaissance writers like Claude McKay or Gwendolyn Brooks to discuss this issue, spoken-word poems like Javon Johnson's "Cuz He's Black" can resonate with today's youth better because he writes about the African American experience in today's society. Spoken-word poetry "can be a fantastic way to engage [our classes], to bring text alive, and to encourage student voice" (Borovoy para. 10). In my own classes, I encountered more interest, discussion, and debate when I brought Johnson's poem into the discussion in conjunction with other relevant poems than when I left spoken word off the syllabus. To discuss Ferguson and the issue of racism in our modern culture, I believe there needs to be a modern dialogue present in the discussion. The poet's "vocabulary inescapably reflects a specific mind and a specific society" (Cardone 10). What better choice to represent a specific society than a voice from that society? Spoken-word poetry creates a relevant and open environment where students can discuss their feelings and thoughts on the poetry easily, thereby introducing sound analysis.

Using spoken-word poetry in the classroom myself, I have encountered positive feedback from numerous students. Many of them find poets can relay ideas or beliefs they share but were unable to find in the students' own words. This can be a great opportunity to open students' minds to larger ideologies and perspectives because "when done well, spoken word has the power to move and enthrall audiences" (Borovoy para. 1). Last semester after

watching Johnson's poem, I had a student write in her response that she had never heard anything like it before and the poem had touched her. Poetry at its heart is supposed to make the reader feel something, to spark a reaction. Spoken-word performances can do just that. It is important "to study spoken word because, as an art form, it allows us to connect with students like ourselves to broader critical theories and [provide] an avenue for self-discovery and expression" (Desai & Tyson 72). Bringing spoken-word poetry into the classroom alongside traditional poetry and stories can only strengthen analysis, discussion, and interpretation within the class.

As a teacher, I am constantly trying to find new ways for my students to learn material in interesting ways. I strive to find material that is interesting and exciting because I have learned from my own teachers that excitement is contagious. Spoken-word poetry is one more tool I have found to be extremely effective in not only teaching analysis and literary concepts but also in inspiring interest in and a love for language. I echo Barbara Chatton's declaration to "continue to believe in the power of poetry to change the world one person at a time. Students who are allowed to explore the intricacies of language, to play with words and their sounds, and to think and make sense of the world through poems of all kinds will see that world differently. Words can give them power" (Chatton xx).

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Spoken-Word Poetry Suggested Reading

Button Poetry

- http://buttonpoetry.com/
- https://www.youtube.com/user/ButtonPoetry

Lacey Roop

- http://www.laceyroop.com/
- https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLH34W1H48bGI1e-0cwL_R5pqVr0-DtkeT

Vancouver Poetry Slam

- https://www.youtube.com/user/PoetrySlamVancouver

Poetree Net

- https://www.youtube.com/user/poetreenet/videos

Individual Entries

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0snNB1yS3IE
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDnO5hQcCQM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLSnNSqs_CQ
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnSuR3bFWcQ
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKucPh9xHtM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJnJNcNKmC8
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIUh43Jc5f4

(Standard) English Language Acquisition: A Hole in the American Dream

By Rico Self

As one of the largest countries in the world, both in terms of population and area, the United States is a prime place to consider in terms of the study of English language and the diversity among its usage in an English-speaking country. For instance, the people and their locations within the United States influence language usage in the forms of social and regional dialects, with features of these dialects having the possibility—if used enough throughout the country—of being included in the highly-exalted and rigid Standard. The citizens of the United States come from a variety of backgrounds, and the country's large land mass allows for greater study of regional uses of the language than probably any other English speaking country. Thus, the language itself and its usages are multifaceted. For example, certain dialects can be used to determine with which area of the country a person may be affiliated. Next, command of the Standard is seen as a hallmark of the upper echelons of American society, while, on the other hand, it can be used to signify those who exist on the lower levels of the social totem pole. As such, the usage of the language, particularly in its spoken form, can be used to determine, in an assumptive or stereotypical way, the socioeconomic characteristics of the person using it. Lastly, the language is used to promise equality, yet it is also used to discriminate against those who have not acquired a beyond-basic usage of it. Therefore, the English language, specifically in its nonstandard

forms, can ironically be an impediment to many of the principles for which the United States, the land of equality, is believed to stand, and certain citizens and aspiring citizens have come to anticipate this impediment.

Upon surface-level assessment, one may assume that Standard English has absolutely nothing to do with the American Dream. Maybe he or she will think that speaking English, regardless of the dialect, is enough to pull oneself up by his or her proverbial bootstraps and live a prosperous life in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." Nevertheless, it is very well known that the United States is a capitalist society, one that operates primarily by private (as opposed to state) ownership and individual profit. While arguably the flagship capitalist country, the United States is also known as the land of opportunity. In theory, this means that every citizen of the United States, whether immigrant or natural born, is free and has an equal opportunity by which to improve his or her economic condition and social standing. This is known as the American Dream, which James Truslow Adams defines as a "social order in which each man and each woman [is] able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and [is] recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position" (215).

On the contrary, though, many have learned that, in practice, the American Dream for most people is just that—a dream, an ideal that is largely unattainable because of the prejudices and discrimination that have existed in the United States since its founding and continue to plague it today. These abstractions—prejudice and discrimination—can manifest themselves in a number of ways, particularly through language because upward social mobility is generally tied to a strong command of Standard English, which is most

often taught in schools. Hence, education is usually considered an important key to improved economic status and upward mobility in the United States. Because teachers are charged with, and often held solely responsible for, their students' learning of Standard English, it is essential, regardless of ideology, to understand the importance of learning Standard English as early as possible. As such, one must consider the effects of Standard English deprivation on proficient acquisition of the Standard dialect, as this neglect has larger implications for students, especially English language learners (ELLs) and native non-speakers.

Here, *deprivation* is not defined as a form of maltreatment/abuse, the definition that is most commonly used; rather, *deprivation* is defined in terms of its application to language and awareness—that is, a linguistic deprivation. Many researchers have argued for a critical period of first-language acquisition, noting that the best time for children to acquire language is from infancy "into late childhood and possibly until puberty" (Grimshaw, Adelstein, Bryden,and MacKinnon 237). Barbara Birch, author of *Learning and Teaching English Grammar,* lays a good foundation for this argument. She states, "Babies acquire language procedurally, without understanding anything about it consciously" (28). Grimshaw, Adelstein, Byrden, and Mackinnon, however, note in "First-Language Acquisition in Adolescence: Evidence for a Critical Period for Verbal Language Development," "The [critical period] hypothesis is difficult to test directly because cases of linguistic deprivation during childhood are fortunately rare" (237). While this may generally be true, it is still possible for American children to be deprived of learning Standard English before they get to school, and this deprivation can place them at an

extreme disadvantage when compared to children who speak Standard English, or something close to it, in their homes.

Birch implicitly outlines the variety of child learners who are connected through the common goal/need of learning Standard (Written and Spoken) English (21). They include the native Standard English speakers, native nonstandard speakers (English speakers who speak a dialect other than Standard), nonnative speakers (English language learners), and Generation 1.5, which Birch defines as learners who "come after first generation immigrants but are not quite second-generational bilinguals" (22). Because of the variety of language learners and their levels of learning or acquiring language, teachers are especially challenged when dealing with a group that is made up of students from more than one group. Lydia Mays, author of "The Cultural Divide of Discourse: Understanding How English-Language Learners' Primary Discourse Influences Acquisition of Literacy," details how children, specifically those who do not speak Standard English, are given *standard*-ized tests, which are written in ways in which the students do not understand (i.e., the Standard). Therefore, the students do not fare well and are labeled "at risk" of failing without regard academic inclinations. She predicts that these students will "be assigned seats in the back of the class … [and] will be called upon less than [other] classmates who perform successfully on tests and other classroom assignments" (415). As a result, the negatively affected students will experience a disconnect from activities and will be, ironically, left behind.

It is easy to assume that by now, educational institutions would know how to respond to the different levels/types of language learners who enter into the classroom. However, because of cultural hegemony, institutions in the United States have privileged one language (English) and dialect (Standard) over all others. In *Spreading the Word,* John

McWhorter debunks this exaltation of the Standard dialect by offering that the Standard is a dialect, just like any other, and that other "dialects develop alongside standard varieties, not from them" (7). It is important to note here that McWhorter further debunks the exaltation of the Standard as correct or right by offering that colloquial dialects of a language are as complex and distinct as Standard ones. The only difference, he claims, bringing the point full-circle, is that the "complexities and shadings of local dialects are not appreciated because they are not studied in schools the way standard dialects are" (10). Language, both written and spoken, is taught in a prescriptive, rather than descriptive, manner in schools, meaning that students are taught that the English language is governed by a set of rules that detail the best usages "of the most standard writers and speakers so that those whose language may be nonstandard or nonnative have access to them" (Birch 44). This stance, for McWhorter, would be problematic because it "sees colloquial speech as a departure from, rather than an alternative to, the standard variety" (10). McWhorter obviously adheres to language equality, the belief that all language and dialects are "positive" and should be "nurtured and encouraged" (Birch 6).

The problem with this all-inclusive ideology, though, is that if all language and dialects were considered equal in America, this consideration would run counter to the colonial/imperialistic ideology, which holds that "English is 'better' than other languages and that Standard English is 'better' than other varieties" (Birch 2). This is arguably the imbedded belief held in America. While America has no official language *de jure*, English is its official language *de facto*, and Standard English is understood as its official dialect, even though the country boasts quickly-growing minority and immigrant populations. To explain, McWhorter states that this insistence upon the Standard as the best evolves out of

geopolitical accident because standard varieties of languages were formed near and are generally spoken and perpetuated by those who have wealth and power (8-9). To allow other languages/dialects to occupy an equally privileged space with Standard English presents problematic implications to the status quo, namely allowing components of cultures that exist outside the dominant one to equally occupyt the same space in a country that operates off inequalities. As Birch explains, "They [those who adhere to the colonial/imperialistic ideology] think because English is the dominant language, everyone should learn it in order to take advantage of the benefits and opportunities of our society… A bilingual or bidialectal society is a 'problem'" (Birch 2).

To address the "problem" of a bilingual and/or bidialectal society of which Birch speaks, one must begin with understanding that due to the increased intermingling of races, ethnicities and cultures, more people now speak more than one language or dialect than probably ever before in American history. Thus, a bi- or multilingual or bi- or multidialectal society, or at least the acceptance of one, should not be an issue in a country that prides itself on its diversity. As a matter of fact, it should be the norm. As Klammer, Schulz, and Volpe note in *Analyzing Grammar,* "Today, a greater variety of languages may be spoken in the United States than ever before" (34). Therefore, it could be argued that to remedy the "problem" of a bi- or multilingual or bi- or multidialectal society, it is important for more people to be willing to accept and embrace linguistic differences. This acceptance and embrace will allow American citizens to more effectively navigate the melting pot that is America and the greater globally interconnected community while negotiating language barriers that prevent or impede communication between people of different races, cultures, and/or ethnicities. This holds very true for communities where there is a great number of

immigrants. The complexities of language and dialects—regional and social, standard and nonstandard—in the United States will probably surprise even native citizens of this country. It becomes necessary, therefore, for educational institutions in America to understand the complexity of languages and dialects in this country and to use it as a way to reach students, particularly in terms of advancement in Standard English language/grammar learning, which may be an altogether different language and/or dialect for the student who is learning it.

While it may not seem plausible upon first glance, if one studies the literature concerning language acquisition, he or she is likely to find many parallels between general language acquisition and the acquisition of Standard English. The latter, which is itself a dialect of the English language, is acquired by those who do not speak it, like ELLs and native nonstandard speakers (those who primarily speak other dialects like Spanglish and African American English). Much like it is considered necessary for children to learn their first or second-language early as possible, should also be considered necessary for children to have a grasp on Standard English as early as possible in order to do well academically. Roulstone, Law, Rush, Clegg, and Peters state in their book, *Investigating the Role of Language in Children's Early Educational Outcomes*, that there "is a strong association between a child's social background and their readiness for school" (3), and that language "development at the age of 2 years predicts children's performance on entry to primary school" (3). What is more interesting, however, is that they found, among other things, that the "communication environment is a more dominant predictor of early language than social background" (3). This means that children who come not necessarily primarily from privileged socio-economic backgrounds, of which Standard English or the like is the standard, but from

productive and nurturing communication environments, in which communication and language exploration are encouraged, are predicted to perform better than those who do not.

Therefore, in order to holistically understand the interconnectedness of the American Dream to Standard English acquisition, it is necessary to end exactly where this paper started. Children must be nurtured in the Standard early to increase their chances of doing well in school, and, thus, achieving the American Dream—at least as much of it as circumstances will allow. This is especially true of students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds where other varieties of English (or another language altogether) are the norm. While a strong grasp on Standard English represents "a sign of loyalty or patriotism" (Birch 2) to those who adhere to the colonial/imperialistic ideology, it also helps to guard minority/immigrant students from language prejudice, especially because they can expect to endure many other forms of prejudice. "Language prejudice," states Birch, "is toxic because it sometimes masquerades as standards but insidiously excludes some portion of our population" (7) and allows for judgment of those who do not speak the standard. Birch brings the point full-circle by stating that language prejudice is not necessarily racist or classist, but it is a question of privilege because "the closer someone's home language or dialect is to that of the school and workplace, the more advantage he or she has over those who must learn the language" (7). Conversely, those who do not speak the Standard at home generally require more remediation.

A call to action is necessary for those who do not primarily speak Standard English at home. Children should be encouraged to learn Standard English while understanding that the Standard is not the only dialect. This is called metalinguistic awareness, language about language, which enables children to consider language as separate from themselves (Birch

30). Learning of the Standard is necessary because this will help to close the educational, economic, and even racial disparities in American systems, specifically education, as it is necessary for their children, those typically from underprivileged backgrounds, to succeed in school and in the game of life. Neglect for the Standard in the home places children at a disadvantage when Standard English is taught in schools. Discussed earlier, Birch contextualizes the colonial/imperialistic ideology in a way that makes it seem that learning Standard English is an option; however, it is generally *required* in order to take advantage of the opportunities with which America has been endowed. Turning Birch's definition on its head, the Standard should be learned not as a way of denouncing one's heritage or background in order to assimilate into the dominant culture, but it should be learned as a way of consciously taking advantage of the opportunities that come with acquiring Standard English.

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Around the State in Thirty Days: In Defense of the Scholarly Literary Pilgrimage

By Lorie Watkins

Hello. My name is Lorie Watkins and I'm a literary tourist. I suspect it's a secret or not-so-secret addiction that many in this discipline share. We carve our lives and livings from books, so naturally we take those books along when we travel, or even plan our journeys around them. Nothing wards off unwanted advances at the beach as handily as a hefty tome, but more importantly, many of us derive a genuine pleasure from combining reading and travel in a sustained, academic fashion. I have, generally to my traveling companion's dismay, traced Mark Twain's path through the "Sandwich Islands," read O'Connor in Milledgeville, took Moby Dick along on a cruise, and have detoured to see more sights than I can count, both on and off the Southern Literary Trail, always with a book in hand. I'm saving my pennies now for a trip to Paris and have no doubt that when the time comes for me to go, my tattered copy of *A Movable Feast* will be in my bag.

There are several different varieties of the practice of literary tourism including guided and self-guided tours of homes, graves, and any number of other places associated with the lives of actual authors, explorations of fictional landscapes superimposed on the actual ones, and even theme parks such as Dickens World or Harry Potter World. I long to visit both, by the way. And any number of strange practices can be involved like leaving Bourbon at Faulkner's grave or tracing the Bloomsday route through Dublin (if only from your armchair). The practice is hardly a new one, despite the recent resurge of interest in it. Writer's home museums "have been on the

itineraries of the European Grand Tour since the sixteenth century. By the eighteenth century, you could visit Shakespeare's house in Stratford-upon-Avon and leave with a souvenir….In the United States, writer's houses started to be preserved at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, when historic preservation and tourism, both ways to shore up and create national memory, rose in cultural value" (Trubek 3).

I first contemplated incorporating literary tourism into my classroom when it was my turn to teach that ubiquitous cash cow commonly known as the "mini-session" or "intercession" course. These courses, which typically span a week or two at most, pose difficulties for all disciplines, but the challenges for any substantial study of literature are particularly difficult. In anticipation of the anniversary of Mississippi's bicentennial of statehood in 2017, I began planning my current book project and incorporated that information into a Mississippi literature class that would involve reading before the intercession period, travel during it, and reflection and research in the form of a seminar paper upon our return. I am an expert reader, but I am also admittedly an amateur in the industry and study of the practice of literary tourism. "Unseemly," "cheap appropriation," and "oversimplified" are among the first descriptors I came across concerning the cultural practice of literary tourism when I first began researching the subject for the travel component for that mini-session course. For example, Nicola J. Watson thinks the landscape sought by literary tourists, as she puts it, a "dangerously supplemental" text. She describes the practice of literary tourism as a "deeply counterintuitive response to the pleasures and possibilities of imaginative reading" and mentions "the embarrassment palpable among professional literary scholars over the practice of literary pilgrimage" because, in the age of Barthes and Foucault, "only the amateur, only the naïve reader, could suppose that there was

anything more…to be found on the spot marked X." I did eventually find scholars who wrote of the joys of traveling readership and even two scholars who suggest:

> Several qualifiers mark the literary pilgrim as a post-modern reader, one who tutors us in the dynamics of "new literacies." She crosses into dimly lit rooms in early morning to finger the dusty traces of idols, and in doing so she makes thinkable an ecology of reading praxis that takes seriously space, time, and containment in reading, and what these might actually signify for a new literacy in which life, literature, and theory interconnect. (Robertson and Radford 206-07)

I moved on to design my course as I tried to strike a balance between these two poles. I also knew that I needed to avoid presenting these sites in a way that would make my students either overly reverent or, at the other extreme, lure them into the "field trip" mentality. In short, I went into this fully aware of the pitfalls of the literary tourist trap and tried to avoid them at all cost.

I was largely successful, thanks in part to contextualization. In addition to reading authors both advocating and admonishing the practice of literary tourism, we read a variety of texts as we defined southern literature as a created and sustained industry whose roots could be traced far beyond *Gone with the Wind*. For example, we read chapters from texts including Michael Kreyling's *Inventing Southern Literature* and Eudora Welty's famous essay "Place in Fiction" to establish place as an element in Southern literature, but not the only one. As Welty writes:

> Place is one of the lesser angels that watch over the racing hand of fiction, perhaps the one that gazes benignly enough from off to one side, while others, like character, plot, symbolic meaning, and so on, are doing a good deal of wing-beating about her chair, and feeling, who in my eyes carries the crown, soars highest of them all and rightly relegates

> place into the shade. Nevertheless, it is this lowlier angel that concerns us here. There have been signs that she has been rather neglected of late; maybe she could do with a little petitioning. (16)

With this framework in mind, we began to "petition," as Miss Welty puts it, with an ever-skeptical eye, for the role of place and travel in reading.

We began our four-day-long literary tour of the state in Jackson, where we toured Welty's home and visited various sites relating to her, Richard Wright, and various other writers. From Jackson, we went to Natchez where we visited the ruins of Windsor. We also visited Richard Wright's home, and then waited for four hours in the Natchez Walmart while the auto mechanics fixed our three flat tires. Repairs complete, we then headed for the Delta and spent the night in seven renovated sharecropper cabins at Tallahatchie Flats, much like the ones occupied by Faulkner's Snopes clan and any number of Mississippi writers themselves. Our pilgrimage ended in north Mississippi where we visited several literary sites, toured Faulkner's home, and visited his grave before heading to his birthplace in New Albany and his great-grandfather's grave in Ripley.

The main saving grace of this exhausting endeavor was my inclusion of passages from the assigned course texts that illustrate how place shapes fiction and vice versa. For example, after viewing a period photograph of the old Bryant Store in Money, Mississippi, where Emmet Till's fatal mistake occurred, we visited the site as it appears today. We discussed the politics, demographics, and geographical isolation of the area then versus now (which were not that different, actually), compared our experiences as visitors in the Delta (a region none of the students had ever visited before) with Till's own experience as an outsider unfamiliar with the

cultural taboos and mores of the era, and read this passage from Lewis Nordan's *Wolf Whistle* at the ruins. Nordan writes of the whistle:

> It was Bobo, of course. Who else it gone be? That durn Bobo, acting on some dare another, double and dee-double and dog. Somebody out on the porch , aint no telling who, done bet Bobo a nickel he wouldn't axe that white lady for a date, since he liked white girls so much, since he's all time carrying on about a white girl, toting a white girl's picture in his wallet, axe her Bobo, go on and axe her, you so smart….all of a sudden Bobo turned around and looked right square in Lady Montberclair's face. Well sir. He said what he said, Bobo did. The blues singers stopped playing. They must have heard the children talking, must have suspected that the boy from Chicago didn't know no better. (33-34)

We left the ruined store, sobered, and headed for Pecan Point, the spot on the Tallahatchie River where seventeen year old Floyd Hodges discovered Till's body (Houck and Grindy 16). Nordan transfigures that scene in *Wolf Whistle* in the following passage which we read on site:

> Already two weeks had passed. Already the rain, that had so recently insisted it would never stop, was finished, forgotten. The sun shone. Children had attended school for ten days. Already blues singers avoided Reds gin front porch. Already Bobo's mother's heart was broken with fear. Already his uncle and auntee's lives were changed forever. Bobo's flesh grew soft in the running water. It lost its rich color. Turtles and fish nibbled at rags of meat. Already the barbed wire tether had slipped and lengthened, and Bobo's feet stuck up out of the water, above the surface of the lake. (182)

The combination of place, history, and literary reinterpretation of that history led to a powerful experience impossible to recreate here or in the classroom. As we drove on to Itta Bena, we

discussed the controversy concerning Nordan's appropriation of Till's story, his alterations, and the effective intersections of our own lives with this material. We had similarly productive experiences at several other sites, but I'll limit myself to just one more. Just outside of Oxford, prior to catfish at Taylor Grocery, we pondered the implications of *Sanctuary*'s Temple Drake jumping off the train at a stop like Taylor. As Faulkner describes it in *Sanctuary*, Temple "looked about, at the bleak yellow station, the overalled men chewing slowly and watching her, down the track the diminishing train, at the four puffs of vapor that had almost died away when the sound of the whistle came back" (203). This passage, combined with the isolation still palpable in modern-day Taylor, helped my students understand how Temple's choices are taken from her from the moment that she jumps into her nightmare at the Taylor depot.

"Unseemly" though it might have been, I taught the course with great success. In our travels, my students and I toured Eudora Welty's home with her biographer and long-time friend, Suzanne Marrs; enjoyed drinks poured by a server at the historic Edison Walthall hotel bar who told stories of serving Miss Welty for decades; and spent one transformative night sleeping in those renovated sharecropper cabins. As a result, after visiting (and revisiting) the physical and narrative sites of our state's literary history, fifteen high school English teachers returned to their classrooms to teach the literature of their home state in a new way, and I gained a new respect for the power of the intersections between geography and literature.

In the end, I discovered that place may be one of the lesser angels that guides the hand of the fiction writer, but it's a significant, useful, and enlightening angel nonetheless. Through revelations such as the ones I described, I came to think of our trip as more of a literary pilgrimage than as literary tourism. Pilgrimage, of course is a journey, especially a long one, made to some sacred place as an act of religious devotion. In this fashion we read the authors

whom we love as we traveled across our state with enough faith to make the journey---and with enough doubt to necessitate it.

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