

Copyright

by

Arthur Alvin VanderVeen, Jr.

2002

**The Dissertation Committee for Arthur Alvin VanderVeen, Jr. certifies that
this is the approved version of the following dissertation:**

**Other Minds, Other Worlds:
Pragmatism, Hermeneutics, and Constructive Modernism,
1890-1942**

Committee:

Warwick Wadlington, Co-Supervisor

Phillip Barrish, Co-Supervisor

Katherine Arens

Evan Carton

Brian Bremen

**Other Minds, Other Worlds:
Pragmatism, Hermeneutics, and Constructive Modernism,
1890-1942**

by

Arthur Alvin VanderVeen Jr., B.A., M.Div., M.A.

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

the University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

December 2002

“The more we see, the more we think; while the more we think, the more we see in our immediate experience, and the greater grows the detail, and the more significant the articulateness of our perception.”

William James

Acknowledgments

For their support, I would like to acknowledge the University of Texas at Austin Graduate School for a University Fellowship, the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation for an Ernest Hemingway Research Grant, and the Mellon Foundation for a Summer Seminar Grant. I cannot claim that this support speeded the completion of this project, but it did allow me to pursue my research interests more broadly and deeply than I would otherwise have been able. I extend my sincerest thanks to Warwick Wadlington, whose appreciation for the particularity and fullness of the world has taught me to avoid simple binaries and remain open to the disturbing details that lead to new insights. I am also grateful to Phillip Barrish, who helped me develop and refine a critical vocabulary for describing how my selected texts operate rhetorically within their cultural and historical context—a set of critical tools that will serve me throughout my career. Katherine Arens challenged me to study the critical conversation I was joining as I took up my project, which improved my work immensely. By her respect for the vocation of the scholar, she has modeled values that will guide me professionally. I am grateful to Brian Bremen for first inspiring my interest in American modernism and pragmatism, and to Evan Carton, whose informed readings of American literature and the history of criticism provided a context for my work. For their love, support, and patience, without which I could not have completed this project, I thank my family and friends, Art and Bettye VanderVeen, Deanna Parrett, Brian Gantt, Libba Letton, Katherine Oldmixon, Bill Greenway, and Richard Campbell.

**Other Minds, Other Worlds:
Pragmatism, Hermeneutics, and Constructive Modernism, 1890-1942**

Publication No. _____

Arthur Alvin VanderVeen, Jr., Ph.D.
The University of Texas at Austin, 2002

Supervisors: Warwick Wadlington and Phillip Barrish

Increasing dissatisfaction with a postmodern politics of identity during the 1990s has sparked a critical reconsideration of the nature of identity and difference, specifically as they are constituted within a modern liberal state. The virulent particularisms of identity-based social movements have persuaded many leftist critics that some kind of universalism is politically necessary to advance beyond the recognition of pure difference. As leftist critics take up the project of reconceiving the role of the universal within a framework of radical democracy, they have acknowledged uneasily liberalism's staying power as a seemingly necessary set of ideas, while also objecting to its essentialist pretensions. Notions of an autonomous and free subject of rights does not fit easily with post-structuralist assumptions, a disparity which has generated significant discussion regarding whether liberalism's thoroughgoing individualism can be reconstructed

to support collective identities and their pluralist participation in a radical democratic society. Liberalism's defining terms have not functioned unequivocally, however, as the essentialist concepts many leftist critics now figure them to be. This dissertation describes the efforts of "constructive modernists" in the U.S. to problematize liberal models of the self as founded on natural foundations. These efforts resulted in new representations of the self and society not as natural, given entities but as interdependent centers of discursive activity. In his experiential psychology, William James conceives of the self as a dynamic, coordinating center of interest and activity within the stream of consciousness. John Dewey expands James's model to examine how individuals and society interdependently conceive, articulate, sustain, and modify these subjective formations through cultural expressions. Progressive intellectuals Herbert Croly and Walter Lippmann promote a discourse model of the public sphere, where self and society reciprocally define one another through democratic participation, cultural expression, and a pragmatist verification of truth. Other constructive modernists—including W. E. B. Du Bois, Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and William Faulkner—explore the implications of a modern, discursive self, showing how relations of power, compulsion, habit, and regressive cultural narratives constrain our efforts to write individual narratives of self-development into the historical, cultural narrative of the nation.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	
Toward a Genealogy of the Modern Discursive Self	1
CHAPTER ONE	
Embedded Worlds: The Radical Empiricism of William James	31
CHAPTER TWO	
Reconstructing the Real: John Dewey and the Reflex Arc.....	74
CHAPTER THREE	
Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, and the Production of Public Opinion.....	123
CHAPTER FOUR	
Writing Jim Crow with W. E. B. Du Bois.....	150
CHAPTER FIVE	
Turning Corners, Trading Worlds: The Constructive Modernisms of Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, and John Dos Passos	210
CHAPTER SIX	
Gold Coins, Smudged Souls, and Discourses of Value in Yoknapatawpha.....	276
CONCLUSION	
Over the Horizon.....	347
WORKS CITED.....	352
VITA.....	381

Introduction

Toward a Genealogy of the Modern Discursive Self

Increasing dissatisfaction with a postmodern politics of identity during the 1990s has sparked a critical reconsideration of the nature of identity and difference, specifically as they are constituted within a modern liberal state. The virulent particularisms of identity-based social movements have persuaded many leftist critics that “some kind of universalism is politically necessary to advance a politics of social movements beyond the recognition of pure difference” (Lott 668). Just what that universalism is supposed to look like, notes Eric Lott, is the burning question.

As leftist critics take up the project of reconceiving the role of the universal within a framework of radical democracy, they have acknowledged uneasily liberalism’s staying power as a seemingly necessary set of ideas, while also objecting to its essentialist pretensions. At the heart of classical liberal formulations of self and society is the notion that all persons are born into a state of nature, whose God recognizes the equal dignity of each, and that autonomous individuals may freely divest themselves of their natural liberties to become a “subject of rights” and enjoy the protections of civil society (Locke 269-270; 330). Notions of an autonomous and free subject of rights does not fit easily with post-structuralist assumptions, however, a disparity which has generated significant discussion regarding whether liberalism’s thoroughgoing individualism can be

reconstructed to support collective identities and their pluralist participation in a radical democratic society.

Despite claims to natural foundations, liberalism's defining terms have not functioned unequivocally as the essentialist concepts many leftist critics now figure them to be, even within the history of liberalism. Liberalism has helped shape different understandings of self, state, and civil society, as different formations of capitalism have. Its constituent elements and their reciprocally defining relationships bear a sedimented history of definitions particular to multiple historical and geopolitical settings. In taking up Locke, Smith, and Hume as their interlocutors, however, leftist critics position themselves against an ahistorical antagonist, overlooking certain historical reconfigurations of liberalism that have variously survived in and been displaced by the neo-conservative formulations that currently exercise hegemony in the United States. To avoid the dangers of articulating new models against false abstractions, it is important that we carry out a more careful genealogical analysis of liberalism's formations, to which this project will contribute some initial observations and reflections.

Specifically, I will describe efforts during the Progressive period in the U.S. to problematize liberal models of the self as founded on natural foundations, efforts that resulted in new representations of the self and society as interdependent centers of discursive activity.

The cultural movements that pursued a politics based on differential identities initiated this historicizing project to combat the assimilationist dynamics of liberalism's essentialist categories. The universality of the autonomous subject and the sovereignty of the state have been appropriately historicized, "exposed," writes Wendy Brown, "not only as bourgeois but as relentlessly raced, gendered, and sexed—as shot through with stratifying and subject-producing social powers" (13). Liberalism is a historically specific and culturally contingent social construction, writes Jürgen Habermas: the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere of contract-based commodity and labor exchange among private persons was an effect of the expansion of commercial capitalism beginning in the sixteenth century (Structural 1-29). Moreover, the bourgeois insistence on the freedom and autonomy of the private individual should be understood as a political claim within the contest between bourgeois and feudal structures of economic and social control. The appeals to reason and common law as "higher" authorities than the authority of the prince or the state were cultural constructions aimed at changing existing structures of power (Structural 27-29).¹

¹ Of course Marx would characterize these appeals as ideological fictions obscuring bourgeois exploitation of the proletariat and question whether the breaking of feudal relations in favor of capitalist methods of production, the
(Continued)

Conceiving the subject of rights as a reasonable, free, and autonomous individual proved to be effective in resisting absolutist denials of political participation in early modern Great Britain, France, and Germany. But, notes Kirstie McClure, it also excluded others who were dependent, such as women, children, laborers, and the insane, who did not enjoy such public representability (111). Proponents of a politics of difference have argued persuasively that the supposedly neutral principles of liberal society reflect the contingent history of a particular hegemonic culture; invoking the abstract subject of rights has served to displace the claims of unequal treatment by those who have been persistently excluded from its formulations of public selves and thus has operated discursively, subtly, and systemically to suppress participation. This, writes Charles Taylor, is a disturbing prospect for those who hold out faith that an appeal to universal, difference-blind principles can structure an equitable society, for we are still uncertain whether the historical discriminations are an amendable consequence of modern liberalism's specific and contingent history or whether we have discovered that the very idea of such a liberalism is a pragmatic contradiction, "a particularism masquerading as a universal," imposing its discriminatory values under the guise of a universal neutrality ("Politics" 44).

commodification of labor, and the appropriation of surplus value was emancipatory.

Whether an impossibility or not, liberalism has failed to function as a true universal because it has not reconciled its commitment to blind and equal justice with the modern belief that recognition is instrumental in each individual's lifelong process of dialogically constructing a social identity. As hierarchical social structures and strict social definitions of identity weakened, descriptions of the modern self (e.g., those of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Gottfried Herder, and Jonathan Edwards) included notions of authenticity, being true to one's inner voice, and expressing the pre-understandings and traditions of one's cultural heritage.² Western procedural liberalism, however, restricts its jurisdiction and claims no authority over the putatively private concerns surrounding representation and recognition. Procedural liberalism opts rather to regulate only those fundamental rights—rights to life, liberty, due process, free speech, free practice of religion, and so on—that liberal society has chosen to guarantee indiscriminately to all.³ As representation and recognition of one's particular

² Charles Taylor provides a concise history of the significance of recognition in modern models of the self, as developed by Kant, Rousseau, Herder, and Hegel. See Sources of the Self : The Making of the Modern Identity. For a brief summary, see "Politics of Recognition."

³ That a liberal society must remain neutral regarding specific conceptions of the good life is characteristic of what Michael Sandel has called "procedural

(Continued)

forms of life—and the cultural milieu that supports them—are increasingly figured as integral to the formation of identity and, therefore, the pursuit of life, however, liberalism encounters an aporia: its commitment to the equal dignity of each person based on an abstract, Kantian notion of his or her innate human *potential* cannot accommodate modern notions of the self that figure human potential as both enabled and constrained by one's cultural environment. Habermas explains:

For from a normative point of view, the integrity of the individual legal person cannot be guaranteed without protecting the intersubjectively shared experiences and life contexts in which the person has been socialized and has formed his or her identity. The identity of the individual is interwoven with collective identities and can be stabilized only in a cultural network that cannot be

liberalism.” See “The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self.” In her formulation of radical democracy, Chantal Mouffe affirms the separation between the public and private, citing Hannah Arendt's model of the public sphere where members of civil society exist *as citizens* and act collectively to resolve democratically the issues concerning their life in the political community without reference to gender, ethnic, religious or racial identity (Dimensions 9).

appropriated as private property any more than the mother tongue itself can be. (“Struggles for Recognition” 129)

Where Locke figured life, liberty, and happiness as property, which could be defined and codified into public objects, modern notions of the self figure these as qualities of the self’s hermeneutical process of development, which is pursued dialogically with others within a dynamic cultural sphere that mediates the available life forms by which individuals and the group reproduce themselves, thus sustaining their individual and historical existence. These cannot be simply appropriated and/or defended, they can only be constructed interdependently. From this perspective, liberalism’s commitment to the equal protection of life, liberty, and happiness would entail a social commitment to preserving the cultural forms and means of expression that enable and sustain the pursuit of life and happiness.

This systemic, hermeneutical perspective complicates simple notions of identity because it rejects any formulation of an autonomous self, whether it be the abstract subject of rights or an essentialist self grounded on claims to authentic experience or other ontological grounds. It also poses significant problems for accommodating political assertions of identity—which are generally voiced by collective actors contending about collective goals and the distribution of collective goods—within a liberal constitutional and juridical framework that thinks in terms of discrete autonomous entities. “Can a theory of rights that is so

individualistically constructed deal adequately with struggles for recognition in which it is the articulation and assertion of collective identities that seems to be at stake?” asks Habermas (“Struggles” 107, 108).⁴ Liberalism’s apparent inability to

⁴ Despite some historians’ claims that eighteenth-century American political theory was motivated by an enthusiastic embrace of republicanism—with its appeals to classical notions of the common good, benevolence, and public virtue—the constitutional government produced by the generation of revolutionary leaders was thoroughly individualistic and Lockean in how it structured relations of self and society. The “republican synthesis” proposed by historians of U.S. history during the 1960s and 1970s developed in reaction to longstanding views—primary among them being those of Louis Hartz, as developed in The Liberal Tradition in America—that posited the centrality of Locke in the formation of American constitutional structures and identity. Republicanism was also argued against the socioeconomic interpretations of progressive historian Charles Beard. Principal contributors included Bernard Bailyn, Pamphlets of the American Revolution; H. Trevor Colbourn, The Lamp of Experience; Gordon Wood, Creation of the American Republic; Gerald Stourzh, Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government; and J. G. A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment. John Diggins challenges the republican synthesis in The Lost Soul in American Politics. Robert Shalhope provides a

(Continued)

accommodate modern—i.e., dialogical, constructivist, and collectivist—notions of the self has contributed to the current confusion of leftist politics, which has been unable to articulate positive legitimating grounds for its commitments to recognition, emancipation, and justice within the context of a liberal democratic culture.

This inability to reconcile the recognition of particular cultural identities with a liberal model of universal human nature and equal citizenship reflects in part the breakdown of modern narratives that have historically provided the links between the private and public spheres. Modern, Enlightenment narratives assumed that private interests were negotiated into the public sphere through voluntary association and open communication, mediated by a common human nature and universal reason. Open and reasonable communication would expand public recognition and the conferral of rights, achieving, through the progressive and teleological advance of history, a consensus between democratic public opinion and universal principles of equality, liberty, and the protection of human rights. American liberal democratic institutions, and the

history of these contending schools in “Toward a Republican Synthesis: The Emergence of an Understanding of Republicanism in American Historiography.” See also Daniel T. Rodgers, “Republicanism: The Career of a Concept” and Robert Kelley, “Ideology and Political Culture from Jefferson to Nixon.”

Constitution that authorizes them, presume these Enlightenment narratives that have now been deeply troubled, both from within and without.⁵ How are we to conceive of the individual and the state, how are we to regard the efficacy of rights-based definitions of justice, without a narrative of progress that promises an expansion of rights, equality, and freedom? Brown poses the question this way:

How do we live in these broken narratives, when nothing has taken their place? And how do we conjure an emancipatory future within a liberalism out of history? If the fabric of (universal) justice premised on the (universal) man of the liberal dream is in tatters, on what do we pin our hopes for a more just society? And without the belief in progressive history carrying liberalism toward whatever this

⁵ Though it is beyond the scope of this project, a full account of the breakdown of these modern narratives would consider the troubling from without produced by Communism's global collapse in the late 1980s. Brown argues that these events eliminated another crucial touchstone for liberalism's identity, literally removing the opposition against which contemporary liberal freedom could be figured (12-13). I speak to this issue in the Conclusion, where I lay out lines for future work.

reformulated aim might be, what is the engine of historical movement that would realize these hopes? (14)

Brown argues that we late moderns are haunted by these broken narratives, still mourning their loss and suffering our disenchantment, having not yet adequately interrogated how liberalism's naturalized categories served and continue to serve contingent, historical interests.

I say "continue to serve" because contemporary descriptions of liberalism's "pseudo-universals" are serving as an opposition against which postmodern critics are defining "new universals" that may provide positive means for overcoming difference without introducing the imperialist tendencies of old-fashioned Enlightenment totalities.⁶ Much of this work remains abstract and preliminary, with critics sketching out requirements rather than defining how a new universal will indeed effectively recognize particularity while promoting values that should be common to all. The most promising projects agree, however, on this requirement: that our task is to conceive of a universal that is subject to history, articulated and enacted through radical democratic expression

⁶ On the return of the universal, see Eric Lott, "After Identity, Politics"; Linda Zerilli, "This Universalism Which is Not One"; Naomi Schor, "French Feminism is a Universalism"; Michael Walzer, "Two Kinds of Universalism"; Joan Scott, "Universalism and the History of Feminism."

and voluntary identification. In rethinking Hegel's gendered universal, for example, Luce Irigaray concludes that the new universal is to be a mediation, constituted by the political work of those that invoke it (Sexes 147). Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe also assume that the universal and the particular articulations that define it remain political, historical, and contingent, with the universal functioning as an empty signifier, an always receding horizon that productively mediates the demands, affiliations, and aspirations of the articulated community. Zerilli paraphrases Laclau's Emancipation(s) to describe it thus:

Hegemony means that the relation between universal and particular entails not the realization of a shared essence or the final overcoming of all differences but an ongoing and conflict-ridden process of mediation through which antagonistic struggles articulate common social objectives and political strategies. The very fact that commonalities must be *articulated* through the interplay of diverse political struggles—rather than discovered and then merely followed, as one follows a rule—means, first, that no group or social actor can claim to represent the totality and, second, that there can be no fixing of the final meaning of universality (especially not through rationality). (Zerilli 11)

This model of the empty signifier as mediating horizon assumes the following: guiding ethical principles are historical and contingent, and shaped by

the particular interests of the members of society; they are made productive through psychic and social investment, or identification; and they are effective in mediating material social conditions. What then is their relationship to liberal institutions whose purview traditionally has been the protection of individual rights through constitutional and juridical regimes? If we are to assume that universals are constructed through democratic, articulatory identifications, then we may conclude that traditional liberal commitments to the universal dignity and equal rights of all persons are themselves historical constructions that have garnered sufficient psychic investment to become productive in mediating social behavior in ways that continue to attract that investment. This perspective does not recognize any legitimating ground for universal ethical principles outside the political, that is, outside the mediating activities by which the citizens reach agreement about their ethical-political self-understanding. This mediation takes place, writes Habermas, in the

discussions about a shared conception of the good and a desired form of life that is acknowledged to be authentic. In such discussions the participants clarify the way they want to understand themselves as citizens of a specific republic, as inhabitants of a specific region, as heirs to a specific culture, which traditions they want to perpetuate and which they want to discontinue, how they

want to deal with their history, with one another, with nature, and so on. (“Struggles” 125)

Habermas argues that this constructivist model of the universal is in fact *conceptually necessary* to a liberal model that posits the autonomy of the individual, as persons can acquire autonomy (in the Kantian sense) only to the extent that they can understand themselves to be the authors of the laws to which they are subject as private legal persons (112). To conceive of the universal as an ahistorical truth is to perpetuate the hierarchical binary of dominant universal and subordinate particular that has served only to mystify the historical articulations of power that have proven unsatisfactory.

For in the final analysis, private legal persons cannot even attain the enjoyment of equal individual liberties unless they themselves, by jointly exercising their autonomy as citizens, arrive at a clear understanding about what interests and criteria are justified and in what respects equal things will be treated equally and unequal things unequally in any particular case. (113)

As conceived by Laclau and Mouffe, the articulation of the universal as empty signifier—as a vanishing point or horizon that organizes and mediates the ethical and political activity of the group—reflects the dematerializing and de-essentializing tendencies of late modernity. Their formulation of articulation draws on the Freudian concept of overdetermination, wherein signifiers (whether

hysterical symptoms or dreams) do not represent transparently a single present fullness of meaning but function nodally within layers of repeated dreams or traumas. Through mechanisms of condensation, signifiers carry the presence of other signifiers, preventing any of their identities from being fixed.

Objects appear articulated not like pieces in a clockwork mechanism, but because the presence of some in the others hinders the suturing of the identity of any of them. [. . .] [W]e will call *articulation* any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice, we will call *discourse*. (Laclau and Mouffe 104, 105).

Society is not an objective totality, add the authors, as every nodal point (among these being subject positions) is constituted within an intertextuality that overflows it. Because these articulated moments within the discursive field are “failed objects,” or quasi-objects that are never autonomous or discrete, they always imply a larger horizon that makes sense of them. Articulating such a meaning-producing horizon is the political work inspired by myth, which promises “to suture that dislocated space [of failed objects] through the constitution of a new space of representation.” Thus, concludes Laclau, “the effectiveness of myth is essentially hegemonic: it involves forming a new objectivity by means of the rearticulation of the dislocated elements” (New Reflections 61).

Critics have approached the current project to reconsider the productive value of universals in a pluralistic democratic tradition from three perspectives: as a continuation of the modern, Enlightenment project, represented by the work of Habermas and John Rawls; as a neo-Gramscian, post-Marxist project, represented by the work of Laclau and Mouffe; and as a neo-pragmatist project, represented by the work of Cornell West, Walter Benn Michaels, and Richard Rorty.⁷ These efforts to rethink the possibilities of radical democracy call for a more thorough genealogical analysis of current liberal formulations. Mouffe, for example, proposes a vision of radical democracy that combines liberal pluralism with civic republican articulations of the common good without providing any historical sense of how those terms have been variously conceived at different times and in different places since the eighteenth century (“Democratic Politics”; “Democratic Citizenship”). To counterpose Machiavelli, Rousseau, and Montesquieu against Locke and Hume is not to interrogate adequately how current formulations of the common good as defined by a multicultural, international community of nations is functioning within the Bush Doctrine, for

⁷ In this gross schematic, I would locate the work of Judith Butler and other Foucauldian and Derridean critics, as well as Slavoj Žižek’s Lacanian psychoanalytic approach, with Laclau and Mouffe’s post-Marxist discursive materialism.

example. Nor is it to interrogate how “the end of history” and the hegemony of U.S. power are figured in terms of the abstract binaries of the Cold War, which demand their own ontological analyses. As Laclau and Mouffe explicitly position their efforts to rethink the leftist project as a counter to neo-conservative appeals to democratic principles, a proper genealogy of these claims should be expected.

As Kirstie McClure points out in her contribution to Mouffe’s collection, liberal formulations of the subject of rights and the sovereign state have a more recent history that is relevant to contemporary critical and political debates. McClure takes up three periods of heightened critical reflection on liberal democratic pluralism in the U.S.: the first two decades of the twentieth century, when Progressive intellectuals drawing on the pragmatist philosophy of William James contested models of state sovereignty that excluded the emergence of independent civic organizations; the 1950s and 1960s, when social scientists Robert Dahl and David Truman conducted detailed analyses of voting blocs within the American electorate; and current efforts to reinscribe the subject of rights within a post-Marxist pluralism (113-115).

The first-generation pluralism challenged the period’s philosophical monism as expressed both in the grand narratives of historical progress and in the sovereign state as the vehicle for universal publicity. Pluralist thinkers such as Ernest Barker and Harold Laski promoted instead a notion of “distributive sovereignty,” in which a plurality of self-constituting groups constituted the social.

This displacement of the sovereign state had a profound effect on the notion of the autonomous subject of rights as well, as the pluralist social subject was understood as bearing multiple, group-affiliated public identities. This new group pluralism, concludes McClure,

reinscribed the “subject of rights” as a creature whose *political* identity was no longer given by virtue of its “individuality”, but rather was contingently constituted, *within* the social, by its participation in group processes. And this, I think initiated a shift in the interior of Anglo-American liberalism towards the construction of a social subject distant not only from Marxism’s ontologically privileged class agency, but from liberalism’s autonomous, rational individual as well. (117)

McClure recounts how new definitions of political sovereignty at the turn of the twentieth century in the U.S. altered the relationship between the individual and the state, expanding possibilities for a group-centered civil society. In my project, I recount how social scientists, political experts, and writers of essays and fiction from 1890 to 1942 further elaborate this model of a socially constituted self, specifically within the context of liberal Progressive philosophy and political theory. My project is the beginning of a history of several American efforts to problematize naturalized models of self and society, showing them to be contingent, dialogical, cultural, and historical constructions specific to their

place and time. The articulations of self and society I describe in this project will provide the groundwork for the fuller genealogy of liberalism that I have proposed above.

In his Principles of Psychology (1890), William James provides the conceptual tools that would enable social scientists in the U.S. to conceive of the self as a discursively constituted site of motivated, pragmatic activity. Conceived in opposition to both Spencerian environmental determinism and Kantian freedom, the Jamesian model of the self underwrites our present abilities to rethink how non-essentialist subjects might participate responsibly and effectively in a democratic liberal society. James's refusal to conceive of the mind as a mirror of nature compelled him to imagine the individual self as a center of coordinated activity within the flux of experience. His radical empiricism helps us conceive how ideology and the material conditions of life interdependently constitute one another, encouraging us to resist the recurring temptation to privilege the material over the "merely cultural." In chapter one I offer a reading of James's Principles of Psychology (1890) to describe the components of this radical empiricism, which helped a generation of progressive intellectuals to consider the conditions and limitations of pluralism and the parameters of the public space.

John Dewey grasped early the power of James's radical empiricism to free psychology and philosophy from having to resolve the epistemological questions posed by a model of mind as the mirror of nature. In his seminal essay, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), Dewey applied James's radical empiricism to construct the stimulus-response mechanism not as a series of discrete impulses received from the environment which compound automatically into actions; rather, Dewey privileged purposive action (whether conscious or not) as the organizing context, serving to coordinate the discrete elements of any task into an organic whole. From this perspective, purposive activity "searches out" origins (stimuli) and ends-in-view (responses) by which to interpret experience into meaningful continuities. Dewey's adoption of a radically empiricist perspective applied also to his portrayal of social inquiry, whereby a community cooperatively experiments toward a consensual, though often tacit, vision of the common good. The instrumental use of ideas and the pragmatic evaluation of their value result in method and process rather than a substantive ideal of the common good; Dewey's republic is always in process as individuals cooperatively interpret the shared experience of the community by searching out origins and ends-in-view that, as narrative, effectively attract the continuing identifications of others.

By attempting to translate Deweyan and Jamesian models of a radically empiricist, socially mediated identity into a political program, progressive

intellectuals Herbert Croly and Walter Lippmann offer a valuable case study for considering how individuals articulate their public identities through group identifications. Croly and Lippmann analyze how individual expressions of subjective experience form a public opinion that is dialectically informed both by current experience and a historico-social sensibility. Croly embarks on a search for the compelling and defining promise of the American nation, its *Bildung*, or self-formation, that would have the power to form individual character in a way that the amoral philosophy of laissez-faire liberalism could not. *Effective* liberty required that the individual mediate its self-development through the forming power of national purpose. In Progressive Democracy (1914), Croly claims that the viscerally felt disruptions of identity coherence and the frustrations of agency are what motivate efforts to articulate oneself into new progressive structures. Croly's model of a hermeneutically formed, non-essentialist identity motivated by a sense of lack is present in recent articulatory models of a discursive self.

Lippmann grows increasingly skeptical through the 1930s that these disruptions and frustrations can be remedied by individual identifications with and articulations of any social or historical sensibility. By designating the Great

Society⁸ as that agonistic other that thwarts recognition and agency, however, Lippmann emphasizes the political nature of myriad particular acts of interpretation and expression of experience which could, if channeled appropriately by those who manage the means of modern communication, still form an effective public sensibility. The task of the progressive social scientist was to actively infuse this realm of communicative activity with information derived from pragmatic engagement with one's environment.

The interpretive expressions of several writers demonstrate both a radical empiricist model of experience and an interest in exploring how the interpenetration of culture and the material conditions of life shape the mechanisms by which individuals reciprocally articulate individual and social identities. Writers whom I call constructive modernists, including W. E. B. Du Bois, Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and William Faulkner, address questions of historical formation, the meaning of culture, the possibilities of representability and recognition, and the possibilities of agency and social transformation. I conceive the value of reading the fiction and essays within this historical context much as Zola conceived the value of the

⁸ Lippmann takes the term from his Harvard mentor and Fabian socialist Graham Wallas to describe modern society as having grown too complex for meaningful participation by individuals.

experimental novel: these authors put into play a model of self and world that is radically empiricist, hermeneutical, contingent, historical, and socially mediated; we may allow the narrative intelligence of the novels and essays to illustrate the consequences and dynamics of this worldview, drawing inductively from our own reading experience to think through the urgent questions of difference and public representation that were posed during the Progressive era much as they are being posed by leftist cultural critics today. Furthermore, these writers extend the horizon of this model to include the reader, who is invited to complete a variety of symbolic actions that are crafted within the text. I read these invitations as mechanisms for training the reader to develop the skills demanded by a radical empiricist perspective: the willingness to act purposively and meaningfully within one's horizon of meaning, *articulating* available cultural forms, in the sense of both enacting and bending those forms, empowered by a sense of one's self as an active agent who materializes one's culture and one's self in the process of enacting its forms.⁹

⁹ My specific readings will elaborate a hermeneutical model of enacting cultural forms to create worlds, which derives from Johann Gottfried Herder's model of language as the discourse within which our thoughts and expressions construct themselves. Similar and recent models include a *practice-based* model of enacting cultural forms as rules for meaningful participation in a language

(Continued)

I designate these writers as constructive modernists because their analyses of contingent, historical human experience rejected the metaphysical assumptions that support essentialist or naturalized conceptions of self or society. As did Johann Gottfried Herder, James, Dewey, Wilhelm Dilthey, and other historical social scientists, constructive modernist writers explored the means for describing, interpreting, and articulating shared worlds from within the stream of contingent and historical experience. The strategies by which they attempted that project through their fiction and essays shed light on the strategies by which we today may articulate productive horizons through radical (i.e., nonessentialist) democratic means.

game as described by the later Wittgenstein. This model is also evident in Clifford Geertz's description of culture as the rules which, when followed, make it possible for one to interact successfully with the members of one's community (Geertz 11). Judith Butler draws on this tradition to arrive at a model of sexual identity that is constrained by discursive norms but also dynamic in the performance of those norms (Bodies 94-95). Always intent on defending the culturally mediated and constructed nature of identity, Butler cites Wittgenstein to offer a model of constraint that need not seek recourse in metaphysical, precultural, or essentialist models of sexual identity, but inheres in the nature of the public enactment of the rules of the language game (94, 265 note).

In terms of their literary historical genealogy, critics typically characterize the modernist impulse as a search for order within the fragmentation of modern experience. This search can be located historically at the point of crisis where Victorian grand narratives for making sense of the world were judged inadequate for guiding modern experience. Daniel Singal identifies modernism's defining characteristic as an attempt to reconcile these opposing tendencies, one toward alienation, fragmentation, and irrationalism; the other in pursuit of cohesion and integration (vii). Most often, critics emphasize modernism's irrationalism, its privileging of the primitive as a renewing source of energy, and its solipsistic search for private, ahistorical structures of coherence that refuse to narrate a continuity with larger public narratives. Edmund Wilson in *Axel's Castle* cites Proust's hypochondriac, recumbent inspection of his private sensations; Stein's withdrawal into impenetrable catalogs and incantations; and Yeats's championing of solitary vision over a life of action as representative of this European line of modernism. Numerous critics have challenged this genealogy from a variety of perspectives but have shared the belief that the terms of European modernism are inappropriate for describing American literary reactions to the experience of modernity. In his contribution to Singal's collection, David Hollinger characterizes this split as the tension between "the knower" and "the artificer," the former believing culture could be rehabilitated through a "cognitive, public, cooperative enterprise," the latter believing culture had to be made anew by contriving new

myths out of the artist's private, pre-rational experience.¹⁰ Hollinger argues that most critiques of modernism focus on the artist as heroic artificer, but recalls that

¹⁰ Hollinger cites antithetical metaphors of the mirror and the lamp to differentiate these two strategies for knowing and representing the world, representing the mimetic and expressive theories of language. He characterizes these as steps in a dialectic, with "cognitive" modernism (specifically pragmatism) representing something of a synthesis (46). Hollinger mentions Dewey's instrumentalism as representative of this synthesis: for Dewey "finding" is a form of "making," and "science entailed acting upon and reshaping the world rather than merely mirroring it" (54). According to M.H. Abrams, these opposing metaphors arose with the publication of Wordsworth's definition of poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," which introduced the expressive theory as a counter to the theory of art as imitation going back to the tenth book of Plato's Republic and Aristotle's Poetics. (Abrams acknowledges a parallel Romantic tradition emerging simultaneously in Germany, with Herder, Goëthe, Schlegel, and others, but focuses primarily on the English Romantics.) As Abrams reminds us, the Romantic metaphors for the mind introduced by Coleridge and Wordsworth emphasized perception as active rather than inertly passive reception, whereby "the perceiving mind discovers what it has itself partly made" (58).

Edmund Wilson's hope in Axel's Castle is not to replace the Artificer with the Knower, but to "make art and science one" (Hollinger 56). Constructive modernists understood their aesthetic projects as providing a way back to a shared public language that enabled individuals to identify their individual experience with communal articulations of meaning.¹¹ For the constructive

¹¹ Numerous critics of modernism, however, characterize its search for aesthetic coherence as a retreat from socio-historical and political concerns. Charles Russel describes modernism's "Parnassian impulse" as "modernist hermeticism" and contrasts this to the politically engaged efforts of the avant-garde movement which sought to restructure institutions of art and bourgeois culture (3-38). Russel attributes modernism's complicated aesthetics to Théophile Gauthier's "art for art's sake," which Russel argues derived from Kant's aesthetics but was mobilized as a defense against the market-driven demand for pulp fiction in England in mid-nineteenth century (18). Andreas Huysen differentiates the historical avant-garde from modernism, claiming the avant-garde movement challenged modernism's exclusion and derogation of mass culture, and so was more politically engaged (Huysen viii, 7). See also Martha Woodmansee for a history of modernist aesthetics from the perspective of artists' and writers' relationship to nineteenth-century capitalism and mass

(Continued)

culture. Peter Bürger also uses the avant-garde as a foil to modernism, which he criticizes for withdrawing into art itself. Eric Sundquist characterizes the late nineteenth-century social, economic, and political scene in the U.S. as so corrupt and dismaying that writers had no alternative but to escape into imagination (7). Frederic Jameson criticizes modernism's "sealed aesthetic realm" that is cut off from "bodily" time and experience. Modernist art and literature thus replicates the fragmentation and alienation of modernity (Marxism and Form). Raymond Williams argues that the self-reflexivity of the text and the alignment with the unconscious enabled modernists to denaturalize a language that was once thought transparent and to challenge the fixed norms and cultural authority of the academics and the bourgeois consumers (Politics 32). Williams regrets that modernism quickly lost its anti-bourgeois edge, however, aligning itself with international capitalism and providing easy iconography for advertising. Toril Moi summarizes Georg Lukács's critique of modernism as the decadent and regressive art of capitalism, representing the fragmented, subjectivist, and individual psychologism of oppressed and exploited human subjects. Marjorie Perloff enumerates the usual catalog of complaints, describing modernism as dismissive of the outer world, concerned with the subjectivity and creativity of the heroic artist, who is amoral, anti-conceptual, isolated, and in search of myth as an organizing structure for his or her divided consciousness. Harold Bloom, on

(Continued)

modernist, the dynamic and reciprocal relationship between the cultural forms that are inherited and performed by the community member and the material elements that are made meaningful through those performances underwrites the living, creative moments of the modernist experience. It is the living moment of the speech-act, which enacts the limited power both to situate oneself intelligibly within the available codes of interpretive conventions and to modify those codes by asserting a new relationship among those conventional elements. It takes seriously the idea that the parts can be transformed by offering a new vision of the whole, and that a vision of the whole can be altered by provoking a reconfiguration of the parts. The exercise of these strategies to include the reader in this transforming practice is at the heart of the constructive modernism I will explore in this project.

Briefly, I find these works instructive for this project in different ways. Du Bois was a major, though overlooked, source for introducing historical social science methods to the United States. A thorough use of the hermeneutical methods of description and interpretation characterize his social studies of Philadelphia's 7th Ward and the rural black communities of the South. I propose

the other hand, traces modernism's impulses to the English Romantic poets and praises the modernists' attempts to provide a coherent vision of the universe which, as a secular religion, enables us to live.

that the reciprocating movement of description and explanation are evident in his lyrical essays and fiction as well. As do all of the writers of this study, Du Bois expressly creates a hermeneutical opportunity for the reader, structuring a reciprocating movement that first engages the reader in a sympathetic identification with the world of the text. The lyrical expressions of personal experience—both beautiful and painful—elicit felt energies from the reader that may be progressively refined into new experiential content that will persist in the reader's construed world. The reader searches for new configurations to accommodate those energies and articulate that content into continuities with her original horizon. Faulkner discloses in his novels between 1929 and 1942 the dramatic ways that power, compulsion, habit, and regressive cultural narratives constrain the vocabularies available to us as we attempt to shape politically our prospects for a more expansive democratic community. Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, and John Dos Passos vividly portray how the complexities of urban life and the proliferation of mass media frustrate individual efforts to write private subjective experience into a public narrative of the nation.

Relying on the fictional intelligence of these historical case studies in literature is appropriate, I believe, as it reminds us that our political efforts to articulate new democratic hegemonic formations relies ultimately on our ability to feel and describe and interpret the horizon of another lived world.

Chapter One

Embedded Worlds: The Radical Empiricism of William James

Numerous contemporary discourses converged during the late nineteenth century in the United States to encourage people to think of their lived experience as constituting organic wholes that both responded to and shaped individual activity. The evolutionary dynamism of Darwin's model of natural selection; the emergence of a conceptual psychology in Germany and the U.S.; the voluntarist, scientific methodologies of American pragmatism; and the historicism of the German social sciences are among the influences that informed this new systemic perspective. In this chapter I will disclose some of these influences as they shaped the compelling interests, questions, and answers of William James's efforts to describe how a person could be both continuous with nature and pragmatically effective in governing her interactions with her environment.

Cornell West characterizes American pragmatism as "a diverse and heterogeneous tradition" emerging out of many distinctive features of American civilization during the nineteenth century, including its liberal rule of law, its hybridity of cultures, its obsession with "mobility, contingency, and pecuniary liquidity," its impatience with philosophy, and its celebration of technical innovation (West 5). James Kloppenberg describes pragmatism as a convergence of ideas among a generation of thinkers who sought to free philosophy from the "tangle of misconceptions originating in Descartes's initial

attempt to establish certainty” of knowledge upon the undeniable fact of self-awareness (Kloppenberg 47). Most historians define the movement around its attempts to evade the epistemological questions that concerned Descartes’s successors, who diverged into empiricist and rationalist camps as they searched for a unity and purpose within which the separate, perceiving mind and nature were found to be commensurate with one another.¹² Instead, pragmatism assumes what Richard Rorty calls a “therapeutic” rather than a “constructive” stance toward knowledge (Philosophy 5), by which we conceive new purposes, new descriptions, and new disciplines so that we may “reinterpret our familiar surroundings in the unfamiliar terms of our new inventions” (360). Rorty call this “poetic” activity “edification,” which he models on the German concept *Bildung* (education, self-formation), and he identifies it as the goal of pragmatist thinking. Pragmatism is characterized by a desire for edification rather than a desire for truth, and the revolutionary turn (in the Kuhnian sense) lies in pragmatism’s

¹² Kloppenberg traces the history of oscillations between these camps from Locke, who insisted that organisms react passively to received stimuli; to Leibniz, who countered that consciousness actively organizes perceptions; to Kant, who sought to transcend this opposition by arguing that consciousness actively organizes phenomenal experience according to the transcendent forms of time and space (47).

abandonment of the Platonic-Aristotelian view that “the *only* way to be edified is to know what is out there (to reflect the facts accurately—to realize our essence by knowing essences)...” (360).

As Rorty cautions, this is not to say that a therapeutic approach believes the desire for objective knowledge of nature, history, self, or society is delusory:

For Heidegger, Sartre, and Gadamer, objective inquiry is perfectly possible and frequently actual—the only thing to be said against it is that it provides only some, among many, ways of describing ourselves, and that some of these can hinder the process of edification. (361)

Instead, Rorty follows Gadamer in claiming that objectivity should be seen as conformity to the shared norms and rules by which a community justifies and organizes its claims, statements, and actions. There is no essence or ground here to justify claims and actions, only a moral evaluation of and responsibility for the consequences of those claims and actions. To take responsibility for one’s own education (*Bildung*) starts with becoming familiar with the descriptions of the world shared by our society, but need not stop there, as one proceeds through stages of implicit, then self-conscious, then critical conformity (or non-conformity) with the norms of shared discourse we participate in (365).

Several ideas developed among the first generation of American pragmatists have contributed to Rorty’s model of edification as a conceiving of

new purposes and descriptions by which we make foreign what has become natural and thus educate ourselves toward desired ends. James, in deriving his model of the mind, insisted that individuals select, choose, and sustain meaningful structures that organize and direct the raw flux of experience toward selected ends evaluated critically according to their projected outcomes.

Dewey's functionalism assumed that our actions are always telic, coordinated within some purposive behavior that directs and defines the discrete elements of the organic whole. A familiarity with James's psychology of will and Dewey's functionalism will help us develop a productive interpretive model for reading the works of constructive modernists who also explored the interdependencies between an individual's (or society's) selected purposes and self-understandings and that individual's (or society's) growth.

James's Psychology of Will

The role of the will in the production of voluntary bodily movements was a defining issue in nineteenth-century psychology, and the attempts to explain how a "spiritual" intelligence could impact a material environment set the terms with which constructive modernists would reconceive the relationships among character, plot, and setting.¹³ The different models for describing how the mind

¹³ In his genealogical history of James's psychology of will, William Woodward writes that explicit references to James's formulations decline after
(Continued)

produced voluntary bodily movements were developed within a larger debate over the “psycho-physical” relationship, articulated most simply as the mind-body problem but couched within Victorian anxieties over how to preserve human freedom within a model of scientific determinism.¹⁴ The crux of James’s

1910, but argues that developments in many fields of psychology since then are unacknowledged reformulations of James’s pivotal work. Woodward cites Gardner Murphy on this point: “But the whole modern impact of James’s luminous contribution is in danger of being deflected to this one metaphysical issue, the issue of the meaning of freedom, while his rich, beautiful, and very modern conception of how the will actually operates has been almost forgotten [. . .]. [T]here are very few ideas as fundamental and valuable as the full working conception that James developed regarding the nature of voluntary processes” (qtd. in Woodward 148).

¹⁴ In his Mind and Body (1872), Alexander Bain framed the question: “Is the open system of the will compatible with the closed system of energy?” Boring attributes the emergence of psychology’s renewed interest in the mind-body relationship to the growth of science, which had made materialism a general issue. Specifically, the gradual establishment of the doctrine of the conservation of energy implied the physical world was a closed causal system that had no room for the freedom of the will (Boring 235-36, 239).

contribution, taken up by Dewey, and articulated contemporaneously in Lester Frank Ward's model of dynamic sociology, was that the intellect is not an impelling but a directing force, emphasizing, choosing, and lending sustained attention to a series of physical sensations experienced by the body.¹⁵ By giving priority to the sensations of experience, which the intellect then recalled and sustained through willful attention, James was able to reconcile a belief in a uniform materialism with a belief in the freedom of the will.¹⁶ His model enabled

¹⁵ “Now the study of the phenomena of consciousness which we shall make throughout the rest of this book will show us that consciousness is at all times primarily a *selecting agency*. Whether we take it in the lowest sphere of sense, or in the highest of intellection, we find it always doing one thing, choosing one out of several of the materials so presented to its notice, emphasizing and accentuating that and suppressing as far as possible all the rest” (Principles of Psychology 1: 139. See also Chapter IX.)

¹⁶ As Kloppenberg points out, whether James actually succeeded in reconciling material determinism and human freedom in his Principles of Psychology is up to the reader. “ His Psychology reflected his uncertainty about the paradox of objective determinism and the subjective experience of freedom. In an effort to remain faithful to science and to lived experience, James pieced together an analysis that threatened to split apart at the seams connecting its
(Continued)

constructive modernists to conceive of the individual as an agent capable of creating the real by selecting and emphasizing relations among the simple elements of authentic experience. In subsequent chapters I will demonstrate how Du Bois, Crane, Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Faulkner employ rhetorical strategies that derive from these basic assumptions.

A variety of contemporary models of the mind's relationship to its environment (known through the body) provided the context within which James elaborated his psychology of will. In outlining what he believed should be the scope and legitimate data for the science of psychology, James argued that the "passing thoughts or states of mind" must be the "ultimate data" for all psychological analysis (Principles of Psychology 1: 370). By delimiting what constitutes appropriate data in these terms, James aligned himself within the British empirical tradition, specifically with Locke and Hume, who described the mind as a passive host registering discreet sensory stimuli from the

positivistic account of physical processes with its vivid descriptions of the protean character of life. Both behaviorists and gestalt psychologists have laid claim to James's legacy, and both can find support in the split personality of his Psychology" (67).

environment.¹⁷ Since the time of Hume, James claimed, psychologies have started with the stream of passing thoughts as the data for their reflection, then conceiving various mechanisms by which the diversity of these passing thoughts

¹⁷ James also excludes the model of science held by the German idealists, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Wilhelm von Schelling, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, for whom “science” (*Wissenschaft*) meant a unitary system of knowledge in which the reified objects-in-themselves of empirical science were intermediate, objective representations that would be overcome (*aufgehoben*) in the historical progress of Absolute Spirit advancing toward an identity between subject and object. For a reading of the impacts of German idealism on nineteenth-century psychology, see Leary. James did not hide his contempt for German idealism, believing it established logical unities in place of the real differences we encounter in experience (Kloppenber 55). “The Hegelizers [. . .] will take high ground at once, and say that the glory and beauty of the psychic life is that in it all contradictions find their reconciliation; and that it is just because the facts we are considering *are* facts of the self that they are both one and many at the same time. With this intellectual temper I confess that I cannot contend. As in striking at some unresisting gossamer with a club, one but overreaches one’s self, and the thing one aims at gets no harm So I leave this school to its devices” (Principles of Psychology 1: 163).

are integrated into continuities, whether they be the continuity of space and time, the spatial extension of objects, the persistence of a conscious self within the passing states of mind, or the continuity of memory, of history, and of culture. James criticized both the idealists' and the empiricists' models for resolving the mind-body split established by Descartes:

Ever since Hume's time, it has been justly regarded as the most puzzling puzzle with which psychology has to deal; and whatever view one may espouse, one has to hold his position against heavy odds. If, with the Spiritualists, one contend for a substantial soul, or transcendental principle of unity, one can give no positive account of what that may be. And if, with the Humians, one deny such a principle and say that the stream of passing thoughts is all, one runs against the entire commonsense of mankind, of which the belief in a distinct principle of selfhood seems an integral part.

(Principles of Psychology 1: 330)

In providing his solution to this puzzle, James first criticizes the empiricist model for its inability to account for a persistent consciousness of self, which he describes as more than a "bare principle of personal Unity, or 'pure' Ego," but that part of the stream of consciousness which is aware of itself as a discriminating, judging, choosing, and willing thinker. Some, discerning this active seat of reflection, will abstract this part of the stream

as a sort of innermost centre within the circle, of sanctuary within the citadel, constituted by the subjective life as a whole. Compared with this element of the stream, the other parts, even of the subjective life, seem transient external possessions, of which each in turn can be disowned, whilst that which disowns them remains.

(1: 297)

Asking what is this self of all selves, James defines it as that which “welcomes or rejects” the content and feelings that comprise the self’s conscious experience.

It presides over the perception of sensations, and by giving or withholding its assent it influences the movements they tend to arouse. It is the home of interest,—not the pleasant or the painful as such, but that within us to which pleasure and pain, the pleasant and the painful, speak. It is the source of effort and attention, and the place from which appear to emanate the fiats of will. A physiologist who should reflect upon it in his own person could hardly help, I should think, connecting it more or less vaguely with the process by which ideas or incoming sensations are ‘reflected’ or pass over into outward acts” (1: 297-98).

With the publication of his Principles of Psychology, James was in fact targeting an audience of physiological psychologists who, he believed, should pursue both empirical and introspective methods to identify the relation between brain-facts

and mental facts (1: 176-79). This central, active self is at the heart of his psychology of will, managing the psycho-physical relationship as an intermediary between ideas and overt acts. The self functions, James continues, as “a sort of junction at which sensory ideas terminate and from which motor ideas proceed, and forming a kind of link between the two” (1: 298).

James thought most reflecting individuals would agree with such a general description of the central self mediating between ideas and actions, but he acknowledged that most agreement would break down as soon as one ventured into a more detailed description of the nature of that self:

Some would say that it is a simple active substance, the soul, of which they are thus conscious; others, that it is nothing but a fiction, the imaginary being denoted by the pronoun I; and between these extremes of opinion all sorts of intermediaries would be found. (1: 298)

James grants that he will take up one-by-one the full gamut of these “intermediate” models of the self, but insists that any search for the self must begin with how such a self *feels*.

Later we must ourselves discuss them all, and sufficient to that day will be the evil thereof. *Now*, let us try to settle for ourselves as definitely as we can, just how this central nucleus of the Self may

feel, no matter whether it be a spiritual substance or only a delusive word.

For this central part of the Self is *felt*. It may be all that Transcendentalists say it is, and all that Empiricists say it is into the bargain, but it is at any rate no *mere ens rationis*, cognized only in an intellectual way, and no *mere* summation of memories or *mere* sound of a word in our ears. It is something with which we have direct sensible acquaintance, and which is as fully present at any moment of consciousness in which it *is* present, as in a whole lifetime of such moments. (1: 299)

James references each contemporary alternative model in this statement and presumes to differentiate his position from them all by insisting that the self can be felt. Let us quickly unpack each of James's references so that we may better consider his own position within its historical context.

By asserting that the conscious self is no mere *ens rationis*, cognized only in an intellectual way, James wants to differentiate his model from the Intellectualist school, with which he associates Kant's description of the Understanding as the synthetic unity of apperception. James's careful rebuttal of Kant's first critique suggests that James's psychology of will and model of the

knowing self as active owes much to Kant's psychology.¹⁸ James's model of the conscious self assumes with Kant, for example, that our representations derived out of the manifold of sensory experience cannot be meaningful unless they be understood by a unified consciousness to which/whom such representations belong. Kant describes it thus:

To know anything in space (for instance, a line), I must *draw* it, and thus synthetically bring into being a determinate combination of the given manifold, so that the unity of this act is at the same time the unity of consciousness (as in the concept of a line); and it is through this unity of consciousness that an object (a determinate space) is first known. The synthetic unity of consciousness is, therefore, an objective condition of all knowledge. (Kant 156)

The similarities between James's model of a conscious self and Kant's synthetic unity of consciousness suggest that both were operating within a common paradigm, which Katherine Arens identifies as the "conceptual psychology" that emerged in Germany during the nineteenth century, beginning with Herder and Kant and finding its fullest expression in Mach and Freud (Arens, Structures).

¹⁸ As Kloppenberg notes, all of the philosophers of the *via media* were neo-Kantians in a restricted sense, though not in the way of the nineteenth-century, neo-Kantian German idealists (Kloppenbergs 55).

This new paradigm posited the mind as mediating a dynamic equilibrium between a persistent, internal unity of self and the manifold of sensory data received from the environment. It emphasized the “inner unity of individuals and their interface with the world” (Arens, “Kant, Herder” 192), which was decisively different from both the physiologists, who conceived of the ego as a mere epiphenomenon of the body, and the rationalist or early idealist psychologists, who deduced the structure of the mind as a collection of positive faculties from idealist assumptions.

The question at issue for James is whether this synthetic unity of consciousness that serves as the vehicle for knowing is an *agent* that operates on experience or an *event* that is produced within experience:

The *ambiguity* referred to in the meaning of the transcendental Ego is as to whether Kant signified by it an *Agent*, and by the Experience it helps to constitute, an operation; or whether the experience is an event *produced* in an unassigned way, and the Ego a mere indwelling *element* therein. If an operation be meant, then Ego and Manifold must both be existent prior to that collision which results in the experience of one by the other. If a mere analysis is meant, there is no such prior existence, and the elements only *are* in so far as they are in union. Now Kant’s tone and language are everywhere the very words of one who is talking

of operations and the agents by which they are performed.* And yet there is reason to think that at bottom he may have had nothing of the sort in mind.

*"As regards the soul, now, or the 'I,' the 'thinker,' the whole drift of Kant's advance upon Hume and sensational psychology is towards the demonstration that the subject of knowledge is an *Agent*."

(G.S. Morris, *Kant's Critique*, etc.)

(James, *Principles of Psychology* 1: 364-65, footnote in original)

James does not decide Kant's opinion on the matter but proceeds to argue that *if* Kant deemed the transcendental Ego to be an agent, then his entire model of the mind was but a mere rehearsal of "Substantialism grown shame-faced, and the Ego only a 'cheap and nasty' edition of the soul" (*Principles of Psychology* 1: 365).¹⁹ James favors the alternative possibility wherein the conscious self is an event produced in the course of sensational experience by thought's own cognitive processes of discrimination and comparison. He allows that a reading of Kant's transcendental Ego as nothing more than "consciousness of the unity of thoughts which are its predicates" might approach his own preferred

¹⁹ James suggests that this conception of the Ego as an empty soul is more likely due to Kant's Fichtean and Hegelian successors, claiming that Kant deemed his conception of the Ego as "of next to no importance at all" (1: 365).

sensationalist model; but, he argues, this “simple and utterly empty idea: *I*; of which we cannot even say we have a notion” provides no explanation for the common experience that the unity of self is indeed *felt* as a coherent center within the stream of thoughts that comprise conscious experience. This is the problem with the Intellectualist model,²⁰ which insists that relations between representations must exist, but, since such relations cannot be felt, their unity must exist in

something that is no feeling, no mental modification continuous and consubstantial with the subjective tissue out of which sensations and other substantive states are made. They are known, these relations, by something that lies on an entirely different plane, by an *actus purus* of Thought, Intellect, or Reason, all written with capitals and considered to mean something unutterably superior to any fact of sensibility whatever. (1: 245)

Through his critique of the Transcendentalist position, we thus read James as sharing its model of mind as a set of activities deriving knowledge out of the manifold of sensory experience, but rejecting any suggestion that the

²⁰ James explicitly cites T. H. Green as representative of this school (1: 247), though he would doubtless add all of the neo-Kantian idealists.

understanding is an agent prior to or superior to the stream of conscious experience.

Having cleared the field of the Transcendentalists, James turns his attention to those who would insist that the conscious self is a “*mere* summation of memories or *mere* sound of a word in our ears.” The target here is the Humean sensationalist school,²¹ with which James demonstrates clear affinities but remains dissatisfied because of its unwillingness to acknowledge a knowing self as a coherent and persistent element within the stream of thoughts. Echoing his complaint against the Transcendentalists, James charges that the Empiricists ignore the common experience of the conscious self as a *felt* coherence: “It is something with which we have direct sensible acquaintance, and which is as fully present at any moment of consciousness in which it *is* present, as in a whole lifetime of such moments” (1: 299). His claim is a direct refutation of Hume’s chapter on personal identity in his Treatise on Human Nature, which James quotes at length:

There are some philosophers who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence, and are certain, beyond the evidence of a demonstration, both of its perfect identity and

²¹ Represented in Germany, according to James, by Herbart (1: 336).

simplicity.... Unluckily all these positive assertions are contrary to that very experience which is pleaded for them, nor have we any idea of Self, after the manner it is here explained.... [Selves] are *nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions*, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement [. . .]. The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, repass, glide away and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situation. *There is properly no simplicity in it at one time, nor identity in different*; whatever natural propension we may have to imagine that simplicity and identity. The comparison of the theatre must not mislead us. They are the successive perceptions only, that constitute the mind; nor have we the most distant notion of the place where these scenes are represented, nor of the material of which it is composed. (Hume, qtd. in Principles of Psychology 1: 351-52)

James replies that there is indeed constancy in a succession of thoughts—the unity of sensory impressions produced through the cognitive activities of discrimination, comparison, and association. James argues that such judgments of sameness are essential to all thinking, and that there is no difference whether

such judgments be applied to impressions of the objective field or the subjective phenomena of one's experience of consciousness:

[T]here is nothing more remarkable in making a judgment of sameness in the first person than in the second or the third. The intellectual operations seem essentially alike, whether I say 'I am the same,' or whether I say 'the pen is the same, as yesterday.' (1: 331).

Thought itself differentiates a present self from thoughts of things thought about (e.g., the pen) and believes the thought of the self experienced yesterday is identical to the thought of the self experienced today (1: 332). This section of the stream of consciousness felt to be the nuclear self passes down from one thought of the present self to the next this sense of identity. "*This sense of our own personal identity, then, is exactly like any one of our other perceptions of sameness among phenomena*" (1: 334). This is not simplicity but continuity.

Up to this point, James acknowledges, he has described nothing more than the Associationist school's correctives to Hume's extreme emphasis on manifold diversity of sense impressions. The model thus far relies only on the empiricist explanation of personal consciousness as the "'integrating' or gumming [of thoughts and feelings] together on their own account, and thus fusing into a stream" (1: 338). What remains to be explained in common experience is the sense of ownership the "I" feels for the thoughts and feelings that comprise both

the present self and the things thought by that self. “The unity into which the Thought²² [. . .] binds the individual past facts with each other and with itself, does not exist until the Thought is there” (1: 338). James insists that the thoughts that comprise the self have an ontological—not ascriptive—unity, derived from having always been owned by each successive judging Thought, passed down the stream as if by legal title. The judging thought or “identifying section of the stream” “collects,—‘owns’ some of the past facts which it surveys, and disowns the rest,—and so makes a unity that is actualized and anchored and does not merely float in the blue air of possibility” (1: 338). The objective field that is known and the conscious self that knows it reciprocally define and constitute one another. This is akin to the correlative in Kant between the analytic unity of apperception and the synthetic unity of consciousness, which reciprocally uphold one another and, therefore, must always be present simultaneously.

James’s strategy for reconciling objective determinism and the subjective experience of freedom turns on this description of an active, judging unity that is “actualized and anchored.” He warns against the common tendency to abstract

²² At this point in the Principles of Psychology, James uses the term Thought (emphasizing the capital T) to designate the “I,” suggesting the self’s “consubstantiality” with the stream of thoughts (1: 338).

a knowing self out from the stream of conscious experience, arguing that the stream merely divides itself into the Self and the not-Self:

If they really were the innermost sanctuary, the *ultimate* one of all the selves whose being we can ever directly experience, it would follow that *all* that is experienced is, strictly considered, *objective*; that this Objective falls asunder into two contrasted parts, one realized as 'Self,' the other as 'not-Self;' and that over and above these parts there *is* nothing save the fact that they are known, the fact of the stream of thought being there as the indispensable subjective condition of their being experienced at all. (1: 304)

James grants that a subtle reader may object that the Self cannot knit other thoughts to itself without being aware of itself as a Self, thus manifesting a Self-consciousness that *is* more than the knowing of the parts of the stream (1: 341). James is attempting here to reconcile the common experience of a nuclear self with the logic of the physiologists who had argued, since Helmholtz's formulation of the conservation of energy, that the whole physical world was a closed material system whose energy must be constant. By this principle, the appearance of a conscious, acting mind would "produce a change in the configuration of a material system, thus doing work and increasing the energy of the system, without there being a corresponding decrease of energy elsewhere in the system" (Mischel 2). To satisfy these constraints, James argues that the

Self is nothing more than selected parts of the stream of thoughts; these parts are simply discriminated and collected according to the basic principles of cognition (e.g., judgments of similarity and difference) which are themselves thoughts within the stream.

To further defend this model of a judging unity that is actualized and anchored, James suggests that the conscious self may be nothing more than the sum of afferent nerve impulses that result from the myriad physical adjustments made to the body through the course of its experience in the objective field. “The sense of my bodily existence, however obscurely recognized as such, *may* then be the absolute original of my conscious selfhood, the fundamental perception that *I am*” (1: 341). Allowing that the self is the center of activity whereby we discriminate, find continuity, reinforce and obstruct, appropriate and disown the stream of thoughts prompted by experience, James admits that in examining the particulars of this activity,

it is difficult for me to detect in the activity any purely spiritual element at all. Whenever my introspective glance succeeds in turning round quickly enough to catch one of these manifestations of spontaneity in the act, all it can ever feel distinctly is some bodily process, for the most part taking place within the head. (1: 300)

He then reports on the physical sensations that accompany various kinds of thought (e.g., ideas of the senses, of memory and reflection, of reasoning, of

consenting and negating, etc.). For each he identifies a coordinate series of sensations in the head, involving the eyes, the glottis, the jaw, and the brow.

In a sense, then, it may be truly said that, in one person at least, *the 'Self of selves,' when carefully examined, is found to consist mainly of the collection of these peculiar motions in the head or between the head and throat.* (1: 301)

James presents this conclusion tentatively, allowing that the sum of physical adjustments may not constitute the whole of the self (much less the soul).²³

²³ James cites approvingly Wundt's similar account of Self-consciousness as the "process of Apperception." "In this development (of consciousness) one particular group of percepts claims a prominent significance, namely, those of which the spring lies in ourselves. The images of feelings we get from our own body, and the representations of our own movements distinguish themselves from all others by forming a *permanent* group [. . .]. This self-consciousness is, at the outset, thoroughly sensational, . . . only gradually the second-named of its characters, its subjection to our will, attains predominance" (Wundt, qtd. in James 1: 303). Wundt adds that as the self becomes aware that it has the power at any moment voluntarily to arouse bodily movements it comes to associate itself entirely with this experience of the free exercise of the will. James rejects the Cartesian split that underlies Wundt's model of "psychological causality," where
(Continued)

James's model of the self as the consciousness of the collection of physical adjustments made to the head and throat during the processes of cognition fits with his reversal of the mentalist assumption that feelings precede and trigger voluntary bodily movements.²⁴ Much of the laboratory-based, experimental psychology that arose in Germany in the 1860s and migrated to the U.S. was based upon Wundt's theory of the feelings of innervation, which were said to result from the mental effort expended to produce physical movements. Wundt's

private mental and objective physical processes parallel one another but remain incommensurate. Wundt, on the other hand, rejected James's theory that emotions were the result, and not the cause, of vasomuscular adjustments in the body, which came to be known as the James-Lange theory. (See Boring 516.)

²⁴ Woodward describes this mentalist assumption as "universal," attributing it to Herbert Spencer, Hughlings Jackson (England's foremost physiologist), Wundt, Helmholtz, and Herbart. Woodward conflates, however, critiques of vitalism with critiques of Wundt's "feelings of innervation," which were said to indicate a feeling of mental effort that preceded movement (153). Such a claim should be qualified by a more careful distinction between vitalist models of the will as an animating agent and empiricist models of ideo-motor actions that do not include conscious, voluntary acts of will but occur as reflex actions precipitated by instinct and habit, as in Spencer's and Bain's descriptions.

theories had their critics, however, and James drew upon alternative models, articulated by Alexander Bain and based upon Johannes Müller, which suggested that an initial spontaneous discharge of nerve impulses from the motor centers of the brain to the motor fibers of the muscles was necessary for the brain to connect the experience of the volitional idea with the effect produced in the body. “Both a feeling and a movement are necessary parts of every such act” (Bain, qtd. in Woodward 153). Building on Bain, James argued that the idea that appears to precede the voluntary action is actually the idea of the feeling of the bodily movement that the brain associated with the original spontaneous idea, now recalled. Woodward explains, “For example, a bird singing for the first time connects a blind exertion of volition with the effect produced by its laryngeal muscles” (153). Through this associative activity, the higher centers of cognitive activity develop a kind of database recording the automatic couplings between ideas and feelings of movements that occur spontaneously in the lower centers.

In all this we assume that the hemispheres do not *natively* couple any particular sense-impression with any special motor discharge. They only register, and preserve traces of, such couplings as are already organized in the reflex centres below [. . .]. If we give the name of *partners* to the original couplings of impressions with motions in a reflex way, then we may say that the function of the hemispheres is simply to bring about *exchanges among the*

partners. Movement m^n , which natively is sensation s^n 's partner, becomes through the hemispheres the partner of sensation s^1 , s^2 or s^3 . It is like the great commutating switch-board at a central telephone station. No new elementary process is involved; no impression nor any motion peculiar to the hemispheres; but any number of combinations impossible to the lower machinery taken alone, and an endless consequent increase in the possibilities of behavior on the creature's part. (Principles of Psychology 1: 26)²⁵

We observe here again James's efforts to account for the active cognitive processing of the mind without attributing to it any substantial existence, and, furthermore, to ground these activities in the stream of thoughts produced by the organism's experience of the material world. Herein lies the seat of the will for James, in the hemispheres' freedom to bring about new, creative exchanges among the ideas (the interior representations of the sense impressions) and their associated motions. Whereas Bain maintained that these couplings were

²⁵ James acknowledges that this "scheme" draws from the description by Theodor Meynert, the Austrian anatomist, of the hemispheres as a supernumerary surface for the projection and association of sensations and movements natively coupled in the centers below.

natively wired, such that the recurrence of a prior sense impression automatically produced its associated motion, James allowed that the hemispheres could discover new relations of similarity among different partnered couplings, which resulted in the “endless consequent increase in the possibilities of behavior.”²⁶

Two more descriptions employed by James will lead us into our discussion of the impacts of James’s model of the self on contemporary sociological and political economic discourses, and, finally, on the rhetorical strategies of constructive modernists. In describing the stream of thought, James compares the brain to a kaleidoscope wherein the figures are constantly rearranging themselves, sometimes pausing in identifiable configurations, sometimes shifting rapidly in sequences that cannot be differentiated by the eye. What persists, however, is the consciousness of the rearrangements among the images and

²⁶ Bain explained memory and retentiveness by his law of contiguity: The concurrence of sensations and actions “tend to grow together, or cohere, in such a way that, when one of them is afterwards presented to the mind, the others are apt to be brought up in idea.” Bain’s law of similarity suggested the possibility of creative association producing new couplings, but, as Boring notes, Bain’s notion of “spontaneous action” was in fact reflex action or instinct, which, while not produced by an association of ideas, was determined by the nervous system (Boring 235-40).

transitive states. James believes that we perceive things *and the relations between things* directly. It is the feelings of relation that guide the stream of consciousness from one thought to another, providing the *feeling* of correctness, that this idea can and should be associated with the next, and thus guiding the stream to the “halting places” of conclusion, which appear to superficial observation to be the real substance of the train of thought.

The only images *intrinsically* important are the halting-places, the substantive conclusions, provisional or final, of the thought.

Throughout all the rest of the stream, the feelings of relation are everything, and the terms related almost naught. (1: 269)²⁷

²⁷ James cites Thomas Brown as one of a few sensationalists who acknowledge that we cognize both ideas and the relations among them: “There is an original tendency or susceptibility of the mind, by which, on perceiving together different objects, we are instantly, without the intervention of any other mental process, sensible of their relation in certain respects, as truly as there is an original tendency or susceptibility by which, when external objects are present and have produced a certain affection of our sensorial organ, we are instantly affected with the primary elementary feelings of perception; [. . .].” (Brown, qtd. in James 1: 248)

James insists that the relations between the definite images in the stream impinge upon our consciousness directly with their own sensational impressions.²⁸ This became known as James's theory of radical empiricism, which, while never being precisely defined as such, appeared in his essay, "The Meaning of Truth," which was included among the essays published posthumously as Essays in Radical Empiricism. In that essay James claimed that relations are experienced directly as much as are the things they relate, and "the parts of experience hold together from next to next by relations that are themselves parts of experience" (6-7). Vast amounts of our language, he argues, contain no sensorial content but suggest only tendencies and direction in the stream of thought. "Verbal skeletons of logical relation," such as "naught but,"

²⁸ While James includes Spencer among those sensationalists who acknowledge relations, he contrasts direct perception of relations to Spencer's psychology which describes relations as the feeling of transition between the discrete elements of consciousness (Spencer, qtd. in James 1: 249-50). "The traditional psychology talks like one who should say a river consists of nothing but pailsful, spoonsful, quartpotsful, barrelsful, and other moulded forms of water. Even were pails and the pots all actually standing in the stream, still between them the free water would continue to flow. It is just this free water of consciousness that psychologists resolutely overlook" (1: 255).

“either one or the other,” “*a* is *b*, but,” and “although it is, nevertheless” are felt directly as relations. The sense of rightness that accompanies the stream of ideas that leads toward remembering a forgotten name or finding the solution to a problem is sensed directly as the relations among those searching ideas, and the mind mediates the search by reinforcing or obstructing that flow of ideas based on the sense of the connecting relations (1: 252).

Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it. With it goes the sense of its relations, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead. The significance, the value, of the image is all in this halo or penumbra that surrounds and escorts it,—or rather that is fused into one with it and has become bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh [. . .]. (1: 255)

Like the kaleidoscope, the conscious self is nothing more than the stream of thoughts and feelings that arises from the constant physiological adjustments demanded by bodily existence; the elements of this stream undergo constant rearrangement prompted by the inputs from the objective field mediated by the self’s sense of the appropriateness of their connecting relations. Following these relations, the mind constitutes some of these sequences into objective things, others into itself, and may collect parts of both sequences into another whole, the self completing the purposeful action of sitting, for example. Free volitional

activity is limited to this mediating activity, reinforcing certain series of ideas that arise from experience and obstructing others based entirely upon this sense of the rightness of their relations.

Finally, James uses the analogy of a sculptor to describe the reciprocal relationship between mind and environment that evolves organically toward rational form through adaptation. On first glance, the analogy of a sculptor working on stone threatens to introduce the dualism that James worked so assiduously to undo, either by acknowledging the creative agency of the artist freely imposing rational form on brute matter, or “liberating” the pre-existing final form of the sculpture out of its material base. James instead imagines the stone as a plurality of possible sculptures, just as the swarming mass of nebular atoms contains a plurality of worlds, each one “extricated,” articulated, and, thus, constituted among a community of others who confirm each excising stroke. The sculptor does not respond, then, to the vital, compelling force of nature that directs inert matter toward rational form. Nor does the sculptor introduce that creative force from without. Rational form is rational only within its situated context; like the kaleidoscope, it is the relations among the elements, felt, selected, and sustained by an active intelligence directing—not impelling—those arrangements in light of past experience and conceived ends.

To view an organism as pragmatically effective within its environment is to assume, however, that the organism is capable of conceiving such ends and

acting purposefully. *Actions*, as opposed to events, must be described within a conscious conception of the meaning, value, motives, and purpose of the act.²⁹

²⁹ Wundt used this distinction to differentiate psychological from physiological descriptions of behavior. Mischel explains: “Since the physiologist abstracts all subjective elements, he sees human behavior as ‘a coordinated sum of muscle contractions, of skeletal movements produced by it’ etc. and these can be explained without any reference to volitions or other psychological phenomena ([Wundt] Grundzüge der Physiologischen Psychologie, 6th ed., III, 728, 744). But when the physiologist’s story is all told, we still have not fully understood human behavior [. . .]. For the agent himself can describe the contents of his consciousness as they appear to him as perceiving and acting subject [. . .]. From the physiologist’s point of view human behavior is a physical phenomenon, a succession of occurrences in nerves and muscles which must be explained in terms of theories. But from the psychologist’s point of view human behavior is a mental activity performed by the subject; his task is to explain ‘representations of [bodily] movements’ in terms of the ‘ends’ which are their ‘motives’ [. . ..]” (Mischel 9-10). As we have noted above, James also insisted on incorporating subjective interests and motives into a description of mental behavior. He attempted to accommodate these subjective phenomena, however, without either abstracting an agent out from the stream of sensational thoughts or

(Continued)

Emerging as it did out of physiology, the new psychology struggled against contemporary materialist and evolutionary discourses to conceive a model of the self that included purpose and will. Evolution, according to James, explains life's development from the inorganic forms to the lowest forms of animal and vegetable life, to the forms of life that possess "mentality," and to humans who possess that capability in high degree. Physical and biological processes and the forms they produce are merely the aggregations and separations of the original and unchanging material that appeared in our galaxy's nebular chaos.

The self-same atoms which, chaotically dispersed, made the nebula, now, jammed and temporarily caught in peculiar positions, form our brains; and the 'evolution' of the brains, if understood, would be simply the account of how the atoms came to be so caught and jammed. In this story no new *natures*, no factors not present at the beginning, are introduced at any later stage.

But with the dawn of consciousness an entirely new nature seems to slip in, something whereof the potency was *not* given in the mere outward atoms of the original chaos. (James 1: 146)

adopting a psycho-physical parallelism that denies causality between the psychological and the physiological, as Wundt does. On the lack of causality, see Mischel (10) and Wundt (Logik 3: 170, 254 ff.).

James grants that this apparent discontinuity poses a real problem for philosophy and psychology, and, as we have seen, he attempted to develop a model of consciousness that did *not* introduce an entirely new nature to evolutionary development.³⁰ Bodily movements get associated with the kinesthetic sensations

³⁰ Dewey, James, and Peirce were among those philosophers of the late nineteenth century who understood Darwin correctly, according to Bowler, as they realized that natural selection did *not* imply teleological progress upward along a determined path toward perfection. Rather, for Dewey and James, natural selection implied that humans enjoy some freedom to shape their own destiny because they are not subject to some preordained pattern of development (Bowler, Evolution 237, 241, 364).

Bowler has carefully detailed the “non-Darwinian” nature of late nineteenth century social Darwinism, which assumed a Lamarckian model of inheritance of acquired useful traits and a Spencerian faith that individual struggle and adaptation contributed to the inevitable progress of evolution (Eclipse; Non-Darwinian; Evolution 237-40, 296-99).

Peirce’s understanding of freedom, it should be noted, differed from the open-ended model of James and Dewey. Following his father’s Swedenborgianism, he believed that God’s love was moving the universe from a condition of chaos toward a condition of “concrete reasonableness” characterized

(Continued)

they produce. Myriad physical adjustments produce brain currents that discharge through myriad paths, some well established and some new, depending on the totality of physical and mental conditions. New couplings

by absolute law, absence of chance, and the final fixation of all habits (which establish identity). Until that ultimate state is reached, however, nature's laws are predictive, not determinative. Myriad, minute variations of chance progress through undetermined paths toward that final reasonableness (Bowler, Evolution 241). See also Menand, pp. 364-67.

Bowler notes that the reception of Darwin in Germany was enthusiastic, but, as in the U.S., interpretations of Darwin often missed or ignored the implications of the selection mechanism (Evolution 199). Ernst Haeckel, the chief apostle of evolution in Germany, assumed a Lamarckian view of the inheritance of acquired characters, whereby "virtually every useful variation is actively acquired by parents during their life and passed on by heredity to their offspring" (Gould 80). Otis notes that nineteenth-century biologists in Germany, France, and England combined the Larmackian theory of inherited characters with Haeckel's biogenetic law (ontology recapitulates phylogeny) to articulate a model of "organic memory," whereby individual memories persist across generations. " Evolution occurred through accumulation, suggesting not only Lamarckian but Haeckelian biology" (Otis 109).

between the bodily movements and the kinesthetic sensations they produce are recorded by the hemispheres, which scan them imaginatively as they seek to adjust future bodily movements. Through this reworking of the Meynert scheme, in which he emphasizes the interdependence between the lower centers and the hemispheres, James locates consciousness much closer to the body: “Wider and completer observations show us both that the lower centres are more spontaneous, and that the hemispheres are more automatic, than the Meynert scheme allows” (1: 72). Out of this variety of discharge paths and couplings appear myriad possibilities for volitional behavior. Consciousness, then, is a sculptor only in this sense, by selecting, filtering, and organizing the “intelligent” reflex actions and kinesthetic couplings that occur throughout the nervous system. The stone is experience, not inert matter, and experience, even when described as “stuff,” must be understood as intelligent activity, not substance. Mind and matter both are formed out of a more fundamental stuff, pure experience, which, in its uncognized state, is neither mental or physical. Pure experience is “the immediate flux of life which furnishes the material to our later reflection with its conceptual categories [. . .] a *that* which is not yet any definite *what*, tho’ ready to be all sorts of whats [. . .]” (James, Essays 46).

Looking back, then, over this review, we see that the mind is at every stage a theatre of simultaneous possibilities. Consciousness consists in the comparison of these with each other, the selection of

some, and the suppression of the rest by the reinforcing and inhibiting agency of attention. The highest and most elaborated mental products are filtered from the data chosen by the faculty next beneath, out of the mass offered by the faculty below that, which mass in turn was sifted from a still larger amount of yet simpler materials, and so on. The mind, in short, works on the data it receives very much as a sculptor works on his block of stone. In a sense the statue stood there from eternity. But there were a thousand different ones beside it, and the sculptor alone is to thank for having extricated this one from the rest. Just so the world of each of us, howsoever different our several views of it may be, all lay embedded in the primordial chaos of sensations, which gave the mere *matter* to the thought of all of us indifferently. We may, if we like, by our reasonings unwind things back to that black and jointless continuity of space and moving clouds of swarming atoms which science calls the only real world. But all the while the world we feel and live in will be that which our ancestors and we, by slowly cumulative strokes of choice, have extricated out of this, like sculptors, by simply rejecting certain portions of the given stuff. Other sculptors, other statues from the same stone! Other minds, other worlds from the same monotonous and inexpressive chaos!

My world is but one in a million alike embedded, alike real to those who may abstract them. How different must be the worlds in the consciousness of ant, cuttle-fish, or crab! (1: 288-89).

Out of the sensations of bodily experience and the cognitively inferred relations among them, consciousness emerges as an organizing activity supporting willful fiats, felt motives, and imagined purposes. Mind and body, both embedded in the stream of pure experience, function reciprocally to articulate and maintain shared worlds.³¹

³¹ Bowler locates James's model among several attempts at the end of the nineteenth century to conceive of evolutionary progress along more Darwinian lines, i.e., conceiving the emergence and selection of new forms according to mechanisms that are not directed or determined by external teleological causes (Evolution 241). Bowler cites Henri Bergson's model, in Creative Evolution (1911), of the *élan-vital* impelling life to strive with inert matter, producing new forms but never overcoming material resistance. He also cites Alfred North Whitehead's Process and Reality (1929), in which Whitehead offers a similar model but conceives of matter itself as having awareness, which enables material structures to function organically at multiple levels. Bowler explains: "Life and mind are not qualities standing above matter, as in emergent evolutionism, but are essential components of a universe in which nothing is
(Continued)

At this point we should recall James's objectives in writing his Principles of Psychology, not to evaluate whether he succeeded but so that we may keep in mind his framing questions and concerns as we investigate the impact of his proposed solutions on other discourses. As noted by Kloppenberg, James used the framework of the mind-body problem to attempt to reconcile a positivistic account of physical processes with the subjective experience of human freedom. The result was an objective, physical self continuous with material nature and so subject to nature's laws, combined with a persistent set of conscious cognitive activities that knows some degree of freedom in organizing and adjusting the stream of thoughts that results from and governs that physical body. James's resolution of the mind-body problem thus includes terms that fit our earlier description of the mind as both *fortuitously* receptive to the environment and

completely inorganic or lacking awareness. Thus Whitehead went beyond Bergson to make spiritual qualities *part of* matter, rather than separate forces *acting on* matter" (242-43). James had taken great pains to make this very distinction. He too had conceived of "lower centers" as displaying intelligence: In the syllabus for his first physiological psychology course taught at Harvard, James framed the course's subject matter by the question, "Can actions accompanied by intelligence be conceived under the form of reflex action?" (Stern 183).

pragmatically effective within that environment: fortuitous in that the perceptions, associations, and conceptions of the mind are contingent upon the random stream of stimuli provoked by the mind's environment; pragmatic in that the mind can choose to repeat, extend, and elaborate those contingent mental formulations that serve to advance the favored purposes that the mind maintains and modifies over time.

To conclude this section with a working definition that we may take forward, we have seen that James proposes a model of identity as *organized activity*, actualized and anchored in bodily experience, with the objective and subjective syntheses (e.g., organization and representation of both the objective field and the conscious self) reciprocally defining and constituting one another. This model and James's nearly obsessive insistence on locating that activity within the flux of "pure experience" had a formative impact on other contemporary discourses that looked to pragmatism for a model of engaged intelligence and purposeful activity.³² By granting the temporal and logical

³² I have used James and his Principles of Psychology in this Introduction to describe the development of this model of identity within the discourse of late-nineteenth-century psychology. As James's treatment of German, French, and English philosophy and psychology in his Principles of Psychology makes clear, his was only one voice in a rich and varied conversation that produced an array

(Continued)

priority of physical sensations, “intelligent” reflex actions, and spontaneous mental impulses; by limiting the role of intelligence to the sifting, selecting, arranging, and sustaining of forms within this primordial flow—in short, by moving consciousness closer to the material—James set the stage for constructive modernists in multiple fields (including literature) to explore the power, the freedom, and the tragic limitations implied by a contingent yet pragmatically effective relationship between consciousness and environment. As we will see, several characteristics commonly attributed to constructive modernism follow from a model of consciousness based on James’s radical empiricism:

- the emphasis on embedded, contingent, humanly conceived structures for organizing experience;
- the abandonment of a mimetic model of mind as reflecting a preexisting reality;

of theories on personal identity. Arens identifies the idea of the self as “a mental system in dynamic equilibrium between thought constellations and the data of the real world” as a defining characteristic of conceptual psychology as an emerging nineteenth-century discourse (Arens 336; see also 54). A broader consideration of the German figures in this history would provide the reader a better sense of the social, linguistic, and historical concerns that characterize that tradition and thus provide a corrective to James’s famously individualistic orientation.

- the self-reflexivity of the text that assumes that relations are perceived immediately as their own sense datum and allows no ontological distinction between the materials of consciousness and their arrangement;
- a heightened sense of the historical conceived as the history of the mind's reciprocal adjustments between its contingent, stable forms and the particular, the novel, and the precarious;
- the understanding that organizing structures have a life of their own that thrives or dies according to how they are used within a community;
- a prizing of instinct and the “primitive”;
- and the recognition of duty, defined as what is owed to a community by a partially isolated self to engage, maintain, and renew those contingent structures through social transactions.

I intend to further elaborate this historical and theoretical context, first by examining John Dewey's adoption and modification of James's theories of consciousness and conduct, and, second, by examining how political theorists Herbert Croly and Walter Lippmann erected a model of progressive society upon James's and Dewey's radical empiricisms. For these later progressive intellectuals, James's model of consciousness as the reciprocal activity of mind and matter producing contingent, pragmatic forms offered hope that their alienated generation might yet combine an authentic connection to its environment (natural and social) with the capacity to guide nature's and society's

evolution intelligently toward human ends. The progressives' adoption of a pragmatist model would also provide the terms by which Du Bois, Crane, Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Faulkner would conceive of a dynamic world in which identities are not static but functional, contingent yet pragmatically effective within the stream of experience.

Chapter Two

Reconstructing the Real: John Dewey and the Reflex Arc

Louis Menand has noted John Dewey's lifelong commitment to conceiving of experience in terms of the unity of wholes. Menand and Charlene Haddock Seigfried have attributed this character trait in part to the influence of Jane Addams, whose active promotion of an organic relationship between intellectuals, policy makers, and citizens informed her years at Hull House (Menand 322; Seigfried, "Socializing Democracy" 4). Dewey was instrumental in translating James's radically empiricist, pragmatic model of the self into an extended, social self constituted through the community's culturally mediated, interdependent shared activities. Dewey's emphasis on voluntaristic yet socially mediated activity distinguishes the pragmatist, hermeneutical tradition from positivist social scientists such as Lester Ward. In this chapter I will use this opposition between Dewey and Ward to demonstrate the influence of the German historical social sciences and, specifically, their reliance on hermeneutical methods, to create a genuinely socio-cultural and historical social science practice in the U.S. The elaboration of this model will provide the context from which I propose to read the rhetorical and political strategies of the constructive modernist writers.

The influence of James's functional psychology on Dewey and the entire department of philosophy he founded at the University of Chicago is well documented.³³ Dewey's break with Hegelian logic and metaphysics began to appear in published articles around 1900. In "Some Stages of Logical Thought" he rejected a transcendental logic that believed our logical processes reflect a rational structure inherent to the universe and instead characterized these logical structures as *functions* within the inquiry process. Structures of thought are inherited from past experience as a horizon of possible *actions* available to the organism as it responds to the demands of its environment. Environmentally engaged rationality—how Dewey described "intelligence"—interprets and reconstructs the present actual in light of both organized experience and possible future actions (Alexander 371). In contradistinction to the transcendentalists, Dewey thus defines consciousness as a "doubt-inquiry process" within the stream of experience.

In Studies in Logical Theory, a collaborative effort of essays published in 1903 by the faculty and students of the University of Chicago Department of

³³ In the preface to Studies in Logical Theory, which Dewey later described as the "manifesto" for instrumentalism, the authors acknowledge their debt to James and characterize their model of instrumental logic as deriving from his functional psychology (x, xi).

Philosophy, Dewey cites James's Principles of Psychology specifically as a primary source for his new "instrumental type of logic" (xi, 8). Instrumentalism drew upon James's functional description of cognitive structures as the result of adaptive processes:

Briefly, the point of departure of this theory is the conception of the brain as an organ for the co-ordination of sense stimuli (to which one should add modifications caused by habit, unconscious memory, or what are called today "conditioned reflexes") for the purpose of effecting appropriate motor responses. (Dewey, "Development" 52)³⁴

³⁴ Dewey adopted James's model of the mind as a mediator between sense stimuli and the body's motor responses. " It is interesting to note how the metaphysical puzzles regarding 'parallelism,' 'interaction,' 'automatism,' the relation of 'consciousness' to 'body,' evaporate when one ceases isolating the brain into a peculiar physical substrate of mind at large, and treats it simply as one portion of the body which is the instrumentality of adaptive behavior" ("Does Reality" 214). Dewey's seminal essay, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), demonstrated the organic relationship between stimulus and response as coordinated within purposeful, adaptive behavior.

Instrumentalism thus starts with James's model of the brain as the adjusting and executing activity by which the organism mediates its successful survival within its environment. By defining the self functionally, Dewey follows James and seeks to eliminate any ontological distinction between the self and its environment.

In the logical process, the datum is not just real existence, and the idea mere psychological unreality. [. . .] In other words, datum and ideatum are divisions of labor, co-operative instrumentalities, for economic dealing with the problem of the maintenance of the integrity of experience. (Dewey, "Thought" 51-2)

James responded warmly to the publication of Studies in Logical Theory, commenting in a letter to F. C. S. Schiller that "it appears now that, under Dewey's inspiration, they have at Chicago a flourishing school of radical empiricism [. . .]" (qtd. in Perry 2: 375). As with James's radical empiricism, experience is the foundational reality, not some "real world" that exists prior to anyone's experience of it or some transcendental realm of pure self-consciousness that apprehends ultimate truths (Dykhuizen 86; Dewey, "Consciousness" 167).

If experience is the foundational reality, comprising the organism's active processes of adjustment within its environment, then the organism's states of consciousness should be viewed as structured traces of actions within

experience, not as abstract existences in themselves (Dewey, “Consciousness” 166). Dewey compares these structured traces to fossilized footprints that imply a world of behavior. A paleontologist should not analyze those fossils simply by classifying and relating their particular features but infer from them “the structure and the life habits of the animals that made them” (“Consciousness” 164). To stop short of this functional analysis is to deprive ourselves of the real organizing principle that produces consciousness: the “*course* of the acts that constitute experience” (168).

Like James, Dewey did not deny the existence of concrete, empirical phenomena, but argued that analysis of such phenomena from the perspective that they were discrete entities unto themselves, to be synthesized by the faculties of perception, conception, etc., was to ignore their being traces of adaptive activity. As they do for the geologist or paleontologist, empirical phenomena have preliminary value in psychological descriptions.

But through the collection, description, location, classification of rocks the geologist is led to the splendid story of world-forming. The limited, fixed, and separate piece of work is dissolved away in the fluent and dynamic drama of the earth. [. . .] The psychologist should profit by the intervening history of science. The conception of evolution is not so much an additional law as it is a face-about. The fixed structure, the separate form, the isolated element, is

henceforth at best a mere stepping-stone to knowledge of process, and when not at its best, marks the end of comprehension, and betokens failure to grasp the problem. (“Consciousness” 169)

As James did with his paradigmatic shift from discrete phenomena to a stream of consciousness, so Dewey argues that the isolated element and the fixed structure become meaningful only when understood as coordinated action within the course of experience as adaptive process.

Coordinated, purposeful activity within ongoing adaptive processes constitute the givens of reality for Dewey; his is an existential, not a spectatorial theory of knowledge, in which objects are known through experience: “For things are objects to be treated, used, acted upon and with, enjoyed and endured, even more than things to be known” (Experience and Nature 28). Objects of cognition are to be interpreted, therefore, within the broader context of non-cognitive experience, the “course of life” that produces the fossilized footprints and includes the organizing structures of habit, unconditioned reflex responses, and unconscious memory. These non-cognitive structures are the “instrumentalities” that generally maintain the integrity of experience; cognitive reflection is only one more of the body’s instruments that works alongside the non-cognitive tools to coordinate adaptive activity.

Dewey formulated his model of experience as adaptive process for many of the same express purposes that motivated James. He believed the

spectatorial model of knowledge was a pre-Darwinian concept that ignored the new belief in biological continuity and emergent evolution. The subject of experience is at least a biological animal, continuous with the chemico-physical processes which constitute the activities of life. The brain was originally an “organ of conduct,” “part of the same practical machinery for bringing about adaptation of the environment to the life requirements of the organism to which belong legs and hand and eye” (“Does Reality” 214). From a Darwinian perspective, Dewey argues, we must conclude that brain and environment participate in a reciprocally dynamic flow of activity that matches the analogy of events in history:

To see the organism *in nature*, the nervous system in the organism, the brain in the nervous system, the cortex in the brain is the answer to the problems which haunt philosophy. And when thus seen they will be seen to be *in*, not as marbles are in a box but as events are in history, in a moving, growing, never finished process.
(Experience and Nature 224)

The adaptive *events*, then, are the primary units of experience; no material substance exists prior to its being known:

[Knowing] is an affair of the dynamic interaction of two physical agents in producing a third thing, an effect—an affair of precisely the same kind as in any physical conjoint action, say the operation

of hydrogen and oxygen in producing water. [. . .] Why talk about *the real* object in relation to *a knower* when what is given is one real thing in dynamic connection with another real thing? (“Need for a Recovery” 82)

A *scientific* description of experience, then, must be pursued as a genetic description of the origin and evolution of individual states of consciousness that emerge through the organism’s dynamic, existential, adaptive processes. As with James, for Dewey experience as activity is the primordial “stuff” out of which worlds are created.

Dewey first developed this theory of coordinated activity as the primary unit of experience in his seminal essay, “The Reflex Arc in Psychology” (1896). The essay marks a point in the history of experimental psychology—published twenty years after the establishment of Wundt’s laboratory at Leipzig—when pragmatist American critics were questioning the new experimental methodologies and challenging Wundt’s reliance upon introspection to report the data of immediate experience.³⁵ Dewey claimed that you cannot look at the

³⁵ Wundt’s psychophysical parallelism, which was based on an absolute distinction between mind and body, resulted in experimental psychology pursuing methods of introspective analysis that excluded the body, except in noting how physical experience (e.g., sensation) *appears* to parallel psychic phenomena

(Continued)

elements of consciousness without also looking at what the subject is doing. Actions are not compounds of the many distinct elementary processes they include; on the contrary, the purposeful action is the primary unit, which coordinates the elements into an organic whole. Dewey elaborates this shift in focus by rereading the Meynert scheme as described in the case of the child seeing a candle flame, reaching to touch it, and recoiling from it at the sensation of being burned. The ordinary interpretation held that the sensation of light is a

(e.g., perception). “ In this manner Wundt, for all that he founded ‘physiological psychology’ and wrote chapters on the nervous system, really went far toward dismissing the body from psychology. It is only in the latter half of his intellectual life that other psychologists began to insist upon bringing the body back into psychology, and on counting its behavior as a proper datum” (Boring 333). Following Arthur Blumenthal, Arens notes, however, that Wundt has been perceived in America primarily as an introspectionist due to the influence of Titchener, Wundt’s student (Arens, Structures 120). Arens provides a bibliography of recent articles reconsidering Wundt’s work in notes 4.11 and 4.12, p. 361). Dewey’s instrumentalism, the outlines of which first appeared in “The Reflex Arc in Psychology,” was one of these psychologies seeking to synthesize idealism and empiricism, anticipating the rise of behaviorism (ca. 1913), which was shaped in large part in opposition to Wundtian introspection.

stimulus that provokes the grasping as a response, and the burn is a resulting stimulus that prompts the withdrawing of the hand. Dewey shifts the observer's attention from the discrete elements to the comprehensive and coordinating activity of looking, e.g., seeing-for-reaching purposes ("Reflex" 138). Actions are not compounds of the many distinct elementary processes they include; on the contrary, the purposeful action is the primary unit, which coordinates the elements into an organic whole. From this functional perspective the observer may describe not concatenated physical events but *actions*, motivated by purpose and intelligently directed by a selection of instruments and a division of labor to achieve a desired end. A proper description from the functional perspective investigates not only the *what?* but the *what for?*

More specifically, what is wanted is that sensory stimulus, central connections and motor responses shall be viewed, not as separate and complete entities in themselves, but as divisions of labor, functioning factors, within the single concrete whole, now designated the reflex arc. ("Reflex" 137)

The reflex arc is a coordinating activity that integrates the physical objects (as sensed and perceived by the peripheral and central organs respectively), the experience of prior sensorimotor actions, and the purposes of the organism into a single, organic whole, which constitutes the primary unit of experience. The reflex arc is, therefore, more than stimulus and response; it is saturated with

“tertiary qualities,” e.g., the values, purposes, and strategies that attend and give coherence to the coordinating activity as a unit of psychological experience. The reflex arc integrates those tertiary qualities—habit, memory, values, purpose, and activity—making “knowledge inseparably united with doing” (Menand 322).

These tertiary qualities infuse value and significance into the elements of experience, binding them together into complex, organic units which are *felt* in immediate experience (Kennedy 803-04).³⁶ These organic, value-infused actions are the primary units of experience; the elements they contain—stimulus and response—are meaningful only in “maintaining or reconstituting the coordination” (“Reflex” 139).

By adopting the point of view of the organic, coordinated activity, Dewey liberates the organism to “reconstitute” the arrangement and significance of the

³⁶ Gail Kennedy explains Dewey’s concept of experience: “Now philosophers customarily distinguish between what are called primary and secondary qualities. And there is a third sort —called by Santayana, ‘tertiary.’ Whereas the first two modify *particular* aspects of an experience—the apple is round and it is red—these tertiary qualities suffuse an *entire* experience, giving it a peculiar character. [. . .] It is these tertiary qualities which give the formal unity of *significance* to our experiences. Without them experience would dissolve into a hotchpotch of discrete feelings and perceptions [. . .] (804).

elements comprising the experience by reinterpreting each event in light of its consequences and the value the organism places on the experience as a whole. This means that the two elements are not two different states, chronologically determined; rather, the response is the stimulus “reconstituted” according to the value of the response and of the experience as a whole. The experience of the burn introduces content or value into the coordinating activity of seeing-for-reaching purposes. “More technically stated, the so-called response is not merely *to* the stimulus; it is *into* it. The burn is the original seeing, the original optical-ocular experience enlarged and transformed in its value. It is no longer mere seeing; it is seeing-of-a-light-that-means-pain-when-contact-occurs” (138).

Dewey claims that the *disjectum membrum* of the traditional reflex arc interpretation misses this organic viewpoint and thus deforms all of psychology by differentiating three disconnected existences that must somehow be adjusted to one another (139). It fails to recognize that stimulus and response are “virtually a circuit, a continual reconstitution” that maintains continuity within the process of experience itself.³⁷ A loud noise has very different psychological value if

³⁷ Without this, the psychologist seeks explanations for variation and change in either an external pressure of “environment” (as represented by Spencer and Weismann), or else in an unaccountable spontaneous variation from within the “soul” (as represented by Wundt) (139).

one is in a dark place on a lonely night or if one is hunting. The sensorimotor coordination of hunting provides an entirely different context than watching alone in the dark. The stimulus (the noise) emerges out of this context, redistributing the attentions (perhaps dramatically, perhaps not) that comprise the original coordination, depending on how the antecedent activity determines the significance of the stimulus. A final response, like running away, would reconstitute the stimulus and the original coordination, enlarging and defining its value.

It is one uninterrupted, continuous redistribution of mass in motion. And there is nothing in the process, from the standpoint of description, which entitles us to call this reflex. It is redistribution pure and simple; [. . .]. There is just a change in the system of tensions. (142)

In identifying (and attempting to measure) the reflex arc, experimental psychologists have abstracted out of the continuous process of coordinated activity one disjointed part, “centering” it according to externally imposed coordinates that are not organic to the experience of the organism.

From the perspective of the moving present in which we live, however, the identification of a stimulus always *follows* the experience of the coordinating activity. “The stimulus is something to be discovered; to be made out; [. . .]” (147). It is “that phase of activity requiring to be defined in order that a co-

ordination may be completed” (146). The organism “searches” for a stimulus to understand the current disequilibrium that is calling upon its attention and motivating it to seek a new coordination.

What the sensation will be in particular at a given time, therefore, will depend entirely upon the way in which an activity is being used. It has no fixed quality of its own. The search for the stimulus is the search for exact conditions of action; that is, for the state of things which decides how a beginning co-ordination should be completed.
(146)

Furthermore, within the continuous process of coordinating activity, a response becomes “that phase of one and the same forming co-ordination which gives the key to meeting these conditions, which serves as instrument in effecting the successful co-ordination” (147). Stimulus and response are, therefore, “strictly correlative and contemporaneous”; they are reciprocally determining within the defining coordinating activity they constitute:

To attain either, means that the co-ordination has completed itself. Moreover, it is the motor response which assists in discovering and constituting the stimulus. It is the holding of the movement at a certain stage which creates the sensation, which throws it into relief. (147)

Within this circuit of adjustment, as the organism senses and responds to disequilibrium, stimulus and response have only functional significance, *defined* as stimulus and response by the organism to maintain the integrity of its mediating activity. The organism searches for and defines a stimulus that makes sense of its current coordinating activity while simultaneously searching for a response that logically completes the arrangement implied by the selected stimulus and the other elements of the coordinating activity (habit, social custom, conditioned response, etc.).

This raises the question of how the organism develops the capacity to define the elements of its experience meaningfully (and variously) within a conscious construction of its environment, also conceived as having a meaningful and purposeful structure. Dewey recognized that this coordinating activity operated along a continuum, from unconscious, conditioned reflex (or instinct) to conscious, reflective, intelligence. Through the course of experience, the organism encounters its environment in ways that deflect and oppose it, disrupting the harmony of its routine interactions and throwing the organism into an “indeterminate” or “problematic” situation. Kennedy describes this transition as the incessant transitioning between the stable and the precarious, which Dewey presents in Experience and Nature (Kennedy 806). Impulses prompted by environmental challenges seek out resolutions to the problem, and successful resolutions stabilize into habits. Habits provide stability and thus free the

organism from having to consciously coordinate every adaptive action. They also constitute and control us, however, most thoroughly when we are unaware of their stimulating, inhibiting, and selecting action upon our native stock of activities.

All of us have many habits of whose import we are quite unaware, since they were formed without our knowing what we were about. Consequently they possess us, rather than we them. They move us; they control us. Unless we become aware of what they accomplish, and pass judgment upon the worth of the result, we do not control them. (Democracy 29-30)

Like the fossilized footprints that imply the course of life that produced them, habits are traces of adaptive behavior. Because they resulted from the successful resolution of a problematic situation, habits have “an intrinsic developmental structure to them, a *narrative structure*,” notes Thomas Alexander, “for they are not merely serial operations, but are teleologically organized toward resolution” (384). As structured traces of the organism’s unconscious but effective reconstruction of a situation’s impulses, instrumentalities, and purposes, habits are prototypically intelligent. “They organize our responsiveness to the world, interpreting it in a dynamic, temporal

way, so that the world takes on a structure as a field of dramatic meaning for us” (384).³⁸

Just how the world of habitual and unreflective experience becomes meaningful and therefore subject to intelligent action is the crux of the problem Dewey seeks to resolve in his model of knowing as doing and in his philosophy of education. As we might expect, Dewey’s answer is implied in how he approaches the question, which is through the existential concept of concern. An

³⁸ Shannon Sullivan draws on Dewey’s notion of habit and its plasticity to further elaborate Butler’s concept of performativity, arguing that the relationship between habit and identity in Dewey’s formulations support Butler’s claim that the social norms that gender individuals are not fixed and can be challenged through performance. Because we cannot think of ourselves outside of the culturally sedimented habits that we perform, we should not seek to find freedom *from* these structures, but to replace unsatisfactory habits with others that coordinate our activities toward desired ends (Sullivan 30; Dewey, Human Nature 135-56). Thomas Alexander agrees that for Dewey one’s freedom to imagine a new relationship to current habits is embedded in one’s current situation: “Imagination is the capacity to understand the actual in light of the possible. Imagination is the capacity to creatively explore inherited structures from past experience in light of the future as a horizon of possible actions, and so of possible meanings” (384).

individual's environment leads her to see and feel one thing instead of another; it leads her to have certain plans to interact successfully with others; and it strengthens certain beliefs and weakens others as a means for winning the approval and sanction of others. As the individual coordinates her activities within her physical and social environment, she develops successful schemas that evolve into a controlling system of behavior. This is the natural and organic process of education that results from the individual's innate concern to "fit in" successfully with her environment (Democracy 11). What lies behind all this "leading" of the individual is Dewey's assumption that the individual is constituted inter-subjectively, depending upon the "expectations, demands, approvals, and condemnations of others" (12). "Intelligence is social, because meaning arises from use" writes Charlene Haddock Seigfried in describing Dewey's model of how the individual moves from unreflective, habitual activity to intelligent behavior that perceives actions as meaningful:

to have an idea of a thing means to be able to foresee the probable consequences of its action on us and of ours on it. And it is by observation and participation in how others around us use things, the recognition of the instrumentalities through which they reach their ends, that intelligence is developed from the earliest years of life. (211)

Meaning thus arises *indirectly*. Communities do not transfer beliefs, values, and meanings directly, even through language; the individual perceives meaning in the ways other community members *use things* (Dewey, Democracy 14). The individual first observes how others use things, then takes an interest in participating in those actions as a way of satisfying her own concerns. In order to refer those visible actions to our own, she has to judge their meaning, which involves interpreting that action in light of predictable, prospective consequences (31). “To have an *idea* of a thing is thus not just to get certain sensations from it. It is to be able to respond to the thing in view of its place in an inclusive scheme of action; it is to foresee the drift and probable consequence of the action of the thing upon us and of our action upon it” (30). As physical actions become associated with consequences that interest us (i.e., for which we share a concern), we recognize their instrumentality, and those actions become meaningful for us. We refer those actions to something we are doing ourselves, or should be doing, thus enlightening and enlarging our existing set of problem-solving schema by relating it to the purposeful activities of others in our community.

This activity of associating action with its prospective consequences infuses those actions with value, adding to them the content of their consequences, reconstructing them as actions-toward-desired ends. Much of human behavior is direct and immediate, such that no desires and ends

intervene. This is the course of life as mediated by stable habits. But as the individual seeks to integrate the course of her experience into the actions of others, or to achieve remote or expanded purposes, intelligent mediation is called for:

But if and when *desire* and *an end-in-view* intervene between the occurrence of a vital impulse or a habitual tendency and the execution of an activity, then the impulse or tendency is to some degree modified and transformed: a statement which is purely tautological, since the occurrence of a desire related to an end-in-view *is* a transformation of a prior impulse or routine habit. It is only in such cases that valuation occurs. (Theory of Valuation 34)

By imaginatively reconstructing existing habitual actions with respect to an end-in-view, the individual frees her organic activity from immediate, impulsive behavior and begins to operate intelligently upon actions, which become meaningful signifiers.

The extent of an agent's capacity for inference, its power to use a given fact as a sign of something not yet given, measures the extent of its ability systematically to enlarge its control of the future.

A being which can use given and finished signs as things to come; which can take given things as evidences of absent things, can, in that degree, forecast the future; it can form reasonable

expectations. It is capable of achieving ideas; it is possessed of intelligence. For use of the given or finished to anticipate the consequence of processes going on is precisely what is meant by “ideas,” by “intelligence.” (“Need” 69)

The intelligent organism that is able to search out a stimulus and a response authors the continuity of its experience in symbolic terms. So also the mature individual that is able to situate her activities within the customs and values of her community creates a meaningful continuity of experience by identifying the origin and consequence of her actions within the broader structures of meaning provided by her social environment.

Dewey’s formulation of intelligence as the ability to reconstruct the continuity of one’s experience by asserting origins and selecting ends-in-view provided a powerful and appealing model for constructive modernists who wanted to construct coherence out of the simple elements of authentic experience. It was appealing because it recognized the power of the individual to reconstruct society’s ongoing activities by searching out and communicating new human ends toward which each member could coordinate its activities. Because the parts were conceived functionally within this directed, coordinating social activity, their value could be transformed by offering a new vision of the whole as defined by the selected ends-in-view. And because one’s vision of the whole

was derived by how one uses the parts, that guiding vision could be modified by altering one's existential relations of concern to specific parts.

Reflecting this model of intelligence, Dewey's theories of education also became relevant for constructive modernists who rejected the mimetic strategies of Victorian realism, which, they believed, conceived of reason as an antecedent and superior faculty used by civilized persons to enclose manifold sensory data into manageable forms (Orvell 35). Whereas Victorian forms abstracted the manifold into universal themes, constructive modernism sought to express experience as evolving constantly *through* new forms. Following Dewey, constructive modernists figured knowing as learning, which happens indirectly as individuals participate in joint activities and observe how others place value on and direct the activities by which they experience their environment. The individual learns meanings and values as instruments for coordinating her activities with those of others in her community. Formal education, defined as a systematic effort to guide immature community members toward adoption of society's shared meanings and values, transfers these meanings and values by intentionally structuring joint activities that will lead younger members to infer, adopt, and apply the desired meanings and values. Education is, therefore, best achieved when pursued indirectly, by placing an individual in an indeterminate situation that calls upon her to functionally employ society's available meanings

and values to constitute her experience in continuity with the meanings and values that structure the shared activities of society (Democracy 1-53).³⁹

Society, then, as conceived according to this pragmatic vision, is responsive to intelligent, human amelioration, but only indirectly, as members propose, publish, and solicit interest in ends-in-sight that require a reconfiguration among the elements of experience and the coordinating activities that maintain their continuity. We will see this model underlying the strategies of social progressives Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, and Charles Horton Cooley;

³⁹ Dewey emphasizes the mutually constituting relationship between the use of things and the symbolic expression of the values and meanings that instrumentally mediate their use within the group. This model resembles Herder's emphasis on language as the discourse within which our thoughts and expressions construct themselves. Language is not a tool inherited from the group for mediating experience by carrying out the rhetorical power of ideas, as was held by Wundt (Arens 130); rather, following Herder, language is the form according to which we structure the content of our experience. " It [language] is much more than this: the form of a discourse or discipline, not simply in which, but actually *according to which* thoughts structure themselves [. . .]. We think in a language; we might explain what is there, or seek what is not yet there" (Herder, Sämmtliche Werke 2: 16, 18; qtd. in Leventhal 147).

we will also see it shaping the rhetorical strategies of the constructive modernist writers we will read in the following chapters.

This radical theory of knowledge based on James's and Dewey's radical empiricism contributed to a revolution in nineteenth-century epistemology that continues to influence today's post-empiricist philosophies of science.⁴⁰ Its rejection of the Cartesian subject-object split; its belief that science could appeal to no Archimedean point of certainty, and that knowledge is the product of interpreting experience; that mind is active in attending to the data it selects and interprets; that meanings, values, and purposes constitute facts by orienting them toward the concerns of the knowing agent; that truths are made by being acted on and confirmed in social experience; and, finally, its recognition that knowledge is transmitted through memory, culture, and history and must be appropriated anew by each generation—all these constituted a profound challenge to

⁴⁰ Bernstein cites Peter Winch's The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy (1958) as the first book to draw out the relations between the earlier hermeneutical model of the social sciences developed by Dilthey and Weber and the later work of Wittgenstein and the linguistic turn in analytic philosophy. Soon thereafter Thomas Kuhn's Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962) also challenged the positivist model of scientific inquiry with a hermeneutical approach (Bernstein 25-30).

nineteenth-century Anglo-American social scientists. While critics concerned with locating the grounds for objective knowledge dismissed this new theory of knowledge as purely subjectivist, relativist, and opportunist, its emphasis on experience, its historical sensibility, and its hermeneutical approach to knowledge and truth as contingent and constructed provided the guiding assumptions for a generation of politically active progressive intellectuals.⁴¹ As progressive intellectuals sought to translate this radical theory of knowledge into politics,

⁴¹ Kloppenberg writes that the radical empiricism developed by the philosophers of the *via media*—James, Dewey, Dilthey, Alfred Fouillée, Henry Sidgwick, and Thomas Hill Green—provided the theoretical foundations by which the next generation of progressive intellectuals—Léon Bourgeois in France; Leonard Hobhouse in England; Max Weber in Germany; and Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, and John Dewey in the U.S.—would transform liberal theory into progressive theory (298-99). Kloppenberg acknowledges that historians have differed sharply about how to define the progressive era, having emphasized social control and efficiency (Hays, Kolko, Wiebe, and Weinstein); antimonopoly action (Hartz); “status anxiety” (Hofstadter); and the importance of the common good (Thelen, Buenker). Kloppenberg follows Buenker and others in defining progressivism as “a series of shifting coalitions” among these reformist interests (n. 487).

constructive modernists translated it into the rhetorical strategies they would use to achieve their cultural-political goals through their writing. If indeed the radical empiricism of James and Dewey influenced the assumptions and strategies of the constructive modernists, then we may better understand the rhetorical strategies they employed by comparing them to the political strategies of the progressive intellectuals who also assumed the pragmatist radical theory of knowledge.

Radical empiricism versus Comtean positivism

Even when they recognize the diverse factions and interests and shifting coalitions that made up the progressive movement, historians of the progressive era have often overlooked how the progressive intellectuals described here conceived of their reform initiatives from a position of radical empiricism, which set them apart from other progressives who conceived of the mechanisms of progress in materialist terms. Of course, how one conceives of the mechanisms of progress affects how one conceives of the mechanisms of reform, which becomes evident when we compare the reform proposals of a liberal materialist like Lester Ward to the reform proposals of radical empiricists, such as Dewey, Croly, and Lippmann.

Lester Ward stands in the middle between the Comtean positivism of Herbert Spencer and the radical empiricism of John Dewey. Ward shared Spencer's positivist assumptions, believing that laissez-faire social policies

maximized the conflict between the individual and the environment, prompting greater creative adaptation and thus speeding along evolutionary progress. Ward differed from Spencer, however, in believing that the dynamics of evolutionary progress could be intelligently directed toward progressive ends through human intervention. In this respect, Ward agreed with James, sharing the belief that evolution had produced mentality and intelligence in humans, providing them with another tool for environmental adaptation (Ward, Dynamic 2: 50). Through scientific observation, humans could understand the laws of nature and put them to use to serve the interests of humankind. This activism, shared by other pragmatists, differentiated Ward's view from Spencer's evolutionary naturalism, and initiated a new faith in "progressive evolutionism" (Fine), also described as "reform Darwinism" (Goldman), which was a reform-oriented positivism that combined commonsense realism, a commitment to scientific method, and an Enlightenment faith that humans could actively and intelligently intervene in nature's evolutionary progress toward perfection. As we will see, Dewey welcomed Ward's reform but challenged his positivism.

Dorothy Ross identifies Ward's arguments for the application of intelligent reform to the problems of modern society as the first major statement in American social science of the new liberalism, in which history was subject to scientific control (91-92). This shift from evolutionary naturalism to progressive evolutionism, according to William Fine, was motivated by a dissatisfaction with

the descriptions of nature as a closed-system by positivists such as Spencer and Sumner. Instead, progressive evolutionists viewed social processes—especially in the more advanced states of civilization—as open, fluid, and subject to modification through conscious human action (11, 45).⁴² Consonant with late nineteenth-century efforts to reconcile metaphysics (including religion) with science, however, proponents of progressive evolution portrayed a dynamic, open universe in naturalistic, material terms. As we have seen, James also wanted to conceive of intelligence in material terms, introducing the possibility of free will without adding anything that would contradict the newly minted principles of the conservation of mass and energy. Ward similarly wanted to conceive of evolutionary progress as open-ended without introducing chance into a material world governed by natural laws. Every phenomenon is the result of some antecedent cause, Ward writes. “Science is steadily moving in the direction of explaining all phenomena on strictly genetic or mechanical principles” (Dynamic Sociology 1: 50, 28-29). Ward insisted on a rigorous naturalism to secularize the Protestant orthodoxy of his day, believing that human history would follow a Comtean progress through its theological and metaphysical stages to a scientific positivism (Scott 135-164).

⁴² See also John Higham on characterizing this shift as a thoroughgoing assault upon closed systems (35, 47).

Ward's model of consciousness, therefore, is similar to that of James and Dewey, in that he attempts to conceive of the mind as effective without resorting to spiritualism. Consciousness for Ward, however, was thoroughly materialist, while James and Dewey rejected commonsense realism and proposed their theory of radical empiricism that does not figure the real in materialist terms. Like J. S. Mill, Ward imagined mental activity as a series of chemical chain reactions: sensations and thoughts were the result of "an infinite series of causation, deriving their own character from the immediate antecedents out of which they are evolved, and impressing that character upon the immediate consequents upon which their activities are expended" (Dynamic Sociology 1: 66). Unlike Mill, however, who conceived of mind as an epiphenomenon to physiological brain activity (Kloppenber 51), Ward figured mind as effective in the material world, demonstrating similarities to James and Dewey in describing intellect and will as a "directive force" that could guide mental activity toward selected ends. While sharing pragmatist aims, Ward's materialist descriptions of how intelligent human activity could direct nature's gradual evolutionary processes was very different, however, from the radical empiricism of James and Dewey. The science of "sociocracy," Ward writes, is the science of devising methods for controlling natural and social phenomena "so as to cause them to follow advantageous channels, just as water, wind, and electricity are controlled" ("Claims" 3: 334).

Pointing to such language, Dorothy Ross concludes that his materialist assumptions shaped how Ward conceived of social reform:

Although Ward's conception of history escaped the determinism of many positivists, it retained the positivists' faith that society was fundamentally like physical nature and hence open to mechanical manipulation. He was calling not simply for intelligent action in dealing with human problems but for social engineering, the rational deployment of inanimate forces from above (Ross 92).

Ward, for example, believed that environmental factors were the primary determinant of whether latent, native genius would be expressed in an individual's life. Citing a statistical analysis conducted in France on the topic, Ward concludes that the expression of genius is the result of the following social factors: 1) the local environment, or the contact of men and things; 2) the economic environment, or the material means of subsistence; 3) the social environment, or the social class to which the possessor of native genius belongs; and 4) the educational environment, or the kind and amount of education that the born genius has received, especially in youth ("What Brings Out Genius" 11). The French study showed that most geniuses appeared in Paris, were born into the noble and bourgeois classes, had adequate economic means, and received a strong educational formation. Armed with this data, Ward suggests that public policy should manage these factors in ways that will maximize the *quantity* of

latent genius that gets expressed publicly so as to produce the greatest benefit to civilization. Ward evidences here a belief in the same Lamarckian model assumed by Spencer, whereby the demands of the social and physical environment produced new, functionally successful characters in the adaptive organism. What is new is Ward's belief that these factors could be intelligently manipulated to produce desired results. My point here is that Ward's conceptual framework maintains the physical analogies that underlay Lamarck's schema; genius is simply present as a statistically identifiable material quantity.

The *substance* of Ward's psychic materialism was *feeling*, which is produced by physical contact with objects in the environment. Contact that results in intense sensations produces pleasure or pain, which sets up an economy of desire that impels the individual into action to maximize pleasure and avoid pain. "The motive of all action is feeling," writes Ward. "Feeling alone can drive on the social train, whether for weal or woe" (Dynamic 1: 11, 12). To this impelling psychic force of feeling, Ward introduces a commensurate "mind force," which enables conscious human beings to exercise foresight and calculation as they actively organize the motive power of feeling to achieve remote purposes (Dynamic 1: 72-3). This mind force arises directly out of the steady hammering of material forces; the conscious individual "is the product of an infinite series of infinitesimal impacts in one general direction. He has, as it were, been gradually pushed into existence by a storm of pelting atoms continued through millions of

years” (Dynamic 2: 4). Ward invokes an apt analogy to explain how this pelting action produces a new directive force when he claims that “man is *kat'exochên* the proper teleological agent” (Dynamic 1: 29). The Greek translates typically as “par excellence,” but the denotation of being elevated is used also to describe figures that have been embossed upon a shield. As the craftsman’s hammering raises metal into raised bosses, so the impact of nature’s forces has raised the organic material of the brain into an intellectual faculty that is both subject to and in control of the play of natural forces.

Ward links his physiological psychology to a model of the social as follows: feeling in the individual produces desire, which motivates action according to the pleasure-pain calculus. Individual action extends quantitatively into social action, because Ward conceives of society as a simple aggregation of individuals. Individual psychic forces aggregate and become social forces, which are the dynamic agent in society (Pure Sociology 101). These social forces are organized according to the aggregate attempts of individuals to maximize pleasure and minimize pain, producing new social structures or modifying existing social structures (Pure Sociology 261).

The forces, so long as unimpeded, produce motion. Motion produced by the social forces is action. So long as it is free, society will act. In every case the degree of activity, and therefore of progress, is proportioned to the degree of liberty, *i.e.*, to the degree

to which the natural play of the social forces is unimpeded and unrestricted. (Dynamic 1: 42)

Impeded social forces produce pain, while social forces that are able to circulate freely increase social well-being.

In the interest of maximizing pleasure, mind force introduces creative, adaptive responses that enable the individual to achieve remote ends through indirect means (e.g., by fashioning tools that will provide greater advantage in achieving the final end). These artificial adaptations produce modifications in the individual's biological structure, and, through a Lamarckian inheritance of use characters, direct human evolution in line with human interests.

More accurately formulated, this method consists in an artificial modification of the environment. The truth apprehended [through the act of conceiving that artificial modification] acts objectively upon the brain, and effects transformations and permanent alterations of tissue, gradually but slowly building up a better structure [. . .]. [Through mechanisms of inheritance], intellect will, upon the whole, increase. (Dynamic 2: 551)

Thus, Ward argues, that while knowledge gained through the life of the organism is not passed down to subsequent generations, the exercise of the *faculties of intelligence* through adaptive activities produces incremental changes in the

material structure of the brain, which get passed on to subsequent generations.⁴³

This creative adaptive activity occurs naturally as “auto-telic” humans attempt to maximize pleasure; since adaptive activity produces structural changes in the organism by way of introducing new functional requirements, one may both accelerate and direct evolutionary development by introducing new ends that will add to the general sum of human happiness (Dynamic 1: 69). This transmission of incremental development in the faculties of intelligence is what makes education effective; without this, Ward argues, “education has no value for the future of mankind, and its benefits are confined exclusively to the generation receiving it” (“Transmission” 319). Furthermore, according to this model, the education may stoke this developmental process by introducing new desires that will stimulate the circulation of psychic forces:

By perceiving a train of physical sequences, the brain-force is able to direct the motor energy of the body to touch the springs, as it were, of

⁴³ Ward defended his belief in a Neo-Lamarckian model of inheritance in response to the publication of August Weismann’s essays refuting the transmission of acquired characters, Essay upon Heredity and Kindred Problems (1889). See prefatory note to reprint of “The Transmission of Culture” in Glimpses of the Cosmos, vol. 4, p. 246.

phenomena, and thus cause existing external forces to do what would otherwise be the laborious work of the feeble organism. (Dynamic 2: 541)

As the feelings are the biological response to material stimuli, they can be aroused by initiating direct contact with other material elements and forces in the environment. Once this organically based force is generated, the educated mind can select further contact so as to simultaneously provoke the most intense combination of feelings and steer the new motive force toward desired ends.

Legislation is the social analog of brain force here, clearing away all impedance that would distort the free circulation of social forces organized around the pursuit of intelligently proposed ends.

The special problem of sociology is to control these forces, to remove throughout its vast domain all those which obstruct the natural course of the feelings, to increase and intensify those which are favorable to that course, and to guard against any form of stimulation whose reaction will count more strongly against the general sum of human happiness than the stimulus itself counts in its favor. (Dynamic 1: 69)

The greater the stimulus and the freer the circulation of these intelligently engineered social forces, the faster and more humanly commensurate will be the resultant evolutionary adaptation.

Herman and Julia Schwendinger write that Ward's theory of social forces was one of his most important contributions to American sociology, "grounding American sociology in psychology" (168).⁴⁴ One real consequence of Ward's language was to maintain the currency of positivist models that described social phenomena in terms derived from the physical sciences. As we will see, other social scientists at this time were questioning whether the social sciences could be modeled on the physical sciences, and their success in modifying the

⁴⁴ Both claims are debatable, as Ward clearly draws on Bentham and J. S. Mill for his model of the mind and society; Adam Smith had conceived of "market forces" as aggregates of individual interests; and Spencer refers to social forces to explain the evolution of society from less-differentiated to more-differentiated social structures. Jonathan Turner writes: "At the analytical level, Spencer analogized as much to the physics of his time as to the biology. He illustrated his analytical points with biological analogies, but the highest order analytic principles are borrowed from physics and are directed toward understanding how social matter, force, and motion affect the structuring (evolution), destructuring (dissolution), and equilibrium (rhythmic phases) of the social world" (Turner 51). As for Ward's grounding American sociology in psychology, the social psychology of Dewey and Mead, which was in significant ways very different from Ward's physiological model, had a more lasting influence.

epistemological assumptions of the social sciences had tremendous effects on praxis. Ward, however, clearly contributed to the persistence of the materialist model, further funding the idea that social dynamics could be manipulated through instrumental means. Despite the fact that Du Bois and Dos Passos operate primarily out of a radical empiricist framework, we will find occasions when they both resort to a commonsense materialism like Ward's, dramatizing the dynamics of social growth in materialist terms, as when Du Bois refers to the "genius" of his race as a social force that would renew Anglo-Saxon social structures with its alternative and complementary energies.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ The Schwendigers write that this new emphasis on the productive nature of conflicting social forces coincided with the rise of imperialist ambitions in the late 1890s and was used to justify both the imperialist conflicts between nations and the imperialist oppression of races and nations throughout the world. "This modification resulted in 'race-conflict' theories which placed greater emphasis on racial rather than economic analogues to the Darwinian struggle for existence. Ward adopted these ideas being proposed by Ferguson, Bagehot, Gumplowicz, and Ratzenhofer. These scholars were called 'race-conflict' theorists because they classified both racial and nationality groups with the single superordinate term 'race' and maintained that a universal conflict between 'races' stimulated the progressive evolution of society" (173).

Ward's model is usually associated with those progressive factions that emphasized social control. In his call for social legislation to clear out obstacles that blocked individual desire from aggregating freely into progressive social forces, we hear the progressive call for efficiency and complaint against special interests that corrupted the workings of the system. In his liberal conception of society as a quantitative aggregation of equal individuals, we see progressivism's call for a renewed democracy based on majority rule rather than on the interests of property holders as formalized in the Constitution.⁴⁶ In his belief that individual desires translated into social forces and thereby shaped social institutions, we see Woodrow Wilson's faith that society would be renewed from the bottom up and the conviction everywhere that the direct primary and the initiative and referendum would renew the large corporate social structures that were clotting the expression of public opinion and the realization of communal values.

⁴⁶ Grant McConnell cites J. Allen Smith's The Spirit of American Government (1907) and Charles Beard's An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution (1913) as two publications that best expressed the quality of the Progressive impulse, in that they located the root of the evils of American political life in the conservative nature of the Constitution, which distorted the democratic impulses of the people through a formal system of checks and balances that favored wealthy conservatives (McConnell 35-37).

Dewey criticized Ward's positivist model on two grounds. As he did in reconceiving the reflex arc, Dewey argued that feeling and response should not be conceived separately, as Ward did, with contact producing sensation, sensation producing desire, and desire (or will) producing action. Instead, sensation and act should be conceived within the ongoing process of adaptive activity. In a review of Ward's The Psychic Factors of Civilization (1893), Dewey employs the same terms that would appear three years later in his article on the reflex arc:

Let the fundamental thing be conceived as impression resulting from contact with an object, and thought, perception, must be another sort of thing; desire and action can be brought in from passive feeling only by a virtual contradiction, while nature, the individual, and society have independent ends. [. . .] Let once the standpoint of *action* be taken and there is a continuous process: the sensory ending is a place, not for receiving sensations and starting notions on their road to the mind, but a place (viewed from the standpoint of nature) for transforming the character of motion; the brain represents simply a further development and modification of action, and the final motor discharge (the act proper) the completion of this transformation of action. [. . .] To suppose that

feeling starts off action attributes a causal power to a bare state of consciousness at which many of the “metaphysicians,” before whom Mr. Ward so shudders, would long hesitate. What feeling adds is consciousness of value of action in terms of the individual acting. (“Review” 204-05)

Here again we see how values and actions interpenetrate one another in Dewey’s model. As we have seen in our discussion of the reflex arc, sensation and act are not two discrete elements, chronologically determined; rather, the act is the stimulus “reconstituted” according to the value of the action and of the experience as a whole. Purposeful action is the primary unit, which coordinates the elements into an organic whole. Dewey returned to this idea throughout his career; it informed his understanding of society as well as the individual:

To have an *idea* of a thing is thus not just to get certain sensations from it. It is to be able to respond to the thing in view of its place in an inclusive scheme of action; it is to foresee the drift and probable consequence of the action of the thing upon us and of our action upon it. (Democracy 30).

The meaning of an action within the coordinated whole is its value, which serves as an instrument for coordinating its place within the overall purposive activity: “the furtherance they [values] afford to the movement of their whole is their meaning” (“Consciousness” 171). A purely physical description of unconscious

biological activity, then, cannot fully capture the nature of conduct, as Ward attempts to do; a description of conduct must account for meaning and value, because they are integral to the physical processes. Ward overlooks this because he is “under the spell of an old psychology of sensation [and] fails to recognize the radical psychical fact [. . .] [of] *impulse*, the primary fact, back of which, psychically, we cannot go” (“Review” 206). Here we recall that the impulses of the mind, the discharges of electrical energy that transfer between sensory, muscular, and mental neurons in the nervous system, are the final stuff of experience for James and Dewey, the stream of consciousness beyond which empirical observation cannot penetrate and out of which we create worlds. “All conduct,” Dewey writes, “is at first impulsive. It has no end *consciously* in view. The self is constantly performing certain acts more or less determined in results, but without distinct consciousness of their significance” (Study of Ethics 235). Reflection, signification, valuation, and adjustment toward ends-in-view are all processes by which we refine impulses toward conscious behavior. To start one’s systematic reflections on conduct with impulse, rather than with sensation, is to reject the idea that the individual is a passive organism that is environmentally determined and view conduct as the active mediating behavior of a historical and contingent agent, who is organizing impulses to action through a process of reflection, signification, valuation, and judgment. Ward was enthralled still by the positivist belief that an all-encompassing, value-free science

of human affairs was possible; based on his analysis of immediate experience, Dewey perceived values as instrumental to human conduct and believed, therefore, that they must be included in a science of social analysis.

Furthermore, since he believed that values emerge out of the individual's participation in shared social activities, Dewey argued that a proper social analysis must include uncovering meanings and values that are imbedded in social interactions.

Sociology must be informed, therefore, by an analysis of value and meaning at both the individual and the social level. James and Dewey had approached this analysis first through psychology, but both recognized that the individual self does not exist apart from the recognition, approbation, and sanctions one receives from others, as well as the expectations and valuations one infers and assumes within one's social group (Principles of Psychology 1: 293-96). As we have seen, especially with Dewey, meaning and value inhere in the *interdependent* actions by which a community engages its environment. To uncover the meanings and values imbedded in those social interactions, and to develop a systematic, verifiable way to discuss and analyze those meanings, social scientists at the end of the nineteenth century began to question whether the positivist model of an objective and value-free science, based on observation and induction, promoted most vigorously by J. S. Mill, was appropriate for the social sciences.

Arens notes that Herder's psychology provided a framework for how late nineteenth-century social scientists would conceive new methodologies for describing how meaning and value emerge out of the interdependent relations of a community. Herder was relevant to the elaboration of a new model for the human sciences because his psychology introduced the concept of an individual ego unifying sensation within a process of mediating desire, including a desire to belong to one's world ("Kant, Herder" 190-96).

Herder's individual acts to reach out towards that environment and contribute to its own formation. An individual's movement and sensations originate out of a life rationale, not from an overarching plan of organic nature. Thus while a being may be motivated at first by its reactions to the environment, Herder stresses an individual's developing life history. (192)

The self unifies experience into representations (*Vorstellung*), which do not merely reflect a direct correspondence to the environment but build into an emerging sense of self, or character, which is historical, contingent, intentional, and the result of a process of mediation between that emerging character (or life rationale) and the thought styles of the group (195). This emphasis on the temporal development of a reciprocal interplay between meaningful individual actions and structural contexts marks the emergence of a truly historical sociology (Skocpol 1).

While a full history of the methodological dispute between *Naturwissenschaften* (natural sciences) and the *Geisteswissenschaften* (human sciences) is beyond the scope of this project, the terms, methodologies, and objectives that emerged from that debate clearly influenced progressive intellectuals who believed that subjective meanings and values as communicated in the sociocultural realm shaped social behavior; drawing as it did upon the Idealist tradition in nineteenth-century German philosophy, it added a historical sensibility to American social sciences;⁴⁷ it furthered the shift to a social

⁴⁷ David Leary provides a thorough account of the influence of German idealism on the development of psychology as a distinct discipline in Germany during the nineteenth century. Knowledge as conceived by the post-Kantian idealists—specifically Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel—is not derived primarily by an intellectual and empirical analysis of things-in-themselves; rather, things and our knowledge of them are meaningful only with respect to their place within a comprehensive system. Leary writes that the idealists did not wish to eliminate natural science altogether, but to locate it within their systems, which, following Hegel, included a historical understanding of the evolution of reason (300). From this, Leary concludes, late nineteenth-century German idealistic psychology encouraged psychologists to locate their psychophysical experiments within a “genetic approach” that accounted for the dynamic and teleological aspects of

(Continued)

psychology in the U.S., started by James and Dewey; and it has had a profound and lasting influence on the driving questions of twentieth-century philosophy.⁴⁸

consciousness as developing in history. This convergence, which was especially evidenced in Wundt, oriented the new psychology toward a consideration of how consciousness mediated voluntary actions through a historical sensibility (313-315). Dewey's early Hegelianism, James's interest in Dilthey, and Weber's formulations of interpretive sociology all introduced this historical sensibility to American sociology.

⁴⁸ The history of hermeneutics as the methodological foundation for the *Geisteswissenschaften* is generally attributed to Wilhelm Dilthey, who expressly sought to develop a "critique of historical reason" comparable to what Kant had done for the natural sciences (Palmer 41). As Kloppenberg notes in discussing Dilthey's hermeneutics in relationship to the radical empiricism of James and Dewey, the latter did not discuss hermeneutics explicitly, but their belief in the contingency of knowledge, the social verification of truth, their insistence on interpretation as contextual (or situated), and their methods for relating part to whole demonstrate similarities (101). Dilthey limited the scope of hermeneutics to the interpretation of the meaning of external expressions, be they verbal, written, or actions structured by social systems of meaning. Kloppenberg cites this circumspection in associating Dilthey with James and Dewey, specifically

(Continued)

An understanding of its key terms will shed light on the strategies by which constructive modernist writers also demonstrated their assumptions that ephemerally coherent worlds (social wholes) were comprised of interdependent individuals acting within a dynamic system of relational and historical meanings and values.

As did Dewey, Wilhelm Dilthey believed that individuals mediated their subjective sense of the meaning of their lived experience through participation in interdependent social activity. Through expression, immediate experience

their unwillingness to speculate on the structures of being that may exist beyond immediate experience, a restraint not demonstrated by Heidegger and Gadamer, who believed interpretations of meaning must be based on a hermeneutics of being (440 n). The debate over whether an objective interpretation of interpretive expressions is possible without resorting to subjective empathy (Schleiermacher) or other means for discerning authorial intention has been central to the work of Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer, Habermas, Ricoeur, Hirsch, Foucault, Derrida, and to recent debates over the possibility of theory, including Knapp, Michaels, and Fish. For more on the debate between *Geisteswissenschaften* and *Naturwissenschaften*, see Kloppenborg on Weber (326-29) and on Fouillée and Dilthey (99-107); Bernstein on relating the debate to Kuhn (25-34, 112-13); Ricoeur on Dilthey (48-53, 149-53); Palmer; and Hirsch.

becomes objectified in language, which both limits and enables one's understanding of subjective experience, as language carries the shared experience of the spirit or culture of a group or nation—its habits, traditions, customs, laws, and interaction patterns—which provide the context into which the expression must fit to be meaningful as the individual coordinates his or her activity with others. Dilthey's theory of expressions was a corrective to Schleiermacher, whose hermeneutics framed understanding as a "reconstruction" of and psychological identification with the mental processes (including intention) by which a speaker formulates thought into expression.⁴⁹ Dilthey started with Schleiermacher's sense of the interconnection between

⁴⁹ Palmer provides a careful history of Schleiermacher's development toward this more psychological and intuitive model, recalling that earlier publications emphasized the linguistic nature of thought and therefore the emphasis on understanding through an analysis of grammar and style (84-97). Gadamer acknowledges this as well (164, 516-17n). Kloppenborg writes that critics charged Dilthey with a similar psychological intuitionism (e.g., Rickert and Weber), which Dilthey acknowledged as evident in his early works but which he worked to overcome in his later work (332). Gadamer, on the other hand, claims Dilthey remained "profoundly influenced by the example of the natural sciences" pursuing the Enlightenment ideal of presuppositionless knowledge (8-9, 153ff).

rational human beings who can understand one another (even across historical and cultural distances) through sympathy, common mental processes (technique, or psychology in Schleiermacher), and the ability to understand others' moral and ethical valuations. Dilthey drew from the German historical school to coin a notion of experience (*Erlebnis*) as meaningful in that individuals conceive of their experience as subjectively significant. The term as developed by Dilthey has a double meaning: first, that which is given in immediate experience and serves as the material for all imaginative fashioning; and second, experience as it assumes significance through artistic expression (Gadamer 56-57). As did James and Dewey, Dilthey considered experience (and not discrete sensation) as the primary material of consciousness. Dilthey emphasized the intentionality of experience: the unit of experience is a part of consciousness and memory only insofar as something is experienced and meant in them. This intention to mean, which structures life experience, produces the expressions that become available to be interpreted and explained by the social scientist.

Herein lies the distinction that Dilthey adopted between interpretation and explanation: the task of the social scientist is to interpret the expressions of life experience and then explain them within a proposed account of how they function to organize empirically observed behavior. The analytical method used to combine interpretation and explanation is the hermeneutical circle, whereby the social scientist engages in a reciprocating dialogue between the

presuppositions or hypothetical theories he or she brings to the analysis and the intuited subjective meanings of the observed expressions. More specifically, Dilthey suggests that the social scientist *should* bring to the hermeneutical interpretation his or her historical and aesthetic sense, the complete form (*Bildung*) of history and culture around which individual expressions of life experience take shape as they locate themselves within their group's culture and history. This historical sensibility provides the context within which individual expressions can be interpreted, and its availability to the German mindset is what made the *Geisteswissenschaften* superior to the positivist model of the moral sciences proposed by J. S. Mill.⁵⁰ Thus, in Dilthey's model of the human sciences, individual expressions themselves are in an intentional dialogue with the cultural and historical formation of the group.

In the next brief chapter I will look at how this historical pragmatic model of the individual and society fared in guiding social policy as the nation went to war and experienced a dramatic growth in the bureaucratic state and corporate mechanisms for governing the Great Society.

⁵⁰ Dilthey noted in the margin of his copy of Mill's Logic: "The properly empirical procedure to replace prejudiced dogmatic empiricism can come only from Germany. Mill is dogmatic because of his lack of historical formation" (qtd. in Gadamer 8).

Chapter Three

Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, and the Production of Public Opinion

This chapter reads the proposed reforms of Herbert Croly and Walter Lippmann⁵¹ as bringing together and enacting both the pragmatist theory of truth and the German historical model of representation as subjective expression in dialogue with the historical and aesthetic sensibility of the group. Returning to the “problematic situation” that elicited the proposed reforms of the progressive movement, we can now contrast Ward’s materialist model to the moral and aesthetic pronouncements offered by Croly and Lippmann. Like Ward and other progressive reformers, Croly and Lippmann analyzed the evils of the era as resulting primarily from a disconnect between the power resident in large social structures and the desires, values, and purposes of individuals. The laissez-faire policies of a weak, regionally divided, spoils-oriented federal government had allowed privileged financiers to exploit the American system of competitive capitalism and create a series of combinations that no longer reflected the

⁵¹ The history of this convergence of American pragmatism with the hermeneutical model of the social sciences developed in Germany certainly is not complete without a discussion of Max Weber’s working of these same ideas, specifically his model of interpretive sociology, which also employed the twin activities of interpretation and explanation.

interests of a broader marketplace. Taken from its forerunner movement, populism, a widespread belief in *conspiracy* animated this fear that the power of the individual had been usurped by the railroads and the trusts (McConnell 32-4), which enabled these critics to attribute the ills of society both to individual corruption and to the inscrutably large corporate organizations that barred meaningful individual participation. Regarding the latter, while some reformers believed that size could only be counteracted with size, and therefore proposed that a regulatory state should either take over or manage large industry, the liberal tradition in America generally viewed socialism as a foreign and radical solution.⁵² Most progressives, including Croly and Lippmann, accepted that

⁵² Controversy surrounding Henry George's proposal in Progress and Poverty (1879) of a single tax to expropriate the unearned increment on land contributed to a new openness to discuss state intervention and other socialist solutions in the rapidly industrializing economy. Ross identifies the generation of young historical economists, including John Bates Clark, Henry Carter Adams, Richard T. Ely, Edmund J. James, Simon Patten, and E.R.A. Seligman, as promoting a more open discussion of socialist economics, which derived from their combining social evangelical commitments with German historical economics to critique industrial conditions and the inequality resulting from industrial capitalism; Clark, Adams, and Ely specifically envisioned a cooperative

(Continued)

corporate hierarchy and bureaucratic rationality were inevitable in the modern world; that mechanized production required larger markets; that competition was in fact wasteful in some cases; and that the vitality of corporate capitalism should and could be regulated toward serving national interests (Croly, Drift 139; Lustig 99-100). What was needed was, as James had put it, “a consciousness much

commonwealth that would revive liberal republican ideals in a socialist framework. In the statement of principles drafted at the formation of the American Economic Association, founded by Ely and other reform-minded economists in 1885, the group approved state economic action and urged economists to abandon the deductive theories of classical economics for an inductive method based on a close study of facts (111). (An empirical, inductive method would loosen the hold of classical economics which held the Malthusian and Ricardian analyses of the marketplace as reflecting natural law, and, therefore, unalterable.) As we will see, this perspective profoundly influenced W. E. B. Du Bois, who studied under the German historical political economists Gustav von Schmoller and Adolph Wagner. Ross cites anxieties following the Haymarket riot in 1886 as the reason why social scientists tempered their call for radical socialist solutions, and reads the reformist alternatives of the progressive movement as motivated to a great degree by an effort to revitalize liberal models in order to avoid socialism. See pp. 98-122, 143.

closer to the body,” where the liberal-republican ideals of the nation were once again instrumental in mediating the interdependent transactions among individuals that constitute a liberal society. In Herder’s language, individuals construct a historical sense of self—their character—by pursuing their own self-development in light of a life rationale that is informed by the community’s sense of its self-formation, by its *Bildung*. What had broken down, according to Dewey, was the mutually informing relation between individuals’ life rationales and the community’s *Bildung*. The dialectic between these individual and communal organizing frameworks formed the “mental equipment” society used to manage its material conditions. Modern corporate, technological, and industrial complexes had grown too complex, however, to be guided by a poorly articulated system of social values. Individuals were no longer were capable of inferring social values from their joint activities in order to agree upon selected ends-in-view. Without a unity of aim and interest, the “lost individual” could no longer develop right plans, nor attach right values to ends.

The progressive intellectuals described here believed that because individual and social systems of value were dialectically articulated, social reconstruction would require the reconstruction of the liberal individual. This concern for the renewal of the individual did not preoccupy all progressive reformers, however. Those who emphasized regulation and legislative reform sought to strengthen the collective bargaining power of unions; regulate large

corporate holding companies; promote social legislation regarding wages, hours, and worker's compensation; and develop a system of taxation based on the ability to pay—all of which became mainstream legislative proposals in the New Deal era (Buenker, Urban Liberalism 80-83). These legislative proposals addressed corporate social structures directly. John Buenker argues that state legislatures pursued this corporate approach to reform because they were controlled by legislators who had entered politics through their leadership roles in the unions. As the constituencies of most unions at the end of the nineteenth century came from continental European countries and Ireland, these reform politicians would be more favorable to the regulation of economic activity by government agencies, as economic life in those countries had traditionally been regulated by the state, the church, and merchant and craft guilds (92). Laissez-faire, on the other hand, had never established itself in these countries, so state legislatures would be little inclined to consider New National reform proposals (e.g., those proposed by Croly and taken up by Theodore Roosevelt) that derived from the classical liberal impulse to free *individual* interest from all variety of corporate controls and, in the progressive liberal version, direct it toward communal values.

In contrast to these corporate-oriented reform measures, it was the emphasis on renewing the individual that made the progressive liberal proposals so difficult to classify, opening them to criticism from both the left and the right.

One can read Lippmann's The Good Society (1937) and Dewey's Liberalism and Social Action (1935)—both written during the New Deal era to rescue progressive liberalism from the “collectivists”—as the final efforts of two policy experts to clarify the terms of a social policy that could preserve a binary interdependence between individual interest and the corporate structures that organized social life. Liberalism had always been a force for change, challenging the status quo, wrote Dewey. But now it was being attacked virulently by collectivists who associated it exclusively with its late nineteenth-century commitment to laissez-faire, a corruption of the liberal spirit that developed out of specific historical circumstances but did not disprove the emancipatory power of the original vision. Dewey rejected the collectivist claim that social legislation could renew society: “For the forces at work in this movement are too vast and complex to cease operation at the behest of legislation” (Individualism 37-38). Dewey called instead for a “new individualism” that did not deny the corporate nature of the modern industrial era but that would conceive of those corporate structures as constructed through voluntary individual identifications. “The need of the present is to apprehend the fact that, for better or worse, we are living in a corporate age,” Dewey acknowledges; to have power in a corporate age, individuals must operate collectively within these collectivist schemes of interdependence (Individualism 48). But effective collective power required a form of group intelligence that collectivist reforms ignored:

At present the “socialization” is largely mechanical and quantitative. [. . .] If the chaos and the mechanism are to generate a mind and soul, an integrated personality, it will have to be an intelligence, a sentiment and an individuality of a new type. [. . .] Hence only in an external sense does society maintain a balance. When the corporateness becomes internal, when, that is, it is realized in thought and purpose, it will become qualitative. In this change, law will be realized not as a rule arbitrarily imposed from without but as the relations which hold individuals together. The balance of the individual and the social will be organic. (49-50)

Complexity of organization had brought interdependence, which made it imperative, Dewey argued, to bring about a “social consciousness.” Individual drives toward self-development must motivate all conduct, but those drives must also “fit” with the requirements of the situation, which find representation in the effective values of the group. Dewey sums up this reciprocal view in his “ethical postulate,” which he compares to the “scientific postulate” that begins with a belief in the uniformity of nature:

The conduct required truly to express an agent is, at the same time, the conduct required to maintain the situation in which he is placed; while, conversely, the conduct that truly meets the situation is that which furthers the agent. (Study of Ethics 234).

This reciprocal process of adjustment between the impulses of individual self-development and the requirements of the social situation demonstrates characteristics of the hermeneutical process between interpretation and explanation described by Dilthey. Subjective impulses are shaped dialogically by their interaction with the physical requirements and social expectations of the situation. Reflecting their idealist inclinations, both Dilthey and Dewey assumed that individual impulses and actions could only achieve their full development as they also found a coherent coordination with the social ideal. This ideal, however, is neither the historical objectification of spirit in the Hegelian state nor the transcendent ideal of reason, virtue, and justice that establishes the republican commonwealth. It is, according to Dilthey, the sum total of life experience that takes form (objectifies itself) around an organizing core, and, for Dewey, it is the dynamic form of cooperation that results as individuals actively coordinate their interdependent actions within an extended awareness of the ends and values of others. It is thoroughly historical in its faith that socially and historically aware impulses construct a rational and aesthetic coherence that accommodates (ultimately) the sum total of diverse interests. The task of social policy is to foster the abilities of individual citizens to carry out that process of mediating their own self-development in dialog with the forming power of society's ideal. This reform involves both changes in social structures that inhibit these processes and a transformation of the individual, achieved by fostering not

only a social and historical sensibility, but also an aesthetic sensibility that can discern the sense of a proper “fit” among the parts and the larger whole. These reformers thus believed they could emancipate and strengthen the individual by addressing the structural distortions that inhibited him or her (Lustig 126).

Herbert Croly set about promoting a revised historical sensibility with his Promise of American Life (1909). Croly characterized the American sensibility as combining “loyalty to historical tradition and precedent with the imaginative projection of an ideal national Promise” (2). Given the country’s history, the notion of an American “race” constituting the national identity was not possible. Having been established on an idea, the national spirit has always been formed more by its projected vision of itself than by its shared customs and geography (3). Croly writes from within the crisis of American exceptionalism, prompted by the increasing inequalities of the industrialized cities that put in question the country’s faith in laissez-faire liberalism and the power of its democratic, liberal-republican ideals and its millennial evangelicalism (Ross 53). This crisis called for a spiritual reform, which Croly characterized as abandoning a faith in the nation’s destiny and taking up its promise (22). This involved a shift from a classical liberal faith in the inevitability of progress to a conscious pursuit of national purpose. “In this country the solution of the social problem demands the substitution of a conscious social ideal for the earlier instinctive homogeneity of the American nation. That homogeneity has disappeared never to return” (139).

But what was that purpose? Heretofore it had been defined exclusively in terms of the individual pursuit of wealth, but that had resulted in the deleterious inequities that were threatening the nation's welfare. Croly therefore embarks on a search for the compelling and defining promise of the American nation, its *Bildung* that will have the power to form individual character in a way that the amoral philosophy of laissez-faire liberalism could not.

Croly pursues his search for the national purpose through a hermeneutical dialog with Alexander Hamilton, who, with Washington, moved the country during the first two administrations aggressively toward a manufacturing economy. This propelled the country toward extended economies of trade that threatened the small agrarian community favored by Jefferson, ensuring the emergence of a diversity of occupations and economic interests and thereby producing the factions that would have to be managed through the federalist system of checks and balances (McConnell 102). To be effective, Hamilton's vision of a strong federal union would have to organize the diverse activities of individual citizens toward a clear national purpose; this contrasted with Jefferson's liberal model of democratic individuals, whose interests and purposes would be left to organize themselves if individual liberties were protected from interference. "Jefferson's policy was at bottom the old fatal policy of drift, whose distorted body was concealed by fair-seeming clothes, and whose ugly face was covered by a mask of good intentions" (Promise 45). *Effective* liberty, however, required that the

individual mediate its self-development through the forming power of national purpose. This could occur only through an alliance between democratic popular expression and national Federalist leadership. The combination of Federalism (unionism) and Republicanism (liberty) during Jefferson's administration failed because neither party effectively critiqued and transformed the other, producing a poor amalgam with insufficient strength to bind the distributed interests of the populace into an efficient, truly national government organized by an effective national purpose (46-47).

But if for liberty we substitute the word democracy, which means something more than liberty, and if for union, we substitute the phrase American nationality, which means so much more than a legal union, we shall be looking in the direction of a fruitful alliance between two supplementary principles. (51)

Where nationalism and democracy are not fused, Croly continues, sterility results. Croly compares this to the fusion of ideas and feeling: where idealistic national direction and popular democratic feelings do not inform one another, the nation either loses the vitality of its animating social forces or it flounders and divides into incoherent factions (70). Only through reciprocal recognition will self- and national-development mediate one another toward a rationally benevolent harmony, achieving Hamiltonian ends through Jeffersonian means.

If both or one be conceived as finished products the result is a tendency either to sacrifice the individual to society or society to the individual. [. . .] But if the individual and society are both conceived as *formative ideals*, which are creating centres of genuine individual and social life out of the materials offered by human nature, then a relationship of interdependence can be established between the two, which does not involve the sacrifice either of the individual to society or of society to the individual. (Progressive Democracy 198-99; emphasis added)

Following Dewey's ethics, Croly acknowledges that no external vision can be imposed on popular opinion, for extrinsic motivations are never effective; what works toward cohesion of national purpose is the experience of effective nationality (267-70). When this experience of cohesion is disrupted, individuals are motivated to consider again their individual impulses toward self-development and their expressions of national purpose and, in light of those as symbolically mediated by the community, adjust their actions to restore continuity to individual and national experience. "The national principle becomes a principle of reform and reconstruction, precisely because national consistency is constantly demanding the solution of contradictory economic and political tendencies, brought about by alternations in the conditions of economic and political efficiency" (270). Croly thus reformulates in national historical terms the

adaptive mechanisms of Dewey's reflex arc: thrown into a problematic situation, the nation seeks out historical origins and purposeful actions that, when properly expressed and brought into a coherent system of explanation, will restore the continuity of experience. As an adopted end-in-view, the national promise infuses content and meaning into individual impulses, reconstructing them as actions-to-achieve-promise, thus making them (refining them into) *expressive* actions. The role of the statesman, like that of Dilthey's social scientist, is to situate these expressive actions in an explanatory framework that persuasively accounts for subjective experience while writing it into a public narrative.

According to Lippmann, progressive leaders infuse content and meaning into events so the social organism may direct itself intelligently toward its promise:

the genius among politicians is he who can deal in his own time with the social forces that lead to a better one. [. . .] He grasps the facts of his age, sees in the confusion of events currents like the union, the trust, the cooperative,—suffuses them with their promise, and directs them into the structure of the future. (Drift 326)

As *meaningful* events, they must participate in a shared signifying system where standards of explanation provide a systematic means for evaluating and further refining them. And, following James, it is both that rational consideration and an aesthetic sense of coherence, whereby one can say that the parts of these adaptive schema fit with one another and with the whole, that together inform the

hermeneutic circle by which a democratic nation comprised of individuals directs its historical development.⁵³

⁵³ Lippmann insists on the role of feeling in organizing ideas and evaluating policy: “Criticism will have to slough off the prejudices of the older rationalism if it is to have any radical influence on ideas. It is sophomoric to suppose that the emotional life can be treated as a decadent survival. Men’s desires are not something barbaric which the intellect must shun. Their desires are what make their lives, they are what move and govern. You are not talking of human beings when you talk of ‘pure reason.’ And, therefore, anyone who deepens the conflict between thought and feeling is merely adding confusion to difficulty. The practical line of construction is to saturate feeling with ideas” (Drift 316). This line of thought, which Lionel Trilling among others would take up in the 1940s, became emblematic of modernist literary critics; later formulations, working exclusively from a consideration of Henry James and T. S. Eliot, insist on an opaque model of fusion which lacks the reciprocating hermeneutical dynamics of expression and interpretation that put in dialogue both the subjective experience interpretively expressed and the “ideological” explanation of those expressions.

A “plastic” sensibility

In his second book, Progressive Democracy (1914), Croly reformulated his provocative ideas, granting a larger role to the power of public opinion as a driving social force. Critics have seen this as a shift from his emphasis on the formative power of the Hamiltonian ideal to the formative power of the social will, due in part to his reading of social psychology (Noble 66, 71-2; Kloppenberg 383-85). The national promise still serves as a coordinating end-in-view, but Croly now takes up Dewey’s emphasis on scientific method as guiding the social will to create coherence out of disequilibrium.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Croly describes this will, whether animating the individual or the social organism, as the “active assertion of the needs and purposes of its own life” (Progressive 167). This formulation is clearly different from the psychic and social forces described by Ward, which result automatically from biological mechanisms and multiply quantitatively into social forces. We find in Croly’s formulation a recognition of voluntary action directed instrumentally toward self-development through identification with the public sentiment. Croly and Lippmann, however, often resorted to vitalist and material analogies and vocabulary, including reference to social forces, social processes, and social structures, which sound very similar to Ward.

The establishment of the progressive democratic faith as the primary creative agency of social improvement necessarily gives to any specific formulations of social law a merely temporary and instrumental value. They have their use for a while and under certain conditions. They constitute the tools which the social will must use in order to accomplish certain specific results or to reach a useful temporary understanding of certain social processes.

(179)

“Public opinion” became the rubric for this expression of the democratic social will, and fostering a fluid communication of social impulses into a coherent public opinion became the task of progressive reform.

Writing after the first world war, Lippmann felt acutely the disconnection between public opinion and material conditions, strengthening his conviction that a special class of experts was needed to refine and formulate social impulses into a coherent public opinion (Kloppenber 392). A worldwide militarized bureaucracy no longer responded to the vital and creative impulses of the individual, and individuals could no longer comprehend public problems in their full complexity. Lippmann concluded that the simple mechanism described by Dewey whereby individuals attach meaning to actions by comprehending them within their social context was no longer possible; events were no longer meaningful signifiers, because neither individual nor society could search out

origins and outcomes (the stimulus and response of Dewey's reflex arc) by which to locate the event within a continuity of understood experience. Events took place half-way around the world, and those who reported them attached meaning according to their own context and ends-in-view, which often were not continuous with the interpretive values and meanings employed by those who learned of them from a distance.

As an example of this breakdown of context, Lippmann describes the chain of events that followed when French General Joffre would edit his field intelligence into a daily communiqué on the progress of the war, to be transmitted worldwide. Out of the myriad events that made up the battle of Verdun, including the hopes and fears of each individual soldier, General Joffre would compose a few words tailored to fit his own political needs, crafted in light of the vast geopolitical concerns that shaped the process of the war: "Within a few hours those two or three hundred words would be read all over the world. They would paint a picture in men's minds of what was happening on the slopes of Verdun, and in front of that picture people would take heart or despair" (Public 37).

Disillusioned by the betrayal at Versailles, Lippmann sought structural explanations for how his generation of progressive intellectuals could have been so wrong about the ends and means of the war. Petty personal motives on the part of the leaders and generals was part of it, but something more pervasive—a pseudo-environment of unattached and manipulable symbols, newly understood

as “propaganda”—had intervened to distort the public’s interpretation of events (Public 42-44).

This pseudo-environment consisted of “stereotypes,” by which Lippmann designates the interpretive schema a person uses to organize sensations into meaningful and communicable wholes. In that they are relatively stable, they correspond to Dewey’s habits and to the database of automatic couplings between feelings and ideas described by James. They are part of the “mental equipment” individuals use instrumentally to refine their impulses into meaningful actions and thereby maintain a continuity of experience. Because they are socially traded, inferred, acted upon, and validated through shared social activity, they are part of the “social equipment” that refines and constitutes the social individual. And because they are received and transmitted across generations, they are both generative and conservative, helping to define the formative character of group. Until the war, Lippmann and his progressive compatriots believed that these stereotypes demonstrated a rational dynamic, operating functionally to mediate understanding and action. “The symbols of public opinion, in times of moderate security, are subject to check and comparison and argument. They come and go, coalesce and are forgotten, never organizing perfectly the emotion of the whole group” (Public 11). Since the war had militarized the economy and created a vast machinery for manipulating public opinion, however, these symbols no longer enjoyed a natural existence; their

circulation and effect were distorted by ideology, power, distance, structures of communication, apathy, and ignorance. Dewey concurred: during the war the public information agencies manufactured public opinion and sentiment.

There has been a remarkable demonstration of the possibilities of guidance of the news upon which the formation of public opinion depends. There has been an equally convincing demonstration of the effect upon collective action of opinion when directed systematically along certain channels. One almost wonders whether the word "news" is not destined to be replaced by the word "propaganda"--though of course words linger after things have been transformed. The world has come to a curious juncture of events. The development of political democracy has made necessary the semblance at least of consultation of public opinion. The beliefs of the masses cannot be openly ignored. The immense size of a democracy like our own would make the development of community of sentiment and persuasion impossible unless there were definite and centralized agencies for communication and propagation of facts and ideas. ("The New Paternalism" 118)

In order to resist this new paternalism, the progressive social scientist needed to actively infuse this overarching realm of communicative activity with value and meaning generated by particular local transactions. The gathering and

distribution of information was essential, therefore, if the great engines of modern progress—the division of labor, the capitalist market, social diversification, democracy, technology, and scientific knowledge—were to work not just for the larger corporate interests but for the good of all. Data collected through the methods of interpretive sociology would introduce into the social consciousness the “content” of subjective meanings that actors attached to their own behavior and to the behavior of others, enabling others again to infer and extend a value system by which they may coordinate their conduct. Social psychologist Charles Horton Cooley describes this social process: “The obscure impulses that pass from man to man [. . .] have quite as much to do with the building of the collective mind as has explicit reasoning. The whole psychic current works itself up by complex interaction and synthesis” (Social Process 357). “Enlargement” of the social intelligence is a matter of fostering a freer circulation of these psychic currents, which occurs by improvement of communication, of printing, the telegraph, rapid travel, illustration, and the like (361-62).⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Ward’s electrical/physical model resonates in Cooley’s description of the circulation of social forces. As Dewey indicated in his review of Ward, the difference is that social psychology starts with mental impulses, the “stuff” of experience in the radical empiricist model, rather than with sensation understood as a discrete input from the environment to be processed by the sensory- and

(Continued)

In practice, however, this ideal served to foreground all of the friction inherent in the system that inhibited the free circulation of information and the organic growth of a representative public opinion. Lippmann hoped to infuse the stereotypes that structure the circulation of social forces with this situated content, thus reconstructing them according to a fresh understanding of the requirements of the environment. Data inform ideas, which filter and channel impulses and desire. By recording new data that had been omitted, by crafting more accurate reports of that which was known, and by unblocking the circulation of knowledge among all parties, society could challenge its own prejudices and stereotypes that constrained perfect knowledge within artificial barriers:

The stream of public opinion is stopped by them in little eddies of misunderstanding, where it is discolored with prejudice and far fetched analogy. Thus the environment with which our public opinions deal is refracted in many ways, by censorship and privacy at the source, by physical and social barriers at the other end, by

ideo-motor schema. Still, the shorthand description of psychic energies circulating and coalescing into social structures displays a free use of materialist metaphors that could be interpreted as ignoring the role of intelligent adaptation via critical selection of intended purposes, subjective valuations, and aesthetic judgment of relations.

scanty attention, by the poverty of language, by distraction, by unconscious constellations of feeling, by wear and tear, violence, monotony. These limitations upon our access to that environment combine with the obscurity and complexity of the facts themselves to thwart clearness and justice of perception, to substitute misleading fictions for workable ideas, and to deprive us of adequate checks upon those who consciously strive to mislead.

(Public 75-76)

While Dewey continued to put his faith in the democratic expression of public opinion, evidenced even within his trenchant analysis of the “eclipse of the public” in The Public and Its Problems (1927), Lippmann argued that the complexity of society required the guidance of the expert to facilitate a freer circulation of knowledge and information. The expert is there “to represent the unseen” (Public 382), interjecting information that is out of sight into the mix of feeling, instinct, and ideas, whether because that information enjoys no means of record or has been rendered mute by the prejudice of the majority. Unlike leaders of industry or elected politicians, however, the expert had no immediate power because he represents intangible interests, which have no supporting constituency. As one who is able to think across the boundary between individual sentiments and publicly mediated ideals, the expert works indirectly,

often behind the scenes, to make the unseen visible and felt by those who hold more tangible forms of power.

[The expert] represents people who are not voters, functions of voters that are not evident, events that are out of sight, mute people, unborn people, relations between things and people. He has a constituency of intangibles. And intangibles cannot be used to form a political majority, because voting is in the last analysis a test of strength, a sublimated battle, and the expert represents no strength available in the immediate. But he can exercise force by disturbing the line up of the forces. By making the invisible visible, he confronts the people who exercise material force with a new environment, sets ideas and feelings at work in them, throws them out of position, and so, in the profoundest way, affects the decision.

(Public 382-383)

Lippmann's confession that the expert's power is limited betrays also a sense that the expert sees through to the forming historical and social sensibility (*Bildung*) that shapes the more outward expressions of public opinion. This (self-affirming) faith in the power of the intellectual and artist to shape the material conditions of life by altering the deeper signifying structures that tacitly mediate individual identifications and actions was a defining characteristic of the

progressive intellectuals and of the constructive modernists who pursued similar designs through their writing.

The expert prompts a reconstructed balance of forces by infusing new content which would call forth new adaptive activity. Just as the balance of forces in a solar system must adjust if the mass of one of its planets changes, altering that planet's course through the system, so public opinion will adjust as the expert introduces new data into the equilibrium of social forces. As elements change, the system responds to restore equilibrium. Lippmann's description indicates the reciprocally informing relationship between material environmental conditions and the social intelligence that inheres in cultural systems through the publication and observance of socially significant data:

Every time a government relaxes the passport ceremonies or the customs inspection, every time a new railway or a new port is opened, a new shipping line established, every time rates go up or down, the mails move faster or more slowly, the cables are uncensored and made less expensive, highways built, or widened, or improved, the circulation of ideas is influenced. Tariff schedules and subsidies affect the direction of commercial enterprise, and therefore the nature of human contracts. (Public 48)

Prejudice, ignorance, and unconscious constellations of feeling constitute clots in the free flow of knowledge and opinion, which distort the emergence of a

progressive corporate will. The power of socially significant data lies in their ability to provoke a disequilibrium in a clotted information system, which demands a modification in conceptual schema.

If the experience contradicts the stereotype, one of two things happens. If the man is no longer plastic, or if some powerful interest makes it highly inconvenient to rearrange his stereotypes, he pooh-poohs the contradiction as an exception that proves the rule, discredits the witness, finds a flaw somewhere, and manages to forget it. But if he is still curious and open-minded, the novelty is taken into the picture, and allowed to modify it. Sometimes, if the incident is striking enough, and if he has felt a general discomfort with his established scheme, he may be shaken to such an extent as to distrust all accepted ways of looking at life, and to expect that normally a thing will not be what it is generally supposed to be.

(100)

Lippmann offers a phenomenological description of this process, which notes both the emotional and conceptual transformations that occur in the destruction of a prejudice:

[T]he destruction of a prejudice, though painful at first, because of its connection with our self-respect, gives an immense relief and a fine pride when it is successfully done. There is a radical

enlargement of the range of attention. As the current categories dissolve, a hard, simple version of the world breaks up. The scene turns vivid and full. (Public 410)

Here, feeling is acknowledged as a compelling social force; it is effective, however, not through the mechanical pleasure-pain calculus—which, according to Ward, was automatic and did not entail cognitive reflection—but by expanding the attention and calling forth adjustments in the regulating cultural schema that accommodate a broader set of values and ends-in-view. Public policy must work to effect a plasticity in cultural schema that respond vitally to the requirements of an ever-broadening sense of the social: "The ideals of human feeling," Lippmann proclaims, will "place politics among the genuine, creative activities of men [. . .]. The goal of action is in its final analysis aesthetic and not moral—a quality of feeling instead of a conformity to rule" (Preface 200). By introducing new mechanisms for collecting data, and new conceptual schema for interpreting and communicating that data, social policy experts release the flow between private feeling and public intelligence, a flow that had been diverted into eddies of prejudice, misunderstanding, and private interest. The new experts used the scientific marshalling of facts, therefore, to challenge misconceptions and channel powerful social forces toward socially validated ends.

W. E. B. Du Bois was one of the earliest proponents of a historical sociology that broke from the positivist and materialist assumptions of

Spencerian social models. His thorough studies of the living conditions of local black communities exemplified the role of the expert as representing the invisible constituents by introducing the *full* facts of their lived experience into the national psyche.

Chapter Four

Writing Jim Crow with W. E. B. Du Bois

In my project to consider how individuals during the progressive era articulated identities in relationship to a historical national sensibility, W. E. B. Du Bois provides an especially illuminating case, as he analyzed and described such articulatory practices both through introspective reflection on his own experience and through descriptive studies of local communities. Du Bois sought to create African American identity by employing the progressive model of pragmatic, culturally mediated, historico-social identity formation. Specifically, he employed a hermeneutical model of “thinking into” (and across) horizons to discern how a people’s available cultural forms structured their developmental aspirations as they responded to the demands of their particular environment and historical experience. Despite contemporary racial and cultural models that effectively isolated African Americans from the nation’s cultural history, Du Bois emphasized the elements, connections, and mediating rules that wove a continuity across the concentric yet distinct horizons of two life worlds defined antagonistically by the color line. His hermeneutical model and the effective rhetorical strategies it supported for fostering identifications across difference is instructive for today’s political projects. The act of thinking into another’s cultural *products* works to transform those products back into the constructive *processes* according to which they were produced. By imagining the developmental aspirations of an other and imaginatively recreating the experience of expressing those aspirations

through the totality of available discursive forms as historically received, the hermenutical process provides a structured means for “articulating chains of equivalence” within an imagined cultural horizon, or empty universal. In this chapter I will describe Du Bois’s training in a historical, hermeneutical method, and then read a variety of his rhetorical strategies in light of that model.

Du Bois formed his methodologies under several mentors. In 1960, he recalled with some pride how he had come to sociology from the perspective of history and philosophy rather than physics and biology. Having studied under William James at Harvard, he shared James’s opposition to Spencer’s materialist monism that squelched any possibility of individual free will.⁵⁶ Working under his dissertation advisor, Albert Bushnell Hart, he learned Hart’s inductive methodologies for building a historical model of the growth of the nation based on a careful examination of primary data. Du Bois thus represented one of Lippmann’s experts, contributing vast amounts of interpreted data through his sociological studies, representing the unseen because unrecorded life of the African American.

⁵⁶ “In the realm of social phenomena the law of survival is greatly modified by human choice, wish, whim and prejudice” (Philadelphia Negro 98).

Du Bois further refined his historical approach to sociology through his studies with Gustav von Schmoller and Adolph Wagner, proponents of the new historical economics at the University of Berlin. Schmoller and Wagner urged economists to abandon the deductive theories of classical economics for an inductive method based on a close study of facts.⁵⁷ David Levering Lewis notes that Wagner and Schmoller's insistence on inductive techniques curbed Du Bois's tendencies to idealism and system building (Lewis 142). Critics often make this point, claiming that his tutelage under Hart, Schmoller, and Wagner trained Du Bois in empirical research methods, leavening his innate Hegelianism (Broderick 369; Rampersad 44). These critics generally fail to note how these various traditions informed one another in late nineteenth-century German social sciences, however, and they allow British empirical models to color their conclusions. Citing The Philadelphia Negro as the epitome of Du Bois's use of Schmoller's empirical techniques, Broderick then conflates Schmoller's influence

⁵⁷ Ross notes that the German historical economics school profoundly influenced the generation of historical economists who came of age during the progressive era in the United States, influencing the period's emphasis on experience. In this younger generation Ross includes John Bates Clark, Henry Carter Adams, Richard T. Ely, Edmund J. James, Simon Patten, and E.R.A. Seligman.

with that of Charles Booth's Life and Labour of the People of London (1892-97) to suggest that Du Bois imposed a strict separation between the accumulation of facts and the recommendations of reform (370).

As practitioners of an emerging discipline, sociologists indeed felt compelled to differentiate their scientific study of society from ameliorative social work.⁵⁸ The empiricism of the German historical social sciences was significantly different, however, from the empiricism of Bentham and Mill; it did not presume to accumulate facts from an objective, value-neutral perspective, which could then be schematized into principles and laws. Human beings process their experience through pragmatic acts of conceptualization, valuation, and mediation of activity in a reciprocal relationship to the stable and historically persistent formations of meaning and value sustained by the group. Understanding the products of these processes required “a new science of culture” that interpreted social data heuristically through an identification with the lived experience of the social group, a perspective from which we may infer the ways the group's

⁵⁸ On this point Lewis Coser cites Albion Small, who differentiated “Descriptive Sociology—The actual society of the past and present, the world as *it is*”; “Statical Sociology—The world *as it ought to be*”; and “Dynamic Sociology—The methods available for causing approximation of the ideal, the world *in process of betterment*” (292).

members see themselves and their goals. Broderick is aware of this tradition and in fact describes Schmoller's historical economics as a "normative science," in which the social scientist infers the historically developed norms that structure social interactions. "A generation of thinkers was turning to historical principles in American social thought," he writes, quoting Morton White, "and under the impetus of Schmoller's instruction, Du Bois was applying the new ideas to the sociology of the Negro" (369). Lewis also associates Schmoller's influence on Du Bois with that of James's psychology, both of which led Du Bois to take a hermeneutical approach to analyze the stream of lived, historical experience as the proper subject of analysis, rather than, like Spencer, analogizing from the principles of chemistry and genetics (Lewis 202). Axel R. Schäfer argues that the German historical school of economics suggested to Du Bois a theory of social ethics that "anchored values in social interaction and participation, not in man's nature as a rational, autonomous being motivated by self-interest" (par 3). Schmoller and Wagner taught their students to think of the economic organization of society as

the reflection of specific ethical and customary views of a culture, not as the result of universal economic laws. They exhorted their students to study and understand economic life in the context of social customs, values, and institutions. They urged them to look at culture, rather than nature; at the environment, not genetics; at

historical differences, not universal laws; and at ethical change, not moral absolutes. (Schäfer par. 23)

This descriptive methodology was combined with a progressive impulse.

Schmoller vigorously rejected the deductive conclusions of laissez-faire economics, characterizing them not a natural laws of human interaction but as the product of a peculiar entrepreneurial spirit expressed in a particular place in time. Schäfer notes that this emphasis on the ethical nature of economics was a primary cross-Atlantic influence on progressive impulse in America as American students studied at Berlin, Leipzig and Heidelberg (par. 13).

The German historical school of economics reflected Hegelian metaphysics, Kantian epistemology, and Herderian historicism in its emphasis on the creative intellectual and moral powers of the individual as means of understanding and transforming the social and economic environment. Its central tenets were a fundamental critique of laissez-faire liberalism, an understanding of ethics as historically constituted rather than transcendently grounded or biologically fixed, an emphasis on the close connection between ethics and economics, a recognition of the relativity of economic truth, a rejection of all a priori assumptions, and an insistence on the observation of facts in order to arrive at general rules and principles. (par. 24)

In his unpublished essay, "Sociology Hesitant," Du Bois described his analytical methodology as seeking to discover through personal immersion in the field of data the primary and secondary rhythms that structure the world the social scientist seeks to understand. The primary rhythms were governed by physical events that could be described statistically, such as birth and death rates; the secondary were governed by the dynamics of human volition as expressed in group life. These latter were nearly as uniform in expression as the former (qtd. in Lewis 202-203). The task of the sociologist was to interpret the data of subjective human experience as expressed in group activity by understanding how the community responded to its environment in light of its sense of its self, its purposes, and its history.

From the perspective of a progressive historicism, which rejects the empiricist's split between the analytical mind and the world out there, there is no such thing as a value-neutral amassing of facts, for to introduce new data into the articulatory practices of cultural formation is to modify those practices according to the values and ethical vision of the social scientist who infers those data. Concerning his methodology in The Philadelphia Negro, Du Bois insisted "We simply collect the facts; others may use them as they will" (qtd. in Broderick 370). He later reflected this same sentiment: "Of the theory back of the plan of this study of Negroes I neither knew nor cared. I saw only here a chance to study a historical group of black folk and to show exactly what their place was in the

community” (Autobiography 197). Critics have followed Du Bois’s characterizations of his methodology to distill Schmoller’s influence to the inculcation of sound empirical methods. Thomas Boston writes that Du Bois never injected normative judgments into scholarly research. “Although he was a social activist throughout his life, he confined his propaganda for racial equality to journalistic editorials and speeches” (305). Yet Du Bois’s close personal identification with Schmoller and his explicit adoption of social science methodologies suggest that we must complicate Du Bois’s professed attitude toward empirical research. Du Bois appealed to the methodologies of “pure” empirical science to distinguish his work from the confused reform-oriented research of early sociologists. Furthermore, especially in the years before he assumed the position of editor at The Crisis, Du Bois held such great faith in the descriptive power of hermeneutically based analytical methods that he chose not to compromise the reception of his studies by drawing their political and social implications explicitly. To show exactly the place of the 7th Ward Negroes in relationship to the community—and to locate that place within a historical perspective of the consequences of slavery—was rhetorically more radical and more effective than to launch polemical attacks against the white citizens of the city for perpetuating those conditions.

Once we place Du Bois’s historicist methodologies in context, we see how his careful efforts to disclose the elements, connections, and mediating rules that

structure the whole of the city were indeed radically progressive. From that perspective, the plight of the 7th Ward cannot be attributed to the primitive state of the Negro race or the weakness of the Negro culture. The 7th Ward is one element within the interdependent whole of the city of Philadelphia, which itself can only be understood within the context of the nation's history, a history that has been articulated incessantly around the persistence of the color line, and, specifically, the institution of slavery. The history of the whole social complex is implicated in the conditions of the 7th Ward. In attempting to recuperate Du Bois as a reasonable economist, Boston writes that the only value assumptions that shaped Du Bois's work were 1) that African Americans are part of the human race and have the same endowment and capacity for culture and development as all others; and 2) African Americans are as deserving of as much scientific investigation as are all other ethnic groups (305). Boston writes this without any apparent recognition of how radically subversive these two assumptions were during the height of brutal Jim Crow repression and in relationship to the hierarchical racialism of the social sciences.

In her description of Dilthey's descriptive psychology, Arens explains that the goal of the historical approach to the human sciences was to understand the production of knowledge and the conception of organizing principles as they emerge out of human consciousness (Structures 155-156). To remain within the flux of experience and not import organizing principles from some transcendent

unity of mind, the human sciences must remain immersed in the content of experience, inferring “the associations and correlations of data which went into the formation of a particular product of culture as responses to a particular environment” (169). This emphasis on both the content and the structure of experience derives from Dilthey’s analyses of the individual mental life, which he expanded into a science for analyzing the products of culture (167). Working from the whole to an analysis of the parts, inferring the interconnections among elements, Dilthey searches for structural regularities that constitute the expressed particularity of the system as a dynamic response to its environment, its historically inherited cultural products, and its mediating procedures (168-169). As with Dewey, structures in Dilthey’s cultural science are not “ideational in themselves, but rather are the mechanisms which provide the ground for ideas to form in a particular environment and for the survival purposes of a distinct culture—the patterning of the mind” (169).

Du Bois worked self-consciously from this perspective, attempting a science of culture that combined both intuitive and explanatory methods. His emphasis on beauty and the cultivation of a sensibility towards it; his celebration of sensuality and the enjoyment of it; his belief that the Negro’s power of imitation, his quick eye, and his love of performance grant special powers of discernment—these are all skills of intuition that provide the rich material that he and others in the talented tenth would then interpret, express, and explain to

challenge the worldview of both the white- and the dark-skinned peoples of the world. This methodology was evident in the dual rhetorical strategies Du Bois used over the years, which he described broadly as academic description and journalistic propaganda. I do not mean that each genre represented fully one mode or the other; rather, Du Bois used both techniques to reconstruct the psyche of whites and blacks by bringing to the fore the unconscious elements, connections, dependencies, and values that structured the shared experience of both races.

Lewis characterizes Du Bois's move in 1910 from Atlanta University to the editorship of The Crisis as the transition from science to propaganda, compelled by a series of ugly incidents that confirmed Du Bois's fear that the world was growing more atavistic and violent in its repression of African Americans. Du Bois forsook the tower for the platform, monographs for editorial columns (408). The Crisis would follow in the line of militant newspapers devoted to overcoming the color line, including Frederick Douglass's North Star and William Garrison's Liberator. Its editorial design as a comprehensive review of published opinion and literature on race relations fit its mission to serve as a tool for those who would actively engage public opinion. In the German historicist tradition so dear to Du Bois, genre defines authorial intention; his decision to take up the self-reflective essay would make available to him rhetorical means that were not available to systematic social studies. Unlike the implied objectivity of the study,

the self-reflective essay operates explicitly within a productive binary between the life rationale of the author and the constitutive cultural schema of the writer's and reader's horizon. Herder adopted the form for its ability to engage the reader in a conversation—a dynamic give-and-take that brought to the fore both the reader's life rationale and the cultural schema that enabled its expression:

Certainly our philosophy must let itself come down from the stars to the human beings [. . .]. I must speak to a culture in its own language, in its way of thinking, in its own horizon; its language is not things or words; its way of thinking is vivid, not distinct, certain, but not demonstrative.⁵⁹ (qtd. in Leventhal 171)

What was needed was not systematic description but a new philosophical anthropology that trades the project of building metaphysical foundations for the hermeneutical project of describing human experience as an indefinite set of concentric horizons defined by a shifting “center point” Herder identified alternately as *der Mensch* and *das Volk* (170).

The editorials at The Crisis were not Du Bois's first foray into the essay form; at the request of a publisher, Du Bois agreed to gather “a number of my fugitive pieces” that had been previously published. As Lewis notes, the resulting

⁵⁹ Wie die Philosophie zum Besten des Volkes allgemeiner und nützlicher werden kann, reprinted in Sämmtliche Werke vol. 1, p. 122.

collection, The Souls of Black Folk (1903), contained much new material that, together with the assiduously reworked existing material, revealed an entirely new voice in the tradition of African American literature. Its publication “redefined the terms of a three-hundred-year interaction between black and white people [. . .]” (Lewis 277). Its tone was lyrical, polemical, confessional, of surpassing emotional power and beauty, bathetic and crimson (277). Here Du Bois was speaking as a human being to other human beings, no longer mediating his appeals through the rhetorical strategies of scientific description but presuming to speak from the same horizon of experience as his white audience and expecting his claim on the reader to be recognized as that of an equal. He would speak to the American culture in its own language, in its way of thinking, from within its own horizon; his language would be vivid, not distinct, certain, but not demonstrative. Du Bois confessed this approach a year after the book’s publication, acknowledging that the message of The Souls of Black Folk was not altogether clear; while strong, the central message was colored by a penumbra of half-veiled allusions that communicated by a sympathetic appeal to moral and aesthetic judgments as much as to reason (“Souls of Black Folk” 1152). Du Bois frames the hermeneutic method in his Forward by tendering his “little book” from behind the veil, reaching out across the color line to the gentle reader who may, by sympathetic study, experience and interpret the life world of the folk who live behind it. Du Bois concludes with a detail designed to introduce the distance

between horizons that makes the hermeneutical analysis productive: “And, finally, need I add that I who speak here am bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of them that live within the Veil?”

As a worker in the kingdom of culture, Du Bois intends to present the life world of a people and articulate the elements of that world in relationship to the larger cultural and historical sensibility. This decentering of the existing hegemonic formation introduces a new social force that will modify the interdependent relationships that structure that world. In using the term “folk,” Du Bois cites Herder’s model of folk culture as the free, genuine and collective imaginative expression of a particular people articulating a collective identity as they interact among themselves and with their environment. Isaiah Berlin describes Herder’s notion of the spirit or psyche of the *Volk*:

For Herder, to be a member of a group is to think and act in a certain way, in the light of particular goals, values, pictures of the world: and to think and act is to belong to a group. [. . .] Herder conveys the notion that the way in which a people—say the Germans—speak or move, eat or drink, their hand-writing, their laws, their music, their social outlook, their dance forms, their theology, have patterns and qualities in common which they do not share, or share to a notably lesser degree, with the similar activities of some other group—the French, the Icelanders, the Arabs, the

ancient Greeks. Each of these activities belong to a cluster which must be grasped as a whole: they illuminate each other. Anyone who studies the speech rhythms, or the history, or the architecture, or the physical characteristics of the Germans, will thereby achieve a deeper understanding of German legislation, music, dress. There is a property, not capable of being abstracted and articulated—that which is German in the Germans—which all these diverse activities evince. (195)

In publishing the *Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois invited his white readers to meet and come to understand the psyche—the soul—of the black folk living in America. That soul was manifest in the cultural productions of the people; Du Bois's lifelong labor to record and publish a variety of African American cultural expressions suggests that he, following Herder, believed that the soul of the people did not exist apart from its expression. The self unifies experience into representations (*Vorstellung*) which do not merely reflect a direct correspondence to the environment but which manifest a self-formation (*Bildung*), which is historical, contingent, intentional, and the result of a process of mediation between that emerging formation (or life rationale) and the thought styles of the group (Arens 195). Herder's radical model of language and knowledge supported this view and likely motivated Du Bois in his efforts to gather and record the "folk" expressions of his people, much as Herder sought to

preserve the cultural expressions of folk communities. Language and knowledge are coextensive for Herder: to know means nothing other than to be able to say (Leventhal 230). To lose the shared linguistic and historical expressions of a culture is for that community to lose its political identity.⁶⁰

Soul does not, therefore precede its expression; the soul *constructs itself* through its expression. We find evidence of this discourse perspective that

⁶⁰ In Our America Walter Benn Michaels argues that the logic of 1920s nativist pluralism reinforced an essentialist notion of race by requiring a persistent substratum to organize the nonhierarchical pluralism of cultures. Herder's nonessentialist and relativist descriptions of culture, especially in his earlier work, locates these persistent structures in culture. Michaels argues that the nativist logic resurrected a useful materialism designed to differentiate and separate blacks and whites, especially in the South, during the 1920s. Herder describes the cultural structures and practices that persist in the life world of a people, which inform material elements as well (e.g., handwriting, gestures). Herder emphasizes the organic elaboration of that life world, which includes historically derived cultural forms, such as language, and schemas for organizing activity, as well as the demands of the physical environment. Herder's systemic perspective complicates the causal mechanisms Michaels employs, whereby the logic of a cultural ideology materializes racial identities.

rejects a priori origins in Du Bois's descriptions of the African roots of African American culture. Where white historians, including his dissertation advisor Albert Bushnell Hart, classified Negro culture as primitive and inferior, Du Bois described the articulatory processes of social groups in Africa as displaying similar dynamics of cultural mediation as are found in Anglo-Saxon culture. Du Bois emphasized dynamic articulation and process to argue that African American cultural expressions could and do participate in the same processes of cultural expression and identity formation as those that constitute Anglo-Saxon culture, because the two are continuous and interdependent. The African American horizon of experience and the soul that expressed its collective identity were indeed distinct from the horizon and identity of the Anglo-Saxon culture. Both souls were, however, the articulated expression of the sum total of structured cultural activity. Du Bois studied Negro culture from the unusual perspective of one who was adept in the symbolically mediated social processes of both horizons. Through this dual perspective, Du Bois developed his strategy of peering "behind the veil," studying the cultural traditions and social structures of a people who were on the margins of Anglo-Saxon civilization, whether they lived in the rural South or the Seventh Ward of Philadelphia. Du Bois's strategy of pulling back the veil for his white audience was a direct challenge to those sociologists and historians who dismissed the "native gifts" and racial traits as

being too unstructured to have any continuing impact on the interdependent process of cultural formation across horizons.

Against the artificial universals of the French Encyclopédistes, specifically Voltaire, Diderot, and Condorcet, for whom there can be only one universal civilization, Herder proposed a cultural relativism that celebrated the particular traditions and interaction patterns that evolved as the peoples of the earth responded over time to the demands of their geographical area (Hausheer 53; Arens, “Kant, Herder” 196).⁶¹ For Herder, these folk expressions were closer to the vital sources of “Heart! Warmth! Blood! Humanity! Life!” than the rational, metaphysical constructions of the philosopher.⁶² Du Bois’s descriptions of African American folk culture combine these dual emphases found in Herder: the cultural expressions of African Americans transmitted a vital, renewing energy through an articulated, structured cultural expression. This combination enabled Du Bois to assert both a continuity of structure and function and a vital difference. Both his sociological studies and his essays sought to engage his reader in a

⁶¹ Arens comments that Herder’s later work turned teleological, towards the utopistic diction of rationalism (Arens 196), which, we can conclude, enabled his work to be appropriated for national socialist purposes .

⁶² A favorite phrase of Herder’s, repeated throughout his life (Hausheer 52).

hermeneutic exploration of how this difference could work through its continuities with Anglo-Saxon culture to advance American civilization toward a richer and more inclusive social and historical sensibility.

Du Bois took the progressive evolutionary social scientists at their word, appealing to their theories of race conflict and progressive social evolution to challenge their limited, Anglo-Saxon, and imperialist perspectives.⁶³ His model of

⁶³ By progressive evolutionary social scientists I refer to those, like Lester Ward, who believed natural evolutionary forces of nature could be directed toward progressive human purposes by mechanically manipulating the pain-pleasure calculus that determined individual and social behavior. As shown in Chapter 2, the pragmatist, progressive intellectuals described here maintained that individual denominations of meaning and value, made in the course of shared, social activity, are what constitute a community's horizon and thus organize social behavior (see Dewey's critique of Ward above, pp. 115-119). Progressive evolutionary social scientists and progressive liberals shared a commitment to progressive reform; whereas the former believed materialist mechanisms could be used to direct social progress from above, through legislation, the latter believed that individual denominations of meaning, value, and purpose would have to be guided toward democratically decided,

(Continued)

the kingdom of culture challenged these sociologists to include in their descriptions of the circulation of American social forces African American interests and gifts that had been marginalized and ignored. In the evolutionary progressive model of social development, social structures that supported vital life functions survived; archaic structures dissolved as the vital life process of the group assumed new configurations that better accommodated the impulses of the group spirit and the changing conditions of the environment. America's deep psychic investment in forgetting black contributions made it difficult, however, for black intellectuals and artists to receive recognition for introducing the gifts of their race into the circulation of progressive social and cultural forces. While his Atlanta University case studies had sought to inform, and thus transform, educated understandings of these societal dynamics, Du Bois came to understand that it was not mere ignorance alone that was preserving distorted social arrangements, that the causes were more systemic, and that a deep reorganization of feeling was necessary to ameliorate American social conditions.

progressive values. In the case of Du Bois, this would be achieved primarily by increasing opportunities for contact across the color line and interpreting the felt experience of that contact in ways that society's members would rethink their guiding denominations of meaning and value.

Dialectics offered some hope to this Berlin-trained sociologist, as they supported a logic whereby obstacles to progressive growth became the grounds for their own removal. In this case, it was the active excluding of the gifts of black folk that isolated Negro physical and spiritual striving, led to their distinctive development, and made them complementary to the Anglo-Saxon genius for commerce, government, and institution-building. The Kingdom of culture required the full gamut of complementary spiritual gifts; by the very act of excluding its Negro citizens, Anglo-Saxon America had split off a key element of its composite self. As a result, white civilization lacked the spiritual, aesthetic, and physical gifts that resulted from a unique African American experience. For a “seventh son” like Du Bois,⁶⁴ the logic of exclusion—inscrutable to whites but transparent to those who had lived within the Veil—preserved a hope that the citizens of the center would one day feel the loss *to themselves* of that which had been shunted to the margins. Sorting out the warp and woof of a nation's mingled racial history would not be necessary if all its members felt themselves citizens of a higher Kingdom of culture, where such social forces could circulate freely. Until their gifts were recognized by merit alone and all citizens could contribute freely to the progressive betterment of society, however, black folk

⁶⁴ Du Bois describes the Negro race as “a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world” (Souls 214).

would have to call out their distinctive racial traits and remind Anglo-Saxon society of its dependency on their gifts. From his early use of Alexander Crummell's theories on "Afro Saxon" civilization to his calls for separate black economic communities in the 1920s, Du Bois followed this dialectical line of reasoning, by which an emphasis on the distinctiveness of black culture was a necessary precursor to achieving a free and undistorted play among separate cultural elements contributed by various races. As Wilson Moses explains it, "assimilationist ends through separatist means" (Golden Age 30).

In his social psychology, which also focused on the study of folk cultures, W. I. Thomas argued that the process of institution building involved refining social forces from their lower, more instinctual and biological roots to higher, more cultural formations, including legislation, a judiciary, transportation networks, and financial institutions. While celebrating the vitality and warmth of the Negro's native gifts, Du Bois shared this common model that social interaction refined primitive impulses into increasingly elaborated social systems. To articulate a distinctive cultural expression that could compete in the larger cultural organization of the nation, African Americans would have to articulate and elaborate their own cultural products over time somewhat separate from the destructive social forces of the larger culture. Du Bois therefore promoted racial segregation, arguing that only by cultivating their own racial genius into valuable social economic and political structures would African Americans begin to

participate in the civil life of the nation, or, at least, gain some safety from Anglo-Saxon violence. Expressing these ideas in the Crisis in 1933, Du Bois argued that the solution to being murdered by whites was to express black cultural ideals in viable social institutions:

Therefore let us not beat futile wings in impotent frenzy, but carefully plan and guide our segregated life, organize in industry and politics to protect it and expand it and above all to give it unhampered spiritual expression in art and literature. (“The Negro College” 75)

Hart, Du Bois’s dissertation advisor at Harvard, assumed an evolutionary model of social progress in his twenty-six-volume history, The American Nation. Hart traces English and French social compact theory, including that of Rousseau, Lock, Montesquieu, and Blackstone, as it was attempted by the American experiment. Hart focused his research on identifying those intermediate social structures that facilitated communication between local social forces and larger group identities, including a national government authority. He praises America’s federalist system for its checks and balances and its dialectical relationship between federal and states’ rights. This dialectic between governing bodies and the consent of the governed preserves the careful balance between natural and civil rights that is at the heart of social compact theory.

By using social compact theory, Hart employed the vocabulary of political science to describe the evolutionary social processes that were of such interest to sociologists. Where Ward and Small traced the evolution of psychic forces into a differentiated and interdependent social processes, Hart described the progression from natural to civil rights. Following Rousseau, Hart explained that natural rights are given in the state of nature; civil rights are willed and compacted. Without political self-organization, a group has only its natural rights and innate qualities; to participate in the life of the nation—a political entity—it must fashion itself as a body politic (Hart 16: 100). Anglo-Saxon immigrants were especially gifted with a capacity for self-government, the result of their doctrine of inborn rights and their principles of liberty. These racial traits had led to their unparalleled success in fashioning civilized nation states.

The European immigrants did not have the continent to themselves, however, and, by contrast, these other racial groups were less competent:

They found a native race of dark-skinned people; they brought another over from Africa; and they have added several others by annexations. These dependent races have for centuries affected American life and have put a strain upon popular government both in its principles and its practice. (Hart 16: 47)

The nation had no means to enfranchise these groups, as they lacked the skills to fashion their distinctive characteristics, traditions, and culture into civic structures that could withstand the pressures of Anglo-Saxon civilization.

Can the Indian stand the pressure of civilization? At the end of twenty-five years, when he gets the right to transfer his title, will he cling to his land? Or will he become a gypsy race, a curse and degradation to the white communities among which he moves? At best the hope of the Indian is to lose his own individuality in the nirvana of Americanization.⁶⁵ (Hart 16: 65)

The fate of marginal groups depended on their ability to assert their racial characteristics, or genius, through such institutional structures as could withstand the pressures of the conflict-ridden interaction between social groups, which was

⁶⁵ Hart's question refers to the (then) uncertain consequences of the Dawes Act of 1887, which divided the 150 million acres belonging to native American Indian tribes into small private holdings. Proponents of this Progressive reform effort believed that the large communistic reservations were a primitive social organization. Through progressive legislation, Indians would be encouraged to organize themselves around the small, family farm, fitting them for easier incorporation into American civilization. As these small plots were not viable, most of these parcels were sold to whites, with the result that 100 million acres of Indian lands were retaken (Matthiessen 17-18, 582).

one of the impelling dynamics driving the nation's progressive history. In this passage, Hart questions whether the Indian tribes have the capacity to express their distinct cultural identities through the available social formations of the reigning Anglo-Saxon civilization.

Hart had even less hope for the African American, who had no tribe and no treaties and, therefore, no means for maintaining a structured interaction with Anglo-Saxon civilization.

With the negro the conditions are not very different. As a race he, too, has contributed little to the ideals of America: his languages have perished; his tribal customs have long since died out; he has accepted the tongue, the religion, the literature, and the standards of his former masters. Yet by them he is still held to be an alien in the land where he was born, and a stranger amid the graves of his fathers. (Hart 16: 65)

Hart assumes that any group, whether distinguished by race or locale, can assert itself into the body politic, if it can fashion its racial genius into civic institutions that are strong enough to influence public discourse. The national spirit emerges out of the interaction among these constituent groups. Liminal groups that cannot fashion such institutions impose a strain on the American democratic system, because they do not facilitate the interaction that drives progressive evolutionary growth. Unable to participate in this interactive social process, the

African American's innate qualities have remained obdurate to civilizing influences.

Whatever his variety of original race, climate and conditions little disturbed the race fixity of the negro; neither his physical characteristics nor his intellectual aptitudes have much changed during four centuries of contact with Europeans. The African in America has many attractive traits: he loves a joke, can sing a song, makes a tolerable soldier, shows faithful affection for his white leaders, works in the sun, and is exasperatingly cheerful under the worst conditions. In his native home he is cruel, superstitious, and lustful [. . .].” (Hart 16: 50).

According to volume 26 of Hart's history of the continent, National Ideals Historically Traced: 1607-1907, this obduracy was a curious anomaly, for out of the interplay among English principles, a virgin continent, and the influence of various cultures, American civilization had been progressively adapting and growing for three centuries. By passively accepting the civilization of whites, Indians and African Americans failed to contribute to the nation's progressive evolutionary development.

With Hart as a foil, we can now better appreciate Du Bois's rhetorical strategies for identifying the elements, connections, and mediating rules that structure the whole of American society, including the contributions and values of

its African American citizens. Du Bois often repeats in his essays the list of racial traits Hart attributed to the Negro. In "The Conservation of Races," the Negro is soft, with a subtle sense of song and humor and a unique ability for storytelling. In The Souls of Black Folk, blacks have given this country three gifts: story and song; the ability to endure long physical labor; and a strong spirituality (387). In "The Negro," an unpublished essay, African Americans are esteemed for their "goodheartedness—their straightforwardness" (qtd. in Lewis, Biography 149). Du Bois allows that these are the folk virtues of the African American, which he describes, using the language of the day, as racial characteristics; but even as he echoes his dissertation advisor, he in effect deconstructs Hart's dialectic that elevates a civil society over the more traditional cultures that form the base of that society.

Du Bois challenges Hart's claim that three centuries of contact between the European and African races on the American continent have had little impact in either direction.

Above and beyond all that we have mentioned, perhaps least tangible but just as true, is the peculiar spiritual quality which the Negro has injected into American life and civilization. It is hard to define or characterize it—a certain spiritual joyousness; a sensuous, tropical love of life, in vivid contrast to the cool and cautious New England reason; a slow and dreamful conception of

the universe, a drawling and slurring of speech, an intense sensitiveness to spiritual values—all these things and others like them, tell of the imprint of Africa on Europe in America. There is no gainsaying or explaining away this tremendous influence of the contact of the north and south, of black and white, of Anglo-Saxon and Negro. (“The Gift of the Spirit” 54)

Du Bois structures this historical contact between cultures as paired, reciprocal, and equally informative.

Recalling Herder’s insistence that our thoughts and our language are coextensive, and that the soul of a people is expressed through the discourse structures (including language) that are available to it, we can now read Du Bois’s early sociological studies, including The Philadelphia Negro and the Atlanta University studies, as a refutation of the claim that social structures in black society were insufficiently developed to participate in a progressively interactive social evolution. Where Booker Washington in Up From Slavery pictures his origins as a “heathenistic darkness” out of which he must, by industry, self-help, and self-reliance, build an autonomous self, Du Bois pulls back the veil to reveal a world of Negro gifts that demonstrates continuities with a preceding African folk culture. He then further discloses the continuities among

these gifts and the cultural formations of Anglo-American culture.⁶⁶ Slavery did not wipe out every vestige of antecedent culture, he argued. The tribal priest became the Christian priest of the plantation, and on that foundation grew the Negro church, “the first distinctively Negro American social institution” (“The Gift of the Spirit” 57).

It must not be assumed that [the work of northern missionaries to the South] acted on raw material. Rather it reacted and was itself influenced by a very definite and important body of thought and belief on the part of the Negroes. Religion in the United States was not simply brought to the Negro by the missionaries. To treat it in that way is to miss the essence of the Negro action and reaction upon American religion. We must think of the transplanting of the Negro as transplanting to the United States a certain spiritual entity, and an unbreakable set of world-old beliefs, manners, morals, superstitions and religious observances. (“The Gift of the Spirit” 56)

American Anglo-Saxon society at the turn of the century conceived of its Christian missionary efforts as a vigorous extension of white civilization into

⁶⁶ For more on Du Bois’s rewriting of genealogies, asserting the originating precedence of African American culture to Anglo-American culture, see Ann Douglas, Terrible Honesty, p. 309.

traditional cultures that lacked the virtue and capacity necessary for progressive evolutionary development. To argue that such missionary efforts to the Negro South were met, rather, by a rich culture, already bearing its own manners, morals, and religious observances, was to challenge how Anglo-Saxons employed the race-conflict model to claim license for their imperial designs. Du Bois did not question whether contact and conflict among races advanced the progressive evolution of society; he did, however, displace that model from its materialist metaphors to disclose the active, articulatory nature of all cultural formation. A people could not, except by violence, elevate its cultural expression to the status of a timeless universal standard. Du Bois's interdependent, articulatory model enabled him to expand the terms of the discussion to include such social forces as he believed characterized the African American, so as to preserve for his race a role in that progressive process.

Through his contributions to the annual Atlanta University studies of the Negro, which were published from 1897 to 1914, Du Bois marshaled extensive primary-source material to show that black communities had indeed built social institutions that expressed the Negro genius in structural forms. The Third Atlanta Report of 1898 published statistics on the numbers of cooperative enterprises, businesses, insurance establishments, and property holdings of blacks known to exist in Southern cities. Attending the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1900, Du Bois displayed some 500 photos, maps, models,

architectural plans, and patents recording the contributions made by African Americans and showing the progress made at Atlanta University, Berea, Fisk, Howard, Hampton, and Tuskegee. In his own report on the Exposition, Du Bois claimed there was “no more encouraging answer than that given by the American Negroes, who are here shown to be studying, examining, and thinking of their own progress and prospects” (Lewis, Biography 248).

Du Bois’s aim in studies like The Philadelphia Negro and the 1899 Atlanta report, “The Negro in Business,” was to reveal a maturing social infrastructure in black communities. Du Bois was forever frustrated that whites ignored the existence of a differentiated class structure among blacks. For his 1898 study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor, “The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia,” Du Bois gathered census data, read local newspapers, and conducted extensive interviews while living among the town’s residents for two months. Through this research he developed his theories on class formation in black communities, which reflect in large part the Victorian values of the time. Character, the moral sanctions of the community, and a certain energetic “push” combine variously to produce differences in economic and social standing.

One thing, however, is clear, and that is the growing differentiation of classes among Negroes, even in small communities. This most natural and encouraging result of thirty years’ development has not yet been sufficiently impressed upon general students of the

subject, and leads to endless contradiction and confusion. (“The Negroes of Farmville” 235)

Du Bois cites the Negro church, secret societies, and cooperative industrial enterprises as other examples of social organization that reflect and support class distinctions in Farmville (233).

Law, manners, and cooperation among differentiated social groups were the infrastructure that supported the free circulation of both capital and cultural influence. Out of this intercultural circulation emerged character, mutual forbearance, and understanding. “A Southern community is thus seen to have it in its power to choose its Negro inhabitants [. . .].” If it allows ambition and enterprise among blacks, who will then build their own race organizations and grow a civilized community, it will produce Negroes of character. If they inhibit the development of these structures, they will get the “shiftless happy-go-lucky semi-criminal black man and the enterprising one will either sink or migrate” (“Black Durham” 257). Fair economic treatment, police protection, justice in court, courtesy on the street and in the press—these are the civilized structures that allow spirit and capital to flow freely, producing mutual growth. Du Bois attributes the growth of black Durham to three black men who understood this process. They had the thrift to gather capital by the saving of pennies. They had the knowledge to build businesses, among them a textile mill, retail stores, groceries, and a metal working shop. They had the vision to encourage

cooperation, which set the capital flowing and prompted the growth of one of the most successful black communities in the South. All this depended, however, on the cooperation of whites, who supported such enterprise. Negro race organizations developed such stature and economic power that they emerged from behind the veil and redrew the lines of cooperation in Durham across racial boundaries (253). In recording the evidence of institution building and tracing the lines of social cooperation across racial lines in Southern communities, Du Bois employed the standard sociological models of his day, sharing their progressive, interactionist assumptions. Civic organizations gave formal expression to the race's spiritual genius, translating the primitive social forces of Negro communities into cultural products that would be recognized and valued by a universal kingdom of culture.

Du Bois thus elaborated a comparable theory of social forces for the African American, similar to what Ward, Small, Hart, and Parks, among others, had elaborated for the Anglo-Saxon. The racialist assumptions of his white counterparts, however, required Du Bois to challenge the terms of the model, for, according to Hart, the Anglo-Saxon's innate capacity for civic organization—and the Negro's obdurate primitivism—gave the European white races the advantage. To challenge this hierarchy, Du Bois wrote from a hermeneutical design by which he intended to foster his reader's identification with the soul of

the Negro folk behind the veil. "Every nation has its own inner centre of happiness," wrote Herder, "as every sphere its own centre of gravity" (qtd. in Hausheer 53). Du Bois would inculcate a cognitive, emotional, and aesthetic sympathy on the part of his reader for the African American center of happiness (and pain). This required on the part of the reader not just an appreciation for the cultural products produced by African Americans but an understanding of how they organize their own self-development. Du Bois thus sought to train his readers in a capacity for "Einfühlung," the process, according to Herder, by which the hermeneuticist "feels oneself into everything." This meant "entering" or "feeling your way into" the subject before you, whether it be the geist of a nation, a literature, or an individual person (Hausheer 53). Du Bois would thus position his reader to try on what it was like to be a problem, to experience riding Jim Crow on a Southern train, to seek out resolutions to the irresolvable conflict of affiliating oneself with two nations (or folk), to experience the double consciousness that defines the culturally articulate African American. By engaging his audience rhetorically in a series of intellectual and visceral conflicts, Du Bois sought to provoke crises and reintegrations at the individual psychic level, which would enable the reader to appreciate the vitality, the efficiency, and the logical functional structures that his people have elaborated to survive their peculiar historical experience. Subsequent social interaction among his enlightened readers would facilitate a wider sympathy for the social intelligence

of these African American articulations. Ultimately, more inclusive social organizations would be the result.

Specifically, by tracing the origins of Southern black social institutions back to African roots, Du Bois attempted to invert the hierarchical binary between civilized and primitive. Glossing the Victorian fascination with “black Africa,” Du Bois attributed a vitality and an innate spirituality to these African roots that opened up a space in the interactionist model for the “uncivilized” to contribute an ameliorating influence upon the civilized. African American social formations enjoyed an extraordinary vitality not available to Anglo-Saxon social institutions because they managed to lard a workable social structure with the more animating forces of nature. Du Bois links the family and religious formations he found in the rural South to their pre-slavery past in Africa: tribal priests set the mold for New World preachers and African matriarchal society created a resilience that could withstand the pressures of family separation under slavery (Lewis, Biography 223).

[The Negro church] was not at first by any means a Christian Church, but a mere adaptation of those heathen rites which we roughly designate by the term Obe Worship or “Voodooism.” . . . It is this historic fact that the Negro Church today bases itself upon the sole surviving social institution of the African fatherland, that

accounts for its extraordinary growth and vitality. (“The Gift of the Spirit” 57)

Du Bois demonstrated this rhetorical play by appropriating the vocabulary of the white racist. The monster—civilization—had enslaved whites to its machines, uniformity, and drudgery. Whites were hired hands serving the lifeless machinery of their pecuniary civilization.

Is this superiority? It is madness. We are the supermen who sit idly by and laugh and look at civilization. We, who frankly want the bodies of our mates and conjure no blush to our bronze cheeks when we own it. We, who exalt the Lynched above the Lyncher and the Worker above the Owner and the Crucified above Imperial Rome. (“The Superior Race” 475)

Du Bois shocked his white readers by claiming a freer and more potent racially based sexuality. A sterile and mechanical American civilization desperately needs the vital, primitive energies of its black citizens. Zora argues this same point with Bles, in Du Bois’s The Quest for the Silver Fleece. The whites’ power is illusory, she claims:

No, no, they don’t really rule; they just thinks they rule. They just got things—heavy, dead things. We black folks is got the spirit. We’s lighter and cunninger; we fly right through them; we go and come again just as we wants to. Black folks is wonderful. (46)

Du Bois did not always resort to essentialist terms when arguing the superiority of the Negro race. The racial traits of patience and longsuffering enabled blacks to make superior ethical decisions, which also advanced the American culture toward its ideal in the kingdom of culture. Such rhetorical acts were also based on the shock of inverted hierarchies, however, which Du Bois employed throughout his writing life, both as a scholar and an editor. The outlines of this strategy are evident in his Harvard commencement address, “Jefferson Davis as Representative of Civilization.” Du Bois explained to his Harvard audience that the Negro had saved the advance of human civilization by refracting the play of social forces away from a singularly Teutonic expression. By willing acts of submission, the Negro provided a check and complement to the Teutonic Strong Man, who would have otherwise, in the exercise of brute power, crushed the progressive interaction among races that advances by dialectic toward a true universal harmony, not the false universal of an elevated single race.

What then is the change made in the conception of civilization, by adding to the idea of the Strong Man, that of the Submissive Man? It is this: the submission of the strength of the Strong to the advance of all—[. . .] recognizing that [. . .] civilization cannot afford to lose the contribution of the very least of nations for its full developement [. . .]. (sic) (“Jefferson Davis” 14)

Du Bois crystallizes the inversion in the final sentence of his address, when he pointedly informs his Brahmin audience that it is not they who carry the burden of civilization's advance, but he.

In the rise of Negro people and developement of this idea, you whose nation was founded on the loftiest ideals, and who many times forgot those ideals with a strange forgetfulness, have more than a sentimental interest, more than a sentimental duty. You owe a debt to humanity for this Ethiopia of the Out-stretched Arm, who has made her beauty, patience, and her grandeur, law. (sic) (16)

I read these final possessives as referring to humanity. Within the interactionist, and specifically dialectical, process of social development, the Negro has met the Teuton's brutality, moral obtuseness, and personal assertion with patient submission. Through that gesture, the social forces of a single race have been directed toward a higher Individualism that transcends race. Through this negation of the dominant will, the Submissive man directed the more primitive social forces of both races into that highest of social formations capable of sustaining progressive evolutionary growth: by demanding a recognition of not only the I but the Thou, the Negro laid the moral foundations for the establishment of law.

Du Bois shocks the sedimented configurations of his readers' psychic investments, which, he believes, work against the general sum of human

happiness. The most significant of these obstructive cultural forms is the color line, a cultural construct that diminished civilization's vitality by excluding the contributions of the great majority of humankind. By directing, rhetorically, the psychic investments of his white readers into a viscerally experienced conflict, Du Bois hoped to cause the dissolution of these limiting cultural forms. Those conflicts demanded a new configuration of cultural forms based on merit, beauty, patience, humility, and other spiritual values that were closer to the feelings and desires of broader humanity.

Du Bois wrote a short piece for The Crisis in 1923 that concisely illustrates this technique. "On Being Crazy" is a dialogue between a main character, who is black, and the whites he encounters during a normal day. Du Bois uses the brief interchanges to force into opposition a cultural code based on "natural" forces, such as hunger and exhaustion, and the highly elaborated cultural code of whites, which is designed to preserve the color line. Hungry, the black protagonist walks into a restaurant and sits down. A white man responds, "Sir, do you wish to force your company on those who do not want you?" "No," said the protagonist, "I wish to eat." "Are you aware, Sir, that this is social equality?" "Nothing of the sort, Sir, it is hunger—and I ate."

The protagonist navigates through similar exchanges, asserting his simple desire to enjoy Beethoven's Fifth Symphony at the theater and his need for rest in a white hotel. Always it is whites' fear of social equality that prevents them

from seeing the logic of the protagonist's values, which have their origins in simpler, often biological, needs. In this short piece, Du Bois portrays the experience of double consciousness, revealing the through-the-looking-glass experience of the African American who is forced repeatedly each day to look at himself through the eyes of others. Like Du Bois himself in the first chapter of The Souls of Black Folk, the protagonist must juggle two warring ideals in one dark body—the economy of his felt, inner needs and the ill-fitting representations of himself imposed upon him by the whites he meets.

In the protagonist's final encounter with a poor Southern white, Du Bois shows how the color line diminishes the general sum of happiness for whites as well as blacks. Poor, disfranchised by voting requirements, and exploited by the banks and railroads, Southern white farmers would have benefited from Populist reform if an alliance could have been struck between white farmers and blacks. Swayed by inflammatory rhetoric that Negro suffrage would threaten the purity of Southern womanhood, poor Southern whites voted against Negro suffrage in order to defend the color line (Kirwan 95). "I don't want my sister to marry a nigger," proclaims the white man, who crosses the street to walk through the mud rather than be soiled by passing a black man on the street. The black protagonist gives his final verdict on the situation: "either you are crazy or I am," he says. "We both are," replies the Southern white, affirming Du Bois's point that the distortions of the color line constrain the beneficial formation of social

connections and interdependencies; the discourse structures do not provide language for—and so do not allow to exist—the new cultural formations that could foster mutually beneficial connections. The resulting, ill-adapted structures inhibit beneficial contact and cooperation.

The essay frankly calls it crazy that whites would obstruct the growth of social formations that would organize private desires and cognitions—white and black—into shared values, mutually agreeable definitions, and common purposes for the benefit of both races. Du Bois studied this translation of the private into the social in order to highlight those distortions that kept black and white aspirations from shaping the emergent social formations. Merely describing a protagonist's efforts to assert primary biological needs against constraining cultural formations was not effective enough, however, to induce real social change. Du Bois launched The Crisis as a review of opinion and literature standing for the rights of every citizen and the highest ideals of American democracy, and for “reasonable but earnest and persistent attempt to gain these rights and realize these ideals” (“Prospectus” 93). The editor defined education as not merely a scientific presentation of facts but as “the applied art of training men by means of approved psychological method” with a “frank facing of the mystery of purposeful will on social reform” (“Apology” 216-17). The challenge for effective propaganda, then, was to arouse that purposeful will and train individuals to articulate it into a national spirit that reflected the ideals of

American democracy. Confronted viscerally with a rhetorically orchestrated conflict aroused by the text, readers would propose new ideas to organize their conflicted feelings. “How does it feel to be a problem?” Du Bois reported being asked in “Of our Spiritual Strivings.” Du Bois spent his life inverting that question, asking his white audiences, “how does it feel that the foundations of your society are laid upon a problem?”

Perhaps the most famous example of this strategy was his pairing of the sorrow songs—the spirituals—with poems from Browning, Byron, Lowell, Swinburne, Tennyson, and others at the beginning of each chapter of The Souls of Black Folk. Lewis describes the rhetorical strategy of this pairing thus:

Du Bois meant the cultural symbolism of these double epigraphs to be profoundly subversive of the cultural hierarchy of his time. Three years into yet another century of seemingly unassailable European supremacy, Souls countered with the voices of the dark submerged and unheard—those voices heard by him for the first time in the Tennessee backcountry. Until his readers appreciated the message of the songs sung in bondage by black people, Du Bois was saying, the words written in freedom by white people would remain hollow and counterfeit. (Lewis, Biography 278)

The epigraph from the antislavery poet and statesman James Russell Lowell, at the beginning of chapter two, “Of the Dawn of Freedom,” plays on the

biblical theme that the forces of dominion in this world will not recognize the true power of the Word when it appears.

Careless seems the great Avenger;
History's lessons but record
One death-grapple in the darkness
'Twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne;
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow
Keeping watch above His own.

Du Bois used the Lowell epigraph to introduce the binaries that structure his second chapter. Two figures in the chapter typify the power hierarchy of slavery, which Du Bois inverts according to the logic of the epigraph: the graying patriarch, whose sons died in the cause, and the black nurse, "a form hovering dark and mother-like; her awful face black with the mists of centuries," who cared for her owner's wife and children and submitted to his lust, only to see her dark boy's limbs torn off by midnight marauders (Souls 232). The owner is a blighted form, ruined by the exercise of worldly power, while the nurse, exploited and

abused, is compared to the creative Spirit in Genesis, hovering over the waters of chaos, calling forth life.

Du Bois often used this Hegelian representation of the master-slave relationship to argue that whites were crippled in a more profound, spiritual way by the evil of slavery than blacks. Through their suffering, blacks developed “a vast pity—pity for a people imprisoned and enthralled, hampered and made miserable for such a cause, for such a phantasy!” (“Souls of White Folk” 455). White masters, enthralled by their hatred, were enslaved to a system that required careful maintenance so that the distinctions of the color line would be preserved. The cruelty and barbarism exercised to uphold such a system diminished whites spiritually and questioned the basis of their authority. “A true and worthy ideal frees and uplifts a people; a false ideal imprisons and lowers” (“Souls of White Folk” 456). Whites were on the wrong side of the cross; their false ideals regarding race had lured their emotional investments into psychic and social formations that cut them off from their own native energies and spiritual gifts and those of other races as well. Blacks, through their suffering, had learned the hollowness of those ideals and developed greater spiritual values.

Admitting that the problem of native human endowment is obscure, there is no corresponding obscurity in spiritual values. Goodness and unselfishness; simplicity and honor; tolerance, susceptibility to

beauty in form, color and music; courage to look truth in the face; courage to live and suffer in patience and humility, and forgiveness and in hope; eagerness to turn, not simply the other cheek, but the face and the bowed back; capacity to love. In all these mighty things, the greatest things in the world, where do black folk and white folk stand? (“The Superior Race” 474)

Aligning black folk with the suffering messiah, Du Bois used the rhetorical power of the cross to make clear where blacks and whites stood on his hierarchy of values.

As evidenced in the Harvard commencement address, the cross was a powerful symbol for Du Bois, who used the archetype to demonstrate that an individual—or a race—could transform its destined fate into freedom by aligning itself with the advance of historical forces. By submitting to the Strong Man, the Negro redirected the movement of history toward a higher kingdom of culture that accommodated all races. As Brian Bremen points out, Du Bois’s use of the term “double consciousness” has precedent in Emerson’s essay “Fate.” By choosing his fated ruin freely, a man may conspire with the purposes of the Universe and thereby transform an externally imposed fate into a free and creative exercise of power (Bremen). Emerson rhapsodized that the Anglo-Saxon, trained by the hard, northern European climate, had been prepared by nature to claim a hundred Mexicos. There is a fitness between the strong race and the inferior

races it uses (“Fate” 364). The best a Mexico might hope for is that its sacrifice furthers the advance of the Universe as a whole (373).

Du Bois shifted the emphasis here, to argue that the sacrifice of the “inferior races” was the dynamo driving Nature’s progress forward. To use Mexico, or the American Indian, or the African, was to come into contact with the vital folk forces that had the power to reshape the psyche, and ultimately the social formations, of the dominant race. Du Bois used Emerson’s logic to invert the elements of the dialectic: Anglo-Saxons had cocooned themselves in a fantasy of racial superiority and cut themselves off from truth, which was the source of genuine power. Enslavement had raised up racial traits—a love for song and story, a quick eye, a free sensuality—that had kept Negroes more susceptible to truth’s subtle influences. Emerson’s “Fate” sets the terms of this construction:

The truth is in the air, and the most impressionable brain will announce it first, but all will announce it a few minutes later. So women, as most susceptible, are the best index of the coming hour. So the great man, that is, the man most imbued with the spirit of the time, is the impressionable man;—of a fibre irritable and delicate, like iodine to light. He feels the infinitesimal attractions. His mind is righter than others because he yields to a current so feeble as can be felt only by a needle delicately poised. (Emerson, “Fate” 371)

What Emerson attributed to women, Du Bois appropriated for blacks, claiming that their susceptibility to beauty raised in them a sympathetic resonance with truth. This resonance with truth was the “handmaiden of [Negro] imagination” (“Criteria” 513). A quick imagination, inspired by the progressive spirit of truth, would achieve, finally, universal understanding among all races. In an address on the “Criteria of Negro Art,” delivered during the period of the Harlem Renaissance, Du Bois claimed,

We who are dark can see America in a way that white Americans cannot [. . .]. You realize sooner than the average white American because, pushed aside as we have been in America, there has come to us not only a certain distaste for the tawdry and flamboyant but a vision of what the world could be if it were really a beautiful world; if we had the true spirit; if we had the seeing eye, the cunning hand, the feeling heart; [. . .]. (509-10)

Du Bois concluded “Thus it is the bounden duty of black America to begin this great work of the creation of beauty; of the preservation of beauty, of the realization of beauty [. . .]” (513).

Among the endowed, racial sensitivities enjoyed by black folk, the “cunning hand” had an especially relevant cultural resonance; the phrase appears in the King James Version of Psalm 137, a favorite among church-going African Americans:

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

In the text, cunning translates simply as skill—skill in playing song. The foundation of that skill depended on a doubled sense of self, however: on Israel's remembering that it was a chosen and free people—the apple of God's eye—who had been taken captive. To sing a song of Zion while captive in Babylon was to affirm one's elected fate despite appearances, and to claim that God's plan was being worked out through one's captivity. The experience of the captivity, in fact, sparks the first reference in the prophetic literature of the Torah that Yahweh would use captive Israel to shine a light among the Gentiles and bring justice to the nations (Isaiah 42:1, 6).

Du Bois often characterized the African American's captivity in these messianic terms, claiming that black folk were the instrument through which justice would be brought to the modern world. "Most men in this world are

colored. A faith in humanity, therefore, a belief in the gradual growth and perfectibility of men must, if honest, be primarily a belief in colored men” (“Atlanta University” 237). By this faith, progressive evolution involved a “blackening” of civilization, which Du Bois often described in his poetry. In “The Song of the Smoke” (1907), Du Bois claims that “blackness was ancient ere whiteness began” (“Song of the Smoke” 108). In an inversion of color binaries, the smoke king rises and gives expression to the souls of those who toil and suffer. The voice of these oppressed, carried by the smoke, daubs God in black and swabs Hell in white. In “The Burden of Black Women” (1907), Du Bois writes that the will of the world passes through the dark depths of the experience of a black woman, despite her being doubled over by the oppression of whites. She shall bear the black Christ. Out of this sense of doubleness—of suffering in this world while carrying the promise of renewal, rise the sorrow songs, and the hope for a renewed America.⁶⁷ To be an “apostle” of beauty, to sing a song of Zion, was to

⁶⁷ Charles Chestnutt’s The Conjure Woman establishes a similar dialectic and discloses the foundational power of black culture in America. The inner conjure tales question whether the solid, Anglo-Saxon perspective of the frame story has isolated itself from the more vital and healing power of the spirit. The healing of Annie suggests that conjure is the more foundational truth. See Elizabeth Ammons, “Expanding the Canon of American Realism.”

submit to one's captivity in order to become an instrument of renewal for the nations. The peculiar, salvific power of black beauty and art derives from the cunning that is inherent to maintaining this doubled sense of self. A seventh son, who has direct and immediate access to the progressive spirit of truth through his private experience of doubleness, becomes an instrument for transforming the public. To ride alternately on the private and public (Emerson's description of double consciousness) was to assert connections across the warring perspectives that each structured overlapping but irreconcilable worlds. Du Bois believed beauty advanced this process through the sudden recognition, apprehended in a flash, that disclosed a moral truth by its providing a proper fitness among previously discrete elements. Truth must be disclosed not as an ethical sanction, but artfully, so as to gain sympathy and human interest ("Criteria" 514). "The apostle of beauty thus becomes the apostle of truth," encouraging the growth of human interest and sympathy by disclosing the doubled nature of experience under the color line. Du Bois sought to provoke a sudden recognition of the color line and the reader's investment in it, so as to free that investment and organize the reader's feeling according to new schema. Du Bois's stories, poems, and parables were designed to disclose and disrupt these investments.

The experience of the color line had insistently reminded Du Bois that social harmony was imposed by those who had the power to set boundaries; that

the ideal was defined by those who had the luxury of forgetting history.⁶⁸ Du Bois often criticized the Anglo-Saxon race for its willful forgetting of its dependence upon the contributions made by people of color to the progress of civilization.

Away back on the level stretches of the mountain tops in the forests, amid drifts and driftwood, this sled [of civilization] was slowly and painfully pushed on its little hesitating start. It took power, but the power of sweating, courageous men, not of demi-gods [. . .]. Those passengers, white, black, red and yellow, deserve credit for their balance and pluck. But many times it was sheer good luck that the made road did not land the white man in the gutter, as it had others so many times before, and as it may him

⁶⁸ “Europe has never produced and never will in our day bring forth a single human soul who cannot be matched and over-matched in every line of human endeavor by Asia and Africa. Run the gamut, if you will, and let us have the Europeans who in sober truth over-match Nefertari, Mohammed, Rameses and Askia, Confucius, Buddha, and Jesus Christ. If we could scan the calendar of thousands of lesser men, in like comparison, the result would be the same; but we cannot do this because of the deliberately educated ignorance of white schools by which they remember Napoleon and forget Sonni Ali” (“Souls of White Folk” 458).

yet. He has gone farther than others because of others whose very falling made hard ways iced and smooth for him to traverse. His triumph is a triumph not of himself alone, but of humankind, from the pusher in the primeval forests to the last flier through the winds of the twentieth century. (“The Superior Race” 457)

Forgetfulness had enabled whites’ psychic repose; the remembering of that which had been forgotten threatened to disrupt their productive boundaries. “Why then is Europe great? Du Bois asks. “Because of the foundations which the mighty [colored] past have furnished her to build upon” (“Souls of White Folk” 459). Recalling civilization’s dependence upon black folk, Du Bois attempted to shift the boundaries, returning the marginalized to the center and disrupting societal investments in a false collective memory.

The Sorrow Songs have the power to manipulate affective investments in a way that shifts the outlines of individual and social memory. They are traces, “siftings” of three centuries of captivity. While they often use the language and cultural expressions of the dominant culture, their primitive melodies and snatches of African phrasing recover a lost culture that Du Bois believed was closer to nature. Their thrice-repeated phrasing, their senseless African lyrics—passed down by rote memory and distorted into mere rhythmic chants—enthrall those who have ears to hear with the sense of participating in the rituals of a more primitive, more foundational culture. In the longing expressed there, both

verbally and musically, Du Bois hears the hope that a “headstrong, careless people” will acknowledge the foundational role black folk have played in the progressive evolutionary growth of civilization:

Your country? How came it yours? Before the Pilgrims landed we were here. Here we have brought our three gifts and mingled them with yours: a gift of story and song—soft, stirring melody in an ill-harmonized and unmelodious land; the gift of sweat and brawn to beat back the wilderness, conquer the soil, and lay the foundations of this vast economic empire two hundred years earlier than your weak hands could have done it; the third, a gift of the Spirit.

Around us the history of the land has centered for thrice a hundred years; [. . .]. Nor has our gift of the Spirit been merely passive. Actively we have woven ourselves with the very warp and woof of this nation,—we fought their battles, shared their sorrow, mingled our blood with theirs, and generation after generation have pleaded with a headstrong, careless people to despise not Justice, Mercy, and Truth, lest the nation be smitten with a curse. Our song, our toil, our cheer, and warning have been given to this nation in blood-brotherhood. Are not these gifts worth the giving? Is not this work and striving? Would America have been America without her Negro people? (Souls 387)

Concluding, Du Bois points out, “Even so is the hope that sang in the songs of my fathers well sung.” These are the songs of Zion, which black folk could sing only by remembering that they are this nation’s chosen people. They had the effect of pulling back the veil, confronting Anglo-Saxon civilization with an antecedent and generative African American culture. Blacks had preserved these vital social forces and would continue to articulate them into the larger culture through story and song.

In addition to the defining racial genius of African Americans, whites, through their drawing of the color line, had legally defined a social group; like thesis and antithesis, the American social process synthesized white legal definitions and black spiritual gifts to produce a legitimate social entity capable of contributing to the nation’s progressive evolutionary development. The color line had produced spiritual gifts and a cultural identity that Western European and white American civilization desperately needed. “The Superior Race” demonstrates this rhetorical strategy, as a white interlocutor presses Du Bois on whether he genuinely believes Negroes are the superior race. Certainly, Du Bois argues, citing the full and luscious physical features of the Negro, the astronomical achievements of the Egyptians, and the haunting beauty of the Sorrow Songs. In this essay, however, Du Bois does not contend that these achievements are the result of some essentialist or biological identity that differentiates Negroes from Anglo-Saxons. Fools descend from geniuses just as

easily as geniuses descend from fools; inheritance offers little guidance for predicting which race will preserve some innate advantage. Du Bois champions the individual as the basic unit in society, one who contributes her gifts as they emerge from a combination of native intelligence, education, and social experience. Race as a social category has significance only as discursive acts make it possible to identify a group and define its social reality. The experience of black folk, lived behind the color line, has produced a saving nation of some ten thousand dark souls who may renew the land if the imposed boundary of the color line were lifted.

Human beings are infinite in variety, and when they are agglutinated in groups, great and small, the groups differ as though they, too, had integrating souls. But they have not. The soul is still individual if it is free; the group is a social, sometimes historical fact. And all that I really have been trying to say is that a certain group that I know and to which I belong, as contrasted with the group you know and to which you belong, and in which you fanatically and glorifyingly believe, bears in its bosom just now the spiritual hope of this land because of the persons who compose it and not by divine command.

“But what is this group; and how do you differentiate it; and how can you call it ‘black’ when you admit it is not black?”

“I recognize it quite easily and with full legal sanction: the black man is a person who must ride ‘Jim Crow’ in Georgia.” (“The Superior Race” 476)

Depending on the reader’s personal relationship to the color line, this concluding sentence catches one by surprise, especially as the preceding interrogation had considered race as defined by blood lines, physical traits, and native intelligence. Du Bois inverts cause and effect, arguing that the Negro “race” in America has been created by Jim Crow. Jim Crow was strong everywhere in 1923, especially as African Americans were demanding civil rights as their due following their involvement in the war. With a turn of phrase, Du Bois informs his white readers that their efforts to restrict African American freedoms were in fact raising up a savior nation, hidden from view behind the veil, not born of racial categories that could be easily dismissed but resulting from an ill-fitting, artificially imposed sociocultural construct. The intent to exclude had resulted in unanticipated consequences: the active drawing of the color line had created a supplement that has escaped control. That supplement remains an element within the interactive dynamics of the social process, which will not be constrained in its progressive evolution toward a more differentiated and interdependent organization.

The After-thought captures this logic of the generative supplement, born of exclusion. Like “car-window sociologists” (Souls 314), the targeted white reader

has been riding Jim Crow with Du Bois, taking a tour deep into the hidden regions behind the veil. There the Sorrow Songs have exercised their primitive magic, aroused the reader's fascination, and disclosed the vitality of a preceding and sophisticated black African culture. Our trip teaches us, however, that the terrain behind the veil remains charged by the exotic only because we have excluded its gifts from circulating in an open, public discourse. Cultural expressions behind the veil have remained largely unrefined by participation in a larger, open, public conversation; they are artifacts of an excluded history. If the reader has successfully felt her way into the logical structure of those artifacts and discerned their instrumental value for the African American's expression and thus survival, they would no longer appear exotic, but useful; excavated from a now pre-historic past and put on display for a people with no connection to their history, they appear as talismans, imbued with spiritual power.

Like a travelling showman, Du Bois shamelessly plays on white fascination with Negro cultural artifacts and invokes this one form of power that the color line has created for him. Not satisfied, however, with playing his race as an exotic, Du Bois seeks to work this fascination into sympathy, which can lead, ultimately, to mutual recognition. The dialectical process should again be evident here, and the After-thought is a set piece for this movement from binary opposition to integration. "Hear my cry, O God the Reader; vouchsafe that this my book fall not still-born into the world wilderness" (389). Through his book, Du

Bois has impregnated the reader with the mystical power of the cultural talismans revealed from behind the veil. The white master/reader has been invited to experience the cultural and “racial” world of the slave, and, through the labor of engaging the text, has been granted a taste of doubled consciousness. In reading the text and attending to the rhetorical work Du Bois has structured there, the reader’s labor will give birth to a new self-consciousness, one that is aware of his or her psychic investments in the color line and informed about the consequences. In a world split into binary oppositions by the color line, the “straight” of justice can only be imagined through the “crooked” marks of the text. Whites may develop a sympathy for the face behind the mask only as they are first fascinated by what has been hidden there. The book, itself an intriguing mask for a larger cultural presence hidden behind the veil, is made of crooked marks on a fragile leaf. It is itself only a seductive distillation of the full cultural presence behind the veil that it promises to reveal. First and foremost a writer of texts, Du Bois understands and plays on the textual experience, provoking curiosity and desire, hoping that such psychic investments raised by the text will one day lead to genuine presence between his newly self-conscious readers. In that good day, “infinite reason (may) turn the tangle straight, and these crooked marks on a fragile leaf (may) be not indeed” (389).

W. E. B. Du Bois exemplifies the rhetorical and political strategies that are available through a pragmatist, hermeneutical model. He demonstrates the

effective polemical power of the reciprocating strategies of description and explanation. His work suggests that if we are to identify across differences our understanding and description of the facts of another's lived experience must trace those facts back to both their informing interests and the full array of conditions through which they have been and may be expressed.

Chapter Five

Turning Corners, Trading Worlds: The Constructive Modernisms of Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, and John Dos Passos

Speaking to a crowd of Hollywood directors and stars that had come to see a showing of The Spanish Earth in 1937, Ernest Hemingway employed a powerful rhetorical strategy to shock his audience into making a thousand-dollar donation, which would send a fully equipped ambulance to the battle fields of Spain. Having shown the documentary, Hemingway summed up as follows:

Now you have seen what it looks like. There are some things we could not get in. The way the ground rocks and sways under your belly and against your forehead when big bombs fall. That doesn't show. We haven't any picture of the full street car a shell made a direct hit on in the Gran Via. There were 32 people in it. They carried out two badly wounded, and what was left had to be handled with shovels. That was in the center of town around noon and when the dust had settled you could see a dog racing down the street with about a four foot length of human intestine trailing from his jaws. Such a scene is just a by product [sic] of the totalitarian war the Fascist countries make. (Hemingway, Fundraising speech)

While it is easy to attribute this off-handed description of combat to Hemingway's desire to pose as a seasoned war correspondent, this little tableau is dense with evidence of rhetorical strategies that define a genre of writing that emerged as

writers addressed the modern experience of the Great Society, which had grown too complex to coordinate the interests of individuals into a coherent whole. American constructive modernists sought to apply the techniques of formal experimentation developed in the twenties to the social concerns of the thirties. Their strategy was to engage the reader (or in this case, movie audience) in an active production of meaning that would challenge false, bourgeois ideologies and disclose the materials for a new vision of society. Whether those experimental techniques engaged the reader in projecting a Social Realism utopia or an open-ended, progressive liberal society depended on the author's vision of society. In the case of John Dos Passos, we will see that his own ambivalence toward the Communist Party led him to craft experimental narrative structures that both affirmed and questioned the value of individuals aligning with collective movements.

The scraping of shovels on the Gran Via could not contain the human carnage as the hungry dog snaps off a bit of human intestine and scampers away. The shocking detail elicits our disgust, which Hemingway then channels into a proper reading of the scene: if you are disgusted at this you should be disgusted at the war being waged against Spain by the Fascists. Constructive modernists such as Hemingway, Crane, Dreiser, and Dos Passos used shocking details to introduce disruptions in the reader's cognitive schema that prompted a search for origins and ends-in-view that could reconstruct the experience within a

new-found meaningful continuity. In this chapter I will show how several constructive modernists' use of this narrative strategy reflected the social philosophies of the progressive intellectuals who sought to train individuals in these reconstructive skills so they could better write their individual subjective experience into progressive reform narratives of the nation's historical experience. In the moments of contact and recognition that occur across subject positions within the constructive modernist narratives, we find a model of the transactional dynamics that structure what Laclau and Mouffe designate as the articulation of chains of equivalence within systems of difference.

Constructive modernists attempted in their writing to introduce moments of disequilibrium that would lead individuals to reconstruct their world by searching out new origins and ends-in-view that would provide new continuity to their disrupted historical and social experience. By these strategies constructive modernists hoped to facilitate a reconstruction of the real by structuring a reading experience whereby readers would incorporate a greater diversity of "content," understood as interpreted experience (their and others'), into their cognitive structures. Readers are led to consider new perspectives and alternative ends-in-view by reflecting on the effects, poignantly portrayed in the writing, of existing social structures on others. By various mechanisms, the reader is invited to consider these others as members of an imagined shared community, often across class and racial boundaries. Given their radical

empiricist perspectives, we should not interpret these moments as confronting the reader with some external shock, which leads to a modulation in ideology, and issues in reformed action. To hold such a model would be to operate “under the spell of an old psychology of sensation [that] fails to recognize the radical psychical fact [. . .] [of] *impulse*, the primary fact, back of which, psychically, we cannot go” (“Review” 206). This was Dewey’s criticism of Lester Ward’s positivist model, in which contact produces sensation, sensation produces desire, and desire (or will) produces action. As he did in reconceiving the reflex arc, Dewey argued that sensation and act should be conceived within the ongoing process of adaptive activity. Dewey’s critique of Ward is relevant to my model of the pragmatics of reading:

Let once the standpoint of *action* be taken and there is a continuous process: the sensory ending is a place, not for receiving sensations and starting notions on their road to the mind, but a place (viewed from the standpoint of nature) for transforming the character of motion; the brain represents simply a further development and modification of action, and the final motor discharge (the act proper) the completion of this transformation of action. (“Review” 204)

We should discern here, that in taking “the standpoint of nature,” Dewey has signaled an important shift that results from his radical empiricist rejection of an

essentialist, unitary subject. In this review of Ward's essay "The Transmission of Culture," Dewey is attempting to reconcile the split Ward asserts between nature and the individual, and so Dewey starts with Ward's description of the two as distinct; by his description of the brain as an instrument by which nature modifies action, however, we recognize that Dewey acknowledges no split, that the mind of the individual is merely an organized center within the larger stream of nature's motion, which displays a kind of fractal situating of organizing centers within centers. The mind of the individual dialectically organizes the motion of nature within a given situation, which also informs and responds to other situations that constitute a social complex. Function, and the structure that supports it, is not the "end" of nature, nor its beginning. Structural organization and its function are instruments for the transformation of nature's activity, or motion, which includes dialectically the motion and instrumental activity of individuals ("Review" 205). The structural organization and function of the constructive modernist text, then, operate within this larger circulation of nature's motion, effecting a convergence between the organizing situation drawn in the text and the organizing situation brought to the text by the reader. This is the basic structure of the hermeneutic circle, in which two horizons or meaning dialectically interpret and transform one another, producing a reorganization of the whole. This hermeneutical reconstruction is possible because "identities" are understood as structured yet

fluid arrangements of interpreted elements that signify within structured yet fluid contexts, the horizons of meaning that Laclau describes as the empty universal.

The act of trying on a new perspective in the act of reading is the imaginative assumption of a structured yet fluid self engaged within a structured yet fluid horizon of meaning. As we read and encounter obstacles to the circulation of impulses that constitute the motion of our horizon, we search out and signify origins and ends-in-view that coordinate that motion again to keep it meaningful and continuous. Its organization now is not restricted, however, to our original horizon, but has been opened, to include the horizon signified in the fiction. The constructive modernist text does not erect its own totality, whether that be the totality of Victorian bourgeois, capitalist materialism or the revolutionary totality of Social Realism. Its radical empiricist perspective considers the reader's conscious structuring activity as an instrumental extension of *motion*, which comprehends nature, society, and individual minds. The text, then, like the individual consciousness, can offer nothing more or less than its own organizing center within this larger motion, proposing its functional structures to readers who themselves reconstruct both the text's and their own functional organizing centers through their particular acts of reconstructing the meaning of things and events by writing them into continuous adaptive activity. Constructive modernists did not conceive of their texts (or any texts) as capable of didactic instruction; as Dewey conceived of educational interventions, texts

could only structure zones of proximal development in which the engaged reader finds interpreted elements she may integrate instrumentally into her own dynamic horizon. Texts prompt a reconstructed balance of forces by introducing interpreted content that disturbs the reader's structured horizon and prompts a search for complementary content that supports the reconstruction of continuity. Constructive modernist texts thus aim not to lead the reader toward a specific totality, be it revolutionary or conservative, but to train the reader's adaptive capabilities. Richard Pells describes it thus:

While they rejected the notion that literature should be socially uplifting or morally didactic, [American writers] believed firmly that it could refine an individual's sensibility, reawaken his imagination, intensify his awareness of the world, and thereby alter him in a way that ordinary institutional reforms might never achieve. (Pells 37)

Constructive modernist texts pursued this training through two methods: contriving narrative situations which invited the reader to hold multiple perspectives simultaneously, and contriving narrative situations which invited the reader to write continuities in a dialectical consideration of inferred historical and social sensibilities.

In his city sketches, for example, Stephen Crane experimented explicitly with how the stereotypes and cognitive maps used by his middle class readers to manage new urban conditions could be challenged by disrupting continuities and

offering new perspectives for organizing them. To challenge existing cognitive frameworks, constructive modernists either assume or explicitly signal a network of associations and exclusions which constitute the text's organizing sensibility, evidenced in plot, character, and setting. In his city sketches, Crane took this sensibility from the highly structured photographs and textual descriptions of Jacob Riis, who employed a tense, binary structure in his 1890 work, How the Other Half Lives. In his photographs of New York City's Lower East Side neighborhoods, Riis's formal composition of his subjects and their environment emphasized a threatening of boundaries, whereby the tenements, back alleys, and saloons claimed ominous agency over the lives of the human figures. Riis provided his reader numerous metaphors to interpret the scenes he constructed, starting with "other half" and including "problem" and "contagion." Riis's metaphors belied their ability to contain these new forces, however, implying a fevered attempt to exclude dangerous forces. Riis's text employs imagery of viruses to describe the inhabitants and suggests the need for boundaries between social units to control desire, disease, sexuality, and violence. This anxiety over barely contained contagion organizes the text's representation of the setting, and Crane takes it as the organizing sensibility of his city sketches, using it to structure his plot based on an "experiment" in misery, which, for Crane, entails immersion into the bounded horizon of the other to enable inductive reflection and expressive interpretation.

Crane pulls the trigger on these tensions and invites his readers to experience the consequences. He invites his reader to experience viscerally, and willingly, those moments when a character chooses no longer to resist the tremendous opposing force of the environment but opts to submit and “accept the licking” (“To Catherine Harris” 140). Two men stand regarding a tramp in the opening set piece to “An Experiment in Misery,” reflecting on how it must feel to live in that condition. “You can tell nothing of it unless you are in that condition yourself. It is idle to speculate about it from this distance” (“Experiment” 154). The younger man decides to “try on” the tramp’s outer trappings as an experiment, hoping to discover his inner “point of view or something near it.” His costume of rags and tatters opens the door into the tramp’s experience, which Crane frames as a shifting of point of view, from the commanding, middle class perspective associated with the reader to the newly discovered subjective experience of one who had heretofore been always a foreign, unknown object. The young man “aligns himself with the men” (155) and quickly experiences the “imperturbable granite wheels” of an environment bent on his submission. Small pleasures, like a hot bowl of soup, offer the relief of temporary escape and siphon off any energies that might be directed toward resistance. After a night and a day, the young man “confesses himself an outcast” and peers back at the reader’s bustling middle class life in quiet astonishment. Busy people in fine clothes ignore him, and he feels “the infinite distance from all that he valued.

Social position, comfort, the pleasures of living, were unconquerable kingdoms. He felt a sudden awe" (165).

The inversion of point of view has the effect on the reader of breaking the tacit, stable frameworks that serve as the foundation for those kingdoms. The young man's exit from an entire symbolic framework makes strange what had been invisible to the reader, thus marking that framework and making it available for reflection and discussion with others. Crane narrates his reader through a similar experience of estrangement in another story, "The Men in the Storm." With minimal detail, Crane evokes in his New York City reader memories of how falling snow quiets the city, simultaneously insulating its inhabitants from one another while creating connections across distances that would be squelched by the typical bustle. As it grows dark upon the men pressing in at the basement door of a soup kitchen, Crane describes gusts of snow as knives and needles, against which the men must huddle to stay warm.

The snow came down upon this compressed group of men until, directly from above, it might have appeared like a heap of snow covered merchandise, if it were not for the fact that the crowd swayed gently with a unanimous, rhythmical motion [. . .].

Occasionally some man whose ears or nose tingled acutely from the cold winds would wriggle down until his head was protected by the shoulders of his companions. (150)

By taking on the perspective of one looking down “directly from above,” the reader is made aware of her implied superior position that enables her to look upon the men as merchandise. The simple reference implies the class differences that separate one world from the other, which Crane emphasizes by introducing a second observer who is overlooking the crowd. A princely looking man appears in the brilliantly lighted space of a dry-goods store across the street.

[He] looked down at the snow-encrusted mob. From below, there was denoted a supreme complacency in him. It seemed that the sight operated inversely, and enabled him to more clearly regard his own environment, delightful relatively. (152)

Having framed the opposition, Crane leads the reader through her own experiment in misery by simultaneously making strange the reader’s cognitive maps while evoking new sympathies for the men whom those maps render as other. Crane deftly draws the reader into the huddling mass; the descriptions of the needling wind call forth similar memories of hunching one’s shoulders and relying on others to block the wind. Having wriggled down among the men as allies, the reader looks back up at a surrogate, superior self, represented in the man in the dry-goods store. Now we are wet and cold, and he is warm and dry. The shift in point of view invites an easy shift of loyalties. The reader chooses to remain among the men, and, in so doing, willfully sacrifices the delightful ease of

the dry, well-lit space she inhabits outside the narrative. Crane provides the cue for understanding what has happened: the sight of the store owner operates inversely upon the reader as well, enabling her to more clearly regard her newly adopted environment, miserable relatively. Crane offers some compensation for the reader's new alignment, inviting her at least to taunt the lordly observer, causing him to flee. "The mob chuckled ferociously like ogres who had just devoured something" (152). The reader enthusiastically joins in the taunting, thus effecting a strange banishing of her former, complacent self. Characterizing the men as ogres reminds the reader that such primitive sentiments are powerful and disruptive; according to Lippmann and Cooley, the social process runs forward upon the engine of vigorous, primitive sentiments that must be expressed, marked and regarded, and ultimately integrated into the free circulation of public opinion.⁶⁹ The reader is then rewarded with the pleasure of

⁶⁹ Cooley writes: "The originality of the masses is to be found not so much in formulated idea as in sentiment. In capacity to feel and to trust those sentiments which is the proper aim of social development to express, they are, perhaps, commonly superior to the more distinguished or privileged classes. The reason is that their experience usually keeps them closer to the springs of human nature, and so more under the control of its primary impulses. Radical movements aiming to extend the application of higher sentiment have generally

(Continued)

anticipating, and finally achieving, escape from the cold and entrance into the warm shelter.

In their narratives, constructive modernists like Crane put into play what they believed to be limited social, historical, and ethical sensibilities in the hope that conflicting points of view would prompt readers to consider alternative perspectives that often aligned with Progressive social commitments.⁷⁰ These

been pushed on by the common people, rather than by privileged orders, or by conspicuous leadership of any sort" (Social Organization 135).

⁷⁰ June Howard identifies Theodore Dreiser as one realist writer who did *not* position "the other half" as an exotic, material terrain to be explored by a privileged observer, as if slumming through an exotic, threatening environment. "Dreiser is perhaps the most powerful novelist of a world that offers no stable position from which to view it, a world in which not only the realm of the Other, but the most intimate interactions have become mysterious and alien and must be studied as a series of codes in a foreign language [. . .]. The reader's position in relation to the window of observation is constantly shifting; we, and the narrator, are both inside and outside [. . .]. Dreiser's study of the play of intersubjective meanings does indeed make him a kind of sociologist, although he resembles the ethnomethodological students of daily life more than their positive predecessors. For Dreiser, both meaning and identity are structural, (Continued)

techniques mirrored the experimental strategies of the collective novels being published by 1930s literary radicals, both in the Soviet Union and in the U.S. Whereas the collective novel trained the reader to employ dialectical interpretive strategies that would also disclose the dialectical advance of history through class conflict toward revolution, writers in the progressive line were more intent on highlighting process and the power of inductive reflection on experience. The experimental techniques of progressive constructive modernists immersed the reader in a stream of experience that would be organized and articulated dialectically with the text's organizing sensibility. This formative sensibility is different from an abstractly imposed idealist totality, such as the dialectical progress of history under capitalism through class conflict. As we found in Croly's model of national promise, we find constructive modernists suggesting that a community's formative sensibility operated dialectically with individual efforts to construct an agentic, public self. As individuals enact the social and historical sensibility that organizes their horizon of meaning, they enable their agency, by performing representable and recognizable (and therefore

positional, and not substantial" (151). I would propose that Dreiser's perspectival experimentation locates him among constructive modernists who sought to train readers to articulate the real out of the flux of experience through acts of identification and differentiation.

meaningful) actions; they write themselves into a historical continuity by signaling the “distilled history” of conventional forms that structures those actions; and they modify that sensibility by reading and enacting it in light of their own self-development.⁷¹ These techniques exercised the reader’s cognitive and aesthetic

⁷¹ A hermeneutic model of dialectically informing horizons as organized activity recognizes language both for its coordinating or problem-solving functions and its poetic and world-disclosing functions. Dilthey conceived of interpretive expressions as world-disclosing acts, which must then be coordinated into explanatory systems. This model resolves numerous problems that have followed on Althusser’s model of interpellation and Foucault’s model of subjectivation, which describe the formation of the subject as subjection to constitutive norms. Butler’s notion of performance has productively clarified the vague dialectic in Foucault’s work between submission and autonomy, but critics, such as Nancy Fraser, have characterized Butler’s solution as overly formal, lacking a hermeneutical dimension, and, ultimately, “deeply antihumanist” (67). In Excitable Speech (1997), however, Butler makes use of a more hermeneutical approach. She emphasizes a distinction between speech and conduct, arguing that the illocutionary act does not produce immediate effect, but is dependent on an iteration of conventional forms into conduct over time (3). This illocutionary completion as iteration depends primarily on the coordinating function of

(Continued)

faculties, modeling the selection of ends-in-view, the judgments of affiliation and exclusion, and desire for recognition and accommodation that work subtly through feeling to enable the conscious self to select and suppress out of the flux of experience the interpreted content to craft contingent continuities, which serve instrumentally as socially mediated identities. Describing Crane's "Experiment in Misery," Alan Trachtenberg writes, "The narrator has subtly worked upon the reader's point of view, freeing it from the hold of customary feeling so that it might receive a newly discovered 'moral region'" (146).

By projecting in the contrasted points of view a dialectic of felt values, Crane forces the reader to free his own point of view from any limiting perspective. Crane thus transforms the conventional event of turning corners and crossing thresholds into a demanding event: a change of perspective that as its prerequisite recapitulates a number of limited perspectives. (147)⁷²

language, coordinating activity within socio-historical systems of convention; the socio-historical dimension opens up the possibility for creative performance that can modify hegemonic norms.

⁷² In quoting Trachtenberg here, I do not mean to suggest that I agree with his description of the text as "forcing" the reader to reconsider his point of view.

For my purposes, Trachtenberg describes the mechanisms Crane builds into his
(Continued)

Trachtenberg identifies the transition from customary feeling to morality with the emergence of a reflective consciousness capable of considering and integrating multiple perspectives. We are all conscious of numerous social selves, each conceived as an instrumental coherence used to mediate one's conduct according to the demands, expectations, and values of a specific group. The mind is at every stage, James reminds us, a theatre of simultaneous possibilities, but to choose a perspective is to carve out a world that requires alignment and affiliation with its worldview.⁷³ Consciousness consists in the comparison of

texts that enable a reader to experience the shifting of perspectives, which may include arriving at an awareness of each perspective's contingency.

⁷³ We recall James describes pure experience: as "the immediate flux of life which furnishes the material to our later reflection with its conceptual categories [. . .] a *that* which is not yet any definite *what*, tho' ready to be all sorts of whats [. . .]" (Essays 46). " Other sculptors, other statues from the same stone! Other minds, other worlds from the same monotonous and inexpressive chaos! My world is but one in a million alike embedded, alike real to those who may abstract them" (Principles of Psychology 1: 288-89). Crane captures the pragmatist paradox that combines plurality with responsibility: we are free to choose from among the plurality of simultaneous possibilities, but as we align ourselves with the "truth" of an idea we become responsible to the affiliations it

(Continued)

these alternative worlds, the selection of some, and the suppression of the rest by the reinforcing and inhibiting agency of attention. Crane invites his readers to exercise their moral faculties by constructing texts that include demanding events, which, to be enacted as Crane has scripted them, call for reflection and choice, rather than merely following habit or custom. The young man's sense of distance from bourgeois society at the end of the "Experiment in Misery" and the reader's eager banishment of the dry-goods store owner in "The Men in the Storm" demonstrate that the assumption of perspective—however tentative—

requires to extend that truth into a stable reality. Alexander Thomas calls this the moral imagination: "Pragmatism, by contrast, treated imagination as the capacity to understand the actual in light of the possible. It was thus intrinsically linked to the view of experience and action as temporally ongoing, transformative events. Imagination was a *creative* exploration of *structures* inherited from past experience which thereby allowed the future as a horizon of possible actions, and so of possible meanings, to guide and interpret the present. Imagination was manifest as the *growth* and *continuity* of meaning. It was neither mere copying nor radical creation *ex nihilo*; it was the transformation or reconstruction of experience in a changing world which nevertheless admitted of general stable features" (371).

involves an affective and cognitive realignment of self with the meanings and values that structure that newly adopted worldview.

Crane's and James's conviction that the assumption of perspective modifies worlds helps us reconsider current strategies for articulating new hegemonic formations, achieved by defining chains of equivalence against a unified horizon of antagonistic difference. As does Mouffe, the constructive modernists recognized that identity is constituted on exclusion: the formation of *political* identities does not occur simply by bringing into harmony a plurality of diverse elements; it entails the identification with a perspective that is itself an instrumental formation organized by other "situations," or discourses. To constitute a public is to define a unified horizon of equivalence beyond which lies, by definition, antagonistic difference. Together, a horizon of difference and the formative social and historical sensibility (both understood as being constituted through the coordinated activities and identifications of individuals) operate to organize a public. "Such an approach," writes Mouffe,

can only be adequately formulated within a problematic that conceives of the social agent not as a unitary subject but as the articulation of an ensemble of subject positions, constructed within specific discourses and always precariously and temporarily sutured at the intersection of those subject positions. Only with a non-essentialist conception of the subject which incorporates the

psycho-analytic insight that all identities are forms of identification
can we pose the question of political identity in a fruitful way.
("Democratic Citizenship" 237)

This description of such dialectical training echoes Barbara Foley's description of the dynamics of the collective novel. The real power of the collective novel is its structural emphasis on the group as a group, which requires the reader to locate individual experience as one element articulated within a coordinating whole (440). Describing the interlacing of narrative and newsreel fragments in Dos Passos's U.S.A., Foley argues that Dos Passos "invites—indeed requires—the reader to incorporate apparently random fragments into a dialectical paradigm. To read this Newsreel and relate it to surrounding narrative element is to engage in conscious totalization" (431).⁷⁴ Foley clarifies that by

⁷⁴ Foley's language describing the text as "requiring" the reader to progress toward a dialectical synthesis reminds us how easily critics collapse the reading experience into the structurally intended designs of the text. Wadlington reminds us that the text is only one part of a dialogistic model of reading, which includes the author's symbolic action, the text as a script or score proposing certain reading performances; and actual readers performing the text within the context of their own lives and in light of their particular competencies. See Reading Faulknerian Tragedy, 29-32, 61-63.

totalization she does not mean that the collective novel directs the reader to assume a dogmatic and apocalyptic view of historical progress, which was the aim of proletarian novels.⁷⁵ Rather, the collective novel trains readers to construct a totality of social relations out of the interactions of the characters *in light of* an implied, external, unifying horizon.

By disappointing conventional expectations of narrative resolution; by problematizing the ontological relation between text and actuality; by foregrounding interpretation as an ideological enterprise—through these defamiliarizing strategies collective novels open up a space for revolutionary political doctrine not readily available in proletarian novels based upon more conventionally transparent techniques of narrative. [. . .] Rather, situated as conscious participants in the process of making “intimate connect[ions] . . . between things (men, acts) widely separated in space or in the social complex,” readers see through

⁷⁵ Radical Representations defines and differentiates the following genres of revolutionary literature published in the 1930s: the proletarian fictional autobiography, the proletarian bildungsroman, the proletarian social novel, and the collective novel.

and beyond the existing social totality. They become not dialogists, but dialecticians. (441)

Furthermore, the model of hegemonic articulation suggests that the implied horizon cannot be agnostic as to content, either conservative or revolutionary (i.e., Hegel or Marx). Foley insists that the collective novel of the thirties did not celebrate open-endedness or polyphony (401); I propose that the collective novel as written by constructive modernists did, in that the articulatory nature of non-essentialist identity formation highlights the process of identity formation as a suturing of difference through contingent and historical identifications.

Hemingway's "Character Building"

The opening to Hemingway's Death in the Afternoon, with its description of how to capture in writing "the real thing" itself, serves as an exposition of this technique.

I was trying to write then and I found the greatest difficulty, aside from knowing truly what you really felt, rather than what you were supposed to feel, and had been taught to feel, was to put down what really happened in action; what the actual things were which produced the emotion that you experienced [. . .]. [B]ut the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion and which would be as valid in a year or in ten years or, with luck

and if you stated it purely enough, always, was beyond me and I was working very hard to try and get it. (2)

This famous description of Hemingway's approach to writing recalls Dewey's suggestion that any analysis of individuals and society must start from the perspective of coordinated activity. Hemingway sought to engage the reader first in the activity of the story, more precisely, its motion, and then supply the details of interpreted content that would support the reader's interpretive adjustments. Hemingway thus anticipates and encourages a hermeneutical approach to interpretation, inviting his readers to assume a connection that then may be refined through the pragmatic testing of assumptions. Hemingway is consciously aware of the demands implied by such an interpretive model, as a hermeneutical reader first posits the character and intention of the writer to then intuit the writer's felt and expressed relationship to his or her social and historical *Bildung*. He does not attribute the difficulty of this project to the inherent limitations of communication; rather, his failure is due to his own weakness. Death in the Afternoon starts with Hemingway's confession that he was suffering a writer's block, which he associated with his inability to see the real honestly. He experienced that weakness most poignantly and most dramatically in his inability to look on with equanimity as the horses were gored in a bullfight. He had been tainted by an excessively nice Christian tradition. Gertrude Stein can appreciate a good bullfight, why can't he? He will not be able to write the real thing until he

learns to see and record the manifold of his horizon as a structured and meaningful whole.

Lest the reader underestimate the difficulty of this task, Hemingway uses this expository passage as an opportunity to demonstrate what he is describing. He crafts the reading experience to convey a felt sense of his struggle:

I had just come from the Near East, where the Greeks broke the legs of their baggage and transport animals and drove and shoved them off the quay into the shallow water when they abandoned the city of Smyrna, and I remember saying that I did not like the bullfights because of the poor horses. (2)

What does one truly feel, as opposed to what one is supposed to feel, about this striking image of patent ruthlessness? The image elicits immediate repugnance; it also highlights the reader's naivete about the realities of war, as the Greeks had reason to destroy their horses to keep them away from the pursuing Turks. As with his description of the bombing in the Gran Via, Hemingway uses the shocking detail to reproduce in the reader not only the emotion that was true to the moment but the conflict between frames of reference that were available to make sense of the feeling. If the reader chooses to reanimate the sequence of motion and fact—the signifiers Hemingway draws upon to render the scene—she may likely experience strong feelings, which the reader may seek to resolve by experimenting with new conceptual frameworks that successfully locate the

details of interpreted content into a meaningful whole. The reader's active participation in this hermeneutical process is essential, which is why writers such as Hemingway and Pound experienced such anxiety over and groused so publicly about their inability to find good readers who were up to the task. A weak reader focuses on the incidental detail because he assumes the real can be apprehended directly and in its discrete parts. The aficionado understands that the details are only elements of a larger ritual that must be experienced to be known. In the ring, the lone matador's choreographed yet authentic encounter with death discloses the real only to the aficionado who can synthesize and appreciate the multiple competing and complementary points of view.

I believe that the tragedy of the bullfight is so well ordered and so strongly disciplined by ritual that a person feeling the whole tragedy cannot separate the minor comic-tragedy of the horse so as to feel it emotionally. If they sense the meaning and end of the whole thing even when they know nothing about it; feel that this thing they do not understand is going on, the business of the horses is nothing more than an incident. If they get no feeling of the whole tragedy naturally they will react emotionally to the most picturesque incident. (Death 8-9)

The whole gives meaning to the parts without making them irrelevant or undermining their significance. The "religious" individual for Hemingway was one

who could appreciate viscerally the cruelty of the gored horses without losing sight of their necessity to the larger drama.

Writers on the peninsula who tell of the public applauding the death of the horses in the ring are wrong. The public is applauding the force and bravery of the bull which has killed those horses, not their death which is incidental and, to the public, unimportant. The writer is looking at the horses and the public is looking at the bull. It is the lack of understanding of this view-point in the public which has made the bullfight unexplainable to non-Spaniards. (Death n.p.)

Reading Hemingway demands this same precise adjusting between part and whole, as the observer must do at the bullfight.

In the omitted coda to “A Natural History of the Dead,” which was first published as a strange interlude in Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway admits that the difficulty of writing the real this way is that the horror of death disappears as one tries to apprehend it directly. In a rhetorical move that Dewey would approve of, Hemingway shifts his focus (and that of the reader) from the directly signifying detail to the coordinated unit of action. From that perspective, the reader is invited to reconstruct the meaning of the detail to create continuities—continuities in narrative and continuities with the reader’s connected yet distinct horizon.

And as for thinking about what I had seen; I have never been much impressed by horrors so called, due perhaps to a great curiosity which forces me to look at them closely whereupon the horror is difficult of persistence and the greatest horrors I can recall are, first a child being lifted with his legs dangling oddly after being run over by a bus on the stone road between Grau and Valencia and an old man in Madrid struck by a motor car and fallen from his bicycle, his bicycle broken and twisted, his glasses broken and dust and dirt in the places where skin had been scoured from his face, his hands and his knees. (sic) (Beegle 90)

The shocking image of the child's mangled and dangling legs recalls Roman Jakobson's theory of the synecdochic detail, as exemplified by Tolstoy's focusing the reader's attention on the handbag, as Anna Karenina steps under the advancing wheel of the train (qtd. in Lodge 80). The actual striking would be an anticlimax; what is needed is a sense of death's interruption of the contiguous space/time relationships we trust in our constructions of the real. The mangling of the legs foregrounds and thus isolates them from their regular use.

Here is the foundation of Hemingway's iceberg theory of minimalist fiction: the author's and the reader's conceptual frameworks become apparent only as they are called upon to write continuities. Should the author try to capture the detail directly, he will only "produce a blur." This was the fallacy of romantic

fiction, which Hemingway ridiculed in his description of Virgin Spain, written by Waldo David Frank, who claimed to lie naked in bed at night, in direct contact with the immobile all, receiving the exact words with which to describe Spain (Death 53). Attempting to contact the real directly, one can never overcome the subject-object separation. By mobilizing the real as motion and interpreted fact within the flux of experience, the author engages the reader in the act of constituting the real.

In “Cat in the Rain,” for example, Hemingway erects multiple, intersecting planes of reference around the “real” of the story, which he leaves unspoken. Hemingway makes the strange combination of distress and dignity felt by the young American girl in the story palpable to the reader. That same odd combination of affect finds representation in the small kitty. Hemingway then offers the reader tools, in the form of multiple points of view ranging from the superficial unconcern of her husband to the profound respect of the hotel keeper, by which to articulate that content into continuities. The story plays with the reader’s choices, however, complicating the available perspectives, as the sincerity of the hotel keeper’s consideration is qualified by his commercial relationship to his guest, which is itself situated within the relationship between the U.S. and Italy during the war. Using these intersecting planes of reference, Hemingway refines the content at the center of the story many times over, including the final “aha!” experience available to the reader upon concluding that

the young girl is pregnant, which acts to reconstruct the content as initially conceived.

Hemingway thus engages the reader in an articulatory constitution of the real, providing an array of perspectives that, when enacted, articulate a structured horizon. This is analogous to Crane's engaging the reader in a shifting of points of view among characters to reconstruct the content once represented as the *other* half, or Du Bois's escorting the reader behind the veil where she may release her psychic investments in the color line. Hemingway's impressionistic collages demonstrate the constructive modernist experimental textual strategies that invite the drawing of lines, the assumption of point of view, and the commitment of sympathies, only to provoke their release by introducing an anomaly that demands new consideration.

In a letter to Edmund Wilson, Hemingway described how he used the structure of In Our Time to activate the reader's sympathies while simultaneously engaging the reader in an active negotiation of point of view.

Finished the book of 14 stories with a chapter of In Our Time between each story—that is the way they were meant to go—to give the picture of the whole between examining it in detail. Like looking with your eyes at something, say a passing coastline, and then looking at it with 15X binoculars. Or rather maybe, looking at it

and then going in and living in it—and then coming out and looking at it again. (“To Edmund Wilson”)

The author’s description of his art here makes explicit one experience of reading the text: that the privileged terrain of the text does not lie exclusively with either the war stories or the peace stories, but in the dramatic space between, where continuities and incongruities can be proposed and negotiated by the reader. Carlos Baker labels Hemingway’s narrative strategy here as an act of “double perception,” combining the looking at and the living in (128).

Shifts of perspective are strewn throughout In Our Time like land mines, training the reader to hold her interpretive schemas loosely. Story beginnings such as that in “The Battler” require the reader to try out rapidly a series of interpretive assumptions to make sense of the onslaught of brute sensory perceptions: “Nick stood up. He was all right. He looked up the track at the lights of the caboose going out of sight around the curve [. . .]. He felt his knee [. . .]. That lousy crut of a brakeman” (In Our Time 53). The strategy is not to explain but to write from a position of lived experience, an assumed point of view the reader will refine repeatedly as she discovers additional data. What appears at first as surface detail implies the position of full experiential knowledge enjoyed by the protagonist. This makes the plot of even the most mundane experience a sort of mystery or conundrum that engages the reader’s desire to move from ignorance to initiation, training her power of judgment along the way. This device

works, in effect, similarly to Du Bois seducing the white reader behind the veil, where she may seek out new rules that promise to make sense of an exotic and alien experience. This is also precisely the process the progressive intellectuals hoped to foster in the public sphere.

That so many of Hemingway's characters find themselves dependent upon the reception of others for their self-narrations suggests that Hemingway sought to craft, in the projection and reception of his own stories, an interpretively open space.⁷⁶ The strategies for self-creation and recognition portrayed by the characters within the texts thus reflect the poetic strategies of the texts themselves, as they seek the reader's participation in creating a projected real terrain. The real thus functions as a sort of intermediate terrain, a *focus imaginarius* shaped by a triangulation of perspectives which are often at odds with one another—those projected explicitly by different characters, those suggested implicitly by narrators, and those created by the reader. Hemingway is at his most pragmatic when he coaches the reader to recognize the contingent fictionality of her own self-constructions, and those of others who must participate in the projecting of fictions.

⁷⁶ One thinks of Harry in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," who, despite his code that talking only corrupts the living of life, feels compelled to dictate to his wife the things he had never written as a final deferral of the impending *nada*.

Engineering the New

In several biographical sketches in U.S.A., John Dos Passos creates the figure of the new engineer who has the knack for turning matter into energy, which may then be channeled into new social benefits. Motivated by a simple, scientific curiosity, Luther Burbank, for example, tinkered with natural forces and produced new species that flourished in winter, thrived with little irrigation, and put forth fruit without seeds. Burbank “cashed in on Mr. Darwin’s Natural Selection/ on Spencer and Huxley with the Burbank potato.” Burbank was, according to Dos Passos, a scientific infidel willing to release nature’s renewing power against the corrupt and parochial ideas of the church. He subdued nature for human purposes, even the most mercantile of interests, including creating a good, firm shipper’s fruit suitable for canning. Burbank’s embrace of science, his tough, pragmatic assessment of the value of useful knowledge against the vested interests of custom represents the best of what is American. “America was hybrid/ America should cash in on Natural Selection” (42nd Parallel 102).

Like other heroes in the biographical sketches, Burbank carries his ideologies lightly and validates them scientifically. In the same way, Thomas Edison tinkered with things and didn’t worry about philosophical systems.

He worked all day and all night tinkering with cogwheels and bits of copperwire and chemicals in bottles; whenever he thought of a device he tried it out. He made things work. He wasn’t a

mathematician. I can hire mathematicians but mathematicians can't hire me, he said. (42nd Parallel 310)

Edison represents the bold American Yankee spirit against the decadence of Old World metaphysics. American heroes “puzzle out” nature’s principles, discovering them inductively and applying them pragmatically to meet human needs. Dorothy Ross describes this late nineteenth-century enthusiasm for engineering as a response to the crisis in the national ideology of American exceptionalism: the new urban industrial conditions and the pervasive inequalities of industrial capitalism testified against America’s belief that it was fulfilling both God’s eternal plan and the promise of its founding republican institutions (26).

Through empirical method social scientists hoped to discover fundamental laws at work alike in nature and history. Facing the crisis of exceptionalism, American social scientists redrew the lines of American uniqueness and turned natural law and historical principle into unchanging bases for the established course of American history. Change was contained and history rendered harmless. (60-61)⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Dorothy Ross traces the history of natural law in establishing America’s ahistorical exceptionalist beliefs, pp. 22-26, 50, 93. Numerous social and

(Continued)

In his sketches of engineers and architects, Dos Passos suggests that this redeeming realm of natural law lies out there in the material world, to be discovered inductively by the curious mind that immerses itself in experience. The heroes of U.S.A. maintain an attitude toward nature that combines humility with audacity. They strike the typical scientist's pose, oscillating between the

economic developments challenged that exceptionalist faith: the Civil War; the failure of Reconstruction; industrialization; the growth of a permanent working class receiving subsistence wages, without the prospect of owning capital; labor disputes culminating in the Haymarket riots; and other factors challenged the American liberal republican ideal that underlay exceptionalist beliefs (Ross 26, 48, 53, 94, 95). " This vision of the unique place America occupied in history was the core of a set of ideas I will call American exceptionalism. Standing at the westernmost culmination of European history, the United States would not follow Europe into a historical future. American progress would be a quantitative multiplication and elaboration of its founding institutions, not a process of qualitative change. Still prehistoricist, tied to God's eternal plan outside of history, American exceptionalism prevented Americans from developing a fully historicist account of their own history through much of the nineteenth century and limited the extent to which they could absorb European historicism" (Ross 26).

passive recording of nature's data and the inductive abstraction of rules—rules that have the power in turn to constitute new configurations of the real. Yet, also reflecting a radical empiricism that denies the opposition between mind and world, their productive formulae are something entirely new, a hybrid entity that derives in part from their vision and in part from their quirky personalities, which Dos Passos suggests by locating each engineer's achievements within a narrative of his life history. For Dos Passos, this hybrid creation is the wellspring of progressive growth; the expert, inferring nature's forces, capturing and projecting them toward felt human needs as they were known and felt by the expert, practices a sort of alchemy, blending natural forces and human interests, creating something new.

Dos Passos figures his heroic engineers as exemplars of the pragmatist mindset, open to serendipitous ideas that create new theories that produce new physical things. Incisive vision, a receptivity to what is perceived, and a creative mind enable one to breed new, hybrid species that modify a plastic nature and improve society. Charles Steinmetz, the mathematician, for example, developed his law of hysteresis that explains how the poles of a magnet change places under an alternating current. His mathematical symbols “opened the door of Ali Baba's cave,” making it possible for General Electric to manufacture the transformers that made long distance transmission of electricity a commercial reality. “Steinmetz jotted a formula on his cuff and next morning a thousand new

powerplants had sprung up and the dynamos sang dollars and the silence of the transformers was all dollars [. . .]” (42nd Parallel 334).

The biographical sketches suggest that human perception and genius were progressively improving nature and the material conditions of life across disciplines. The Steinmetz vignette complicates this progressive faith in intelligence and the leveraging powers of technology, however, locating them within the a complicating array of social forces. Steinmetz was a mathematician; he could, as Edison noted, “be hired,” and he was hired by General Electric. Dos Passos concludes the sketch noting that “Steinmetz was the most valuable piece of apparatus General Electric had until he wore out and died” (335). We might consider this metaphor from Dewey’s perspective, which views the individual as an instrument for the coordination of all motion within a meaningful horizon. Dos Passos represents Steinmetz as having been “subjected”: he has no identity apart from the normative expressions made available to him by General Electric. Even as he writes letters to Lenin and expresses his pro-German sympathies during the first World War, he remains effectively determined. He is no longer an instrument participating in the dialectical coordination of motion; he is an apparatus for dominating nature. Constructive, articulatory practices within a flux of interpreted experience organize centers of activity that constitute a living, political identity; without this, worlds devolve into a mind-nature opposition that writes meaning through violence. Dos Passos understood this and expressed it

regularly throughout the twenties and thirties in his criticisms of fascism, communism, New Deal policies—and Hemingway.

What separates Steinmetz from Edison, and what makes him susceptible to being co-opted, in Dos Passos' view, was his inclination to dwell in abstraction. Dos Passos contrasts his off-the-cuff calculations to the careful diagramming of experience carried out by Thorstein Veblen, one of Dos Passos's genuine heroes. Veblen tries out his ideas against the mind of his father, Thomas Anderson, who demonstrated the "treasured elaborated builtupseasonbyseason knowledge of a careful farmer" (Big Money 116). Steinmetz and Veblen both were socialists; yet Dos Passos marks the difference in intellectual styles—and their consequences—as the more primary criterion for evaluating a workable model for social reform. Steinmetz approached the socialist reconstruction of society as he approached the building of powerplants:

and they [General Electric] let him be a Socialist and believe that human society could be improved the way you can improve a dynamo, and they let him be pro-German and write a letter offering his services to Lenin because mathematicians are so impractical who make up formulas by which you can build powerplants, factories, subway systems, light, heat, air, sunshine, but not human relations that affect the stockholders' money and the directors' salaries. (42nd Parallel 334)

General Electric did not believe that you *could not* build human relations that threaten the capitalist system; the final clause makes clear that they would not allow it. Steinmetz could be indulged, but his powers of abstraction could also be controlled toward the company's capitalist ends.

Veblen, on the other hand, demonstrates a strength of character that suggests his values had been formed out of a careful reflection on the arrangement of material conditions. His values and the character they build are not abstractions but relations that write continuity into the arrangement of material conditions. His books established a new *diagram* of society dominated by monopoly capital (Big Money 119). Veblen's vision for a socialist society was to put ownership of the productive resources in the hands of the productive classes and eliminate the perverting influence of the "business classes" that didn't produce value but only appropriated it. Veblen's vision was to reconstruct the vast productive machine so that its functioning organically met the common needs of the men and women who did the work (119). My point is that what matters most to Dos Passos in this comparison is not one's socialist commitments but a critique of alienation and the appeal to absolutes that follows. Those who do not articulate their values from within a known field of interpreted elements appeal to absolutes that can be co-opted in any direction, regardless of one's professed affiliations. We will see this conviction expressed in Dos Passos's controversial speech before the first Writer's Conference in 1935, "The

Writer as Technician,” and find it in his correspondence to critics who accused him of drifting to the right when he dared to critique the behavior of the Communists in Spain. The repeated portrayal of such co-optations throughout U.S.A. reveal Dos Passos’s sense that true reform occurs slowly as we articulate meaning and value against a communally constituted social and historical sensibility that undergoes critique through its dialectical relationship to a defining horizon. As with Faulkner, absolutes are dangerous in that they threaten to write meaning through violence, not through an inference of organic relations that may be interpreted, expressed, and refined through communication.

Frank Lloyd Wright represents another “organic genius,” who emerges out of the architect’s immersion into the crisscrossing circulations of pedestrian, automotive, river-borne, and lake-borne traffic in Chicago:

Walking round downtown Chicago, crossing and recrossing the bridges over the Chicago River in the jingle and clatter of traffic, the rattle of vans and loaded wagons and the stamping of big drayhorses and the hooting of towboats with barges and the rumbling whistle of lakesteamers waiting for the draw, [. . .] he has been forced by the logic of uses and needs, [. . .] to draft plans that demand for their fulfillment a new life; only in freedom can we build the Usonian city. His plans are coming to life. His blueprints, as

once Walt Whitman's words, stir the young men [. . .]. (Big Money
438, 440)

Out of Wright's immersion into the particulars of experience emerged a logic of uses and needs whereby form follows function organically and life's structures maintain closer contact with the felt human impulses that spawned their creation.

Progressive social scientists believed a rational social organization could emerge by saturating with information those moments when individuals reflect on and act on their private impulses in light of a formative public sensibility. The gathering and distribution of information was essential, therefore, if the great engines of modern progress—the capitalist market, social diversification, democracy, technology, and scientific knowledge—were to work not just for the larger corporate interests but for the good of all. The belief that public opinion legitimately represents an expression of the will of the people is a belief that individuals are capable of attaching meaning and value to experience and expressing that meaning symbolically within the public discourse. Enlargement of the social intelligence is a matter of enabling a free circulation of these expressions, which occurs by improvement of communication, of printing, the telegraph, rapid travel, illustration, and the like (Cooley, Social Organization 361-62). In practice, however, this ideal served to foreground the friction inherent in the system that inhibited the free circulation of information and the organic

growth of a representative public opinion. Informing and directing the obscure impulses into appropriate and sustainable social structures was a complicated affair. “[T]he most difficult and the most momentous question of government,” wrote Albert Bushnell Hart in his introduction to A. Lawrence Lowell’s Public Opinion and Popular Governments, “[is] how to transmit the force of individual opinion into public action.”

By introducing new mechanisms for collecting data, and new conceptual schemas for interpreting and communicating that data, social policy experts sought to release the flow of exchange between private impulse and public sensibility, a flow that had been diverted into local eddies of prejudice and misunderstanding or manipulated by the interests of the large collective enterprises that were increasing their skill in using public relations and advertising to control public opinion. The new experts used the scientific marshalling of facts, therefore, to challenge the perversions of public opinion and represent the whole of perspectives that could be said to represent the interests of the common good. As the progressive intellectuals characterized the formation of public opinion as the active articulation of individual meanings and values in relation to the social and historical sensibility, individuals functioned as the network routers of the public, passing, suppressing, and directing from node to node the circulation of opinion, understanding, and value that constituted public opinion. The whole network could be reconstructed by introducing new

content that challenged the ignorance and stereotypes that clogged the circulation of knowledge. Dos Passos adds interpreted content to the circulation of knowledge by drawing sharp, detailed portraits of a rich variety of characters that constitute his fictional collective. In his review of The 42nd Parallel, Edmund Wilson recognizes this purpose behind Dos Passos's new experimental design:

Dos Passos has hit upon a method of swift close narration which enables him to present an immense amount of material with astonishing ease and speed—we seem to know all about his people's lives: all the members of their families, all their friends, all their amusements and periods of stagnation, all the places where they work and how much they get, all the meals they eat, all the beds they sleep in. And without any explicit commentary of the author, each of these series of incidents and details creates an unmistakable character [. . .] presented entirely in terms of *things*. And when these commonplace individuals, who have been introduced independently of one another, are finally put into relation with one another, further significances begin to appear—we realize that what we have been witnessing is the making of our own contemporary society. (157)

As does Crane, Dos Passos confronts his readers with a series of demanding events: changes of perspective that ask the reader to recapitulate a number of

limited perspectives, and from among them conceive of a larger constituting whole. The act of discovery lies at the heart of this phenomenological strategy: confronted by an anomaly, a mingling of opposites, or a shocking detail, the reader searches for an implied world, which is visible only as the reader is able to synthesize multiple competing and complementary points of view.

We find in Dos Passos's nonfiction prose commentary during the 1930s, however, a concern that modern social organizations and the circulation of social forces had grown too complex to allow the participation and contribution of the individual. Characters who successfully discover new frameworks to accommodate new content are often foiled as they carry them forward into the buzzing social discourse around them. The first World War was the epitome of this complexity for Dos Passos, and his cynical picture of the war in Nineteen Nineteen as an absurdity of waste, hypocrisy, and debauchery demonstrates his growing skepticism. Like Dewey, however, Dos Passos continued to champion the progressive liberal model of the organic republic representing the interests of its citizens; his portrayals in his fiction of the failure of that model represent part of his effort to discover new means for repairing that disconnection. As Dos Passos writes in an unpublished essay,

The continuance of self-governing institutions will depend upon the invention of methods of communication by which the operations of

the great macrocosms that rule our lives can be reduced to terms which each averagely intelligent man can understand, truly understand, the way a good mechanic understands the working of an internal combustion engine. If we are to govern ourselves we have to know how the machinery of society works. We have to learn to measure the drift of change. (Dos Passos, "Changing Shape of Institutions" 7)

Like Lippmann, who also commented on the need to master the drift of change, Dos Passos believed that effective social participation required a saturation of information at the moment when frames of reference are adopted to manage new content. Writers should employ careful craftsmanship and "sharply whittled exactitudes" ("Writer" 82) to represent the interpreted content of their experience so readers may practice articulating a relationship to that content, again situating themselves within a world. Dos Passos set out to train his readers in these skills which are necessary for participating in a progressive liberal society, whereby private impulses find expression in an chosen world.

While the author's apparent swings in political affiliation have been the subject of much biography, Dos Passos's political philosophy, even when drawn toward socialist ideals, always aligned with the progressive liberal tradition that preserves the role of the individual for contributing the interpreted content of an experience to be negotiated within the larger social complex. In his

correspondence and reviews during the twenties and thirties, Dos Passos praises those writers who trust their readers to respond freely to the fictionally drawn real of their narratives. He criticizes writers who seek to manipulate affect and intelligent reflection through propaganda, charging that they short-circuit the process by which social individuals know and constitute their world. In an unpublished letter to John Herrmann, he compares Herrmann's careful, crafted fiction to John Steinbeck's pamphleteering:

Maybe I'm slipping but I cant seem to get myself to believe that Grapes of Wrath is an important book—its a damn praiseworthy pamphlet—I dont know, there's always something phony to me in that California school writing [. . .]. The propagation of leftist liberal ideas in this country seems to have had the oddest effect of making writers thoroughly crooked—maybe old man dialectic is at the bottom of it. (“To John Herrmann”)

Dos Passos's use of the term “leftist” signals his alignment with the Partisan Review critique of the Third Period insistence among Marxist critics that proletarian literature must reflect a Marxist dialectical perspective on history. Herrmann's writing, by contrast, is a “damn good piece of neat watchmaker's work [. . .]. That's what I like in your stuff—the surgical scrupulousness of the method.” A well-crafted text draws the reader into a “state of selfless relaxation” where his intellect and affect are at play. “You can see a miniature of the whole

thing whenever a man performs even the smallest technical task, such as cleaning a carburetor, or taking a bead on a target with a rifle" ("Writer" 81). In these "selfless" moments, the hemispheres are released from their routinized channels to scan more freely the variety of couplings between sensation and idea, discovering new associations that may effectively mediate the reader's attempts to write the new stimuli into a continuity of experience. In these moments the mind is indeed a theater of simultaneous possibilities, free to discover new content, new arrangements, and new instrumental values to sustain those arrangements. The experimental collective novel structures this free play of associations like a carburetor: its venturis draw the reader's investments deep into its volatile mix; its shocking images set off sudden apprehensions that, if coupled with an effective response, produce new alignments that extend beyond the horizon of the reading event.

Crafting this radically empiricist space where new associations could become new articulations of identity and difference required, according to Dos Passos, both courage and technical skill from the writer. It required courage because anti-Stalinist writers like Dos Passos, Edmund Wilson, and Max Eastmann were then under some pressure from the Marxist editors of the New Masses, Mike Gold, Granville Hicks, and Joseph Freeman, who, before the adoption of the Popular Front strategies in fall of 1935, were leading the debate over how to define proletarian literature, adopting "revolutionary perspective" as

the main criterion in the days leading up to and following the 1935 American Writers' Congress.⁷⁸ The conflict surfaced when Dos Passos addressed the issue head-on in his speech delivered at the Congress, "The Writer as Technician":

By the nature of his function as a technician, the writer finds himself in the dangerous and uncomfortable front line of this struggle [. . .]. I feel that American writers who want to do the most valuable kind of work will find themselves trying to discover the deep currents of historical change under the surface of opinions, orthodoxies, heresies, gossip and the journalistic garbage of the day. They will find that they have to keep their attention fixed on the simple real

⁷⁸ Edwin Seaver first broached this new criterion of perspective (rather than proletarian authorship, audience, and subject matter) in an issue of Partisan Review dedicated to the upcoming conference. "It is not the class origin of the novelist that matters but his present class alignment, not the period of history in which he sets his story, or the kind of characters he writes about, but his ideological approach to his story and characters, which approach is entirely conditioned by his acceptance of the Marxian interpretation of history. And not only the acceptance, but the use of this interpretation as a compelling factor in his work" (5).

needs of men and women. A writer can be a propagandist in the most limited sense of the word, or use his abilities for partisan invective or personal vituperation, but the living material out of which his work is built must be what used to be known as the humanities: the need for clean truth and sharply whittled exactitudes, men's instincts and compulsions and hungers and thirsts. Even if he's to be killed the next minute a man has to be cool and dispassionate while he's aiming his gun. ("Writer" 81-82)

The address reflects the progressive belief that reform occurs slowly by adding interpreted content to the dialectic process by which a society adjusts its "motion"—the circulation of interdependent activities that are mediated by a social and historical sensibility, an articulated horizon of promise, and the myriad individual worlds that further localize that motion around individual commitments toward self-development.

The Marxist dialectic—or any superficial propaganda, for that matter, including the public relations and advertising campaigns of capitalist corporations—was an inadequate instrument for describing or, more importantly, reconstructing that motion. Effective writing must disclose worlds by carrying a density of sensual reference that moves the reader by an aesthetic, "felt" relationship to the real. This is, for Dos Passos, what elevates fiction above other discourses that are exclusively message-driven. Writers will discover "the

deep currents of historical change” if they keep their attention fixed on the simple, real needs of men and women. By comparing his model of the writer as technician to his sketch of Edison in U.S.A., we recognize Dos Passos’s implicit belief that even the expert cannot see or name the underlying principles of life directly. Even the most self-conscious and directed of “readers” must, like Edison, puzzle out a workable formula for one’s surroundings and verify it in its use. As with Frank Lloyd Wright, a logic of uses and needs emerges out of one’s immersion in the particulars of experience. Thus the fictional characters in the trilogy never articulate directly to the reader what is the “truth” of their narrative. Neither they, the writer who draws them, nor the reader is capable of naming such things directly. The reader, like the Camera Eye, must puzzle out the deep currents that structure the experience chronicled in the novels by fixing her attention on the simple, real needs of men and women. There she will find both the motive and the material to put in play as she seeks structures to mediate her private affective investments.

While the heroes of the biographical sketches in U.S.A. often demonstrate this participation in knowing and constituting the real, the fictional characters are generally too overwhelmed by modern conditions to carry it out successfully. The circulation of information has grown too chaotic, too insistent and ubiquitous to support meaningful understanding and communication. A well-crafted phrase in Manhattan Transfer captures this phenomenon in a sharp historical detail:

“Typewriters rain continual nickelplated confetti in his ears” (365). Apathy and social drift are the result when individuals can no longer attach meaning and value to the events in their lives in ways that successfully compose continuity with others and with their past, and this is the condition most of the fictional characters portray. Their opinions have become increasingly mediated by a complex apparatus for managing public opinion. Class lines are drawn between those who can master the swirl of public opinion and those who are at its mercy. “Swivelchair organizers,” political parties, international financial cabals backed by international military alliances, and a judicial system representing the interests of the big money have all contributed to a pseudo-environment that obscures individual understanding of the real. As Dos Passos observes elsewhere,

[These] agencies of self-serving propaganda from one group to another tease and inflame [the individual’s] mind with a succession of unrelated stimuli. These stimuli are rarely sustained enough to evoke the response of careful study and understanding, and the resulting satisfaction which is implicit in the word “understanding”; so in the end they leave the man frustrated. The mind of a frustrated man becomes a sink of fear, ignorance and hatred; his main response to the problems of community and national life, which demand cogitation and decisions is a stubborn apathy. Apathy is one of the characteristic responses of any living

organism when it is subjected to stimuli too intense or too complicated [. . .]. (Institutions” 4)

Dos Passos’s first experimental novel, Manhattan Transfer (1925), demonstrates this chaos of stimuli and the pathetic efforts of its characters to fashion a meaningful understanding of their world. Each chapter in Manhattan Transfer begins with an italicized section written in impressionistic shorthand that captures vivid details and draws the reader into a very sensory experience of New York. These lures into a visceral experience of the city establish the connection between the reader’s horizon and that of the text; the narrative strands carry out the interpretive activity that seeks to refine the initial, recurring connection into an intelligent, articulated continuity. Their juxtaposition sets up for the reader the experience Hemingway had pursued in his novel of the same year, In Our Time, setting up the experience of “looking at it and then going in and living in it—and then coming out and looking at it again” (“To Edmund Wilson”). The first section of Manhattan Transfer, “Ferryslip,” begins with a collage of impressions recorded as the reader embarks into port on a ferry and enters the city. The vignette evokes sensations of intercourse, defecation, and birth simultaneously, shocking and intriguing the reader. The scene opens with a sexualized image of a ferry crashing upon the green tide entering the ferryslip; its gates unfold slowly, releasing its cargo as a stream into the narrow, manuresmelling tunnel, “like apples fed down a chute into a press.” The scene

cuts immediately to a newborn child, squirming feebly like a knot of earthworms in the outstretched arms of a sickened nurse.

This mingling of birth and defecation, soiling one thing with its opposite, has the effect, as generally described by Frederic Jameson, of “reawaken[ing] the reader’s numbed sense of the concrete through the administration of linguistic shocks, by restructuring the overfamiliar or by appealing to those deeper layers of the physiological which alone retain a kind of fitful *unnamed* intensity” (Jameson 317, 20). Dos Passos elicits a strong physiological response that brings into focus the conflict between meaningful horizons. The newborn, the immigrant, and the reader are pressed through a deforming canal; they are subject to driving forces that impel them into the city, where they must navigate a dizzying circuit of crisscrossing social and economic forces they do not yet understand. In such an environment, birth is repugnant because it is dangerous, introducing complications that disrupt the current balance of social forces. Every new element must either adapt and fit into existing circulations of social forces, compel these confining lines of force to accommodate its disruptive presence, or be crippled by the misfit.

Dos Passos heightens the reader’s feelings of vulnerability by bringing focus to individual characters who get crushed by the machinery of large,

faceless institutions.⁷⁹ The hayseed, Bud Korpenning, is the first casualty of these larger forces. In the italicized section called “Steamroller,” night rolls over the city, crushing the city’s “fretwork” that holds buildings, people, fire escapes, water tanks, and street corners in a fragile, visual array of disparate elements. The rolling tons of dark night sky produce large blocks of black and gray, stained by the red, green, and white spurts of neon that erupt as night rolls over the city. The impressionistic set piece prepares the reader to feel the fitful, unnamed intensity when Bud, ignorant of city ways, emotionally crippled by an abusive father, and dizzy with hunger, walks the grid of the city but slips into its interstices

⁷⁹ Dos Passos experimented with prose techniques to achieve this effect, much as Eisenstein used montage in the fourth section of Potemkin: while the Czarist forces in military array advance determinedly down the broad Odessa stairs, firing upon the people who are fleeing in chaotic disarray, the camera carries the viewer above the fray to focus on the fate of a single mother and child. In the film’s most famous scene, Eisenstein isolates a quiet focus on the face of the child as its carriage careens down the stairs in the midst of a flurry of bullets and falling bodies. The juxtaposition elicits a sudden, keen anxiety by accentuating the vulnerability felt when a defenseless, sentient being is released into a clash of social forces too large for it to understand and navigate.

and gets crushed. Bud recounts to another bum in a flophouse how he had killed his father on the farm upstate, mashing in his head like a rotten pumpkin with a grubbinhoe. Like Bud, the reader has no workable framework to accommodate the intensity of what he has done; the surplus of anger over Bud's abuse and the loss and guilt he feels spill over into paranoia that trails Bud on his walks, where he believes derbied detectives are following him.

Dos Passos stages the steamroller's final crushing turn by sacrificing Bud between two irreconcilable frames of reference: weak from hunger, sitting on the edge of the Brooklyn bridge, Bud falls into a flight of fancy, imagining himself riding in a white carriage to his wedding at City Hall, as an alderman honored by the city, with his childhood sweetheart and bride-to-be, Maria Sackett, at his side. The reader is invited to indulge in a moment of sentimental affection for Bud's dreams. The scene shifts to the water below, where Captain McAvoy of the tugboat Prudence stands at the pilothouse with one hand on the wheel. A dark body falls hard on the water with a thudding splash a few yards off the bow. Captain McAvoy competently maneuvers the tug and a black deckhand pulls Bud's body on board, "his neck broke clear off." "God damn it to hell," murmurs Captain McAvoy. "A pretty thing to happen on a man's wedding day." The genitive case of that final phrase makes its reference unclear, as Captain McAvoy is himself getting married that day. The crude juxtaposition allows the pathos of one man's life to slide into the dreams of another. One fantasy, one

real, the moment of establishing a union with one's beloved is now turned surreal.

Numerous examples in the book demonstrate this "Manhattan transfer": affect circulates across the myriad social boundaries that tentatively separate the city's inhabitants. From her third-person point of view, the reader experiences the wrenching effect when artificial boundaries that separate human beings collapse, and chance encounters bring them together. The moment of contact invites a sudden recognition between two worlds that would otherwise never have met, disturbing the affective investments, private stereotypes, public opinions, and social and economic institutions that define them. Her coordinates upset, the reader is left with the task of consciously re-mapping her attachments, reactions, values, and expectations.

Dos Passos orchestrates these shifts of perspective to make the reader conscious of how her daily choices enact ideologies of class, race, and gender. Snippets of popular songs, political cliches, and private fantasies flit through his characters' minds chaotically. Manhattan Transfer was the first of Dos Passos's novels to make use of this narrative device; U.S.A. takes this further, separating out the eddies of popular phrases from any one character's stream of consciousness, granting them their own sections, implying that they have a life within the collective national consciousness. As such they represent in the trilogy the national sensibility, its *Bildung*, as articulated between 1898 and 1929.

Characters mediate their own self-development in relationship to this national sensibility using these scraps of language, which are the traces of past articulations now circulating as interpreted content, facilitating and limiting the ongoing motion of the nation. While these scraps of language flit through the public consciousness apparently without design, Dos Passos associates them with one another and with details in the text to demonstrate how they reinforce the ideologies of those who create and manage public opinion. The hapless characters of the collage are not simply steamrollered by larger forces; they are shown articulating their characters and values according to the impoverished popular phrases that are available to them. With careful attention to detail but no commentary, Dos Passos describes his characters making choices, choices that seem natural and probable given the cultural elements that are available to them. The reader watches as characters often choose against their own interests.

A scene at the end of Manhattan transfer narrates the reader through the poignant experience of hazarding a dream, only to discover that one's dreams are too anemic and impoverished to stake a claim in the existing circulation of social forces. The novel ends with the story of an immigrant seamstress, Anna, who chooses to cross a picket line despite her familial connections to organized labor. Like Crane's Maggie and Dreiser's Carrie, Anna battles the social forces that determine her life using meager conceptual tools and little self-reflection. As she crosses the picket line to work as a scab seamstress for Madame Soubrine,

she hazards her own dreams against the overwhelming pressures of her petit bourgeois employer on the one hand and a socialist family on the other. She tries to take control of her future with each stitch, dreaming of opening her own dress shop and marrying her boyfriend, Elmer. Dos Passos lets us hear the idle chatter of Anna's inner world, which rises upon the flimsy scaffolding of popular songs, socialist slogans, and romantic fantasies. While working in the stifling conditions, she sings a favorite sentimental ballad from Tin Pan Alley, "I'm just wild about Harry." Dreaming of an idealized future, she would have hummed these words:

There are some fellows that like all the girls,
I mean the vamps, with cruel lamps.
But my Harry says I'm the "girl of all girls,"
I'm his ideal, how happy I feel. (Sissle and Blake)⁸⁰

⁸⁰ This song entered the public consciousness through "Shuffle Along," Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle's wildly popular all-black musical revue. Its value undergoes a certain transformation of value when sung by Anna, a lower Eastside Jew, as "Shuffle Along" primarily managed an intersection of interests between Harlem blacks and upper middle class Manhattan whites. Dos Passos demonstrates how widely such interpreted content traveled, which indeed it did.

(Continued)

Anna tempts the reader with her simple belief that one can build a world one stitch at a time and find a partner to share it with. While we indulge our hopes for such a world, Dos Passos pulls back the camera to reveal the social forces that are swirling all around Anna, threatening to engulf her in the complexity of modern life. The central character of the novel, Ellen Herf, arrives to pick up a dress. Our well-developed affective commitments to Ellen are suddenly shown in a new light, as we feel from Anna's perspective the consequences of patronizing a non-union shop. The juxtaposition of Anna and Ellen throws into vivid contrast the conflict across class and ethnic lines. Ellen, a white, middle-class Protestant girl, needs the dress to continue her social climb; she is ambitious, but not inordinately so. Anna, the lower-Eastside Jew, offers the back on which Ellen will climb. We feel both struggles. Pinned on the dilemma, we are aghast to discover that Ellen's choices have enabled Madame Soubrine to run an unsafe sweatshop. A fire breaks out in the workroom, rapidly consuming Anna in "flames of red tulle."

Through the dream she is stitching white fingers beckon. The white tulle shines too bright. Red hands clutch suddenly out of the tulle, she cant fight off the red tulle all round her biting into her, coiled

For more on "Shuffle Along" and its place in 1920s Manhattan, see Ann Douglas, Terrible Honesty, p. 354.

about her head. The skylight's blackened with swirling smoke. The room's full of smoke and screaming. Anna is on her feet whirling round fighting with her hands the burning tulle all round her. (398)

From the waiting room, Ellen comes looking for Madame Soubrine in the workroom. She sees

Madame Soubrine, who is pointing a chemical extinguisher at charred piles of goods about a table. They are picking something moaning out of the charred goods. Out of the corner of her eye she sees an arm in shreds, a seared black red face, a horrible naked head. (398)

“Oh Mrs. Herf, please tell them in front it's nothing, absolutely nothing [. . .].”

Ellen returns to the front and reports to the other consumers that it was nothing, “Just a little blaze in a pile of rubbish” “‘Nothing, absolutely nothing,’ the women say one to another settling back onto the Empress Josephine sofas” (398).

Reeling herself by the shock of what she has seen, Ellen steps out into the noisy chaos of the city; an ambulance arrives; she can hardly breathe. “She tries to puzzle out why she is so moved; it is as if some part of her were going to be wrapped in bandages, carried away on a stretcher” (399). More horrific than death, the scorching of Anna's face ends all her romantic dreams of marrying Elmer or starting her own shop. The world will no longer have a place for her;

she will fall into the interstices of the city, abandoned, and with her has gone a piece of Ellen's soul. "There's a horrible tired blankness inside her" (399). Pulled for a moment outside of her frames of reference, Ellen gets a glimpse of social structures and class differences she has never noticed before. At the same time, she experiences a sympathy for and connection to Anna, perhaps born out of a sense that they share common dreams—the single working girl in the city hoping to stitch together a happy life. As if slowing down the stream of consciousness, Ellen feels for the first time not only the myriad discrete elements that swim in her head but a relation between elements: she feels her connection to Anna and doesn't know what to make of it, or how to sustain it within the great blooming, buzzing confusion. She cannot suppress the appeal of her habitual mental schemas long enough to own and sustain this fragile sense of connection and chooses to follow her customary routine. Ellen watches the ambulance pull away; she turns the corner and hails a cab to the Algonquin; she considers responding to the attentions of a passing stranger; she boards her cab and proceeds to join her husband for drinks with business clients. "Suppose I'd gone with that young man with the ugly necktie who tried to pick me up," she considers.

There are lives to be lived if only you didn't care. Care for what, for what; the opinion of mankind, money, success, hotel lobbies, health, umbrellas, Uneda biscuits . . . ? It's like a busted

mechanical toy the way my mind goes brrr all the time. I hope they havent ordered dinner. I'll make them go somewhere else if they havent. She opens her vanity case and begins to powder her nose.

(sic) (400)

For the first time Ellen experiences a relation of care toward her world, an existential connection that could serve as a nonfoundational, Archimedean point from which Ellen could build character, denominate values, and engage her world politically with conviction. Yet Ellen recognizes intuitively that to adopt an attitude of care is to choose a world out of the million alike embedded in the same monotonous and inexpressive chaos—a choice that she cannot make. In the irony of Ellen's statement, "There are lives to be lived if only you didn't care," Dos Passos frames the pragmatist belief that an attitude of care is all we have to define worlds and live meaningful lives.

Dos Passos portrays his fictional characters choosing against their own interests like this to reproduce for the reader the experience of living in a liberal society that pretends to accommodate each private interest while co-opting those interests into the play of existing power relations that constitute the new modern republic. U.S.A. is the history of the republic, told through the lives of individuals who live under what Dos Passos calls Superpower, few of whom have the strength to define themselves outside of the stream of marketing slogans and fabricated headlines that define their horizons. As long as the unifying horizon of

the republic is determined by Power Superpower, citizens will be subjects of its hegemonic norms. With Ellen, Dos Passos vividly illustrates how individuals who want a place within such a public must inevitably choose against their most human interests, which get cut off and left behind.

Dos Passos does his own bit of performative decentering by following the fate of those lost bits of self, maintaining their disruptive power: they collect in the pockets of the city where few people notice because there are no instruments for recording their presence. In one short vignette, for example, an anonymous woman has an illegal abortion, hoping it will not stain her dress or prevent her from making her five o'clock dinner engagement. Soon thereafter, a character reports that her building's pipes have clogged up, due to an abortionist flushing fetuses down the drain on the fourth floor. Little clots of lost souls appear throughout Manhattan Transfer; when they get cut off by the process of articulating difference, Dos Passos keeps them subtly within view. They function, then, to prevent us from forgetting that our articulations of the real are always constructed and unstable, built upon the exclusions that allow stability. Jimmy Herf, Ellen's husband and a journalist, walks home with an acquaintance, Tony Hunter, after a night drinking in a roadhouse. A tortured homosexual, Tony must hide his desires. Drunk, he confesses the unnamed sin to Jimmy, saying he cannot even find a term for his orientation in the dictionary. In his middle-class, white Protestant world, Jimmy similarly has a limited, clichéd vocabulary with

which to understand the likes of Tony. “Buck up for Heaven’s sake. They’re lots of people in the same boat. The stage is full of them” (234). Tony threatens to kill himself, silencing the superficial banter of Jimmy’s clichés. In this vignette, the Manhattan transfer is successful; Tony’s isolated, lonely plight strikes home, and Jimmy helps the reader articulate the most fundamental of Dos Passos’s principles: it is the health of a public language that enables individuals to write their personal experience into a continuity with others and with their history. Attaching meaning to shared activities and expressing that interpreted content in a public language keeps the circulation of social forces fresh and healthy.

“Gosh it’s horrible,” [Jimmy] shouted suddenly.

“What?”

“All the hushdope about sex. I’d never realized it before tonight, the full extent of the agony. God you must have a rotten time.... We all of us have a rotten time. In your case it’s just luck, hellish bad luck. Martin used to say: Everything would be so much better if suddenly a bell rang and everybody told everybody else honestly what they did about it, how they lived, how they loved. It’s hiding things makes them putrefy.” (Manhattan Transfer 235)

It starts to rain. Tony peels off and ducks into a subway station, but Jimmy chooses to walk the rain-washed streets of Brooklyn. Like the Good Gray Poet, Jimmy wanders through the night, imagining the city’s sleepers stifled by the

poverty of their language, their desires stopped up in little eddies of misunderstanding. Driven by the pounding insistence of “le sang, vive le sang,” handicapped by the poverty of language, desire will erupt, recklessly, without satisfying effect.

He walked on through Brooklyn. Obsession of all the beds in all the pigeonhole bedrooms, tangled sleepers twisted and strangled like the roots of pot-bound plants. Obsession of feet creaking on the stairs of lodginghouses, hands fumbling at doorknobs. Obsession of pounding temples and solitary bodies rigid on their beds. (235)⁸¹

Fragments of contemporary culture spin about in Jimmy’s head—threads of conversation from the evening’s revelry tossed together with headlines about the commencement of hostilities—without allowing Jimmy to write these fragments into a meaningful continuity with a public sensibility or within an open, promising horizon. Jimmy had sought renewing contact with the rain, the local neighborhoods, the people who lived their daily lives on the streets of Flatbush, but his head remains awash in the opaque fragments of headlines, story leads, and song lyrics. These fragments that tattoo his brain prevent him from making

⁸¹ The twisted roots of pot-bound plants recalls the first image of the story, Ellen Herf (née Thatcher) brought into the waiting room as a newborn, squirming feebly like a knot of earthworms.

contact with others in a way that would lead toward recognition and a sense of care. Among Brooklyn's tortured sleepers there can be no sympathetic transfers, no commitment to a point of view among multiple subjectivities; the diversity that isolates these sleepers cannot be healed, because a tangled knot of thready dreams binds them in a petrified obsession. Whitman's hovering, healing spirit is unavailable to this generation's spiritual alienation.⁸²

⁸² I wander all night in my vision,
Stepping with light feet, swiftly and noiselessly stepping and
stopping,
Bending with open eyes over the shut eyes of sleepers,
Wandering and confused, lost to myself, ill-assorted, contradictory,
Pausing, gazing, bending, and stopping.
...
I go from bedside to bedside, I sleep close with the other sleepers
each in turn,
I dream in my dream all the dreams of the other dreamers,
And I become the other dreamers.
...
The diverse shall be no less diverse, but they shall flow and unite—
they unite now. (Whitman, "The Sleepers")

These three constructive modernist writers reflect a radically empiricist understanding of experience, illustrating in their texts strategies for articulating moments of authentic experience into larger wholes. A historically and socially contingent model of the nation's *Bildung*, qualified by a democratically mediated horizon of promise, could satisfactorily replace the decadent Victorian grand narratives that had mediated the nation's experience into war and alienation. They assumed a hermeneutical model of interpretation when writing their fiction, expecting the reader to venture a visceral connection to the horizon of the text, which then enabled the text to refine that felt connection by introducing interpreted content that prompted active articulations of continuity. In training the reader in these interpretive and articulatory practices, these constructive modernists emphasized the complexity of their current horizon and enabled the reader to experience the alienation that results when the public language no longer supports the attachment of meaning and value to actions that is necessary to represent oneself into and find recognition within the circulation of motion that constitutes the nation.

Chapter Six

Gold Coins, Smudged Souls, and Discourses of Value in Yoknapatawpha

The radical empiricism of the Progressive intellectuals carried forward into the historical context of the 1930s, continuing to underwrite a vision for liberal interdependence even as the collapse of the world economy and the rise of imperial communism and fascism threatened any possibility for international social harmony. The radical empirical belief that experience is a historically contingent and socially constructed foundation of the real made it possible for a few writers, critics, and politicians to promote progressive liberal democratic cultural forms that challenged the collectivist enthusiasms of the thirties with a model of community that appealed to interdependency and recognition rather than essential humanist or idealist foundations. I will show how this radical empiricism leads William Faulkner to produce a progressive liberal model of community in his Yoknapatawpha county stories published between 1929 and 1942. In these novels Faulkner explores how individuals interdependently denominate meaning and value as instruments for constructing (and resisting) continuity across their historical and social experience. The telling and retelling of stories in these novels serves as the shared activity—the shared engagement with the real—by which individuals reconstruct things and events to fit them within an always-contested continuity of experience. Faulkner's fictional analyses of the ways that power, violence, compulsion, and habit influence the circulations of social forces parallels Walter Lippmann's growing skepticism

during the 1930s and his belief that rational benevolence could no longer coordinate the interests and activities of modern society. As Lippmann did in his The Good Society (1937) Faulkner proposes a modified progressive liberalism that recognizes the dynamics of power that operate as societies seek to organize social forces into social structures. Specifically, Faulkner exposes the violence inherent in fixing meaning and value through acts of differentiation and assertions of equivalence. He also dramatizes his experience that the impulse toward adaptive coordination and harmony can be drawn off into ineffective reforms. Yet he celebrates the creative energy released in such acts and identifies that energy as a powerful stimulus for progressive action. Faulkner's texts work to educate the reader in these dynamics and thereby provide valuable insight into the possibilities and challenges to articulating a radical democratic pluralism.

Faulkner's model of community has been a contested topic ever since Malcolm Cowley's The Portable Faulkner (1947) first established the Yoknapatawpha stories as an organic saga of the Old South, typified in a northern Mississippi county facing the decline of a heroic past that had once been sustained by tradition and an honest relationship to the land and was now being destroyed by an encroaching, vulgar modernity. Cowley's post-World War II recuperation of Faulkner located a "unified sensibility" in his descriptions of the Old South against which the present-day "fallen" community could be compared

and measured. In Cowley's interpretation, that sentimental vision of an anti-industrial, agrarian society represented the coherent center of Faulkner's work, and its relationship to the changing present structured its communication of a moral vision engaged with the vicissitudes of a fallen existence.

Always in his mind he has an ideal picture of how the land and the people should be—a picture painted, many-windowed houses, fenced fields, overflowing barns, eyes lighting up with recognition; and always, being honest, he measures that picture against the land and people he has seen. And both pictures are not only physical but moral; for always in the background of his novels is a sense of moral standards and a feeling of outrage at their being violated or simply brushed aside. Seeing little hope in the future, he returns to the past, where he hopes to discover a legendary and recurrent pattern that will illuminate and lend dignity to the world about him. (Cowley, "William Faulkner's Legend")

The conservative Agrarian critics rallied around a vision of community as "spurning the vulgar industrial world, calling for renewed social hierarchy and paternalism, and clinging to a white-yeomanly, airbrushed picture of the Old South" (Crews 48). The threat to this unified sensibility, notes Frederick Crews, was not slavery, which was partially redeemed by its paternalism, but secular northern materialism, which corrupted the South's way of life and the natural

hierarchy of the races, especially through Federal meddling during Reconstruction.

This reading of Faulkner marked a shift to the right for Cowley, who was recuperating his own literary reputation in a non-Marxist vein.⁸³ For the literary radicals at the New Masses and the Partisan Review during the 1930s, Faulkner was an unregenerate modernist who lacked the historical perspective to appreciate the defeat of the Old South and its moral sickness from the Marxian perspective that American history was advancing toward an urban, proletarian revolution and an increasing cosmopolitanism that would reconstruct feudal, rural values. In his review of Absalom, Absalom! (1936), Philip Rahv wrote that the

⁸³ The history of literary criticism during the thirties is complex, even arcane, though it has been well parsed by Daniel Aaron in Writers on the Left (1965). Barbara Foley provides an updated and thorough history of the various movements, arguing that their supposed differences remained well within a conservative bourgeois aesthetic that pitted art against propaganda (Radical Representations 3-169). Other histories that challenge the received anti-Leftism critique promoted by Rahv and Trilling include James Murphy, The Proletarian Moment: The Controversy over Leftism in Literature, and Cary Nelson, Repression and Recovery: Modern American Poetry and the Politics of Cultural Memory, 1910-1945.

book's shifting points-of-view fail to provide an objective vision; instead, the material is manipulated to illustrate and fit the author's vision, which is the mystified metaphysics of a tragic humanism (Rahv 20).⁸⁴ Faulkner represented a difficult case for Rahv, as his modernist techniques confirmed Rahv's belief that the formal explorations of the twenties had advanced the primitive naturalism of the 1910s; the progressive literature of the thirties, however, must produce a dialectical synthesis of naturalist and modernist representations in a

⁸⁴ Foley notes the fact that Rahv published his review in the New Masses, not in the Partisan Review, as evidence that the two factions surrounding each magazine were not as opposed as later histories have made out (Radical Representations 141). Cooney argues that the adoption of Popular Front strategies in 1935 made the Partisan Review criticisms of "leftism" anachronistic, as even the New Masses had abandoned the requirement that literature be proletarian and now celebrated native themes and traditions (Cooney 590). Foley notes this shift as evidenced in Joseph Freeman's speech at the Second American Writers Congress in 1937, where he proclaimed that "If [the writer] is a writer at all, he deals with experience, and in our time, simply to record experience is to record aspects of a universal conflict and the most profound transformation in the history of mankind" (qtd. in Foley, Radical Representations 127).

sophisticated and political literature that would also disclose the revolutionary progress of history.⁸⁵ Absalom “mirrors the dissolution of an old order of values” that lacked any sense of history’s dialectical progression toward a more cosmopolitan, industrial civilization; his novel—all the more dangerous for its undeniable power—inculcated the ideological mysticism of humanism rather than the truth of history (21).

The story is now familiar of how the anti-Stalinists of the Partisan Review and the New Critics converged following World War II to promote an international high modernism in which aesthetic freedom marked the freedom of the individual under capitalism, and didactic propaganda was considered totalitarian and fascist (Schwarz 4). Frustrated by the superficial and opportunistic criticism under the Popular Front and disgusted by Stalin’s nonaggression pact with Hitler in 1939, Phillips and Rahv defected and continued their trajectory toward a more

⁸⁵ Cooney cites William Phillips’s “Three Generations,” published in the fourth issue of the Partisan Review, as defining the close relationship between cultural and literary aesthetics and historical progress that shaped the editorial philosophy of the Partisan Review. “Three Generations” outlined this dialectical advance from the naturalism of the 1910s to the formal exploration and “cosmopolitanization” of the twenties, to the mature proletarian literature of the thirties.

cosmopolitan and conservative liberal social model. The Agrarians shifted their search for a formative unified sensibility away from their conservative, classical-Christian vision of an ordered agrarian society to a putatively more universal and cosmopolitan vision that inhered in the structure of the text. As this conservative social vision “collapsed of its own absurdity” (Crews 48) and the Agrarians despaired of finding a redeeming unified sensibility in the history of the Old South, they turned to a more restricted model of unified sensibility in the aesthetic experience of the text (O’Brian 221-224). In his influential William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (1963), Cleanth Brooks modified Cowley’s pastoral reading, positing the whole of Faulkner’s oeuvre as structuring a higher realm of knowledge and self-referential order. Faulkner’s rich use of symbols, complex dialectic between story and plot, shifts in narrative perspective, coding of race, class, and gender into powerful aesthetic moments, and so on, gave voice to the universal themes of friendship, heroism, endurance in the face of defeat, and character as forged through a ritualized engagement both with nature and the unconscious self. In this New Critical interpretation, Faulkner’s highly crafted portrayal of a specific but typical northern Mississippi county disclosed the universal human values that are immanent in every particular.

Schwartz argues that the convergence was completed when the Humanities Commission of the Rockefeller Foundation drew together the New Critics and the New York intellectuals by sponsoring the Kenyon Review,

Sewanee Review, and Partisan Review, where they promoted the Cold War view that the free individual could assert universal human values against the anomie and violence of the new postwar era through the heroic quest of selfhood (Warren 11). The New Critics and New York intellectuals lauded Faulkner as a neglected genius whose intensive labor over fifteen years had crafted out of the regional material of the South the universal truths that spoke honestly to both the doom and the existential promise of the new era. Furthermore, Faulkner had not been tainted by a 1930s radicalism and his work affirmed universal human progress not through class conflict but through existential human aspiration (Schwartz 94).

As Schwartz and Foley demonstrate, more recent criticism has attempted to reread Faulkner with an awareness of the ideological impulses that constructed his reputation in the forties and fifties. In place of the earlier assertion of an organic sensibility and moral vision, critics have taken up hermeneutical, deconstructive, and discourse analyses to highlight the experience of immersion in Faulkner's unstable world. Criticism now finds a breaking down and confusing of oppositions in Faulkner's representations of the instability of individual identity, race, family lineage, inheritance, property, and memory. What we find are characters who struggle with the existential requirement to "write" themselves into being as part of a community's shared articulation of memory, meaning, and value, none of which is stable or grounded

upon universals. Philip Weinstein suggests that the critic must approach Faulkner's texts as a set of performances in which characters and readers both activate or resist larger discourses furnished by the culture. Faulkner himself is an overdetermined site of interchanges in which come into play the writer's discrete performances, the discursive options (accepted, refused, or transformed) of his productive culture (America in the first half of the century), and the interpretive orientation of a reader responding in the receptive culture of the same country fifty years later. (6)

The notion of the performative self runs through much recent Faulkner criticism, as it highlights the "conditioning and conditional freedom" of the subject, who draws upon language as historically and socially situated to create both self and world (Bourdieu 95).⁸⁶ These analyses share the assumption that the subject is a

⁸⁶ The creative activity of the subject as both enabled and limited by the world of meanings he/she is born into runs through Dewey's model of the social individual, Bourdieu's model of the habitus, and Wittgenstein's model of the language game, each with their differentiating emphases. The notion of the performative derives from J. L. Austin's description of the performative speech act in How to Do Things with Words (1975), which served as a productive statement for Derrida's subsequent exploration of the iterability of writing as the

(Continued)

differential construction articulated within a field of contingent, contested, and traded signifiers. In various modes between 1929 and 1942, Faulkner highlights both the conditioned and conditional nature of the subject's freedom to affirm coherent selfhood, portraying the variety of ways characters attempt to coordinate their precarious, contingent selves with available social forms.

My own reading of several of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha novels falls into this category, though I will persist in drawing explicitly on Jamesian and Deweyan models of social identity in order to locate Faulkner's model of community within the contemporary liberal progressive model of society. Specifically I will show how several of Faulkner's characters demonstrate the ability to reconstruct the real by searching out origins and ends that transform the value of objects and social transactions that emerge as contested sites in the mutually adaptive life of the community. This power, which I call the power to "coin" or "denominate" the real, is the interdependent power of each individual in a liberal progressive society to articulate the real by reconstructing the meaning and value attached to events within the experience of the community. Underlying these practices is a radical empiricist model of the real that acknowledges no foundational "stuff"

general condition of possibility for performative acts. For a history of the notion of the performative, see Culler, "Philosophy and Literature: The Fortunes of the Performative."

beyond the shaping of experience into socially meaningful and tradable symbols. Purported incursions of the absolute, therefore, whether they be in the guise of a gold coin, the superiority of one's race and history, or the objective progress of history, have no place in Faulkner's radical empirical worldview.

In a typically Faulknerian scene combining the comic and the earnest, Lucas Beauchamp in Go Down, Moses struggles at midnight to bury his still in an Indian burial mound so that he can report the activities of a rival bootlegger (and prospective son-in-law) without getting caught himself. Faulkner describes the mound as sighing and collapsing upon Lucas, as if it were retching forth a "boiling," "jeering" refusal of the foreign apparatus. With vaudevillian precision, the insult is capped by a smack to the face in the form of a large clod, which ironically carries a treasure from deep within the old earth, perhaps from the old Indian ancestors themselves: the clod crumbles in his hands and deposits a single gold coin. Lucas starts hunting frantically for buried treasure, pausing to check the time, then "probing again in the dry insensate dust which had yawned for an instant and vouchsafed him one blinding glimpse of the absolute and then closed" (Go Down, Moses 39). The "absolute" here is tied to the ground; it is linked to the Indian ancestors, the only inhabitants of that land who ever rightfully belonged there; it is without compromise, and without sin; and it is gold.

The comedy of the scene emerges from the fact that a sacred burial coin in the hands of a plotting bootlegger undergoes a certain transformation of value. While Faulkner does not describe its design, the stamp on an Indian burial coin would denominate no value in the local economy; and even though its worth would derive wholly from the weight of its material, the coin as a token of a larger buried treasure carries a mystical value that far outweighs any surface denomination. The hoped-for treasure promises infinite possibility, the pleasure of getting something for nothing, and the intrigue of a far-away place and time. The coin becomes sacred for Lucas because it represents a boon from outside his economic horizon, the value of which cannot therefore be measured by traditional standards of the quantity of labor expended or the utility of goods it might buy.

Many of Faulkner's characters demonstrate this desire to access an uncorrupted source of value. In a later chapter within the same novel, Isaac McCaslin repudiates his inheritance of the same land Lucas lives on because he sees it as stolen property, taken from the Native American people who should still have right to it. The old people, in the story by that name, represent the fathers of Sam Fathers, the circle of chiefs and kings who had lived in the land long before the white men had ever seen it, whose pure blood had passed generation by generation through a line of inheritance that was slowly moving toward an irrevocable extinction. As the descendant of the man who had

"bought" the land and bequeathed it to his white descendants, Ike shares the guilt of a race that had not only dispossessed a native people but diluted and attenuated their blood-line through miscegenation. Seduced by the myth of pure origins, Ike undergoes a series of rituals—played out most dramatically while hunting the land with Sam Fathers—by which he hopes to transcend his conflicted existence and (re)gain a sacred simplicity.

Faulkner's portrayal of absolutes—such as the myth of pure origins and the gold coin—deserves careful examination, as they disclose the sophisticated dynamics by which power is exercised within Yoknapatawphan communities. With typical complexity, Faulkner's irony in this scene does not undercut Lucas's simple faith in the power of the coin; for while it is certainly funny, Lucas's search for the buried treasure turns darkly obsessive to the point of nearly breaking up his marriage. His wife Molly intuits that the undenominability of the coin threatens to overwhelm or undermine human systems of value. She asks for a divorce to separate herself from her husband, whom she feels has been poisoned, or cursed, till he is sick in the mind. "Because God say, 'What's rendered to My earth, it belong to Me unto I resurrect it. And let him or her touch it, and beware.' And I'm afraid. I got to go. I got to be free of him" (Go Down, Moses 99). Molly's resorting to mythical language is the only way she knows how to account for the fact that the coin *cannot* be denominated—its value cannot be traced back to its source; therefore it must belong to God. Faulkner's

representation of Molly's superstitious fear is not ironic; in fact, the reader is positioned to regard her primitive logic with all the sincerity displayed by Roth Edmonds. For Edmonds too, the danger lies in the fact that the treasure's value cannot be traced to its origins, because a thousand dollars "on which there was no sweat, at least none of [Lucas's] own" could not be accommodated within the given economy (119).⁸⁷ Whether it be called surplus value, money on which there is no sweat, a shrewd trade, or God's money, value that cannot be traced back to its source resonates in Faulkner's stories as something mystical, sacred, and dangerous.

How, then, does Lucas put this fetish to use? Its power is in no way positively *foundational*, as the implied treasure never appears, nor does it fund Lucas's imagined projects directly. Rather, Faulkner employs the gold coin as an empty floating signifier that coordinates several, competing, *negative* identifications. Having been rendered to the earth, it is *of* the earth and, therefore, *outside* the horizon of discursive signifiers that constitute the social sphere. Although the text is unclear as to how the coin actually got into the

⁸⁷ The curse of making money without expending one's own sweat foreshadows Ike McCaslin's guilt for the money his grandfather Carothers McCaslin made not by his own sweat but by the sweat of his slaves.

Indian burial mound, its implied descent figures the coin as an undenominated signifier representing a nondenominating people.⁸⁸ Lucas does not seek to appropriate directly the mythical power of the native tribes, however; he does not, for example, affiliate himself with the Old People by positioning himself as rightful heir, either through the chance discovery of the gold piece or by common opposition to the white Europeans. Rather, Lucas mobilizes a set of relations around the pursuit of the undenominated signifier, in the process displacing his

⁸⁸ To make room for the western expansion by European Americans, nineteenth-century political and judicial language worked to “vanish” the American Indians from the land by figuring them as nonpolitical entities who have no public legal status. In his opinion in *Cherokee Nation vs. the State of Georgia* (1831), for example, Chief Justice John Marshall argues that the American Constitution does not recognize the Indian tribes either as a state within the union or as a foreign state, prohibiting them from seeking redress from U.S. courts for the appropriation of their land. In his concurring opinion, Justice Baldwin states simply that “there is no plaintiff in this suit.” Widespread rhetoric during the period established the claim that the superior culture of European Americans entitled the settlers to the land, as their social institutions would cultivate and make use of the land more fully than the “uncontrolled possession” instituted by the primitive governmental forms of the native tribes.

overdetermined identity as it has been variously defined within the existing social structure. Reflecting on Molly's description of the coin as bearing the curse of God, Roth Edmonds recognizes that the destructive power of unearned money lies in its tendency to provoke unbounded ambition to satisfy unbounded desire:

The curse of God. He knew what she meant, what she had been fumbling toward. Granted the almost unbelievable circumstance that there should be as much as a thousand dollars buried and forgotten somewhere within Lucas' radius, and granted the even more impossible circumstance that Lucas should find it: *what it might do to him*, even to a man sixty-seven years old, who had, as Edmonds knew, three times that sum in a Jefferson bank; even a thousand dollars on which there was no sweat, at least none of his own. (118-119; emphasis added)

What differentiates a thousand dollars on which there is no sweat from Lucas's savings is the former's conspicuous representation of the possessor's power, power understood as the ability to manipulate the implicit logics that structure others' pursuits and labor. The significance of the undenominated coin is that it is undenominated, providing a powerful empty signifier : to *coin* a thousand dollars on which there is no sweat—not by finding it and actually possessing it (for then its value would be located within existing relational structures and its fetishistic power undone), but by articulating a system of relational identities

around its apparent existence—is to create power by aligning identifications and antagonisms in new formations. Lucas’s inheritance *enacts* the power of old Carothers McCaslin; Lucas’s fabrication of the implied treasure elicits desire among others to denominate new value according to the terms Lucas provides.

Lucas uses the implied treasure to challenge numerous relations, the most significant being those lines that intersect upon Molly, Lucas’s wife and Roth Edmonds’s nurse from birth. Lucas uses the adventure to repeat the confrontation he had had with Zach Edmonds, in which Lucas demanded that Zach allow Molly to return home after nursing young Roth for six months. When Roth directs Lucas to abandon his foolish pursuit because it is threatening Molly’s health, Lucas replies,

I’m a man. I’m the man here. I’m the one to say in my house, like you and your paw and his paw were the ones to say in his [. . .]. Long as I do that [bring in my crop], I’m the one to say about my private business, and your father would be the first to tell you so if he was here. [. . .] I’m going to be the man in this house. (Go Down, Moses 116-117)

Lucas thus repeats his self-authoring confrontation to another generation of Edmonds, displacing once more what he and they know to be a formal and false hierarchy, which the McCaslins, Beauchamps, and Edmonds have sustained and

adjusted over time through myriad articulations—sometimes fine, sometimes dramatic—of their relational identities.

These articulations sustain their effect only through the persistence of communal memory, and tracing and asserting origins is a central preoccupation for Faulkner's characters. Sartre found Faulkner overwhelmed by the past, in which a typical character was "deprived of potentiality and explained only by what he was [. . .]" ("Time in Faulkner" 232). Early critics routinely criticized Faulkner for dwelling in despair, cut off from the future by an obsession with the South's defeat in the Civil War and so condemned to a violent nihilism. The Snopeses represented an incursion of vitality into Yoknapatawpha, but their immoral, asocial, and ahistorical disposition would channel that energy not toward a renewal of existing social structures but, rather, toward destruction.⁸⁹ A pragmatist reading that emphasizes the consequences of actions and acts of valuation, however, reveals in Faulkner's treatment of individual and communal memory successive performative acts that coordinate the inherited, formative, historical self with the impulses and desires of the present in light of the concerns of the future. Faulkner did not create characters as Sartre would have liked, as

⁸⁹ George Marion O'Donnell characterized the Sartoris-Snopes conflict as a struggle between humanism and naturalism. See "Faulkner's Mythology" p. 84.

the existential being open to the future, determined only by “the totality of what he does not yet have, of what he could have” (232). Rather, Faulkner’s characters are contingent, historical selves searching out with others the symbolic origins and ends that would render their experience continuous. We experience this adaptive, coordinating process in reading Absalom, Absalom!, which asks the reader to relate each present moment in the plot to its origins and resolutions in the implied story. The story is told and retold, as Rosa Coldfield tells Sutpen’s story to Quentin Compson, a story that was already a part of Jefferson’s heritage of the same air which the man himself had breathed, a story which would be rewritten in Mr. Compson’s letter and retold as Quentin reads the letter to Shreve and reperformed as Quentin and Shreve imagine their own relationship to each other through the story of Henry and Charles Bon. Memory as captured in story is the stuff that Faulkner’s characters perform into a shared sensibility, their historical communal identity. Faulkner portrays this process as taking place always within the urgency of the present moment: “There is only the present moment,” he stated, “in which I include both the past and the future, and that is eternity” (Lion 70). “Man is never time’s slave,” he added. Stories are the communal stream of consciousness, which is fluid, relational, and continuous; by acts of association, organization, and exclusion, humans craft narratives to frame a contingent coherence that will persist and inform future creative acts beyond the present and individual horizon. One of Faulkner’s early favorable critics,

Conrad Aiken, recognized this Jamesian stream of consciousness in Faulkner's model of memory:

What Mr. Faulkner is after, in a sense, is a *continuum*. He wants a medium without stops or pauses, a medium which is always *of the moment*, and of which the passage from moment to moment is as fluid and undetectable as in the life itself which he is purporting to give. It is all inside and underneath, or as seen from within and below; the reader must therefore be steadily *drawn in*; he must be powerfully and unremittingly hypnotized [. . .] and this suggests, perhaps, a reason not only for the length and elaborateness of the sentence structure, but for the repetitiveness as well. (138-139)

If we read Faulkner, then, as representing experience as the individual and communal stream of consciousness, we should find a portrayal of mind as a theatre of simultaneous possibilities, with the individual and communal consciousness selecting and suppressing the material of immediate experience, elaborating significant forms that attract content and meaning and coordinate ongoing activity. We should also find an aversion to material and spiritual metaphysics that conceive of the self as either a transcendent soul or a physiologically determined automaton. As if quoting James, Faulkner, through Rosa Coldfield, describes the mediating center of memory as nothing more than

the sum of afferent nerve impulses that result from the myriad physical adjustments made to the body through the course of experience.

That is the substance of remembering—sense, sight, smell: the muscles with which we see and hear and feel—not mind, not thought: there is no such thing as memory: the brain recalls just what the muscles grope for: no more, no less: and its resultant sum is usually incorrect and false and worthy only of the name of dream.

(Absalom 178)

This description echoes James's description of the conscious self, which is continuous with the stream of thought yet aware of itself as an active seat of reflection abstracted from the rest of the stream.⁹⁰ There is nothing substantial to

⁹⁰ James writes in his Principles of Psychology: "*it is difficult for me to detect in the activity any purely spiritual element at all. Whenever my introspective glance succeeds in turning round quickly enough to catch one of these manifestations of spontaneity in the act, all it can ever feel distinctly is some bodily process, for the most part taking place within the head. [. . .] In a sense, then, it may be truly said that, in one person at least, the 'Self of selves,' when carefully examined, is found to consist mainly of the collection of these peculiar motions in the head or between the head and throat.* (Principles of Psychology 1: 301).

that resultant sum; it is historical, contingent, and particular to the idiosyncrasies of the strong (and weak) characters who make up the community. I quote again James's description of a historically formed consciousness slowly and organically shaping a world out of the unformed "stuff" of experience that furnishes material to the creative designs of selves as sculptors:

But all the while the world we feel and live in will be that which our ancestors and we, by slowly cumulative strokes of choice, have extricated out of this, like sculptors, by simply rejecting certain portions of the given stuff. Other sculptors, other statues from the same stone! Other minds, other worlds from the same monotonous and inexpressive chaos! My world is but one in a million alike embedded, alike real to those who may abstract them. How different must be the worlds in the consciousness of ant, cuttle-fish, or crab! (Principles of Psychology 1: 288-89).

We might add to that list the consciousness of an idiot, a "mulatto," an abdicating scion, and a dead woman. We will see that Faulkner shared James's nearly obsessive insistence on locating the organizing activity that constitutes identity, both individual and communal, within the flux of "pure experience." When he introduces "absolutes," like a gold coin, for example, we can expect the imminent deconstruction of some unexamined mystification that, Faulkner believes, is

serving to ground certain relations of power. In The Hamlet, we can also generally expect some good fun.

In his New Historical work on American literary naturalism, Walter Benn Michaels has traced the evolution of representations of the real from earlier, materialist models to later representations that assume the real is constituted by an economy of desire. He identifies the representational logic of the materialist model with gold bugs and silverites and finds a similar logic at play in the fiction of naturalist writers, such as William Dean Howells and Frank Norris. Michaels compares these writers to late nineteenth-century tracts for a gold-standard currency. Hard currency proponents wanted to reduce a coin's nominative value to the sum of its constituent materials; Michaels shows that naturalist writers followed that same logic when they portrayed individuals as the accumulation of their physical and mental impressions (Michaels, Gold 172-76). Goldbugs and silverites used this analogy, in fact, to argue that reducing paper money to its material substance revealed its counterfeit nature, as nothing more than paper and ink.

Michaels cleverly deduces that by insisting that “good money” must “of itself possess the full amount of the value which it professes on its face to possess” (Wells 26), the hard money proponents were really arguing that money doesn’t exist at all. By demanding that the value of money be determined by the commodity value of the gold or silver that backed it, they reduced money to the

natural commodities it represented, and thus reduced every money exchange to a barter exchange. “The assertion that money exists in nature is thus identical to the assertion that money doesn’t exist at all” (Michaels, Gold 148). Greenbacks, on the other hand, derive value not from their constituent elements but from a convergence of desires within a social network. Michaels concludes that reducing a thing to “what it is,” squelches the thing’s freedom to represent itself. The fact that gold isn’t itself money but only looks like money is what allows it finally to become money (Michaels, Gold 157). Value inheres in the play of representations, whether that be money or persons.

This ambivalence toward a money economy, which Michaels finds expressed in the logic of the gold standard during its classical period at the end of the nineteenth century, was even more pronounced during its interwar period, when the gold standard was briefly revived from 1925 to 1931 to lend stability to a world economy rocked by the inflation that followed World War I and Germany’s inability to repay war reparations. The Hamlet and the stories in Go Down, Moses were written between 1931 and 1942 and reflect both the increased nostalgia for stable foundations and the breakdown of faith that a once-powerful symbol could coordinate the conflicting impulses of a complex economic system into a coherent whole. The commitment to the gold standard collapsed as the central banks in each nation realized they could no longer squeeze their domestic economies to keep the value of their currencies at

parity.⁹¹ The subsequent worldwide economic collapse was largely blamed on the failure to maintain the gold standard, which, supporters argued, would have maintained stability, reduced chaos, and led the return of investment and consumer confidence (Eichengreen 4). Recent investigations into that claim have shown, however, that the system of economic cooperation under the gold standard had little to do with whether or not gold's "intrinsic value" provided a guarantee for national currencies. In his analysis of the interwar gold standard, economic historian Barry Eichengreen has argued that even in its classical period of the 1890s the gold standard worked not because it offered a reliable, material-based standard of value, but because the central banks of the major European trading partners coordinated their gold reserves to maintain the international credibility of the standard (Eichengreen xi-xii, 3-66). In practice, what appeared as a powerful talisman operated as such only because a coordinated structure of trading partners sustained the accepted standard that arbitrarily pronounced an equivalence between the denominated value of currencies and the materially based value of gold. Gold underwrote confidence

⁹¹Austria and Germany were the first to suspend gold convertibility in 1931 in order to depreciate their currencies. Britain and two dozen other countries also abandoned the gold standard in that year. The United States dropped the gold standard in 1933, and France in 1936 (Eichengreen 4).

among the trading partners, loosening credit, allowing partners to trade on what they did not possess—the gold reserves of their trading partners—which created wealth and served as the engine of trade.

Written in the late thirties, Go Down, Moses investigates the period's fear that reliable standards of value were mere arbitrary constructs, and the conceit of the gold coin illustrates nicely how discourse concerning the foundations of value had changed since the naturalist writings of the 1890s. In the Faulkner story, the gold coin does not bring about Lucas's degeneration from a civilized man to a brutish beast, as might happen in a Frank Norris novel; nor does it work as a symbol to suggest that character, like denominated value, is the sum of one's experiences, just as a coin is the sum of its material substance. As I have shown, the gold piece in Go Down, Moses is a free boon: pure surplus value completely dissociated from either its utility or the accrued real value of whatever labor went into the production of a comparable material good. As an empty signifier, the gold coin mediates the adjustment of relational identities among the participating characters, enabling Lucas to rearticulate his position within the McCaslin clan—a position that white conventions of genealogy and inheritance perpetually deny him. As this scene and others illustrate, it is not some transcendent foundation that guarantees the value of an "absolute," but rather the behavior of those committed to that value. While Faulkner's characters often

invoke the "absolutes" of race, blood, and property to justify themselves, for example, those claims usually betray their arbitrary and precarious foundations, and the anxiety of doubt prompts a more fervent support from the devotees of that "absolute."

Lucas represents one of Faulkner's trickster characters, who understands these dynamics perhaps more intuitively than others, enabling him to denominate the real by manipulating others vulnerabilities and liabilities. Lucas buys the divining machine with the pledge of a mule he doesn't own. When the machine "finds" the silver coins he had buried, Lucas negotiates the return of the bill of sale on the mule and to keep the metal detector in exchange for the promised treasure, which he doesn't own but claims to know how to find. Lucas trades on the mule and the treasure in the way that the trading nations traded on one another's reserves, assuming they would be available to them if their reserves become insufficient to meet the demands for currency conversion. When a downturn in the national economy of one of the trading nations disturbed the ratio of gold reserves to circulating currency, they were able to attract an influx of investment because the other nations were confident that the parity in reserves set by the gold standard would be repaired, usually by raising interest rates to attract increased reserves and by raising import duties to generate revenue and lower deficits (Eichengreen 8-9). Other nations invested because each one's commitment to the gold standard communicated that the obligations undertaken

to repair parity would take priority over other concerns, including the concerns of domestic groups who would suffer the consequences of a monetary policy organized around parity, rather than, say, decreasing unemployment. Lucas trades on Roth Edmonds's mule, as if his "reserves" (the buried treasure) were available to convert the pledge to currency when needed. What is hidden by the apparent "natural" value of the gold coin, however, is the fact that numerous competing obligations have been undertaken to underwrite the deal. In the international economy, the parity of reserves to currency was maintained at the expense of the unemployed, who were referred to as "paupers" and "indigents" to locate their plight in their own private failings (Eichengreen 6). Should those other obligations be allowed to disturb the "natural" arrangement organized around maintaining parity, then credibility and confidence collapse. The promised treasure has the power to "reconstruct" both the mule and the divining machine as instruments within the coordinated activity of striving-toward-treasure; central banks were able to reconstruct the suffering of their populations as instruments within the coordinated activity of striving-for-parity. When confidence in Lucas's title to the mule collapses, Lucas has to find other means to underwrite his performance, which he does by planting the fifty silver dollars for the salesman to find. Austria and Germany had run out of silver dollars, however, and the world economy hurtled into depression.

This false trading on false or natural absolutes suggests that denominations of value have no foundational guarantee in Yoknapatawpha. The trading partners in Faulkner's local hamlets play a precarious game in which one's denominated value depends instead on one's ability to command the confidence and recognition of others, and at the heart of Faulkner's stories is the sense that the layered, tacit knowledge of the community does not allow denominated value to be traced back to any natural or original foundation. Faulkner's characters are always in tension with their communities, such that the self must incorporate into itself the tenacious but renegotiable memories and evaluations of others. This contest of valuation becomes not a seeing through to the real for Faulkner, whether it be material or spiritual, but an ordering of the flux of experience into a serviceable structure of differences in which the coin of the realm is always being redenominated.

Other characters wrestle with the power of fetishes that threaten the political economy by vouchsafing a glimpse of some natural absolute. Charles Bon in Absalom, Absalom! ventures into the provincial world of Sutpen's Hundred and seduces Judith and Henry with the promise of easy, urbane delight, which the family associates with New Orleans. Both the mystery of Bon's past and Judith's virginity constitute two centers of unknown and as-yet-undenominated value that cannot be accommodated within the family's economy without being marked by violence.

Henry, the provincial, the clown almost, given to instinctive and violent action rather than to thinking, ratiocination, who may have been conscious that his fierce provincial's pride in his sister's virginity was a false quantity which must incorporate in itself an inability to endure in order to be precious, to exist, and so must depend upon its loss, absence, to have existed at all. In fact, perhaps this is the pure and perfect incest: the brother realising that the sister's virginity must be destroyed in order to have existed at all, taking that virginity in the person of the brother-in-law.... (118-119)

Faulkner deconstructs self-presence and plenitude, showing its dependence upon being denominated within a network of exchange, which is to no longer exist as an unassayed virtue. This is not a case, however, of some absent plenitude created and deferred by a sign. By the pragmatic model of socially validated truth, value and meaning cannot be known except in how *things* are used in shared communal activity, and in the case of virginity, to be used is to be lost. There is no foundation for value, whether material or spiritual, outside of the denominations that occur simply as things (and people) are located within the

coordinated activity of the group.⁹² Judith is valued within a complex convergence of stories, desires, and transactions. Dewey's instrumental definition of an idea is relevant:

To have an *idea* of a thing is thus not just to get certain sensations from it. It is to be able to respond to the thing in view of its place in an inclusive scheme of action; it is to foresee the drift and probable consequence of the action of the thing upon us and of our action upon it. (Democracy 30).

The logic of exchange, which lies at the heart of this negotiation, involves two steps: an assertion of a claim by one party and the recognition by a second party of both the meaning of that claim and the first party's authority to make that claim. This contract of assertion and recognition is common to barter exchanges, currency valuations, claims of reputation, and even speech acts. For Dewey, individuals learn to value objects and activities, including designating their meaning, by assuming the values that others within the community use to coordinate their interactions. Assuming shared values facilitates exchange and integrates the individual into the community (Democracy 4). In Faulkner's novels,

⁹² This was the insight of Levi-Strauss's structural descriptions of kinship transactions, which Butler cites as the realization that the ideological and the material conditions of life always interpenetrate ("Merely Cultural" 272).

characters survive when they manage to accommodate one another's claims within just such a contractual exchange of assertion and recognition. Warwick Wadlington identifies this theme of accommodation as the heart of what makes Faulkner's novels tragic: "The most tragic prospect for Faulkner is unaccommodated man and woman" (Reading 14). Wadlington draws on Kenneth Burke's model of "dramatism," wherein literature, rituals, and myths serve as equipment for living, to describe how Faulkner's characters constitute themselves and their communities. Wadlington uses the term "performance" to describe the human species' unique capacity for self-creation:

I know of no better figure for this than performance, in both senses of *to do* and *to enact roles*, performing (intentionally or not) for others and for the others we have assimilated who are us, and in the process both exercising what others script for us and presenting to others implicit scripts to enact in turn, without end. The evolutionary perspective on this constant exchange helps to elucidate that human performance is not only a cognition or a deed but a self-creation and reproduction finally irreducible to any of its constituents. (Reading 42)

The potentially tragic element involved in this process that is at once "strong and paradoxically fragile" is that the consequence of nonaccommodation is diminution of personal existence. Faulkner characterized this failure as death, and he saw

every demand for recognition, even his own writing, as a "no to death."⁹³

Wadlington marvels that such potentially dire consequences can be resisted only by such fragile means: "[S]uch limited cultural furnishings as our mutually loaned categories are all that separate human beings from the incapacity, thus the unviability as a species of genuinely unaccommodated humankind" (Reading 187). The likelihood of being left "unaccommodated" is increased in times of stress, when fear and instincts toward self-preservation limit the impulse to enact new roles or recognize the performances of others. Faulkner shows how terribly precarious is this dynamic of performative selves by demonstrating that our "mutually loaned categories" are often at cross-purposes, working to subvert recognition as often as they facilitate it.

Wadlington's model of mutual recognition assumes that self-performativity operates within an extended structure wherein the community holds the power of

⁹³At the end of his career, Faulkner stated that man is immortal because he tries, because the very effort entails a recurrently revived no to death: "[M]an's immortality is that he faces a tragedy he can't beat and he still tries to do something about it" (Lion 89). Wadlington cites this "no to death" as the primary shaping motivation for Faulkner's own writing. See As I Lay Dying: Stories, p. 3; and especially Reading Faulknerian Tragedy.

acknowledgment and refusal. That power may seal, fragmentarily within each exchange, the fate of each community member, though, ideally, individuals within a community mutually empower one another by realizing each other's reciprocally tendered scripts. Faulkner maintains this extended structure by employing various limited points of view that keep the reader at precisely the right distance to experience the dynamic of exchange. His collage structures seek neither to diminish the stature of the protagonist, as would be the case with a purely first-person narrative, nor to squelch the reader's participation in the dramatic tension, as with an omniscient narrator (W. Sullivan 554). They share the motive of other avant-garde aesthetics derived from cinematic techniques—to combine direct, intimate fusion of visual and emotional enjoyment with a practical commitment to train readers to think critically about perspective. Such cinematic techniques enabled Faulkner to pack the fullness and variety of experience into each sentence. Describing the risky experimentation of his own work and that of Thomas Wolfe, Faulkner explained:

We tried to crowd and cram everything, all experience, into each paragraph, to get the whole complete nuance of the moment's experience, of all the recaptured light rays, into each paragraph. That's why it's clumsy and hard to read. It's not that we deliberately tried to make it clumsy, we just couldn't help it. (Lion 107)

In this respect, Faulkner's modernist novels should be compared to contemporary avant-garde movements that were attempting to shock the reader/viewer/consumer of art into a heightened awareness of process and orientation, to train "experts" who produced meaning instead of receiving meaning through a bourgeois contemplation of objects (Benjamin 90).

Faulkner uses the circulation of currency within a barter-based, local economy to foreground the power and the anxiety that attends the process of denominating identities. Like selves, bank notes and coins represent a suturing of material and ideal valuations, which threatens always to confuse the parties on the real source of value. The dramatic interest of a trade, apart from the satisfaction of needs, lies in how the triangulation between the evaluations of the consumer, the supplier, and the marketplace works out to determine the value of an object in the exchange. It was just this triangulation that both goldbugs and silverites wanted to control, each by basing currency valuations on the "inherent value" of a rare metal, a third element that they believed could be more easily controlled, or at least more easily understood.

Faulkner takes great interest in the triangular efforts people employ to control the exchanges of both goods and reputations.

The Hamlet represents Frenchman's Bend as a series of exchanges that highlight the performativity of every transaction. For not only does a trade involve the capabilities and intentions of the two parties; it gets worked out within

the context of the communal memory, which preserves the histories (including the past honors and shames) of the players. The preference for face-to-face bartering within the hamlet reflects the community's desire that nothing interpose to deform a fair trade between equals; traders believe that they swap purely in order to fulfill their needs, and that a good's value is set entirely by those involved in the exchange. The reader learns quickly, however, through Ratliff's early account of Ab Snopes's horse-trading with Pat Stamper, that every exchange is mediated by other trades and other stories that have become woven together into a network of assumptions and practices. Ab had hoped to reverse the eight-dollar gain that the itinerant Stamper had made in a shrewd trade five years before. Ab's motivation for risking the trade with the notorious Stamper had not been to gain a team of mules but to vindicate "the entire honor and pride of the science and pastime of horse-trading in Yoknapatawpha County" (Hamlet 38). At the end of the day, Ab has bought back his own horse; yet he is unwilling to renege on the deal because of his respect for the tacit code that governs the art of horse-trading. James Snead identifies this shared code by which horse-trading becomes a science as the mediating third party that structures every exchange in the homogeneous and tradition-defined hamlet. While the "barter/gossip" system of "Varnerism" appears to be a loose tissue of colloquial address and indirect communication, it functions aggressively (as every ideology

does) to naturalize and normalize the hierarchical relations that structure the tight-knit society and resist any challenge to that structure.

Snead proposes a useful accounting model to characterize the dynamics of Faulkner's economy, both in The Hamlet and in Go Down, Moses:

In accounting as in metaphor, the operation of "carrying forward" or "carrying over" allows unequal entities to be fictitiously equated for convenience. The remnant of difference (profit or loss) is then "carried forward" to next year's books with their own version of "equality." Balancing the books eliminates contradiction by decree: [. . .] difference must be postponed indefinitely into the future.

Balance-sheet logic requires that a sense of monetary equilibrium and valuational equivalence be perpetuated by handing down from year to year the residual deficit or profit. Although assets and liabilities are not actually equal, all parties to their representational account share in such a global "equalization," as well as in the profit- or debt-ridden inheritance of these inequalities. (Snead 154)

The characters in The Hamlet intuitively employ this equalization strategy: it is at work when Ab Snopes starts to figure how much Stamper owed the county by tracing the provenance of the horse since the original shrewd trade five years ago. Ab reckons it is not his personal loss that he seeks to redress with Stamper

but the fact that Stamper, a stranger, had prompted such a flurry of trades in the community.

It wasn't what the horse had cost Ab [. . .]. It was them eight cash dollars of Beasley's, and not that Ab held them eight dollars against Herman, because Herman had done already invested a mule and buggy in it. And besides, the eight dollars was still in the country and so it didn't actually matter whether it was Herman or Beasley that had them. It was the fact that Pat Stamper, a stranger, had come in and got actual Yoknapatawpha County cash dollars to rattling around loose that way. When a man swaps horse for horse, that's one thing and let the devil protect him if the devil can. But when cash money starts changing hands, that's something else. And for a stranger to come in and start that cash money to changing and jumping from one fellow to another, it's like when a burglar breaks into your house and flings your things ever which way even if he dont take nothing. (38)

As far as the hamlet is concerned, all accounts are still balanced because that eight dollars was still in the country. Ab (and Ratliff, who is recounting the tale) does not acknowledge loss; rather, he extends the debt both temporally and spatially, drawing the bottom line at the point where the county as a whole must maintain its equilibrium. Individual debts are simply displaced onto the larger

county ledger so that no personal loss is ever registered by the primary players. Ratliff cannot acknowledge that Ab got taken in the deal and goes so far as to efface Ab from the entire transaction to save him from his loss. "[Ab] come out exactly even. Because if it was anybody that Stamper beat, it was Miz Snopes [. . .]. It wasn't Ab that bought one horse and sold two to Pat Stamper. It was Miz Snopes. Her and Pat just used Ab to trade through" (33). The potential threat to this whole exchange is those eight cash dollars because like the gold coin they carry an unassignable value that could complicate attempts to make things come out even. As long as a man swaps horse for horse and the community retains its memory, every element of the trade remains visible and the operation of making equal is possible. Dollars and undenominated coins—like the mysterious gold coins that Sutpen carries into the state in Absalom, Absalom!—mask the source of their value and, therefore, function as an empty signifier around which adroit traders may manipulate the relational identities of the community. To denominate an eight-dollar debt is to articulate a system of relational identities around its now-acknowledged existence and thus to create power by aligning identifications and antagonisms in new formations. Currency disseminates this sort of discursively denominated value as it circulates freely, and it keeps no link back to its original context. This tension between swappable goods and dollars is reflected in Ratliff's reference to "actual Yoknapatawpha County cash dollars"; this denomination particularizes ordinary greenbacks into private currency that

can be distinguished and therefore owned by the county. Yoknapatawpha County dollars lie somewhere between free currency and usable goods on the axis between representation and intrinsic value, and Ratliff's outraged complaint reveals his frustration that he cannot quite pin down what happened during the exchange. Taking dollars is not exactly theft, because dollars are certainly not simply material goods; he resorts to a rather ambiguous illustration of the burglar sending the material goods flying because his conception of the unit of value itself is hybrid, and he cannot arrive at a definitive illustration. That hybrid denomination does allow him, however, to impose an equivalency according to a materialist logic that is not quite appropriate to greenbacks: as long as both the horse and the eight dollars which were once traded as equal are still in the county, then accounts stand even.

Ratliff is not alone in the hamlet in trying to reduce banknotes to their material equivalent and thus eliminate their constitutive instability. In her suit against Flem Snopes to get back the five dollars her husband paid (or tried to pay) to the Texas wrangler for a pony he could never catch, Mrs. Armstid claims, "I would know them five dollars. I earned them myself, weaving at night after Henry and the chaps was asleep" (360). Her interrupted request suggests that she hopes the Justice will allow her to examine Flem's cash holdings, as if accounts could be kept according to the material presence of those five one-dollar bills, rather than the represented value. Mrs. Armstid is frustrated by the

confusions of a free currency exchange of greenbacks, which has disrupted the neatly organized society of the hamlet. It goes against nature that a banknote should be accepted as the equivalent of a traded real good; when five dollars can be passed between four different hands in less than a minute, does that represent the fact that ownership has been transferred as rapidly among all those players? Henry Armstid's five dollars disappear into a separate exchange between Flem and the Texan, but Mrs. Armstid is unable to trace the genealogy of Flem's speculative trades, and so she resorts to the literal accounting that sounds both comic and pathetic as she searches for the actual five dollar-bills. Ratliff sympathetically echoes her frustration, calling the whole ordeal "'that Texas sickness', that spotted corruption of frantic and uncatchable horses, [which has] spread as far as twenty and thirty miles" (356). These ponies that cannot be harnessed or tamed serve as a memorable image of a community's foiled desire to control a field of objects that are disruptive for the very reason that they are useful: their animal vitality. Cash dollars fit the same model, for while they facilitate trade by their capacity to roam freely, they pose the same question the hamlet keeps sweating over: just who exactly owned those horses?

Members of the hamlet try to control the free circulation of cash dollars because free-floating, undenominated signifiers disrupt existing discursive formations. As Lucas used the gold coin to prompt a renewed challenge with Roth Edmonds, so Ratliff and various Snopeses will use a floating IOU to

provoke new alliances and antagonisms. In the account of Ab Snopes first moving in to Frenchman's Bend, Faulkner demonstrates how communities and the stories they trade create a dynamic, discursive field wherein reputations are denominated by the way one's actions are interpreted and defined. To denominate value is to sanction a specific reading, which, in Frenchman's Bend, often entails violence. The plot takes its originative impetus from a threat that is never articulated, perhaps never even intended: Jody Varner decides to rent property to Ab Snopes out of the fear of angering a man with a reputation as a barn burner. Mink Snopes persuades Flem to pay the down payment on his wife's sewing machine by the subtlest of references to Flem's new hay barn, implying that Flem is not the only Snopes who knows how to make matches into (legal) tender. Bank notes in the hamlet carry an aura of threatened violence about them, as Ratliff suggests when he argues with Bookwright that Flem Snopes would indeed allow his own blood kin to rot away in the penitentiary, especially if that kin held a few of Flem's IOUs. "Because Flem Snopes has got to cancel all them loose-flying notes that turns up here and there every now and then. He's going to discharge at least some of them notes for good and all" (354).

While the barter economy in the hamlet appears to be a model of natural and unmediated exchange, the veiled threats that drive every transaction suggest that goods serve as well as greenbacks to facilitate what is really at

stake as traders prey upon one another in Frenchman's Bend: the careful understatement, the vague allusion, the patient preparation of the many tortuous schemes in the novel are all directed toward fostering a consensual reading of certain elements as a way of embedding controlling logics that structure others' pursuits and labor. Whether it be executed in goods, coin, or greenbacks, the trade is an attempt to reconfigure the alliances, identifications, and antagonisms that structure the self-understandings, aspirations, and expenditures of the community, and, the novel suggests, those who fixate on the medium of exchange are likely to overlook the more fundamental dynamics of power that structure such deals. Seeing through to those dynamics is the pleasure that the novel offers as it trains the reader to interpret each subtle allusion by providing a mixture of narrated history and current observation. This "seeing through" is what differentiates the novel from what appears to be on the surface a realist account of the varying fortunes of a cast of typical people swapping very real goods. For the novel is not so much an accounting of goods and fortunes as an examination of the strategies by which characters establish themselves within the contested relations of a community. Within that more primary activity, material goods serve as mere instruments. This modernist emphasis on the performative self whose rhetorical constructs shape the "truth" of the material world marks a shift from the interests of a realist account, where material goods provide a reliable accounting of the possessing ego, and their management illustrates the

individual's efficacy in the world. Snead reads this emphasis in The Hamlet as a critique of the bourgeois realist aesthetic:

The Hamlet critiques "realism" itself, and reveals the links that, ever since Defoe, the trading, exchanging mentality has had with exact, realistic description. For realist narration is a kind of accounting, an inventory of real material objects (and persons) that could at some point be owned. Realist "precision and detail" is a smooth façade seeking to restore an original moment of intact ownership before time corrupted the original goods, before it turned the "enormous house" into a "guttled shell." (Snead 144-45)

By demonstrating the incapacity of surface valuations to structure the novel's exchanges, Faulkner invites the reader to infer a more fundamental process. This contrast between naturalist and modernist constructions of "the real" is analogous to the contrast in the novel between those, like Mrs. Armstid, who assume that a trade is the simple sum of its exchanges, and those, like Flem Snopes, who see it as an opportunity to reconfigure the assumptions, personal boundaries, and desires within the community that control the layout of both material goods and reputations.

In this more performative approach to environmental and material forces, words and paper currency share many attributes, as both introduce a slipperiness into the accounting of material exchanges. Whereas David Wells's

naturalist understanding led him in his gold standard tract to identify paper greenbacks and milk chits with unreliable speech and bad language (57), Faulkner plays with that simple construction. Faulkner explores the analogy between language and property throughout his work, which is why the twin themes of the genealogy of family names and the transmission of inheritance are so often linked. Go Down, Moses is a four-generation accounting problem demonstrating the operation of "carrying over," as the members of each generation bequeath to the next the debts they were not able to "make equal" within their lifetime. Violence, money, and language are incestuously intertwined by the McCaslin patriarchs who rename their children to hide their offenses and offer sacks of gold to substitute for paternal acknowledgment.

Flem Snopes demonstrates great skill in manipulating the field of relational identities by trading on floating signifiers. Having just witnessed Flem's greatest triumph—offering the Snopes name to Will Varner in exchange for taking Will's pregnant daughter, Eula, as his wife—Ratliff imagines Flem's descent into hell, where he exercises his art to lay claim to the infernal regions. Flem returns to hell to redeem his soul, but when the Prince's minions open the asbestos matchbox in which it had been stored, they find nothing but a dried-up smear. In their original trade, Flem had swapped only a trace of his soul, which the Prince had accepted as something real. Now, demanding "no more and no less than his

legal interest according to what the banking and civil laws state in black and white is his" (167), Flem has the Prince in a bind, because he has nothing to return for Flem's demand to redeem his pledge. Flem uses the law to denominate the value of his pledge, which inheres not in anything absolute or material but in the fact that it had been accepted as such. Flem created his soul when he successfully swapped it with the devil and recorded the trade in language, just as, in Absalom, Absalom!, Sutpen created his reputation when he married Ellen. Characters create the reality of a self-possessed identity by entering into the mutual exchange of pledges and the tacit agreement not to reveal on either side that nothing absolute substantiates the pledge. Rejecting the Prince's offer of supplementary compensations—the gratifications, the vanities—Flem demands the return of that which neither he nor the Prince could ever possess, the material real that was created through the original trade.

Faulkner portrays hell as a place holding nothing but supplementary compensations. Founded on the law, where debts are defined and paid, hell is entirely derivative, devoid of the absolute or of anything real that would constrain denomination and make the supplementary compensations irrelevant. Flem Snopes is its purest representative, more dedicated to the letter of the law than even the Prince, who created him. By demanding something real in itself in the realm of the entirely derivative, Flem deconstructs hell's foundations. Rejecting every supplementary compensation, he baffles the Prince, who cries out in

exasperation, “Then what do you want? Paradise?” “I hadn’t figured on it,” Flem replies. “Is it yours to offer?” At that the Prince knows he’s been bested in the deal, as he recognizes the qualitative difference between how he and Flem have been trading on the real. Turning on the word *paradise*, the dialogue reveals a fissure in the foundations of the discourse each interlocutor has assumed. In his hubris, the Prince has forgotten that his derivative significations cannot produce that which lies beyond denomination—the paradise where things-in-themselves and their innate values exist outside of an economy of exchange. Having never forgotten nor disputed that the swapping of signifying traces constitutes what counts as the real among discursively constructed selves, Flem is free to use the power of the law to denominate anything he may create through the offer and acceptance of signs. To acknowledge that trading on the real is tantamount to offering that which you do not possess is to shake the very foundations of hell—and of all civilization built upon the law—which depends upon the lie that one’s significations are underwritten by their claim to the real. When the Prince charges Flem with trading on that which he did not own, Flem responds, “I have never disputed that” (170). It is the Prince who has forgotten the lie, who believes he has Paradise to offer.

Flem’s impassive, unfeeling personality—produced, we might conclude, by his defining humor, phlegm—saves him from miscalculating a single play in his trading with the devil. His constitutional inability to indulge a vice apart from a

calculation of the dependencies and liabilities it would engender, suggests that, within Faulkner's cosmology, it is the warmer humors that introduce a constitutive *lack*—the “empty site of a political desire” that is capable of organizing others' pursuits and labor in a sustained way (Lott 670).⁹⁴ For while Flem adroitly exercises the discursive mechanisms for reconstructing the real, the organizational imperatives he introduces do not sustain the contingent, historical values and ends-in-view by which a community writes its continuity. The Snopeses represent a negative disruptive force because they do not mediate new discursive formations in light of the community's historical self-understanding or its culturally articulated ideals. Rather, they adopt shifting values and alignments as they promise to benefit their immediate context. Flem's sudden ascent within the community suggests that such a strategy can be successful, and may be, perhaps, the more effective approach for personal gain. But one does not assume such a strategy without cost, which is to forego the pleasures of character—what Dewey describes as a sense of one's sustained identity. Given Faulkner's aspiration to live beyond the horizon of his own finite

⁹⁴ Citing Laclau's Emancipation(s), Lott defines the universal as an empty place that is “politically and contingently occupied by a particularism cunning or persuasive enough to have made its concerns the most universally urgent [. . .]” (670).

existence, we can conclude that Flem serves as a cautionary tale, the moral of which does not appear until The Mansion, in which Flem ends up waiting to be killed by his kinsman-victim Mink.

Flem reveals that his organizing imperatives do not include the preservation of existing social structures in his response to Jody Varner's suggestion that one should be a civil neighbor. Jody insists that a man must abjure the violence of burning barns, live peaceably with neighbors, and claim his rights through civil processes if he ever wants legal sanction to work a plot of land and live on it. "So he wont have to feel that the only thing that can prove his rights is something that will make him have to pick up and leave the country next day. So that there wont come a time some day when he will look around and find out he has run out of new country to move to." "There's a right smart of country," Flem replies, suggesting that reputation and civility are not the only means for claiming the right to a piece of land (Hamlet 24-25). Flem won't participate in the forgetting that underwrites the claims of language and the law, the belief that one can trade on the real one has created through the play of signs. Not only does Flem not forget that the real is a discursive formation, he also does not forget that the communal values that sanction and legitimate its organizing structures are also contingent, discursively constructed, and questionable. He is, in a Nietzschean sense, beyond good and evil, marshaling his metaphors and metonyms against what, after long use, seems firm,

canonical, and obligatory. As he speaks from beyond that forgetting, Flem threatens the foundations of those who believe that contractually drawn deeds define the real and who owns it. Will Varner may own the land that Ab Snopes will farm, and he may contract to own the labor that Ab and his family will exert to plant and gather a crop on that land. But when Ratliff retails the story of Ab Snopes burning Major de Spain's barn, giving it currency within the hamlet's trading economy, and Jody plays that card while negotiating his contract with Ab, he introduces a set of unexpected references that reconfigures the denomination of value on either side of the agreement. As the Varners own barns and the Snopeses own matches, Jody is suddenly trading on the value not only of the labor he expects but for fire protection. Within weeks Jody is asking out loud: "Just what is it going to cost me to protect one goddam barn full of hay?" (74). The art of the trade is thus the art of denominating the real, whereby one implies there is more there than meets the eye and then denominates its value by a consensual trade. Implying the threat of a burned barn changes the valuation dramatically, and Jody discovers that the denominations of property and the value of one's labor were not so stable as he assumed.

If trading by implication—i.e., trading on that which cannot be possessed—constitutes the real, then selves, community, and nature are all interdependent performances that share a founding forgetfulness: a forgetting of the absence of any foundational real and a consensual acceptance of the play of

signifiers that are woven in its place. Speech act theory again proves helpful here: when I signify my meaning and intent by drawing upon shared conventions, my confidence that my communication will be successful is in proportion to my confidence that my interlocutor is familiar with the conventions I have invoked and is sincere in wanting to cooperate with me in constructing and confirming an equivalent understanding. As we perform coherent selves and find them confirmed adequately by others—as we denominate and trade upon the real—we benefit from a consensual forgetfulness that confers a natural status upon what we have constructed. The benefit to be gained here goes beyond that of a coded shorthand that facilitates easier reference among those who know and share the code. Reifying our consensual constructs—and forgetting their constructedness—lends them foundational priority which may subsequently enforce their acceptance by others. What begin as tentative, consensual agreements among sincere and consciously cooperative interlocutors become normalized constructs that endure and constrain the play of denominations. They may also act as shibboleths for judging the character of one's participation in the community.

In As I Lay Dying, a novel that portrays how porous are the boundaries we negotiate as we constitute our identities within the mutual tendering of roles to be played and in light of the historical self-understanding of the group, Darl looks upon Jewel and Vernon from a distance as they fish for Cash's tools at the

bottom of the flooded river. The disastrous crossing, which dismantled the wagon's integrity, dispersing mules, coffin, and tools into the rushing river, has also disrupted what coherence and communal purpose had served to organize the family to that point. Shocked and disoriented, Darl narrates the loss of intention that organizes his phenomenological self, describing Jewel and Vernon as discrete elements moving mechanically within a uniform and unintelligible field of elements and motion:

It looks peaceful, like machinery does after you have watched it and listened to it for a long time. As though the clotting which is you had dissolved into the myriad original motion, and seeing and hearing in themselves blind and deaf; fury in itself quiet with stagnation. (156)

Darl experiences autonomy as an alienation from this vast original motion; his narration communicates the seductive appeal of submitting to its dissolving flow, which the family ultimately figures as Darl's slide into madness. Madness is a relative term, however, especially among the Bundrens, and the cinematic movement of the scene suggests that Darl's experience of the fluid nature of the autonomous self results from his adopting the broad perspective of the encompassing horizon. Faulkner associates this perspective with the feminine, figured as Dewey Dell's "mamalian ludicrosities which are the horizons and the valleys of the earth" (156), and with the masculine failure to "focus"—the men's

“dead eyes” are blind as they gaze on Dewey Dell, squatting in her wet dress. Wadlington notes that “dissolving” and “shaping” are two of the novel’s central concepts:

These ideas work to similar effect to remind us often that, from a broad perspective like that Darl takes in the last quotation, boundaries of identity are but passing forms and phases, “clottings” being dissolved and reshaped anew within the vast “original motion” of social and natural existence. (As I Lay Dying: Stories 76)

These terms recall Progressive descriptions of social forces assuming fluid yet identifiable configurations within the dynamic social process. As organizing centers of activity, selves and communities constitute their identities by reiterating the embedded logics that structure their behavior, expectations, and aspirations. When those organizing schemas become so habitual as to appear natural, they obscure their contingency and constructedness. Like the myriad eddies of misunderstanding that cohere along lines of ignorance and insufficient information, these reified clottings in the social process exclude further engagement and result in humans’ alienation from the social structures they have created. Faulkner recognizes that the disruptive energies of desire are instrumental in furthering societal progress, which he describes in liberal terms; but the incursion of those energies in no way guarantees social improvement.

We find, then, in The Hamlet the play of discursive formation sometimes directed toward self-serving ends, as represented in Flem Snopes, and sometimes directed toward both personal and communal ends, as often represented in Ratliff. Like the Progressive policy expert who facilitates the free flow of information and represents the interests of the unseen, Ratliff and, through his renunciations, Isaac McCaslin continually disturb the settled social configurations, nudging their reconstruction toward more inclusive, humanist ideals. Unlike Flem, Ike represents a form of not-forgetting that seeks to imagine the new from within the givens of the hamlet's historical narrative. Ike will not forget that no landowner in Yoknapatawpha has a legitimate claim to the land since Ikkemotubbe first realized it could be sold. To no longer honor the agreements that first constituted the claims to the Indian lands is to remind the trading community that the denominations they honor bear traces of their discursive histories, and that not every mutually negotiated agreement is just. Ike's renunciations are figured within the narrative as a failure of the masculine imposition of will upon the land, and upon its pre-historic, non-denominating inhabitants. Ike's not-forgetting, however, disrupts the preservation of unjust reifications—a political act that maintains the open, non-sutured character of the social and is, therefore, the prerequisite for any political action that may, over generations, begin to reconfigure the denominations of value that have cursed the land.

Transactions in The Hamlet confirm this discursive model of the real. Faulkner seems to relish the process of introducing new elements—like undenominated gold coins and Texas strangers—to the hamlet, because they disrupt the established valuations and prompt a flurry of activity and renegotiations. In doing so, he produces regular reminders that the real consists of mutually accommodated points of view, or demarcations of value, achieved through the tendering and acceptance of denominations of the real. Those who trade on these agreements generate wealth within the existing economy by signifying a plenitude that generates desire and persuading others to accept it as real. Labove knows what it means to create the real and generate real wealth by establishing a convergence of desires around his performance in football. He takes home a pair of running cleats each time he wins a game. Labove understands that their worth was not what they cost. “I tried to get the coach to say what a pair was worth. To the University. What a touchdown was worth. Winning was worth” (Hamlet 121). The chain of references that denominate the value of a pair of running cleats extends well beyond the utility value the shoes provide to Labove’s family. Labove’s is one example among many. Ratliff fashions a convergence of desire, denominating the value of fifty worthless goats by spreading the rumor that these goats were necessary for a northerner to constitute himself as a goat farmer. When fifty goats are required to denominate two thousand acres of hill-gully and rabbit grass a goat farm and not an

insolvency, their value is constituted by a chain of references that includes a gold-sealed diploma issued by the Secretary of State in Jackson and an IOU from Mink Snopes that Ratliff hopes to swap with Flem for the goats he has persuaded Flem to buy. Ratliff can create those valuable goats because others are constituting value, creating a chain of signifiers that depend on the goat denomination Ratliff achieves.

Faulkner thus celebrates the wit and desire and intellect of humans trying to create new value by denominating new representations of the real through trade. As the contrast between Ratliff and Flem suggests, Faulkner is aware that a discursive model of the real raises the question of how a community denominates the values and ends-in-view that shape their denominations of the real. Like James and Dewey, and Croly and Lippmann, Faulkner reclaims human interests and purposes as the dynamic, animating factor behind these discursive acts.

[The spotted horses] symbolized the hope, the aspiration of the masculine part of society that is capable of doing, of committing puerile folly for some gewgaw that has drawn him, as juxtaposed to the cold practicality of the women whose spokesman Mrs. Littlejohn was when she said "Them men!" or "What fools men are!" That the man even in a society where there's a constant pressure to conform can still be taken off by the chance to buy a horse for three

dollars. Which to me is a good sign, I think. I hope that man can always be tolled off that way, to buy a horse for three dollars.

(University 66)

This “puerile folly,” more often associated by Faulkner with men than with women, keeps things “stirred up,” allowing new players to tender new denominations that break up old compulsions and customs fixed long before. The play of desire is what makes change possible, but it is the commitments of the warmer humors—justice, pity, and compassion—that advance social progress. Faulkner maintains a faith that there are enough players in the game committed to bettering social conditions so that the overall movement of this trading economy is toward greater justice, greater pity, greater compassion and strength (Lion 115).

Perhaps the most fundamental exchange is the agreement to recognize another's performed collage of conventional behaviors as a coherent subjectivity. Faulkner examines such agreements in As I Lay Dying, a novel composed of direct, first-person narrations, which displays, however, the ways in which each apparently discreet character is always mediated through the collective play of assertion, recognition, and memory within the family and the community. Snead argues that the novel's narrative style pretends to offer access to the characters through their first-person self-narrations but in fact disrupts any effort to draw a unified shape to those voices. "The narrative style that pretends to join actually

functions by division—textual spacings; separation into fifty-nine ‘sections;’ collapse of normal syntax; fragmentary conversations" (Snead 74). Wadlington also remarks that the novel sets up dramatic expectations only to frustrate them. In the family's "heroically bizarre burial journey" to Jefferson, fruitful action is often diverted into poor substitutes (As I Lay Dying: Stories 111). Thus a novel ostensibly about collective action reveals the precarious nature of communal formations, which often take the form of zero-sum contests rather than a mutually accommodating concert of power.

Other narrative devices invite the reader to participate in forming a coherent communal formation, only to experience the frustrations modeled in the story. The constant shifts of perspective imply that a supranarrative whole may be available for readers to fulfill an authorial intention toward coherence, either of narrative or character. Matthews points out another common Faulknerian technique of leaving most of the key defining moments of his novels—Quentin's suicide, Temple Drake's rape, Joanna Burden's murder—out of the text: "They function more as absences in the stories that surround them. The moment of the story's origin is lost into the novel" (Matthews 21). Those absences tempt the reader to satisfy her desire for unity by accepting the second-hand reports of the townspeople who convey the "facts" of the story, which bear the mark of their own reading. The most compromising of these reader-recruitments appears in Light in August's barbaric approach to settling the question of Joe Christmas's

race. Joe's perverse behavior frustrates the reader and positions her to seek some *natural explanation* for his choices; motivated to find an answer, and provided one by the townspeople's narrations of Joe's final actions, the reader may easily adopt the simple and satisfying explanation of race: "We'll see if his blood is black. . . . We'll need a little more blood to tell for sure" (205). To determine value as somehow natural and unmediated is a violent act of writing/reading that is cut off from the extended, interdependent system that can make sense of Joe's hybrid self. To determine value within a system of differences and chains of equivalence is to read the shifting points of view by which communities pragmatically verify their instrumental truths. The recognizing of the self in another, the splitting and then recuperating of the self into a sutured whole of reflected fragments is always a mediated, reflective experience. Addie Bundren echoes her daughter's experience of awakened self-consciousness in how she describes her first pregnancy: "My aloneness had been violated and then made whole again by the violation" (As I Lay Dying 158). This incorporating of the other into the representation of the self reflects the logic that moves beyond the self-identical "gold standard" into a "money economy" of selves that establishes value on mutual recognition rather than any intrinsic, self-evident essence.

Difference is what sparks the birth of Dewey Dell's inchoate self-consciousness as well; like a seed splitting her open, the foetus separating itself

from out of her "guts" becomes her mark, her self-iteration. For the first time she reads herself as a self: "I feel my body, my bones and flesh beginning to part and open upon the alone, and the process of coming unalone is terrible" (59). As Dewey Dell poetically describes, the discovery of the self alone occurs as a discovery of the self in relationship to an other, so that her inchoate self-awareness carries with it the new awareness of all her contextual links. She steps into the strange, typically Faulknerian position of discovering what she already knows at a level somewhere beneath consciousness. Faulkner represents her experience as the slow materializing into form of some distant but familiar object while travelling on a wagon:

The signboard comes into sight. It is looking out at the road now, because it can wait. New Hope. 3 mi. it will say. New Hope. 3 mi. New Hope. 3 mi. And then the road will begin, curving away into the trees, empty with waiting, saying New Hope three miles. (114)

Dewey Dell animates the lifeless, graphic form of the sign's "3 mi." to its potentially present but poignantly absent, spoken form--"three miles." The empty road is full of the presence of its *promised* but not present destination. The logic of the sign evokes a dream-like logic of absence and presence with which the pregnant Dewey Dell is very familiar:

Now it begins to say it. New Hope three miles. New Hope three miles. That's what they mean by the womb of time: the agony and

the despair of spreading bones, the hard girdle in which lie the
outraged entrails of events. (115)

As the wagon draws near, the sign finally enacts the speech event that Dewey Dell has been anticipating, and her experience of it is that of her deep knowledge and her surface experience uniting in the visual presence of the sign. With the "*outraged entrails of events*," Faulkner manages to make the scandal of the inner turned outward operate even at the morphemic level, where the trochees emphasize the binary opposition, especially when spoken aloud. Thus the visceral—that is, the inner, the self-present, the real—represented conceptually by the "outraged entrails" is effectively turned outward and made present through speaking: "Now it begins to say it."⁹⁵ The speech act translates Dewey Dell into the public where she must negotiate her self as a woman-becoming mother.

The anxiety of mediating oneself through the recognition and accommodation of others is similarly dramatized in a powerful scene in which Vardaman peers into the darkness and resolves the outlines of Jewel's horse.

⁹⁵"Outrage" here suggests its Latin and Middle French roots of going beyond an accepted boundary. Faulkner thus "breaks open" the morpheme "outré" [+AGE], maintaining its sense of "going beyond" while heightening the physical imagery of the entrails turned outward.

The boy articulates himself into being by identifying with the horse as a means of constituting unity out of difference. Vardaman retreats to the barn after having blamed Peabody for his mother's death, released Peabody's team in retaliation, and seen his mother-fish cut into pieces to be "cooked and et" for dinner. Searching for a refuge where he can experience his grief alone, he cannot prevent his already fragile boundaries from dissolving while he fixes upon the myriad swirling sights, sounds, and smells that, like a cubist painting, make up the arrival of Jewel's horse.

[A]n illusion of a co-ordinated whole of splotched hide and strong bones within which, detached and secret and familiar, an *is* different from my *is*. I see him dissolve—legs, a rolling eye, a gaudy splotching like cold flames--and float upon the dark in fading solution; all one yet neither; all either yet none. I can see hearing coil toward him, caressing, shaping his hard shape—fetlock, hip, shoulder and head; smell and sound. I am not afraid. (As I Lay Dying 55).

Vardaman articulates himself as he articulates the horse by constituting his own "is" on its difference from the "is" of the horse. While the symbol never fully materializes, Vardaman experiences a bit of the power of self-representation, utilizing a symbol to mediate his own self-projection into the public sphere, where others may then recognize and accommodate him. Vardaman's isolated act is a

clear break from naturalist models of intrinsic value and identity, but it also is not quite an act of mutual recognition. This intermediate status places Vardaman midway between isolation and mutuality, and Faulkner uses it appropriately to model the controlled and often-aborted attempts for recognition that his stunted characters make.

Constituting oneself within Faulknerian community is not a simple act of crafting familial and regional traditions, religious faith, and regional politics into a distinctive individual identity. Such a model assumes not only that individuals are self-present, rational, and effective, but that communities too allow the free growth of the individual. That *classical* liberal model leaves out Faulkner's tragic sense that such a negotiation is interdependent in nature, involving great risk—that pride and the dogged defense of honor will cause either side to balk at seeking, granting, or even admitting the need for mutual recognition and the accommodating of the other's defining self-assertions. Fear and distrust make those moments in which characters do seek the recognition of others poignant markers of how difficult genuine self-fashioning is within these Southern communities that are so committed to preserving individual and communal honor.

As I Lay Dying illustrates this strained relationship. The dramatic tension of the novel springs from the fact of its being essentially at odds with itself—a novel of collective radical individualism. Its narrative, which centers on the returning of blood to blood by burying Addie with her original family in Jefferson,

is actually the account of how that family blood is split off into so many mutual betrayals. While Addie Bundren believes she can overcome her separation from others by sharing directly in the life blood that animates people of action, the whole novel is a recounting of how those energies get diverted into private and group ways of thinking that sabotage belonging and foil cooperation (Wadlington, As I Lay Dying: Stories 57-60, 111). The novel can be read on one level as illustrating the contradictory commitments of the New South in the early decades of this century as it began to embrace industry and modernization while some factions still held onto their Cavalier identity. While large agricultural producers and leading businessmen in New Orleans, Atlanta, and Nashville were hailing the role the New South would play in developing trade with Central and South America, traditional divisions along the color line and between large and small landowners promised to frustrate the grand economic plans that had been announced at the New South industrial expositions in those cities.⁹⁶ Faulkner's novels typically portray the introduction of new money and the commitment to

⁹⁶For analyses of how the New South expositions represented sectional reconciliation and the development of Southern natural resources as central to the progress of the nation as a whole, see C. Vann Woodward, pp. 124-25, and Robert Rydell, pp. 73-104.

economic development as disruptive forces, resisted by traditional, rural communities, despite the fact that Southern states had suffered lasting economic depression. The Bundrens too illustrate the myriad private commitments and fears that make up the Southern instinct to remain proudly independent; their frustrated efforts suggest that moving beyond a debilitating nineteenth-century individualism toward participation in larger, more extended economic systems would not be an easy matter in the New South.

Faulkner sympathized with these proud acts of defiance, recognizing their kinship to his own determined need to speak a "no" to death. Yet he also recognizes that such defensive reactions tend only to isolate further, defeating the very need for accommodation that had inspired them. Cash's proud craftsmanship with his mother's coffin, Jewel's fantasy of the pure self-sufficiency of his horse, and Dewey Dell's stopping to change into her Sunday dress foreground the desperate passion with which individuals seek recognition. The desire for autonomy also frustrates Addie's desire for direct contact with life and cheats Dewey Dell and Vardaman out of the possibility of sharing their private burdens with the community. What the individual characters in the novel fail to recognize, the structure of the novel makes clear: that the simple opposition between the self-fashioning of the individual and the recognition of the community becomes an unsatisfactory struggle for power when the two efforts are carried out in defiant opposition to one another.

Faulkner undoes that dramatic opposition by placing it within a larger context. The individual does not assert itself against the backdrop of the community; rather, the individual and the collective memory of the community negotiate their mutual recognitions as a defense against the ever-present threat of death, as Faulkner understands it. One of the central ironies of As I Lay Dying is that its characters exercise themselves endlessly to deny that death's finalities can determine their choices and actions, while the novel itself portrays death as an atemporal constant in relation to which all of life's choices are made. It is neither an individual nor a temporally discreet affair; it extends into the lives of others; it starts before and lingers long after the laying of the body into the grave. Faulkner reconfigures death within this larger, extended communal structure so that the "no" of death is no longer an absolute unity to be met by the individual's defiant "no" to death; it is rather an inseparable part of the narrative by which individuals and communities constitute themselves. Dr. Peabody's model of death is illustrative here; death is "no more than a single tenant or family moving out of a tenement or a town" (As I Lay Dying 43). Death becomes an end-in-view that reconstructs the meaning and value of individual and communal activity. By smudging death's liminality, showing it to be an inseparable part of the narrative by which individuals and communities constitute themselves, Faulkner portrays the consciousness of death as the motivation to assert one's presence by the telling of stories. Just as Addie's death is the origin for the web of stories that is

As I Lay Dying, so is every effort at narrating oneself into a mutually recognized public space a "no" to death.

International political and economic relations during the interwar period were carried out according to a logic that is strikingly similar to the performative relations that structure As I Lay Dying and The Hamlet. The two novels bracket the final crisis of the gold standard and reflect the breakdown of the faith that a once-powerful symbol could coordinate the conflicting impulses of a complex economic system into a coherent whole. The prevailing faith of the "classical" gold period had been that each central bank was committed to maintaining its own solvency, with the result that other banks would gladly assist a bank in trouble by lending reserves to ensure that a government could always make good on its promise that its debts were redeemable in gold. As early as 1920, however, John Maynard Keynes recognized that World War I had modified European economic relations: the unresolved issues of German reparations and interallied debt had hobbled the trust and cooperation that had preserved investor confidence in the international community's commitment to the existing parity (Keynes 3-26). Changes in domestic political situations had also destabilized the credibility of that commitment, as the rise of unionism and the extension of suffrage enabled previously unrepresented groups to demand that monetary policies benefit the domestic economy, which usually meant expanding

the money supply without regard for maintaining currency valuations (Eichengreen 6-9).

Whereas the commitment to parity had once triggered the automatic flow of capital into the treasuries of countries whose currencies were weakening, central bankers in the late 1920s had only the power of their own monetary decisions to manage currency valuations.⁹⁷ As the international coordination of currency exchange broke down, national treasuries could no longer rely upon assistance from other nations' reserves. Each nation guarded its position carefully and was unwilling to extend credit to its trading partners as freely as it had when it could rely on the aggregate reserves and cooperation of all the industrial nations under the prewar agreements. Despite these pressures, central bankers remained completely convinced of the necessity of a gold standard. What resulted was an international drama in which central banks could not try to attract foreign capital in times of crisis by raising interest rates, because that would signal weakness and actually cause capital to flee as investors feared devaluation (12). Strangely, the link between gold and the economies it was

⁹⁷If one of these central banks lost gold reserves and its exchange rate weakened, funds would flow in from abroad in anticipation of the capital gains investors in domestic assets would reap once the authorities adopted measures to stem reserve losses and strengthen the exchange rate (Eichengreen 5).

supposed to stabilize had reversed; no longer was the "intrinsic" value of gold serving as the foundation for exchange between economies, but rather governments were adopting increasingly contrived positions in order to have their "face value" match an arbitrarily assigned "natural" standard. Without credibility and coordination, the means for economic survival within the international community had become "good luck and a confident posture" (49). Like the gold coin clutched tightly in Lucas Beauchamp's hand, the gold standard was a talisman to international bankers that promised continuing returns that were somehow independent of interdependent economic realities. And like the coin it concealed what everyone knew—that its absolute value was not intrinsic but founded upon domestic economic policies that squeezed the working classes in order to benefit investors (6, 30-31). By 1928 fear was everywhere that the parity was a sham and all the players were merely fooling themselves; in the summer of that year, the U.S. Federal Reserve contracted the money supply and curtailed its lending to Western Europe and Germany, starting a domino effect that was communicated rapidly to other countries by the rigidity of the gold parity. U.S. interest rates rose, the flow of capital reversed direction as gold reserves began to flow back into the U.S., reducing monetary reserves elsewhere and thus tightening monetary policy worldwide. Debtors were quickly unable to defend their gold parities and were forced off the gold standard one-by-one starting in 1929. Confidence collapsed that autumn and so did prices around the globe.

The economic crises of the late 1920s had several effects on prevailing understandings of the economic system: one was to mystify it further, as traditional mechanisms of control proved ineffective in reinflating prices; another was to psychologize economic discourse as people began to intuit that basic human qualities like credibility and confidence were somehow descriptive of those deep, inscrutable forces that animated the beast capitalism. Common sense argued that the dynamics of the system must be related to human desire and will, as they were the basic units of exchange from which the complexity had grown. The economics of confidence thus entered more forcefully than ever into public discourse, as evidenced by Roosevelt's famous dictum against fear. Faulkner's characters in As I Lay Dying seem trapped in the logic of the interwar gold standard as they flout themselves to maintain parity with the rugged individualist and Calvinist standards of currency exchange they have adopted as natural. And they manipulate others by invoking a shared commitment to that standard of exchange even when all involved recognize that Anse has never been more than nominally committed himself to maintaining his own solvency.

In the ways I have shown, a radical empiricist model of the real and progressive liberal commitments to humanist values underwrites Faulkner's model of community in which individuals act to denominate meaning and value within the historical and contingent symbolic systems they inherit and sustain.

Faulkner's characters "denominate" the real by searching out origins and ends that transform the value of objects, events, and individuals. This shaping of experience into socially meaningful and tradable symbols is accomplished through the swapping of goods and stories and the circulating of information (both reliably and not). Faulkner portrays both the pathos and the violence that attend his characters' attempts to ground their selves and their communities on transcendent foundations. He deconstructs those appeals, showing how they depend upon a tacit agreement to forget the exclusions that entangle every absolute in the political articulation of the social. Appeals to transcendent foundations "constitute repudiations of politics," writes Wendy Brown, "even as they masquerade as its source of redemption" (94). By alerting us to their seductive appeal, Faulkner encourages us to take up the hard work of forever constituting and reconstituting the absolutes by which we may, over time, redeem ourselves.

Conclusion

Over the Horizon

In this project I have reviewed several American efforts to problematize liberal models of self and society that lay claim to natural foundations. I have located these efforts within a convergence of several contemporary discourses in the late nineteenth century in the United States that encouraged individuals to constitute their social identities by appropriating the meanings, values, and cultural expressions of their group. The evolutionary dynamism of Darwin's model of natural selection; the emergence of a conceptual psychology in Germany and the U.S.; the voluntarist, scientific methodologies of American pragmatism; progressive liberalism; and the historicism of the German social sciences combined to inform this new systemic perspective.

Following on William James's compelling desire save a place for free will within the continuity of nature, pragmatist thinkers crafted a model of experience that is neither realist nor idealist. James's radical empiricism, which named experience as the ultimate "stuff" of lived worlds, highlighted how perspective functioned to "sift" alternative worlds out of lived experience. "My world is but one in a million alike embedded, alike real to those who may abstract them" (Principles of Psychology 1: 288-89). We exist within a plurality of lived worlds, ours and others', which demonstrate both stability and a capacity for change. John Dewey dramatically and elegantly described the power of adopting a holistic perspective by reconstructing the reflex arc as adaptive activity,

conceiving stimulus and response as the ever-changing context of origins and ends-in-view that give *interpreted narrative continuity* to a life of action. With this simple re-presentation of the reflex arc, Dewey effected a dramatic shift from viewing the world as an imperturbable monad of material cause-and-effect to a dynamic play of interpreted impulses in which our conscious selves are just one organizing center among other concentrically interdependent centers.

I believe the strategies and goals enabled by these converging traditions offer conceptual tools that are again relevant to current efforts to articulate constructive horizons through expansive democratic means. These tools include the reciprocating methods of interpretation and explanation, which combine sympathetic reflection across difference with creative articulation of felt needs *through* the available discursive formations. This constructive, hermeneutical model rejects appeals to a priori origins or foundations in favor of articulating methods and rules that can organize shared activity and expression to create political continuities. These methods should enable us to write continuities between our individual and social histories; they should confirm the emergence of stable character; and they should aspire toward and beyond a politically articulated vision that focuses our efforts toward self- and communal development in line with our democratic principles of promoting equality, recognition of difference, and opportunity.

I have discussed several constructive modernist writers who wanted to believe in the promise of a progressive liberal society built upon a radically empiricist understanding of experience. Such a model appealed to their desire to articulate moments of authentic experience into larger wholes. A historically and socially contingent model of the nation's *Bildung*, qualified by a democratically mediated horizon of promise, might satisfactorily replace the grand narratives of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that were no longer effective in organizing modern experience. These writers assumed a hermeneutical model of interpretation when writing their fiction, expecting the reader to venture a visceral connection to the horizon of the text, which then enabled the text to refine that felt connection by introducing interpreted content that prompted new articulations of continuity. In training the reader in these interpretive and articulatory practices, these constructive modernists emphasized the complexity of their current horizon and enabled the reader to experience the alienation that results when the public language no longer supports the attachment of meaning and value to actions.

I have argued for a tradition of U.S. writers who understood these pragmatic hermeneutical methods and used them, whether expressly or not, to cause social change by effecting in their readers an expansion of sympathy, a sense of one's interdependence with others, and an understanding that one's guiding principles and cultural formations lend stability yet remain dynamically

responsive to the articulations of the present. Dos Passos risked ridicule to express this humanist perspective before the first American Writers' Congress, the organizers of which had already begun to label him a social-fascist. His statement deserves being quoted again:

I feel that American writers who want to do the most valuable kind of work will find themselves trying to discover the deep currents of historical change under the surface of opinions, orthodoxies, heresies, gossip and the journalistic garbage of the day. They will find that they have to keep their attention fixed on the simple real needs of men and women. A writer can be a propagandist in the most limited sense of the word, or use his abilities for partisan invective or personal vituperation, but the living material out of which his work is built must be what used to be known as the humanities: the need for clean truth and sharply whittled exactitudes, men's instincts and compulsions and hungers and thirsts. ("Writer" 81-82)

The history of those U.S. writers who aspired to this vision is not promising. As Alan Wald recounts, most of the 1930s anti-Stalinist writers on the left became simply anti-Stalinist conservatives on the right during the 1940s and 1950s. They promoted the Cold War view that the free individual could assert universal human values against the anomie and violence of the new postwar era

through the heroic quest of selfhood (Warren 11). An ontology of current liberal democratic ideas would explore how the constructive modernist models of a discursive, articulated self that I have examined here were displaced by international modernism's universalist abstractions. Such a genealogy would disclose how such abstractions enabled conservatives to resurrect the model of the liberal subject of rights as an autonomous, natural entity whose freedom was construed only negatively, as the emancipation from totalitarian control. A fuller understanding of the Progressive generation's articulation of a modern, discursive self—and how it was displaced—will help us better understand the possibilities for and obstacles to articulating an international plurality of societies today.

Works Cited

- Aaron, Daniel. Writers on the Left. New York: Avon Books, 1965.
- Abrams, M. H. The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1953.
- Aiken, Conrad. "William Faulkner: The Novel as Form." 1935. William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism. Eds. Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga Vickery. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960. 135-142.
- Alexander, Thomas M. "John Dewey and the Moral Imagination: Beyond Putnam and Rorty Toward a Postmodern Ethics." Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society 29 (1993): 369-400.
- Ammons, Elizabeth. "Expanding the Canon of American Realism." The Cambridge Companion to American Realism and Naturalism. Ed. Donal Pizer. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.
- Appiah, K. Anthony. "Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction." Multiculturalism. Ed. Amy Gutmann. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994. 149-163.
- Arens, Katherine. "Kant, Herder, and Psychology." Herder Today: Contributions from the International Herder Conference, November 5-8, 1987, Stanford, California. Berlin. New York: W. du Gruyter, 1990.
- - -. Structures of Knowing: Psychologies of the Nineteenth Century. Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science 113. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic P, 1989.

- Austin, J. L. How to Do Things with Words. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1962.
- Bagehot, Walter. Physics and Politics. 1869. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1948.
- Baker, Carlos. Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-1961. New York: Scribner's Sons, 1981.
- Bailyn, Bernard, ed. Pamphlets of the American Revolution. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1965.
- Bain, Alexander. Mind and Body: The Theories of their Relation. London, 1873.
- Beard, Charles Austin. An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States. Macmillan, 1913.
- Beegel, Susan F. "That Always Absent Something Else: 'A Natural History of the Dead' and Its Discarded Coda." New Critical Approaches to the Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway. Ed. Jackson Benson. Durham: Duke UP, 1990. 78-92.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Author as Producer." 1934. Understanding Brecht. Trans. Anna Bostock. London: Verso, 1983. 85-103.
- Bergson, Henri. Creative Evolution. Trans. Arthur Mitchell. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911.
- Bernstein, Richard J. Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis. Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania P, 1988.
- Bloom, Harold. The Visionary Company: A Reading of English Romantic Poetry. Rev. ed. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1961.

- Booth, Charles. Life and Labour of the People in London. 2 vols. London and New York: Macmillan, 1892-1897.
- Boring, Edwin G. A History of Experimental Psychology. 2d edition. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1950.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. Outline of a Theory of Practice. Trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 16. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977.
- Bowler, Peter J. The Eclipse of Darwinism: Anti-Darwinian Evolution Theories in the Decades around 1900. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1983.
- - -. Evolution: The History of an Idea. Rev. ed. Berkeley and Los Angeles: U California P, 1983.
- - -. The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1988.
- Broderick, Francis L. "German Influence on the Scholarship of W. E. B. Du Bois." The Phylon Quarterly 19.4 (4th Quarter 1958): 367-371.
- Brooks, Cleanth. William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country. New Haven: Yale UP, 1963.
- Brown, Wendy. Politics out of History. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001.
- Buenker, John D. "Essay." Progressivism. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing, 1977.
- - -. Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform. New York: Scribner's, 1973.

- Bürger, Peter, and Christa Bürger. The Institutions of Art. Trans. Loren Kruger. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1992.
- Burke, Kenneth. Attitudes Toward History. 1937. 3d ed. Berkeley, Los Angeles: U California P, 1984.
- Butler, Judith. Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex". New York and London: Routledge, 1993.
- - -. Excitable Speech : A Politics of the Performative. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- - -. Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York and London: Routledge, 1993.
- - -. "Collected and Fractured: Response to Identities." Identities. Eds. Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1995. 439-447.
- - -. "Merely Cultural." Social Text 52/53 15.3-4 (Fall/Winter 1997): 265-277.
- Chestnutt, Charles. The Conjure Woman. Boston, New York: Houghton, Mifflin and company, 1899.
- Colbourn, Trevor. The Lamp of Experience: Whig history and the intellectual origins of the American Revolution. Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1965.
- Cooley, Charles Horton. Social Organization. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

- Cooney, Terry A. "Cosmopolitan Values and the Identification of Reaction: Partisan Review in the 1930s." Journal of American History 68.3 (Dec. 1981): 580-598.
- - -. Social Process. 1918. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1966.
- Coser, Lewis A. "American Trends." A History of Sociological Analysis. Eds. Tom Bottomore and Robert Nisbet. New York: Basic Books, 1978.
- Cowley, Malcolm, ed. The Portable Faulkner. By William Faulkner. New York: Viking Press, 1946.
- - -. "William Faulkner's Legend of the South." Sewanee Review (July 1945):
- Crane, Stephen. "To Catherine Harris." Stephen Crane, a study in American Letters. Ed. Thomas Beer. New York: Knopf, 1923. 140.
- - -. "An Experiment in Misery." The New York Press April 22, 1894: Part 3, p. 2.
- The Portable Stephen Crane. Ed. Joseph Katz. New York: Penguin, 1977. 154-165.
- - -. Maggie: A Girl of the Streets. 1893. The Portable Stephen Crane. Ed. Joseph Katz. New York: Penguin, 1977. 3-74.
- - -. "The Men in the Storm." The Portable Stephen Crane. Ed. Joseph Katz. New York: Penguin, 1977. 147-153.
- Crews, Frederick C. "The Strange Fate of William Faulkner." The New York Review of Books March 7, 1991: 47-52.
- Croly, Herbert. Progressive Democracy. New York: Macmillan, 1914.

- - -. The Promise of American Life. 1909. New York: Capricorn, 1964.
- Culler, Jonathan. "Philosophy and Literature: The Fortunes of the Performative."
Poetics Today 21.3 (Fall 2000): 503-519.
- Dewey, John. Art as Experience. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1934.
Rpt. in The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925-1953. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston.
Vol. 10. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1987.
- - -. "'Consciousness' and Experience." (1899). The Influence of Darwin on
Philosophy: And Other Essays on Contemporary Thought. New York: Holt,
Rinehart and Winston, 1938. Rpt. in The Philosophy of John Dewey. Ed.
John J. McDermott. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1981. 160-175.
- - -. Democracy and Education. New York: Macmillan, 1916.
- - -. "The Development of American Pragmatism." Philosophy and Civilization.
1931. New York: Capricorn Books, 1963. Rpt. in The Philosophy of John
Dewey. Ed. John J. McDermott. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1981. 41-58.
- - -. "Does Reality Possess Practical Character." Essays, Philosophical and
Psychological, in Honor of William James, Professor in Harvard University,
by his Colleagues at Columbia University. New York: Longmans, Green,
and Company, 1908. Rpt. "The Practical Character of Reality." The
Philosophy of John Dewey. Ed. John J. McDermott. Chicago: U Chicago
P, 1981. 207-22.

- Dewey, John, and James Hayden Tufts. Ethics. (1932). The Later Works, 1925-1953. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Vol. 7. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1985.
- Dewey, John. Experience and Nature. 2d ed. New York: Norton, 1929. Rpt. in The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925-1953. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Vol. 1. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1981.
- - -. "The Field of Value." Value: A Cooperative Inquiry. Ed. Ray Lepley. New York: Columbia UP, 1949. 64-77.
- - -. Human Nature and Conduct. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922. Rpt. in The Middle Works, 1899-1924. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Vol. 14. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1983.
- - -. Individualism Old and New. 1929. New York: Capricorn, 1962.
- - -. "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy." Creative Intelligence: Essays in the Pragmatic Attitude. New York: Henry Holt, 1917. 3-69.
- - -. "The New Paternalism." New Republic 17 (1918): 216-17. Rpt. in The Middle Works, 1899-1924. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Vol. 11. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1983. 117-122.
- - -. The Public and its Problems. 1927. Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1991.
- - -. "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology." Psychological Review. 3 (July, 1896): 357-70. Rpt. in The Philosophy of John Dewey. Ed. John J. McDermott. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1981. 136-148.

- - -. Rev. of The Psychic Factors of Civilization, by Lester F. Ward. Psychological Review 1 (July 1894): 400-411. Rpt. in The Early Works, 1893-1894. Ed. Jo An Boydston. Vol. 4. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1971. 200-214.
- - -. "Some Questions About Value." Journal of Philosophy. XLI (1944): 449-55.
- - -. "Some Stages of Logical Thought." Philosophical Review 9 (1900): 465-89.
- - -, ed. Studies in Logical Theory. University of Chicago Decennial Publications, Second Series 11. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1903.
- - -. The Study of Ethics: A Syllabus. Ann Arbor, 1894. Rpt. in The Early Works, 1893-1894. Ed. Jo An Boydston. Vol. 4. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1971.
- - -. Theory of Valuation. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1939. Rpt. in The Later Works, 1925-1953. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Vol. 13. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1991. 189-349.
- - -. "Thought and Its Subject-Matter." Studies in Logical Theory. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1903. Rpt. in The Middle Works, 1899-1924. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Vol. 2. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1976.
- Diggins, John Patrick. The Lost Soul of American Politics: Virtue, Self-Interest, and the Foundations of Liberalism. New York: Basic Books, 1984.

Dos Passos, John. The 42nd Parallel. 1930. New York: New American Library, 1969.

- - -. The Big Money. 1933. New York: New American Library, 1969.

- - -. "The Changing Shape of Institutions," ts. Unpublished essay, n.d. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin.

- - -. Letter to John Herrmann, n.d. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin.

- - -. Manhattan Transfer. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1925.

- - -. "The Writer as Technician." American Writers' Congress. Proc. of League of American Writers Congress, April 26-28, 1935, New York. Ed. Henry Hart. New York: International Publishers, 1935.

Douglas, Ann. Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995.

Du Bois, W. E. B. "Apology." Phylon: The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture. Vol 1 (1940): 3-5. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.

- - -. "Atlanta University." From Servitude to Service: Being the Old South Lectures on the History and Work of Southern Institutions for the Education of the Negro. Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1905. 155-97. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.

- - -. Autobiography of W. E. B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing my Life from the Last Decade of its First Century. New York: International Publishers, 1968.
- - -. "Conservation of Races." Pamphlets and Leaflets. Ed. Herbert Aptheker. White Plains, NY: Kraus-Thomson, 1986.
- - -. "The Burden of Black Women." The Horizon 2 (November 1907): 3-5. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- - -. "Criteria of Negro Art." The Crisis, October 1926. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- - -. "The Gift of the Spirit." The Gift of Black Folk, 1924. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- - -. "Jefferson Davis as a Representative of Civilization." Against Racism: Unpublished Essays, papers, Addresses, 1887-1961. Ed. Herbert Aptheker. Amherst : University of Massachusetts Press, 1985. 14-16.
- - -. "The Negro College." The Crisis. August 1933. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- - -. "The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia: A Social Study." U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bulletin, no. 14 (January 1898). W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- - -. "A Negro Student at Harvard at the End of the Nineteenth Century" Massachusetts Review 1 (Spring 1960): 439-458.

- - -. "On Being Crazy." The Crisis June 1923.
- - -. The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study. 1899. Millwood, NY.
- - -. "A Program for a Sociological Society." Ms. of his first lecture at Atlanta, 1897. Du Bois papers.
- - -. "Prospectus." 1910. Pamphlets and Leaflets by W.E.B. Du Bois. Ed. Herbert Aptheker. White Plains, NY: Kraus-Thomson Org., 1986. 93-94.
- - -. The Quest of the Silver Fleece : A Novel. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1911.
- - -. "Sociology Hesitant." Unpublished essay summarized with quotations in Francis L. Broderick, W. E. B. Du Bois Research Material, Box 3, M6197, Schomburg Research Center, New York Public Library.
- - -. "The Song of the Smoke." The Horizon, February 1907. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- - -. The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches. 1903. Three Negro Classics. New York: Avon, 1965.
- - -. "The Souls of Black Folk." Independent 57 (Nov. 17, 1904): 1152.
- - -. "The Souls of White Folk" Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil. 1920. Millwood, N.Y. : Kraus-Thomson, 1975.
- - -. "The Superior Race." The Crisis (February 1921). W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.

- - -. "The Upbuilding of Black Durham." The World's Work. 13 (January 1912): 334-338. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. Ed. David Levering Lewis. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- Dykhuisen, George. The Life and Mind of John Dewey. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1973.
- Eichengreen, Barry. Golden Fetters: The Gold Standard and the Great Depression, 1919-1939. New York: Oxford UP, 1992.
- Eisenstein, Sergei, dir. Battleship Potempkin. 1925.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Fate." The Portable Emerson. Ed. Carl Bode. New York: Penguin, 346-374.
- Faulkner, William. As I Lay Dying. (1930) New York: Vintage, 1964.
- - - . Go Down, Moses. (1942) New York: Vintage International, 1990.
- - - . The Hamlet. The Corrected Text. New York: Vintage International, 1991.
- - - . Light in August. The Corrected Text. New York: Vintage, 1987.
- - - . Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-1962. Ed. James B. Meriwether and Michael Millgate. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1980.
- Fine, William F. Progressive Evolutionism and American Sociology, 1890-1920. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979.
- Foley, Barbara. Radical Representations: Politics and Form in U.S. Proletarian Fiction, 1929-1941. Durham and London: Duke UP, 1993.

- Foucault, Michel. The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Pantheon, 1972.
- Frank, Waldo David. Virgin Spain: Scenes from the Spiritual Drama of a Great People. New York, 1926.
- Fraser, Nancy. "False Antitheses." Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange. Eds. Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, D. Cornell, and Nancy Fraser. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. Truth and Method. New York: Crossroad, 1988.
- Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- George, Henry. Progress and Poverty; an Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions, and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth--The Remedy. San Francisco, 1879.
- Goldman, Eric. Rendezvous with Destiny: A History of Modern American Reform. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood P, 1984.
- Gould, Stephen Jay. Ontogeny and Phylogeny. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1977.
- Gramsci, Antonio. Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci. 1925-1935. Eds. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: International Publishers, 1971.
- Habermas, Jurgen. Communication and the Evolution of Society. Trans. Thomas McCarthy. Boston : Beacon Press, 1979.

- - -. Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics. Trans. Ciaran Cronin. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT P, 1993.

- - -. The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society. Trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT P, 1989.

Hall, Stuart A., ed. Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79. London, Hutchinson; Birmingham, West Midlands : Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, 1980.

Hart, Albert Bushnell. Introduction. Public Opinion and Popular Government. By A. Lawrence Lowell. New York: Longmans, 1913.

- - -. National Ideals Historically Traced 1607-1907. New York: Harper, 1907. Vol. 26 of The American Nation: A History. 26 vols.

- - -. Slavery and Abolition 1831-41. New York: Harper, 1906. Vol. 16 of The American Nation: A History. 26 vols.

Hartz, Louis. The Liberal Tradition in America. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955.

Hausheer, Roger. "Three Major Originators of the Concept of *Verstehen*: Vico, Herder, Schleiermacher." Verstehen and Humane Understanding. Ed. Anthony O'Hear. Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement 41. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996.

- Hays, Samuel P. American Political History as Social Analysis. Knoxville: U Tennessee P, 1980.
- Hemingway, Ernest. Death in the Afternoon. 1932. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- - -. In Our Time. 1925. New York: Scribners, 1996.
- - -. "To Edmund Wilson." Paris, 18 October 1924. Selected Letters: 1917-1961. Ed. Carlos Baker. New York: Scribner's, 1981. 128.
- - -. Fundraising speech, ts. Box 717b, Kennedy Library, Boston. 1937.
- Herder, Johann Gottfried. Sämmtliche Werke. Stuttgart: J.B. Gotta'scher Verlag, 1853-.
- Hickman, Larry A. "Dewey's Theory of Inquiry." Reading Dewey: Interpretations for a Postmodern Generation. Ed. Larry Hickman. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1998. 166-86.
- Higham, John. "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890s." The Origins of Modern Consciousness. Ed. John Weiss. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1965.
- Hirsch, E. D., Jr. "Objective Interpretation," Publications of the Modern Language Association 75(1960): 1103-1112.
- Hofstadter, Richard. The Age of Reform. New York: Vintage Books, 1955.
- - -. Social Darwinism in American Thought. 1944. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.

- Hollinger, David. "The Knower and the Artificer." Modernist Culture in America.
Ed. Daniel Joseph Singal. American Society and Culture Series. Belmont,
CA: Wadsworth, 1991. 42-69.
- Howard, June. Form and History in American Literary Naturalism. Chapel Hill: U
North Carolina P, 1985.
- Hume, David. A Treatise on Human Nature; Being an Attempt to Introduce the
Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects and Dialogues
Concerning Natural Religion. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1874.
- Huyssen, Andreas. After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture,
Postmodernism. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986.
- Irigaray, Luce. Sexes and Genealogies. Trans. Gillian C. Gill. New York:
Columbia UP, 1993.
- Ivens, Joris, dir. The Spanish Earth. 1937.
- James, William. Essays in Radical Empiricism. New York: Longmans, Green,
and Co., 1912.
- - -. The Principles of Psychology. 2 vols. New York: Henry Holt, 1890.
- - -. The Varieties of Religious Experience. Rpt. in The Works of William James.
Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1985.
- Jameson, Frederic. Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories
of Literature. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971.

- - -. Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. Durham : Duke U P, 1991.
- Kant, Immanuel. Critique of Pure Reason. Unabridged ed. Trans. Norman Kemp Smith. New York: St. Martin's P, 1965.
- Kelley, Robert. "Ideology and Political Culture from Jefferson to Nixon." American Historical Review 82.3 (June 1977): 531-562.
- Kennedy, Gail. "Dewey's Concept of Experience: Determinate, Indeterminate, and Problematic." The Journal of Philosophy 56.21 (Oct. 8, 1959): 801-814.
- Keynes, John Maynard. The Economic Consequences of the Peace. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920.
- Kirwan, Albert D. Revolt of the Rednecks: Mississippi Politics: 1876-1925. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1951.
- Kloppenber, James T. Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920. New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1986.
- Kolko, Gabriel. The Triumph of Conservatism. New York: Free Press, 1963.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1962.
- Laclau, Ernesto. Emancipation(s). New York: Verso, 1996.

- Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics. 1985. 2nd ed. New York: Verso, 2001.
- Laclau, Ernesto. New Reflections on The Revolution of Our Time. London: Verso, 1990.
- Locke, John. Two Treatises of Government. 1714. Student ed. Ed. Peter Laslett. Book 2. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 1988.
- Leary, David. "German Idealism and the Development of Psychology in the Nineteenth Century." Journal of the History of Philosophy 16 (1980): 150-163.
- Leventhal, Robert S. The Disciplines of Interpretation: Lessing, Herder, Schlegel and Hermeneutics in Germany 1750-1800. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994.
- Lewis, David Leavering. W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1993.
- - -, ed. W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.
- Lippmann, Walter. Drift and Mastery: an Attempt to Diagnose the Current Unrest. NY: Mitchell Kennerley, 1914.
- - -. The Good Society. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1937.
- - -. A Preface to Politics. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1913.
- - -. Public Opinion. 1922. New York: Macmillan, 1961.

- Lodge, David. The Modes of Modern Writing. Metaphor, Metonymy, and the Typology of Modern Literature. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1977.
- Lott, Eric. "After Identity, Politics: The Return of Universalism." New Literary History 21 (2000): 665-680.
- Lustig, R. Jeffrey. Corporate Liberalism: The Origins of Modern American Political Theory, 189-1920. Berkeley, Los Angeles: U California P, 1982.
- Matthews, John T. The Play of Faulkner's Language. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982.
- Matthiessen, Peter. In the Spirit of Crazy Horse. New York: Viking Press, 1983.
- McClure, Kirstie. "On the Subject of Rights: Pluralism, Plurality and Political Identity." Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community. Ed. Chantal Mouffe. London: Verso, 1992. 108-124.
- McConnell, Grant. Private Power and American Democracy. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.
- Menand, Louis. The Metaphysical Club. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.
- Michaels, Walter Benn. The Gold Standard and the Logic of Naturalism. Berkeley: U of California P, 1987.
- - -. Our America: Nativism, Modernism, and Pluralism. Durham and London: Duke UP, 1995.

- Mill, John Stuart. A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive, Being a Connected View of the Principles of Evidence, and the Methods of Scientific Investigation. London: J. W. Parker, 1851.
- Mischel, Theodore. "Wundt and the Conceptual Foundations of Psychology." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 31.1 (Sep., 1970): 1-26.
- Moi, Toril. Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory. London ; New York : Methuen, 1985.
- Moses, Wilson. The Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1925. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1978.
- Mouffe, Chantal. "Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community." Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community. London: Verso, 1992. 227-237.
- - -. "Democratic Politics Today." Preface. Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community. London: Verso, 1992. 1-13.
- Murphy, James. The Proletarian Moment: The Controversy over Leftism in Literature. Urbana: U Illinois P, 1991.
- Nelson, Cary. Repression and Recovery: Modern American Poetry and the Politics of Cultural Memory, 1910-1945. Madison: U Wisconsin P, 1989.
- Noble, David W. The Paradox of Progressive Thought. Minneapolis: U Minnesota P, 1958.

- O'Brian, Michael. The Idea of the American South, 1920-1941. Baltimore : Johns Hopkins UP, 1979.
- O'Donnell, George Marion. "Faulkner's Mythology." William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism. Eds. Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga Vickery. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960. 82-93.
- Orvell, Miles. The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940. Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1989.
- Otis, Laura. Organic Memory: History and the Body in the Nineteenth & Early Twentieth Centuries. Lincoln and London: U Nebraska P, 1994.
- Palmer, Richard E. Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer. Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1969.
- Pells, Richard H. Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1973.
- Perloff, Marjorie. "Modernist Studies." Redrawing the Boundaries: The Transformation of English and American Literary Studies. Eds. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1992.

- Perry, Ralph Barton. The Thought and Character of William James, as Revealed in Unpublished Correspondence and Notes, Together with his Published Writings. 2 vols. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1935.
- Phillips, William [Wallace Phelps]. "Three Generations." Partisan Review 1 (Sept. – Oct. 1934): 49-55.
- Pocock, J. G. A. The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1975.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. "Ideology and Speech-act Theory." Poetics Today 7,1 (1986): 59-72.
- Rahv, Phillip. Rev. of Absalom, Absalom! by William Faulkner. New Masses 21 (Nov. 24, 1936): 20-21.
- Rampersad, Arnold. The Art and Imagination of W. E. B. Du Bois. New York: Schocken Books, 1976.
- Rawls, John. A Theory of Justice. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Rodgers, Daniel T. "Republicanism: The Career of a Concept." Journal of American History 79.1 (June 1992): 11-38.
- Ricoeur, Paul. Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation. Ed. and trans. John B. Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981.

- Riis, Jacob A. How the Other Half Lives : Studies Among the Tenements of New York. 1890. New York: Garrett Press, 1970.
- Rorty, Richard. Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979.
- Ross, Dorothy. The Origins of American Social Science. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.
- Russell, Charles. Poets, Prophets and Revolutionaries: The Literary Avant-Garde from Rimbaud Through Postmodernism. New York: Oxford UP, 1985.
- Rydell, Robert. All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1984.
- Sandel, Michael. "The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self." Political Theory 12 (1984): 81-96.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. "Time in Faulkner: The Sound and the Fury." 1939. Rpt. in William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism. Eds. Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga Vickery. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960. 225-35.
- Schäfer, Axel R. "W. E. B. Du Bois, German Social Thought, and the Racial Divide in American Progressivism, 1892–1909." Journal of American History 88.3 (2001): 63 pars. 17 Sep. 2002
<<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/88.3/schafer.html>>.
- Schor, Naomi. "French Feminism is a Universalism." Differences 7.1 (Spring 1995): 15-47.

- Schwarz, Lawrence H. Creating Faulkner's Reputation: The Politics of Modern Literary Criticism. Knoxville: U Tennessee P, 1988.
- Schwendinger, Herman, and Julia R. Schwendinger. The Sociologists of the Chair: A Radical Analysis of the Formative Years of North American Sociology (1883-1922). NY: Basic Books, 1974.
- Scott, Clifford H. Lester Frank Ward. Boston: Twayne, 1976.
- Scott, Joan. "Universalism and the History of Feminism." Differences 7.1 (Spring 1995): 1-14.
- Seaver, Edwin. "What Is a Proletarian Novel?: Notes Toward a Definition." Partisan Review 2 (April-May 1935): 5, 7.
- Seigfried, Charlene Haddock. "Socializing Democracy: Jane Addams and John Dewey." Philosophy of the Social Sciences 29.2 (June 1999): 207-231.
- Shalhope, Robert E. "Toward a Republican Synthesis: The Emergence of an Understanding of Republicanism in American Historiography." William and Mary Quarterly 29.1 (January 1972): 49-80.
- Singal, Daniel Joseph, ed. Modernist Culture in America. American Society and Culture Series. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1991.
- Sissle, Noble, and Eubie Blake. I'm Just Wild About Harry. 1921.
- Skocpol, Theda. "Sociology's Historical Imagination." Vision and Method in Historical Sociology. Ed. Theda Skocpol. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.

- Smith, J. Allen. The Spirit of American Government: A Study of the Constitution: Its Origin, Influence and Relation to Democracy. New York: Macmillan, 1907.
- Snead, James A. Figures of Division: William Faulkner's Major Novels. New York: Methuen, 1986.
- Spencer, Herbert. The Principles of Psychology. New York, 1855.
- Stern, Sheldon. "William James and the New Psychology." Social Sciences at Harvard: 1860-1920. Ed. Paul Buck. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1965. 175-222.
- Stourzh, Gerald. Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1970.
- Sullivan, Shannon. "Reconfiguring Gender with John Dewey: Habit, Bodies, and Cultural Change." Hypatia 15.1 (Winter 2000): 23-42.
- Sullivan, Walter. "The Tragic Design of *Absalom, Absalom!*" The South Atlantic Quarterly 50,4 (1951): 552-66.
- Sundquist, Eric J. "Introduction: The Country of the Blue." American Realism: New Essays. Ed. Eric Sundquist. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1982.
- Taylor, Charles. "The Politics of Recognition." Multiculturalism. Ed. Amy Gutmann. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994. 25-74.
- - -. Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1989.

- Thelan, David P. The New Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885-1900. Columbia: U Missouri P, 1972.
- Trachtenberg, Alan. "Experiments in Another Country: Stephen Crane's City Sketches." American Realism: New Essays. Ed. Eric J. Sundquist. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1982.
- Turner, Jonathan. Herbert Spencer: A Renewed Appreciation. Masters of Social Theory Ser., 1. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1985.
- Wadlington, Warwick. As I Lay Dying: Stories Out of Stories. New York: Twayne, 1992.
- - -. Reading Faulknerian Tragedy. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987.
- Wald, Alan M. The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s. Chapel Hill and London: U North Carolina P, 1987.
- Wallas, Graham. The Great Society : A Psychological Analysis. New York: Macmillan, 1914.
- Walzer, Michael. "Two Kinds of Universalism." The Tanner Lectures on Human Values 11, 1990. Ed. Grethe B. Peterson. Salt Lake City: U Utah P, 1990.
- Ward, Lester F. "The Claims of Political Science." 1884. Rpt. in Glimpses of the Cosmos. 6 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam, 1913-18.
- - -. Dynamic Sociology. 1893. 2 vols. New York: Appleton and Co., 1910.

- - -. The Psychic Factors of Civilization. Boston: Ginn & company, 1893.
- - -. Pure Sociology: A Treatise on the Origin and Spontaneous Development of Society. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903.
- - -. "The Transmission of Culture." The Forum 11 (March 1891): 312-319.
- - -. "What Brings Out Genius?" The Evening Star 22 Dec. 1907: Pt. 3, 11,14.
- Warren, Robert Penn. "Faulkner: Past and Future." Introduction. Faulkner: A Collection of Critical Essays. Ed. Robert Penn Warren. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1966.
- Washington, Booker T. Up From Slavery. 1901. New York: Penguin, 1986.
- Weinstein, James. The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1918. Boston: Beacon Press, 1968.
- Weinstein, Phillip. Faulkner's Subject: A Cosmos No One Owns. Cambridge, England: Cambridge UP, 1992.
- Weismann, August. Essays upon Heredity and Kindred Biological Problems. Trans. Edward B. Poulton, Selmar Schonland, and Arthur E. Shipley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889.
- Wells, David. Robinson Crusoe's Money. (1876) New York: Harper, 1969.
- West, Cornell. The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism. The Wisconsin Project on American Writers. Madison: U Wisconsin P, 1989.

- Whitehead, Alfred North. Process and Reality: an Essay in Cosmology. (1929).
Corrected ed. New York : Free Press, 1978.
- Whitman, Walt. "Sleepers." Leaves of Grass. 1891-92. New York: Modern
Library-Random House, n.d.
- Wiebe, Robert. The Search for Order, 1877-1920. New York: Hill & Wang, 1967.
- Williams, Raymond. Marxism and Literature. Oxford : Oxford U P, 1977.
- - -. The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists. Ed. Tony Pinkney.
London and New York: Verso, 1989.
- Wilson, Edmund. Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-
1930. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931.
- Wilson, Edmund. "The End of a Trilogy." New Republic 88 (12 Aug 1936): 23-24.
- Winch, Peter. The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy.
London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Culture and Value. Eds. G. H. von Wright and Heikki
Nyman. Trans. Peter Winch. Chicago : U Chicago P, 1980.
- Wood, Gordon. Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787. Chapel Hill: U
North Carolina P, 1969.
- Woodmansee, Martha. The Author, Art, and the Market: Rereading the History of
Aesthetics. New York: Columbia UP, 1994.
- Woodward, C. Vann. Origins of the New South, 1877-1913. Baton Rouge:
Louisiana State UP, 1951.

Woodward, William R. "William James's Psychology of Will: Its Revolutionary Impact on American Psychology." Explorations in the History of Psychology in the United States. Ed. Josef Brožek. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1984.

Wordsworth, William. Preface to Lyrical Ballads. Wordsworth's Literary Criticism. Ed. N.C. Smith. London: H. Milford, 1925.

Wundt, Wilhelm. Logik. 3rd ed. Leipzig, 1908.

Zerilli, Linda M. G. "This Universalism Which is Not One." Rev. of Emancipation(s), by Ernesto Laclau. *Diacritics* 28.2 (1998): 3-20.

Zola, Emile. The Experimental Novel, and Other Essays. Trans. Belle M. Sherman. New York: Haskell House, 1964.

Vita

Arthur Alvin VanderVeen, Jr. was born in Burlington, North Carolina, on February 12, 1963, the son of Bettye Rabb VanderVeen and Arthur VanderVeen Sr. After completing his work at Boulder High School, Boulder, Colorado, in 1981, he entered Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from Colorado College in June 1985. He began work at Princeton Theological Seminary in September 1986 and received a degree of Master of Divinity in June of 1989. After working as a marketing communications specialist for several years, he entered the Graduate School of the University of Texas in August of 1992. He received a degree of Master of Arts from the University of Texas at Austin in 1994. In June of 1997, he founded ActiveInk Corporation, a learning technologies company in Austin, Texas, and has served as the company's Chief Education Officer.

Permanent Address: 8701 Bluffstone Cove, Apartment 9304, Austin, TX 78759

This dissertation was typed by the author.