Literary Criticism and Cultural Theory

Edited by

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Literary Criticism and Cultural Theory

William E. Cain, *General Editor*

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2006 by Routledge

Published 2017 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

ISBN-13: 978-0-415-97675-6 (hbk)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Catalog record is available from the Library of Congress

informa
Taylor & Francis Group
is the Academic Division of Informa plc.

Visit the Taylor & Francis Web site at
http://www.taylorandfrancis.com

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For Karine Castillo

Contents

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction
The Sound of Foxes, the Voice of the Community 1

Chapter One
The Journalist, the Immigrant, and Willa Cather's Popular Modernism 13

Chapter Two
Sherwood Anderson's Imagined Communities 49

Chapter Three
The Camera Eye and Reporter's Conscience in Ernest Hemingway's
In Our Time and *The Sun Also Rises* 83

Chapter Four
Divided Identities, Desiring Reporters in Zora Neale Hurston's
Mules and Men and James Agee and Walker Evans's
Let Us Now Praise Famous Men 125

Chapter Five
Reporting on the New Dawn of Cold-War Culture in
Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men* 171

Notes 205

Works Cited 227

Index 241

Acknowledgments

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Professors Joan Richardson, William Kelly, and Morris Dickstein of The City University of New York Graduate School and University Center for their guidance in helping me shape this work as a dissertation. I am indebted to their wisdom and grateful for their generosity and encouragement. I would also like to thank Max Novick at Routledge for his help in preparing this manuscript and Professor William E. Cain, general editor of this series. To all my family and friends, I express my gratitude for your support, and I thank especially Terence Brennan, who was there at the very beginning, and Duncan Faherty, who reviewed drafts of chapters long after the obligations of friendship had been exhausted. Though I have Karine Castillo to thank for many things, I would like to thank her most of all for her patience as I completed this book.

For permission to quote the following materials, I would like to acknowledge the following sources: "The 'Real' Collective in New Deal Documentary and Ethnography: The Federal Writers' Project, the Farm Security Administration, Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men* and James Agee's and Walker Evans' *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.*" Copyright 1997 by Sonnet H. Retman and cited with the permission of the author. "Novel Work: Theater and Journalism in the Writing of Theodore Dreiser, Edith Wharton and Willa Cather." Copyright 2001 by Nicole H. Parisier and cited with the permission of the author. "New Dawn." Copyright 1997 by the Estate of Robert Penn Warren. Reprinted by permission of William Morris Agency, LLC on behalf of the Author.

This work was supported in part by a grant from The City University of New York PSC-CUNY Research Award Program.

Introduction

The Sound of Foxes, the Voice of the Community

Near the end of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941), James Agee describes how he—or more precisely, his retrospectively constructed narrator-reporter—sits on a tenant farmer's porch and becomes captivated by what he takes to be the cries of foxes. Speculating on what this sound might mean, he describes it as "beyond even the illusion of full apprehension" and declares it to be "a work of great, private, and unambiguous art which was irrelevant to audience" (466). In a sense, Agee's comments about this sound reflect his own aspirations for his text. In transforming an assignment for a popular magazine, *Fortune,* into the often perplexing *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* Agee surpassed the expectations of his employer and his likely readers and turned a journalistic, possibly even touristic, account of poverty into a difficult, expansive text that seemingly rejects a broad public in favor of private meditations on consciousness and art. Likewise, Agee suggests that the most unambiguous feature of art is, paradoxically, the very ambiguity of a particular work, as is the case with the sound of these foxes. Seen in more general terms, the private reflections of his reporter are made meaningful by the public role of journalism, and it is the elements of journalism within the text that point that to the broader cultural significance of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.*

Far from writing a work irrelevant to audience, Agee often struggled with his conception of his audience through the long and particularly difficult process of composing *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* and rather than suggesting a private work, the individual identity of his reporter and his seemingly private reflections actually reflect some of the most pressing public issues of the time. After he and Walker Evans spent roughly six weeks living with a group of tenant farmers in Alabama in 1936, Agee worked on the book over a number of years and frequently questioned how to address his writing to members of the educated upper- and middle-class, who like

himself, were unable to comprehend the poverty of such farmers. At other times, he wondered whether his intended audience should not actually consist of impoverished people like the uneducated tenant farmers themselves (*Letters to Flye* 114–115). These questions reflect the different, sometimes divergent, strands of Agee's own background. In continuing to reach out to the tenant farmers, he draws upon his previous work as a journalist and his own southern roots; in challenging his more literate and literary audience, he draws upon his Harvard education, literary aspirations, and eclectic reading. In the end, Agee's "private" book was published by a major press, Houghton Mifflin, despite its confrontational stance towards middle-class complacency and the conventions of documentary reportage, and Agee, while addressing specific passages in the text to members of the tenant families, never sent any of them a copy of the book or even made them aware of its existence (Maharidge and Williamson 85). Even after *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* was published, Agee seems to have been unsure of exactly who should comprise his ideal audience.

Though Agee was ultimately unable to reconcile his conflicting goals for *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* his struggles remain a key feature of the text and help to explain the terms by which it was produced and the ways it signifies in larger networks of production and communication. An important clue for understanding Agee's approach to these tensions is found in a request he made to his publisher that the book be printed on newsprint (Bergreen 243–244). Printing the book on newsprint would have allowed Agee to address his literary aspirations and the sense of obligation he felt towards his subjects and his own southern childhood. It would have kept the cost of the book down and increased its potential audience, while calling attention to the "timeliness" of the writing. As an iconoclastic statement, printing the book on newsprint would have also demonstrated Agee's ability to produce an innovative work of lasting value, an example of "timeless" art. While his publishers not surprisingly rejected Agee's request, it nonetheless suggests how he continued to look to journalism as a strategy for reconciling his disparate goals for *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* even as he criticized the conventions of popular journalism within the text itself.

Agee's engagement with journalism remains most evident in the way he constructs his narrator-reporter in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men;* this reporter figure allows Agee to consider his own reporting work and examine the broader conditions in which he was writing. As Agee presents the divided loyalties and desires of this participant reporter and the challenges he faced in reading his subjects and reporting on their lives, he situates his text along the fault lines of his time.[1] Through his reporter and the journalistic features

within the text, Agee addresses the challenges of representing and addressing a nation divided along the lines of class, race, geography, and different relationships to production and consumption. In the study that follows, I further investigate how *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and other key works of American modernism incorporate different journalistic features to negotiate the expectations of different audiences and, more importantly, to explore larger questions of identity, culture, and community. As I demonstrate, reading for these aspects of journalism helps to describe the innovative stylistic and structural qualities of these particular texts while, at the same time, allowing for a needed reevaluation of the ways in which American modernist works of the interwar period were in dialogue with mass culture and broader contemporary social conditions.

In very briefly considering here some of the most typical lenses through which modernist texts have come to be read, I want to outline the alternative ways of reading that I take up in examining Agee's text and other works of American modernism which similarly engage journalism and the process of reporting. For example, Laurence Bergreen, one of Agee's biographers, claims that Agee drew on two of his modernist literary heroes, Marcel Proust and James Joyce, "the patron saint of modern letters," in writing *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* and in doing so, he wrote "a book most likely to be appreciated not by the general public but by other writers." Bergreen further argues that Agee "had created an aggressively antipopular, avant-garde work whose value, if any, would in all likelihood not be recognized in his time. He supposed it would baffle and offend the casual reader in search of entertainment and diversion" (257). While Bergreen's description does reflect the way *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* has often been read, in my reading of the text I examine the ways in which it presents features of popular journalism, critiques literary notions of language, addresses multiple audiences, and, most importantly, takes up issues of its time.

In Bergreen's characterization of Agee's text and his likely audience, he touches on some of the most common attributes critics assign to modernist texts; namely, that they are opposed to the expectations of a general public and ahead of their time. Indeed, Agee's description of the elusive sound of foxes seems to reflect the ways in which modernist writing has been admired for its difficulty, paradoxes, and increased attention towards form. With the rise to prominence of the New Critics, works which seemed to be "irrelevant" to a particular audience were undoubtedly easier to consider in formal terms apart from the historically grounded conditions of their production and reception. More recent readings of modernist texts, though, have been more likely to examine rather than dismiss structures of discourse and power.

For example, in Pierre Bourdieu's *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (1993) and Thomas Strychacz's *Modernism, Mass Culture, and Professionalism* (1993), Bourdieu and Strychacz take their analyses a step further than Bergreen in considering how modernist works not only appeal to an audience of sophisticated readers but actually helped create and shape the values and vocabulary of this audience in the first place. They describe how the modernist audience consists not only of writers but educated readers, cultural critics, and academics, all looking for more than entertainment or diversion in their reading. According to Bourdieu and Strychacz, literary writers look to each other for the terms by which they can define their profession and find a kind of success beyond the fleeting rewards of the marketplace, while critics and academics look for works which will provide them with the terms upon which they can build their own authority. As critics increasingly began working from within the institutional structures of the university, their professional status rested on the demonstration of acquired expertise and a specialized vocabulary, and difficult texts helped to provide this vocabulary while also offering suitable objects of interpretation. In acknowledging the development of a professional literary establishment around the turn of the twentieth-century and in returning literature to the social context in which it is defined, produced, and read, recent critics like Bourdieu and Strychacz have drawn on alternative lines of criticism, such as those offered by Foucault and the Frankfurt School, to argue that modernist writers and their supporters together established an authority that was largely based on its opposition to mass culture.[2]

Other recent critics have suggested that these aspirations for a seemingly autonomous realm of art were particular to a kind of "high" modernism. At the very beginning of his influential *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (1986), Andreas Huyssen claims, "Ever since the mid-nineteenth-century, the culture of modernity has been characterized by a volatile relationship between high art and mass culture" (vii). Unlike Bergreen, who characterizes Agee as both modern and avant-garde, Huyssen distinguishes "high" modernism from the avant-garde, and he argues that the avant-garde did not reject mass culture but instead recognized its potential for reconciling art and life, aesthetics and revolutionary politics. In *American Culture Between the Wars: Revisionary Modernism and Postmodern Critique* (1993), Walter Kalaidjian closely follows Huyssen in linking the avant-garde with the subsequent features of post-modernism. In turning his attention squarely on the United States, Kalaidjian finds that oppositional writers developed an "avant-garde praxis" "from the politicized coupling of image and text, art and journalism, poetry and visual agitation,"

and the particular "conjuncture of popular culture and left politics" during the interwar period (3).

In my study, I follow Huyssen and Kalaidjian in considering how modernist works engage mass culture, but I do not limit my focus to explicitly oppositional, revolutionary, or marginal writers. Instead, I turn my attention to a group of popular and influential writers of the interwar period—Willa Cather, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, Zora Neale Hurston, James Agee, and Robert Penn Warren—and I consider how, in key works, they coupled art and journalism as a means of negotiating the expectations of their critical readers and the demands of a popular audience. At a time when small magazines and academic critics were becoming increasingly influential and demanding formal innovations, these writers deployed recognizable features of popular journalism as the basis for experimenting with issues of perspective, narration, plot, and genre, thereby constructing works that were at once accessible to a broad public and appealing to a select audience of sophisticated readers. Though all of these writers worked in different ways as journalists or critics at some point in their careers, their engagement with journalism in these works is more than just a reflection of their own biographical experiences; rather, these writers call upon journalism's often implicit but always powerful appeal to a common ground as a means of interrogating questions of community and addressing pressing social concerns. In doing so, each writer in this study engages different aspects and different kinds of journalism. In her early fiction and in her later novel, *The Professor's House* (1925), Cather draws on her own work as a columnist and muckraking editor and her later experience promoting her own fiction to consider the role of the artist in shaping more broadly conceived notions of culture; in *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) and *Home Town* (1940), Anderson, who later in life owned two small town newspapers, depicts small town journalism as a means of imagining national communities; in *In Our Time* (1925) and *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), Hemingway employs his awareness of the newsreel form and the professional demands of being a reporter to examine new modes of perception and the shifting social dimensions of language; in Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and Hurston's *Mules and Men* (1935), Agee and Hurston each constructs a narrator-reporter who challenges existing generic conventions and mediates the cultural divisions exacerbated by the Great Depression; and in Warren's best known novel, *All the King's Men* (1946), he portrays the changing perspective of his hard-boiled, narrator-reporter as a means of reflecting changing conceptions of history and the abrupt cultural transformations that occurred following World War II.

Instead of constructing their authority as part of an elite discourse community or pursuing the revolutionary politics of the avant-garde, these writers employ tropes, conventions, and themes drawn from journalism in their writing as a means of achieving critical and popular approval while challenging both accepted literary and social values. In this way, these writers locate their texts at the center of an expansive network of communications in which conceptions of culture are debated and shaped. Like Raymond Williams, who also notes the importance of journalism to changing understandings of literature, I am arguing that the particular works under consideration here can be seen as engaging culture not only as a collection of artifacts and practices preserved in institutions but as an ongoing process which is experienced and contested in individual lives and individual works of literature and art. As Williams claims in *The Long Revolution* (1961), most modernist critics focus on inaccessible art from "the frontiers of knowledge" even though "great art" can be found "near the centre of common experience" (47). Individual works of art need not be seen as either opposing existing values or succumbing to the expectations of existing communities; rather, they can be seen as uniquely contributing to how values and communities are created and shaped. Describing the common basis behind different kinds of language, Williams writes:

> The individual creative description is part of the general process which creates conventions and institutions, through which the meanings that are valued by the community are shared and made active. This is the true significance of our modern definition of culture, which insists on this community of process. (55)

In this context, the artist is best understood not as "the lonely explorer" but rather "the voice of the community," a community that extends far beyond a select group of trained readers (47).

Modern journalists often consider the professional context of their writing, generally write in an accessible style, record notable events, and act as a curb on government. In incorporating these aspects of journalism into their literary works, writers can explore the relationship between art and commerce, consider the scope of literary language and how it is defined, and offer alternative representations of history and community. These possibilities are particularly evident in the works under consideration here, most of which were written during the tumultuous interwar years, when the effects of the Great War rippled far beyond the initial experiences of soldiers; the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 limited immigration even as earlier waves of

immigrants and black migrants from the South made distinctive contributions to American culture; physicists and philosophers redefined fundamental concepts of time, space, and the process of recording observations; the use of the assembly line and new industrial techniques made overproduction the biggest threat to the economy and advertising crucial to increase demand; the Great Depression forced many to reconsider received notions of American identity and values; and technological innovations brought worldwide events closer to home than ever before. While even this thumbnail sketch of the period suggests the impact and pace of the changes during these years, journalism itself not only covered these events but also changed the way they were experienced. Responding to new technologies and new means of communication, such as the radio, film, the newsreel, and the ability to reproduce photographs inexpensively, journalism transformed the basic rhythms of everyday life with the speed, scope, and availability of its coverage. Daily reports on the Scopes trial and the Sacco-Vanzetti case energized intellectuals and sharpened debates about national values; Charles Lindbergh became an instantaneous, international celebrity, as reports crossing the Atlantic acted as reminders that the media was connecting the trans-Atlantic world even faster than air flight; the crash of the Hindenburg, captured on film, came to resonate in people's minds and ended the era of the rigid airship. Even today, these and other events are remembered as media events in a way that had not existed before. Simply put, journalism during this period came to change ideas of representation and memory itself.

However, while mass media brought more people into contact more quickly, it did little or nothing to suggest how all of these people were connected in any meaningful way. Even as commentators like Walter Lippmann questioned whether a truly democratic public could be formed in this context, the writers I consider in this study produced works which addressed such questions and created a public—or the means, at least, by which such a public could be imagined into existence—by using journalism to place literature in a direct dialogue with contemporary social and cultural issues. While journalists were beginning to grapple with their status as a profession and address notions of objectivity and audience, the writers I examine in this study incorporated journalism into their works as a means of considering their own roles as public personas and voices of the community. In some cases, these writers create characters who similarly use journalism to pursue their own literary and artistic aspirations, but they also show how the work of individual reporters calls into question the relationship between isolated individuals and a shared sense of community. Furthermore, in presenting journalism as a broadly conceived institution, these writers also interrogate commonly held values and

consider the ways in which large, abstract communities can be recognized as distinct and meaningful entities by their members.

Many of these possibilities can be recognized in earlier forms of journalism, and journalism, of course, has long figured prominently in American culture and letters. In his *Autobiography* (1788), Benjamin Franklin describes how his work as an enterprising young printer gave him the means to gain an education and improve the course of his life. However, by the late nineteenth-century, the small scale, generally political or commercial kind of newspaper that Franklin describes had largely developed into a kind of "new journalism," as newspapers were transformed from journals aimed at select audiences into mass produced and consumed products aimed at the broadest audience possible.[3] Addressing the early promise of this new journalism, Fanny Fern, in *Ruth Hall* (1855), and Mark Twain, in *Roughing It* (1872), depict journalism as a means for unknown writers to earn a living and achieve celebrity, status, and influence. In later works, such as William Deans Howells' *A Modern Instance* (1882) and Henry James's *The Reverberator* (1888), the negative aspects of this new kind of publicity are examined, and journalism is portrayed as an invasion of privacy and a threat to established values and the existing social order. Even as "yellow" journalism and muckraking campaigns brought attention to journalism as an institution and writers like Stephen Crane used journalism to gain attention for themselves and their writing, the prominence of individual reporters—rather than the editor, publisher, or paper itself—did not broadly take hold until after the Great War, and it was not until the 1930s that the use of by-lines became the norm (Frus 42, Schudson 68–70).[4] Journalism between the two World Wars offered a rich paradox for writers to draw upon: As journalism became centralized as a business and standardized through syndicates and newswires, a new emphasis was placed on individual reporters and celebrity writers. Journalism, then, seemed at once to be a threat to individual expression and the key means by which individual writers could gain even more prominence and influence.

Such tensions within journalism were largely precipitated by World War I, as the war challenged existing relationships among individual reporters, the institutions of journalism, and the public. Paul Fussell, in *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975), describes how journalists during the war conformed to older models of reporting that proved to be ineffective in portraying the horrors of modern warfare, thereby creating an irreconcilable split between the insiders, the soldiers, with their shared stories, and the outsiders, the journalists and their audience, with their inaccurate and incomplete printed accounts (115). As Fussell writes, "A lifelong suspicion of the press

was one lasting result of the ordinary man's experience of the war" (316). Not surprisingly, journalism's effectiveness was often questioned after the war, as the increasing contributions of publicity agents, wire releases, and syndicated columnists seemed to undermine journalism's independence and blur the lines between reporting and advertising (Schudson 134–144), as notably described in John Dos Passos's *U.S.A.* (1930, 1932, 1936). As the attitudes that arose during the war period became more common, journalists who acted as participants rather than objective observers often connected more strongly with their audiences. As William Stott notes in *Documentary Expression and Thirties America* (1973), during the Great Depression, public distrust of mainstream, corporate journalism and government reports continued to grow. In any case, no story or statistic seemed capable of capturing the reality of the widespread hardships—this reality had to be seen to be believed (79). As reporters crossed the country, they emphasized their status not only as observers of sensational events but as witnesses who hoped to reveal social ills so that they might be rectified. While the muckrakers from around the turn of the twentieth-century similarly conducted improvement campaigns and revealed corruption and waste, they maintained the position of shocked outsiders; as Jacob Riis's would declare with *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (1890), the world seemed inherently divided in two. Even if reporters during the 1930s ultimately failed to bridge this divide between the two halves, they and their readers were more concerned with attempting to do so, and committed reporters struggled with varying degrees of success to achieve some kind of authenticity and empathy.[5]

At the same time, the democratic overtones of such committed individual reporters were reinforced by new forms of collective participation with journalism, such as the WPA sponsored "Living Newspaper," in which participants staged public performances by acting out selections from the newspapers (Stott 106–108). As Alfred Kazin notes in *On Native Ground* (1942), the general feeling that reality was overwhelming the imagination brought journalists and documentary writers to the forefront of the literary world and the popular imagination during this time (490). In recognizing their responsibility as representatives and grappling with the challenges of representing different groups to different audiences, the writers of this period share many characteristics and concerns with others who were at the same moment recording the lives of the "folk," particularly anthropologists whose methods as participant observers were being redefined by Franz Boas and others.

While the reporters covering World War II enjoyed more success and received more recognition than earlier war correspondents, the connections

between journalism and fiction would become more explicit and more vexed throughout the Cold War period that followed. In the 1960s, many writers seemed to find that reality had again overwhelmed the imagination and overtaken fiction in its urgency and relevance, and a new style seemed to be born as the sensationalism of the news was matched by the sensational styles of the so-called "New Journalists." These writers further blurred the lines between literature and journalism in ways that were more typical of the playful strategies of postmodernism while unapologetically promoting their own careers and pursuing celebrity.[6] While raising interesting questions about literature and representation, their accounts of history seemed largely confined to the immanent possibilities of the moment and the perceptions of the individual self.

In the interwar period, the writers I consider in this study were still questioning the professionalization of journalism, the emphasis on the individual reporter, and the status of writers in a new culture of celebrity, and they generally approached art with more seriousness and a stronger sense of responsibility than their successors. While Anderson, Hurston, Agee, and Warren portray individual journalists as a means of representing social tensions, cultural changes, and possibilities for imagining communities, Cather and Hemingway consider journalism as a developing institution whose status as a technologically and commercially driven business and profession influences literary languages and forms and challenges the existing roles of fiction writers. Largely avoiding specific historical references or topical political debates, each of these writers questions how to represent different communities and views of history through their works, and in using journalism to disrupt typical literary narratives, they also disrupt the often complacent narratives of history as well.

These writers portray individual reporters and the abstract institutions of journalism in ways that correspond to divergent strands within modernism—the nostalgia for a pre-modern, pre-technological world of human presence and the enthusiasm for technology and change made possible by modernization. For Walter Benjamin, who has come to be cited as the preeminent, contemporary modernist critic, the storytellers' physical proximity to their listeners allowed them to create local communities from shared acts of communication, while the mechanically reproduced newspaper erases such connections and alienates information from meaningful, individual experience ("Baudelaire" 158–159). Unlike Benjamin, more recent cultural critics have argued that abstract relations are not simply a matter of oppressive market forces or capitalist systems of production but an unavoidable fact of the scope of modern nation-states.

In his influential book, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1992), Jürgen Habermas demonstrates that print culture and journalism in particular are crucial for the creation of a public sphere in which all private individuals are, in theory, able to use reason to shape public debate, and he suggests that the public sphere depends to a certain extent on the blurring of what are typically described as high and low cultural forms (43).[7] While Habermas claims that during the interwar period the public sphere declined as the welfare state undermined the distinction between private and public identities and publicity replaced reasoned public debate with the demands of the marketplace (*Transformation* 231–232), the writers under consideration here show how addressing such changes allows for the public sphere to be re-imagined rather than erased.

While Habermas shows how the print media makes it possible for individuals to shape abstract communities, Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2nd ed., 1991), shows how the regularly printed newspaper and the print media actually help such communities to be imagined into existence. Anderson argues that in a community as abstract as the nation it is impossible for all citizens to have any direct contact, and he claims that acts of reading serially produced newspapers form an important basis for a shared sense of national experience. In reading the same things at the same time over a defined geographic space, readers imagine themselves participating in a common project and sharing common concerns and relations. Highlighting the intersections between the newspaper and the novel, he also shows how authors can portray fictional characters as a means of representing shared national aspirations through individual acts of identification.[8] While Anderson is describing post-colonial nations, his analysis sheds light on the ways that the authors considered here draw on the form and reception of the newspaper as a means of calling attention to questions of national identity and the way that literature can participate in imagining—or re-imagining—how communities are defined.

In depicting individual characters as participant reporters and storytellers, the writers I examine in my study help define local communities through their depiction of the interaction of reporters and their subjects. While acknowledging that their reporters are working from within the institutions of journalism, one of the most prominent and influential institutions of modernization, these writers create the sense of presence that Benjamin sees slipping away in the triumph of the printed page over the spoken word; they create characters that readers can identify with and suggest the way personal relations can act as a response to abstract economic and social relations and an overabundance of information. In critiquing the rise of advertising

and publicity, they also offer a critique of journalism as an institution that is in keeping with Habermas's dissatisfaction with a public sphere increasingly beholden to market forces and private gain rather than public ideals. While all of these arguments inform my readings below, Benedict Anderson's argument is perhaps the most compelling for describing my own goals in completing this study, and it helps to illuminate the lasting value and importance I see in the works under discussion here. In their references to different aspects of journalism, these examples of American modernist literature remain accessible to a broader, potentially more democratic audience in ways that do not dull their literary intricacy or critical edges. Rather, incorporating journalistic features and references is central to the experimental forms of these works and, more significantly, to the way they help create a broader forum for debates about culture and the boundaries of national communities. In these works, journalism does not simply appear as a nod to realism or popular expectations; it functions as the means by which specific acts of imagination help shape new perceptions of reality and new understandings of social relations.

Returning once more to Agee and his reporter contemplating "a work of great, private, and unambiguous art which was irrelevant to audience," we can see that this reporter is himself constructed as a great, public, and highly ambiguous work of art. Connecting different perspectives, classes, and sets of experiences, he, as a reporter, represents an attempt, fraught with obstacles, to bridge such distinctions and imagine a common ground that includes both Agee's subjects and his various audiences. As Agee constructs this reporter throughout the pages of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* he comes to represent a whole host of social relations which are as complex and meaningful as Agee's intricate descriptions themselves, and his final reading of the sound of foxes signifies in the broader context of relations that have been explored in the text through his experiences, reflections, and interpretations. Reading the lives and culture of the tenant farmers through his own fractured perspective, he is himself shaped through Agee's conflicted motives and uncertain sense of who his intended audience should be. In the study that follows, I demonstrate how journalism similarly functions in these prominent works of American modernism as the means by which they not only speak to elite groups of sophisticated readers but become as well important voices in the process by which national conceptions of culture and community are contested and advanced.

Chapter One

The Journalist, the Immigrant, and Willa Cather's Popular Modernism

In Willa Cather's early story "The Count of Crow's Nest" (1896), Harold Buchanan, an artistic young man living in a Chicago boardinghouse, is asked if he is a journalist. He replies, "That is one of the many things I would like to be" (462). Speaking later with the same acquaintance, Harold rather proudly announces, "I doubt my own ability to either gauge the popular taste or fill its demands" (465). Though the idea of an aspiring journalist being willfully out of touch with popular taste seems rather odd, Harold's comments in the "The Count of Crow's Nest" point directly to Cather's own experiences as a journalist and critic and to her ongoing consideration of journalism as a means for writers to shape the expectations of a broad public rather than simply gauge and fill its demands. In this chapter, I examine works from a long period in Cather's career, from her earliest fiction to her masterpieces of the mid-1920s, and I trace how she considers this transformative potential of journalism in conjunction with the similar potential she finds in the influence of recent immigrants.[1] As I show, in her early work Cather most often depicts journalists and immigrants as helping artists shape popular taste and change existing conceptions of culture, while in her later works she depicts journalism as nothing more than a form of advertising and immigrants as narrow-mindedly pursuing financial success. In these changing depictions, Cather continues to create works that are at once accessible and subtly challenging even as she addresses the larger question of whether American culture should be seen as an inclusive enterprise characterized by a sense of possibility or as a closed marketplace already bound by existing values.

Cather's initial optimism about the influence of journalism was in keeping with her own early experiences as a journalist. Though she worked as a high school teacher in Pittsburgh for several years, journalism was her main occupation from her college years at the University of Nebraska until her

late thirties, when she was at last able to support herself through her creative writing. Her career as a journalist spanned several important developments in journalism, as many local newspapers were bought up by national chains at this time and newspapers relied more and more on newswires, nationally syndicated columnists, and advertising sales.[2] Cather's initial work as a journalist was shaped not by business considerations so much as her own developing critical sensibilities. In fact, she published her first pieces in the *Nebraska State Journal* on Shakespeare and Carlyle (O'Brien 157–158), and her early success as a journalist in Lincoln rested primarily on her reviews of literature and the stage (O'Brien 119). Even as Cather earned some needed income for herself, she wrote journalism to influence her audience's taste and explore the role of art in everyday life. As Bernice Slote notes, by 1896 she "had written nearly a half million words of criticism, self-analysis, and explorations into the principles of art and the work of the artist" ("Writer in Nebraska" 4). Given this early experience, and given that journalism provided her with an opportunity to move beyond her hometown of Red Cloud, Nebraska, and find her place as a female writer in the largely male-dominated world of culture and art, it is not surprising that in her early fiction she affirmed that journalism could help shape an audience for her work and accepted the common conception that journalism provided budding writers like herself with valuable training.[3]

Later, as Cather edited a women's magazine in Pittsburgh and then became an editor for *McClure's Magazine* in New York, journalism put increasing demands on her time and creative energies. However, she continued to see journalism as affording the artist the ability to understand and reach a mass audience, and it continued to appear frequently as an element in her fiction.[4] Not much attention, though, has been paid to the important ways Cather used journalism in her fictional works during the middle phase of her career when she was attaining her distinct place in American literature, largely because she wanted it that way. Cather's formative years lasted much longer than most accomplished writers, and she later tried to suppress the republication of much of her early writing (Woodress 194). Even as she incorporated her knowledge of journalism into her fiction, in her reviews and interviews she almost "never confused her journalism with her art and always made a clear distinction between what she did to make a living and what she did for literature" (Woodress 95). In continuing to affirm this break between journalism and fiction, many critics have followed Cather's mythology of her development as a writer by citing the advice of her important mentor and friend, Sarah Orne Jewett, who told her to put journalism behind her in order to follow a literary career and the life of the artist (Brown 140).[5]

In reality, Cather's apparent rejection of her earlier work as a journalist can be seen as more accurately reflecting her increasing pessimism about the artist's ability to engage and transform a popular audience, and the lasting importance of journalism on her fiction is evident in a much later work, *My Mortal Enemy* (1926), in which Nellie Birdseye, the central character, questions her cultural education in relation to journalism in a way that harkens back to "The Count of Crow's Nest." Interestingly, Cather sets *My Mortal Enemy* in 1904, "which for her had been a time of opening possibility, initiating her wonder years in magazines" (Stout 216). In this short novel, Nellie's elderly acquaintance, Myra Henshawe, considers possible careers for her and asks, "Why not journalism? You could always make your way easily there." Unlike Harold, Nellie replies, "Because I hate journalism. I know what I want to do, and I'll work my way out yet" (562). Though many critics have taken Nellie's disavowal of journalism as Cather's own, Cather does not dispense with journalism so readily. Nellie, whose name recalls the famous journalist Nellie Bly, encounters a young, nameless female journalist, who is similarly pursuing a self-directed cultural education. This other woman, who functions as Nellie's double, seems more naïve than Nellie, and her work as a journalist is part of her wide-eyed view of the world. On the other hand, as Susan Rosowski notes, Nellie, despite her apparent dismissal of journalism, casts aside her "romantic ego" and actually functions as a kind of reporter. She "is a highly sensitive recorder rather than a creator, and she is telling Myra Henshawe's story rather than making her own" (Rosowski 155). The lasting importance of journalism to Cather is evident, then, in the way that aspects of her life and personality appear in both the romantic reporter and the seemingly transparent narrator in this work published fifteen years after she left journalism as a career (Stout 219).

In "Behind the Singer Tower" (1912), a story that Cather wrote just as she was about to begin gradually separating herself from her work at *McClure's,* Cather uses different perspectives on journalism to address much larger questions about the role of art in shaping everyday life. In *Becoming Modern: Willa Cather's Journalism* (1999), M. Catherine Down writes, "One could almost say that the subject of 'Singer Tower' is journalism itself, and that the conversations between the characters in the short story argue the virtues of various journalistic plots, characters, and narratorial stances toward character and audience" (132). In addressing these literary questions, Cather uses a narrator-reporter to bring together artists, high society, and immigrants in ways that reveal their common interests in shaping a new understanding of culture. The narrator-reporter of the story describes how

there are five other men on board a ship in New York harbor with him: "two newspapermen—Johnson and myself; Fred Hallet, the engineer, and one of his draftsman; a lawyer from the District Attorney's office; and Zablowski, a young Jewish doctor from the Rockefeller Institute" (44).[6] From this vantage, the reporter sees the city's towering buildings "confronting each other with a question" (44). Rather than directly addressing this question, the men seem at first to be silently thinking about the recent fire at the luxury hotel Mont Blanc in which over three hundred people died.[7]

As the narrator-reporter considers the tragic fire, he uses the newspaper as a touchstone for how the city is known, and he thinks that the hotel's "prices, like its proportions, as the newspapers had so often asseverated, outscaled everything in the known world" (44). Noting that the identities of those killed in similar fires are most often ignored by the newspapers because of their poverty and because "most of them bore names unpronounceable to the American tongue," he considers how the fire at the Mont Blanc was unique in claiming so many wealthy victims: "Never before, in a single day, had so many of the names that feed and furnish the newspapers appeared in their columns all together, and for the last time" (45). The morbid fascination that results from all the names of these deceased appearing together means that for once, New Yorkers have a fear of "being overadvertised" (46). In her descriptions here and throughout this story, Cather invokes muckraking conventions, including revelations of business malfeasance, celebrity scandal, and a consideration of "how the other half lives," in order to go "behind" the surface of the news and suggest more meaningful connections among individuals. As I demonstrate below, the way the newspaper brings disparate people together in this story while at the same time threatening to "overadvertise" their lives appears again in Cather's later fiction, as does her seemingly contradictory and troubling use of ethnic stereotypes and anti-Semitic descriptions.

As the narrator-reporter ruminates on the fire, the other newspaperman, Johnson, breaks the silence: "Did you ever notice . . . what a Jewy-looking thing that Singer Tower is when it's lit up? The fellow who placed those incandescents must have had a sense of humor. It's exactly like the Jewish high priest in the old Bible dictionaries" (46). Zablowski, notably identified as Jewish, politely disagrees and suggests that the tower looks more like a Persian, a Magus, or a Buddha (46). Yet Johnson's prejudices remain linked with the threatening question of the city throughout the story. As Hallet, the engineer, recounts his role in the building of the Mont Blanc while working for one of his college classmates, the famous builder of skyscrapers, Stanley Merryweather, he similarly reveals his own prejudices. Yet despite these

disturbing limitations, Hallet's story acts as a scoop, ultimately providing a more meaningful view of the "overadvertised" fire and its potential for suggesting a more inclusive conception of culture.

In recounting his story, Hallet notes that it is well known that Merryweather's maternal uncle, Hughie Macfarlane, "a thoroughgoing Scotch Presbyterian," made him successful, but he adds information that is not so well known: Merryweather's father was a professor of "Oriental tongues" who, despite looking "like a Baptist preacher," possessed "something in his moist, bright blue eye," something that Hallet claims Zablowski would recognize (47). Hallet is clearly preoccupied with racist paranoia, and as he describes his work on the Mont Blanc, he evokes further ethnic stereotypes, characterizing those working for him as Italian "dagos." His favorite Italian laborer, Caesarino, comes from Ischia, where, according to Hallet, the inhabitants are "swarms of eager, panting little animals that roll around in the dust" and the coral divers "look like little seals" (48–49).[8] Despite these dehumanizing descriptions, Hallet imagines himself in Caesarino's position, working for an unknown, ominous power, and he asks his listeners to do the same and consider how they, too, would "guard the precious little spark of life with trembling hands" (49). As Hallet continues his story, he describes how Merryweather refused to replace some worn cables until one broke and Caesarino and five other Italians were killed by a falling load of sand, an event which led Hallet to quit working on the Mont Blanc. In accounting for Merryweather's lack of remorse when he learns of the Italians' deaths, Hallet says that he has a "truly journalistic mind," a taste for "anything that bites on the tongue" (52). Hallet, blind to his own prejudices, suggests that such a "journalistic" perspective is what creates harmful distinctions among individuals and prevents a shared sense of humanity and purpose.

In his exaggerated ethnic stereotypes, Hallet illustrates the limits of the empathy evoked by muckraking journalism, which generally affirmed the social hierarchy even in its criticism of political corruption and the abuses of big business. As the title of Jacob Riis's well-known muckraking book *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (1890) makes clear, muckraking journalism relied on sensationalism and a sense of separation between reader and subject, viewer and photograph. Yet despite Hallet's prejudices and his criticism of Merryweather's "truly journalistic mind," Cather does not indict journalism as a whole in "Behind the Singer Tower" but instead shows how journalism can offer the means for imagining a more unified community to be realized in the future. While sensationalist journalism often perpetuates negative ethnic stereotypes and names those who stay in luxury hotels while ignoring the names of those who die in building them, Hallet's scoop, as

it is filtered through Cather's reflective narrator-reporter, comes to transcend its obvious limitations and show that a broader reporting perspective offers the means of bringing people together.

While Hallet initially challenges his audience to consider Caesarino's feelings, he eventually formulates an answer to the enigma of the city by recognizing Caesarino's sacrifice as something they all share, even if their sacrifices are less dramatic and costly than his. After describing "the spark of life" in Caesarino, Hallet later wonders why the six men on the boat, like the six men who died in the foundation pit of the Mont Blanc, are "throwing everything we have into that conflagration on Manhattan Island, helping, with every nerve in us, with everything our brain cells can generate, with our very creature heat, to swell its glare, its noise, its luxury, and its power" (53). In making Manhattan a "conflagration," Hallet connects the men on the boat with the men who died in the hotel's construction and in the fire. He concludes that all are willingly to give themselves to this fire because of some significant, "unborn Idea" (54). These terms of sacrifice link "Behind the Singer Tower" with an Arnoldian process of defining culture.[9] As Matthew Arnold writes in *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism* (1869), culture, in the sense of "sweetness and light," beauty and intelligence, creates connections precisely through shared sacrifices in the pursuit of some idea to be realized in the future:

> But the flexibility which sweetness and light give, and which is one of the rewards of culture pursued in good faith, enables a man to see that a tendency may be necessary, and even, as a preparation for something in the future, salutary, and yet that the generations or individuals who obey this tendency are sacrificed to it. (48)

While this comment suggests a potential link between culture as it is defined in terms of artistic production and culture as it is experienced in everyday life, in his consideration of American life Arnold disparages its heavy weight towards practical, "Hebraising" activities and the disproportionate value given to business. For Arnold, "America, that chosen home of newspapers and politics" (15), falls short in developing culture:

> Because to enable and stir up people to read their Bible and the newspapers, and to get a practical knowledge of their business, does not serve to the higher spiritual life of a nation so much as culture, truly conceived, serves; and a true conception of culture is . . . just what America fails in. (17)

In this case, Arnold seems to remove his conception of culture from the practical concerns of day-to-day life to some higher spiritual realm apparently lacking in the United States.

In "Behind the Singer Tower," Hallet's overtly Orientalist comments and stereotypical descriptions of Merryweather tap into the potential anti-Semitism of Arnold's argument. At the same time, in the story's conclusion Cather seems to mitigate these prejudices and offer a more inclusive and positive perspective on American culture. In the end, Hallet doubts Merryweather's awareness of the "unborn Idea" but does include him as a fellow contributor in its realization (54). He recognizes that Merryweather, the industrialist, and Caesarino, the immigrant, make similar sacrifices towards a common goal. Indeed, at times Arnold also grudgingly acknowledges the participation of industrialists like Merryweather in these same terms of sacrifice: "Now, culture admits the necessity of the movement towards fortune-making and exaggerated industrialism, readily allows that the future may derive benefit from it; but insists, at the same time, that the passing generation of industrialists,—forming, for the most part, the stout main body of Philistinism,—are sacrificed to it" (48). The narrator-reporter of the story characterizes Merryweather more positively than Hallet does as one of "the most successful manipulators of structural steel in New York" (47). Merryweather, like the skyscrapers, ultimately represents both human waste and potential achievement; like the city itself, he creates as he destroys and destroys as he creates.[10]

The framed structure of Cather's story illustrates more possibilities for journalism than Hallet's comments would suggest. Recounted through the narrator-reporter's perspective—another kind of "journalistic mind"—Hallet's scoop becomes a means of imagining an inclusive understanding of culture shaped by ideas and stories rather than defined by bigoted distinctions. While Hallet, and Cather as well, can be seen as succumbing to the prejudices of the time, the shared, unborn idea provides a more open-ended perspective from which it can be seen that one does not need to be born an American or conform to an existing set of values in order to assume an American identity. As Joseph R. Urgo writes in *Willa Cather and the Myth of American Migration* (1995), Cather generally follows a more Progressive stance in defining American identity and culture as an ongoing process rather than a defined set of features. For her, Americans are "a people under construction whose ultimate characteristics exist primarily in the future," and they "believe in this future because only there does the nation exist as a single, harmonious whole" (Urgo 112). As Urgo emphasizes, "American culture, in the context of Willa Cather's writing, exists as a finished object in the future

alone" (195). From this perspective, immigrants do not assimilate to existing values but assist in shaping them, and in this way they can complement the ambitions of a writer like Cather who hopes to reach and transform a broad public audience.

Written as she was preparing to leave journalism and turn all of her attention to writing fiction, "Behind the Singer Tower" shows how Cather's early journalistic career and her literary imagination are linked in her aspirations for a community shaped by open-ended ideas rather than limited by existing values. In the story, two Italian characters, Caesarino and the famous tenor Graziani, who is described as dying in the Mont Blanc fire, further underscore just how the "high" culture of art is connected to everyday life. In questioning Caesarino's motivation for coming to the United States, Hallet wonders why he left a place where life shapes "itself to tradition and ancestral manners as water shapes itself to the jar" and traveled "so far to cast his little spark in the bonfire" (53).[11] As is the case with Hallet's grudging acceptance of Merryweather, this description of Caesarino, when seen in light of the death of his countryman, Graziani, suggests a further continuity between the workers who built the tower and the singers who stay in it and between European cultural traditions and American innovations. Beginning with deadly tragedy and ethnic divisiveness, Cather's story criticizes journalistic minds that succumb to sensationalism even as it presents journalism as a means for connecting individuals in a collective process aimed at achieving a common cultural ideal.

Shortly after finishing "Behind the Singer Tower," Cather began work on *The Song of the Lark* (1915), a novel in which she engages journalism as a means of mediating a Romantic conception of the artist with a detailed representation of contemporary social conditions. While the scope and style of this novel make it seem more like an anomalous work of realism in Cather's oeuvre, seen in light of her ongoing engagement with journalism it appears as another assertion of her early commitment to a kind of popular modernism. Though Cather, like other modernist writers, was concerned with issues "of alienation and historical discontinuity, of schism between the individual and the world" (Rosowski xiii), the way she incorporates references to journalism into her fictional works also shows her interest in continuity and connections across different times and among different individuals. While journalism adds a level of formal and thematic complexity to her most innovative works, particularly her modernist masterpiece *The Professor's House* (1925), in *The Song of the Lark* it illustrates most clearly how the impact of art and literature can extend beyond an exclusive community of artists and critics to join individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds and social groups.

In order to read *The Song of the Lark* as an example of Cather's popular modernism, it is necessary to return to some of the most common strategies for reading modernist texts that I touched on in the introduction. While the New Critics isolated the literary text from its historical context, many influential contemporary critics isolate the production of modernist literary texts from mass-market consumption. For example, Pierre Bourdieu defines modernist literature through the way modernist writers reject the marketplace and financial concerns. In his influential *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (1993), Bourdieu identifies popular journalism with commerce and argues that both are necessarily opposed to the production of art, and he further claims that modernist writers, beginning with Flaubert, began to conceive of themselves as part of "an autonomous artistic field" in which their primary audience consists of other writers (*Field* 155). At its most basic, this "artistic field is a *universe of belief*" in which the economic world is reversed; "that is, the fundamental law of this specific universe, that of disinterestedness . . . establishes a negative correlation between temporal (notably financial) success and properly artistic value" (164; italics in original). In other words, modernist writers gain stature with their peers within this field by rejecting the values of the marketplace and popular and financial success. Not surprisingly, Bourdieu, like the New Critics, identifies poetry as the purest art form because of its seeming independence from the world of monetary and political values (62). For him, financial success necessarily shifts power from artists to their audiences, while "the professional ideology of producers-for-producers and their spokespeople establishes an opposition between creative liberty and the laws of the market, between works which create their public and works created by their public" (127).

Focusing more directly on journalism's formative role in the creation of modernist literature and its audience, Thomas Strychacz, in *Modernism, Mass Culture and Professionalism* (1993), similarly argues that writers such as Henry James, Theodore Dreiser, John Dos Passos, and Nathanael West used journalism to make cultural distinctions and define literary discourse as a kind of autonomous field. According to Strychacz, these modernist writers do in fact create their public rather than have their works created by their public: They invoke journalism only to reject its appeal to a common ground and develop a distinct discourse—a separate, if limited space, for literature in which modernist writers and their sophisticated readers can establish their authority. In Strychacz's reading, "the playful, self-reflexive, esoteric writing strategies characteristic of a modernist text function precisely through an exclusionary process that, by rewriting and defamiliarizing the texts and language of mass culture, achieves a narrow but real authority in our society"

(77). In Strychacz's account, then, American literary modernism acknowledges the widespread impact of journalism only to use it as a foil, and American modernist writers separate literature from mass culture and increase its prestige in conjunction with new groups of "professional" readers associated with the university, small magazines, and elite publishers.

While Strychacz rightly points to the contemporaneous emphasis on professionalism in both journalism and literary writing, he assumes that the later development of modernist literature rests on an authority solely derived from the mastery of a difficult language (83). Since Anderson, Hemingway, and Cather are known for a style that seems close to journalism in its clarity and diction, and since they include many obvious references to journalism in their work, their omission from *Modernism, Mass Culture and Professionalism* is notable. In another interesting study, *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative: The Timely and the Timeless* (1994), Phyllis Frus does offer readings of Hemingway and, in passing, Cather and Anderson, while also claiming that modernist literature created its own audience of professional, trained readers. Classifying these three writers as examples of the influential "objective or minimalist variety of modernism" (54), Frus sees them as creating a style that uniquely "fits the definition of literature that was soon to be refined by the New Criticism" (57). Frus argues that even as New Critics demoted journalism to a non-literary status, the illusion of objectivity created by writers using seemingly journalistic techniques fit perfectly with the demands of the New Critics since such writing actually requires sophisticated literary training in order to be properly decoded and understood (79).

Though it is interesting that Frus largely avoids fictional works in which Anderson, Cather, and Hemingway depict journalism directly, she is right to call attention to the constructed nature of this "objective" style and the contingent ways in which definitions of literature are constructed and promoted.[12] Likewise, Frus accurately questions the ways in which Hemingway and Cather divided their fiction from their journalism as a means of promoting their literary careers; such divisions do not hold up in the way these writers represent journalism in their own fiction and literary writing. For example, in Cather's famous essay "The Novel Démeublé" (1936) she seems to separate the language of the newspaper from the material of art. She states at the beginning of the essay, "One does not wish the egg one eats for breakfast, or the morning paper, to be made of the stuff of immortality" (834). Later, she adds, "If the novel is a form of imaginative art, it cannot be at the same time a vivid and brilliant form of journalism. Out of the teeming, gleaming stream of the present it must select the eternal material of art" (836). At first glance, Cather's comparison seems straightforward: The

ephemeral language of journalism is different from the permanent language of the novel. Yet upon closer examination, it becomes clear that "the eternal material of art" is inevitably derived from the present of the newspaper, and the artist, in striving for "immortality," remains in the stream of time. Perhaps that is why the "it" that selects this "eternal material" refers oddly to the novel rather than to the writer. Similarly, Cather's engagement with journalism in her fiction is more complex, extended, and meaningful than she lets on.

While Frus sees Cather and Hemingway making such distinctions as they reify existing ideologies—both in terms of prevalent definitions of literature and broader social and economic structures—I am arguing throughout this study that these writers incorporate aspects of journalism into their works in ways that reveal more complicated relationships to journalism and its potential for making connections among different conceptions of culture and different kinds of audiences and communities. While Bourdieu, Strychacz, and Frus all offer extremely useful insights for considering the historical reception of modernist texts and the construction of a modernist canon, the different ways they separate literary production from other kinds of production fail to account for the goals of particular writers, the effects of their writing, and the specific representations of journalism and other forms of mass culture in their literary works. For example, in seeing the language of modernist writers as limiting the scope of their reception, all three of these critics ignore the immense and enduring popularity of Cather, Anderson, and Hemingway and the ways in which they depict features of journalism as a means of crossing social boundaries and challenging existing literary conventions. While I agree that seemingly objective journalistic styles are most often carefully crafted, I am arguing that references to journalism can also be seen as the precise means by which writers like Cather construct complex works which appeal both to critical and popular audiences. Rather than embracing an avant-garde sense of revolutionary politics or limiting their conceptions of literary writing to fit a narrow attention to specialized discourses and forms, the writers in this study use journalism as a means of negotiating a broader space for literature in which culture can be more inclusively conceived and openly debated.

In several key works of the 1910s Cather features female singers as a means to explore both the pressures and the possibilities that come with popular and financial success. In *The Song of the Lark,* the singer, Thea Kronborg, achieves such success, but by taking on the role of a reporter at a key moment in her artistic development and by later engaging the power of journalism, she is able to influence the expectations and values of her

audience according to her own ideas of the power of art. As Thea shapes a new kind of community through her education as a singer, she shows that seemingly anyone who helps her can join the community she leads.[13] While the native-born Americans Dr. Archie and Ray Kennedy give financial support to Thea despite their lack of any formal knowledge of music, other diverse figures—including Wunsch, a German piano teacher, "Spanish Johnny," a Mexican singer, the Nathanmeyers, Jewish patrons of the arts, and Harsanyi, a Hungarian piano teacher and concert pianist—all contribute to Thea's understanding of music and are joined together through her training and ultimate success.

Thea's broadly conceived artistic ambitions clearly touch on issues of national and ethnic identity. For example, after returning to her hometown, Moonstone, Colorado, from her musical studies in Chicago, Thea is criticized by her siblings for singing at a Mexican dance. As Thea begins to argue against the use of ethnic stereotypes and defend the Mexicans' cleanliness and manners, her mother, who partially recognizes Thea's talent, intervenes, "No use spoiling your Sunday dinner with race prejudices. The Mexicans suit me and Thea very well. They are a useful people" (499–500).[14] Yet as Thea's sister Anna continues bickering with her, it becomes clear that for Thea this argument hinges not only on alleged ethnic characteristics like "usefulness" but, more significantly, on the way that artistic commonalities and an appreciation for "talent" can transcend conventional values. According to Anna, Thea's singing for the Mexicans but not for their father's church reflects badly on the entire family, since they fail to meet the town's expectations of how a minister's family should behave. Defending the Mexicans instead on artistic grounds, Thea forcefully responds, "I'll sing for them any time they ask me to. They know something about what I'm doing. They're a talented people (500)."

In rejecting Anna's arguments, Thea is in effect rejecting the character described as the most "American" member of her family (410). Significantly, Anna's "Americanness" is largely a reflection of the way she reads the newspapers, and she thereby illustrates the potential for journalism to affirm prejudices rather than suggest diverse social connections. The eldest daughter of parents whose first language is Swedish, Anna might be expected to be the least American of the Kronborg children, but her reading clearly shapes her conventionally American demeanor, behavior, and values: "Everything had to be interpreted for Anna. Her opinions about the smallest and most commonplace things were gleaned from the Denver papers, the church weeklies, from sermons and Sunday-School addresses" (410–411). Tellingly, the Denver and Chicago papers create "prejudices" and "classifications." While

Anna seems at first to be "mild except where her prejudices were concerned, neat and industrious, with no graver fault than priggishness," she actually has "shocking habits of classification" and "the kind of fishy curiosity which justifies itself by an expression of horror" (411). Like Merryweather's journalistic mind in "Behind Singer Tower," Anna's taste for what bites on the tongue aligns her character with the sensationalism of the newspapers, and for her, the newspapers emphasize distinctions within an American society already defined by conventions. Fitting the Mexicans into her existing classifications, she fails to realize that their artistic knowledge benefits Thea's singing and suggests a common ground of experience.

Though Cather's portrayal of Anna points to her later pessimism about artists' relationships with both journalism and their audiences, Thea's more constructive use of journalism reflects Cather's early optimism about artists successfully harnessing the power of the press to reach a broad American public and influence a sense of national cultural identity. While Anna's curiosity is passive, "fishy," and based on existing classifications, Thea's active curiosity as a kind of reporter enhances her artistic education by encompassing different, seemingly disparate, aspects of contemporary experience. When Thea arrives in Chicago and takes up residence as a boarder with two German women, she tells them that she would like "to see two places, Montgomery Ward and Company's big mail-order store, and the packing houses, to which all the hogs and cattle that went through Moonstone were bound" (464). As Nicole H. Parisier argues, these two destinations are more typical of a journalist on assignment than a young musician (149).[15] Another boarder, a young Swedish immigrant who works in Packingtown, fulfills Thea's second wish and takes her to the slaughter yards there. He thinks that it "would be something of a lark to take a pretty girl through the slaughter-houses. But he was disappointed." As Thea asks "innumerable questions," she "neither grew faint nor clung to the arm he kept offering her." After closely observing the slaughterhouses, she later writes "her father a brief but clear account of what she had seen" (464). As Parisier rightly notes, Thea's trip "manufactures a connection between industrial activity and the writing process" and, more broadly, implies a connection as well between her artistic endeavors and the business of the city (148–149). Her writing itself makes Thea seem "like a journalist . . . more interested in practical details than aesthetic questions. The named characteristics of her account, its brevity and clarity, emphasize its newspaper-like qualities, not its poetic ones" (Parisier 149). The way Thea handles this "lark" suggests that the sources of her musical inspiration come in part from her ability to observe as a reporter and make connections across different aspects of modern life.

As a kind of reporter, Thea tries to understand the commercial basis of the city and the life of its workers, including its immigrants. Far from scorning the production and distribution of commodities or accepting secondhand attitudes from her reading, she observes for herself and records her own observations. Her interest in department stores and slaughterhouses reflects an interest in how goods circulate between the town and the larger world, and her trip to Packingtown helps her understand the small town's relationship to the metropolis and her own movement from the small stage of Moonstone out into the wide world of music and art. In the context of her later achievements, her trip and written report demonstrate that Thea is able to combine a journalistic mind with artistic aspirations, and she mediates between everyday experiences and the search for more lasting values in ways that are in keeping with Cather's own early journalism and writing. For example, as a journalist, Cather wrote reviews in which she avoided predetermined, hierarchical classifications, and she reviewed every kind of performance held in Lincoln's two theaters and many different kinds of publications, from Henry James's novels to drug store romances.[16] Similarly, Thea does not discriminate among Indian ruins, Spanish Johnny's Mexican folk songs, or her musical education in Germany as she develops her understanding of music and contributes to the growth of a more sophisticated yet inclusive concept of American culture.

Though Cather seems to embrace the potentially elitist Arnoldian idea of culture as a solely spiritual endeavor, she also depicts the liberal side of his argument: Even as Thea struggles to enter the rarified air of a select few opera singers, she forms a diverse family of artistic supporters who together serve as a model of American community. As Frederick Ottenburg, Thea's eventual husband, tells her when she is about to meet her first patrons, the Nathanmeyers, a Jewish couple: "We may have a musical public in this country some day, but as yet there only the Germans and the Jews." He goes on to encourage Thea to put all her trust in Mrs. Nathanmeyer, stating, "Whatever she says about music, about clothes, about life, will be correct" (530). In contrast to her troubling descriptions of Jews and other ethnic groups elsewhere in her writing, here Cather shows a willingness to imagine an American culture drawn from many sources, and this willingness is linked to her optimism that artistic integrity and journalistic minds can together make a new kind of public.

While the prospective development of this public points towards the future, Thea's education as an artist also addresses the question of a usable past and a sense of continuity that goes beyond the bounds of ethnicity and family. When she visits the ruins of a Native American civilization in the

cliff-dwelling canyons of the Southwest, she decides that it is better to make her own decisions "than meekly draw the plough under the rod of parental guidance." In Panther Canyon, she realizes, "The Cliff-Dwellers had lengthened her past. She had older and higher obligations" (555). In choosing a cultural inheritance, Thea again rejects the conventional American family determined by conventions and exemplified by her sister Anna. In doing so, she emphasizes that anyone who contributes to this process can define what it means to be an American and hence become an "American." Like Alexandra in *O Pioneers!* (1913), Thea "seeks out and selects her own community" based on her developing sense of aesthetic ideals (Harvey 42). In engaging journalistic perspectives and appealing to diverse individuals and traditions, Thea comes to recognize different possibilities for achieving artistic success and for redefining how this success is measured. Journalism and a core audience largely made up of immigrants and outsiders offer her the means to shape the tastes of a broad audience beyond strictly financial concerns and existing expectations. What begins as Thea's individual need for support becomes, through her artistic vision and acquired sense of "obligations," an opportunity to transform culture as it is more broadly conceived.

Yet Thea, like Cather herself, finds it difficult to describe this link between art and life in any kind of direct, explicit statement. The closest Thea comes to articulating her ideal occurs when she is alone in Panther Canyon and defines art as a vessel that holds life, but even this moment of insight is realized indirectly through the voice of the narrator (551–552).[17] However, Cather's struggles to describe individual artistic success and the development of a new public become, in the end, the means by which she invites readers to participate more actively in constructing meaning in the text. For example, in omitting certain incidents from the text, such as Thea's letter to her father and her important trip to Germany, Cather, in effect, asks readers to fill in these missing reports. While Thea is unable to describe the progress of her own education, Cather shows professional journalists similarly failing to explain or describe her achievements. During her performance as Sieglinde at the Metropolitan Opera, nearly all of her old friends and supporters, including, rather improbably, Spanish Johnny, are there, and all thoroughly enjoy her performance.[18] However, the journalist and the chorus director who join Archie, Harsanyi, and Ottenburg afterwards can only comment on Thea's unique success in conventional terms, as Cather emphasizes by putting their clichéd comments in quotation marks: "The chorus director said something about 'dramatic temperament.' The journalist insisted that it was 'explosive force,' 'projecting power.'" Listening to Thea's long-time supporters, this journalist hopes to get some suitable

material from them, but he is unable to get a clear explanation of Thea's success from Harsanyi or her other supporters (697).

Though the journalist's stale language and exaggerated eagerness might suggest a criticism of journalism in general, they can more accurately be seen as a reflection of Cather's own difficulties in describing Thea's success (Brown 189). In fact, as the novel concludes, Cather's narrator also fails to rise above the level of cliché, stating flatly, "Artistic growth is, more than it is anything else, a refining of the sense of truthfulness" (697). Cather goes on to conclude this chapter with a similarly anti-climatic summary that begins, "Here we must leave Thea Kronborg. From this time on the story of her life is the story of her achievement" (699). These deflating statements again underscore that passive responses are insufficient if one is to recognize the unifying, transformative potential of art and journalism. However, just as Anna's passive reading of the newspaper contrasts with Thea's active reporting, these hackneyed responses to her success suggest another way of reading that might place Thea's success in a proper context and make meaningful connections among those individuals and groups who have helped her reach this culminating moment.

While the journalist and narrator struggle to describe Thea's achievements, Spanish Johnny and Thea's Aunt Tillie, two of her earliest supporters, exemplify alternative reading practices that invite Cather's readers to participate themselves in recognizing the full scope of Thea's success. After Thea's triumphant performance, Spanish Johnny waits to watch her leave the opera house and then walks down Broadway,

> wearing a smile which embraced all the stream of life that passed him and the lighted towers that rose into the limpid blue of the evening sky. If the singer, going home exhausted in her cab, was wondering what was the good of it all, that smile, could she have seen it, would have answered her. (699)

Though he articulates his response with a smile rather than with words, Spanish Johnny is, in effect, a better reporter than the journalist fumbling with clichés. However, the fact that Thea does not see him or know that he was in attendance leaves it up to readers to link the exhausted artist with this affirmative and accurate response. Likewise, Cather here echoes her earlier description of the stream in Panther Canyon, the stream that Thea recognizes as an emblem of life and a source of her art. Thus, through Spanish Johnny Cather's readers can recognize the way Thea brings her aesthetic ideal from the ancient, desolate Cliff-Dwelling canyons to the vibrant, teeming canyons of Broadway.

In the epilogue, the novel returns to Moonstone and focuses on Thea's Aunt Tillie rather than on Thea's siblings, and Tillie comes to serve as an ideal newspaper reader. Though Tillie is only a minor character early in the novel, this conclusion highlights the role of journalism in Thea's education and success as a singer, and Cather filters such important information as Thea's wedding with Ottenburg through Tillie's reading of the Denver newspapers (701). In concluding the novel from Tillie's perspective, readers are asked to imitate her active, journalistic curiosity and complete Thea's artistic success by imaginatively "writing" the newspaper articles that Tillie reads but that Cather omits from the text. In effect, Cather's readers must make up for the deficiencies of the journalist who fails to capture the scope of Thea's achievement and the narrator who merely summarizes it, and in this way, these absent newspapers become a final invitation to recognize the ways in which Thea has connected Moonstone with the world and linked Aunt Tillie, Spanish Johnny, and the other diverse figures in the novel into a new community devoted to the recognition and development of artistic achievement.

Thea's unmitigated success is not repeated in Cather's writing, however. While in *The Song of the Lark* the artist helps to create a new kind of public and a new kind of community, in subsequent works Cather begins to suspect that audiences are already fixed in their expectations just as the communities they represent are already fixed in their values and boundaries. Given these perceived limits, it is not surprising that Cather begins to view the key conduits between artists and popular audiences—journalism and immigrants—with increasing skepticism. While Cather began her writing career by conceiving of American culture in a state of possibility and flux, she comes to be increasingly concerned that such possibilities have been stifled and lost. Commenting on the favorable impression immigrants made on Cather after she moved, as a child, from Virginia to Nebraska with her family, Urgo writes,

> The vision of American culture projected in the novels of Willa Cather is one of continuous movement, of spatial and temporal migrations, of intellectual transmission and physical uprooting. Willa Cather was the one major novelist of her era to recognize that migration links peasant and poet, immigrant and aesthete, into one global pattern of consciousness. (17)

Urgo's description is correct, I think, in characterizing the fiction Cather wrote up until the mid-1910s and some of her later historical fiction, though I would add journalism as a key element in creating this linked sense of

consciousness. However, around the mid-1910s, Cather began to question whether these links are necessarily beneficial; likewise, she began to see journalism and immigrants as merely contributing to the advancement of commerce rather than to an unfolding conception of American culture.

Two controversial stories of this time, "The Diamond Mine" (1916) and "Scandal" (1919), pick up where *The Song of the Lark* ends and describe artists after their initial success. However, in these two stories Cather's growing pessimism about the course of American culture and her ambivalence about her own increasing success are reflected in the way her central characters struggle to deal with their problematic relationships with their audiences. In this context, journalism is defined as a form of advertising that circulates images, scandalous stories, and commodities, and the artist must struggle to pursue artistic goals while managing a public identity based more on celebrity than artistic merit. Cather's take on journalism at this time was not unique; many journalists who began their careers before the Great War were alarmed by the increasing role of publicists and publicity agents and came to see the journalism that emerged during the late 1910s as little more than a form of advertising catering to the expectations of the largest audience possible.[19] This assessment is born out by the facts of the newspaper industry: By the 1920s, newspapers relied heavily on syndicated columns, wire releases, and stories produced by publicity firms, as described in John Dos Passos's *U.S.A.* (1930, 1932, 1936).

Cather's identification of journalism with advertising in "The Diamond Mine" and "Scandal" represents an important turning point in her extended and significant use of journalism in her fiction and essays, and these two stories show how Cather considered the iconic status of artists even as she was herself becoming such an icon. While Cather remained interested in journalism as a necessary means for reaching the largest audience possible, in "The Diamond Mine" and "Scandal" she does not show artists acting as reporters as Thea does in *The Song of the Lark;* instead, she shows artists trying to manipulate journalism through the use of publicity. This use of journalism inspires consumption rather than contemplation as it turns artists into images circulating apart from their work. The singers in both stories show that reaching a broad audience does not necessarily mean influencing its development, and they find it easier to become cultural icons by meeting an audience's expectations rather than by challenging them. As in Cather's earlier fiction, the immigrants in these two stories seem to offer artists potential support and the means of connecting with larger audiences, but these options, too, are shown to be limited in their effectiveness because of the way that immigrants have been compromised

by their devotion to values based on commerce rather than the possibilities of artistic culture.

The narrator of "The Diamond Mine," identified only as Carrie, functions as a kind of celebrity reporter, as when she announces near the end of the story, "Cressida Garnet, as all the world knows, was lost on the *Titanic*." Cressida, a famous singer, could have taken an earlier passage, but she chooses to wait for the *Titanic*'s first crossing because "she still believed that all advertising was good" (430).[20] Although her ability to advertise herself brings her popularity, her reliance on advertising undermines her artistic integrity and ultimately proves to be fatal. The crucial role of advertising and publicity is evident from the very beginning of "The Diamond Mine." As the story opens, Carrie is boarding a trans-Atlantic ship and sees photographers surrounding another passenger, Cressida, Carrie's old friend and cousin by marriage. Cressida

> was good-naturedly posing for them. . . . She was much too American not to believe in publicity. All advertising was good. If it was good for breakfast foods, it was good for prime donne,—especially for a prima donna who would never be any younger and who had just announced her intention of marrying for a fourth time. (397)

Though her photographic image connects her with her audience through a network of publicity and advertising, this audience is simply a group of consumers who share existing tastes and desires and who choose their singers as easily as they choose their breakfast cereals. Her audience's limited imagination seems connected to their limited sense of a national identity; they, like Cressida, are already "much too American."

Cressida does not assume the active curiosity of the reporter but instead generates the publicity of a celebrity icon, turning her career into a financial "diamond mine" for her grasping family. In this context, her "accompanist and shadow," Miletus Poppas, plays a crucial role. Carrie's presentation of Poppas, a "Greek Jew" (398), is filtered through her attitude towards American culture, and like immigrants in other works by Cather, he helps suggest the possibilities that exist for American artists. Early in the story, Carrie sees Poppas "dropping overboard a steamer cushion made of American flags" given to Cressida by one of her fans, and she notes that Poppas is not "too American," as evident from the "indescribably foreign" element in his English and his dislike for "the American rendering of the language" (398). At this point, though, it is unclear whether Carrie sees Poppas's action as a sign of respect for Cressida's art or as a sign of disrespect towards his adopted country.

Though Poppas might seem, at first, to be little more than a threatening alien, Carrie comes to evaluate him in terms of the way he shapes Cressida's relationships with her art and her American audience. She shows how Poppas understands the best ways to gauge the expectations of Cressida's audience even as he helps her pursue the advancement of her art; in effect, he tries to help Cressida use publicity without becoming dependent on it. His specific identity as a Greek Jew similarly suggests an Arnoldian synthesis of "Hebraic" and "Hellenic" tendencies and traditions, and he balances practical concerns and a love of beauty.[21] Such a positive characterization initially seems unlikely, given that Poppas also seems interested in Cressida's money and is described by Carrie as "a vulture of the vulture race" (402). However, as Carrie compares Poppas to Cressida's family and other admirers, she begins to overcome the limitations of her anti-Semitic prejudices and recognize Poppas's positive influence. Later, she suggests that Poppas understands Cressida and treats her more tenderly than Cressida's own family. Carrie "felt that if he ever had her thus at his mercy,—if ever he came upon the softness that was hidden under so much hardness, the warm credulity under a life so dated and scheduled and 'reported' and generally exposed,—he would hold his hand and spare" (402). While her earlier descriptions of Poppas recall the troubling elements of anti-Semitism in Cather's earlier story, "Behind Singer Tower," Carrie goes on to describe him in terms that recall the unifying ideal represented by the fire in that story. She notes that while the others would have "stamped out" "the fire at which Cressida warmed herself," Poppas appreciates the importance of her secret aspirations and protects and nurtures them (402). Only he recognizes the sources of Cressida's inspirations, knows how to balance private inspiration with what is publicly reported, and questions the idea that "all advertising was good."

Yet the idea of Poppas "sparing" Cressida underscores her vulnerability: The artist as icon is as fragile as her image. In the absence of critical modes of journalism, Cressida remains dependent on publicity and an inner circle of supporters. According to Carrie, Poppas has been the only one to help Cressida develop her artistry: Though Cressida, like Thea in *The Song of the Lark,* goes to Germany to study music and develop her voice, "the accomplished singer who came back . . . was largely the work of Miletus Poppas" (409). However, unlike Thea, Cressida is unable to transcend the limits of her family and lead the core audience that appreciates her art; instead, she finds that her "relations with people always become business relations" (405). Only Poppas helps her reach beyond her grasping family and mitigate this tendency. Though many assume that Cressida's relationship with Poppas is sexual, her artistic relationship with him is in fact more important than any

of her consummated relationships. As Carrie recalls, when forced by her second husband to choose either him or Poppas, Cressida chose Poppas (409). While Cressida's use of publicity often subsumes art to money, Poppas manages the financial success of her career without being overwhelmed by the marketplace: "He possessed a great many valuable things for which there is no market; intuitions, discrimination, imagination, a whole twilight world of intentions and shadowy beginnings which were dark to Cressida" (409). Poppas offers Cressida both usable cultural traditions and a sense of personal continuity: "He was like a book in which she had written down more about herself than she could possibly remember" (410). While Cressida promotes her image in the newspapers, Poppas serves as her private diary, the record of those artistic struggles which are not traded in the market.

Another immigrant, Cressida's third husband, Blasius Bouchalka, highlights Poppas's importance in terms of this understanding of the media and the marketplace. Blasius's story, in typical Cather fashion, forms a distinct narrative in the middle of "The Diamond Mine." A musician and composer, Blasius, a Bohemian by nationality and a "Bohemian" in his lifestyle, is innocent of the market. When Carrie and Cressida first see him, he is playing violin in a restaurant orchestra and clearly impoverished, yet Cressida tells Carrie, "I didn't quite have the courage to send him money. His smile, when he bowed to us, was not that of one who would take it" (414). Carrie recounts Blasius's early life as an orphan studying music in a monastery in similar terms: "During the time when most of us acquire a practical sense, get a half-unconscious knowledge of hard facts and market values, he had been shut away from the world, fed like the pigeons in the bell-tower of his monastery" (419). Interested in music for its own sake and unaware of "market values," Blasius seems to counter Cressida's dependency on marketing her image and her propensity for merely turning her voice into money. However, after marrying Cressida, Blasius does little to support her singing and quits writing and making music himself. It is only after Cressida finds Blasius in a compromising position with her Czech maid and divorces him that he begins to compose again (429). Though initially Blasius makes Cressida happy, he does not know how to balance commerce and art; innocent of the marketplace, he cannot help Cressida promote both her career and her artistry the way Poppas can. Impoverished, Blasius is inspired; comfortable, he is not.

While Poppas tries to protect Cressida's life from becoming too reported, Blasius enjoys her fame, and their relationship is from beginning to end a matter for the newspapers. His ignorance of market values is reflected in his ignorance of the ways in which publicity works. Cressida's first visit to

his lodgings "had, of course, been reported, and the men about the Opera House had made of it the only story they have the wit to invent" (423). Tellingly, Cressida's audience inserts her story into their rounds of celebrity gossip, and her life and her artistic aspiration are limited by these existing narratives and expectations. Likewise, at the end of their marriage, "her divorce was announced in the morning papers before her friends knew that there was the least likelihood of one" (427). Like Blasius, Cressida's other husbands also enjoy basking in her celebrity, and after she marries for the fourth time, Poppas can no longer protect her life from being too reported. When Cressida dies on the *Titanic,* still believing that all advertising is good, "The Diamond Mine" turns out to be an obituary framed by two trans-Atlantic voyages and two attempts on Cressida's part to advertise herself, one successful, one fatal. Cressida disappears as Thea Kronborg does—into the news. However, while Thea acts as a reporter and her final appearances in the papers connect diverse individuals in a community founded around her art, Cressida is engulfed in publicity and drowns.

In the conclusion of the story, Carrie notes that she was one of the executors of Cressida's will and that during the legal wrangling over the estate she had become more friendly with Poppas, siding in his favor when Cressida's family challenged the bequest she left to him (431–432). In acknowledging and supporting Poppas, Carrie does what Cressida never could do—she rejects the greed of Cressida's family. After Poppas moved to a healthier climate in Asia, Carrie had written him, and she claims, "His reply . . . prompted this informal narration" (432). In identifying Poppas as the inspiration for Carrie's story, Cather underscores his importance despite the initial ways in which he is described. In his understanding of both the benefits and dangers of publicity, he comes to serve as a model for how the American artist can succeed in a media environment dominated by the increasing power of advertising. However, Poppas's ultimate departure from the American scene reflects Cather's growing pessimism about achieving such a balanced success in her own career. Written at a time when she was becoming involved in presenting her own image to the public, planning how her works were advertised, and enjoying the comforts of her success, "The Diamond Mine" suggests that she had misgivings about becoming addressing her work to an audience already set in its tastes and preferences.[22] Even as she was gaining popular and critical success, Cather seems to have worried that her image might appear before a wide audience without necessarily influencing its expectations. Seen in the broader terms of her career, the story reflects a fading hope that artists could use the contributions of a core audience of immigrants and the power of journalism to help create and shape a larger

American public. As the artist as reporter is replaced by the artist as publicist in Cather's fiction, it is publicity rather than art that prevails.

"Scandal," a story written around the same time as "The Diamond Mine," similarly depicts journalism as a form of advertising and the artist as a publicist who advertises her image. When the story opens, Kitty Ayrshire, a successful singer, is in bed with tonsillitis.[23] Like Cressida, she assumes all advertising is good, and she "wished to believe that everything for sale in Vanity Fair was worth the advertised price" (451). Pierce Tevis, a friend who visits her, associates this belief with her innate ability to generate publicity and myths. He claims, "A whole staff of publicity men, working day and night, couldn't do for you what you do for yourself" (455). Yet from the beginning, this ability is shown to be costly and depleting. Even her doctor, Miles Creedon, "took his share of her vivacity." As he tries to soothe her, he cannot help but admire her, "and whoever admired, blew on the flame" (453). While Poppas tries to prevent Cressida from being too reported and protects her sources of inspiration, here Kitty's intimate acquaintances are consumers. Aware of how all these admirers affect her sense of identity, she tells Tevis, "I'm getting almost as tired of the person I'm supposed to be as the person I really am" (455).

Kitty, like Thea, draws admirers from diverse cultures. When she sings, the long line of devoted fans at the box-office is made of less wealthy Americans and "Italians, Frenchmen, South-Americans, Japanese" (451). Kitty also attracts wealthy individuals to her performances, yet she is suspicious of the level of appreciation among all her audience members and "no prouder of what she drew in the boxes" than she is of the long line waiting outside to buy tickets (451). In contrast to her misgiving about her admirers, Kitty seems more in harmony with the small group of her supporters and friends who are depicted in a painting in her study. Gathered together in a salon in Paris, they are shown to be joined in an "atmosphere of graceful and gracious human living" (454). Yet Kitty has left this nurturing European atmosphere behind; like Cather herself, she is not satisfied with the small, select audience of the salon but instead tries to reach a broad American audience despite the perils this entails.

The costs of her efforts are brought out during Tevis's visit. While her friends in Paris seem to value her artistry, Kitty's American audiences value myths of celebrity instead, and Tevis tells her two stories that describe how the power of her image exceeds her own control and intrudes into her private life. When Kitty tells Tevis she is considering marriage, he responds, "Don't disappoint your public. The popular imagination, to which you make such a direct appeal, for some reason wished you to have a son, so it has given you

one." He then proceeds to recount a story he has often heard about Kitty having a son who lives in St. Petersburg with his presumed father, Grand Duke Paul (455–456). Tevis's second and longer story, about Siegmund Stein, a wealthy businessman, underscores how difficult it is to control the power of publicity. While at the Metropolitan Opera House, Tevis saw Stein with a woman who looked like Kitty and heard the men around him discussing the couple. Though they take the woman to be Kitty, Tevis recognizes that she is not. Yet as Tevis tells her, even the press agent for the opera house believed that Kitty was present in the audience with Stein (459). Kitty's ability to generate publicity undermines her ability to control how her image is circulated, and the appearance of her image in the opera house seems to gain more notice than her actual performances there.

Because journalism appears to be completely controlled by commerce, even the newspapers cannot present the facts of the case. When Tevis meets a journalist friend of his, Dan Leland, he learns that Dan's fellow reporters also believe that Kitty is Stein's mistress. With Tevis's urging, he and Dan investigate the truth and track down Kitty's imposter, discovering that Stein found her while auditioning models for his new department store. While about to embark on one plan of advertising, he stumbled upon another, using Kitty's attractive appearance and artistic prestige (461). Yet Dan is unable to report this story or even mention it "because Stein carries heavy advertising in his paper" (459). Though Kitty believes in the power and accuracy of advertising, in this case advertising leaves journalism beholden to the market and to scandalous stories that the public finds appealing.

Despite Stein's use of this imposter, it initially seems as if Stein, an immigrant, might be redeemed by his ability to balance market and artistic values as Poppas does in "The Diamond Mine." Tevis notes that after Stein came to the United States from Austria, he visited libraries and museums, studied art and music, and used his growing fortune to collect art. The undiscovered "poets, actors, musicians" whom Stein entertained and supported "regarded him as a deep, mysterious Jew who had the secret of gold, which they had not. His business associates thought him a man of taste and culture, a patron of the arts, a credit to the garment trade" (460–461). As Tevis continues to use similar ethnic stereotypes to describe Stein, he suggests that Stein does not ultimately balance his devotion to the arts and to his trade: Unlike Poppas, Stein embraces a concept of American culture defined solely by financial success and uses art as simply a means to facilitate commerce. According to Tevis, whenever Kitty sang at the opera, Stein appeared in his box and often took along some of his best customers. These men "carried themselves as if they were being let in on something; took possession

of the box with a proprietory air, smiled and applauded and looked wise as if each and every one of them were friends of Kitty Ayrshire" (461). Kitty's image and power of publicity again invade her personal life; first her "family" and now her presumed lover and "friends" have been given to her by her public. While Kitty hopes to use publicity for the sake of her artistic career, Stein promotes her image to sell coats to his large buyers, who in turn use it to sell coats to their customers. As Tevis notes, all over the country there were "clothing stores where a photograph of Kitty Ayrshire hung in the fitting-room over the proprietor's desk" (462). As Cather's repetition of "proprietor" suggests, Kitty's image, though useful to her, is in effect owned by others: Her audience inserts her image into existing myths of celebrity, while businessmen insert it into their business practices.

Tevis connects these uses of her image with questions of narrative and art. He speculates that Stein never had to lie to impress his customers; it was enough to imply a relationship with Kitty and then "let their own eager imaginations do the rest" (462). When Tevis sees Stein at a restaurant with Kitty's double, he gains some insight into how the people around him can believe Stein's masquerade. He recognizes that they "want the old, gaudy lies, told always in the same way" and find exactly what the seek (462). Just as newspaper readers insert Cressida's actions into "the only story they have the wit to invent," Kitty's audience imposes its own worn stories on her life. Significantly, Tevis's observations suggest that an audience that wants only posed images and old lies is not likely to respond to artistic excellence or formal innovations. For such an audience, an icon is to be seen and consumed, not contemplated, appreciated, or followed.

Cressida and Kitty, then, illustrate the challenges of achieving a popular modernism in light of the increasing influence of publicity and advertising on journalism. In consistently reaching beyond a limited audience, Cather herself faced the possibility of limited expectations; in using her image and the power of publicity to promote her innovative writing, she similarly risked having her image inserted into her audience's existing stories of celebrity. Furthermore, Tevis's pessimism suggests that while a small, select group may try to understand the artist, this group's disdain for a popular audience means that it offers little help to the artist trying to expand the reach of her work. In fact, both this core audience and a broad public appear to be simply different kinds of consumers. The mass audience consumes images and lies, while the more exclusive core audience consumes the flame of inspiration; both rely on a sense of ownership, a proprietary control over the artist. If Stein represents the failure of immigrants to challenge existing commercial values and influence a mass audience, Tevis represents the parasitical nature

of a modernist audience, the professional readers and critics whose claims to authority are based more on exclusive access and a sophisticated discourse than on the ability to bring about broad cultural transformations.[24]

In the conclusion of Tevis's story, his pessimism and elitism emerge even more strongly. He notes Stein's success in ascending the social ladder and describes how Stein and his wife, a department store heiress, "now inhabit a great house on Fifth Avenue that used to belong to people of a very different sort" (462). Wary of change, Tevis is concerned with preserving prejudices rather than considering how art may overcome and transform them. While in *The Song of the Lark,* immigrants shape a future American audience, here immigrants represents a break with the past and an affirmation of the worst aspects of the present. In this context, Stein's individual success in assimilating actually parallels the failure of the artist, as in both cases existing commercial values predominate over the possibilities opened up by art.

After listening to Tevis, Kitty replies with a story of her own which further emphasizes the decline of journalism, the perils of publicity, and the challenges the artist faces in promoting her work. As Kitty explains, she helped Peppo Amoretti, an Italian singer, escape conscription in his native country. After having difficulty resuming his career in the United States, he was invited to perform at the Steins' new home on Fifth Avenue, provided Kitty would sing with him. In recounting her visit, Kitty also uses anti-Semitic descriptions, though the artistic appreciation and intelligence of her Jewish audience inspire her to sing a rare encore (464–465). She tells Tevis that a week after the engagement, Peppo

> came to me in rage, with a paper called *The American Gentleman,* and showed me a page devoted to three photographs: Mr. and Mrs. Siegmund Stein, lately married in New York City, and Kitty Ayrshire, operatic soprano, who sang at their house-warming. . . . Poor Peppo wasn't mentioned. Stein has a publicity sense. (466)

After hearing Tevis's stories, Kitty only now realizes that Stein had used her image one last time as an advertisement of his increasing success. When Tevis admonishes Kitty for having "enormous publicity value and no discretion," she announces that she can see no value in such discretion: "If the Steins want to adopt you into the family circle, they'll get you in the end." Characterizing both herself and her double as "the victims of circumstance," she claims that "in New York so many of the circumstances are Steins" (467).

In this controversial ending to a controversial story, Kitty further dehumanizes Stein by turning him into a circumstance. Yet her grudging admiration

of his publicity sense and her acknowledged loss of control over her family and friends suggest that Cather's choice of words must be properly understood as part of a larger set of "circumstances." Cather's repeated anti-Semitic descriptions have often been defended on typical grounds, through references to positive descriptions of Jewish characters elsewhere in her work, to her significant close relationships to Jews in her personal life, and to the relatively more egregious attitudes held by her contemporaries and peers.[25] While each of these points may be debated, the recurrence of such descriptions cannot, I think, simply be explained away. At the same time, these anti-Semitic descriptions and other ethnic slurs seem to signify beyond the narrow bounds of personal prejudice and prevalent bigotry. Rather, they are better understood in relation to similarly recurring, often positive, depictions of journalism and immigrants in general throughout Cather's work. As I am arguing, there is an important critique of existing values and even a sense of cultural possibilities and inclusiveness that can be seen when these troubling descriptions are acknowledged and examined in this wider context.

For example, while "Scandal" and "The Diamond Mine" can be seen as turning points in Cather's career, they are specifically related to *The Song of the Lark* in their composition histories and portrayal of opera singers (Woodress 282), and comparing the stories to the novel illustrates Cather's understanding of the different roles journalism and immigrants might play in helping a writer like herself achieve a kind of inclusive popular modernism. While Thea moves from a small group, an ethnically diverse "artistic family," largely separate from the marketplace, to a larger public, Cressida and Kitty are stifled by members of their inner audience: Cressida's husbands exploit her fame, while Kitty finds her path towards starting a family of her own is blocked by the stories already created for her. In contrast to Thea, who uses the written word to further her ideas of art, Cressida and Kitty become not reporters but publicists, and their images and scandals are all that seem to make the papers. There is no evidence that the reporters who cover them or their fans who buy the papers have any interest in understanding their art; they prefer beautiful images and sensational stories. While Thea's reporting skills and appearances in the newspapers bring art and life together to create diverse communities, Cressida's and Kitty's appearances in the newspapers alienate them from their audiences.

The immigrants in "The Diamond Mine" and "Scandal" exemplify the challenges facing an artist when journalism is dominated by advertising. To ignore publicity is to risk becoming irrelevant to all audiences, as Blasius and Peppo exemplify; to embrace publicity is to risk becoming submerged in the marketplace, as Stein shows in his relations with Kitty and her double. In these

two stories, immigrants are faced with either assimilating to existing values or remaining marginalized. Only Poppas shows how an artist might balance artistry and market values, private and public lives, personal inspiration and the advertised image, but even his success is temporary and limited. Where once Cather viewed journalism as influencing popular taste and immigrants as offering alternative cultural perspectives and traditions, she begins to see both as being subsumed to existing commercial values. While the difference between Cather's descriptions of the Nathanmeyers in *The Song of the Lark* and Stein in "Scandal" might be invoked as the basis for trying to mitigate the egregiousness of her anti-Semitic descriptions, a more convincing explanation of these differences lies in the way they parallel her changing understanding of American culture. As these works demonstrate, Cather initially conceived of a more inclusive and forward looking sense of American culture shaped by the pursuit of art and open-ended ideals, but she came to believed that this conception was being overwhelmed by an American dream defined solely as financial success.

Despite these growing misgivings, Cather remained committed to reaching and influencing a broad public, and she continued, for some time, to recognize the need to engage journalism on whatever terms it offered. Her dilemma in needing to face the powers and perils of publicity may be why in the end Kitty is more like Stein than Peppo. While Peppo, like Blasius, shows that an ignorance of market values and publicity can limit an artist's influence, Kitty recognizes the need to have a "publicity sense." For Cather, the question remained whether such publicity could still provide some possibilities for shaping a national culture or whether it would inevitably entangle artists in a culture of consumption and completely undermine their influence. As the 1920s began, Cather's increasing popularity and critical acclaim only made this question more acute. Late in her career, in her "Prefatory Note" to *Not Under Forty* (1936), she would famously declare, "the world broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts," referring to the year in which her novel *One of Ours* won the Pulitzer Prize and became her biggest seller (812). By associating this feeling of historical rupture with the time of her greatest popular and financial success, Cather suggests just how skeptical she had become about the power of art to influence the marketplace, and her typically modernist claim for a break in history is intertwined with her broader concerns about the role of artists in defining American values and the support that journalism and immigrants might offer them in this regard. While in 1922, she spoke publicly against the forced, rapid assimilation of immigrants and English-only laws (Stout 118), by the 1930s she was lamenting the flood of immigrants in her private letters (Stout 162).

Cather's two novels of the mid-1920s, *The Professor's House* and *My Mortal Enemy,* link the forward-looking vision of *The Song of the Lark* with the backward view of her later historical novels. In both works, Cather continues to explore the feasibility of a popular modernism and the potential influence of artists through a consideration of journalism and immigrants. As noted above, *My Mortal Enemy* presents a journalist as a kind of double for the narrator and uses these two young women to offer different ideas about how a budding artist might best pursue her cultural education and how a writer might best recount her story. A similar doubling operates as well in *The Professor's House* as Godfrey St. Peter, "the Professor," considers the relationship between his two sons-in-law, the Scottish newspaperman Scott McGregor, and the Jewish industrialist Louie Marsellus. Ultimately, Godfrey's personal crisis at the end of the novel can be seen as paralleling Cather's crisis in her pursuit of a popular modernism, and the way he comes to balance his understanding of his sons-in-law reflects Cather's own efforts to balance, at least provisionally, her need to maintain a private sense of artistic inspiration while pursuing, and perhaps influencing, a broad audience.

As with her descriptions of Jewish characters in her earlier works, Cather's descriptions of Louie are, at times, little more then ethnic caricature, though at other times he is described in clearly positive terms. After the death of Tom Outland, Godfrey's best student in his many years of teaching, Louie marries Tom's fiancé, Godfrey's daughter Rosamond, and develops the patent for Tom's aeronautic invention. The way Louie spends his money on luxury items makes him seem shallow and ostentatious to Godfrey, though more often than not he finds him to be "magnanimous and magnificent" (202). Likewise, Godfrey has reservations about Scott, the husband of his younger daughter, Kitty. As he remembers, he had tried to prevent their marriage when Scott was a young, struggling journalist. After Scott began to write a daily, syndicated prose poem, his earnings enabled him to marry Kitty. Yet Godfrey "had expected a better match for Kitty. He was no snob, and he liked Scott and trusted him; but he knew that Scott had a usual sort of mind, and Kitty had flashes of something quite different" (135).[26] At other times, Godfrey looks at Scott with "a great deal of sympathy":

> Scott was too good for his work. He had been delighted when his daily poem and his "uplift" editorials first proved successful because that enabled him to marry. Now he could sell as many good-cheer articles as he had time to write, on any subject, and he loathed doing them. Scott had early picked himself out to do something very fine, and he felt that he was wasting his life and his talents. (140)

These descriptions of Scott as having "a usual sort of mind" and yet being "too good for his work" suggest Cather's more critical view of journalism at this time. Scott himself realizes the limits of his work. When he complains about the hypocrisy of Prohibition, Louie asks him, "Why don't you journalists tell the truth about it in print?" Scott replies, "And lose my job? Not much!" (162). Earlier in the novel, when Scott worries about finishing an article, Rosamond suggests that he rest in order to refresh his mind. Scott replies,

> Unless I keep my nose to the grindstone, I'm too damned spontaneous and tell the truth, and the public won't stand for it. It's not an editorial I have to finish, it's the daily prose poem I do for the syndicate, for which I get twenty-five beans. This is the motif:
>
> > "When your pocket is under-moneyed and your fancy is over-girled, you'll have to admit while you're cursing it, it's a mighty darned good old world."
>
> Bang, bang! (123)

For Scott, journalism is neither about reporting the truth nor influencing one's audience; it is simply about giving the public what it wants. In this way, Scott realizes Cather's fears about the influence of journalism: Instead of helping to spread artistic achievement, improve critical judgments, and negotiate a common set of values, journalism can simply be a means of converting words into dollars by meeting the existing "bang, bang" tastes of the public.

In *The Professor's House,* Cather sees journalism as equating words with money and projects these failures of journalism onto Louie, who functions as the outsider or "immigrant" in the novel. Scott, in particular, sees Louie undermining literary values by ineptly using language and following questionable tastes. Though Scott realizes that Rosamond "detested his editorials and his jingles," when he and Kitty are alone he makes fun of Louie's description of Rosamond as "Tom Outland's virtual widow." Scott asks Kitty, "Now what the hell is a virtual widow? Does he mean a virtuous widow, or the reverseous? Bang, bang!" (123). Godfrey also worries about Louie usurping or degrading Tom's memory. Remarking on Louie and Rosamond's construction of an estate called "Outland," Godfrey tells his wife that Louie and Rosamond have what Tom earned but never enjoyed, and "the least they can do is to be quiet about it, and not convert his very bones into a personal asset. It all comes down to this, my dear: one likes the florid style, or one

doesn't" (125). Despite their talents and different levels of self-consciousness, both brothers-in-law seem at first to do little more than support the taste for that which bites on the tongue, the gaudy lies and "bang, bang" style that the public expects and is willing to pay for.

Seen in a broader set of circumstances, Godfrey's comments about Louie reflect back on himself and on Cather as well. Key ideas for Godfrey's historical writings on the Spanish explorers came together through his friendship with Tom, and he has won a prestigious and lucrative award for these works. In other words, he, like Louie, continues to profit from Tom's ideas, and he is also moving into a new house with the money Tom indirectly helped him earn (116). The doubts he has about Scott and Louie point to his hesitation in editing Tom's diary: He recoils from their "bang, bang" style and the thought of turning memories and words into money, even as he feels a responsibility to share Tom's story with as many people as possible. Given these mixed feelings, it is not surprising that his attempts to prepare Tom's diary lead to his own crisis of identity. Just as Cather took the initial inspiration for her two previous novels, *One of Ours* and *A Lost Lady* (1923), from the obituary pages (Woodress 303, 340), Godfrey finds his inspiration among the dead and is anxious himself about turning "bones into a personal asset."

Godfrey's impasse in editing Tom's diary reflects Cather's own impasse in pursuing a popular modernism, and his relationships with his "adopted" son, Tom, and his two sons-in-law reflect the challenges Cather faced in writing *The Professor's House.* In reaching out for a large audience, she had to navigate between her loyalty to a personal vision of language and literature and find a style which would still appeal to the largest possible audience. Godfrey's mixed feelings towards Scott and Louie can thus be seen as a reflection of his admiration for their success and his repulsion at the means by which they have achieved it. He would like to convey Tom's ideas about life as successfully as Louie has conveyed Tom's ideas about aeronautics, yet he would also like to avoid being the salesman that Louie is; he would like to reach a broad audience, as Scott has, but he would also like to challenge existing truths rather than rephrase stale commonplaces. These conflicts culminate near the end of the novel when, paralyzed by indecision and frustration, Godfrey nearly commits suicide.

The distinct middle section of the novel, "Tom Outland's Story," helps to clarify these issues and set the terms by which Godfrey can ultimately achieve a tentative sense of balance. Like Thea in *The Song of the Lark,* Tom and his partner, Rodney Blake, explore the cliff dwellings of the Southwest and discover a sense of how different traditions can shape contemporary

culture and identity. However, when Tom takes the news of his and Rodney's discovery of a preserved Cliff City to Washington D.C., he is ignored by everyone except a low-level government secretary and a French diplomat. Meanwhile, Rodney, back at the Cliff City, sells their relics to a German collector, literally turning the bones of the Native Americans into an asset. When Tom returns, he berates Rodney for this sale and tells him, "You've gone and sold your country's secrets, like Dreyfus" (247). Rodney, a devoted reader of the newspapers, defends Dreyfus, and his persistent optimism provides a faint reminder of Cather's early view that journalism and immigrants might help to shape a receptive American audience.[27]

Tom's anti-Semitic remark about Dreyfus can also be interpreted in terms of Cather's identification with Godfrey and the other characters who comprise his extended family. Though Godfrey admires Tom, he is clearly more like Louie and Scott in his willingness to pursue material success and consider the necessity of compromise in making one's work accessible to a large audience. While Tom remains loyal to his private vision of success, he can only find an audience of three, a secretary, a French diplomat, and, finally, a professor. Furthermore, while Tom's death in the Great War represents a kind of triumph of his uncompromising individuality, it also means that his discoveries and his life story will remain unknown unless others take on the challenge of sharing them. Though Louie and Scott may have compromised too much in reaching a broad audience, the deficiencies of their strategies are mitigated when compared to the alternative, the silence of Tom's death.

Godfrey almost follows the same route as Tom by accepting suicide as an escape from his own crisis, a crisis which is precipitated by the imminent return of his family from Europe and his loss of his old house. In "The Ambiguous Politics of the Aesthetic" (1999), Sean McCann sees Tom's visit to the cliff-dwelling canyons and Thea's similar visit in *The Song of the Lark* as further instances of Cather reinterpreting Matthew Arnold and putting forth a definition of culture not based on the relics of the art world but on the anthropological basis of everyday life (40–41). McCann claims that for Arnold and Cather, "art and expertise constantly seek to become not *merely* art, but common culture" (51; italics in original). In making larger claims about the relationship between aesthetics and politics, McCann sees Cather and James Agee as two exemplary figures: Both saw that if art is to provide both an autonomous critical perspective *and* the means for reshaping common culture, then the relationship between art and everyday life must be a kind of dialectic movement between critical distance and necessary contact. In my more in-depth reading of Cather (and Agee, whom I consider below), I see this movement being clearly dramatized through an engagement with

journalism. While in *The Song of the Lark,* Thea literally brings this drama to the stage, Godfrey's drama is the more solitary one of a writer.

Godfrey laments the decline of the university as it moves from the disinterested purity of the arts and sciences to the professional trades, a shallow emphasis on social graces, and attention to the practicalities of everyday life (130). At the same time, he seems to believe that Tom's discoveries can provide a new ideal that will inspire not only Americans but the world. In trying to share Tom's writing and experiences, Godfrey's challenge is, as McCann describes, like Cather's: To keep his autonomous authority as a writer while trying "to be not abstract, professional, and exclusive but the voice of an egalitarian nation" (McCann 48). The professor needs to make Tom's diary into a book that is not simply for other professors.

To move past this challenge and the crisis it brings, Godfrey, like Cather, must bridge the gap between Tom's abstract idealism and the shallow material success of Louie and Scott. This means, in part, facing the issues his sons-in-law ignore and acknowledging both the possibilities and the imperfections he sees in these two figures of the journalist and the immigrant. If Godfrey's efforts to make Tom a kind of adopted son represent his first attempt to find an ideal audience, his second attempt challenges him to expand the scope of his audience and accept Louie and Scott into his family. Despite their limitations, they provide him not only with an immediate audience for his ideas but with more effective models for reaching a large audience as well. This is evident at the very end of the novel when Godfrey recovers from his near-death experience by accepting a kind of journalistic mind, a new sense of the real, and by being welcomed into the arms of another immigrant, his simple German housekeeper, who saves him from being asphyxiated. When he revives and sees her, he knows that his "sense of obligation" to her, at least, is real: "And when you admitted that a thing was real, that was enough—now" (270). Like Thea in *The Song of the Lark,* Godfrey recognizes both a new sense of obligation in expressing himself and a need to confront the "real" life around him. Given that the middle section of the novel, "Tom Outland's Story," can be taken as a version of the story that Godfrey edits from Tom's diaries, he seems successful in shaping these obligations into a form that can be shared more broadly. Likewise, given both the critical and popular success of *The Professor's House,* perhaps Cather's most formally innovative work, Cather also seems to have been successful in meeting this same challenge and entering the marketplace without succumbing to existing expectations about her writing.

In *The Professor's House,* as in earlier works, Cather explores ways of mediating between artistic goals and the expectations of a popular audience

through her depictions of journalists and immigrants. However, during the late 1920s the increasing prosperity of the country as a whole and Cather's own financial success brought her only more doubts. As she "became richer and richer and America wallowed in prosperity in the years before the stock market crash in 1929, she became increasingly preoccupied with the corrupting power of money" (Woodress 372). Her preface to *The Best Short Stories of Sarah Orne Jewett* (1925), later reprinted in *Not Under Forty* as "Miss Jewett" (1936), reflects these preoccupations and misgivings:

> Imagine a young man, or woman, born in New York City, educated at a New York university, violently inoculated with Freud, hurried into journalism, knowing no more about New England country people (or country folk anywhere) than he has caught from motor trips or observed from summer hotels: what is there for him in *The Country of the Pointed Firs?*
>
> This hypothetical young man is perhaps of foreign descent: German, Jewish, Scandinavian. To him English is merely a means of making himself understood, of communicating his ideas. . . . It is a surface speech: he clicks the words out as a bank clerk clicks out silver when you ask for change. (856)

Once again, Cather uses the journalist and the immigrant to measure her aspirations for achieving a kind of popular modernism. Here, in her later pessimism, she combines the two into a single, threatening figure, confirming her fears that writing simply means turning words into silver and that someone like herself, "hurried into journalism," will never be able to create more lasting and influential works. Where once Cather depicted the immigrant and journalism as a means for imagining how artists might connect with a broad audience and influence its values, here the immigrant remains foreign, journalism remains a matter of money, and the immigrant-journalist sees language as nothing more than a way to circulate existing ideas.

Throughout much of Cather's writing, then, journalism and immigrants measure her hopes for how artists might shape a new understanding of American identity and culture. While in *The Song of the Lark,* Cather depicts both journalism and immigrants as contributing to the triumph of the artist and the formation of a new, inclusive community that encompasses Cather's readers, her later works show a growing anxiety about publicity defining journalism and financial success defining the aspirations of immigrants, leaving artists in a more tenuous position, caught between critical demands and popular expectations. In an early piece of journalism, Cather

draws on Alexander Pope's image of a "treacherous isthmus" to describe an artist crossing "between the troubled, inconstant tides of commercial art and those remote, still waters whose depths are not gauged and whose stars do not set" (*World* 450).[28] Cather's repeated references to journalists and immigrants over the course of her career call into question readings of her work which emphasize this seemingly straightforward passage from fleeting, commercial art to a timeless realm of high art apart from the market. While Cather seems to have found a place for herself among the stars that do not set, some of her most interesting works are the ones I have considered here, works which are situated squarely on this treacherous isthmus and which reach towards the immediate demands of a popular audience and yet continue to challenge accepted expectations and static conceptions of literature and culture.

Chapter Two

Sherwood Anderson's Imagined Communities

In Willa Cather's fiction, journalism is often portrayed as a potential means for bringing together diverse individuals in a new conception of the public. When journalism achieves this potential, Cather's artists act as leaders and shape broadly defined communities through their own artistic pursuits. In his most well-known work, *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), Sherwood Anderson also engages aspects of journalism as a means of exploring the relationship between artists and audiences, but for Anderson artists do not so much lead communities as act as their representatives. Often read as either the story of a town's decline or an artist's education, *Winesburg* combines these two strands of narrative through its portrayal of the town's newspaper, the *Winesburg Eagle,* and its lone cub reporter, George Willard. George's work and his literary aspirations make him at once a particular individual exploring the bounds of his imagination in a small town and a general "young man" allowing others to imagine themselves and their communities through him. As a reporter, his observant receptiveness to other people's stories gives a human face to journalism so that the newspaper emerges in its historical context as both a prominent example of the anonymous, national forces of modernization and the means by which individuals can respond to these changes.

Like other short story sequences, *Winesburg* raises the question of whether a unified whole emerges from the connected stories, and at the same time, it raises the parallel question of whether a community emerges from among the individuals in the text.[1] As J. Gerald Kennedy notes, "The simultaneous independence and interdependence of stories in a sequence fosters a corresponding awareness of both the autonomy of individual stories and the elements that conjoin them" ("Semblance" 195). Kennedy further argues that the question of community is one of the defining features of the short story sequence: In presenting "collective or composite narratives, they may all be said to construct tenuous fictive communities" ("Introduction" xiv). In

Winesburg, Anderson presents a complex description of how a town responds to historical disruptions, and the contrast between possible connections and feelings of alienation emerges in his depiction of the newspaper and its lone reporter. As I argue below, while the newspaper might seem to undermine a sense of community that already exists, in reality it offers the shape of a community as it might come into being.

Winesburg brings together the idea of a "fictive" community Kennedy describes and the idea of an "imagined" community outlined in Benedict Anderson's seminal work, *Imagining Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2nd ed., 1991). While the arrangement of chapters, repetition of characters (particularly George), and focus on a defined space roughly surrounding the imaginary Winesburg, Ohio, suggest a kind of "fictive community," Anderson's presentation of the newspaper and the young reporter raises implications that go well beyond the small town described in the text: Together, the newspaper and the reporter suggest the way a national community is imagined into existence. Benedict Anderson shows that a centralizing process is necessary for the formation of modern nation-states, given their size and scope, and he examines specific historical contexts in which such abstract nation-states have been "imagined" into existence through the growth of a print media.[2] He claims the nation must be "imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (6). As he notes, the increasing standardization and secularization of time in the modern era created a sense of history as a collective procession through empty, homologous time. Printed works, such as the novel and the dated, serial newspaper, a "one-day bestseller," fill these units of time and make experiences seem as though they are being shared through collective acts of simultaneous reading. In particular, reading the newspaper suggests the contours of a unified community, as each individual reader establishes a similar relationship to the fragmented news stories (33–36).

In this chapter, I show how the *Winesburg Eagle* and its reporter function to bring together its readers in a local community, Winesburg, Ohio, while the text of *Winesburg, Ohio* acts in the way that Benedict Anderson describes and brings together its readers in imagining a national community. These two functions are connected through George's maturation and the implication that he is responsible for writing the text itself some time after his departure from Winesburg in the concluding chapter of the text. Such a sense of narrative circularity is implied in the writer who appears in the introductory "The Book of the Grotesque." Just as George seems

responsible for the stories in *Winesburg* at the end of the text, this writer seems responsible for them at the beginning. Though it is interesting to speculate on the relationships among this initial writer, George Willard, the narrative voice which appears throughout the text, and Anderson himself, the obvious importance of the writer in this introductory chapter is that he gives the stories that follow a retrospective cast. The sense of nostalgia present in this introduction and the subsequent narrative asides serve as important reminders that *Winesburg* reflects the time of its composition during the mid- to late-1910s as much as it does the decade of the 1890s in which it is largely set. As such, the alienation that permeates pre-industrial Winesburg must be seen as largely a reflection of attitudes that were to emerge in the post-World War United States. From this perspective, the perceived alienation in *Winesburg* casts doubt on the idea that any meaningful community ever existed in the town at all; instead, the text suggests how an idea of community might develop in the period of its composition and initial publication, as a response to the opportunities opened up by such modern innovations as the contemporary newspaper.

Most readings of *Winesburg* that describe it as an elegy for the small town community ignore the evidence in the text itself that no meaningful community ever existed. Instead, such readings either reflect contemporary debates about movement to the city and the value of being close to the land or draw on the criticism of standardization and modernization that is actually found in Anderson's less successfully realized novels, such as *Windy McPherson's Son* (1916) and *Poor White* (1920). For example, Irving Howe, in his influential study of Anderson, describes Winesburg's inhabitants this way:

> The books' major characters are alienated from the basic sources of emotional sustenance—from the nature in which they live but to which they can no longer have an active relationship; from the fertility of the farms that flank them but no longer fulfill their need for creativity; from the community which, at least by the claim of the American mythos, once bound men together in fraternity but is now merely an institution external to their lives; from the work which once evoked and fulfilled their sense of craft but is now a mere burden; and, most catastrophic of all, from each other, the very extremity of their need for love having itself become a barrier to its realization. (101)

While summarizing the most common arguments about the sources of alienation in *Winesburg,* Howe seems to acknowledge that the community he finds in *Winesburg* is based more on a "claim of the American mythos"

than historical facts. He more accurately describes the social relationships portrayed in *Winesburg* as being "simultaneously unformed and atrophied" (77). Yet as he considers George Willard's role in the text, he seems to accept unequivocally this mythos of community when he argues that such a community can be "restored" rather than created. For the other townspeople, Howe argues, George is

> a young priest who will renew the forgotten communal rites by which they may again be bound together. . . . As they approach George Willard, the grotesques seek not merely the individual release of a sudden expressive outburst, but also a relation with each other that may restore them to collective harmony. They are distraught communicants in search of a ceremony, a social value, a manner of living, a lost ritual that may, by some means, re-establish a flow and exchange of emotion. (102–103)

Howe is right in noting that the characters in *Winesburg* lack the social rituals and ceremonies that might offer a means of connection. Furthermore, unlike Anderson's other fiction, *Winesburg* contains almost no direct commentary on economic changes or social issues. Yet despite the lack of evidence that any meaningful social institutions or rituals ever existed in Winesburg, Howe, like other critics, assumes that they were in fact present at one time and that they are now in decline, and he suggests that George might "renew," "restore," and "re-establish" a sense of communal relations. Tellingly, Howe does not consider George in his historically situated role as a cub reporter but rather describes him as the ahistorical, archetypal figure of the priest.

Likewise, Thomas Yingling's more recent reading, "*Winesburg, Ohio* and the End of Collective Experience" (1990), while also useful, similarly rests on contradictory assumptions about whether a community existed in Winesburg before the encroachment of industrialization and the mass-market. Initially, Yingling tries to situate a "loss of collective identity" in an historical materialist context:

> Rather than read this collapse of collectivity and the concurrent burdens of interiority as 'given,' or as psychological inevitabilities in the text (and in modern culture), we might ask why they have occurred. Historical materialist analysis would suggest that changes in the social and economic articulations of culture were largely responsible for this modern alienation from public communion. (106)

While here Yingling implies the existence of some former "collectivity" and describes alienation as "modern," he later suggests, more accurately, that perhaps a collective experience of community never existed in Winesburg at all. Instead, he claims that in *Winesburg* even "supposedly 'preindustrial' labor is a source of alienation" and thus "renders problematic a long tradition of cultural fantasy that equates labor on the land with a completely unalienated existence" (111). Yingling, however, does not pursue the implications of these claims. Instead, he argues that Anderson responds to the rationalization of the modernizing process not with specific details drawn from materialist history but rather with a kind of nineteenth-century romanticism grounded in the ahistorical, "universal" values of heterosexual identity. Yingling argues that Anderson affirms "the notion that the individual is powerfully, radically free of material limitation" even as he limits this freedom by imposing his own ideas of normative sexuality on the community he describes (114).

While Howe is right that Winesburg is almost completely devoid of social institutions and collective rituals and actions, and while Yingling is right that Anderson depicts sexuality as limiting interaction and communication, neither of their arguments is adequately grounded in the complex context that emerges from the structure of *Winesburg* and the way it engages contemporary social issues through its depictions of the newspaper. Furthermore, Yingling does not give Anderson the credit he deserves for exploring different permutations of sexuality and sexual repression. In the context of his time, Anderson is remarkably sympathetic in his portrayal of homoerotic desires and the sexual repression forced on women, and the failed marriages that recur throughout *Winesburg* suggest that Anderson was well aware of the limits of normative heterosexual relationships. Rather than furthering myths of pre-industrial community or offering a "universal" standard for communities in prescriptive sexual relations, Anderson depicts a specific reporter and newspaper to show how modernizing forces might not only challenge existing values but also offer the means of imagining a more broadly conceived and inclusive sense of community.

Anderson's repeated descriptions of failed heterosexual relationships and the fragmented structure of *Winesburg* work together to emphasize a particular moment of historical disruption. In *The Plague of Fantasies* (1997), Slavoj Zizek connects sexuality, narrative structures, and representations of history in ways that help to illuminate the relationship among these terms in *Winesburg.* Zizek argues that the collective value placed on marriage can actually cause a retreat to private fantasies that underscores a sense of alienation. He begins his Lacanian analysis by claiming that "'there is no sexual

relationship,' no universal formula or matrix guaranteeing a harmonious sexual relationship between the genders; because of the lack of this universal formula, every subject has to invent a fantasy of his or her own, a 'private' formula for the sexual relationship" (7). This is precisely the process that *Winesburg* foregrounds: Characters repeatedly recognize that sexual norms, epitomized by the emphasis placed on marriage, fail to create harmonious, meaningful relationships, and when they arrive at this moment of recognition and confront this collective lack, they find themselves immersed in private fantasies that cannot be expressed in general terms and shared.

Zizek further argues that typical narrative patterns, such as the Bildungsroman, simplistically accept the validity of these private fantasies. By focusing on a single individual, these narrative patterns obscure both this lack of harmonious relationships between the genders and the unresolved tensions present in the historical moment in which a text is written. By offering a linked series of events in an individual's life, all leading up to a moment of closure and resolution, the typical Bildungsroman creates meaning retrospectively, disperses historical social tensions over time, and masks "the absolute synchronicity of the antagonism in question" (12). Because of this, such typical narratives often create the sense that some essential historical point has been lost when in reality it is just beginning to emerge as a quality worth considering: "the paradox to be fully accepted is that when a certain historical moment is (mis)perceived as the moment of loss of some quality, upon closer inspection it becomes clear that the lost quality emerged at this very moment of its alleged loss" (12–13).

Winesburg embodies this paradoxical relationship between the text and its historical moment, and its loose structure and repetition of failed private fantasies disrupt the expectations raised in typical narrative patterns. Instead, *Winesburg* reveals the limits of the collective fantasies that underlie the text and allows for the recovery of historical trauma. The sense of loss that many critics find in *Winesburg* needs to be reevaluated in the terms that Zizek describes: What seems to be a description of the prewar loss of the traditional, small town community is actually a description of the emerging small town community at the moment Anderson is writing, a moment characterized by increased industrialization and the growth of a mass-market during and after the Great War. While the narrative of a traditionally plotted novel might mask this historical disruption by tracing the life of a single character, *Winesburg* reveals the trauma of this moment by dispersing the story of the main character, George, among portrayals of other characters and their failed sexual relationships. As Zizek suggests, since history "does not follow the logic of narration," this departure from a conventional narrative structure

provides a more accurate sense of historical disruption and demands a reevaluation of a perceived historical loss (13). In its fragmented form, *Winesburg* calls attention to the falsity of the underlying fantasy that collective values have already established rules for relationships and a sense of community, and it challenges the existing fictions of community that lie beneath individual character's sexual fantasies. In Zizek's terms, *Winesburg* is an example of "true art," for, as he claims, "The artifice of 'true art' is thus to manipulate the censorship of the underlying fantasy in such a way as to reveal the radical falsity of the fantasy" (20). Despite its lack of specific historical references, *Winesburg* is profoundly historical in the way that Zizek describes, and the structure of the text, as much as its content, serves as a critical commentary on its historical moment.

In challenging the existing collective fantasy of meaningful sexual relations, *Winesburg* opens up the possibility for imagining more meaningful fictive communities into existence. Readers are able to connect individual experiences of this fantasy and its repeated failure through George's work as a reporter, aspirations as a writer, and repeated considerations of language. Though he also pursues his own version of this fantasy, his reputation as a budding writer and his work as the lone cub reporter for the *Winesburg Eagle* allow him to learn of others' fantasies, and the knowledge he gains in this way ultimately allows him to face the limits of his own personal desires and the "radical falsity" of any existing sense of community in Winesburg. While George's development emphasizes the static lives and stifled desires of the other characters, the lack of social and cultural institutions and rituals only underscores the importance of the newspaper as practically the sole means by which the town can imagine itself as a viable community.

The prominence of the newspaper and its identification with mass industrialization and mass culture add an important element of historical specificity to the text. At the time when Anderson was writing *Winesburg,* the small town paper was coming to be more and more dominated by stories taken from newswires and syndicated columns; like other industries, the newspaper industry was increasingly consolidated into chains and influenced by standardized production (Schudson 150). At the same time, the newspaper continued to offer local communities a means of keeping a specific identity and resisting the normalizing pressures of the national marketplace, and the newspaper provided individuals like George the same benefits it had since the time of Benjamin Franklin, an education in the use of language and the fostering of social connections. Ultimately, the newspaper's functions in *Winesburg* show that industrialization and the growth of a mass-market do not erase the idea of community; rather, they call attention to the lack of a

community and the need to consider new ways of imagining how communities are defined.

Even as *Winesburg* disrupts existing notions of fictional and historical narratives and challenges existing fantasies about relationships between the genders, the newspaper and its reporter emerge as the key factors in unifying the town and offering a model of community. As both a threat of increased alienation and a promise of greater community, the newspaper reveals how Winesburg seems to be at once limited by Victorian, repressive sexual morals and threatened by the encroachment of the mass-market; in other words, it shows how Winesburg seems paralyzed by both its inability to change and by the possibility of change. In this moment between a stifling past and an ominous future, Anderson seems to describe how the town is losing its sense of community with the onslaught of industrialization while actually revealing how this bucolic community never really existed in any meaningful way.

While George ultimately serves to reveal the limits of the surface fantasies in *Winesburg,* these fantasies clearly connect Anderson with his modernist peers. *Winesburg* is similar to prominent works by Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence, Ernest Hemingway, and T.S. Eliot, among others, in presenting crises in sexual relations as indicators of deeper crises in society. Interpretations of their works, and of *Winesburg* as well, often suggest that if sexual relations improved, the community would also improve and survive.[3] However, the fact that Anderson did not try to work out this connection programmatically in *Winesburg* contributes to its power; its loose structure and the recurring figure of the reporter make for a more open-ended and complex consideration of the links between sexuality and the way community is understood. While the community's only value seems to be its prohibition of sex outside of marriage, it offers no outlets for culture or communication to compensate for this prohibition. Only George links different lives, and only the newspaper offers a shared public space where the townspeople can recognize potential connections among their different experiences.

Winesburg is also obviously similar to other modernist works in the way it features a portrait of the artist coming of age. What makes George different, though, from the typical modernist artist and from the other artistic residents of Winesburg is that his maturation hinges on him becoming aware of the extent to which the other residents of the town have shaped his sense of identity and imagination. This process occurs through his apprenticeship as a journalist, as characters repeatedly seek him out to tell him their stories, and through their support for his desire to become a writer. The first story, "Hands," highlights George's unique relationship with the other residents of the town. The story focuses on Wing Biddlebaum, a reclusive man who

was formerly known as Adolph Myers and who had been a teacher before he arrived in Winesburg. Recounting his past life, the narrator notes that his feelings for his students were like those that "the finer sort of women" has for the men they love (31). However, when a "half-witted" boy falsely accuses him of "unspeakable things," a mob chases him from his home (32). Interestingly, even in this collective act of violence, the mob is brought together only by its shared confusion, and it cannot even decide if it should continue to pursue him. The antagonism towards Adolph, then, is not simply the result of the accusations against him or the perceived threat of his ambiguous sexual identity; rather, the mob's antagonism also springs from its inability to explain its desires to itself. While Wing remains unable to express or even acknowledge his homosexual desires, he does not serve as the Other who enables the formation of a cohesive heterosexual community. Instead, "Hands" introduces the themes that will emerge from the fragmented stories to follow, as troubled sexual relations reflect deeper failures in language and community.

The story also highlights George's importance. When Adolph arrives as Wing Biddlebaum in Winesburg, George is the only person with whom he feels comfortable talking, and he seems to address George as he had his former students. Other characters similarly trust George and believe he can understand them. This trust, which comes in large part from his status as a reporter, gives him the opportunity to observe the private motivations of other individuals. Even as he comes to realize the limits of sexuality and community, his recognition of others' desires, his work as a reporter, and his own interests in language ultimately allow him to work through the similar confusion and frustration he feels and transform an inarticulate mob into an articulated, cohesive community.

In "The Untold Lie," one of the few stories in which George does not appear, Anderson clarifies the connection between sexual relationships and communication first suggested by Wing in "Hands." In the story, the free-spirited bachelor, Hal Winters, tells the older, married Ray Pearson that the schoolteacher is pregnant with his child and asks him what he should do. Though marriage is the only option sanctioned by the community, Ray thinks of marriage as something that he was "tricked" into (204). Before he married, he had wanted to be a sailor or move out West and be the kind of cowboy who rides around on his horse letting loose "wild cries" (207). The inarticulateness present in this seemingly juvenile fantasy persists into his adult life, and at the beginning of the story, he struggles to express himself until the seemingly unspeakable "beauty of the country" brings the two men together in a shared feeling of understanding (204). After they part and Ray is back at home with his wife and children, his recognition of this beauty

causes him to feel restless and gripped by nearly uncontrollable, violent urges. When Ray leaves the house, he, like many of the characters in *Winesburg,* experiences a momentary sense of freedom, and he again connects his frustration in not being able to describe beauty with the constraints of marriage. Seeing the striking colors of autumn in the countryside, he feels connected to a world that is becoming "alive," just as he had earlier felt "alive" with Hal in the cornfield. Overwhelmed by this beauty, Ray begins to run, tears off his overcoat, and shouts a protest against all the frustrations in his life and all that "makes life ugly" (207). For Ray, marriage is a promise he never made but that he was forced to keep anyway. Significantly, Ray's response to something social—the need to marry—is expressed in aesthetic terms, the need to acknowledge and express beauty. Even in his crude and brutal simplicity, he, like many of the other characters in *Winesburg,* appears to be an artist struggling to find a medium and an understanding audience.

Ray also realizes at some level that he cannot truly communicate with Hal or name "what he thought or what he wanted" (209). He cannot articulate his desires or reactions any more than he can articulate the town's moral and social expectations, and he cannot rebel against something he cannot even describe. His dilemma, however, is resolved when Ray meets Hal and Hal tells him that he has already decided to marry the schoolteacher (208). Ray is relieved as he thinks, "Whatever I told him would have been a lie" (209). He realizes that the unstated bond between them, which was inspired by an appreciation for the landscape, has been lost, and he has been spared the embarrassment of trying to face and state the lack that exists at the supposed heart of the social order. In this way, "The Untold Lie" follows the typical pattern of the stories in *Winesburg* and points to the inability of the residents of Winesburg to express any shared values or basis of social reproduction. In this context, characters who try to transgress perceived sexual norms in their personal behavior necessarily fail because they cannot recognize or articulate the sources of their alienation and frustration.

As Anderson begins to explore the sources of this failure through George's development, he presents the newspaper as both the emblem of modernity's incursion into the small town and the means by which the town can re-imagine itself as a community in the modern world. Through his depiction of the newspaper, Anderson, in effect, grapples with the paradox central to many modernist texts, the desire to make it new and the intense nostalgia for what is being lost. This paradox inherent in modernist literature's response to modernization is examined most famously by Walter Benjamin in his contrasting descriptions of the storyteller and modern print culture. In Benjamin's reading of Proust, he argues that the newspaper serves

as the quintessential example of the modern assault on traditional conceptions of identity and communication. While Jürgen Habermas, in his influential *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), describes the indispensable role of the print media in the formation of a bourgeois public sphere in which private individuals can debate public issues, Benjamin sees public media like the newspaper invading the private sphere of the individual and claims that the newspaper divides information from stories and public events from personal experience[4]:

> If it were the intention of the press to have the reader assimilate the information it supplies as part of its own experience, it would not achieve its purpose. But its intention is just the opposite, and it is achieved: to isolate what happens from the realm in which it could affect the experience of the reader. . . . Another reason for the isolation of information from experience is that the former does not enter "tradition." Newspapers appear in large editions. Few readers can boast of any information which another reader may require of him. ("Baudelaire" 158–159)

Benjamin's lamentation here for the loss of an ongoing, common tradition illustrates the conservative strand of modernism. While Habermas and Benedict Anderson see the newspaper as providing the necessary means for individuals to participate in the construction of abstract, national communities, Benjamin sees the newspaper as an overflow of information that alienates individuals from any meaningful experience of community. In comparing the newspaper with the traditional story, Benjamin grounds authentic experience in the body. Referring to "the increasing atrophy of experience," he argues that the story, "one of the oldest forms of communication," deals with sensations that cannot be separated from the embodied presence of the storyteller. While the mechanical printing press erases the traces of the human hand in producing information, the story allows for the personal exchange of experience as a kind of handicraft:

> It is not the object of the story to convey a happening *per se,* which is the purpose of information; rather, it embeds it in the life of the storyteller in order to pass it on as experience to those listening. It thus bears the marks of the storyteller much as the earthen vessel bears the marks of the potter's hand. ("Baudelaire" 159)

In distinguishing information from the embodied gesture of the storyteller, Benjamin, like Zizek, raises suspicions about the narrative logic of the novel.

While the storyteller seems to create "companionship" outside the relations of the marketplace, the typical novel presents a narrative that replicates the logic of individual ownership and consumption:

> In this solitude of his, the reader of a novel seizes upon his material more jealously than anyone else. He is ready to make it completely his own, to devour it, as it were. Indeed, he destroys, he swallows up the material as the fire devours logs in the fireplace. The suspense which permeates the novel is very much like the draft which stimulates the flame in the fireplace and enlivens its play. ("Storyteller" 100)[5]

Though the short story, unlike the more lengthy novel, can be more easily read aloud and shared, the need for "abbreviating" separates the modern short story from traditional storytelling:

> We have witnessed the evolution of the "short story," which has removed itself from oral tradition and no longer permits that slow piling one on top of the other of thin, transparent layers which constitutes the most appropriate picture of the way in which the perfect narrative is revealed through the layers of a variety of retellings. ("Storyteller" 93)

Unlike the short story writer, the storyteller relies on endless expansion, a surplus of time, the value of repetition rather than originality, and a pervasive sense of boredom rather than the constant stimulation of modern life.

In the moment of historical disruption that Benjamin describes, Anderson invokes traditional, oral storytelling in the modernist form of *Winesburg*.[6] Howe is right when he observes,

> The atmosphere of oral narration, deliberately created by Anderson, is the setting of his best stories, which can be read not merely as imaginative versions of human experience but as renderings of a pervasive pattern of story-telling. Part of the craft of oral narration consists in the narrator's working not only for the usual kinds of interest and suspense, but also to produce in his listeners a vicarious responsibility for the successful completion of the story. (148)

In "cannily" tapping the "traditional resources" of oral narration and the "communal role" of storytelling, Anderson includes readers in a text that replicates, to an extent, the kind of embodied intimacy found in traditional storytelling (Howe 148–150), even as the fragmented structure of *Winesburg*

suggests the formal sensibilities of literary modernism. In order to understand this connection, it is necessary to consider how Anderson explores the relationship between embodied experience and abstract information in the way that George develops as both a specific, local reporter and storyteller and as the figure of a representative young man.

Yingling initially describes George in just this way, as both an embodied storyteller and a more generalized and abstract reporter. As a "confidant," George

> is the very figure of the storyteller whom Benjamin sees as being lost in the modern world. . . . George Willard becomes the focus of collective experience and energy in a moment of transition between an oral culture of proximity that is rapidly disappearing and a print culture (the culture of exchange) rapidly instituting itself as the agent of a "larger" but less authentic culture of industrialism and distance. (125)

While accurately pointing to the transitional aspects of this moment, Yingling characterizes the new culture that is emerging at this time as "less authentic," and he argues that Anderson invokes an oral tradition only to show how print culture has reduced its effectiveness to the point that it "no longer maintains any link to the social structures in these Midwestern towns" and "has become only another tool in the hegemony of industrialism" (124). For Yingling, George's roles as a storyteller and reporter are ultimately distinct and contradictory, so that "the collection ends by concentrating on him not as the representative of a collective experience of modern alienation but as a solitary individual" (125). Like Yingling, Kennedy sees *Winesburg* as an elegy for a lost community and finds the modern reporter replacing the traditional storyteller. In "From Anderson's *Winesburg* to Carver's *Cathedral:* The Short Story Sequence and the Semblance of Community" (1995), Kennedy rightly notes that the *Winesburg Eagle* "serves as a nexus of communal identity" and that George provides important links among the town's residents (197). However, Kennedy nonetheless finds that George "strives to build community by passing along the stories the grotesques themselves are powerless to communicate, but as a newspaper reporter, he himself is complicitous in the circulation of meaningless language" (201).

As I am arguing, there is little evidence in *Winesburg* that any meaningful community ever existed, and the elegiac or nostalgic tone that these and other critics find in the text needs to be seen as a reflection of the changing possibilities for community that first emerged when *Winesburg* was published. Furthermore, George does in fact develop as a "representative of a collective

experience" through the ways in which his roles as a reporter and storyteller are intertwined and through his explorations of the social implications of language. However, in order to understand Yingling's and other critics' use of terms like "authenticity" and "elegy" it is necessary to consider the ways in which they draw upon unexamined assumptions in Benjamin about the size and scope of the community in question. The dichotomies traced by Benjamin and invoked by Yingling and Kennedy, between immediate/abstract, sensation/information, and nature/news do not in fact compare terms on the same scale. If the possible community for the storyteller is a handful of listeners, then to the extent that the news replaces Benjamin's storyteller, it is the small group that seems most threatened, not the town or nation. These larger communities are necessarily abstract and anonymous according to their increasing size. As Benedict Anderson argues and Sherwood Anderson demonstrates, communities larger than a small group, and particularly the large, modern nation-state, can be imagined into existence and made more authentic through the existence of print media. By appearing as both a local reporter and storyteller and as a figure within a larger, national media system, George mediates between these conceptions of embodied small communities and abstract national communities.

As noted above, the self-reflexive features of *Winesburg* further undermine any absolute distinction between the storyteller and the writer. Though there has always been some critical controversy about whether George is the implied writer of Winesburg, given his goal of becoming a writer, the encouragement he receives from the other residents of Winesburg, and his insights into the town as he prepares for his departure, it seems more than reasonable to assume that George is meant to be the author of *Winesburg.*[7] *Winesburg, Ohio,* then, appears as an expansive, fictive edition of the *Winesburg Eagle* collected by George through his work as a reporter. As the culmination of George's work and experiences, *Winesburg* records his development and the town's development as well through his transformation of oral stories into a written form. In Winesburg, Ohio, the newspaper gives George access to the individual members of the town and in turn offers them a way of feeling connected to one another; in the work of fiction, *Winesburg, Ohio,* George offers a fuller elaboration of the lives of these individuals and their connections to one another. While the *Winesburg Eagle* provides the means of imagining a local community, *Winesburg, Ohio* presents a version of the local newspaper before a national market and reading audience. In using the individual reporter as a representative figure, *Winesburg* helps create a national community while mitigating its anonymity. In Benjamin's terms, *Winesburg* provides readers with the shared sense of embodied human interaction that occurs in

the rituals of storytelling, while in Benedict Anderson's terms it gives readers a shared sense of connection as they read the same text and identify with the same character at roughly the same time.

In *Winesburg,* Anderson portrays the newspaper in a number of different ways before focusing more exclusively on George as he emerges at the center of these new concepts of community. Since "Godliness" is unique in *Winesburg* in offering some direct commentary on historical change, many critics have focused on this story as evidence of the decline of the small town community that they find in *Winesburg.* In "Godliness," Anderson compares the newspaper to mass produced goods that threaten to invade and disrupt the "natural life" of the farm, and so the newspaper does at first seem to be associated with modernization and alienation. Anderson's narrator describes how ubiquitous books, magazines, and newspapers, rushed into production, find their way into every home: "In our day a farmer standing by the stove in the store in his village has his mind filled to overflowing with the words of other men. The newspapers and the magazines have pumped him full" (71). Claiming that a sense of "innocence" has been lost in a flow of senseless language, the narrator typically includes his reader in his observations, referring to "our day," a time in which the separation between country and city is being undermined. As mentioned earlier, at the time when *Winesburg* was written, the rise of syndicated columns and news services was indeed making newspapers seem more like commodified urban goods, despite the long tradition of the small town paper.[8] Anderson, in describing Jesse Bentley, the main character in "Godliness," further equates newspapers with mass production and machinery. As Jesse begins to use more farm machinery and fewer farmhands, he wishes that he had built a factory when he was younger instead of becoming a farmer, and he even invents a machine for making wire fences. At the same time, Jesse "formed the habit of reading newspapers and magazines" (81). In these descriptions of Jesse's character, newspapers are associated with the success of the individual and the loss of tradition. Indeed, Anderson describes the information of the newspapers as marking the transition from a simple state of grace to the complexities of the modern marketplace. Where once Jesse had the feeling "of a close and personal God" who might touch him and direct his life at any time, now he is obsessed with financial dealings and the other things that he reads about (82).

In "Godliness," then, the newspaper does at first seem to represent the transition from an embodied faith and shared stories to disembodied information. Upon further inspection, however, "Godliness," like *Winesburg* as a whole, undermines any conception of a loss of community in the town.

Notably, Jesse exhibited antisocial behavior and embraced money over human relationships long before he took up the practice of reading newspapers and making machines, and he is never actually shown standing around the stove, participating in storytelling, or preserving rural traditions. While this story is set in the country rather than in Winesburg itself, there is no real evidence here or elsewhere that any sense of community existed before the arrival of newspapers and magazines. In the other stories, most of which feature George in some way, and all of which are set within the town, Anderson significantly qualifies these comments on the newspaper, questions the idea of an existing "natural" or providential community, and undermines the apparent nostalgia found in "Godliness."

In "A Man of Ideas," Anderson presents Joe Welling as a caricature of the idea that the news and nature can somehow be combined in the contemporary world. Speaking to other men in the drugstore, Joe explains why the water is rising in Wine Creek even though the sky is clear and it has not rained for ten days: "If we had no trains, no mails, no telegraph, we would know that it rained over in Medina County." In flowing from Medina County, "Wine Creek brought us the news" (105). In this case, nature, in the form of Wine Creek, offers Joe an alternative to the newspaper and the mechanical means of communication it is associated with—the railroad, the mail, the telegraph. Later, Joe, who envies George's position on the *Winesburg Eagle,* makes it clear to George that "he was meant by Nature to be a reporter on a newspaper" (106). Joe's outlandish observations show that the very timelessness of nature renders it meaningless as a solution to the immediate problem of establishing a sense of community. Even if in some unspecified moment in the past a sense of divine presence or naturally defined social roles allowed for a more direct means of recognizing communities, "A Man of Ideas" and Anderson's other stories show that in a place that has been transformed by new forms of transportation and communication a community must be developed in history and the context of contingent social relations. As Anderson demonstrates, the newspaper and the reporter who takes up a profession, not a vocation, provide a way to create such a sense of community from isolated individuals.

In his failure to convince his audience, Joe, like many other characters in *Winesburg,* struggles to express himself, as evident when he tries to get George to write down his latest story drawn from nature, his scoop that the idea of decay is best understood as a kind of fire. He tells George that the sidewalk, the feed store, the trees, and, in effect, all that they see is "burning up" with the unstoppable fire of decay: "The world is on fire. Start your pieces in the paper that way. Just say in big letters '*The World Is On Fire*'"

(106). Like Ray in "The Untold Lie," Joe's perceptions seem to transform the landscape, and his description of a world on fire recalls the thick, swirling brush strokes of a Van Gogh painting and a world animated by the vision of a single mind.[9] It is also worth nothing that Joe tries to convey his ideas to the men in the drugstore, a setting appropriate for Benjamin's storyteller, while also trying to communicate more broadly through the newspaper by offering up his ideas to George as headlines. Though this suggests that Joe, like many of the other characters, raises issues that George will later address, he fails to convince either his immediate listeners or a more abstract of audience of readers, let alone suggest any connections between the two. Unlike George, he is ridiculed rather than respected for his observations and no more successful than the other characters in suggesting even the outlines of a community.

Joe's "natural" newspaper sheds light back on the significance of Jesse's story by suggesting that a language based on moments of individual grace and inspiration is unsuited for forming a common culture or collective sense of experience. Joe's view of nature and Jesse's view of religion show how extreme individuality, rather than modernization as such, can prevent a sense of community from forming. Unlike these "grotesques," George's work as a reporter demonstrates how a newspaper can help in imagining a community that is neither dependent on the vision of a single individual nor simply determined by external market forces, while his education as a writer underscores the social context in which language signifies and becomes meaningful. While Jesse's story shows the failure of imagining a community revealed from the sky above and Joe's story shows the failure of imagining a community grown from the soil below, George's unfolding story shows how a community can be imagined from the relations of individuals situated in specific local and national circumstances.

While all the evidence points to the previous lack of community in Winesburg, the future threatens to bring the kind of unsettling industrialization that Anderson describes more directly in his later writing. Though each story seems to describe individual moments of paralysis, as characters are caught between Victorian morality and the encroaching pressures of modernity, the newspaper and George's work for it transform personal frustrations into a collective process of development. In an article published a few years after *Winesburg,* "The Natural History of the Newspaper" (1923), noted sociologist Robert E. Park proposes just this potential for the newspaper. As Michael Schudson remarks, in this piece Park tries "to establish that the newspaper was an important institution in the transition of social life from tradition to modernity, from village to city, from 'community' to

'society'" (41). Noting that "a newspaper cannot do for a community of 1,000,000 inhabitants what the village did spontaneously for itself through the medium of gossip and personal contact" (278), Park still thinks that the newspaper might contribute to the creation of more meaningful large communities, and he states that "the efforts of the newspaper to achieve this impossible result are an interesting chapter in the history of politics as well as of the press" (279). While Schudson and Park question whether the newspaper was ever able to realize this potential, *Winesburg* shows the *Winesburg Eagle* fulfilling the possibilities outlined by Park. In *Winesburg,* George gives the newspaper an element of "personal contact" and acts as a sympathetic storyteller rather than a mere "gossip," and in the absence of other social institutions, the small town newspaper and its reporter remain rooted in immediate experience and work against anonymity to create a space for public discourse that connects isolated individuals in specific relationships. As Anderson notes, the single policy of the *Winesburg Eagle,* like that of most small town newspapers, is "to mention by name in each issue, as many as possible of the inhabitants of the village" (134). In this way, the *Winesburg Eagle* allows the town's inhabitants to see themselves in relation to one another on the printed page in ways that they are otherwise unable to recognize or express. Though the relationships suggested by the arrangement of names on the page may be fictive or merely implied, the shared act of reading them together opens up the possibility for imagining a community more real than anything previously found in experience, and this process carries over to the way that readers of *Winesburg* can collectively read the text and similarly imagine a more abstract national community.

Though often cited as evidence for the disappearance of a traditional small town, George's eventual departure from Winesburg has to be considered in light of the effects that the other characters have had on his conception of himself, his vocation as a writer, and his understanding of language. In all of these ways, George does not just write the story of the town but allows the other residents to write the story through him. Just as Joe Welling offers a model for George's achievements as a reporter in "A Man of Ideas," in "Loneliness" Anderson presents a character who provides a model for understanding George's departure from Winesburg, while in "Adventure," a character George does not directly meet offers an important context for understanding his work as a young reporter and ambitions as a writer. In relation to these other characters, George can be seen as combining the roles of the artist concerned with individual expression and the reporter concerned with social representation; the end result is a sense of writing that grows out of his individual perspective yet accounts for the influence of the town on his identity.

In "Loneliness," the story of Enoch Robinson reflects George's maturation as a writer in terms of his ability to represent others' lives and relate to an audience. According to the background information provided by the narrator, Enoch leaves Winesburg for New York to study painting, and he eventually gets married, moves from an apartment on Washington Square Park to one in Brooklyn, and has two children. In these new circumstances, Enoch begins "a new game," playing "the role of producing citizen in the world," and he begins to vote and have "a newspaper thrown on his porch each morning" (171). Interestingly, the "game" Enoch was playing before he became a producing citizen is the same one that the anonymous writer plays in the introduction to *Winesburg:* He creates a procession of imaginary, grotesque figures that march through his mind. In communicating with these imaginary figures, Enoch, "like a writer busy among the figures of his brain" (171), is also like the other residents of Winesburg in his strong desire to express himself, and these figures are initially conceived as an audience who will understand his paintings without the encumbrance of meaningless words (170–171). For Enoch, the problem is that his "real" friends only see and comment on the obvious meanings in his paintings while missing their hidden significance (169).[10] After Enoch's wife and family prove to be no better at making him feel understood, he leaves them and returns to his apartment on Washington Square Park. However, Enoch finds that his imaginary figures are no longer entirely satisfying, and he longs for someone to recognize the essence of his imagination. One night, when a neighbor woman who offers just this possibility enters his apartment, he feels the overwhelming need to be understood and locks her in with him. Yet Enoch feels threatened rather than satisfied when he realizes that the woman does indeed understand him, and he responds by angrily expelling her from his apartment and resuming his solitary life (177).

Enoch's story and the contrast between George and this nameless woman underscore George's distinctive work as a writer and his role in building connections among previously isolated characters. Though the earlier part of "Loneliness" is recounted through the narrator, George later appears directly in the story, and Enoch recounts his reflections directly to him. After returning to Winesburg, Enoch again feels the need to talk to someone and is drawn to "the young newspaper reporter" (173). When they meet on a rainy night, Enoch invites George to his room, telling him: "I think you can understand" (175). George's attempt to understand Enoch while alone with him in a room clearly parallels the earlier scene with Enoch and the woman in New York, and as George occupies her position as a listener, she herself is cast as one of the grotesques figures of Enoch's imagination. From

the perspective of Anderson's readers, another frame is created, and Enoch himself appears as a grotesque figure in *Winesburg*. The significant difference is that while readers know almost nothing about Enoch's unnamed wife or the woman in his apartment, Enoch himself is differentiated as an individual through George's sympathetic listening. Unlike Enoch's unrealistic expectations for communication and understanding, George's knowledge as a reporter places Enoch's story in the more realistic context of the other stories that he has heard, and this context comes to include his own development as well, since Enoch implicitly provides a model for him as he considers his own ambitions and identity as a writer. While Enoch seems like the typical modernist artist in the way he seeks the legitimacy of his art through a rejection of the marketplace and a popular audience, George's writing emerges from his contact with the lives of the townspeople and his attempts to meet with their approval.

Enoch's failed effort to become a "producing citizen" also suggests the broader, national implications of George's story. In effect, Enoch has made what Benedict Anderson describes as a "pilgrimage" to the city, a trip from the periphery of an administrative region to a political or cultural capital to complete one's education. Such journeys complement collective reading habits and form an important component in imagining the nation as a community, for they create communal bonds that go beyond the village or town and create a sense of a common center (Benedict Anderson 55–56). Enoch, despite his later disaffection, similarly finds in New York a group of artists who share a common outlook despite their disparate origins. Enoch's pilgrimage further suggests how George, if he is recognized as the voice of the implied narrator, has made such a pilgrimage in leaving Winesburg and returning to it in his recollections. Through the narrator's comments, George's youthful observations and experiences are contrasted with a more experienced perspective; these comments show an older writer acting as an editor of his younger self and the stories he has reported as a young man. Yet these editorial comments rely on the accepted opinions and common knowledge of Winesburg as the basis for general observations about human nature. By relying on a local perspective in a work with a much wider readership, the narrator forms another kind of bridge between the town and the nation. For example, in introducing Enoch, the narrator notes how "[o]ld citizens remembered him" (167), but the "citizens" here differ from the kind of "citizen" that Enoch becomes in the city, since the small town residents make and share opinions rather than simply receive them. "Loneliness" dramatizes this important difference through the contrast between the city and small town newspaper: Instead of an anonymous newspaper landing on

Enoch's door to be read, a more personal representative of the local newspaper, George, comes inside his home and reports on his life in the context of his fellow "citizens."

Just as George hopes to move to a big city as Enoch has done, the many noted similarities between George and the other characters allow Anderson's readers to compare and connect the seemingly isolated lives of Winesburg. Likewise, Anderson shows how individuals are joined through language as well as experience by repeating certain words and developing their significance in the context of George's maturation as a young man and writer. For example, near the very end of *Winesburg,* Anderson describes George as a "young man, going out of his town to meet the adventure of life" (246). The repeated description of George as a "young man" and the recurrence of the term "adventure" throughout the text help to explain George's experiences leading up to his departure from Winesburg, and more significantly, they point to the broader, national significance of both the *Winesburg Eagle* and *Winesburg, Ohio.*

Benedict Anderson raises precisely these possibilities in his reading of Mas Marco Kartodikromo's *Semarang Hitam,* and he sees this novel, which was published in 1924, as contributing to the development of an Indonesian national identity. Quoting a passage which refers repeatedly to "a young man," he notes that here "is also something new: a hero who is never named, but who is frequently referred to as 'our young man.'" This "*means* a young man who belongs to the collective body of readers of *Indonesian,* and thus, implicitly, an embryonic Indonesian 'imagined' community" (32; italics in original). He goes on to add, "It is fitting that in *Semarang Hitam* a newspaper appears embedded in fiction, for if we now turn to the newspaper as a cultural product, we will be struck by its profound fictiveness" (32–33). For Benedict Anderson, the creation of the representative character of the "young man" is tied not only to a shared vernacular language but also to the fictiveness of the newspaper; both help to create a common experience of time and a common outlook on events (33). The newspaper, a commodity found in the market, creates the "vivid figure of the secular, historically clocked, imagined community" as its readers are "continually reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life." In this way, "fiction seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating that remarkable confidence of community in anonymity which is the hallmark of modern nations" (35–36). While this "community in anonymity" is created largely through the "fictive" reality of the newspaper, the fictive novel also offers a way of making this community more fully realized through its depiction of a young man who embodies a shared sense of experience.

Just as the newspaper helps create such an imagined national community in *Winesburg,* the experiences and dreams of Anderson's "young man"—a phrase he frequently uses to describe George—help ground this abstract community in a specific life. By clearly identifying his "young man" by name as George Willard, Anderson demonstrates that shared meaning is not only created through the reading practices of anonymous individuals consuming texts but also through the production of texts by specific, socially situated individuals. Being a citizen is not simply a game played in isolation, when individuals take the newspaper from the doorstep; being a citizen means going beyond such games to recognize common needs and experiences, as the characters in *Winesburg* begin to do when George listens to their stories and links them together. In other words, as a cub reporter and aspiring writer, George dramatizes the concrete ways in which the newspaper can construct fictive yet meaningful relationships even as he explores the ways in which fiction can enhance the reality of a shared sense of experience.

George's status as both a unique character and a representative figure is evident not only in his repeated characterization as a "young man" but also in the way that he redefines "adventure," a term that similarly recurs throughout the text. In transforming this key term, George shows how his language reflects not only his aspirations to become a writer but the issues of sexuality that limit the residents' efforts to express themselves. In the concluding story, "Departure," George, "the young man," goes "to meet the adventure of life," while in the earlier story "Adventure," the "young newspaperman" Ned Currie similarly departs Winesburg to pursue a career as a journalist in Cleveland and later Chicago. The "adventure" of this story does not refer to Ned, though, but to Alice Hindman, the young woman he leaves behind. Her adventure occurs years after Ned's departure, when on a stormy night her restlessness, frustration, and loneliness take possession of her, and she undresses, runs naked in the rain, and approaches an old deaf man (119–120). Like "The Untold Lie," "Godliness," and most of the other stories, "Adventure" foregrounds the lack in the underlying fantasy that structures sexual relations and the way this lack is linked to the failure of meaningful communication. The night before Ned is to leave Winesburg, he and Alice go for a walk and then a carriage ride together, but "they found themselves unable to talk" and instead "became lovers" (113). Ned and Alice, generalized, like George, as a "young man" and a "girl," turn to sex to try to avoid facing the ineffectiveness of their language, but this proves to be futile. Unable to cover the embarrassment of their unexpressed feelings, Ned tries to articulate received expectations by turning to empty clichés about sticking together (113–114).

Here, as elsewhere, sex does not express the relationship between two individuals: It covers the lack between them and the absence of social structures and a meaningful language that might act as positive outlets for their desires. Investing ineffectual prohibitions and empty words with significance, Alice trusts that Ned will return to keep his promise years after she has heard a word from him, and she is unable to change her daily behavior or articulate her feelings. Finally, she has her "adventure" and erupts onto the street. Given the repetition of such "adventures" in *Winesburg,* the story "Adventure" does more than illustrate Ned's lack of integrity and Alice's limited thinking; it shows how sexual prohibitions merely act to cover more profound failures of language and communication. In the final two pieces of *Winesburg,* however, George combines elements of Ned's departure, Alice's restlessness, and the frustrations of other characters into an understanding of the social possibilities of language and a more meaningful and inclusive idea of "adventure."

"Sophistication," the penultimate story of *Winesburg,* begins with George in the same position as Ned before him, on the brink of leaving Winesburg to seek work as a journalist in some city. While George's aspirations initially seem self-centered, like Ned's, the term "sophistication" as it is used in the story comes to refer to George's subtle development in realizing that identity is contingent and bound by social relations and the contributions of others. Tellingly, Anderson renders this moment of sophistication in George's development by describing it as something that might happen to any "imaginative boy" who sees for the first time, "in procession before him, the countless figures of men who before his time have come out of nothingness into the world, lived their lives and again disappeared into nothingness" (234). This statement seems to affirm the reflexive turn in *Winesburg,* for as George proves himself to be "an imaginative boy" he echoes the enigmatic old writer from the opening tableau who also sees in his mind a "procession of figures" (24).[11]

"Sophistication" underscores how acts of imagination are necessary to forge social relations, yet the story also illustrates that a sense of limits, a sense of lack, must also be included in such acts of imagination if the resulting social relations are to be meaningful. The young writer must have the sympathy to describe the individuals in the procession of figures while also recognizing the gaps among their stories and the limits of the language in which their stories are realized. While the *Winesburg Eagle* includes the names of the town's residents and connects them in its news reports, the stories in *Winesburg* connect individuals while acknowledging that the stories are necessarily incomplete in and among themselves. Indeed, just as "The

Book of the Grotesque" goes unpublished, throughout *Winesburg* the narrator notes stories, often of women, which are unable to be told just yet.[12] The final three stories, "Death," "Sophistication," and "Departure," which were also written last, most clearly engage these issues. Together, they present a conception of language that addresses the unattainable but real desire for understanding evident in the previous adventures while acknowledging the inevitable limits of communication. Thus, in "Sophistication," Anderson describes the moment when a young man recognizes his own mortality and similarities with others and feels the need for another's understanding touch: "If he prefers that the other be a woman, that is because he believes . . . she will understand" (235). As the "if" here shows, such understanding is taken in whatever form it comes and is not strictly associated with normative heterosexual relationships. In the previous stories, the sexual act temporarily obscures the lack of authentic communication while leaving the characters' fantasies about language and communication intact. In "Sophistication," on the other hand, George goes beyond the limits of these fantasies to confront the reality of the lives of those around him and in doing so transforms his understanding of language.

In "Sophistication," the banker's daughter, Helen White, contributes greatly to George's development, and her sympathetic portrayal helps to mitigate some of the gender implications of having a young man serve as the representative figure of an imagined community. At the beginning of the story, Helen is home from college, and she, like George, is feeling restless as if she is on the cusp of some momentous change. Though they are apart, Helen and George are both reflecting on the failures of language. Helen is thinking of the night when she and George went for a walk and George took to boasting about himself (235). As George turns away from a group of men similarly talking and boasting, he acknowledges that their conversations, which would once have interested him, now seem worthless (238). Meanwhile Helen, sitting on the veranda with her mother and the college instructor who has come home to court her, has the same reaction to his seemingly pointless pronouncements and flees her house (239). While others go on talking in the same old ways, George and Helen move towards a more effective form of communication.

Unlike Ned and Alice, George and Helen do not turn to sex to cover the limits of their language and the lack present in Winesburg's construction of gender relations. When George appears just as Helen calls out for him, he first begins to boast, but he quickly finds himself humbled and "ashamed" of his talking and falls silent (236–237). Walking to the fair ground, now empty for the evening, they find it full of "ghosts, not of the dead, but

of living people" (240). While *Winesburg* is a portrait of the reporter as much as the artist as a young man, here Anderson recalls "The Dead," the concluding story of Joyce's *Dubliners* (1916), and the way the central character, Gabriel Conroy, finally recognizes the limits of his relationship with his wife, Gretta, and realizes that these limits reflect his smug use of language throughout the previous evening. In the lyrical conclusion of the story, Gabriel experiences a sense of communion among "the living and the dead" and a growing awareness of a national identity: "the newspapers were right: the snow was general over Ireland" (223). In this way, Joyce connects an intensely private vision with a new appreciation for the social aspects of language and likewise connects the fictiveness of particular social relationships with the national community imagined through the newspaper. Similarly, in "Sophistication" the procession of figures from nothingness to nothingness leads George to imagine a communion of the living and the dead, and his recognition of the inadequacy of his previously self-centered use of language comes to signify in a national context through his association with the newspaper. George, like Gabriel, recognizes the inevitable lack in intimate relationships even as he becomes aware that more abstract and more expansive relations might be imagined into existence.

The understanding George and Helen share reflects a more grounded conception of language, allowing them to take "from their silent evening together" what they need to become mature men and women (243). As Helen's presence and human touch allow George to surpass his previously self-centered notions of language, he feels "reverence" for the inhabitants of Winesburg whom he recognizes for the first time as his own people (240–241). This coming of age goes beneath the surface fantasy of sex to confront the underlying fantasy of a previously existing community. Just as the silence that Helen and George share is more meaningful than the sex which Ned and Alice turn to in their embarrassment, George's final "adventure" makes both language and experience more pertinent to the creation of a meaningful community.

This can be seen by comparing "Sophistication" and "Departure" with the earlier story "Nobody Knows" and the depiction of what might have been expected to be George's coming of age, his first sexual "adventure." In that story, George receives a provocative note from Louise Trunnion, but he is uncertain about taking up her invitation and pursuing this adventure. Seeing the situation as a test of his manhood, he fails to understand his feelings or consider hers. The limits of his perspective are reflected in the vacuous "flood of words" that he lets loose when he and Louise meet in a barn, but he is "wholly the male" and feels "no sympathy for her" (60–61). Though Louise's

lower class background undoubtedly makes her seem more sexually available than Helen, George's developing sense of identity and growing awareness of language most clearly distinguish these two adventures. After George's tryst with Louise, he walks until he meets Shorty Randall, the clerk at the drug store. When the two talk for a few minutes, George finally feels "satisfied" and realizes that he "wanted more than anything else to talk to some man" (61). Yet as the story ends, it is clear that George has not told Shorty about his adventure with Louise (62). As in the other early stories, language fails as a means of communication; instead, language simply upholds the central prohibition of the town, the prohibition against sex outside of marriage, while masking the lack of meaningful relations between men and women. As is the case with Ray and Hal in "The Untold Lie," George is unable to express his feelings to Shorty, and he speaks to cover the fact that his sexual transgression has left him feeling as isolated and alone as before. Though George's adventure begins and ends with a momentarily satisfying flood of words, these words do not allow him to recognize the alienation he shares with Louise and the other town members. It is only later, through his work as a reporter and his relationship with Helen, that George develops a deeper sense of the possibilities of language for acknowledging, and, to an extent, overcoming this alienation.

In the final story, "Departure," George is a particular reporter collecting stories and a typical young man allowing others to imagine themselves through his life and work. While he seems to believe that he can simply leave Winesburg and use the town to imagine his own stories, the town's response to his departure shows how Winesburg has in fact shaped him. Though he has not yet realized the full ideal of "sophistication," his final "adventure" reflects the deeper understanding of self and community that he discovered with Helen in the previous story. Around the train station a group of Winesburg's inhabitants, some of them mere acquaintances, waits to send him off. This small crowd stands in sharp contrast to the opening lynch mob that ran Adolph Myers out of town and represents the most positive collective gathering in the book. Like the newspaper, the railroad platform is a space that suggests the incursion of the outside world into the small town and the flow of people into and out of its borders, but through George's departure it is also revealed to be a space where people can come together to recognize and express their shared feelings. Thus, the previously unmentioned Gertrude Wilmot "voiced what everyone felt. 'Good luck'" (246).

The fact that in this final scene George is presented in part through the eyes of another character, the train conductor Tom Little, further shows

how George's character has been recognized and shaped by the town. Tom's work for the railroad, like George's work for the newspaper, is part of the process of economic change affecting Winesburg, but he, like George, uses his work to shape a sense of community. Just as George knows the people of Winesburg from his reporting, Tom knows all the people along his route "better than a city man knows the people who live in his apartment building" (245). As the train starts, Tom punches George's ticket, but even though he knows George and knows what his trip means to him, he says nothing further: "Tom had seen a thousand George Willards go out of their towns to the city" (246). Even as Tom affirms that George is a typical young man, George himself turns from the drama of his departure, his future plans, and thoughts of his mother's recent death to consider the individual lives of the residents of Winesburg. The final image of George, then, shows how much he has been made by the town, even as his own thoughts point to how he will remake the town in his writing.

In his encounter with Helen in "Sophistication," George surpasses his fellow reporter, Ned, in his realization of a deeper understanding of language and community; in "Departure," he surpasses the painter Enoch in his understanding of the artist's potential audience. The figures he will write about are not, like Enoch's figures, mere figments of the imagination. George's work as a reporter gives him the opportunity to meet the people who are brought together in the pages of the *Winesburg Eagle,* and his growing awareness of the limits of language allows him to transform their lives as he depicts them in his "The Book of the Grotesque," *Winesburg, Ohio.* The figures he takes from Winesburg exist in a dialogic relationship with him, and it is through their language and a new definition of "adventure" that he transforms their isolated lives into stories that they themselves might recognize as connected and meaningful.

In the way he merges the roles of the storyteller and the reporter, George's coming of age reflects the town's own developing self-awareness of itself as a community. While in 1919 a newspaper like the *Winesburg Eagle* would have printed syndicated columns and newswire stories from around the world alongside the reports of local news and familiar names, challenging its readers to recognize their connections to each other and to the changing world in which they are increasingly involved, Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* does not rely on individual acts of reading and individual consumption as the basis for forming abstract communities. Instead, Anderson depicts the production of the newspaper and the creation of fictive yet meaningful relations through George's maturation. As a specific reporter and writer, George records the lives of his subjects and gives the town the opportunity to recognize itself

as a community, while as a more generalized "young man" he shows how Anderson's work affords the same opportunity to a nation of readers.

* * *

While it is a commonplace that many writers begin their careers as journalists, Anderson is unusual in that he became a small town journalist only after achieving national success and notoriety for his fiction. Though Anderson had worked as a newsboy when quite young and had later worked in advertising, he had no direct experience in journalism when he wrote *Winesburg, Ohio* and created his most famous character, George Willard, cub reporter for the *Winesburg Eagle* (White, "Introduction" 12). However, several years after the publication of *Winesburg,* in 1927, Anderson bought two newspapers in Marion, Virginia, the small town where he was to spend much of the later part of his life, and he wrote extensively for both of them from 1927 until 1931, when his son Robert Lane Anderson took over publishing the two papers (White, "Afterword" 214).[13] In taking over the Republican *Smyth County News* and the *Marion Democrat,* he "came full circle, having been what George had set out to become," a famous writer, and becoming what George had been, a small town reporter (Townsend 244). Anderson did not entirely give up his fiction, and he created a fictional character, Buck Fever, for the newspapers while writing columns under that name as well as his own.[14] Although Anderson was only directly involved with the newspapers for four years, "almost all of the writer's published work after 1930 is a form of sophisticated journalism" (White, "Afterword" 209). Moreover, his foray into small town news allowed him to put into practice his idea that the small town newspaper could act as a means "to strengthen a community's sense of itself and to protect its inhabitants against the leveling influences of other media, coming from other sources," and he used the papers to write about "a way of living that was not yet wholly mechanized, about the possible existence of a community" (Townsend 247). In soliciting contributions from local readers and focusing on local events, Anderson's newspapers worked "to help bind a community together, to help its people to understand each other" (Rideout 130).

Throughout his writing career, Anderson considered the newspaper to be both an agent of alienating mechanization and meaningful, personal interaction, and he thought of the small town weekly newspapers he owned as not only providing space for the news but also offering space to bring people together around the figure of the storyteller. Echoing Benjamin's description of the storyteller, he writes, "The country newspaper is the drug store: it is the space back of the stove in the hardware store: it is the farmhouse kitchen"

(*Hello* 34).[15] As in the fictional world of *Winesburg,* the small town newspaper mediates the dichotomy that Benjamin describes between the embodied storyteller and the mechanized press, between narratives shared directly with listeners and information arriving from beyond personal experience. In other words, while Anderson retains an anti-modern nostalgia for the presence of the storyteller, he continues to explore how the newspaper can provide the means for imagining modern, abstract communities.

Anderson's continued promotion of "possible" communities links his late work as a journalist with his early fiction, as evident in *Home Town* (1940), his final completed work. After writing one of the early cross-country travelogues of the Great Depression, *Puzzled America* (1935), a collection of his letters to *Today* magazine, Anderson returns to the small town in *Home Town,* which was published as part of "The Face of America" series. Like *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941), which I consider below, and many other Depression-era works, *Home Town* consists of a combination of text and photographs, taken in this case from the Farm Security Administration (FSA) collection. Anderson uses this form to modify his earlier ideas about the newspaper and fictive communities in light of the economic hardship of the 1930s, the rise of fascism in Europe, and the increasingly alienating effects of technology, industrial production, and mass media.[16] *Home Town,* in fact, begins as a kind of response to *Winesburg.* While *Winesburg* ends with the young man, George, leaving for the big city, *Home Town* begins with Anderson reconsidering the need for the young to leave the small towns at all. Using Abraham Lincoln as an example of the kind of individual the small town can produce, he writes that Lincoln "grew naturally, as a tree grows, out of the soil . . . out of the people about whom he knew so intimately" (4). Anderson's descriptions of the importance of the land and use of the seasons to structure *Home Town* seem to suggest a return on his part to the idea of an "organic" community he had earlier critiqued in *Winesburg.* However, as David D. Anderson notes, Anderson's view of community is forward looking in *Home Town,* and the text represents his "final definition of the values which America might use as the foundation for a new, humanized, post-Depression society. Not only a tribute to America's past, it is at the same time a testimony to his hope for the future" (90).

In *Home Town,* Anderson considers in more complex ways the relationship between the mass media and the national community that he had examined throughout the Great Depression. For example, early in Roosevelt's presidency, before the "fireside chats" had begun, Anderson wrote to the editor of *Today,* Raymond Moley, to suggest that Roosevelt speak to the people on the radio each week to reassure and inspire them (Stott 244).

In *Home Town* he describes how, with a "radio in almost every man's house now," there are "new worlds of thoughts and feeling," and government is "no longer a thing far off." All hear "the President speaking, Walter Winchell, a Hillbilly band, a famous singer," and this produces a strange juxtaposition of advertising and information: "The market place come into the sitting rooms of small frame houses in the towns, tooth paste, hair restorers, trade with South America, fascism, communism, the Yanks have beaten the White Sox, the old quiet sleepiness at evenings in the towns quite gone" (9). While the radio brings the national marketplace and disembodied information into the small town and the sitting room, the small town itself allows individuals to sort out this information and interact in more meaningful ways, so that in the towns will come "[t]he real test of democracy" (9).

In *Winesburg,* George has to leave Winesburg for the city before the town can be recognized as a community; in *Home Town* Anderson suggests that the small town can internally develop its own place for public discourse and create "a common ground on which you can stand with your fellows" (65). In considering both immigration and race, Anderson suggests that closer interaction in the small town mitigates the ethnic and racial divisions of the city in establishing this common ground. Describing the emergence of a Whitmanesque race of Americans, he writes, "The American, mixture of many bloods, grows constantly into a definite new race. It is a race that can be studied, understood best in the towns" (8). Likewise, he finds "the making of a new language, the American language" from the immigrants who have arrived in the small towns and begun to communicate with the other residents (9). By juxtaposing his descriptive, impressionistic sentences with stark photographs of blacks and whites, men and women, Anderson highlights diverse contributions to small town life and the American experience. In particular, he echoes his earlier observations in *Perhaps Women* (1931) and describes the important role of women in advancing the culture of the small town in the face of mechanization and standardization (*Home Town* 71–73).

In *Winesburg,* the newspaper is the only effective cultural institution and George is the only reporter, so that George's individual work effectively links all of the other stories. In *Home Town,* Anderson describes other cultural institutions while keeping the newspaper at the center of town life, and he focuses on the editor, rather than the reporter, as someone who builds a local sense of community by arranging others' stories. Anderson, however, notes how the editor's job is complicated by recent changes in journalism and the growing dependence of small town papers on the city and the marketplace: "More and more country weeklies were owned in chains like the grocery stores, the drug stores, and the Five and Tens. Often two-thirds of the space

in the town weekly was taken up by material manufactured in Chicago or New York" (108). He later describes how the many "dailies coming to the towns became more and more alike, all served by the same news services" (129). These daily newspapers are described as prominent elements in the larger system of mass production and standardization: "The same newspaper columnists wrote for many newspapers that circulated through the towns, in many towns the same chain store systems, hundreds of thousands, even millions of small town men driving the same make of automobiles" (129).[17]

In responding to this standardization and in drawing on his own experience owning two small town newspapers, Anderson sees opportunities for small town editors to revitalize local communities by again emphasizing immediate stories and concerns. A good editor, knowing "he can't compete with the big dailies and with the daily radio digests of news" (106), ignores their idea of news and goes beyond the ubiquitous pre-printed materials and news service stories. Instead, he becomes more concerned with the small town in the way that Anderson explored in his own journalism:

> If Mr. Morley's little girl gets bitten by a dog and there is a danger of rabies, it's worth a column or two. Why not? The whole town is anxious. Nowadays almost every small towner has a radio. He gets the world news and the national news in the same split second as the city man, hears the same wise-cracks, his woman wears the same kind of clothes, hears the same canned music. (104)

Anderson goes on to describe how "intensely local" the effective weekly small town newspaper can be: "There is column after column of 'personals.' The idea is to try to catch the color, the smell, the feel of the everyday life of everyday people" (104).

Anderson's own return to the small town as a newspaper editor helped him recognize the opportunities for journalism that later arose in the midst of the Great Depression. In *Home Town,* he argues that the talent level on the staffs of small town papers has increased as schools of journalism continue to turn out well-trained journalists who cannot find adequate work in the cities. These new journalists find that their job on a small, weekly paper "could mean, after all, a pretty good living" and that they occupy "a position of respect and responsibility in the community" (109). While previously the small town editor was simply "a politician" representing "the voice of the big outside world coming in" (108), Anderson argues that the editor can now understand everyday American life "down near the grass roots" and give a voice to small town life from the inside (109). Knowing what to print and

what to ignore, these editors follow the same policy as the *Winesburg Eagle* by fitting in as many names and as many daily events as possible into each issue (106–107). While the city newspapers present a fragmented world by juxtaposing isolated stories from around the world, small town newspapers, like the *Winesburg Eagle,* connect the names of the town's inhabitants and act as models for public discourse in which individuals are connected in a unified space.

In the years between *Winesburg* and *Home Town,* the forces of modernization had increased, but in light of these changes Anderson shows the small town newspaper can continue to provide the local community with a way of establishing its own identity while offering a model of community to the nation as a whole. Though the local paper uses many of the same technological innovations as the city papers and participates in the increased flow of information, it also offers a means of grounding this information in a specific, comprehensible context. In Benjamin's terms, the small town newspaper includes disembodied information and acts as a local representative of the abstract, national marketplace; yet, at the same time, it is one of the last means of promoting the embodied context and connections of the storyteller. While in *Winesburg,* George connects others' lives through his work as a reporter, his dream of becoming a writer, and his growing awareness of the functions of language, in *Home Town* Anderson replaces the reporter as creative artist with the editor as practical leader. The small town editor becomes in effect a New Deal administrator: As an arbiter and protector of democratic values, the editor self-consciously maintains and develops a sense of community while also fostering individual expression in the face of a marketplace of standardized commodities and ideas.

Just as Anderson suggested that Roosevelt might use weekly radio addresses to give a unified voice to the people, he suggests that the newspaper editor can do something similar by arranging the many voices of the people into a unified chorus in the intimate space of the small town paper. Having experienced these possibilities through his own belated entry into journalism, before his death Anderson considered writing a book that would specifically examine how the newspaper might overcome the increasing alienation of modernization: "After *Home Town* came out, he wrote Stryker [head of the FSA photography project] saying that children no longer knew where their food or clothes came from, and that he wanted to write a book 'in simple direct prose, and in pictures' about 'the drama back of the production of almost everything that makes the child's life comfortable.'" Significantly, he thought of this exploration as a kind of "broadcast from an editor of an imaginary small town newspaper" (Townsend 315).

Responding to an abstract marketplace, Anderson continues to present the newspaper as a public space in which individuals can imagine how they are connected in local communities and in a larger whole, a national community that is meaningful and real.

In *Winesburg, Ohio,* Anderson presents journalism as the means by which his budding artist, George Willard, is able to contribute to the way both local and national communities are imagined into existence. Though Anderson presents George as more of a representative figure than a leader, his presentation of journalism as a means of connecting artists and audiences is similar to Cather's depiction of journalism in her early fiction. However, as I showed in Chapter One, in Cather's later fiction journalism is generally depicted more negatively: Her writers and artists drown in the scandal sheets, fall victim to advertising, and wither before the "bang-bang" style of popular journalism. Anderson, on the other hand, continued to see opportunities in journalism for public-minded writers and artists. While recognizing the growing influence of the marketplace, he portrayed the work of reporters and editors as a source for creating original literature and as a model for imagining meaningful relationships and communities as well.

Chapter Three

The Camera Eye and Reporter's Conscience in Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises*

Like Willa Cather and his one-time friend, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway found journalism to be a valuable source for creating fictional works that appeal to critics and popular readers alike, and the influence of Hemingway's journalism on his writing style has long been noted. However, as I demonstrate in my readings of *In Our Time* (1925) and *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), the influence of journalism on Hemingway's early fiction goes far beyond formal and stylistic concerns. Rather, Hemingway, like Anderson before him, examines the ways in which a single reporter can act as a representative figure, and his own distinctive engagement with journalistic conventions in these two works reveals provocative ideas about the necessary fictions that lie at the heart of language, identity, and community.

While *In Our Time* draws on Hemingway's own journalism and his reading of other news reports, in this work Hemingway actually moves beyond the printed news and challenges modern views of perception in ways that reflect a major new form of journalism, the newsreel. As I argue, Hemingway makes his central character, Nick Adams, into a kind of ideal reporter, a camera, in the well-known concluding story of *In Our Time,* "Big Two-Hearted River." In doing so, Hemingway offers a utopian view of language and community in which words are removed from social relations and identified with things, just as the individual is removed from society and identified with methods of pure perception. However, in the concluding piece of *In Our Time,* "L'Envoi," Hemingway goes one step further and subtly acknowledges the limits and essential fictiveness of this seemingly individual perspective and transparent language. Similarly, in *The Sun Also Rises* Hemingway presents a journalist, Jake Barnes, as a representative figure. As Jake, the narrator of the novel, aspires to be a novelist himself, he shows the ways in which identity and language are constituted through the complementary relationship between fact and fiction. In this novel, the issues

around participatory reporting and the professional guidelines of journalism also provide Hemingway with an ethical structure for presenting Jake's own understanding of different kinds of language and communities. Together, then, these two works present important examples of the ways in which journalism informs the language of modernist fiction while calling attention to shifting communal values and boundaries.

In his influential *The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway: The Early Years* (1952), Charles A. Fenton presents one of the first in-depth explorations of the impact of Hemingway's journalism on his fiction. Considering Hemingway's work as a reporter for his high school paper, as a beat reporter for *The Kansas City Star* from October 1917 to April 1918, and as a freelance reporter, foreign correspondent, and feature writer for *The Toronto Star* from 1919 to1924, Fenton argues quite clearly that Hemingway's "literary apprenticeship was journalism" (ix). Though, in later years, Hemingway often dismissed the lasting value of his journalism, Fenton claims that his fiction brings together the best aspects of his work as a reporter (143). Following Fenton, many later critics have suggested that Hemingway's distinctive prose style began with the 110 reporter's rules for *The Kansas City Star* and the "cablese" of the reporter on location cabling in reports.[1]

While Hemingway's journalism influenced his writing of fiction, his reading of fiction influenced his early ideas about journalism. Judging from his first, unpublished stories, which often featured hard-boiled journalists, such as Punk Alford, "a crime solving newspaper reporter," Hemingway's attraction to journalism was largely shaped by the fiction of such popular writers as Rudyard Kipling, Mark Twain, Jack London, Stephen Crane, and Ring Lardner, among others (Reynolds, "Introduction" 2, Reynolds, *Young Hemingway* 90). As Kenneth S. Lynn shows, popular fictional images of the Great War inspired Hemingway in his own pursuits to become a solider to the point that his life almost seemed to imitate fiction (66–67), and it seems that fictional images of journalism similarly shaped his later experiences of what it meant to be a reporter immersed in action. In *Acquainted with the Night: The Image of Journalists in American Fiction, 1890–1930* (1986), Howard Good describes how the characters in fiction that featured newspaper work "served as role models for young men and women aspiring to journalism careers" (87). Such fictional characters attracted a new generation to the profession and shaped their initial experiences: "Anecdotal evidence suggests that the youthful readers of newspaper novels who went on to journalism careers were the image made flesh" (Good 92).

A close examination of some of Hemingway's earliest published fiction, the short vignettes that eventually became the interchapters of *In Our*

Time, reveal that the relationship between fact and fiction was already complex at the beginning of Hemingway's writing career. These pieces show that Hemingway did not simply leave journalism behind as he became a fiction writer, nor did he simply import his journalism and journalistic techniques into his fiction. The vignettes have their earliest origins in the sketches that Hemingway wrote with his friend, Bill Smith, about people they knew from upper Michigan, though the published versions of the first six vignettes reflect Hemingway's experiences during the war and his work as a reporter (Reynolds, *Young Hemingway* 93; Hagemann 38).[2] Of these six, two were derived from his reporting for *The Toronto Star,* and one came from his reading of a newspaper report (Fenton 237–238). Hemingway added an additional twelve vignettes for the book *in our time* (1924), which his friend Bill Bird, owner of Three Mountain Press, published as an installment of "The Inquest into the State of Contemporary English Prose" series edited by Ezra Pound (Stewart 24; Hagemann 38). Though the majority of these eighteen vignettes did not originate in journalism, Bird, who designed the books he published himself, initially considered giving each page a frame of newsprint (Reynolds, *Paris Years* 151). In fact, when *in our time* appeared, the cover design consisted of the title, author's name, and publication information superimposed over a collage of newsprint in several different languages (Reynolds, *Paris Years* 182).

While the title and subject matter suggested certain journalistic features to Bird, the vignettes themselves, even those that originated in Hemingway's own reporting, reflect the influence of Hemingway's two fellow expatriates in Paris, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein, and they were repeatedly and meticulously revised.[3] Comparing the vignettes that finally appeared as the interchapters spliced between the more traditionally structured stories in Hemingway's first major publication, *In Our Time,* with Hemingway's reporting for *The Toronto Star* shows that Hemingway actually developed what became known as his "newspaper style" while writing fiction. The vignettes are often more detached, spare, and "realistic" than his newspaper reports and share many features with the titled stories.[4] As Phyllis Frus demonstrates in her book *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative: The Timely and the Timeless* (1994), from the beginning Hemingway's literary art was in hiding the artfulness of his writing.[5] As a regular acquaintance of Hemingway's during the composition of *In Our Time,* Pound lectured Hemingway on his general theories of literature, emphasized the need for accuracy and simplicity, and provided specific comments on the vignettes (Fishkin 147). Specifically, Pound helped Hemingway move from the sensationalism of his news reports and the need to report verifiable facts to the more detached yet vivid "journalistic" style in

the vignettes. In examining Hemingway's early plans for *In Our time,* Pound advised Hemingway "that there needed to be more frozen moments for the book to feel right," and he suggested taking out the ironic titles that Hemingway had earlier proposed for the chapters (Reynolds, *Paris Years* 140–141). In this way, he helped Hemingway find the direction he would ultimately take in *In Our Time,* arranging frozen moments and discrete images in a sequence very much like a newsreel.

For example, in the vignette describing the death of the bullfighter, Maera, (which would become Chapter XIV of *In Our Time*), Pound suggested that Hemingway revise Maera's melodramatic, deathbed speech (Reynolds, *Paris Years* 139–140). Hemingway then produced the final, published version, a detached, untitled description of Maera dying in the arena's infirmary, unable to speak while the images in his mind "commenced to run faster and faster as when they speed up a cinematograph film" (131). Though the historical figure, Maera, had in reality died from tuberculosis (Hemingway, *Death* 82; Fenton 143), the key point here is not how Hemingway rewrote the facts but how his "journalistic" style emerged in *In Our Time* as he placed more emphasis on cinematic images than extended commentary and discourse. As he composed *In Our Time,* Hemingway would not simply reproduce or leave behind his journalism. Rather, he would largely follow this same process in readily incorporating techniques from the "cinematograph film" of a new form of journalism, the newsreel, to produce a work that seems simple but actually makes complex demands on readers' perceptions.

As Hemingway left behind the romantic figure of the journalist derived from his reading of fiction, he focused more on the process of observing itself. In this regard, the vignettes are more than simply journalistic remnants or filler to round out the stories of *In Our Time;* instead, they point to Hemingway's distinctive explorations of language in his first two major works. As Shelly Fisher Fishkin notes in *From Fact to Fiction: Journalism and Imaginative Writing in America* (1985), the "montage" of "short story" and "documentary vignette" is what makes *In Our Time* unique, as "Hemingway's fascination with the possibilities for mixing fact with fiction blossomed for the first time in this volume" (148). In following Hemingway's own concerns with the authenticity of language, Fishkin goes on to examine how Hemingway interrogated "the potential of verbal structures and of words themselves to 'lie,' to move one away from the realities he thought it so crucial to confront" (147).

Fishkin is right to note that *In Our Time* produces intensely visual effects like those of a "montage" and that the structure of the work allows Hemingway to explore the tendency of language to "lie." While I return to

Fishkin's argument below, here I want to emphasize that the two modes that make up this montage, though stylistically somewhat different, are both fictional, suggesting that the mixing of fact and fiction is more complex than the simple back and forth arrangement of the stories and interchapters. As I am arguing, this interaction is best understood in the way that Hemingway incorporates the journalistic form of the newsreel into a new form of fiction. Appearing as the newsreel reached its peak in popularity and innovation, *In Our Time* depicts many of the subjects that were portrayed in the first silent newsreels and uses this interplay of short stories and vignettes to produce images that demand a new way of seeing if readers are to find order in the text's fragmented structure.[6] At the same time, the detached voice that finally emerges in *In Our Time* anticipates the unifying effects of the voiceover in the sound newsreels that were released beginning in 1927 (Fielding 161). Furthermore, *In Our Time* appeared at a key juncture in the way that the newsreels were received, as the initial trust put in the newsreel was beginning to give way to growing skepticism about its ability to manipulate audiences. As I demonstrate, *In Our Time* not only reflects the form and subjects of the newsreel; it also addresses these growing questions about the authenticity of the newsreel as a means of examining the potential authenticity of language itself.

Initial reviews of *In Our Time* suggest that it did in fact challenge contemporary readers with its intensely visual effects.[7] As two often-quoted letters indicate, Hemingway was well aware of how his text replicates the vivid images and shifts in perspective characteristic of the camera. In a letter to Edward J. O'Brien, he suggests that the interaction of the two modes of *In Our Time* produces the sensation of a "close-up": "I've tried to do it so you get the close up very quietly but absolutely solid and the real thing but very close, and then through it all between every story comes the rhythm of the in our time chapters" (*Selected Letters* 123). In a letter to Edmund Wilson, he argues that the interchapters give readers

> the picture of the whole between examining it in detail. Like holding with your eyes at something, say a passing coast line, 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. (*Selected Letters* 128)

As the active language of this description suggests, the images in *In Our Time* do not form a series of static photographs but rather give a sense of movement meant to take readers through an experience that is visual and dynamic,

varied yet continuous—in other words, an experience very much like that of watching a newsreel motion picture.

In providing close ups of individual characters in often violent confrontations and panoramic views of refugees and battle scenes, Hemingway does not assist his readers with markers or visual clues the way John Dos Passos does in *U.S.A.* (1930, 1932, 1936).[8] In *U.S.A.,* Dos Passos identifies "Newsreel" sections which provide panoramic perspectives, glaring headlines, and gaudy snippets of news reports and popular songs. He also clearly identifies biographical and narrative sections which recount the lives of fictional and historical characters and "camera-eye" sections which present introspective, personal observations and memories.[9] Hemingway, however, avoids any such schematic arrangement to identify his "camera angles." While Dos Passos experiments with typography and provides distinct headings, Hemingway only varies his presentation by italicizing the interchapters. Instead, he tries to move readers through the words themselves and directly into the stream of images.

In recent years, many of Hemingway's most perceptive critics have further analyzed the visual aspects of *In Our Time.* However, these critics do not go far enough in connecting these visual aspects with the ways in which *In Our Time* engages contemporary social and historical issues. Instead, they generally focus on the unifying themes within *In Our Time* and its links with Hemingway's later works.[10] However, *In Our Time* is, as the title suggests, significant as part of its time. While it lacks headlines and has few specific historical references, it describes the events of the day in ways that follow the contemporary newsreel in challenging traditional modes of perception. Furthermore, Hemingway's distinctive form and language in *In Our Time* touch on pressing issues of identity and community and the way that meaning emerges from both personal perceptions and social contexts.

While many of Hemingway's early readers found that "[r]eading Hemingway was as informative as reading the newspapers, and much more exciting (Rovit 26)," such reactions resulted from his choice of sensational subjects and carefully crafted, visual language, both of which show more affinities with the newsreel than the newspaper. In *The American Newsreel, 1911–1967*(1972), Raymond Fielding notes that while the American newsreel replicated some aspects of the newspaper, it introduced a new focus on particularly graphic stories and images that had not previously been used in presenting the news.[11] Though the technology to reproduce photographic images inexpensively was available to newspapers for some time before the early news film was developed, newspapers remained almost exclusively focused on text, and the newsreel "provided predominantly photographic

news coverage long before newspapers and magazines did" (Fielding 3).[12] With this kind of coverage, the newsreel paid particularly close attention to "catastrophe, international celebrities, pageantry and ceremony, sports, political and military events, technology, and spectacle and novelty" (Fielding 48). As Fielding notes, among the early newsreels that caused public sensations were a French news film, shot in 1895, of a bullfight in Madrid (7); a British news film of the Derby at Epsom Downs, shot on June 3, 1896 (8); and an American news film released in 1905 that "pictured the execution of a New England housewife convicted of drowning her husband" (62). Besides these specific films, many of "the very early news films of the United States centered around prize fights" (Fielding 9), and warfare was also one of the staples of early newsreels (Fielding 29). Hemingway's choice of topics in *In Our Time* closely matches many of the subjects in these notable early newsreels: He features bullfights, horse racing, executions, a violent ex-prize fighter, and many images of warfare.

In addition to these correspondences in structure and subjects, *In Our Time* is directly linked to the production of the newsreel through Hemingway's friendship and working relationship with a film operator, the newsreel cameraman Shorty Wornall. In some cases, Hemingway and Wornall shared the same perspective on scenes that Hemingway describes in *In Our Times;* in other cases, Hemingway reproduces the newsreel cameraman's perspective, experiences, and language. The importance of this connection became even more prominent as Hemingway continued to revise *In Our Time.* After Hemingway switched publishers, his new editor, the renowned Maxwell Perkins, bought the rights to the book and requested that Hemingway write a new introduction for the Scribner's edition. Hemingway suggested that Edmund Wilson write one instead, but when one was not forthcoming from him, he added another vignette to open the work (Stewart 35). It appeared at first simply as "Introduction by the Author," though the title was changed in later editions to "On the Quai at Smyrna" (Stewart 24–25). Both in terms of their themes and perspectives, the two titled vignettes or interchapters that frame the final version of *In Our Time,* "On the Quai at Smyrna" and "L'Envoi," are connected, as "On the Quai" opens with a panoramic view of Greek refugees, while "L'Envoi" shows a close-up of a captive Greek king anxious to leave his country, and both include the presence of a reporter or interviewer. As Hemingway's journalism of the time shows, he was traveling with Wornall when he reported on the events that became "On the Quai at Smyrna," and he had an inside perspective on the newsreel coverage of the catastrophe ("Thrace" 57, "King Business" 76).[13] In addition, Wornall gave Hemingway the idea for "L'Envoi" when he returned to Paris in November

1922 and told him about his interview with the Greek king (*Selected Letters* 91–92). Wornall even gave Hemingway the last line of *In Our Time* when he described the king by noting, "Like all the Greeks he wants to get over to the States" ("King Business" 77).

In addition to these framing pieces, Wornall's perspective is clearly found in two other interchapters. In Chapter II, which describes refugees fleeing from Adrianople, Hemingway draws on both the language of his own news report and the exact perspective he had shared with Wornall. As Hemingway writes in one of his news dispatches,

> Shorty and Company were going a stretch along the stone road in their motorcar en route back to Rodosto and Constantinople and gave me a lift along the stone road past the procession of refugees into Adrianople. All the stream of slow big-wheeled bullock and buffalo carts, bobbing camel trains and sodden fleeing peasantry were moving west on the road, but there was a thin counterstream of empty cars driven by Turks in ragged, rain-soaked clothes and dirty fezzes which was working back against the main current. ("Thrace" 58)

In removing himself, the reporter, and Shorty, the cameraman, and in tightening the language he uses here to describe this "stream" of refugees, Hemingway presents a more starkly visual stream of images when he includes this scene in *In Our Time.* While it can be argued, then, that Wornall first "framed" this shot for Hemingway through his own work as a newsreel cameraman and the perspective they shared, Wornall's language is even more clearly present in Chapter V and Hemingway's description of the execution of five Greek ministers. Wornall had told Hemingway about this scene, and the published interchapter is adapted directly from Wornall's story and a similar news report. Fenton goes so far as to argue that in this interchapter "Hemingway was attempting . . . to reproduce not only the execution scene which Shorty described to him, but also the film operator's idiom. There is a distinct parallel between the diction of the vignette and the lines Shorty had spoken in one of Hemingway's *Daily Star* dispatches" (237). Thus, *In Our Time* literally begins and ends with the perspective of a newsreel cameraman, and it is clearly inflected at key moments with "the film operator's idiom" as well.

While Wornall had seen the events that became "On the Quai at Smyrna," it is significant to note that this opening piece exactly reproduces the perspective of a famous newsreel shot taken by another newsreel cameraman. As Michael S. Reynolds states, "Hemingway had not witnessed the

event himself, but there had been graphic news coverage, and he talked to men who were there" ("Biography" 44). Given that this piece was probably written after the earlier vignettes and very well may have been written as late as 1926 or 1927, Hemingway most likely wrote it from his own memory of speaking with Wornall and seeing this famous newsreel himself ("Biography" 45). The version of this newsreel entitled "The Burning of Smyrna" (1922, 1931), which is now readily available at British Pathe Limited's website, is extremely instructive in considering how *In Our Time* draws on the newsreel form and is situated in its particular historical moment.[14] While commonly perceived as a text about the Great War, *In Our Time* actually reflects a broader moment when traditional modes of perception were shocked and changed, as this newsreel from the later Greco-Turkish War reminds us.

While during World War I, the danger of long-range weapons, weighty cameras, and especially government censorship made shots of combat difficult to obtain (Fielding 115–116), the newsreel industry took advantage of easy access to the Greco-Turkish conflict to depict the harsh reality of warfare more directly. The destruction of Smyrna provided one of the most innovative newsreel companies, Pathé News, with an important scoop in newsreel journalism through the effective planning of its young managing editor, Jack Cohen, and the daring of a French cameraman named Ercole (128–129). With Cohen's urging, Ercole, despite numerous obstacles and dangers, filmed Smyrna from a plane until "he managed to get aboard an Allied warship in the harbor, and with a long-distance lens made photographs of the terrible scenes on the water front" (qtd. in Fielding: 129).[15] The significance of the resulting newsreel, one of the first ever to depict this kind of conflict and the misery of refugees, was such that it was viewed years later as a lesson for newsreel cameramen to follow in covering "impending events" (qtd. in Fielding: 147).[16] Again, it is important to note that when Hemingway added "On the Quai at Smyrna" to *In Our Time* he began his text by almost exactly reproducing this well-known newsreel shot: His narrator, like Ercole, is "aboard an Allied warship in the harbor," and he provides a similarly panoramic description of the horrific images on the waterfront. As Reynolds notes, contemporary readers would have made just this connection as they read about the fleeing Greeks in Hemingway's opening interchapters; after all, similar descriptions had been "in all the papers and on the newsreel screen" ("Biography" 46).

While Hemingway reflects the form and subjects of the newsreel in *In Our Time,* he also challenges its journalistic limits. In other words, while the newsreel serves as the model for *In Our Time, In Our Time* serves as a model newsreel. In the first untitled interchapter, Chapter I, Hemingway

plays off the typical newsreel shots of World War I which often featured patriotic scenes of soldiers marching. Such scenes were largely staged by governments, however, so that soldiers would appear properly disciplined and ordered and inspire viewers (Fielding 115–116). Hemingway similarly shows soldiers marching behind the lines but subverts conventional propaganda by depicting his soldiers as being drunk, disorderly, and afraid.[17] More broadly, Hemingway's concern with the veracity of language parallels the ongoing questions of truth and authenticity that surrounded the reception of newsreels. Initially, the newsreel images and films in general were received as the unimpeachable truth. As one commentator remarked in 1911, "Cinematography cannot be made to *lie,* it is a machine that merely records what is happening" (qtd. in Fielding: 43; italics in original).[18] With nearly all of the newsreel producers staging fake news films during the early years of the medium, with governments during World War I censoring commercial newsreels and producing their own propaganda films, and with years of sensationalism and censorship, the newsreel's credibility, however, slowly eroded (Fielding 122–125). In 1937, a typical commentator quipped, "the adage that 'the camera never lies' is, of course, nonsense" (qtd. in Fielding: 247). In 1947, one observer noted more caustically, "The motion picture camera in particular is a natural liar, and it lies more artfully with the aid of a willing cameraman or editor" (qtd. in Fielding: 248).[19]

Surprisingly, this erosion of trust increased with the introduction of sound newsreels. After sound newsreels were first released, many newsreel companies added emotional music, booming commentators, and sound effects and ignored locally recorded sound, so that the immediacy of the scenes presented seemed to diminish (Fielding 167). At the same time, some newsreel producers did employ narrators as a way to enhance the prestige and consistency of their newsreels. William Randolph Hearst's *News of the Day* used a single, authoritative narrator, and *Paramount News* consistently used a small number of narrators who were not identified by name (Fielding 193–194). These companies showed that, used skillfully, the narrator's disembodied voice could be superimposed over the images on the screen in a way that seemed to merge words and images. While *In Our Time* draws on the earliest subjects of the newsreels, its language points to the way these more prestigious newsreels would use sound and the voiceover to enhance the newsreel's authenticity.[20]

The role of the central character in *In Our Time,* Nick Adams, needs to be understood in terms of the way the newsreel informs the work as a whole. Modeled, in part, on George Willard in Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), Nick similarly functions to unify the text, and

he acts as a representative of a particular kind of community.[21] In *In Our Time,* he comes to serve as the camera recording various images and the voiceover bringing these images together through a single consciousness. As Nick's character develops throughout the text, he helps to create a pattern of meaning from Hemingway's fragmentary images, and he ultimately presents a language that seems absolutely trustworthy and true.

Appropriately enough, "On the Quai at Smyrna" begins to establish this framework for the text and Nick's role in it, even though Nick does not himself appear in the piece. "On the Quai at Smyrna" points to the way Hemingway works to restore the newsreel to its promise of authenticity. Indeed, one of the first captions from the Pathé newsreel "The Burning of Smyrna" describes what follows as "Authentic images that beggar description," while a later caption states, "Words are superfluous for a picture such as this—the tragedy of the burning of Smyrna." This idea of making words seem superfluous is something that Hemingway comes to pursue in *In Our Time* by making words seem identical with things. For many, though, the burning of Smyrna in September 1922 epitomized the hypocritical, duplicitous peace proceedings that followed the end of World War I. While in "Big Two-Hearted River" Hemingway returns to the idea of providing "authentic images" in which "words are superfluous," in "On the Quai at Smyrna" he begins *In Our Time* by showing how witnesses can become implicated in the production of lies through the very act of watching. In this way, he replicates the historical event itself: While the victorious Allies were busy pursuing their own diplomatic and economic interests throughout the summer and fall of 1922, the Allied ships in the harbor at Smyrna, for the most part, just passively watched as much of the city burned and its minority populations were devastated after the Turkish nationalist forces entered the city.[22] Like "L'Envoi," this piece is told through the frame of a dramatic monologue that calls attention to the reporter's presence even as the panoramic scene on the waterfront is described through a camera-like perspective (Seed, "Picture of the Whole" 25).

After "On the Quai at Smyrna" opens with a broad view of the refugees along the waterfront, there is a close-up in which a British officer listens to a Turkish officer claim that he has been insulted by a British soldier.[23] In response, the British officer lies about punishing the accused offender. Like many of the pieces in *In Our Time,* "On the Quai at Smyrna" is structured around a repetition of themes rather than a plot with a rising conflict (Flora 81). In this case, the wide scope of abject human suffering is echoed in the narrow irritation of the Turkish officer, and the speaker's initial lie is echoed in his later language. Referring to what are presumably discarded corpses as

"plenty of nice things floating around" in the harbor, the speaker concludes by bitterly using the words "nice" and "pleasant" rather than expressing his feelings directly. Seeing how the Greek refugees maim and drown their pack animals, he notes, "The Greeks were nice chaps too," and he twice describes the whole scene as "a pleasant business" (12). While the speaker's initial encounter shows how war necessitates lying, the bitter irony of his concluding remarks suggests that the shock of what he has seen profoundly affects his sense of language and the way he speaks.

The news reports that Hemingway had written about this scene in October and November 1922 for *The Toronto Star* help to further contextualize the language that he uses in "On the Quai at Smyrna." In his report "Refugees from Thrace" (1922), he uses the same word "pleasant" without irony, noting that "Adrianople is not a pleasant place," and he goes on to describe his own miserable experiences in a literally "lousy" hotel (56–57). As is the case with much of Hemingway's writing for *The Toronto Star,* Hemingway the reporter is a kind of character in this piece, again showing how his detached "journalistic" style did not actually emerge until his later revisions. While in his journalistic work the "unpleasantness" Hemingway describes reflects not only what he sees but what he and others, including, Shorty, physically experience, in "On the Quai at Smyrna" Hemingway presents his reporter as a disembodied speaker whose observations are reflected in the duplicitous language of the piece: He does not crawl with lice but with lies.[24] While in "On the Quai at Smyrna" the searchlight that stands in for the newsreel cameraman's long range lens momentarily stops the screaming of the refugees on the pier, seeing does not explain the suffering or make it go away, and neither the speaker's words nor his vision help him feel connected to what is going on.[25] In this way, the speaker suggests yet another role—that of the passive newsreel viewer.

The studied detachment and vivid images in "On the Quai at Smyrna" help point to the later pieces in which the emphasis on what characters see, rather than what they think, replicates the function of the newsreel camera. As with other short story sequences, readers must find their own connections as they continue through *In Our Time.* While in many other short story sequences, including two by friends of Hemingway, Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* and James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1916), a sense of place connects the loosely related stories and characters, it is evident from the very title of Hemingway's work that it is more focused on a sense of time than a sense of place.[26] This process also calls attention to the way that *In Our Time* more closely replicates the newsreel than the newspaper. While the newspaper is printed on a regular schedule, reading the newspaper is an activity largely

organized by space, both in terms of the way, local, national, and international news are divided, for example, and in the way that readers choose to begin reading wherever they wish and make links across the pages and columns as they proceed. The newsreel, on the other hand, unfolds in time, requiring viewers to make connections among juxtaposed images solely based on their implied correspondences in themes and on the implication that they occurred more or less simultaneously. Hemingway's title, which is most likely taken from the famous phrase "peace in our time" in the Book of Common Prayer (Reynolds, *Young Hemingway* 183), plays off the same idea found in the titles of such well-known newsreels as *March of Time,* while adding a cynical note about war and peace.

In my reading of *Winesburg, Ohio* in Chapter Two, I consider Benedict Anderson's argument for the importance of the newspaper in shaping the way modern relationships are experienced in modern nation-states. In linking seemingly disconnected articles under the same date, the newspaper causes otherwise disconnected readers to feel as if they are collectively participating in a common, simultaneous experience of witnessing and making meaning, and this in turn contributes to the creation of abstract "imagined communities" (Anderson 63). In practice, this shared act of imagination results from individual choices and reading habits, since each reader can begin reading at any point, pause, and continue according to personal choice and interest. Watching a newsreel also creates the sense of participating in a larger, abstract community through the newsreel's timeliness and the experience of collectively witnessing history. However, the experience of viewing a newsreel does not offer the same kind of choices as reading a newspaper. Each viewer of a newsreel must follow a prearranged series of fragmentary images that unfold continuously in time, and the ephemeral nature of the image underscores the importance of time in this process of perception.

In incorporating typical newsreel images and the perspective and language of a newsreel cameraman into *In Our Time,* Hemingway demonstrates how changes in perception cut across warfare, literature, science, and mass media.[27] The association of the soldier and the camera is one of the noted legacies of the Great War. While the French historian, Marc Bloch notes that the soldier's experience in the Great War was something new, "a discontinuous series of images, very lively but poorly co-ordinated, like a torn roll of cinematic film" (qtd. in Fraser: 78), Paul Fussell, in *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975), and Paul Virilio, in *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception* (1989), convincingly describe how changes in warfare contributed to broad changes in perception. As I am arguing, *In Our Time* provides a specific example of such changes: It precisely demonstrates

how permutations in perception were transformed from theaters of war to movie theaters and everyday life. Again, it is important to remember that the key opening images in *In Our Time* are from the Greco-Turkish War, a war which largely resulted from the backroom machinations of the peace proceedings in Paris, and that Hemingway's images correspond to the way this war and its effects were filmed in a much more direct and disturbing way than World War I. In its fragmented, open form and juxtaposition of bucolic Michigan, the devastation in Europe, and picaresque acts of violence, *In Our Time* suggests how, in the years following the Great War, the newsreel made people around the globe immediate witnesses to warfare, refugees, and often violent and sensational spectacles.

While such changes in perception seem to have been first concentrated in the experiences of soldiers during the Great War, they can be seen as more broadly linked to new understandings of the relationships among time, space, and individual acts of perception, as Alfred North Whitehead demonstrates in his Lowell Lectures, which were given in 1925, the same year that *In Our Time* appeared, and subsequently published as *Science and the Modern World* (1926). In this work, Whitehead crosses disciplinary and epistemological boundaries as he considers how historically shifting cultural and philosophical contexts can be linked to changes in methods of scientific observation. Recognizing the importance of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity and anticipating Heisenberg's formulation of the uncertainty principle in 1927, Whitehead acknowledges the inadequacies of defining perception in terms of pre-existing definitions of time and space and the separation of subjects and objects. Given such recent developments in science, he shows how perception needs to be understood as a process that accounts for the role of the observing subject, while objects of perception need to be understood within patterns of relationships. In arguing that time and space are contingently defined in the act of perceiving a pattern of relations, Whitehead suggests how *In Our Time* challenges preconceived ideas of time and space through the complex set of relationships that emerge in the text.

Whitehead describes how science had long relied on the idea of "simple location" for its understanding of how the most basic natural entities are perceived. In terms of "spatio-temporal relations," attributing simple location to "a bit of matter" means that "it is adequate to state that it is where it is, in a definite region of space, and throughout a definite finite duration of time, apart from any essential reference of the relations of that bit of matter to other regions of space and to other durations of time" (58). In other words, simple location means that discrete places and discrete moments can be noted in advance by an outside observer using given measurements of

time and space whose values remain constant. As Whitehead describes, this understanding of simple-location characterized Western scientific thought from the time of Aristotle and reached its apotheosis in the formulations of Isaac Newton. However, the inadequacies of simple location became evident by the end of the nineteenth-century, as this method could not account for the effects of relative motion and relative perspective or the discrete but discontinuous phenomena later proposed by Einstein. As the fragmented form of *In Our Time* demonstrates, seemingly discrete units have to be understood in terms of their relationships to other units in ways that account for the act of interpretation and evolving definitions of time and space. In other words, new models of perception have to recognize that time and space cannot be understood apart from specific acts of observation and measurement.

Whitehead's proposals suggest that *In Our Time* is better understood as an "event" rather than as an object that can be read in terms of simple location. According to Whitehead, an event generates its own sense of time and space and is understood in terms of internal and external relationships. Unlike the concept of matter implied by simple location, an object perceived in an event cannot be isolated in a definite region of space and in a definite, finite moment of time. Since a single event has to do "with all other events" (103), a different understanding of apprehension is needed that accounts for other regions of space and other durations of time. While simple location suggests that a product of measurement can be arrived at independently of the observer, Whitehead instead proposes that in an event the observer participates in the act of perception through a process of "uncognitive apprehension" which he calls "prehension" (69). In defining prehension, Whitehead rejects both the strict materialism of previous scientific thought and the dichotomies of philosophical idealism and avoids strictly defined categories of subjective and objective perception. While prehension does not create a solipsistic, subjective perspective, it does take account of the fact that the perception of the natural world is inseparable from the process of perception itself. Prehension reflects the idea that "concrete fact is process" and that perception is inevitably self-reflexive: "Perception is simply the cognition of prehensive unification; or more shortly, perception is cognition of perception" (70–71).

Hemingway's complex arrangement of material in *In Our Time* challenges readers to see the text as an event requiring a similar process of perception. It belies the adequacy of simple location because none of its individual components can be fully appreciated if they are considered as discrete objects existing in discrete moments. Rather, the text, like a newsreel film, needs to be perceived as an event that unfolds in time and is interpreted from

within this process, as each segment of the text transforms the segments that have preceded it and is then in turn transformed by the segments that follow it. Each segment, then, takes on significance according to its relations: Repeated words, images, and descriptions create relations of meaning within the text, while references that point to historical events outside the text create wider patterns of perception and significance which touch upon "all other events." As disparate elements are connected in the process of prehension, definitions of space and time emerge from within the event of the text itself and a pattern in space is recognized through its duration in time. As Whitehead demonstrates, this emergence of a pattern in time challenges the idea of a discrete moment and a discrete present. Since each event is realized "as grouping together a number of aspects of its own temporal parts" and since each event also relates to external patterns of events, the seemingly instantaneous moment is actually a "specious present" "in which the event realizes itself as a totality" (104–105). Both these internal temporal parts and external events have their own duration, and therefore, the pattern of a particular event "requires a definite duration determined by a definite meaning of simultaneity." In other words, even an apparently simultaneous moment actually involves a "definite lapse of time" and is "not merely an instantaneous moment" (124). Since time and space cannot be defined externally, units of time and space only emerge within an event as each relationship is recognized. Whitehead emphasizes how different this concept of the event is from previous notions of perception:

> For each relationship enters into the essence of the event; so that, apart from that relationship, the event would not be itself. This is what is meant by the very notion of internal relations. It has been usual, indeed, universal, to hold that spatio-temporal relationships are external. This doctrine is what is here denied. (123)

The necessity of recognizing each internal relation means that "the whole is evidently constitutive of the part" (123).

Again, Whitehead's comments can be seen as describing how *In Our Time* draws on the form of the newsreel to challenge received ideas of perception. While each segment of the text offers its own distinct moment, each of these moments is also part of the same moment of "our time." In this way, the text offers a seemingly simultaneous moment which nonetheless requires a sense of duration in order for relations to be properly established among the parts and the whole and among disparate external events. The actual features that constitute this event are not defined in advance; the crucial

connections among these relations and specific definitions of time and space only emerge from within the process of perception. At the same time, these relations are not endless. Readers approach *In Our Time* the same way viewers approach the newsreel or scientists approach the event—expecting to find not only relations but a limit to these relations so that the event seems singular, whole, and meaningful. As Whitehead notes, "An event is the grasping into unity of a pattern of aspects" despite the proliferation of seemingly endless relations (119). In literary terms, this need to give shape to relations recalls Henry James's preface to *Roderick Hudson* (1909) in which he states, "Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so" (*Art* 5; italics in original). Just as James uses individual characters to draw a circle around a particular set of relations, Whitehead sees the unity of the whole coming from the repetition and limits of an individual shape:

> The reiteration of a particular shape (or formation) of value within an event occurs when the event as a whole repeats some shape which is also exhibited by each one of a succession of its parts. Thus however you analyse the event according to the flux of its parts through time, there is the same thing-for-its-own-sake standing before you. (104)

In this way, the event "realises itself under the guise of an enduring individual entity, with a life history contained within itself" (104).

Whitehead's and James's descriptions help to describe Nick's specific function in shaping *In Our Time* as an event. In the span of Nick's life that Hemingway presents in the text, he "stands before us" as the "individual entity" whose "life history" realizes the unity of the event, and his repeated presence generates the necessary sense of duration in which a pattern can emerge from an expansive set of relations. In other words, *In Our Time* captures a moment, and its individual parts make sense within this moment because of the way that Hemingway depicts Nick. Nick defines how long this moment lasts and how far the relations among these parts extend. Nick's character suggests multiple relations among seemingly disparate events while at the same time defining the limits of these relations in the way Whitehead describes. In the context of the fragmented, far-flung interchapters, Nick's appearance in many stories, his absence from others, his geographical movement, and his gradual maturation make him appear as "Nick of time," internally generating the sense of duration at the center of Hemingway's innovative form. As each image in the text flickers momentarily like the frame of

a newsreel movie, Nick's presence offers the means to create a sense of time that accounts for both personal experience and public history. Lacking a predetermined time period, historical dates, or directive headlines, *In Our Time* is not measured in advance by external limits on places and times the way a newspaper is. Instead, as Nick's life unfolds in *In Our Time,* his presence across chapters gives the text the same feeling of simultaneity and immediacy as the newsreel. While readers are seemingly given an invitation to share in an extended moment of "our time," Nick's life defines this moment and the various "instances" of his life emerge as the extended "instant" in which the text is recognized as a single event.

Nick, then, comes to serve as a representative figure in the way George does in Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio.* In centering his conception of community on the spatial reality of a single town, Anderson shows George bringing together other characters through his work as a reporter and bringing together Anderson's readers through his status as a representative young man. George enacts local community building while also offering a means for imagining abstract national communities. Nick, on the other hand, does not work to bring together other characters within the text itself. Instead, he serves as a representative of his generation, a community defined in time, and he exemplifies the complex significance of time in the process of perception. While Anderson uses the repetition of key terms to show how George's use of language is shaped by his fellow residents of Winesburg, Hemingway, in "Big Two-Hearted River," erases Nick's connections to other characters and shows him reinventing his own understanding of language; while Anderson suggests George went on to become the implied author of *Winesburg,* Hemingway eliminates almost all of his earlier references to Nick as the implied author of *In Our Time.* Rather, he shows Nick achieving a sense of language that is so compelling that it seems at first glance to avoid the problems of community altogether and make language transparent and new. Hemingway does this by making Nick not a working reporter, like George, but the primary lens through which the newsreel is presented, a kind of reporter with a camera. In *In Our Time,* Hemingway comes to focus on Nick's perspective as the means of presenting a language of immediacy that recreates the potential clarity and veracity of the newsreel camera and voiceover.

As Fishkin argues, at his best Hemingway "helps his readers to achieve fresh views of the distinctly 'noninvented' world around them; he recognized the power of fiction to focus the reader's attention upon the world of fact" (148). In *In Our Time,* Hemingway does the reverse as well: He recognizes the power of the factual, journalistic form of the newsreel to help his readers achieve a fresh view of the power of fiction. In engaging the form of

the newsreel in *In Our Time,* Hemingway crafts a distinct literary style that combines modernist experiments in fractured forms with a language that seems even more accessible and direct than the language of journalism.[28] As noted above, in pursuing this seemingly authentic language, Hemingway addresses the claims to truth raised by the early newsreels. As a commentator noted in 1911,

> The reporter with the pen will be superseded by the reporter with the camera. . . . The world will be treated to that rarest of rare things—a reporter who does not, in fact, who cannot lie. The events will come to us not as the policy of the paper would want to color them, but as they actually occurred. (qtd. in Fielding: 146)[29]

While such confidence in the newsreel would decline as it became clear that newsreels were as carefully constructed as all texts, Hemingway, by making Nick into a reporter with a camera rather than a pen, also tries to create a language that seemingly "cannot lie."

While this role for Nick is foreshadowed in Hemingway's use of language in "On the Quai at Smyrna" and in the early stories in which Nick appears, Nick's connection to a new kind of seemingly truthful language reaches a decisive turning point midway through the text, in Chapter VI and "Soldier's Home," and culminates in the final story, "Big Two-Hearted River." In Chapter VI, Nick appears in one of the interchapters for the first and last time. He has been wounded while fighting in the Great War, and while leaning against a church, proposes "a separate peace" to the dying comrade who lies next to him (63). By appearing in one of the interchapters after already appearing in five titled stories about his early life, Nick disrupts the distinctions between these two forms and between private and public history.[30] As Kathryn Zabelle Derounian suggests, Nick acts as a camera at this point, so that in this interchapter, the "movement is slow yet punctuated, as if the reader were looking at separate frames of a film and seeing objects and events from Nick's restricted viewpoint" (61). Earl Rovit also claims that this interchapter emphasizes the process of perception and notes that here Nick "registers the events as though he were a slow-motion camera" (57).

While Chapter VI anticipates Nick's role as a camera lens in "Big Two-Hearted River," his sarcastic language as a soldier looks back to the opening language of the British officer in "On the Quai at Smyrna." In "Soldier's Home," Hemingway more clearly anticipates how Nick uses the language of the voiceover in "Big Two-Hearted River" by showing how the central character of the story, Harold Krebs, more clearly desires a language that will not

lie. One of the last soldiers in his town to return from the Great War, Harold "found that to be listened to at all he had to lie," and the "unimportant lies" he tells lead him to feel that "he lost everything," even his recollection of the times during the war when all was "cool and clear inside himself" (69–70). As his parents and community seem to deny the effects of the war on him and his generation, their hypocritical reception stands in contrast to this internal feeling of authenticity, and Harold tries to avoid all lies by seeking a life that is not "complicated" and utterly without "consequences" (71). He spends much of his time reading the baseball reports in *The Kansas City Star* and the histories of the war that are just beginning to be published. He particularly enjoys "reading about all the engagements he had been in," and he eagerly awaits the publication of even better histories which include "more maps" (72). For Harold, reading the newspaper and nonfiction becomes the means for him to escape his surroundings and maintain the fiction that he can avoid all life's complications. When his parents intrude into this fictive world with their expectations, he decides to make a more decisive escape and sneak away to Kansas City.

In the two parts of "Big Two-Hearted River," the final story of *In Our Time*, Nick fulfills Harold's fantasy by freeing himself from personal complications and the social implications of language. Returning to the river to fish, Nick turns the burnt out terrain along the river into a kind of garden and appears as a timeless "Adam" rather than as the Nick Adams who is shaped by history and memory. Seeming to describe only what he sees as a solitary camera and commentator, he suggests that words can exist apart from social conventions as well. Just as he has escaped from the trauma of war and the inevitable compromise of relationships, so, too, does it seem that language can escape from the inevitability of compromise and lies.

Hemingway's ambitions for *In Our Time,* his first book with a major publisher, influenced the way he composed "Big Two-Hearted River." After reading *Winesburg, Ohio* and *Dubliners,* Hemingway's desire to write a powerful concluding story initially led him to deviate from the detached perspective he had developed in the previous pieces (Reynolds, *Paris Years* 202). In early drafts of "Big Two-Hearted River," he had Nick discussing art, contemporary literature, fishing, marriage, and his ideas as a writer. He justified these comments by identifying the Nick Adams of "Big Two-Hearted River" as the author of the previous pieces and the creator of the "Nick Adams" character who appears in them. Just as Pound had earlier helped Hemingway consider the language and visual aspects of *In Our Time,* Gertrude Stein helped him stay focused on these aspects in the story of the text. When Stein read Hemingway's draft of "Big Two-Hearted River," she told him she liked it "as

long as Nick stuck to the river, but once he started thinking too much, the story lost its drive. 'Remarks,' she told him, 'are not literature'" (Reynolds, *Paris Years* 247). Following her advice, Hemingway removed nearly all of Nick's remarks and self-reflexive meditations. Had Hemingway portrayed Nick as a reporter with a pen, rather than transforming him into a reporter with a camera, *In Our Time* would have been more reflexive but not offered the same challenges to perception found in the published version.[31] Instead, Hemingway's revisions strengthened the effect he had already created by placing Nick alone in the burnt out terrain. By not identifying Nick explicitly as a reporter or writer, Hemingway allows him to function as the lens and voiceover of a newsreel and the means by which readers come to see *In Our Time* as a set of relations—a distinct event, in Whitehead's terms. At the same time, with Nick's remarks removed, readers are left to consider exactly how he is connected to—and connects—the other segments of the text and must participate more actively in the process of making meaning.

In the only reference to Nick as a writer left in the published version of the story, Hemingway describes him as feeling that "he had left everything behind, the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs. It was all back of him" (134). This suggests that Nick has achieved what Harold Krebs only wanted—a life without consequences. While Harold reads constantly, Nick here leaves behind the desire to write and elsewhere only briefly wishes that he had brought something to read (155); while Harold wants better maps that depict the battles of the Great War, Nick "did not need to get his map out. He knew where he was from the position of the river" (135). This last point not only distinguishes Nick from Harold but also underscores Nick's distinct role in the text.[32] Though other short story sequences often include maps, and though Hemingway had kept a map of northern Michigan pinned to the wall above his desk while he was composing "Big Two-Hearted River" in Paris, he chose not to include a map in *In Our Time* (Reynolds, *Young Hemingway* 40–41). If he had, the result would have been the same as if he had kept Nick as the writer of the stories; it would have provided an explicit structure for the text. Instead, Nick avoids any mediated representations of reality and in effect surveys his own map as he moves through the landscape. In this way, Nick's movements and what he sees are at once immediate and meaningful in terms of their implied relations to all that has appeared before in the text.

The lack of any mediating texts enhances the way seeing becomes thinking for Nick, and the camera function he assumes in Chapter VI thus culminates in "Big Two-Hearted River." Hemingway, in an earlier article for *The Toronto Star* with a similar setting, "The Best Rainbow Trout Fishing" (1920), "explores the literary use he can make of a technique borrowed from

film in an effort to describe with documentary precision a great river for trout fishing" (Fishkin 142). Hemingway writes that

> to get the proper picture you want to imagine in rapid succession the following fade-ins:
>
> A high pine covered bluff that rises up out of the shadows. A short sand slope down to the river and quick elbow turn with a little flood wood jammed in the bend and then a pool.
>
> A pool where the moselle colored water sweeps into a dark swirl and expanse that is blue-brown with depth and fifty feet across.
>
> There is the setting. ("Trout Fishing" 9–10)

In "Big Two-Hearted River," Hemingway does not address his readers with this conversational "you," and he eliminates the explicit camera directions he includes here. In following Stein's suggestions, he makes his style more detached, as he does in the interchapters, and presents a language more directly modeled on the techniques of the camera.

Lacking any specific directions about Nick's role or function in the text, readers must place the final story in its proper relation to the other works. When Nick, at the beginning of the story, arrives in Seney to find that the town is gone and "[e]ven the surface had been burned off the ground" (133), readers are likely to connect this burnt landscape with the destruction of war and the shellshock of soldiers like Harold and Nick. Significantly, Nick's solitude allows him to bring another feeling home from the war—the same "cool clear feeling" Harold had experienced. In a portion of the story that Hemingway later eliminated, Nick thinks that he

> wanted to write about country so it would be there like Cézanne had done it in painting. You had to do it from inside yourself. There wasn't any trick. Nobody had ever written about country like that. He felt almost holy about it. It was deadly serious. You could do it if you would fight it out. If you lived right with your eyes. ("On Writing" 239)

With such comments removed in the published version of the story, Nick does not think about what it means "to live right with your eyes" but enacts this idea himself. When he finds a cool, clear pool of water, he sees trout "slightly distorted . . . through the glassy convex surface" (133). The convex lens of the pool represents how Nick recreates the "cool clear feeling" through the act of seeing—it as though he makes a new surface of the world by living right through his eyes.

When Nick moves away from the pool, he continues to live through his eyes, and images flash more quickly across the screen of his consciousness. In the solitary world of "Big Two-Hearted River," motion and seeing are forms of pleasure, and desire is momentarily controlled and fulfilled in the way Harold imagined in "Soldier's Home"—without consequences. To see this way, Nick finds that he needs to "choke" off his thoughts before the past interferes with the present (142). While he leaves everything behind, including his memories, the complications of relationships, reading and writing, and the need to make sense of such things, readers continue to find correspondences, such as those between Nick's satisfaction in fishing alone and the frustrations of the couple going off to fish together in "Out of Season." Since the reader's participation in rounding out the story this way lends a sense of fullness and authenticity to the pared down language of the story, "Big Two-Hearted River" is perhaps the most successful example of Hemingway's often quoted "iceberg principle" in which absence enhances meaning. At times reading the story is, as Hemingway described to Wilson, "like looking at it and then going in and living in it—and then coming out and looking at it again."

Though Nick's solitary experience of nature recalls Henry David Thoreau's experiences in *Walden* (1854), Thoreau plummets experience and language in his meditations on Walden Pond, while Nick finally arrives at a river, a more appropriate body of water for *In Our Time.* Just as the newsreels eventually trained the perception of viewers to make sense of apparently random streams of images, Hemingway uses the stream of images in his text to prepare his readers for viewing this river and Nick's movements around it. Nick's reappearance throughout the text often makes it seem as if his voice carries over from one story to the next, and his experiences and consciousness become the touchstone by which readers arrange the events in the text (Moddelmog 608). The fact that his final appearance is offered without direct commentary on his own history or the history of his generation makes Nick into a kind of simple declarative sentence himself. Even as Nick functions as the "glassy convex surface" of a lens, the language of "Big Two-Hearted River" replicates the language that would be used by the most effective newsreel commentators: Disembodied words appear over images with an authority that seems naturalized and transparent, as if the words were found, not put, there, and hence beyond interpretation. Fishkin describes the way the published version of the story avoids the seemingly inevitable lies found earlier in *In Our Time* and conveys this sense of immediate authenticity:

> The world of "Big Two-Hearted River" is a world where one is required to tell no lies, where one is not even required to speak to compare the

> present with the past, to abstract from what one is experiencing. There is no disjunction here between words and things; words themselves are superfluous. (154)

"Words themselves are superfluous"—here Fishkin almost exactly repeats the newsreel caption from "The Burning of Smyrna": "Words are superfluous for a picture such as this." This is no coincidence, I think, but follows from the way that Hemingway engages the newsreel and pursues its promise of transparency and authenticity from the beginning to the end of *In Our Time.*

In combining the role of the camera eye and the voiceover, Nick seems to exist as a single individual apart from society just as he seems to reduce language to single, atomistic words apart from their social context.[33] In these terms, the ending of *In Our Time* stands in contrast to *Winesburg, Ohio* and *Dubliners,* two similarly structured works, which, as I noted above, Hemingway knew well. While George's departure by train at the end of *Winesburg* is the occasion of the most meaningful gathering described in the text, Nick's arrival by train at the end of *In Our Time* is the occasion of utter solitude. While Gabriel's final epiphany at the end of "The Dead" leads him to recognize the limits of language and desire and to reflect on "general," shared experiences (223), Nick's final realization in "Big Two-Hearted River"—that he would wait to fish the swamp (156)—shows he will continue to experience the world only through his individual perceptions. The journalistic form of the newsreel provides Hemingway with possibilities for exploring the idea of a truthful language, but it also limits the scope of his perspective to a single camera lens.

This lens is distinctly masculine, as is obvious from Hemingway's portrayal of women in *In Our Time.* In one of the later stories, "Cross-Country Snow," Nick speaks of a woman, Helen, who is pregnant with his child (111). Though her pregnancy seems to be the reason for Nick's unwanted return to the United States, he does not mention her in "Big Two-Hearted River," and she never appears directly in *In Our Time.* While throughout the text women are associated almost solely with violence, painful childbirths, and death, female subjectivity is totally absent from "Big-Two Hearted River," and the "growing antagonism to women" that Wilson and many later readers would find in Hemingway's subsequent writing can thus be seen in the way that he moves women out of the frame in this, his first major work (Wilson 237–240).[34] The cost of Nick's unifying vision, his need to repress the past, and his lack of meaningful social relations is measured, though, in his emotional state, which is so precariously balanced that a lost trout causes him to sit down and gather himself (150–151).

In its relations to the context of *In Our Time* as a whole, "Big Two-Hearted River" is better understood not as a true story but as a romance of fact. The ideal the story puts forth, of a purely objective observer superimposing transparent words over the objects of his gaze, contradicts Hemingway's own experience as a reporter and his increasing awareness of the observer as a participant in the scene at hand, a topic I consider more fully below. Instead, "Big Two-Hearted River" returns readers to the idealized potential of the newsreel form, even as the newsreels were themselves increasingly recognized as constructions "altered in their configuration by the inevitable presence of the camera-man" (Fielding 148–149).

While "Big Two-Hearted River" continues to receive much critical attention as the masterful culminating story of *In Our Time,* it is important to note the obvious fact that it is not actually the final segment of the text. "L'Envoi" follows it and concludes *In Our Time* by returning once more to the language of the newsreel cameraman and subtly undermining the purity of the newsreel image. As noted above, "L'Envoi," like "On the Quai at Smyrna," is closely based on information told to Hemingway by the newsreel cameraman Shorty Wornall, and it is similarly presented in the form of a short interview that acknowledges the presence of the reporter in recounting the story. In this piece, the unnamed Greek king, who is essentially imprisoned, uses language marked by the artificial, English mannerisms found in "On the Quai at Smyrna," while the queen, after a brief greeting, toils on silently in the garden. As mentioned above, the interviewer concludes the piece with a line about the king that Hemingway took almost verbatim from Wornall: "Like all Greeks he wanted to go to America" (157). Like the Greek refugees in "On the Quai at Symrna," the king hopes to escape; like Nick in "Big Two-Hearted River," he finds himself in a kind of garden. Yet the king's political predicament and use of clichés call into question the idea that identity or language can exist outside of a socially constructed world, while the queen's work and silence underscore the troubling way women recede from the text. Thus, "L'Envoi" acts as a disruptive commentary on "Big Two-Hearted River" and the way that Nick brings together and unifies the relations in *In Our Time* through the limited perspective of his camera eye. "L'Envoi" concludes *In Our Time* by suggesting that Hemingway was aware of these limits and knew that his ideal, "factual" language could only exist in the world of fiction.

In *The Sun Also Rises,* Hemingway's next major work, he again draws on his experience as a journalist and the modernist culture of postwar Paris to create a work of fiction that deals with similar issues of perception and the authenticity of language. However, instead of using an experimental form

modeled on the newsreel, Hemingway addresses theses by presenting his novel through a first-person narrator-reporter, Jake Barnes. While Hemingway claimed *In Our Time* gives readers the experience of "looking at it and then going in and living in it—and then coming out and looking at it again," this process of observing, becoming immersed in a story, then coming out to observe in a new way, accurately describes Jake's experience in *The Sun Also Rises.* Through Jake's role as a participant reporter, physically present throughout all of the scenes he describes, *The Sun Also Rises* engages contemporary issues facing journalism and presents a more nuanced conception of the interrelationships between fact and fiction. As Michael Schudson writes in *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (1978), "In the twenties and thirties, many journalists observed with growing anxiety that facts themselves, or what they had taken to be facts, could not be trusted" (6–7).[35] With this suspicion of "objective" facts, journalists began to accept the idea that the "experience of reporting should be in the report" (187).[36] In *The Sun Also Rises,* Hemingway presents the reporter's experience of observing, and he explores the necessity of accepting a social basis for language in which lies and fictions often complement the facts themselves. While *In Our Time* uses a factual model, the newsreel, to shape a fictional world around a single individual, *The Sun Also Rises* uses ideas of fiction to reclaim a sense of truthfulness in the way facts are reported by a journalist immersed in complex social relations.

There is much evidence to support the idea that Jake is a participant reporter who recognizes that the "experience of reporting should be in the report." As Phyllis Frus notes in her useful reading of Hemingway, in the feature pieces Hemingway wrote for *The Toronto Star* and in much of his later reporting, he did not merely report on the news but frequently focused on his own presence and responses: His "journalism from the twenties is characterized by irony, parody, broad satire, and by a narrative persona that communicates variously authority, irreverence, expertise, and wit" (Frus 59). As Schudson demonstrates, such features were common at the time, and the idea of "objectivity" was largely a reaction to the true state of affairs in the way journalism was conceived and practiced:

> While objectivity, by the 1930s, was an articulate professional value in journalism, it was one that seemed to disintegrate as soon as it was formulated. It became an ideal in journalism, after all, precisely when the impossibility of overcoming subjectivity in presenting the news was widely accepted, and . . . precisely *because* subjectivity had come to be regarded as inevitable. (157; italics in original)

Though Hemingway examines precisely this "inevitable" subjectivity in *The Sun Also Rises,* critics have rarely considered Jake's understanding of his occupation as a reporter and role as a participant-observer. Most critics have taken the opposite position, in fact, and cited Jake's war wound and impotence as the basis for claiming that he is an objective, detached observer. Essentially, such arguments claim that since Jake cannot fully consummate his relationship with Lady Brett Ashley, he can only observe her story and the stories of others as they unfold. Reynolds typifies this position when he writes that Jake "has trained himself to be the detached, ironic observer." He further claims that Jake's "detachment becomes our own; we are forced into the spectator's role, for Jake Barnes will let us get no closer" (*Twenties* 51). However, Jake's wound can actually be seen as a constant reminder of his bodily presence, and it does not prevent him from becoming significantly involved in the lives of Brett and the other characters. In fact, Jake brings Brett and his friend Robert Cohn together, plans the trip to Spain that forms the centerpiece of the action in the novel, and brings Brett and the Spanish bullfighter Pedro Romero together as well. In other words, Jake not only observes the other characters but also manipulates their behavior and shapes all the central events in the novel.

As is the case with *In Our Time,* early versions of *The Sun Also Rises* illuminate the role that Hemingway had in mind for his central character. Before Hemingway revised the galleys of the novel, Jake's work as a reporter and awareness of his involvement in the story were much more obvious. In Frederic Joseph Svoboda's useful book *Hemingway and The Sun Also Rises: The Crafting of a Style* (1983), he reproduces some of the pages from these galley proofs, which are stored at the John F. Kennedy Library. These proofs make it undeniably clear that Hemingway grappled with the extent to which Jake would be involved in the story and presented as the imputed author of the text. For example, at the beginning of what was to have been Chapter Two, Jake speaks directly to the reader about his literary methods and the reluctance with which he decided to recount his story as a first-person narrator. Finding that the story of his subjects inevitably includes him as a character as well, he acknowledges that it is impossible for him to maintain any distance from the events in the story and accepts with hard-boiled sarcasm that he must tell it through his own eyes and in his own words.[37] Though in the published version of the novel Jake does not make such overt admissions, only the influence of previous readings which claim that Jake is detached could obscure the fact that he obviously becomes increasingly involved in the life of his first subject, Robert Cohn, and then in the life of his second and main subject, Lady Brett, as well as in the lives of many of

the other characters. While Nick finds a cool, detached feeling in escaping from social relations, Jake remains touched by others through his occupation as a journalist and his affection for Brett. While Nick chokes off his desires and the memory of his war wound, Jake cannot forget either his desires or his own war wound: He does not become a camera lens but remains an embodied reporter who must ultimately account for his inevitable involvement as an observer.

These key changes between Nick and Jake are signaled in Hemingway's short novel *Torrents of Spring* (1926), which he completed in a matter of days while in the middle of writing *The Sun Also Rises.* With a title from Ivan Turgenev, the novel is mainly a satire of Sherwood Anderson's recent novel, *Dark Laughter* (1925). Hemingway wrote *Torrents of Spring* with the intention that Boni and Liveright, Anderson's publisher as well as his own, would refuse it, thus freeing him from his contract and allowing him to switch publishers (Townsend 229). While Hemingway was undoubtedly jealous of the success of his former friend and galled by the fact that many reviews of *In Our Time* compared him to Anderson at a time when *Dark Laughter* was selling much better than his own book (Reynolds, *Paris Years* 328), the unguarded spontaneity of *Torrents of Spring* nonetheless reveals much about the issues that were on Hemingway's mind as he wrote *The Sun Also Rises.* This is clear in Hemingway's single direct reference to Anderson, when Yogi, one of the two main characters and a veteran of the Great War, reflects on his recent reading about a "chap in the book by Anderson," a soldier named Fred, who "had been at the front two years." Yogi remembers Anderson writing about Fred's experiences in the war:

> One night, in the time of fighting, he went out on parade—no, it was patrol—in No Man's Land, and saw another man stumbling along in the darkness and shot him. . . . You don't kill men in war much, the book said. The hell you don't, Yogi thought, if you're two years in the infantry at the front. (53–54)

Yogi goes on to think: "Afterward, killing this man haunted Fred. It's got to be sweet and true. That was the way the soldiers thought, Anderson said. The hell it was. This Fred was supposed to have two years in an infantry regiment at the front" (54).

In satirizing Anderson in *Torrents of Spring,* Hemingway implies that only soldiers truly understand the experience of war and can write about it. While in the deleted portion of "Big Two-Hearted River" Hemingway argues for the importance of the imagination, here he emphasizes the authority of

the eyewitness who possesses privileged access and information. In Yogi's mocking comments, Hemingway suggests that a veteran like himself would never confuse a "parade" with a "patrol," and he points ahead to the basis of Jake's authority as a wounded veteran and a reporter with inside information. In privileging the eyewitness as a representative observer, Hemingway also implies that veterans of the Great War like Yogi and Jake can stand as representatives of their generation, while Anderson, Hemingway's senior by 23 years, and Anderson's contemporaries are from a generation whose experiences and aesthetic loyalties prevent them from accurately portraying the horrors of the war or its aftermath. Like the title *In Our Time,* Hemingway's epigraphs for *The Sun Also Rises* from Stein ("You are all a lost generation") and Ecclesiastes ("One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh . . . ") emphasize the strategy of inviting readers into a community defined by a shared time, a generation, rather than a shared place. However, while Jake, like Nick, stands as a representative member of his generation, he does not attain this status by escaping the complications of society but rather by "being there" as a reporter and shaping the stories he sees first-hand.

Though Hemingway ultimately removed many of the details of Jake's work as a journalist in the published version of *The Sun Also Rises,* as late as the galley stage he had Jake first introduce himself as a journalist and describe his work at great length. In these deleted passages, Jake emphasizes that he enjoys his position as a journalist so much that he even takes a lower salary so that no one else will try to steal his job. Yet in describing the kinds of writing he does, he admits that he would prefer to become a novelist and worries that his first novel will suffer from the typical self-consciousness of the journalist who begins to take up fiction.[38] Here and elsewhere in his earlier draft of the novel, (first entitled *Fiesta,* the title it retains in its British editions), Hemingway makes it obvious that Jake was meant to be the implied author of *The Sun Also Rises* and includes other remarks on the nature of writing, as he had in early drafts of "Big Two-Hearted River" and *Torrents of Spring.* At one point, Hemingway even had Jake repeat the literary advice he himself had received from Stein while working on *In Our Time.*[39] Despite Jake's defiant tone in denouncing this advice, "all the 'remarks' that found their way into the first draft of the novel disappeared as Hemingway revised" (Svoboda 38), and in the end, Jake became "less a conscious commentator and more a man who is recording immediate experience" (Svoboda 81). In particular, many of these comments and remarks were removed when Hemingway followed the advice of F. Scott Fitzgerald and cut most of the opening, as Svoboda convincingly demonstrates by comparing the galleys of the novel with Fitzgerald's letter.[40]

These revisions and the removal of most of Jake's comments on writing have allowed critics to minimize the importance of Jake's work as a journalist. Critics have been quick to do this, in part, in order to emphasize the artistry of the book and defend it from the many early commentators who noted how closely the novel was based on real events and real people and took it to task for deviating from the way things "really" were.[41] In emphasizing the novel's fictive elements, these defenders often explicitly distance *The Sun Also Rises* from journalistic techniques and themes. Svoboda, for example, notes that while the original opening seems to be almost "a completely journalistic account of Hemingway's 1925 trip to Spain" (8), as one reads "the rest of the original draft, journalism rapidly turns to fiction" (9). He goes on to state directly, "*The Sun Also Rises* is not a flawed work of journalism but is superbly realized fiction" (10).[42] By distancing the novel from journalism in this defensive way, however, critics overlook the contributions journalism makes to the structure of the novel and to Jake's characterization; they also miss the opportunity to examine more closely the similarities between the novel and *In Our Time* and the ways in which Hemingway continues to develop ideas about the potential authenticity and social basis of language.

In the published version of the novel, a few explicit details remain to underscore the importance of Jake's occupation as a reporter. Early in the novel, Hemingway describes a typical workday for Jake, including his attendance at a news conference and work in his office (36). Not only does Hemingway make Jake the only one of the main characters who has a regular job, he significantly implies that Jake is working as a reporter even when this work is not overt. Not long after Robert Cohn appears in the novel, Jake ends an unwanted meeting with him by noting the importance of discovering "graceful exits like that in the newspaper business, where it is such an important part of the ethics that you should never seem to be working" (11). In light of the galley proofs of the novel and the way that Jake becomes involved in the lives of his subjects, this comment takes on a crucial importance in understanding Jake's role in the story he tells: Though the other characters may not be aware of it, Jake's implied audience is given an insight into the fact that he is often working even when he does not seem to be.

In light of this comment about the need to conceal reporting work, other interesting traces of Jake's occupation and literary aspirations can be clearly recognized throughout the published version of *The Sun Also Rises.* For example, when Jake first describes Robert and then meets him, he notes the circumstances of Robert's divorce (4) and tries to wheedle similar "dirt" out of him to use as material for gossipy news articles (9–10). Jake does more

than reveal his cruel streak here in prodding Robert; he also shows that he is working and reveals the kinds of subjects that he finds to be newsworthy, including the affairs of people like Robert. Along with Jake's initial descriptions of Brett, whose divorce and subsequent love life he also describes, Jake's early descriptions of Robert initially emphasize his reporting skills and authority as an observer. Like a good reporter, Jake is skeptical about the stories Robert tells of himself. As he admits, "I mistrust all frank and simple people, especially when their stories hold together." Doubting that Robert had been the middleweight boxing champion at Princeton, Jake recalls that he "finally had somebody verify the story" (4). While here Jake implies that Robert makes good news copy and dutifully checks his story out, later his literary aspirations require him to consider how the story he recounts can be transformed into something more meaningful than mere "dirt."

As the second chapter begins, Jake considers Robert as a potential subject, not only for his reporting but perhaps for his novel. After Robert goes to New York and has his own novel accepted by a publisher, he returns to Paris a changed man. Jake notes that after Robert's success with his novel, "he was not so simple, and he was not so nice" (8). In other words, Robert is no longer too "simple" for Jake's attention as a possible subject for his writing. Later, in one of the self-reflexive traces left in the novel, Jake implies that Robert's complex character requires that he revise his earlier portrayal, and he worries that he has "not shown Robert Cohn clearly" or brought out his "nice, boyish sort of cheerfulness" (45).[43] Even as Jake writes about Robert, he evaluates Robert's novel as a way of asserting his own literary credentials, and he positions himself as being more accurate in his literary opinions than Robert or his critics (5–6). In considering Robert, then, Jake uses both his reporting skills and his literary expertise, as he does throughout the entire novel, even when he is hiding his work.

As Jake keeps his literary inclinations and aspirations from Robert, he develops a more intimate relationship with his readers than with the other characters in the novel. Jake notes that Robert has two friends in Paris, a literary friend and Jake himself, his "tennis friend" (5). While Robert seems unaware of Jake's literary ambitions, later in the novel, when Jake and his friend Bill Gorton are fishing together, they discuss these ambitions more directly, in ways that are again more meaningful to Jake's implied audience than to Bill. As they playfully discuss current debates about "Irony and Pity" in New York literary circles, Bill jokes with Jake about Jake's desire to be a writer, telling him that he's "only a newspaperman" (114).[44] Bill also argues that no expatriate "ever wrote anything worth printing" and admonishes Jake for his work habits: "You spend all your time talking, not

working" (115). Though Bill knows more about Jake's literary aspirations than Robert, Jake's earlier comment about hiding his work means that readers have more knowledge about Jake's real work habits than Bill. Given that Hemingway was also an expatriated newspaperman, Bill's comment further provides a sense of dramatic irony as readers share a joke of which Bill is unaware. When Bill refers in jest to Jake's impotence, Jake responds by directly mentioning his wound, one of the few times he does so in the novel, but Bill does not press the point and instead advises him that this type of subject is just "what you ought to work up into a mystery" (115). Bill's comment here demonstrates the level of their friendship, yet it further underscores that the reader knows more about Jake: Given that he is the narrator of *The Sun Also Rises* and an aspiring writer, and given that his wound forms an important part of the novel, readers are led to believe he has done exactly what Bill suggests by working up the mystery of his wound into the novel he recounts.

Again, Jake's wound does not mark his detachment as a reporter: It forms the basis of his credibility as a reporter by authenticating his observations. At first, it serves as a kind of badge showing he is a member of the walking wounded who have survived the Great War, while later it highlights his uniquely complex connections with the other characters he describes. While in *In Our Time* Nick acts as a representative of a generation by defining a moment of "our time," in *The Sun Also Rises* Jake's wound makes him a representative of his generation by validating him as an eyewitness of the war and the events he describes. By building authority in this way, Jake shows how a sense of community relies on exclusion as much as inclusion, as his interests, desires, and circle of acquaintances and friends determine the bounds of what he presents as an ostensibly representative experience. This is obvious when Brett describes Count Mippipopolous to Jake by telling him that the Count is "one of us" (32). When Brett and the Count later appear at Jake's apartment in the middle of the night, the Count's droll comments reveal the inadequacy of language alone in defining membership in this group of walking wounded. Instead, he suggests that belonging is based on seeing things for one's self (60). While seeing accurately creates a sense of authenticity in "Big Two-Hearted River," in *The Sun Also Rises* seeing is not an end in itself but a means of verification, an experience that remains grounded in the body, as when the Count removes his shirt and vest to show Brett and Jake the two scars he got from being shot with arrows while on a business trip to Abyssinia. Since it is Jake, of course, who recounts what he sees—the marks on the Count's stomach and, on his back, "the same two scars, raised as thick as a finger" (60)—it is as if Hemingway is making

Jake his "doubting Thomas," a representative who sees the wounds that are a badge of membership in this group and who can, if necessary, touch them to assure readers of their existence. Jake's first person perspective and engagingly direct comments seem to put readers in a position of intimacy, as if Jake and his scars are likewise just within reach. His wound, then, is a reminder that he is embodied and present in the scene he describes and more than just a camera-eye. For example, while the relationship among Nick and the Greek refugees and Greek king who frame *In Our Time* is only implicit in the newsreel form of the text, Jake's interaction with the Greek count can be seen as a more fully drawn portrait of the kind of interview that is described in the concluding piece of *In Our Time,* "L'Envoi." In *The Sun Also Rises,* Jake's observations remain more clearly bound in social relations and the way language is limited in its specific use.

While Jake's wound authenticates his reporting by calling attention to his experiences and embodied presence, it also causes him to become involved in the lives of his subjects in ways that he cannot always control, particularly in the way he brings Brett and Robert and then Brett and Pedro Romero together. Appropriately enough, Jake registers the consequences of this involvement not only with his eyes and mind but also with his body. This involvement is most obvious during the trip to Spain when Brett scorns Robert in favor of her fiancé, Mike Campbell, and then the bullfighter, Pedro. Treated rudely by everyone and broken-hearted, Robert accuses Jake of "pimping" Brett and then proceeds to knock him out (190–191). While critics have noted the anti-Semitic elements in the way Robert is described, as an aspiring writer he can also be seen as a kind of double for Jake, and here he inflicts what is essentially a self-reproach, forcing Jake to face the truth about his responsibility for the debauchery that has occurred during the trip. Near the end of the novel, when Brett wires Jake from Madrid, he succinctly summarizes his previous involvement in a way that seems to affirm the truth of Robert's accusation: "That was it. Send a girl off with one man. Introduce her to another to go off with him. Now go and bring her back. And sign the wire with love" (239). While reflecting his own personal experiences, Jake's comments here can also be seen as a reflection of the broader struggles of reporters at the time, as they tried to reconcile increasingly normative ideals of objectivity with a growing awareness of the seemingly inevitable subjectivity and participation of the reporter in all reporting. Though he can no more remain detached from his story than he can resist Brett's charms, Jake nonetheless feels the need to pay for his involvement, and Robert's beating fulfills this masochistic urge and temporarily resolves this tension between his status as both an observer and a participant.

Another physical sign of Jake's involvement in his subjects' lives is the bull's ear that Brett carelessly discards after Pedro is awarded it in the bullring and in turn presents it to her. Like the Count's scars, the bull's ear, which Brett had wrapped in one of Jake's own handkerchiefs, represents Jake's membership in an inside group, in this case the aficionados of bullfighting, and Jake describes it with a reporter's precision to detail (199). An obvious symbol of Jake's wounded manhood, it also acts as a physical manifestation of his anguish, and its careless treatment by Brett confirms his guilt at betraying this group's values by introducing Brett to Pedro, a feeling that is confirmed when the inn-keeper Montoya, the most serious of aficionados, expels Jake from his inner circle. Yet, as indicated by his handkerchief, the ear also shows how Jake acts to connect seemingly unrelated groups; Spanish peasants, bull breeders, the president, aficionados, tourists, dancers, English, Scottish, and American tourists, Jews, Protestants, and Catholics, all come into contact through Jake's participation in the story. While at the beginning of the novel, Brett introduces Jake to widely disparate individuals, from the homosexual men at the dancing-club on the Rue de la Montagne to Count Mippipopolous, as the novel progresses Jake is no longer a spectator observing Brett but a participant who involves her in others' lives.

The ear also symbolizes the reporter's need to listen, and like Jake's beating from Robert, it represents his guilt in making rather than observing the story he recounts. Again, Jake's frustration and pain can be seen as not only reflecting his personal emotions but also his professional sensibilities. Significantly, his participation in the stories of his subjects also leads him to consider the complementary relationship between fiction and fact and the way that language signifies within the context of social relationships. While in *In Our Time* Harold and Nick fantasize in different ways about a life without complications or consequences, in *The Sun Also Rises* Jake's life is nothing but complications and consequences. His work as a journalist, friendship with Robert, and especially his love for Brett mean that he cannot escape to a fantasy world but must confront the relationship between fantasy and reality. Though the fishing trip he takes to Burguete gives him a respite from his attention to his two main subjects, Robert and Brett, and functions as a return to the garden similar to Nick's in "Big Two-Hearted River," Jake, unlike Nick, does not go alone on his fishing trip nor can he leave behind the world of consequences.[45] Instead, Jake goes fishing with his friend Bill, who represents his present predicament and future literary aspirations, and meets a new friend, the English veteran Wilson-Harris, who represents the inescapable memory of the war. After the fishing trip, though, Jake momentarily seems to find a world like Nick's in "Big Two-Hearted River." When he

and his group of friends arrive in Pamplona, he thinks that the fiesta creates an atmosphere of unreality until "it seemed as though nothing could have any consequences" and he thought it wrong even "to think of consequences" (154). Eventually, though, Jake recognizes that he cannot leave all his problems behind in the garden, and in the concluding chapter of the novel, he pointedly passes through the gardens in Madrid on his way to face reality and meet Brett one last time (240).

Jake's continued involvement in others people's lives results in a different conception of language in *The Sun Also Rises:* The reporter with the pen sees language in a different way than the reporter who acts as a camera. With Jake as his narrator, Hemingway grounds his language in specific social contexts, and his style is less lyrical than in *In Our Time,* as words are not purified through a single consciousness but implicitly and explicitly shared. For example, in addition to their discussion of "irony and pity," a common literary discussion of the time, Bill and Jake share other jokes about words and how they are used (Svoboda 34–35). On their fishing trip, their comical use of the word "utilize" similarly shows how language can create a community around certain values. Initially "utilize" expresses Bill and Jake's shared goal of getting the most pleasure from their money and time; when Wilson-Harris begins to also use the term, it measures the extent to which he has entered their community of friends (128). Later, Jake explicitly locates the meaning of language in particular groups and contexts when he thinks about the limited vocabulary members of the English upper class use when speaking: They "talked with inflected phrases. One phrase to mean everything" (149). Just as Jake suggests that the same word never means exactly the same thing, Hemingway's repetition of certain words, such as "good" and "nice," and Jake's hard-boiled, conversational language enact this principle so that the written words in *The Sun Also Rises* seem to be inflected in this way as if they were spoken.

As a working journalist and aspiring writer who speaks both to characters in the text and directly to readers, Jake blurs the line between fact and fiction. While in *In Our Time* Hemingway presents a choice between either reading and passively watching, like Harold, or actively living through one's eyes, like Nick, Jake moves back and forth between fact and fiction, language and life, watching and acting, and explores the ongoing relationship between these two sets of terms. This is evident when Jake is in his room in Pamplona reading Turgenev's *A Sportsman's Sketches* (1852) and trying to let the effects of his heavy drinking wear off. When Brett and Mike come back to their room next to his, Jake hears them talking and laughing, and finding himself suddenly sobering up, he quits reading and

tries to go to sleep (147–148). Though Hemingway does not specify what else he hears, Jake's angry reaction suggests it is quite likely Brett and Mike having sex (148).

After imagining this scene, Jake is unable to sleep and continues reading Turgenev, knowing that his agitation means that he will remember the book "as though it had really happened"; it has become "another good thing you paid for and then had" (149). Again, Jake "pays" for his involvement in the story he observes, and his reaction here goes to the root of his identity as an individual and writer. As an accomplished journalist, Jake is paid for his words; as an aspiring novelist, he thinks he must pay for the words he uses through his experiences and suffering. Here, he reads to escape from his feelings and desires; later, he will write as a way to face his desires. While Jake, like Hemingway, seems to use the facts of his observations as the basis for his fiction, here he proposes a more complex relationship in which fiction can become a fact of experience as well.

As the narrator and implied author of *The Sun Also Rises,* Jake similarly tries to craft words that enhance the ways in which reality is experienced.[46] Again using Robert as a foil, Jake explores how fact and fiction are related and demonstrates how all language must be tested by circumstances if it is to connect individuals and deepen a sense of reality. Early in the novel, Jake criticizes Robert's reading of W.H. Hudson's *The Purple Land* (1885). He comments that it "is a very sinister book if read too late in life" because of its "splendid" romances and "well described" scenery. Comparing different kinds of writing, he criticizes the way Robert reads this novel: "For a man to take it at thirty-four for a guide-book to what life holds is about as safe as it would be for a man of the same age to enter Wall Street direct from a French convent, equipped with a complete set of the more practical Alger books." Yet in Jake's estimation, Robert takes the novel "as literally as though it had been an R.G. Dun report" (9). Commenting on Robert's growing attraction to South America and his growing dislike for Paris, Jake similarly notes that Robert's attitude in both cases comes from books (12). Though initially Jake establishes his authority as a narrator by promising more direct access to the facts of experience, it is important to note that Jake's description of *The Purple Land* is entirely positive; it is the use to which Robert puts it that is incorrect. The problem is not so much that Robert gets his ideas from books but rather that he fails to test romance against reality and in so doing accepts "truths" that would not stand the weight of experience. As a reporter and aspiring writer, Jake, on the other hand, tries to test his imagination against the particular facts of his experience so that he can create a work of fiction which makes reality seem all the more real.

During his fishing trip, Jake playfully brings fact and fiction together in this way in his own reading. As he waits for Bill to come from his fishing spot, he describes what he is reading, a complicated and "wonderful story" by A.E.W. Mason about lovers in waiting who "were still waiting when Bill came up" (120).[47] As Jake merges the time frame in the book with the time in his life, he uses one of the words that he and Bill had pointedly and ironically shared, "wonderful," to describe the book, though in this case he seems to inflect its meaning with some genuine praise. In fact, given his admiration for Bill, a writer who "made a lot of money on his last book, and was going to make a lot more" (70), Jake seems to appreciate writers who are able to achieve popular success, and it would seem that this is a reflection of Hemingway's own interest in reaching a mass audience and earning financial rewards through his writing. Through his work as a reporter and literary aspirations, Jake takes readers into different worlds and helps them work through and evaluate different kinds of writing. In other words, Hemingway, like the other writers under consideration here, constructs Jake's character as a means of achieving a kind of "popular modernism" rather than as a means of constructing an elite or overtly political discourse.[48]

Jake shows that any work of fiction can become a fact of experience when read sensitively and tested against experience. Just as a word is inflected with each iteration, changing meaning each time it is "utilized," so too does each story offer a sense of truth when it is considered in its proper context and put to proper use. Conversely, Jake comes to recognize that the social relations that structure reality are often based on fictions—lies and compromises—that mark the boundaries of a community or serve as signs of membership. For example, Jake gains further access to Montoya's inner circle of aficionados not only through his knowledge of bullfighting but also through his willingness to deceive when necessary. When Montoya tells Jake that he has been instructed by the American ambassador to pass along an invitation to Pedro and another bullfighter, Jake tells him, "Don't give Pedro the message" (172–173). Since this is exactly what Montoya hoped Jake would say, his reply adds to their mutual understanding about the importance of bullfighting. The two then agree that such an engagement with foreign flatterers would corrupt Pedro and lead to his ruin within a year; to support this point, Jake mentions that he has heard about an American woman who "collects bull-fighters" (172). Given that it is Jake who later introduces Pedro to Brett, an older, flattering foreigner who collects lovers, these comments take on a bitter irony: It is Jake's betrayal of this shared deception rather than any lack of appreciation for bullfighting that leads to his expulsion from the community of aficionados.

Just as fictions can affect the truth of belonging to a group, the facts of the newspaper can serve as kinds of useful fictions. For example, when Jake first meets Pedro, he accidentally tells him that he has seen him in the bullfighting ring three times, when in reality he has only seen him twice. When Pedro asks Jake if he saw him in Madrid, Jake lies that he has; he decides not to explain his mistake, knowing that he can cover for himself because he had read about Pedro's bullfights in Madrid in the newspapers (174). As with Jake's advice to Montoya, this lie expresses a truth about his love of bullfighting and provides him with a greater entry into this community. As Jake's experiences and comments show, information and language need to be judged based on specific, local circumstances, and hence only the personal experience and credibility of an eyewitness can vouchsafe for the usefulness and veracity of any particular word or fact. Thus, Jake's presence in the text serves to keep information grounded in a specific context, and he gives his descriptions a greater sense of immediacy and authenticity than if they were presented as disembodied, "objective" facts.

Near the end of the novel, Jake confirms how powerfully fact and fiction can interact when he returns to his overt work as a reporter and again shows how he reads and uses the newspapers. In returning alone to San Sebastian after the festival in Spain, Jake is returning to the place where Robert and Brett earlier had their tryst. While it "seemed out of place to think of consequences during the fiesta," San Sebastian seems to be the perfect place to think of consequences, and Jake begins to consider the complicated story he has shaped by introducing his friends and planning the trip. As soon as Jake arrives back in France, he buys a copy of the *New York Herald* and considers the preceding events in light of their reality and consequences (232). Although Hemingway chose to delete the explicit descriptions of Jake writing at this point, the published version still shows him stacking his books in his hotel room and then wiring his office to forward his messages to his hotel. As Jake's reporting work is once more visible, the newspaper again offers a commentary on the validity of "the facts" and the way they can be manipulated to shape reality. At the hotel where he is staying, a group of rambunctious bicycle-racers have stopped before continuing their race the next day. As Jake watches them, one of the team managers asks him if he follows the Tour de France, and Jake replies, "Only in the papers" (236). When this manager invites Jake to watch the start of the race with him early the next morning, Jake resists but finally agrees. Waking hours after the cyclists and managers have gone, Jake does not even comment on his lie to the manager but simply has "coffee and the papers in bed" (237). Later, after a swim, Jake goes back to the hotel reading room, and finding that the cyclists have

left a few copies of *L'Auto* lying around, he "took them out and sat in an easy chair in the sun to read" (238). Here, the newspapers are implicated in Jake's lie to the cycling manager, and they represent both a welcome substitute for his own complicated reality and, at the same time, a reminder that Jake must soon return to this reality in his own writing as well.

In the end, Jake's acceptance of the relationship between fact and fiction finally allows him to acknowledge his own involvement in the story and recognize his role as both an observer and a participant. When a telegram from Brett arrives instead of the telegrams from the office he was expecting, it offers Jake his next story—not an article for the newspapers, but the final piece of the story he recounts in the novel. However, in order for Jake to recount Brett's story, he has to go to her and verify one last fact. This fact, paradoxically, is that a fiction has structured all that has preceded this final moment in the novel. When Brett continues to play out the drama of their relationship, asserting they could have been happy together had he not been wounded, Jake concludes the novel by saying, "Isn't it pretty to think so?" (247). Through Brett, and through Robert as well, Jake confronts the fiction that his wound has enabled and acknowledges that his relationship with Brett is a shared illusion, even though it has shaped the reality of his life and made his experiences more meaningful. In the words of Wallace Stevens, himself a reporter turned poet, Jake realizes that this fiction has been a "necessary angel," a willed belief that does not violate reality but enhances the way reality is experienced.[49] Now that this illusion no longer stands the test of experience, Jake also confronts the illusion that he has been a detached observer, and he recognizes, in Stevens's words, that he has unknowingly taken up "disillusion as the last illusion" ("Ordinary" 468). Jake can only move beyond this by recognizing that he has actually shared in shaping the romantic flights of imagination that have characterized the lives of his two main subjects, Robert and Brett.

Jake's personal attitude, which is crystallized in his last comment, has often been taken as the attitude of his generation as well, but it more specifically reflects the attitude of his profession. The way he comes to question the illusion of simple objectivity and his hard-boiled disillusion serves as an apt description of the way many journalists questioned their professional standards during the 1920s. According to Schudson, the discrepancies between the realities of the Great War and the way it was reported and the subsequent rise of public relation firms convinced

> American newspapermen that facts themselves were not to be trusted. Reporters had long taken pride in their own cynicism, but this expressed

> itself in a love of being close to, and conversant with, the "inside story" of political and economic life. Their cynicism had sneered at popular illusions while relishing hard, stubborn, and secret facts. But in the war and after, journalists began to see *everything* as illusion, since it was so evidently the product of self-conscious artists of illusion. (142; italics in original)

In this context, the idea of objectivity in journalism was more of a reaction than an enthusiastic embrace of an immutable ideal: "The ideal of objectivity in journalism, like related ideals in law and the social sciences at the same time, was founded on a confidence that the loss of faith was irretrievable." With this loss, Schudson writes, "Journalists came to believe in objectivity, to the extent that they did, because they wanted to, needed to, were forced by ordinary human aspirations to seek escape from their own deep convictions of doubt and drift" (159). In other words, objectivity itself became a necessary fiction for journalism as a profession, but individual journalists were confronted with a sense of dissonance as they tested this fiction against their everyday practices and their awareness of the inevitable elements of subjectivity in their reporting.

In *The Sun Also Rises,* Jake tests his faith in objectivity in just this way, and his struggles to find a "true" language, examine the sources of his own motivations, and acknowledge his own participation in his reporting parallel similar developments in journalism as a profession. While his wound represents his loss of faith, his apparent disillusionment, and his subsequent belief that he is an objective observer, Jake comes to let go of this deceptively simple understanding of his identity as an individual and as a reporter. He finally recognizes the limits of his illusions and the extent which he participates in the story that he tells. In this way, Jake not only reflects the contemporary challenges facing journalism but also anticipates some of the later ways journalism would develop—his struggles point towards the growing acceptance of participant reporting in the 1930s and the later rise to prominence of such reporting in the 1960s (Schudson 162). While in an earlier version of the introduction Jake had admitted that he could not maintain any distance from his story, in the published version of the novel the force of this recognition gains its power by not being realized until its closing lines. When Jake finally realizes that disillusion is the last illusion, he also accepts that for reporting to be meaningful it must be tested against the fictions of belief that motivate reporters and their subjects alike; conversely, he realizes that for any fiction to survive, it must be tested against reality. Jake's experiences illustrate the ways in which fiction

contributes to the construction of meaningful realities and the way facts themselves are presented and understood. The honesty of his closing remark suggests that Jake will be able to move beyond the illusion of disillusion that characterizes "the lost generation" and journalists of his time. To the extent that *The Sun Also Rises* is presented as Jake's book, he has done just that: He has offered his readers a fiction that is an experience and an opportunity to move beyond disillusion and recognize a deeper sense of reality animated by ever evolving fictions.

As Sheridan Warner Baker observes, perhaps no writer in the twentieth-century made greater claims than Hemingway about writing the truth while so successfully propagating lies about his own life (37). Wilson also comments on this intersection of fact and fiction, noting that the Hemingway who appeared in the magazines, "arrogant, belligerent and boastful, is certainly the worst-invented character to be found in the author's work. If he is obnoxious, the effect is somewhat mitigated by the fact that he is intrinsically incredible" (226). Hemingway would seem to have written much of his later fiction with this character in mind, and his "worst-invented character" has understandably, if sadly, influenced the way his fiction has come to be read by many readers. Early in his career, however, Hemingway did more than belligerently assert the authenticity of his writing; rather, he accepted insightful advice from his friends and creatively explored the ways in which language and identity are experienced as authentic. In these two early works of fiction, *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises,* he pointedly draws on journalism to explore the relationship between fact and fiction in very different ways. *In Our Time* reflects the newsreel form and illustrates the changes in perception brought about by new forms of mass media, new scientific conceptions of perception, and the cultural shocks of the Great War. The search for immediacy, objectivity, and a language without lies found in "Big Two-Hearted River" reflects one aspect of postwar journalism, the desire to achieve objectivity, and this story, in particular, shows how Hemingway's text ultimately challenges the shortcomings of the new journalistic form of the newsreel and the way its truth claims were undermined in popular perception. *The Sun Also Rises,* on the other hand, represents the growing acceptance that it was better to acknowledge the inevitability of subjectivity than uphold an ideal of objectivity which was increasingly seen as a disabling illusion. In Jake's growing awareness of his participation in the story he observes and in his exploration of how fact and fiction complement each other, he reveals both the limits of his own disillusion and the limits of a reporter's claims to objectivity. He exemplifies what these two early works of Hemingway demonstrate: Factual forms, such as those drawn from journalism, can

enhance how fiction is structured and perceived, just as fictional forms can enhance perceptions of reality.

While Cather and Anderson drew on models of prewar journalism in creating such innovative postwar works as *The Professor's House* (1925) and *Winesburg, Ohio,* Hemingway's fiction engages conceptions of journalism that grew out of the Great War and its aftermath. While reflecting the attitudes and often the prejudices of their time, the representative figures of Nick Adams and Jake Barnes are portrayed by Hemingway through his engagement with different models of journalism and different views of how to create a language that seems inherently credible and authentic. In the next chapter, I show how James Agee and Zora Neale Hurston similarly portray individual reporters as a means of grappling with different genres, kinds of language, and audiences. In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) and *Mules and Men* (1935), Agee and Hurston address not only the demands of different kinds of journalism but also the underlying social tensions of a nation in the grips of the Great Depression.

Chapter Four

Divided Identities, Desiring Reporters in Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men* and James Agee and Walker Evans's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

In two distinctive nonfiction works of the Great Depression, James Agee and Walker Evans's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Three Tenant Families* (1941) and Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men* (1935), Agee and Hurston create memorable participant reporters within their texts and challenge generic and cultural boundaries. While Agee directly confronts the conventions of on-the-road reportage and magazine journalism, Hurston more subtly challenges the conventions of anthropological case studies. As I argue above, Ernest Hemingway, in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), shows how Jake Barnes's role as a participant reporter in the story he tells is troubled by his divided personal and professional loyalties and different conceptions of language and representation. Agee's and Hurston's participant reporters take on similar challenges, but they do so in ways that clearly reflect the personal histories of these two authors and the particular contexts in which these two works were created and received. In reflecting the social tensions and economic crisis of their time, Agee's and Hurston's participant reporters offer their own readings of cultural performances and artifacts, and in dong so, they suggest how individual acts of observation and interpretation can have broader ramifications in the ways culture and community are conceived.

Let Us Now Praise Famous Men and *Mules and Men* both challenge existing generic and social classifications, but they play off different assumptions and expectations. Agee's reporter, "James," often fiercely challenges Agee's readers and attacks the conventions of magazine journalism and the popular Depression-era genre of the photo-documentary, while Hurston's reporter, "Zora," charms Hurston's readers by guiding them playfully and dramatically through the seemingly academic form of the anthropological study.[1] In assuming a stance towards the marketplace and in considering their ideal readers, Agee and Hurston encounter the conflicting imperatives that I describe in my first chapter and negotiate the tensions of engaging

a kind of popular modernism. Like Willa Cather and her character Godfrey St. Peter in *The Professor's House* (1925), they consider their obligations towards their subjects, their goals as writers, and the expectations of a mass audience. As I discuss in my introduction, in overtly criticizing such an audience and constructing an intricate, difficult text, Agee seems to affirm the commonly held idea that a lack of popular success can indicate artistic success for the modernist writer. According to Laurence Bergreen, one of Agee's biographers, Agee patterned *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* after the works of two of his literary heroes, Marcel Proust and James Joyce, and wrote "a book most likely to be appreciated not by the general public but by other writers." He "knew it would not be an easy book to love, for he had created an aggressively antipopular, avant-garde work whose value, if any, would in all likelihood not be recognized in his time. He supposed it would baffle and offend the casual reader in search of entertainment and diversion" (257).

As Valerie Boyd, Hurston's most recent biographer, notes, Hurston, on the other hand, seems to have relished the idea of bringing her own book to a wide audience. In particular, the popularity of Margaret Mead's book *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928), "surely alerted Hurston to the scientific and commercial possibilities of her own work" (Boyd 183).[2] While Hurston had initially struggled with her patron and with publishers to produce an acceptable manuscript of the folklore she had collected and only had *Mules and Men* accepted by Lippincott after the successful publication of her first novel, *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934), she did not seem to mind adding a narrative thread and, of course, her reporter figure, Zora, to her folklore material.[3] These changes allowed Hurston to draw on techniques from her fiction writing while also reaching out to the broader audience she desired. In a letter to Carl Van Vechten, she describes *Mules and Men* in positive terms as "[t]he folklore done over and put back into their natural juices" (*Letters* 288). Despite their apparent differences in approaching a broad public, Agee and Hurston shared a similar difficulty in trying to remain loyal to their subjects and write to them and for them rather than just about them.

Different conceptions about the role of journalism in these two works add yet another dimension to the ways *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Mules and Men* were created and received. As Paul Ashdown notes, while *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* seems to be at least partially an "anti-journalistic manifesto" (xiii), Agee did not "dislike the work of journalism as much as he implied" (xiv). Yet Agee's critical comments about journalism have helped to frame the later critical reception of his writing, so that "it has become obligatory in the cultic literature written about Agee since his death at age forty-five in 1955 to denigrate the energy he expended on jour-

nalism" (Ashdown xiv). As I am arguing, Agee was certainly aware of the critical distinction between timeless literature associated with a select audience and timely journalism associated with a mass audience, but he uses his reporter in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* to defy these neat distinctions. In this way, his text, like Hurston's, becomes a useful entry point in reevaluating the literature of the Great Depression and the "narrow genealogy of polarized relations between aesthetics and politics, or between difficulty and accessibility, textuality and content" typical of the way literature from this time has often been received (Williams and Matthew 1). At times, Agee's reporter rejects his presumably middle-class readers as cultural consumers and identifies instead with the barely literate and illiterate tenant farmers. In doing so, James tries to escape the vagaries of fashion and taste and admires the way these farmers unknowingly produce private works of art that seem to exist apart from the marketplace. At other times, Agee seems eager to reach and confront a broad audience, and the way he presents his reporter suggests that the artist and writer must enter the marketplace of commodities in order to transform the values of consumers. In the end, his reporter is unable to identify with either his subjects as producers or his readers as consumers, though he seems somewhat consoled by the idea that his tragically flawed identity links him in some way with the economic tragedy befalling the tenant farmers. Furthermore, this seemingly personal failure also reflects the economic divisiveness of the United States at this time.

While the sophisticated audience of modernist literature might view Agee's use of a journalistic reporter as compromising his relationship with the marketplace and undermining the seriousness of his artistry, an academic audience might similarly view Hurston's use of a journalistic reporter in *Mules and Men* as undermining the serious, scholarly value of her work. While Agee preempted some such criticism by including anti-journalistic comments in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* Hurston's understated artistry and lack of analytical commentary left her open to accusations of being unscientific or inartistic, depending on the expectations of different readers. For example, in a less than flattering, confidential letter written on behalf of Hurston's application for a Guggenheim fellowship, Franz Boas, Hurston's anthropology professor during her undergraduate career at Barnard and short graduate career at Columbia, writes, "On the whole her methods are more journalistic than scientific . . . and I am not under the impression that she is just the right caliber for a Guggenheim Fellowship" (qtd. in Boyd: 252). Though Hurston's last notable writing would be done as a reporter covering the notorious Ruby McCollum murder case for a black newspaper (Boyd 414–417), her engagement with journalistic issues and techniques

in her folklore and fiction has often been criticized by literary critics. For example, Hurston's first biographer, Robert E. Hemenway, claims that her journalistic fidelity to the truth initially detracted from the artistry of her fiction, and he notes the difference between "scrupulous reportage appropriate to anthropological description and the unprincipled selectivity characterizing esthetic construction. The reporter describes as much as she can of the event. The artist uses the event for her own selfish purposes" (73). As I am arguing, Hurston's reporter in *Mules and Men* does emphasize "selfish," individual desires, even as Hurston places this reporter within a network of social relations and uses her to explore the way a community's values are transmitted and transformed. While Agee's reporter becomes a reader of private art, Hurston's reporter becomes a public performer whose divided self reflects a more collaborative view of art and a more inclusive understanding of community. Ultimately, the community that Agee's reporter presents is characterized by a tragic loss of purity, while the community that Hurston's reporter presents is characterized by a shared ability to adapt and incorporate external influences.

Agee and Hurston portray the individual reporter as a desiring subject who makes and interprets as well as records. While readers during the Great Depression became accustomed to such participant reporting, the emphasis that Agee and Hurston place on personal desires challenged contemporary readers' expectations and largely accounts for why both texts disappeared for a time after their initial publication. On the surface, neither writer seemed fully committed to any of the dominant political discourses of the 1930s, as Agee questioned New Deal liberalism and leftist politics as well as the extremes of capitalism, and Hurston seemed to sidestep direct statements about racism and the struggle for civil rights.[4] Yet the dominant focus on individual desire and perception that critics of the 1930s and 1940s found to be off-putting was eventually embraced, and both books reemerged from obscurity as the personal was recognized as being political. As reporters during the 1960s explored the rapid changes and social disturbances experienced throughout the country and civil rights activists from the North retraced Agee's steps in traveling to the South, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* became recognized as an important precursor to "New Journalism, while its iconoclastic emphasis on individual rebellion and literary experimentation made it a favorite on campuses both among student activists and professors" (Bergreen 261).[5] More recently, Keith Williams sees Agee's interests in formal experimentation, the power of the image, and photography in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* as typical characteristics of an innovative hybrid form, the "modernist documentary" or "new reportage," that developed between

the wars and "tried to absorb modernism's lessons for politically accountable ends" (164–165).

In Hurston's case, her emphasis on the vitality and creativity of black verbal expression and social rituals, which contemporaries like Richard Wright found to be apolitical and blind to the oppression of racism, has come to be read as a politically significant affirmation of black culture. As is obvious from the immense current interest in Huston's work, she is now highly valued for her significant contributions to American literature, including the ways in which she links the experience and language of the rural folk with the largely urban perspective of the Harlem Renaissance. Hurston's individual female reporter is now seen as challenging the limits placed on female anthropologists and expanding the conventional limits of anthropological writing. For example, Boyd describes *Mules and Men* as "part folklore, part hoodoo chronicle, and part immersion journalism," and she attributes this genre-bending largely to the way Hurston creates her participant reporter, Zora: "Inserting herself into the narrative as a semifictional and self-effacing Zora, Hurston effects as much intimacy with the reader as she achieved with Big Sweet, Mack Ford, Luke Turner, and all the men and women who vividly populate her book" (280). Hemenway similarly observes that the immediacy of oral communication in a "natural setting" emerges through the "reporter created by Hurston the folklorist." This reporter helps "to dramatize the process of collecting and make the reader feel part of the scene" (164). Other recent critics have identified Hurston's reporter as the means by which she challenges the limiting racial and gender assumptions of ethnography, and she has been described as anticipating later feminist and postmodern texts and subsequent innovations in anthropology.[6]

While Hurston's emphasis on her reporter, Zora, is now largely celebrated, some recent critics have once again reacted more negatively to Agee's emphasis on the individual identity of his reporter in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* In comparing Agee and Hurston, Sonnet H. Retman finds that both writers share "a profoundly personal and self-conscious narration built upon participant observation and inspired by a prevalent romanticization of the underprivileged" (203–204). Noting that Agee "flouts the primary taboo of modern fieldwork" in describing his sexual desires for his subjects (233), Retman argues that his intense and notoriously involved descriptions of objects are primarily a way for him to explore his identity: "These object-relations finally testify to Agee's formulation of himself: his intense identifications with the tenants' things permit him to figuratively undo the barrier between subject and object in order to gain an intimate and illusory understanding of the Other" (245). Susan Hegeman, in *Patterns for America:*

Modernism and the Concept of Culture (1999), similarly claims that "Agee's revision of the documentary form" in *Let Us Praise Famous Men* is simply a reflection of the self, so "the point is not to show how 'they' get along (or do things differently), but to reveal *oneself,* through one's (thoroughly dissected) relation to them. The self is recentered as the object of interest, the reason for writing" (191; italics in original). Hegeman argues that the positive critical reception that the text began to receive in the 1960s is simply a reflection of the way later critics turned away from overt politics towards strictly formal concerns: "For Cold War aesthetes, *Praise* redirected the documentary project from its roots in the New Deal modernization program, to a depoliticized act of moral introspection and aesthetic play." In her reading, the text abandons its ostensible purpose in representing another culture: In seeming to offer the final word on the cultural issues raised by earlier documentaries, it is instead simply "challenging, from the perspective of high art, the political and moral value of representing the cultural other at all" (159).

As these comments suggest, the power of the male gaze influences the ways in which Agee and Hurston construct their reporters, so that Agee's reporter largely sees while Hurston's reporter is largely seen. Yet far from simplifying or even abandoning vexed questions of cultural representation, Agee and Hurston experiment with formal and stylistic innovations as a means of creating individual reporters who both perform and judge the performances of others, thereby mediating different understandings of identity and culture. The turn towards the individual reporter is not to be simply celebrated in Hurston's case or simply condemned in Agee's; rather, the desires and judgments of these individual reporters should be seen as attempts to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable tensions of society within a single individual and a single text. Agee's suggestive characterization of "James Agee" as "a spy, traveling as a journalist" (xxii) could just as easily apply to Zora in *Mules and Men.* James and Zora are spies in that they are forced to assume double-identities, and they act as both native informants and participant-observers, insiders and outsiders.[7] Agee and Hurston, as displaced Southerners, use their reporters to explore their divided obligations to the past and the present, to their southern families and childhoods and northern educations and audiences. Again, the specificity of Agee's and Hurston's assignments and the expectations of their professions underscore the need to interpret these reporters, who are as intriguing as any fictional characters, against both the life experiences of Agee and Hurston and the cultural background of their time.

Early in his life in Knoxville, Agee saw in his father and his father's mountaineering family the promise of immediate experience and spontaneity,

and he often dwelled on these qualities after his father's early death (Moreau 24–25). Meanwhile, in his mother's family Agee found a cosmopolitan sense of culture, as his mother claimed Walt Whitman as an ancestor and had painters and musicians in her family (Bergreen 9). After Agee went from an Episcopalian high school in Tennessee to Philips Exeter, then to Harvard, these conflicting origins became more pronounced. He exaggerated his Tennessee roots in order to differentiate himself from his classmates, to the point that while at Exeter he earned the nickname "Springheel" for his careless dress and hygiene and "countrified" gait (Bergreen 35–36). After he graduated from Harvard, Agee still had these issues on his mind as he pursued his literary ambitions and worked as a journalist for Henry Luce's *Fortune,* and he leapt at the opportunity the magazine gave him to go to the South in the summer of 1936 and investigate the economic reality of life as a tenant farmer. Such an investigation seemed to offer him the perfect opportunity to reconsider conflicting aspects of his family background, which he persistently viewed as a source for his literary writing, while advancing his work as a journalist.[8]

Hurston was also a Southerner who found success after moving to the North. Born in Alabama, Hurston moved with her family to the uniquely independent, all-black community of Eatonville, Florida, where her father held a prominent place in the community. Just as the untimely death of Agee's father disrupted his childhood, the death of Hurston's mother when she was thirteen basically brought an end to her childhood. After her father promptly remarried and Hurston had heated confrontations with her stepmother, she drifted for several years before ending up in Baltimore, where she attended Morgan Academy. After a chance encounter with the daughter of a Howard University dean, and with the encouragement of her friends, she moved on to Howard University (Boyd 79–80). After leaving Howard for New York, she became the only black student at Barnard, where she encountered the renowned anthropology professors Franz Boas, Melville Herskovits, and Ruth Benedict (Boyd 114–115). Eventually, she completed her studies with a brief stint as a graduate student in anthropology, studying under Boas at Columbia.[9] In New York, the funding she received for her two folklore trips to the South reflected her accomplishments as an anthropology student and writer as well as her success in convincing her sponsors that her southern upbringing would allow her unique access to her subjects.[10] Given her ignominious treatment by her father and stepmother, her trips back to Eatonville after she had already achieved a measure of success offered her a way to vindicate herself and perhaps heal old wounds. At the same time, writing *Mules and Men* also became a way for her to explore her sense of obligation to her sponsors, supporters, and subjects, even as she asserted her own independence and

put forth her own ideas of black folklore and culture. As Hemenway notes, Hurston "had participated in American civilization at the levels of both 'high' and 'low' culture," and when she set out on her folklore expedition she had many ideas about culture and the possible vocations she might pursue. Most of all, "she wanted a career that would bridge the gap between Morningside Heights, 135th Street, and rural Florida" (100).

The geographic displacements Agee and Hurston experienced can be seen as more broadly reflecting the divisions arising from increasingly centralized economic and cultural production. During the 1920s and throughout the Great Depression and New Deal, the rise of the broadcasting, recording, and advertising industries and the consolidation of the publishing industry made New York the capital of mass culture, while the increasing prominence of academic critics and small journals and reviews made it the center of more "serious" artistic cultural as well.[11] At the same time, New Deal theater, writing, photography, and archival projects made Washington increasingly important as well.[12] Agee was involved in the New Deal both through his reporting on the TVA and other New Deal policies and through Evan's work with the Farm Security Administration (FSA). Likewise, Hurston benefited from the publishing contacts she made in New York almost immediately upon her arrival, and she would later work with the Federal Theater and Federal Writer's Project (Boyd 278, 313). Both writers thus participated first hand in this process of cultural centralization; significantly, the flip-side of this process was an increased interest in works like *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Mules and Men* that were set in the "peripheries" (Hegeman 130).

The importance of noting the broader contexts in which these two texts were written is suggested in the way that Agee describes the proper reading of journalism. Initially, Agee comments on the strange idea of a magazine profiting from an investigation into poverty and questions its right to expose the lives of the poor to a privileged reading public. He claims that "honest journalism" (7) is a contradiction in terms, and in a later comment, he defines journalism as a "successful form of lying" (235). However, even in this latter critique he suggests that journalism can indeed be valuable and "true" when it is understood and interpreted within the context of "what conditioned and produced it." In a note, he adds that from this perspective "a page of newspaper can have all the wealth of a sheet of fossils, or a painting" (234). While these comments can provide a useful model for reading Agee's text, the way he equates a newspaper with both a sheet of fossils and a painting suggests the challenge in properly analyzing the function of his reporter in the text. In making James an embodied participant reporter, Agee emphasizes his immediate physical sensations, sexual desires, and individual consciousness, and he

tries to naturalize his language within his environment and remove it from the contested realm of culture. Yet Agee cannot erase the need to understand the conditions that produced his reporter and the language he uses, and this contradiction between the immediacy of experience and the importance of a broader context is reflected in this attempt to equate a sheet of text with "a sheet of fossils."

This contradiction is evident when James examines the cut newsprint that adorns the wall of the Gudgers' front room (166). Following the ideas of one of his most influential professors at Harvard, I.A. Richards (Bergreen 82–83), Agee initially suggests that words can become objects rather than signs, so that this newsprint can offer an ornamental beauty that is simply experienced rather than interpreted. Yet the text that he includes from this newsprint is clearly shaped by his selection, memory, and imagination, and it shows that the newsprint is actually a cultural artifact produced under specific social and economic conditions. Referring to events similar to those that Dos Passos includes in many of the "Newsreel" sections of *U.S.A.* (1930, 1932, 1936)—Communism, art, war, class divisions, and strikes—the newsprint suggests provocative connections between the seemingly isolated, impoverished farmers and world events (166–169). Even as James tries to see the newsprint through the tenants' eyes, it is clear that the text of the newsprint is constructed and presented through the full range of Agee's experience and meant to be read as a provocation. For Agee's readers, his reporting self becomes, like the newsprint, both a seemingly embodied presence in the text to be seen in his physicality and a textual construction to be interpreted in a broader context.

While readers of journalism and popular documentary forms in the 1930s became accustomed to participant reporters guiding their reactions, Agee frustrated such expectations by directly presenting James's own desires and repeated attempts to identify with his subjects. While Agee's footnotes, appendices, lengthy digressions, and repeated hesitations call attention to the book's composition and the contingency of his own experiences and literary choices, James's reflections call attention to his divided affinities and intense participation in the scenes he describes. In his influential *Documentary Expression and Thirties America* (1973), William Stott notes that Agee's "extraordinary participation in the narrative of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* . . . set the book apart from other documentary writing" (298). While raising typical Depression-era suspicions about mainstream journalism and its "objectivity" through "the extraordinary participation" of his reporter, Agee also confounds the singular perspective most readers had come to expect from such reporting.

As Hurston presents roughly seventy folktales from Florida and an account of her investigations into the hoodoo practices of New Orleans in *Mules and Men,* she similarly depicts Zora as an agent who initiates action and interacts meaningfully with her subjects. In the "Folk Tales" section, Zora tells folk tales, sings songs, and enjoys social activities, while in the "Hoodoo" section she directly participates in various hoodoo initiations and rituals. Rather than using extended anthropological analysis as she does in her later work *Tell My Horse* (1938), Hurston describes the tellers of folk tales and hoodoo practitioners more as characters than anthropological subjects and places these characters in *Mules and Men* within a specific setting that includes Zora herself. In this way, Hurston gives her reporter a sense of immediate presence and the written word the specificity of oral communication.[13] At the same time, Zora's perspective reflects Hurston's own experiences and education, and Hurston uses various devices that call attention to the fact that she is shaping her written language as an anthropologist writing in a broader context. Describing Hurston's perspective on her subjects in his review of *Mules and Men,* Henry Lee Moon notes, "Alert and keenly observant, she studied the *mores,* folkways, and superstitions, the social and economic life of these people as an essential background for her book" (142; italics in original). This "essential background" is evident in the way that Zora's identity emerges not only in the presence of her subjects but in the language that Hurston uses. In Chapter Three, for example, Hurston provides the meaning of a word in a footnote (45), uses footnotes that simply refer readers to the glossary (51), identifies a word in quotation marks as a "local term" (56), and defines a word in a parenthetical aside (59).

Zora's divided affinities between the world of her subjects and the world of her audience emerge in the way she negotiates between the language of the anthropologist and the language of the folk teller. For example, as Zora performs with and for her subjects and negotiates different aspects of her identity, she is variously identified as "I" and "Ah." As she does in her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), Hurston contrasts, without comment, such changes in tone and diction. Seen in this light, the difference between words spoken dramatically for immediate effect and words collected as objects to be categorized seems to divide the reporter who participates in the telling of stories from the anthropologist who classifies these stories and studies them. While Agee's presentation of newsprint and analysis of journalism indicate how his language reflects both James's immediate experience and his own awareness of a social network of relationships, Hurston's language is experienced in its immediacy through Zora's immersion in the culture of her subjects, even as her anthropological notes and asides serve as

reminders that these local references are necessarily shaped and interpreted from Hurston's broader perspective as a college graduate, trained folklorist, and successful writer.

In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Mules and Men,* Agee and Hurston use their reporters to mediate these tensions in language and the corresponding tensions between cultural centers and their peripheries. According to the expectations of Depression-era on-the-road reportage, Agee, in heading off to the South, can be seen as going to document a lived reality thought to be missing from the mainstream media and government reports; this reality was presumed to be most "real" when documented by committed individuals in places less influenced by such media and government representations (Stott 72). In Evans's foreword to the edition of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* published after Agee's death, he notes that Agee went to the South in flight from the "money-hued culture" of New York (xi), and at times, Agee does seem to suggest that the rural South possesses a kind of authenticity apart from the economic pressures of the outside world. As an anthropologist, Hurston also went in search of a more "real" black culture closer to its African roots. In his brief "Forward" to Hurston's book, Boas states that *Mules and Men* is useful in revealing "the character of American Negro life," and in recognizing inevitable European influences on black culture, he proposes that "its strong African background . . . diminishes with increasing distance from the south" (3). Hurston plays off this idea of a return to a more authentic origin to enhance her credibility and authority in *Mules and Men,* but she comes to show how changing points of contact, rather than some enduring, static core, characterize the culture she is describing.

At first, then, Agee and Hurston both seem to be trying to escape the divided loyalties of their own lives by returning to their southern origins and a more unified culture based on a singular sense of place. However, in describing the experiences of their narrator-reporters, both writers show how their reporters' divided sense of identity parallels the effects of outside influences on the supposedly "pure" culture of their subjects. Furthermore, both writers show how a divided perspective can actually offer a way of mediating similar fissures in the larger culture of the nation as a whole. Both *Mules and Men* and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* were meant to be timely: Agee was to create a magazine article on a topical subject, rural poverty, to promote awareness and possibly reform; Hurston was to preserve a supposedly vanishing culture by finding folk tales and rituals and recording them before they were lost. However, as the authors' pasts influence how their narrator-reporters read the economic and cultural significance of the present, Agee and Hurston typify Raymond Williams's assertion that "often an idea of the

country is an idea of childhood" as well (*Country* 297). This return to childhood raises the possibility that both authors' descriptions of rural and small town life are colored by nostalgia. In describing the common "iconography" of the 1930s, Retman notes, "Much of the popular culture of the decade participated in the construction of a golden, explicitly rural, patriarchal and segregated past" (126).

Had Agee and Hurston created simple, unified identities for their reporters, they could have easily succumbed to offering their own versions of such recuperative images. Instead, the claims of memory and the expectations of different audiences heighten Agee's and Hurston's experience of being both outsiders and insiders, and their reporters, James and Zora, make connections across different times, places, and communities and disrupt simplistic assumptions about the glory of the past and the insularity of their subjects' cultures. Even as James and Zora struggle to belong to the groups that emblematically represent their childhoods, they explore the veiled origins of desire and the intersections of different conceptions of culture. While their authority initially seems to rest on their identification with their subjects and their ability to project an embodied sense of presence, they come to show that the past cannot be fully recovered any more than the immediacy of present experience can be fully rendered in language. Yet the failures of memory and the gaps within different kinds of language ultimately open up new possibilities for connecting the reporter's observations with the context in which they signify.

Such a pregnant moment is typified in a remarkable scene late in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* in which Agee describes how James's ancestry and "blood" make him particularly sensitive to the lives of the white tenant farmers he observes in Alabama. As he recollects his first dinner with the Gudgers, the tenant family hosting him and Walker, James is described as a child seeking their protection. Though George and Annie Mae Gudger are roughly his age, James feels as if they are his parents, and as they all sit together in their kitchen, every detail seems to be remembered from a recovered past, which, in its immutability, makes his life as an adult seem unreal. This sense of familiarity makes him feel "that this was my right home, right earth, right blood. . . . For half my blood is just this; and half my right of speech" (415). As he reflects on the appropriateness of this glimpse "into the sources of my life," James goes on to admit that his desires and observations are clouded by a strong sense of "nostalgia" (415). While James seems to invoke the idealized past typical of Depression-era reportage, he undercuts the satisfaction of this nostalgia with his equally intense and seemingly tragic sense of fragmentation as

well. Even as he claims a collective memory experienced through his body and blood, this passage confirms that his ties to his father's family have been lost through his seemingly random decisions and the "sophisticated" conditions of his life (415).[14] Cut off from this past, he makes claims to memory that leave him not whole but "half," and this description of existing in between two halves exemplifies how Agee and Hurston portray their narrator-reporters: James and Zora are "half" identified with their northern readers and "half" tied to their southern subjects through their claims to a common background.[15]

These divisions are further complicated by the ways in which both writers depict sexual desire. In remembering a masturbatory experience on his grandfather's porch in Tennessee (379–380), James locates the origins of his desires and his identity in the South, even as he seems to be vindicating his later voyeurism on the Gudgers' ramshackle porch and his acknowledged attraction towards several of his female subjects, particularly Ivy Woods (372–373) and Annie Mae Gudger's sister, Emma (61–62).[16] Though James never acts on these desires, he uses them to call attention to the embodied immediacy of his reporter and the way his memories link him to his subjects. Yet James's desires also call attention to the limited scope of his gaze as well and work to undercut any suggestion of nostalgia for a segregated past. This is most obvious in the way that Agee focuses solely on white tenant farmers. Though Agee claimed that his southern past and even his "black" childhood name, Rufus, offered him a greater insight into the lives of southern blacks (*Letters to Flye* 147), in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* his reporter places black tenant farmers beyond the bounds of his desires and hence beyond the scope of his observations. In the few scenes in which black figures do appear, they are generally portrayed as being more dignified and sexually pure than James and the other white figures, and they call attention to Agee's ambivalence about his own sexual desires and the racial attitudes of his subjects.[17]

Even as he tries to focus attention on James's physical presence as an eye-witness, Agee repeatedly describes James's body in ways that reveal the underlying social tensions mediated through his identity. At his first dinner with the Gudgers, when James dwells on the two "halves" of his blood, he notes that the smell and consistency of the Gudgers' food make it seem repulsive to him even as its familiarity entices him with "the true tastes of home." Divided in his responses in this way, James nearly gags with each bite, even as he claims that "a true homesick and simple fondness" for such cooking "has so strong hold of me that in fact there is no fight to speak of and no faking of enjoyment" (416). James's body, while seeming to unify

the text and authenticate its "true" language, actually betrays an identity divided between the norms of a citified, northern life and memories of a rural, southern past. These divisions, which obviously reflect the specific sources of Agee's own sympathies, pervade the structure and language of the text as well. In this case, the intricacies of Agee's language offer a tenuous resolution, so that James's twitching at each mouthful of food is "no fight to speak of" and his repulsion is actually a fondness in no way "faked." Homesick for an imagined family and lost rural past, James cannot really swallow the return to a real country home.

In *Mules and Men,* Hurston's reporter similarly focuses the text through her embodied presence, even as her perils underscore Hurston's more tenuous authority as a black female anthropologist writing in a discipline dominated by white males and writing for a popular audience that is likely to be mostly white and middle-class as well. In choosing to claim her ties to her southern roots, Hurston also differentiates herself from most of her black peers. As Hemenway notes, Hurston was one of the few writers of the Harlem Renaissance to know the rural South intimately (61). In comparing her to one of the few other black folklore collectors, Arthur Huff Fauset, Hemenway accepts Hurston's claims to a unique perspective as a southerner and endorses her criticism of her rival: "Yet even the New Jersey-born Fauset, a Philadelphia schoolteacher, was not a native of the southern scene, and he, too, experienced problems penetrating to the roots of the southern folk experience" (90). While Hurston could choose how to present her geographic origins, she also had to consider that she had no choice in the way that her white audience would likely associate her with her subjects on the basis of race. Boas, for example, praises *Mules and Men* because of the way Hurston "entered into the homely life of the southern Negro as one of them and was fully accepted as such by the companions of her childhood." He claims that she was "able to penetrate through that affected demeanor by which the Negro excludes the White observer effectively from participating in his true inner life" (3). While Agee describes how his reporter can only choose to identify "half" with his subjects, Hurston's reporter is presumed from the beginning to be "fully" accepted by her subjects "as one of them," and Zora must negotiate "the disjuncture between Hurston's understanding of herself as a member of particular communities and the membership her readers would ascribe to her" (Domina 199–200).

Remarkably, Hurston manages to use these assumptions about race to her advantage in depicting her reporter. While Agee at times rejects his audience and claims a greater affinity with his subjects, Hurston more subtly develops

and complicates Zora's relationships with both her readers and subjects. Even as she uses Zora's race to remind readers of her unique access to information unavailable to her white colleagues, Hurston also reveals that she is observing her subjects with a knowledge gained through her northern, formal education at a white university. In a well-known passage early in *Mules and Men,* she writes about how in her early life in "the crib of negroism" she could not see how this world fit her "like a tight chemise": "It was only when I was off in college, away from my native surroundings, that I could see myself like somebody else and stand off and look at my garment. Then I had to have the spy-glass of Anthropology to look through at that" (9). While Agee's reporter is described as a spy, Zora sees through a "spy-glass" of education and is seen through her subjects' own spy-glasses as well. James's desires manifest themselves in his gaze as he chooses what objects to see and develops a sense of self through his reflections on these objects. As a black woman, Hurston makes no such direct claims for the power of her gaze and instead develops the identity of her reporter through the ways in which Zora both sees and is seen. As Zora observes her subjects, she also attracts and influences attention, appearing alternately powerful and vulnerable.

These different claims to agency and different expectations are evident in the ways that Agee and Hurston each deal with the effects of education on identity. Just as he tries to shed the effects of the years since his childhood, James tries to shed his formal education to emphasize his connection with his subjects; Zora, as she does in discussing "the chemise," pointedly calls attention to her education even as she redefines its significance. During the composition of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* Agee mulled over his intended audience in terms of its educational level. As I note in the introduction, at one point he asked his publisher to print the book on newsprint and bind it like a government publication: "Since it was inspired by the tenant farmers of the South and dedicated to them, he decided that it should be made available in an inexpensive edition to be sold for no more than $1.50" (Moreau 174). He also considered writing in a language accessible to the tenants, as he writes in a 1939 letter to his former teacher and lifelong friend, Father James Harold Flye:

> I made a try lately of writing the book in such language that anyone who can read and is seriously interested can understand it. . . . The lives of these families belong first (if to any one) to people like them and only secondarily to the "educated" such as myself. If I have done this piece of spiritual burglary no matter in what "reverence" and wish for "honesty," the least I can do is to return the property where it belongs,

> not limit its language to those who can least know what it means. But I can't and should not sacrifice "educated" ideas and interests which the "uneducated" have no chance or reason, yet, to be other than bored by; and until I can keep these yet put them in credible language I guess there's nothing better I can do about it than write as to the "educated." (*Letters to Flye* 114–115)

Agee's impulse to write for the tenants survives in the way he writes directly to them throughout *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* particularly in the first part of the "Inductions" section. In these passages, Agee does not aim for an "educated" audience but writes to his "uneducated" subjects.

Like Boas's foreword to Hurston's book, Evans's foreword to the reprinted edition of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* helps reveal the terms by which Agee constructs his reporting self with regards to his education. Evans writes that while Agee "felt he was elaborately masked" during their time in Alabama, he could not hide "a faint rubbing of Harvard and Exeter" and "a hint of family gentility." This masking extends to his language and variable accent, as Evans describes how Agee even managed to convince the farmers and himself of the authenticity of his "country-southern" accent (ix). While acutely aware of the terrible handicaps that all the tenant children faced in attending totally inadequate schools (297–298), Agee has his reporter question the benefits of his own education, and he wonders whether attending Harvard actually brings any advantages (310–311). However, as Evans suggests, education cannot simply be discarded, and despite Agee's best performances, his education inflects the language and sense of self he constructs in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* Yet even Evans seems to be a little taken in by Agee when he notes that Agee had a connection to the life of the tenant farmers "in his blood, through relatives in Tennessee" (xi). As Evans suggests how Agee's identification with his subjects was necessarily incomplete, he echoes James's claims to a common "blood" and calls attention to the fact that Agee tries, at times, to identify directly with his subjects.

Just as Hurston describes Zora's chemise, Agee describes how education produces a double sense of consciousness even as it limits his identification with his subjects. In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* education appears as an impediment to recognizing rural beauty and offers little more than the means of surviving in an urban world. At one point, James projects his divided, alienated self onto the farmers, whom he sees as unified and whole. Yet in connecting their existence firmly to the naturalness of their surroundings, he suggests the tenant farmers must remain unaware of the beauty in which they are immersed, claiming that the beautiful "purity" of their lives

would be lost if they were "conscious" of it. While the tenant farmers exist in a state of beauty inaccessible to anyone with the consciousness of other perspectives, their own lack of consciousness makes them unable to articulate this beauty or protect themselves against the cunning and deceit of others (314–315).[18] Though this distinction seems predicated at first on a simplistic contrast between country and city and a potentially condescending nostalgia for a threatened way of life, Agee's reporter reveals the limitations of such observations almost as soon as he makes them. James's attempts to connect with his subjects reflect his attempts to connect with his past selves, and his difficulty in achieving either of these goals is further reflected in his strained attempts to connect his subjects and readers. His failure to make such connections to his own satisfaction highlights the difficulty of trying to create a holistic sense of identity and community through the mediation of a single consciousness.[19]

For Hurston, perceiving the significance and beauty of folk practices is linked to an awareness of public performance and reception, and to the extent that her education alienates Zora from her subjects it also alienates her from fully appreciating their culture. In her autobiography, Hurston blames the failure of her first trip to Florida to collect folk material on "the glamour of Barnard College" and the fact that she was still speaking "Barnardese" (*Dust Tracks* 687). While "Agee constantly reminds us of the painful embarrassment his position as a Harvard-educated, white, male writer creates for all his subjects, himself among them" and attempts to discard the value of this education (Rabinowitz 51), Hurston refers to education in ways that highlight her connections to both her subjects and her audience. In moving Zora to the center of her text, Hurston acknowledges the assumptions of her readers by making Zora an entertaining object of attention, but she also challenges these assumptions by showing how Zora assumes authority as a perceiving subject. This is evident in the way that Hurston explains why her study begins in her hometown, Eatonville. She claims that she did not go back to Eatonville expecting praise from its residents "because I had been up North to college and come back with a diploma and a Chevrolet." She further claims that to them she would "still be just Zora" (9), and if she tried to act otherwise and impress them with her "form and fashion," they would "tell me that they didn't have me, neither my sham-polish, to study 'bout" (10). Here, Hurston's reporter, "just Zora," presumes to know how she will be received by the town; she demonstrates her knowledge of its values and opinions and goes beyond "Barnardese" by using the town's language and expressions. At the same time, she pointedly mentions her college education, twice noting her accomplishments. As Retman writes,

> Ironically, her apparent disavowal of her academic credentials ends up advancing them. While her neighbors may not pay attention to her accomplishments up North, her readers most likely will. However, even as she alludes to her schooling up North, she positions herself as "Lucy Hurston's daughter," an authentic, native informant: as both a skilled Columbia-trained ethnographer and an Eatonville mother's daughter, she is able to offer up down-home expressions like "a Kaiser baby," and then provide an explanatory footnote that translates the idiom to a broader audience of readers. (161)

While Hurston calls attention to her education in this complex way, she, like Agee, seems to bracket off the issue of race. However, Hurston also needs to handle this issue more delicately than Agee. Though she initially claims that she chose to begin her study in Florida because it includes black and white people from many different kinds of backgrounds (9), she later avoids any extended social analysis of race and excludes whites from her direct observations. In fact, as she begins her investigation in Eatonville, she emphasizes its "unity" by comparing it to another town, Wood Bridge, whose lack of unity is underscored by the fact that a white woman resides there (19). While using race to affirm Zora's access to inside information, Hurston continues to call attention to her status as an educated outsider as well, and she shows that education provides Zora with the distance necessary for her to see and address two worlds. While Agee's reporter cannot overcome the cultural distance created by his formal education, Hurston's reporter offers a more extended consideration of the effects of education on identity. Even as she calls attention to her formal, northern education to appeal to her audience and assert the effectiveness of her "spy-glass," Zora describes another kind of education, the initiation rites that mark the anthropologist's entry into the communities she is examining. While Agee's reporter presumes to speak for his subjects and even records their unspoken thoughts (Rabinowitz 69), Hurston draws on her training as an anthropologist to emphasize the ways in which Zora records her subjects' speech and social rituals and negotiates different kinds of language herself.

Hurston begins to describe this process in the first section of *Mules and Men,* "Folktales." In one of the early folk stories or "lies" that Zora collects in Eatonville, Robert Williams, a town resident, tells of a girl who returns home after seven years of schooling. The girl's father, who is evidently illiterate, asks her to write a letter to his brother. He begins by stating that his family is proud of their educated daughter, and the daughter has no problem transcribing his words. However, his next statement poses some trouble for

her. He asks her to tell his brother that he has a new mule, "and when Ah say (clucking sound of tongue and teeth) he moved from de word." When the father sees that she is struggling to write what he has said, she admits, "Ah can't spell (clucking sound)" (43). The father is shocked that someone with seven years of schooling cannot spell a word that he, an uneducated man, is certain he could spell himself, and he urges her again to write "(clucking sound)," confident that his brother will know what he means (43–44).[20] This lie reflects Hurston's pride in her educational accomplishments and her fear that they will not necessarily make for an impressive or successful homecoming, and it highlights the challenges she faces in representing Zora's identity and her subjects in language. In writing "(clucking sound)," it is unclear if she has solved the girl's problem or simply shown that it is her problem as well. Furthermore, would the girl write "our chile is done come home from school" when years of schooling have trained her—and Zora, for that matter—to write and spell another way? Even as Hurston raises these questions, she highlights the centrality of her reporter in the text itself. Zora prompts both of these lies and participates in their telling, and as she collects more folk tales, she dramatizes these questions of language and identity through her individual performances.

The day after hearing this story, Zora, like the daughter in Williams's story, shows how she is both empowered and conflicted by her education. Sitting on the porch, she notes, "The young'uns had the grassy lane that ran past the left side of the house playing the same games that I had played in the same lane years before." As she watches and listens to their games, she tries and fails to write a letter (57–58). While Agee's direct address to the tenants makes his text seem, in part, like a letter back to them, here Hurston seems to be writing a letter from inside the community of her subjects to the outside world of her audience, and she, like the daughter, falters in this difficult task, as her return to the past and her identification with the young girls temporarily silence her. Struggling to negotiate different kinds of language and be both "I" and "Ah," her difficulty in writing is evident in the tension between a "grassy lane" and "young'uns"; her reporter, like this sentence, must somehow stretch to include both. Despite Boas's claim and Zora's earlier affirmation that she is already an insider, her difficulties here suggest that race is a necessary but not sufficient factor for Zora to gain access to the communities she describes—she still needs to acquire the proper means to represent her subjects.

As Hurston shows, Zora's success in completing various initiation rights, her increasing facility in performing with her subjects, and her deft use of language bring about her success as a reporter. This is particularly evident

in Hurston's descriptions of the significance of laughter. Initially, Zora suggests that she already understands the "open-faced laughter" of her subjects, the laughter that so befuddles white investigators. She states that rather than rudely confront a white investigator, "We smile and tell him or her something that satisfies the white person because, knowing so little about us, he doesn't know what he is missing." Likewise, she suggests how this "feather-bed resistance" does not dismiss or avoid penetrating questions but instead simply smothers them "under a lot of laughter and pleasantries" (10). Hurston further describes this "theory behind our tactics": Knowing that "[t]he white man is always trying to know into somebody else's business," a black person will respond by giving him something misleading "to play with and handle," all the while knowing that the white man "can read my writing but he sho' can't read my mind" (10). Even though Zora, as an anthropologist-reporter, is herself trying to find out "somebody else's business," Hurston, by voicing the forms of this resistance in the first person, suggests that her book, too, may use "feather-bed tactics." Despite her charming performances, Zora's mind may be harder to read than Hurston's words.

In *Mules and Men,* Hurston's stance towards her readers is not as confrontational as Agee's is in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men:* If Agee is, at times, "fiercely anti-popular," Hurston playfully pulls readers into her text while slowly increasing the influence of her reporter's perspective and views. Despite Boas's and Hurston's claims for an inclusive community already defined by race, Hurston actually shows Zora humbly recognizing the difficulties of entering her subjects' lives and recording their stories as she begins another kind of education. Hurston describes how Zora's academic, northern credentials, manner of speaking, signs of status, and intrusive gaze mean that she is liable to receive feather-bed resistance herself: Taken for a spy, she is unable to use her spy-glass. This is particularly evident when Zora leaves the familiar residents of Eatonville for the strangers of Polk County. In fact, when Zora arrives in Polk County, no one tells her at first why she is being ostracized (62); even when the workers stage a dance on the first payday after her arrival, Zora is at first simply ignored. Outside of the dance, around a bonfire, she knows that the "laughter and aimless talk was a window-dressing for my benefit" and that the laughter itself could mean almost anything (64–65).

In order to investigate these meanings, Hurston shows that Zora needs to perform for her subjects in order to gain their trust and supplement the access she gains because of her race; only in this way can she effectively report on their lives and culture. When a man at the bonfire introduces himself as Mr. Pitts, Hurston describes Zora's reaction and the reaction of

those who observe her: "I laughed heartily. The whole fire laughed at his quick comeback and more people came out to listen" (66). While Zora eventually realizes that her car makes her look like a revenue officer or a detective, here she responds to Pitts's claims that she looks too rich for the men to talk to her by explaining that her bootlegger lover bought her the dress she is wearing (66). In this early initiation test, Zora uses her own laughter to break down the resistance of her subjects and gain access to the inside meanings of their laughter and language. Zora's success as a reporter and participant is reflected in the language Hurston uses to describe her. Before she speaks with Pitts, she is "I" (65); immediately afterwards, she is "Ah" (66). Soon, Zora becomes the center of attention at the dance, and as she dances and sings the songs she also records, she participates in rounds of laughter that now signify a shared sense of understanding (67). Interestingly, as Hurston once more emphasizes Zora's success, she is again "I" and recognizable to Hurston's readers as a resourceful anthropologist rather than simply a "woofer" and singer.

Zora's successful initiation here reflects Hurston's own success in crafting a language that is able to reach different audiences. Even as Hurston presents Zora as a believable, active, and creative reporter, her perspective is difficult to pin down: Though she seems to laugh for her subjects and write for her audience, sometimes she gives the impression that she is writing for her subjects and laughing at her audience. This role of the trickster storyteller is most obvious in the concluding piece of *Mules and Men* when Zora identifies with one of the clever animals of the folk tales, "Sis Cat" (228). More often than not, Zora has it both ways in relating to the audience of her subjects and to Hurston's readers. In the "woofing" scene with Mr. Pitts, she calls attention to her car, her Macy's dress, and her use of formal language to remind her readers that they share certain experiences and assumptions, even as she also reminds them that only she, as a black, southern anthropologist, can successfully probe the feather bed resistance of her subjects.

The way Zora succeeds in her performance at the workers' dance while James fails in his performance at the Gudgers' dinner highlights the significant intersections between *Mules and Men* and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* Hurston begins with the authority of her discipline and mentors as she presents Zora in the text. Responding to the demands of her publisher to write a popular book in an academic genre and following her own aspirations to make black folklore material more widely available, Hurston uses her reporter to create an authority uniquely her own.[21] While engaging and eventually challenging the assumption that her reporter already belongs to

the communities she describes, Hurston shows the ways in which Zora successfully, if provisionally, connects two different cultures and worlds. In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* on the other hand, Agee presents overt elements of his composition process and frustrations with his profession in order to challenge the assumptions of his audience and the demands made by *Fortune* and later his book publishers. Defying the expectations established by previous photo-documentaries, he creates a difficult text in which he explores the image of the alienated, modernist writer by observing first-hand the alienating effects of extreme rural poverty on a particular community. While Hurston uses the trickster storyteller to convey one message to her white readers while signifying other meanings her subjects would likely recognize, Agee never resolves the problem of whether he is writing to his middle-class readers, to cajole and provoke them, or to his subjects, to honor and touch them. Instead, he makes his reporter's failure to mediate between different audiences and different conceptions of writing a key characteristic of his text, and James's final musings from the porch of the Gudgers' house serve as a kind of ironic commentary on Agee's attempt to write an experimental, modernist text that examines the extreme poverty of his subjects in language that is, at times, addressed directly to them. As I noted in the introduction, near the end of *Let Us Praise Famous Men,* James's thoughts turn towards the enigmatic sound of what may be foxes, a sound he describes as being "beyond even the illusion of full apprehension." In his opinion, this elusive difficulty makes the sound "a work of great, private, and unambiguous art which was irrelevant to audience" (466).

Agee's foxes, like Hurston's Sis Cat, conclude his work with the narrator turning mysteriously inward. As I also noted above, some critics suggest that such moments show that Agee set his goals above his audience and the genre of the photo-documentary in order to embrace the commercial failure of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and enhance its lasting literary reputation (Hegeman 177). According to Pierre Bourdieu, rejecting a popular audience for an audience of other writers and trained readers is a common modernist strategy that lowers a work's immediate commercial value while enhancing its long-term literary value (*Field* 164). While arguments like Bourdieu's return modernist literature from the realm of universal, timeless values to a more properly grounded context, such assumptions fail to capture the significance of Agee's complex attitude toward his assignment for *Fortune* and his subjects. While modernist ideas about the role of the artist and the lasting value of art do inflect Agee's conceptions of language and form in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* his reporter, James, offers his own interpretations about how to read cultural works within a broader framework that reflects the specific social

conditions of his time. Furthermore, Agee's ambivalence about his potential audience and the shape his text should take is reflected in James's conflicted desires and fraught performances during key moments of the text. By making James a reporter and an artist, Agee offers aesthetic as well as sociological readings of his subjects, but he leaves it up to his readers to make the necessary connections between the riddle of James's foxes, "irrelevant to audience," and the way James interprets the lives of the tenant farmers in the context of his times. As I argue below, Agee draws on Walker Evans's photographs as a means of exploring the divided identity of his reporter and the apparent contradictions in his own understanding of culture.

Though Zora concludes the main portion of *Mules and Men* by becoming the coy Sis Cat, her role as a reporter is more clearly to lead the reader throughout the text as a kind of reporter-guide: Her observations and experiences structure the text, and she earns her readers' trust and keeps their attention through her performances. Hurston seems to present her material more chronologically than Agee, and she uses Zora's travels to condense and unify "a two-and-a-half-year expedition into one year and nine months, with a one-year segment (Florida) and a nine-month segment (New Orleans)" (Hemenway 165). As she portrays Zora recording folk tales, Hurston describes Zora's relationship to the immediate audience of her subjects as a way of establishing her own relationship with her audience of readers; later, as she portrays Zora participating in hoodoo rites, Hurston modifies the assumptions of this relationship. Continuing to refer to education as a touchstone, Hurston initially meets her readers' expectations by addressing the complex ways in which Zora's formal education both authorizes her study and inhibits her ability to enter her subject's lives. After showing how Zora undergoes the initiation tests typical of the anthropologist in the field, Hurston goes on to redefine the value of her authority on her own terms. She transforms Zora from a willing reporter and guide into an expert insider, and she shows Zora assuming the power to turn away from her readers and offer up her own interpretations of her subjects and their culture.

While in the "Folk Tales" section of *Mules and Men* Zora calls attention to her formal education even as she describes the improvisational lessons of feather-bed laughter, in the "Hoodoo" section she recounts her more structured training in the practices of hoodoo. As she undergoes one of several hoodoo initiation rites that lead to her receiving the "hoodoo crown," she emphasizes that the crown is not lightly given and should not be lightly received: "The crown without the preparation means no more than a college diploma without the four years' work" (188). Here, Zora equates earning a hoodoo crown with earning a college diploma; by the end of the section she

suggests that earning a crown is more of an achievement. By distinguishing her education in hoodoo from the formal education she presumably shares with her readers, Hurston assumes a greater authority as an insider, but she does so without overtly alienating her audience, as evident from the way Zora avoids commenting directly on her own beliefs in the power of hoodoo, even as she uses hoodoo to address the issues of race bracketed off earlier in the text.

In one notable consideration of the connection between hoodoo and race, Zora recounts the story of an "unreconstructed" white planter who kills a black servant girl and is then cursed by the girl's father. By embedding this story of an effective hoodoo curse in a chapter which is meant to "illustrate the attitude of negroes of the Deep South" towards hoodoo (215), Zora merely suggests what her own opinions about race relations and hoodoo's effectiveness may be, while at the same time presenting a more clear social context for hoodoo practices. In another case, Zora links the effectiveness of hoodoo and questions of race explicitly, justifying her respect for one hoodoo practitioner, Dr. Jenkins, by noting that most people who come to see him "are white and upper-class people at that" (212). Zora then describes how Jenkins, who is training her at the time, listens to her own "wish" that she will receive assistance from "a certain influential white woman." Noting Jenkins' assurances but not revealing what, if anything, he does, she then announces that the following morning a wire arrived from this white woman, "stating that she would stand by me as long as she lives" (212). In this veiled reference to Mrs. Charlotte Osgood Mason,[22] Hurston can be seen as flattering her financially generous but overbearing patron, the woman who financed most of Hurston's early folklore expeditions but then maintained strict control over her materials and manuscripts.[23] At the same time, she is also suggesting, despite the lack of specific details here, that access to the knowledge of hoodoo empowers her and symbolically frees her from Mason's control. Though Hurston had published the hoodoo material before in a folklore article, she uses it in *Mules and Men* to reevaluate the way she presents her reporter, Zora, in terms of her own relationship to her patrons and audience. At the very beginning of her introduction, Hurston enthusiastically embraces the endorsement of her study that presumably came from Boas (9); here, she claims a more powerful sense of authority for herself and transforms her obligations to her supporters, publisher, and audience into a statement of independence. Following Henry Louis Gates's argument in *The Signifying Monkey* (1988), Keith Walters also argues that this process begins in Hurston's introduction, as she creates a complex, divided voice and employs her understanding of different languages and traditions: "Hurston indeed signified on the

very whites who had made the book's existence possible: Mrs. Annie Nathan Meyer, Dr. Boas, and Mrs. R. Osgood Mason. Part of Hurston's revenge, then, was to mock both the privilege and the racism of these patrons even as she thanked them for their help" (345–346). Paradoxically, then, Zora's increasingly "subjective" participation in the text is a mark of Hurston freeing herself from the assumptions and limits of her white audience and reading her subjects with an increased independence or "objectivity."

Zora also invokes the power of Jenkins' hoodoo to return to the issue of education. She describes how the prominent black sociologist Dr. Charles S. Johnson arrives in New Orleans and goes with her to visit Jenkins. On his own initiative, Jenkins tells Johnson that he will be receiving an unexpected invitation to take a trip, and as predicted, Johnson is directed to go to Africa the next day (212). Though Zora, as usual, refrains from commenting directly on the effectiveness of Jenkins' hoodoo, the implication here is that if Jenkins knows more than Johnson, one of the first people to encourage Zora's aspirations as a writer and one of her early supporters in New York (Boyd 91), then Zora's training in hoodoo might give her more power than her college education in carrying out her study and, in some measure, relieve her of past obligations. However, in order to complete this education in hoodoo, Zora needs to have the proper sympathy towards its effectiveness, and from the beginning of the section, she is repeatedly questioned by hoodoo practitioners about her beliefs (178). Since these questions are likely shared by Hurston's readers, they go directly to the conflicting basis for her authority: She must believe in hoodoo to learn about it and enter this world unavailable to her white audience, but she must not profess her beliefs too directly in order to retain her credibility with this same audience. While in "Folklore," Zora's subjects see her marked by signs of external, white authority, in "Hoodoo" her white readers may question her claims to authority because of her identification with her subjects' beliefs. To connect these different views and the two sections of her text while maintaining and even increasing her claims to an authoritative perspective, Hurston subtly shows how Zora's folklore collecting, which is largely made possible by her academic credentials, becomes in itself a valuable education unavailable to her teachers, patrons, or audience, as dramatized by Zora's successful completion of several hoodoo initiations rites. By seeming to maintain the skepticism of the trained anthropologist while revealing unusual, even exotic details to her largely white audience, Hurston surpasses the authority of her academic credentials by reminding this audience that she also possesses the authority of a black, southern woman who can enter these communities and gain special access to such information through her race and presumed beliefs. By

linking, without comment, the practices and effects of hoodoo, Hurston has Zora publicly enact the kind of balancing act that she herself masks in her writing.

Hurston makes Zora's performance visible in the way she draws increasing attention to the exposed body of her reporter in the "Hoodoo" section. As Zora, like James, registers unstated conflicts and divisions through her embodied presence in the text, Hurston manages to hide the increasingly independent authority of her reporter in plain view. This is exemplified by her description of the three days Zora lies naked and prostrate, in a trance-like state, as she completes her hoodoo education under the tutelage of Luke Turner (189). The woodcut illustration by Miguel Covarrubias accompanying this scene shows Zora's naked body and dramatically focuses attention on her as an embodied participant in the scene described in the text (190). As D.A. Boxwell writes, here Zora's body "itself becomes a kind of runic ethnographic text" (612). Since Zora's face is turned away in this woodcut, this "ethnographic text" calls into question whether Hurston's white readers are really meant to read her mind as easily as they read her words. In viewing Zora's exposed body, these readers may be more like the white audiences Hurston describes coming to Congo Square in New Orleans each week to watch what they take to be the spiritual elements of a hoodoo dance: They "think they see all, when they only see a dance" (183). Covarrubias' illustration and Hurston's description of the culmination of Zora's education in hoodoo redefine Boas's affirmation in his foreword, noted above. While Boas assumes that Hurston has been able to penetrate beyond any white observer in gaining "the confidence of the voodoo doctors," he further praises her "loveable personality" and "revealing style" (3). Just as Agee charms Evans into believing he has some claims to his southern accent and some special insight into his southern subjects, Hurston seems to charm Boas into believing she has a "revealing style" even as she assumes different disguises and often masks her own thoughts about her audience and the "true inner life" of her subjects.[24]

Zora's exposed body and hidden face in the woodcut show how Hurston's reporter, like Agee's, disguises the ways in which she appeals to different audiences, tries to balance conflicting desires and loyalties, and acts to mediate social tensions. In both cases, the contradictions masked by these disguises are revealed in recurring images and dramatic crises. In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* the key crisis occurs during a solitary drive James takes in the countryside. As he takes a break and enters a diner, he encounters a group of teen-age boys. Contrary to his behavior elsewhere, in this case James "decided to assume no disguise in mannerism" even though he expects these

boys to resent his presence as an outsider and possibly even attack him (381). Though here he overtly admits the imperfections of his disguise as a spy, James is both disappointed and relieved when no fight occurs, and he leaves after his meal to continue his drive through the stillness of a Sunday afternoon. When he becomes more despondent and considers wrecking his car and committing suicide, the recollection of a woman, Via (Agee's wife at the time), and, more importantly, his desire to write and make movies direct him away from these urges (384). Torn between different audiences, James turns from his performance as a spy towards the act of writing; as is the case with Zora, the seemingly irreconcilable tensions within his identity are once more transformed into an almost acrobatic performance in language.

Both reporters' seemingly odd relationships with their cars call attention to these tensions and crises. As James drives in a rainstorm, he feels that his thoughts and his senses extend throughout the car as if it were part of his body (408). After a half-willed accident nearly fulfills an earlier death wish and leaves his car stuck in a ditch, he claims that he feels "laughter toward it as if it were a new dealer, a county dietician, an editor of *Fortune,* or an article in the *New Republic;* and so, too, at myself" (410). After first identifying his car as an extension of his body, here James equates the car with journalism and well-intentioned if ineffectual bureaucratic interventions into the impoverished world of the tenant farmers. In his laughter, he underscores his paradoxical position as a reporter trying to place his subjects outside the public marketplace even as his perspective reflects his work at *Fortune* and other writing for magazines like the *New Republic.* In his enigmatic laughter, Agee's reporter, like Hurston's, only seems to leave behind his northern self, his "patrons," and his writing assignment; instead, he remains a reporter-spy who mediates conflicts through his own embodied performances and the intricacies of Agee's language. More than a symbolic oddity, the ongoing emphasis on the car in both *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Mules and Men* illustrates these indelible effects of the urban North on both James and Zora, for as Raymond Williams notes, the car always represents a distinctive "city" way of looking at the country—it signifies speed and motion and frames one's view of the landscape and rural life (*Country* 296). In Agee's text, James's drive and his "accident" exemplify his crisis of identity towards the end of the text. The accident with James's car also points directly back to the unfolding of events described in the book, since it gives James the excuse to walk back to the Gudgers' home and accept their invitation to stay with them for the night, which in turn leads to their extended invitation and the following six weeks of tenant farm life recounted in the text.

Zora's car also figures prominently in key moments within *Mules and Men* and underscores the inevitably urban aspects of her perspective. For example, at the end of the introduction, Zora is driving just outside Eatonville and switches from the past to the present tense as she acknowledges Mason's support of her project (12). As the first chapter then begins with Zora driving across from Maitland into Eatonville, Hurston shows how the mobility of the car enables her reporter to move from the world of her white audience into the world of her black subjects and make the transition from "Hurston" the grateful academic to "Zora" the playful and increasingly independent participant reporter. While James tries, unsuccessfully, to leave behind the perspective implied by his car and his education, Zora uses both as she transforms her perspective and the basis of her authority. When she arrives in Eatonville, she sees the residents familiarly gathered on the store porch and greets them as she "went into neutral." She adds that within a moment, "everybody crowded around the car to help greet me" (13). Though Zora is supposed to be in "neutral" as an anthropological reporter, Hurston actually uses the car to show how Zora becomes the center of attention as a storyteller. Even before Zora is out of the car, one of the residents of the town starts to tell a "lie," while another suggests they tell the first story while driving in the car to a party (14–15). From the beginning, Zora's car gives her experiences a sense of immediacy, as if she were bringing her readers into the circle of storytellers and along for the ride.

The continued presence of the car indicates that Zora's crossing into the black communities of Florida is not an absolute break from the origins of her trip and the world of her readers, and from the beginning, she associates her Chevrolet with the way her past remains part of her perspective. This complex perspective is grounded in her bodily presence, as it is for the woman in "Can't You Line It?," a song included in the first part of the appendix, "Negro Songs with Music." Set to the rhythm of the men working on the railroad, this song describes a woman who walks with "[h]er mouth exhausting like an automobile" (247). As in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* the car in *Mules and Men* represents more than just mechanization, mass production, or social status; it also suggests a way of seeing that is as immediate as the body but at the same time clouded by the outside world and the claims of the past. At times, Zora's car is even personified as a character in its own right, as she describes it commenting on where to go after she leaves Eatonville (62). Though she welcomes the attention the car brings her while she is in Eatonville, she later finds that this attention can cause problems as well. When she arrives in Polk County and stops at the workers' quarters of the Everglades Cypress Lumber Company, the workers largely shun her. While

they are used to strangers arriving unexpectedly, she admits, "The car made me look too prosperous" (63). As I mentioned earlier, this reception by the workers exemplifies Hurston's tenuous position between her black subjects and white readers. Here the workers associate Zora's car with the marks of white authority and suspect she is an agent of the law, yet in reality Hurston chose to travel by car during her two trips in part because her brother and sister living in Florida suggested it would be the best way for her to avoid the harsh and humiliating Jim Crow conditions on the trains (Boyd 143).

While the cars in both texts point to Agee's and Hurston's similar difficulties in setting aside their previous experiences and immersing themselves in the supposedly isolated worlds of their subjects, they also underscore the different subject positions that each writer occupied. While Agee's white male reporter explores his desires through the act of seeing and the freedom of driving, Hurston's black female reporter initially presents herself through the way that she attracts the male gaze. Zora's reliance on her possessions and appearance, however, puts her in direct competition with the other women on the job, leading to one of the notable crises described in *Mules and Men.* When Zora's friend, the strong-willed Big Sweet, alerts her of the imminent danger posed by two particularly jealous women, Zora recoils "at the thought of dying in a violent manner in a sordid saw-mill camp." Though she states that she has nothing but "teeth and toe-nails" to take on her antagonists, she remains in the camp for the time being because of her loyalty to Big Sweet (147). In this rare instance of Zora directly revealing her thoughts, her divided loyalties and desires emerge in her language. Like James, she cannot always maintain the consistency of her disguises, and her cosmopolitan perspective surfaces in the uncharacteristically stilted and formal phrasing of "dying in a violent manner" and the adjective "sordid," a surprising choice given her largely positive descriptions of life in the workers' quarters. Though Zora follows Big Sweet's advice and initially avoids this threat, she later returns to another party at Big Sweet's invitation. When one of the jealous women draws a knife on her and starts a massive brawl, Zora tellingly escapes in her car (174–175). The car, then, is both the means of her entrance into the world of her subjects and the means of her escape from this world as well. In fact, while the "Folk Tales" section begins and ends with Zora in her car, the "Hoodoo" section also opens with her describing the passing of time and her arrival in New Orleans from behind the wheel of her car.

In both *Mules and Men* and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* the car indicates how strongly the reporter's perspective is implicated in the structures of cultural production and contemporary social issues. As Raymond Williams describes in *The Long Revolution,* journalism plays a particularly

prominent role in the ongoing process of industrialization, the extension of democracy, and accompanying transformations in culture (10–14).[25] The subjects that Agee and Hurston describe seem, at first, to be outside of the modern stages of this "long revolution." *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Mules and Men* are premised on returns to communities based clearly on production and examinations of the lives of rural southerners who grow cotton and other crops and work to produce lumber, turpentine, and other agricultural products; these rural producers command only a minimal ability to buy the finished cultural and consumer goods that characterize northern, urban culture.[26] Though James and Zora initially appear to affirm this split between urban centers and rural peripheries, between local communities based primarily on consumption and those based primarily on production, their efforts to link their own past and present lives come to undermine such distinctions and instead affirm the connections between these two worlds.

Rather than describing distinct, insular cultures, they offer their own models for reading the cultural artifacts they discover in relation to mass produced commodities and the urban marketplace. Agee shows James evaluating such artifacts in terms of their aesthetic qualities, and in doing so, he suggests that seemingly worthless mass produced commodities can be redeemed by being shaped through individual use. In keeping with a "private" conception of art, these artifacts seem to be created in and through the private lives and desires of individuals and the shelter of a seemingly autonomous local culture. Just as his consideration of the untouched "consciousness" of the farmers calls attention to his own divided consciousness and hence his ability to compare their lot with his, James's cross-cultural interpretations ultimately call into question the impermeability of cultural borders. In *Mules and Men,* on the other hand, the artifacts and rituals Zora examines are clearly constructed through collective transmission, variation, and revision (Hemenway 54–55). For Zora, then, artifacts and rituals, including her own performances, are always public and subject to compromise and collaboration, particularly as they pass from one cultural context to another.

Both Agee and Hurston ultimately demonstrate that all acts of perception and interpretation reflect local values as well as broader social relations. To return to Raymond Williams's terms, Agee and Hurston show how social and cultural relationships between country and city are historically situated economic relationships as well. Taking the apparent decline of life in rural Britain as his example, Williams demonstrates that what looks from the outside like a precipitous cultural fall from some pastoral golden age is seen from the perspective of rural inhabitants as "a crisis of wages, conditions, prices; of the use of land and work on the land" (*Country* 257). James

and Zora seem at first to accept a simplified conception of cultural decline, and their return to the rural South initially seems to be a return as well to the familiar elements of childhood. However, as their observations come to reflect the double perspective through which they read culture, they underscore the importance of acknowledging the particular social and economic contexts in which cultural artifacts are created and interpreted. Entering supposedly untouched communities of production, they inevitably discover outside influences and elements of mass consumption, and they describe these external factors as reflections of their own position as insiders and outsiders. As reporters who participate themselves in the broad mass-market through their writing assignments, they offer readings of artifacts that come to show how apparent boundaries between consumption and production are constantly being blurred and redefined, and they demonstrate that communities based on production and consumption are not as separate as they might first seem to be.

In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* Agee suggests that the commodities that seem to represent an oppressive economic system are redeemed through their use, as the white tenant farmers, among the lowest members in this system, make meaningful artifacts from otherwise meaningless mass produced objects. Evans's black and white photographs help to illuminate James's reading practices, as evident in the different ways that advertisements appear in the photographs and in Agee's text. In one photograph of a small town, a span of a few buildings includes three posters for Coca-Cola and one for Dr. Pepper. These advertisements, which form the visual center of the photograph, catch the sunlight and literally overshadow the people walking below them, as their indistinct faces are hidden in darkness. In another photograph, two Coca-Cola advertisements peek out from a ramshackle general store, while across a short, empty space a poster for Nehi stares blankly from a brick wall. As in several other photographs, these advertisements speak for the people who are absent and provide a ghostly reminder of the way their desires have been commodified. The perfectly stenciled letters of the advertisements stand in stark contrast to the unpainted surfaces and jagged edges of the decaying buildings; in their cheerful, pristine persistence, they also contrast with the wrinkled, weathered faces of the tenant farmers who appear in the other photographs. In the photographs of the private spaces of the tenants' homes, advertisements appear as decorations, and these images have taken on the worn, soiled quality of the tenants' faces, clothes, and hands. These advertisements do not frame an anonymous public space but instead bear the marks of personal attention and the human touch. While the publicly displayed advertisements offer a hope that seems to surpass human

endurance, these advertisements within the home are shaped by everyday use and reflect the embodied limits of personal desires. In this way, they are redeemed from mass production and the delusions of collective fantasies to become as unique as the individual tenant farmers who value them and the reporter who observes them.

In Agee's text, James's descriptions of similar decorative advertisements highlight these significant contrasts among Evans's photographs. In a section on the decorations within the Gudgers' home, James describes personal photographs and images and advertisements taken from cheap publications. Next to the image of an idealized woman who appears on a calendar advertising a brand of shoes, James sees "written twice, in pencil, in a schoolchild's hand: Louise, Louise" (164). In the context of abject poverty, the advertising image seems absurdly out of place, while against anonymous economic forces stands the signature of Louise, one of the Gudger daughters, marking a tentative statement of individuality whose fragility is emphasized by being written in pencil. After describing the advertisements on and around the mantel, James ends the section by noting that "the print of a child's hand" can be clearly seen in the whitewash nearby (165). In contrast to the idealized, standardized images of advertising and consumption, these individual gestures take on a greater sense of authenticity. Just as Agee creates James in all his embodied, human complexity from his own past, his own trip South, and his own aspirations, here the handprint provides a specific, human trace, a mark of individual presence lacking in the advertisements themselves. A similar description of the Rickets' mantel begins as nothing more than a long list of the advertisements and decorative texts they have taken from religious magazines, but the last few items that James includes in this list clearly offer a bitter commentary on the tenants' attempts to meet the basic needs of survival rather than acquire the accouterments of middle-class life:

> Love's Gift Divine, You Can't Afford *NOT,* Soft, Lovely Hands, You Owe It to Her, You Owe It to Him, You Owe It to Them, Country Gentleman, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but for your children, and your children's children, Energize, Save, At Last, Don't be a Stick-in-the-Mud, et cetera. (200–201)

As with the earlier examples of newsprint, James's juxtaposition of the scraps of words implicitly contrasts the farmers' limited perspective with his own broader cross-cultural perspective. What the tenants see as decorative images, James inevitably arranges and interprets as a meaningful, if fragmented text.

More damningly, the reporter who wishes to leave mass-market consumption for a distinctly authentic realm of production cannot help but recognize that his salary is ultimately derived largely from such advertisements. While with the Gudger family James seems to find old family ghosts, here, with the Rickets, he finds that ghostly reminders of his occupation have already preceded him. Just as James, then, is caught between his work as a reporter and his identification with the farmers, he presents these advertisements and bits of text as being caught between their association with anonymous commerce and their use as personal decorations, and he reads them through his own split perspective and the wider context of his experience and education.

The language of these advertisements reflects the tenant farmers' lives and the language that James uses as well. The idea of "owing" and "saving" relates ironically to the debts that bind the farmers to their land and to their landlords, making it impossible for them to ever become "gentlemen," and the idea of "soft" hands is belied by the way their bodies have been hardened and twisted by incessant labor and a poor diet. Likewise, the religious language resonates with the connections across generations that Agee emphasizes in his text, both in terms of the way the farmers' poverty is passed on from generation to generation and in terms of Agee's own sense of family roots. Finally, the impossibility of escaping from a broader context of meaning is underscored by the final "et cetera." It is at once a sign of the endlessly stimulated desires necessary for consumer capitalism to function and a sign of James's own proliferating desires and language in his unwieldy text. Just as the advertisements serve as reminders of his profession and the ultimate sources of his income, the "et cetera" serves as a reminder that he is inevitably entangled in the economic system he critiques and remains an outsider even as he tries to immerse himself in the tenant farmers' world.

As James continues to report on the farmers' lives, he evaluates their cultural artifacts more consciously, and his evaluations show how the farmers' aspirations to identify with city consumers are an inversion of his own aspirations to identify with the farmers as rural producers. This can be seen by comparing one of Evans's most famous photographs in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* the striking image of a pair of farmer's boots, to Agee's description of the farmers' work shoes. As many observers have noted, the worn boots in Evans's photograph seem to take on a human personality and almost speak for the unique hardship of their owner's life. In contrast to the worn look of these boots, James describes how the farmers purposefully modify their mass made shoes by cutting ventilation holes in them in accordance with their individual conceptions of "utility and art" (262). While some modifications just barely surpass the demands of utility, other shoes have

been carefully and intricately worked "toward a kind of beauty" (263).[27] In responding to the needs of the body, the farmers transform mundane commodities into individual works of art in just the way Agee hopes to transform his routine work of journalism into a lasting contribution to literature.

As Phyllis Frus argues in *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative: The Timely and the Timeless* (1994), around the turn of the twentieth-century, novelists began to see themselves as laborers. In response, they "moved to reserve a space for the nonutilitarian, the noncommercial, the 'more than real' literary production, that is, for works that transcended their ties to the immediate occasion, their association with the market, and their appeal to an uncritical mass public" (30). In his description of the farmers' shoes, Agee seems to do just this: He tries to develop his identification with the farmers in terms of a common, nonutilitarian aesthetic that seems to transcend associations with the marketplace by focusing on elements that arise from the needs of the body. While Frus correctly points to the complicated relationship between literary writing and journalism, I am arguing here and throughout this study that the conventions of journalism allowed writers, like Agee, to shape complex texts that reach out to both "an uncritical mass public" and a critical, elite readership. In Agee's case, his reporter draws on his education in art and literature in his readings of cultural artifacts, yet at the same time he calls attention to the circumstances in which the text itself was produced so that his gestures towards transcendent values actually remain grounded in a particular context and network of relations. If the emphasis on James's expansive, probing consciousness seems to take the text beyond "the immediate occasion" of Agee's own journalistic assignment, Agee's emphasis on James's embodied presence constantly returns these musings and reflections to the specific occasion of his writing.

While here the farmers consciously modify their shoes and transform commodities into artifacts, elsewhere they seem to perform similar processes unconsciously. For example, Agee surprisingly suggests that the farmers' new, machine-made work clothes possess their own kind of "delicate beauty," and he describes a man wearing such new clothes as looking like "a mail-order-catalogue engraving." Yet he makes it clear that the distinctive beauty of these clothes only comes with time, as the farmers' bodies and labor transform the artificiality of these machine-made forms into uncontrived artifacts. From repeated "sweat, sun, laundering," the material of these clothes takes on a distinctive texture and striking colors—a "scale of blues" that James has only seen approximated "in rare skies," "smoky light," and "some of the blues of Cezanne" (267). Just as "a page of newspaper can have all the wealth of a

sheet of fossils, or a painting," here the farmers' clothes take on both natural and aesthetic characteristics. Gudger's overalls, in particular, exemplify the merging of such qualities. One pair is "lost out of all machinery into a full prime of nature" (268), while an older pair has shaped itself against his body into intricate "foldings" beyond the work of any sculptor (269). Unlike sculptors, however, Gudger's body, rather than his creativity, transforms the "delicate beauty" of these commodities by working out their machine qualities and creating a more appealing, natural beauty.

In describing the women's dresses and Fred Ricketts' work shirt, James similarly emphasizes how the necessity of the farmers' lives and the seemingly innate artistry of their bodies turn the mass produced sacks and advertising labels into pearls of natural beauty. James notes that one of Ivy Woods's homemade work dresses, which has been fashioned from a fertilizer sack, still retains visible corporate "trademarks," though he also claims that the dress is similar in some ways to the garments worn by the women of ancient Greece (277). Again, James's education and inevitably comparative perspective lead him to recognize both advertising trademarks and classical features, and he cannot escape the vocabulary of his own education.[28] In describing Ricketts' homemade shirt, James similarly notes that he can still see the brand name of the fertilizer sack, but the way it has been worn and washed makes the material appear to be "pure cream" molded "into a fabric an eighth of an inch thick." While this shirt is patterned as an "earnest imitation of store shirts," it differs from store bought shirts in its unique, rough-edged details (274). He finds something more attractive, even endearing, in this difference between the intent of the shirt and its effect—in the failure of its disguise as a kind of cultural performance—though he admits that "socially and economically" it lacks the status of a store bought shirt (274–275).

The way James reads these items recalls Raymond Williams's warnings about the need to connect the apparently "natural" and "moral" idealizations of rural life with "the thrusting ruthlessness of the new capitalism" since this form of capitalism inevitably shapes the everyday realities of rural life and the ways in which it is viewed by outsiders (*Country* 37). As Williams suggests, even subsistence farming does not exist outside of market forces but is shaped in relation to the market economy. Even as James seems to value these items of clothing as natural folk art, preferable to store bought shirts, Agee shows James acknowledging the advertisements, logos, and imitated forms that remain apparent to someone with his background. While his references to Cezanne and the ancient Greeks reflect his formal education, his references to social and economic groups reflect the analytical elements initially required by Agee's assignment for *Fortune.* In other words, Agee's education

and work as a journalist leave traces of his own participation in the marketplace that are as visible in the text as the trademarks James sees on the farmers' clothes, and such traces belie the idea that this rural life exists outside of wider social and economic relations. Likewise, Agee's "naturalizing" of the tenants' bodies is undermined by the complexity of his reporter's embodied presence and focused gaze. Even as James stands before readers in his stark honesty as a corporeal, desiring man, his thoughts and readings of artifacts point to his origins as a carefully constructed, textual artifact himself, as he arises from Agee's own understanding of the marketplace, his potential audiences, and his conflicting goals for *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.*

Agee later picks up on his criticism of the way poor white and black farmers value store-bought commodities as a sign of social status (272), and in doing so, he reveals his own bias against mass produced goods, a bias that further reflects his knowledge of social and economic categories and awareness of the critical attitude that modernist literature is presumed to take towards the values of the marketplace. For example, he describes Gudger's store-bought hat, "his sunday belt and the pull-over sweater he wants" as "city symbols against a rural tradition."[29] A "machinist's cap," it pulls his "ineradicably rural face into city and machine suggestions" (271). While Agee again seems to naturalize the distinction between country and city, this distinction also needs to be placed within the wider context of James's reporting. James's own disguises as a spy-reporter are present in all of his observations, and his criticism of Gudger for taking on a "city" cast despite his "rural face" reflects his own anxiety in disguising himself behind a rural mask while inevitably retaining some "machine suggestions" in his perspective and his writing.

Just as he later tries to align his text with the nonutilitarian, artistic aspects of the farmers' boots, Agee first begins to don such masks by aligning his reporter with the farmers as cultural producers in the prefatory sections of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* Claiming to create a book only "out of necessity" and advising his readers to read the text out loud, Agee further states that he and Evans do not support "any attempt on the part of the publishers, or others, to disguise or in any way to ingratiate this volume" (xv). Yet in claiming to reject any attempts to promote or "disguise" his book, Agee obscures the roles that such disguises play throughout the text in the way he portrays the divided identity of his reporter. Despite the fact that he was working for one of the illustrated magazines that formed a prominent part of the new consumer culture, Agee, in his own reporting, seems to have similarly disguised himself during the time he and Evans spent in Alabama. Describing Agee's clothes, Evans writes that Agee "would work a suit into fitting him perfectly by the simple method of not taking it off much. In due

time the cloth would mold itself to his frame." While admitting to "exaggerate" a bit, Evans writes "that wind, rain, work, and mockery were his tailors" (ix-x). Echoing Agee's descriptions of the way the farmers mold and transform their clothes, Evans suggests that Agee himself overshot his mark and undermined his intentions: Worrying that "expensive clothes" suggested "some sort of claim to superiority," Agee's extreme method for wearing cheap clothes sometimes became a kind of "inverted dandyism" (x). In constructing his reporter, Agee's internal conflicts, comparative evaluation of the farmers' culture, and paternalistic certainty in knowing what is best for them, all set his reporter apart from the tenant farmers. While Agee offers readings of the farmers' clothes, and Evans in turn offers a reading of Agee's clothes, the tenant farmers are never shown reading James on equal terms. In his eagerness to identify with the farmers, Agee often overestimates his own ability to do so and generally fails to include his subjects' own voices or actual responses to his presence. Yet in Evans's description of Agee and, more significantly, in Agee's own descriptions of his reporter, a meaningful space opens between his performance and his aim, between the intention of his disguise and its actual effects. James's failure to see the tenant farmers' lives as composing a hermetic culture and his corresponding failure to immerse himself completely in their world lead to the rich intricacy of his performance as a reporter, and the divisions James tries to disguise in his own identity and criticizes in his subjects actually form the most crucial and distinctive element of his reporting.

The disguises that form such an important part of the text are exemplified by some of James's later interpretations. Observing how Louise, one of the Gudgers' daughters, and Paralee, one of the Ricketts' daughters, wear their store bought dresses, his descriptions reflect pointedly back to his own performances. Addressing Louise directly, James notes that at first glance her dress seems "like the 'party-dress' of a little girl your age in town, of people whose mothers are so nice they would never speak to yours unless about putting less starch in the cuffs, please." After mimicking the middle-class hypocrisy of this polite "please" and going on to detail the dress, James notes that it actually betrays Louise's identity in the way the "whole sweet artifact set itself around the animal litheness of your country way." In James's estimation, Louise's body makes this dress into an "artifact" even as her body inevitably undermines her imitation of a town girl. He describes how there is a quality in her skin different from that of "little girls in towns and cities," a color that is only present in the skin of "those who came straight out of the earth and are continually upon it in the shining of the sun, active and sweating" (367). In James's view, Louise cannot occupy the role of a consumer but remains a

producer, a laborer, whose performance of a city girl necessarily fails in a way that testifies to her own natural authenticity.

Writing in the third person, Agee similarly describes Paralee's dress, noting that while it also seems to resemble the dresses "which middle class girls of her age wear in town," this resemblance does not hold up under scrutiny (283). While James first locates these telling differences in the colors of the dress, they actually emerge in the way the dress contradicts what he sees as Paralee's inherent physical characteristics. At the same time, her expectant hopefulness contrasts poignantly with the inevitable failure of her disguise, so that her performance serves as a warning to anyone who wants to "climb" in society, and James admits that the dress almost looks "stolen" on her (284). In both cases, the girls' dresses appear to be interesting disguises even as the girls' performances remain incomplete and fail. Their performances, then, are like those of Agee's reporter, James. Just as James cannot decide whether the imperfections in the girls' performances are tragic deficiencies or endearing marks of salvation from the corruptions of the marketplace and the limitations of class, Agee cannot decide on how to evaluate James and indeed his own efforts in composing *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* Agee tries to shape the text as a beautiful artifact, yet he does not want it to be simply received as an artifact that meets middle-class demands for clarity and cohesion or critical demands for formal originality. Likewise, James is torn between claiming to succeed in his identification with his subjects and documenting his successive failures as a reporter who vacillates between two worlds. Wanting to produce a text that "came straight out of the earth," Agee is not sure if he has "stolen" his text from the farmers through the vantage of his cosmopolitan consciousness.

Although Agee strives to appreciate and even honor the tenant farmers and their way of life, his descriptions of the girls' dresses reveal the implicit social anxieties behind his reporting and cultural evaluations. In advocating the beauty and presumed purity of the tenants' culture, he sidesteps any extended discussion of racial equality and equivocates about whether social "climbing" is desirable. This apparent reification of social categories is not simply elitist, however, since it is a commentary on the sense of loss James experiences from his dual perspective of country and city, past and present, and his awareness of the seemingly irreconcilable economic and social divisions of his times. In the midst of a massive economic crisis brought about largely by a lack of consumption, Agee tries to interpret commodities as cultural artifacts from a strictly producer's perspective, but his reporter's identity is too thoroughly enmeshed in an urban, consumer culture and a modernist response to the effects of mass production to make this interpretation effective

or comprehensive. Just as Paralee's body betrays the way her performance is at once incomplete and excessive, James's embodied desires and perceptions and his seemingly endless descriptions and interpretations ultimately reveal Agee's imperfect performance. While Agee has James try to guide his audience's reactions, as Paralee does, like her, it is the complexity of his performance rather than its unqualified success that is so striking and meaningful.

Agee's focus on the way James reads individual artifacts stands in contrast to the somewhat similar ways in which Hurston shapes *Mules and Men* through her reporter, Zora. The stories and rituals that Zora gathers are collectively shaped and set against the backdrop of an immediate, discerning public, and Zora's own performances and contributions are similarly evaluated by her subjects. These differences are evident in comparing James's descriptions of Paralee's flamboyant dress with the way Zora presents the reception of one of her own dresses. When Zora is at the workers' party I previously described, she is finally told that her apparent wealth has aroused suspicions and resulted in her cold reception at the work camp. Closely observing the women around her, she "mentally cursed the $12.74 dress from Macy's that I had on among all the $1.98 mail-order dresses." As she realizes that some of the women are even wearing homemade aprons and hats, she admits that her appearance is different and resolves to correct that as soon as possible (66). Clearly, as a trained anthropologist, Hurston would have noticed such distinctions without needing someone to point them out to her. However, by calling attention to Zora's apparent surprise, Hurston again reminds readers that Zora is both different from her subjects in her cosmopolitan sophistication and formal education and different from her readers in her ability to fit in with her subjects by simply changing her clothes. As Hemenway notes, Zora's reaction to the dress recalls the chemise in the introduction and suggests that she "saw things from a dual perspective, both from within the community and from without" (167). Hemenway adds that Hurston's technique, which "falls somewhere between scientific reporting and personal journalism," "produces a repeated pattern of experience. Zora becomes a member of each community she encounters, accepted by the virtue of race and her sympathy with communal ways" (195). As I argued above, race does not in fact guarantee Zora's acceptance, but it does form part of her performances, and in these performances, Zora ultimately achieves the success that eludes James, Louise, and Paralee.

While Zora's return to the South also marks the return of an individual trained in reading cultural artifacts and consumer goods to scenes of production, she does not read such artifacts in solitude, as James does. Like James, her readings come to show how communities based on production

and consumption are in reality linked, but she does so by observing how her subjects negotiate these two realms in their public performances and by participating in such performances herself. Though Zora's innocence of the effects of her Macy's dress in the turpentine camp seems feigned, workers on the job are not themselves unaware of how to read mass produced commodities, as their evaluations of Zora's appearance, ownership of "$1.98 mail-order dresses," and knowledge of the Sears and Roebuck catalogue make clear (28). While Agee shows an implicit parallel between his reporter's and his subjects' performances, his narrow focus on James's consciousness suggests that only James is capable of producing subtle cultural readings. Though James sees both himself and his subjects necessarily failing in their performances, this failure is measured by his standards, not his subjects'. Zora's subjects, on the other hand, read her performance in ways similar to how she reads theirs; since they are shown to be fully capable of forming their own opinions, Zora takes account of these opinions in forming her own.

As Zora participates in the production and transmission of folk materials, Hurston, like other writers of the 1930s, convincingly describes abstract, often dehumanizing, social and economic trends by showing how they are experienced by an individual reporter committed to the idea of communal culture (Susman 172). While Hurston depicts Zora as a means of establishing her own authority as a writer, she also shows how Zora "celebrates the art of the community" (Hemenway 166). Even Hurston's emphasis on Zora's creative powers can be seen as in keeping with the accepted rules of the folk stories she preserves, since her subjects value a storyteller's playfulness in stretching the truth and displaying individual creativity. For example, in the glossary of *Mules and Men* Hurston notes that the devil in black folk stories is often associated with black storytellers, while the God who is tricked and defeated is associated with the "supposedly impregnable white masters" (230). The way Hurston subtly plays with the expectations of her audience suggests that she may be following the black singers, storytellers, and hoodoo practitioners in *Mules and Men* in similarly establishing her authority beyond the limits of racist oppression.

At the beginning of the "Folk Tales" section (11) and again at the beginning of the "Hoodoo" section (176), Hurston shows Zora driving alone in her car and offering a genesis story, even before she arrives at her destination and begins to collect material. In arriving ready to listen yet with "her mouth exhausting like an automobile," like the woman in the song "Can't You Line It?," Zora does not try to deny her urban perspective but rather slowly transforms it as she performs along with her subjects. Though she initially seems

to accept the idea of a community largely untouched by the outside world, she ultimately demonstrates that the inescapable divisions within her reporter's identity signify in the context of a community that recognizes and incorporates similar divisions within itself. This is exemplified by the song "John Henry," which, like Zora, seems to develop and change as it crosses cultural boundaries. While underscoring the familiarity and prominence of "John Henry" by making it the first song in the appendix (233), Hurston seems to discount its value compared to her other folk materials. Early in the book (10–11) and then again in the glossary, Hurston clearly distinguishes the obviously more recent "John Henry" from the folklore hero "Jack" or "John" who figures prominently in older folk tales (230). While Zora introduces the verses of the song without comment into the text (59–60), Hurston's more distinctly academic language and judgment in the glossary and her repeated comparison of the song to its white counterpart, "Casey Jones," seem to downplay its importance. Noting that "John Henry" is similar to other work songs in being broadly performed, Hurston first summarizes John Henry's brave but deadly competition with the steam drill and then finishes her analysis of the song by noting that some verses seem to have been "interpolated from English ballads" (230).

The apparent lack of anthropological significance in this song parallels the apparent lack of anthropological knowledge displayed by Hurston's reporter, Zora. While this song seems at first to be not worth analyzing, Zora avoids any extended analysis throughout the body of the text. Likewise, the song's hybrid origins reflect Zora's similarly hybrid perspective and the hybrid nature of *Mules and Men* itself. Just as the song belies the idea of a pure, geographically insular and cohesive culture, Zora belies the possibility of reading culture from a single, immutable perspective; just as the song interpolates English ballads, *Mules and Men* interpolates some of the conventions of anthropological writing, such as footnotes, a glossary, and an appendix, into the immediate language and drama of the lying sessions and hoodoo rituals. Though it tells the story of increasing industrialization, "John Henry" also shows how a sense of presence and human interaction can redeem the alienating effects of a mechanized consumer culture, as the rhythm of the song comes directly from the work rhythm and breathing of the railroad workers (230).

Hurston, in shaping Zora as an anthropological reporter to be presented to a broad, popular audience, similarly participates in the long revolution in which such cultural artifacts do not simply reflect increasing industrialization and standardization but provide the means by which individuals can articulate responses to these transformations and participate in the ongoing

development of particular, localized cultures. While the worker's provide the rhythm of "John Henry" and make the song their own, Zora's embodied presence in the text, her divided perspective, and her participation in making folklore all act to blur distinctions between cultures of production and consumption. In fact, "John Henry" actually comes to represent Zora's clearest connection with the workers she is describing and her most obvious form of participation in their lives and culture; despite Hurston's comments, it is in fact one of the most significant artifacts in the text. At the party in which Zora proves her understanding of featherbed laughter, her singing of "John Henry" fully convinces everyone that she belongs to their community, so that by the time she finishes the song she is confident that she is "in the inner circle." While noting that her first hurdle had been to prove to the workers that she was not a representative of the law, she acknowledges that she still had "to prove that I was their kind." Tellingly, she admits, "'John Henry' got me over my second hurdle" (67).

Interestingly, after Zora begins to share in the singing of this song, she also begins to share her car with the workers. After this successful performance, she notes that "my car was everybody's car" and that she and her new friends sang "'John Henry' wherever we appeared" (67–68). As their performances make Zora more familiar and accepted, she confides in her subjects and openly reveals the anthropological purpose of her trip. Although initially surprised that someone would want to write down their "lies," Zora's subjects become convinced of the seriousness of her intent, and when she hosts "a lying contest," it yields many stories and also inspires people to approach her later with additional material (68). As a song derived in part from a culture outside the worker's world and as a means for Zora to enter this world, "John Henry" suggests an interesting parallel between the way Hurston, the writer, succeeds with her audiences of readers, and Zora, the anthropological reporter, succeeds with her audiences of spectators. While Agee shows that elements of urban consumer culture pull at his reporter's sense of identity and separate him from his subjects, Zora finds that emblems of urban, industrial intrusions, the car and "John Henry," become the means by which she openly collaborates with her subjects, penetrates their private lives, and succeeds as an ethnographic reporter in gathering folk material. In *Mules and Men,* Zora's performances take into account the expectations of her immediate audience and Hurston's distant readers, and her car, her language, and her singing of John Henry all show that she can belong as an insider without eliminating the way her outside experiences inform her own perspective. Even as "John Henry" comes to hold a special place in Zora's individual performance, it illustrates how Hurston goes beyond fixed

cultural values and the limits of her reporter's individual perspective. Hurston emphasizes that Zora, despite her central role, is not the only one who evaluates or creates cultural artifacts: Just as she shares her car, she also shares the stage. The workers on the job do not simply desire consumer goods, aspire to urban values, or shape artifacts in seeking their own survival—they consciously produce their own cultural artifacts and rituals and contribute directly to Hurston's text. Aware of Zora's project, some remind her to give them credit for their lies (49–50), while others, like Big Sweet, urge her on to success (171). By creating a reporter who responds to her subjects and gives voice to their contributions, Zora emerges as more than just an observer and becomes a catalyst, a performer, an editor of others, and she develops her authority both within the context of her subjects' lives and in relation to the expectations of her readers.

In emphasizing the way their individual reporters interact with their subjects and offer their own interpretations within *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Mules and Men,* Agee and Hurston reveal the ways the fissures within their reporters' identities and within the texts themselves correspond to the tensions of their own time. In returning home to report on supposedly untouched cultures, James and Zora end up undermining the idea that such isolation is possible in modern America. Instead, they reveal how their own identities as reporters and the texts they structure and shape are implicated in broader social contexts, just as the communities they describe are implicated in the troubled economic and social fabric of the nation as a whole. While Agee and Hurston address these issues through their reporters' complex identities, the performances of these reporters provide their own terms of critique as well. The frustrations and failures James experiences grow in part from memories of childhood that cannot be fully recovered or redeemed from across the intervening years of education and experience, but they are also a commentary on social boundaries that are as difficult to ignore or overcome as the passage of time itself. While James's acts of interpretation arise from Agee's formal education, employment with *Fortune,* understanding of his father's family, and aspirations as a modernist literary rebel, they also reflect anxieties about an increasingly fluid and transient society and the growth of a consumer culture in which advertising is required to stimulate demand even as it seems to create desires apart from individual lives and needs.[30] Together, these factors threaten to erase the beauty found within lives based on the daily pressures of survival. Even as Agee values personal acts of interpretation and contemplation, James's own halting performance, enacted in the difficult language and structure of the text, distinguishes Agee from the limited perspective of many other

liberal writers of the 1930s. While *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* often falters as an "anti-journalistic manifesto" or diatribe against middle-class complacency, it effectively challenges readers by suggesting that all personal sympathies and social concerns are inherently partial and incomplete. If James's performance sometimes misses the mark and falls victim to simplistic assumptions, his experiences and observations are reminders that all readings must take account of "what conditioned and produced" both the cultural artifact, the text in question, and the perspective of the reader. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* then, is a reminder that "objective" facts are limited by the particular perspectives of individual reporters, but it also shows that acknowledging these limits may be the best way to negotiate different values and expectations.

Agee's "failure" to convey a singular sense of personal or communal identity is no failure at all for Hurston. As Hurston transforms the terms of her own education in her portrayal of Zora, she also transforms her criteria for evaluating cultural artifacts, finding that the state of being in-between can actually provide a common basis for shared experience and cultural production. Just as the cross-cultural song "John Henry" sparks meaningful collective interaction, so, too, does Zora's presence spark the telling of folklore, singing of songs, and enactment of rituals. In the midst of the Great Depression, Agee's reporter reads a penciled autograph and a handprint in the context of the empty advertising that surrounds it, and he finds these connections among fragile individuals and powerful economic and social categories to be necessary to his reading but disturbing in their implications. Rather than succumb to externally defined social categories, Hurston gradually changes the rules by which her individual reporter is connected to a larger social context. The ability of the workers to sing "John Henry" to the rhythm of their breathing shows they produce not only commodities to be consumed elsewhere but also a significant culture of their own. In examining a responsive, communal audience with its own ability to make and interpret cultural artifacts, Hurston's reporter shows how a community can adapt to changing means of production and incorporate elements from across existing social and economic boundaries, and her divided perspective similarly opens up possibilities for shared transformation and growth. While James contemplates the limits of his individual consciousness, Zora jumps on a table, sings the song of a steel driving man, and drives away in a car with her fellow performers. She accepts the fact that as a reporter she necessarily participates in the modernizing process and shows how this process makes new means of representation and new ideas of community possible in such reports as her own.

Unlike the other fictional texts I am considering in this study, these two nonfiction works have explicit subjects that give a particular focus to the way Agee and Hurston construct their reporter figures. However, rather than narrowing the significance of either *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* or *Mules and Men,* these reporters offer different models of identity and interpretation that are grounded more broadly in some of the key issues of the Great Depression. Addressing the economic crisis, Agee acknowledges a corresponding crisis of representation through the difficulties of his narrator-reporter. Unable to identify fully with his subjects or his work for *Fortune,* Agee dramatizes the challenges of representing the lives of tenant farmers and the physical labor that is both necessary and invisible to urban centers of modernity. While Hurston, like Agee, begins by apparently bracketing off issues of race and class and assuming that the culture of the subjects she is describing is about to disappear, she comes to challenge existing racial divisions and describe a culture that is actually in an ongoing process of development. As Hurston describes Zora's expedition among different groups of southern workers, she shows that a culture must adapt and respond to external influences in order to survive, and the divisions inherent in Zora's perspective reflect the means by which this process of adaptation is collectively shared and celebrated. While Agee suggests that the tenant farmers cannot recognize the beauty of their own lives, Hurston's subjects not only recognize such beauty but consciously seek it out, and their conceptions of beauty inform their own evaluations of others. Beginning with surprisingly similar backgrounds and goals, Agee and Hurston thus exemplify different aspects of the committed reporting of the 1930s: They demonstrate the impossibility of entirely overcoming or effacing economic and social boundaries in a single performance or representation, but they reveal the possibilities that arise when such boundaries are examined as an opening, a space where meaningful responses and adaptations can occur.

Chapter Five

Reporting on the New Dawn of Cold-War Culture in Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*

> There,
> The apocalyptic blaze of
> New dawn
> Bursts.
> Temperature at heart of fireball:
> 50,000,000 degrees centigrade.
> Hiroshima Time: 8:16 A.M., August, 6, 1945.
>
> from Robert Penn Warren's "New Dawn" (1983)[1]

Robert Penn Warren's third and best-known novel, *All the King's Men* (1946), provides a fitting text to examine at the end of this study. Revised during the closing months of World War II, *All the King's Men* features as its narrator a one-time reporter, Jack Burden, who bears the "burden" of writing history, examines contemporary politics, and suggests a new conception of identity and culture at the new dawn of the Cold War. While Jack assumes different roles throughout the text, his work as a journalist and responses to journalism link his specific experiences to a wider network of different kinds of communication. Like "James" in James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) and "Zora" in Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men* (1935), Jack is at once a reporter and a reader of different kinds of cultural texts, and he offers his own readings of political campaigns, newspaper policies, and photographic images. Furthermore, Jack's similarly fractured identity serves to structure the intricate plot and complex chronology of Warren's novel, as is particularly evident in the novel's introduction and conclusion, both of which Warren revised heavily at the end of his writing process. In these two section of the novel, Jack's surprising transformations—first, from a nameless

reporter into a socially situated, hard-boiled political operative, and then into a home-bound husband—reflect the momentous historical events and dramatic cultural divisions that were unfolding as Warren composed his novel from 1939 to 1945.

As Joseph Blotner recounts in his biography of Warren, by August 6, 1945, when "the new dawn" burst, Warren had essentially completed a draft of *All the King's Men,* but at the urging of his editor at Harcourt, Brace, Lambert Davis, he revised the novel again in November 1945. He cut quite a bit of introductory material and opened the novel on a more ominous note, and he drastically changed the ending by adding a marriage after the deaths of three of the main characters (Blotner 221).[2] Though the novel makes intricate loops back into time, the action in the novel ends in 1939, the year in which Warren began seriously working on the novel while in Italy. As is well known, the "King" of the title, Willie Stark, is based primarily on Huey Long, who Warren had seen in action firsthand in 1934 while he was a professor at Louisiana State University (Blotner 150). Since Warren worked on the play that would become *All the King's Men, Proud Flesh,* while in Italy on a Guggenheim grant in 1939 and 1940, (Blotner 179–181), it seems likely that Mussolini also inflects his portrayal of Willie.[3] While often described as a "southern," "political," or "historical" novel, *All the King's Men,* to be appreciated in all its complexity, needs to be seen as more broadly reflecting the cultural shifts brought about by the end of the Great Depression and World War II. In my reading, the way the novel depicts these shifts points ahead to the incipient Cold War culture of the United States, and *All the King's Men* can rightly be taken as the first significant American novel of the Cold War. All of these issues emerge most dramatically in the way that Warren depicts his narrator-reporter, Jack Burden, and the way that Jack, as the imputed author of the novel, reflects on his own development and different conceptions of culture and history. As I demonstrate, the revised introduction, which is best read back through the revised conclusion of the novel, suggests Warren's concern with an understanding of identity that seems to be very much in flux, while the revised conclusion itself suggests how this open-ended consideration of identity would come to be narrowly defined and contained in the Cold War nuclear family.

In the conclusion of the novel, Jack tells his mother not to go to Europe because of the impending war (430), and Jack's abrupt and unanticipated transformation in this section, from a reporter to a husband, parallels the abrupt ways that the Great Depression led into World War II and then almost directly into the Cold War. As Jack traces the rise and fall of Willie Stark, from naïve "Cousin Willie" to Machiavellian governor and proto-fascist "Boss" of an unnamed southern state, he uses his inside access as the

"newspaper fellow who is sort of a secretary to Willie" (250) to consider the mystery of Willie's success, the sources of his power as a leader, and the meaning of his startling assassination; in doing so, he also recounts his own story as the narrator and tries to make sense of the past from the other side of a series of violent experiences and shocks. In this way, Jack's experience parallels Warren's own in finishing the novel from the other side of the war. As a "newspaper fellow" and kind of political secretary, Jack appears throughout most of the novel as the kind of investigator typical in Depression-era fiction, and he examines the sordid details of life in a hard-boiled language that is often metaphorical, hyperbolic, and philosophical.[4] However, Jack differs from the typical hard-boiled investigator in that he is not really an isolated loner; his work and sense of identity develop in the context of his relationships with political insiders, first with his neighbors as a youth, Judge Irwin and Governor Stanton, and later with Willie.

Through these relationships, Jack explores the connections between public history and personal memory. As a reporter and former history student, he is aware of how history appears to the public, while as a political insider with his own personal relationships with political figures, he is aware of the human drama behind the headlines and public record. The chronologically fragmented structure of the novel, which reflects the recursive process of making meaning from memory, is largely focused on the way Jack recounts and analyzes Willie's political ascent. In the midst of the Depression, Willie promises to lead the people of his state from economic deprivation through his combative attack on the established order, but his assassination at the hand of Adam Stanton, Jack's friend since childhood, at a moment when he is reconsidering his methods, leaves the question of his legacy unresolved. While the historical details of Long's assassination, which had occurred in 1935, figure prominently in early drafts of the novel, the published version casts Willie's assassination more broadly in the contemporary context of fascism and the nuclear threat and underscores how Willie's story becomes Jack's story as well.[5] For Jack, Willie's death is as transformative as his life: It serves as the symbolic eruption that leads him to seek a different understanding of history and ultimately a new way of life.[6]

The conclusion of the novel presents Jack's seemingly unanticipated marriage to Adam's sister, Anne Stanton, and takes on a striking change of tone. However, it does not so much mar the novel's otherwise tragic form as point to a parallel between the structure of the novel and contemporary historical and cultural changes. The conclusion serves as a response to the threats of fascism and the atomic bomb and prefigures the similar responses that the nation as a whole would make. While the conclusion seems to be separate from the rest of the novel, it is from exactly such a position of

separateness that Jack redefines his understanding of history and comes to terms with his own memories, realizing that history is not found simply in the accumulation of objective, inevitable facts but in the telling of different stories and the pressing demands of different beliefs.[7] Like other important works of the early Cold War period, *All the King's Men* can be seen as celebrating American conceptions of freedom and individualism while paradoxically presenting a new cultural logic that limits the possibilities of the individual within various containment strategies, including an unquestioned faith in the patriarchal family and an emphasis on political and cultural interpretations that point towards consensus rather than confrontation. Similarly, while Warren shows a greater acceptance of the role of individual needs and desires in interpreting history, the conclusion works against the relativism of the introduction and suggests that a measure of certainty and stability are necessary to make such acts of interpretation possible and to understand the position of the individual subject.

The marked differences between the introduction and the conclusion can be traced through Warren's direct and indirect references to the dawning nuclear age and features of an incipient Cold War culture. For example, in his revised conclusion Warren describes two key characters, Adam and Willie, in absolute terms that prefigure the sharply opposed ideologies of the two superpowers during the Cold War and the corresponding threat of "mutually assured destruction." In summarizing their relationship after their deaths, Jack identifies Adam as "the man of ideas" and Willie as "the man of fact" and observes that, as representatives of "the terrible division of their age," they were "doomed to destroy each other" (436). Two key images directly connect this charged, paired relationship with the atomic bomb. In considering the origins of the novel's climatic acts of violence, Jack identifies the chain reaction as beginning with a poor man named Marvin Frey. When he blackmails Willie, claiming that Willie's son, Tom, has gotten his daughter pregnant, he sets in motion the complex reactions that ultimately lead to the deaths of Willie, Adam, and Irwin. Significantly, Jack describes Marvin as "that unique agglomeration of atomic energy known as Marvin Frey" (331). This "atomic energy" ultimately reaches Adam Stanton, who is described as having the force of "an atom busting machine" (212). When the atom meets the atom busting machine, the result is a series of "explosions"—Irwin's suicide, Adam's assassination of Willie, and Willie's henchman gunning down Adam. As I am arguing, the revised introduction of the novel presents an open-ended conception of identity in which individual possibilities are overshadowed by the threat of these devastating reactions, while the revised conclusion reflects how Jack comes to contain such threats, just as Warren's novel

itself reflects the threats of its time and is in part an effort to respond to the two atomic explosions of August 1945.

In the way Jack narrates the story and analyzes its significance, he is always drawing on his work as a journalist, and in fact, he identifies himself as a reporter working for the *Chronicle* long before he identifies himself by name (13). In 1936, the year in which the main action of the novel begins, Jack is Willie's right-hand man—a press agent, researcher, detective, intermediary, and general political operative—and he is able to take on these different aspects of his work because of his earlier training as a journalist and, before that, his training as a graduate student working towards his Ph.D. in history at the state university. Jack quit work on his dissertation because of his inability to understand the subject of his historical research, the antebellum figure, Cass Mastern, his supposed great-uncle (160), and he later quit work on the *Chronicle* because of the trouble that arises when he endorses the political upstart Willie Stark and violates the unofficial but unbending political slant of the newspaper (99). Even after Willie hires him, Jack remains known to the other characters as a "newspaper fellow," and since the story he narrates seems to come directly from the records he kept during his years working for Willie (20), he appears to be the typical journalist using material from his reporting to write his first novel.

The novel begins, like most hard-boiled detective stories, after a mysterious death has already occurred, and by the end of the first chapter readers learn that Irwin, Adam, and Willie have already died. Later, Jack begins to describe his investigations into Judge Irwin's past by calling it "the 'Case of the Upright Judge'" (191), and as he goes on to list some of the typical clues from detective novels, he claims that researchers like himself believe in their power to define the lives of the dead and uncover the truth (228). The ideas Jack suggests here are more fully explored in the conclusion, as he comes to accept that the truth of the past is actually based on a more contingent will to believe and the motives and needs of particular individuals. In other words, Jack recognizes the past is constructed in the present not simply from the objective accumulation of clues but from the way certain clues are chosen and arranged into a narrative. However, in order for him to reach this point, he first needs to recognize how he has participated in the making of history himself and find a perspective from which he feels safe from its immediate claims and threats.

Interestingly, Jack's initial, often caustic descriptions of history as an objective chain of events that simply needs to be uncovered and recorded runs completely contrary to his experience as a newspaperman. From the beginning of the novel, he provides an inside view of how the press manipulates

what gets reported and corrects, in effect, the daily recording of history. In the first chapter, he describes his relationship with Tiny Duffy in terms of the policies of the *Chronicle:* Since Jack works for the *Chronicle,* and since the paper supports the governor of the time, Joe Harrison, with whom Duffy is connected, Duffy assumes that he and Jack share similar interests and is disposed to be friendly with him (13). Throughout the novel, Jack continues to reveal the biases of the newspapers and corrects them as he shares his story. In this way, he is like Jake Barnes in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) in that his work as a journalist adds to his credibility as a narrator. Like Jake, he gains readers' trust by acting as their representative and by sharing the important facts that are not fit to print. For example, in an early, crucial scene, Jack learns that support for Willie's first bid for governor comes from one of his opponents and that he is being set up in order to split the rural vote. Jack gets this inside scoop from an acquaintance, the political strategist Sadie Burke. In reminding her that she can trust him to know what to put into his newspaper articles and what to keep out (74), he implicitly makes a distinction about what he writes as a reporter and the more complete picture he gives his readers as the narrator and implied author of the novel. Jack, then, does more than fulfill the journalist's duty to expose the corruptions and excesses of government: As the readers' representative, he can be seen as acting as a symbolic legislator mediating between the sometimes extreme ideals of the executive and judicial branches of government, as represented by two of his important father figures, Governor Willie Stark and Judge Irwin.

Despite commenting on the biases of the press, Jack nonetheless tries to maintain the fiction that as a reporter he is simply a neutral observer. In his work for Willie, he clings to his assumptions about objective journalism by continuing to believe that in his work he is simply uncovering and reporting facts. As Jonathan S. Cullick notes in *Making History: The Biographical Narratives of Robert Penn Warren* (2000), Jack, despite evidence to the contrary, continues to suggest "that the meaning of history was in the facts, absolute and isolated from subjective consciousness" (120). Willie's hard-boiled view that there is inevitably something compromising to be found in everyone's past may account for why Jack works for Willie rather than finding another job with a newspaper (191). Though Willie manipulates the media and has the support of some newspapers, he seems more objective than the press in acknowledging the realities of corruption and more forthright in using this knowledge to try to improve the lives of a broad range of constituents, even as he steadfastly holds onto power himself. It is only after Willie, Adam, and Irwin are dead that Jack is able to acknowledge that Willie's view is just one

possible narrative and recognize the extent to which he is an active participant in shaping events and constructing historical narratives himself. Only then does he realize "that the facts of history are meaningless until they are ordered into a narrative by a shaping consciousness" (Cullick 120). However, as I am arguing, Jack is able to make this acknowledgement in the conclusion of the novel because he thinks that he is safe from the consequences of history in the security of the home. While as a reporter Jack seems to renounce personal desires and critique social institutions from an objective perspective, he ultimately foregrounds the importance of his personal desires and subjective perspective, and he symbolically reconciles himself to social institutions when he marries Anne in the conclusion of the novel.

These seemingly drastic changes are in keeping with the cultural attitudes of the time and the turn towards the family and polarized gender roles that began to take shape during the war. Given the association of journalism with the male public sphere of politics, it is not surprising that in popular portrayals changing conceptions of gender were often linked to depictions of the work of the reporter, as Elaine Tyler May shows in her examination of several movies from the era. For example, in the popular movie *His Girl Friday* (1940), a woman reporter, Hildegard "Hildy" Johnson, decides to remarry her ex-husband, her boss at the newspaper, after expressing her hope that they "will be able to combine their fast-paced careers with serene domesticity" (May 46). Interestingly, in the original version of the movie, *Front Page* (1931), the character Hildy Johnson is a man—Hildebrand. Though much of the dialogue actually remains the same in the remake, *His Girl Friday,* like *All the King's Men,* adds a marriage plot to the original story and similarly suggests the importance of the family and traditional gender roles. Likewise, another popular movie of the time, *Penny Serenade* (1941), which like *His Girl Friday,* stars Cary Grant, clearly divides work from the home and portrays starkly defined gender roles. The movie "begins with Roger (Cary Grant), the restless newspaperman, wooing Julie (Irene Dunn), the young working woman" (May 143). When Roger marries Julie and they adopt a child, the movie effectively "introduced the new theme of fatherhood" by erasing depictions of work: "Once the child arrives, gone from the screen are the whirring presses and the impressive headlines emerging from the workplace," and in their place appear images of domestic harmony (May 145). In retrospect, it may not be surprising that the women in the these two movies from the early 1940s turn from the workplace towards domestic roles, but it is interesting to note that the men in both movies also accept that their identities will ultimately be defined by their role as husbands rather than by their work as journalists.

Like the reporters in these later two movies, Jack finally turns from journalistic and political work to the role of husband and the sanctity of the home. Initially, such a conclusion seems unlikely given Jack's strong identification with his work, his attitude towards his first wife, his repeated descriptions of Anne, his future bride, as distant and aging, and his acceptance of hard-boiled gender stereotypes. For example, one of the few times he mentions his first wife, Lois, Jack describes her with the fantastically hyperbolic, misogynistic metaphors of hard-boiled fiction; she is an as an alluring yet ultimately threatening woman who engulfs him with her insatiable sexual desires (304). A bit later in the novel, Jack describes Lucy Stark, Willie's wife, in contrasting terms as matronly yet virginal—"the United States Madonna" (334). As Willie puts his work, ambitions, and mistresses ahead of his family, Lucy gives up living in the governor's mansion and moves to a country house, and when Jack visits her he describes the house itself as looking like a woman resting in between chores (333). While Jack found married life to be stifling, he finds Lucy's housekeeping and appearance appealing as expressions of a maternal domesticity to be admired from a distance. However, for Jack, Lucy is no more real than Lois; both are merely images to him. While he claims that Lucy's face could be revered as a national emblem of femininity, he admits that faces like hers have already been exploited in advertisements for home goods (334). Though Jack's descriptions of women as femme fatales and Madonnas are clearly drawn from hard-boiled stereotypes, his changing readings of images of domesticity come to provide an important context for understanding the development of his character in relation to the cultural transformations of the time.

Jack makes his observations about Lucy and her home when she summons Jack to tell her what is going on with her and Willie's son, Tom. Lucy is shocked to find that the line between the family and politics has been blurred when Willie's political enemies take advantage of Tom's indiscretions (335). While Jack admires Lucy's home and her desire to keep her home life outside of politics, Jack's work as a reporter and political operative force him to acknowledge that the image of the home is often manipulated for political ends. In the first chapter, after Willie and his entourage arrive at Willie's father's house, Jack notes all of the home improvements Willie has bought for his father and realizes that he avoids anything that might interfere with his political image. For example, Willie does not have his father's house painted, since that might cause some envy on the part of the neighbors and would certainly lower the value of the house as a symbol of his humble roots. On the other hand, he does put in running water and an indoor bathroom, since voters cannot see such improvements or dwell on what they might

mean about Willie's new place in the world (23). Later in the novel, after Lucy moves out to the farm, Willie continues to use the image of the home as a source of political capital. He occasionally visits Lucy to remind voters of his family life and rural background, and Jack describes how "the administration papers" cooperate with his intentions by printing "photographs of him standing with his wife and kid in front of a hen yard." In his role as inside reporter and political analyst, Jack comments specifically on how the chickens add the perfect touch, providing the proper "homey atmosphere" to impress Willie's constituents (156).

While the newspapers present these gendered political images, Jack interprets them and connects them to particular political views. Just as he understands how the home can be presented to the public to reap political benefits, so, too, is he sure that the average voter, whom he assumes is male, willingly participates in the construction of the domestic image while being aware that it is largely an illusion. He argues that these voters accept the idea of Willie having both a matronly wife and an attractive mistress as long as he maintains the image of his family. However, Jack claims that the voter would not accept a divorce because that would take away the reassuring image that reflects the voter's own image of himself and his family (328). Though at this point Jack is not yet willingly to concede that such beliefs shape the narratives of history, he is aware from his work as a reporter that they do shape perceptions and that even seemingly "objective" images are staged and framed. In fact, from the beginning of the novel, Jack helps to create Willie's public persona and interprets images constructed for the newspaper, even anticipating likely captions for them (327), so that the objectivity he seems to claim for writing journalism and recording history are not borne out by his own reporting or participation in Willie's campaigns. For example, in the first chapter, Jack is following along at Willie's father's house when a photographer suggests that Willie be photographed with his old dog, Buck, on the porch, and Jack mocks the creativity of the newspaper photographer's idea. Yet when they are done with the outdoor shots, they all move inside to Willie's old room to photograph him with a book in the place where he studied law and made his start in the world, and Jack acknowledges with self-deprecating mockery that this shot was his own idea (27).

All of this is told retrospectively, of course, and even at this early point in the novel Jack suggests that there is a distinction between the political image and the personal image, a distinction that he will finally work to resolve on his own terms in the conclusion of the novel. For the photographers and reporters under Jack's guidance, and presumably for the readers of newspapers who will see this photograph, Willie's room has a fixed

significance in space: It is a set piece representing, in the present, Willie's humble origins and inspiring example as a typically self-educated and self-made American man. Jack, however, sees the present image as it connects with the past and future, and his thoughts demonstrate how the room represents different versions of "now" depending on one's perspective. When they enter the room, Willie notes that the only thing missing is a bedpan or "thunder-mug," and this leads Jack to imagine Willie in the room years before and wonder what had really motivated him. In this case, the photographic image represents a single meaning for public consumption, but it cannot capture the changes that have occurred over time and the multiple meanings whose traces remain in the present, in Willie's current ambitions and relations. From the beginning, Jack recognizes this distinction between the image that is frozen on film and the image that develops in memory over time. Though Jack helps arrange Willie's image for the public photograph, here he values his own complex image of him more, and he leaves as the photographer prepares more shots (28).

As a reporter with access to how public images are constructed and as a hard-boiled narrator who shares his own interpretations and thoughts, Jack considers what the newspaper photograph cannot represent—personal memories and desires and the changes of time. In his historical study of Cass Mastern, the subject of his uncompleted history dissertation, and in the study of Willie Stark that he puts before readers, Jack explores an issue that Warren often returned to in his work, the connection between private motivations and public conduct. Ultimately, however, in his own life Jack separates public and private images and claims that private images are superior in offering interpretative plentitude and strengthening a sense of individual identity. For Jack, the most significant of his own private images is one of Anne lying on a beach under ominous storm clouds. This image, he recalls, originated one day in 1915 when he was swimming with her and Adam on a beach in his hometown of Burden's Landing. Though Anne was a bit younger than the two boys, they all were leaving childhood behind, and Jack speculates that it was on that day that he first recognized Anne, Adam, and even himself as unique individuals. In his reflections, he claims such images possess a rare kind of authenticity, a sense of meaning that does not fade but becomes more intense with the passage of time. Without such images, Jack states that life "would be nothing except an old piece of film," discarded and lost (118–119). Significant private images, unlike public photographs in the newspaper, are inseparable from the context of their creation and repeated acts of interpretation. They are not simply developed and forgotten at the end of the day but rather develop in conjunction with identity itself.

Later in the novel, Jack remembers the night he realized he was in love with Anne and the way the earlier image of her from that day at the beach had appeared in his mind. As Anne lies undressed before him, ready to have sex with him for the first time, he recalls how startled he was that this first image returned, since he thought that it had been lost when the feeling behind it "had exploded out into the whole universe" (277). As Jack wonders why he hesitated at that moment, he is still interpreting his image of her, and he again suggests that without such personally significant images life would be experienced as a series of discontinuous public images that are consumed and discarded according to the exigencies of external circumstances. In considering another image of Anne playing tennis, Jack further clarifies this point. Wondering if the ancient Greeks might have put Anne serving a tennis ball on a vase had they played tennis, he decides that they would not have depicted "the moment just before the stroke, before the explosion." Jack, though, is satisfied since he can thus keep this image of Anne all to himself (274). The language Jack uses to describe these two key images points precisely to the containment strategy that he assumes in the conclusion of the novel as he redeems his images of Anne by marrying her. While the significance of the first image had "exploded out into the whole universe," the significance of the second image is caught just "before the explosion." In both cases, Jack links the threat of cataclysmic explosions to the allure of female attraction, a typical Cold War representative strategy, as is obvious from the term "bombshell" being used to indicate an attractive woman (May 110). As the differences between these two images demonstrate, the destructive power of the female image can be contained if its meanings are constantly remembered and interpreted privately, though to ignore such an image is to allow it to explode "out into the whole universe."

When Jack later finds out that Anne is having an affair with Willie, his hard-boiled attitude cannot prevent him from being horrified, as Lucy is, to discover that the influence of politics intrudes even into his personal images and overshadows his private interpretations. Though he and Anne had not been close for some time before this, Jack states that he had always held onto his image of Anne until this moment, and he tries to escape his loss by fleeing west to California (270–271). As Jack compares his way of thinking about history at the time of this trip with his way of thinking about history as he looks back and narrates the story, he more clearly contrasts the image of Anne from the day at the beach with the image of her lying naked in his bed. He again remembers how, in that moment when the first image appeared over the second one and caused him to pause, he felt that the future would overwhelm and erase the past, since he had had not yet accepted what

he only later came to discover—"that we can keep the past only by having the future" (310). In the conclusion, Jack trades the newsroom and the governor's office for the security of the home, and he is finally able to recover these images and write history in this way, as a means of having the future. In other words, Jack can only judge his public life once he feels that he has a separate private life; he can only connect the past and the future when he feels safe from the dangers of history himself. Paradoxically, then, Jack can only report on history when he is no longer a reporter.

When he reaches California, Jack does not so much find the concluding chapter of history as he does a particular theory of history, the "Great Twitch" theory, which represents his initial attempt to articulate the connection between the interpretation of individual memories and the construction of public history. According to this theory, the individual is a biological machine with no free will and hence no real responsibility (435). Accordingly, history is not found in private motives, individual acts of interpretation, and meaningful narratives, but in the steady accumulation of objective facts. In light of this theory, Jack justifies his previous reporting work and simply considers his past as a pattern of twitches. Referring to himself in the third person, he decides that all those years ago Anne had simply been following her own biological twitches when she proclaimed her love for him (309), and now he is unable to think of Anne Stanton as anything but the label of her name (311). In recounting the events in the novel, Jack also offers another theory of history that seems to counter this theory of "the Great Twitch." Rather than seeing the present as determined in advance by the ineluctable logic of the past, he describes history as a giant web in which the present is the beginning of an endless string of reactions emanating into the future. As Jack wonders why he had not been able to understand Cass Mastern, he realizes Cass had come to accept this view of history in which each action touches upon the next without any loss of energy, so that the end of a deed is never known. In his journal, Cass ominously describes how his own betrayal of his friend, Duncan Trice, would "spread infinitely and with ever increasing power" (178) across this web until it caused a poisonous spider to strike (188–189). In the conclusion, Jack claims, "History is blind," but he begins to acknowledge the role of belief and individual perspective in the construction of history. He realizes that in looking back on his own story he must consider the ways in which Irwin, Willie, and Adam struggled to achieve something meaningful through their own experiences and choices (436).[8]

Though both of Jack's theories are potentially apocalyptic, the differences between the two have significant implications for how he reports history. The Great Twitch theory means all he needs to do is record the facts

that culminate inevitably in the present, while the web theory requires that he interpret the past with an eye to the future in order to contain its potential destructiveness. Jack finally comes, in effect, to favor the web theory, which, like the Cold War logic of mutually assured destruction, offers the possibility of endlessly deferring a final moment of accountability. By emphasizing the power of individual, shaping consciousness and ongoing personal acts of interpretation, the web theory is also in line with the kind of American individualism that was often promoted throughout the Cold War period. As Jack considers the past and his own significant images, he comes to see that as long as the image of the girl serving the tennis ball is held in his mind, time can be stopped right before the explosion, and he realizes that though no one knows the farthest ripple of history into the future, it is enough to know where, at the moment, one wants history to go and then construct history retrospectively by taking account of such contingent beliefs.

As Jack accepts the logic of this theory, he leaves behind his identity as a Depression-era reporter and political operative and accepts his own role in constructing history. Jack's reactions as a reporter and as a reader of the press measure these changes as well as the changes he makes in moving from the world of work into the seemingly more secure space of the home. Given common depictions of journalism, it is not surprising that Warren associates Jack's work for the newspaper with a pointedly masculine perspective and the depiction of gritty reality. Despite the fact that there were many successful female journalists in the first half of the twentieth-century, the image of the hard-boiled male reporter held sway in both popular fiction and critical discourse, and observers like William Dean Howells identified journalism as men's work and associated it with the standard of realism in literature (Robertson 30).[9] However, as the image of the hard-boiled male reporter was becoming even more prominent in fiction and film, another medium, the illustrated magazine, was gaining in popularity through its promotion of models of domesticity and femininity, as Jack suggests in describing Lucy as a perfect advertisement for the "Madonna" of the home.

As *All the King's Men* unfolds, Jack is first identified as writing for the newspaper and then later identified as a reader of illustrated magazines, and this transition can be seen as a response to the marked differences between pulp publications and "slick" magazines evident at the time. As Sean McCann demonstrates in *Gumshoe America: Hard-Boiled Crime Fiction and the Rise and Fall of New Deal Liberalism* (2000), the pulps, which were obviously printed on cheap paper, contained very few advertisements or photographs, and relied on subscription and newsstand sales, were largely perceived as a male domain outside of the direct forces of the marketplace (48–49), while the slick maga-

zines, which were printed on high quality paper, featured many illustrations and photographs, and relied primarily on advertising sales, were aimed mostly at females as consumers in the marketplace (51). Most of the ambitious hard-boiled writers of this era began their careers writing for pulp magazines and later found themselves pulled between the respectability and cultural authority offered by literary and academic readers, who were perceived as being mostly male, and the immense market power offered by the magazines aimed at female readers.[10] While I describe in my first chapter how Willa Cather dealt with conflicting pressures in trying to achieve a kind of "popular modernism," hard-boiled writers faced similar issues in navigating between the seemingly contradictory rewards of critical recognition and popular success. The distinctions in authority and taste evident in the contrast between the "pulps" and "slicks" are clearly important for Warren's hard-boiled narrator, and Jack's increasing acceptance of picture magazines measures a change in his attitude towards women, the family, and mainstream culture. His ultimate acceptance of slick magazines allows him to redeem his private images of Anne by contextualizing them in the terms offered by such magazines rather than in the terms offered by the pulp newspapers which inform his language and values until the conclusion of novel.

While Jack's hard-boiled taste is first associated with his work on the *Chronicle,* Jack's first wife, Lois, and her friends clearly use slick magazines as a guide to consumer culture, much to Jack's disgust.[11] In acknowledging their hierarchy of taste, he describes how Lois and her friends "read *Vanity Fair* or *Harper's Bazaar* (according to sex, and some read both) and *Smart Set,* and they quoted Dorothy Parker" (305). Though Jack at this point suggests that some men—certainly not him, of course—might read some kinds of slick magazines, his sarcastic aside suggests quite clearly that he perceives these types of publications as undermining heterosexual, masculine identity. In his consideration of the reading habits of Lois and her friends, Jack again emphasizes how he finds an overtly sexual feminine identity to be threatening. Lois seems to get many of her ideas about sexuality from these magazines, and she liked to tell all of her friends that she and Jack "are perfectly adjusted sexually" (303). This language of "adjustment" prefigures the immensely popular psychology books of the postwar period and the increasingly frank discussion of sexuality in women's magazines. According to May, the sexual morality of the 1950s strictly prohibited any mention of sex outside of marriage but at the same time directly addressed the importance of sexual adjustment for married couples:

> [U]nlike Victorian mothers who were expected to be reluctant sexual partners who tolerated sex for reproduction only, wives in the postwar

> era were recognized as sexual enthusiasts whose insistence on conjugal satisfaction would contribute to erotically charged marriages. Sexual containment—unlike sexual repression—would enhance family togetherness, which would keep both men and women happy at home and would, in turn, foster wholesome childbearing. (102–103)

In linking gender roles and picture magazines, Warren's novel also points ahead to the argument that Betty Friedan would make in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). In her influential contribution to the increasingly political analysis of gender, the home, and popular culture during the 1960s, Friedan traces the marked break from the relative freedom of women during the prewar years largely by analyzing how women's lives were represented and contained in illustrated magazines, such as those that Jack considers in *All the King's Men.*

In his relationships with women, Jack initially emphasizes his friendship with Sadie Burke, his friend and later his female counterpart in Willie's administration, and he favors her similarly hard-boiled attitude over the models of femininity he sees in Lois, Lucy Stark, and the illustrated magazines. Relatively late in the novel, when Tom Stark lies in a coma following a football injury, Jack sits in the waiting room of the hospital with Willie and Lucy. In the tense atmosphere of the room, he keeps flipping through the illustrated magazines, "looking at the pictures of girls in bathing suits and race horses and scenes of natural beauty and long files of erect, clean-faced youths in some kind of shirt or other lifting their arms with a salute and detective stories acted out in six photographs with the answer on the next page" (380). In Jack's view at the time, these picture magazines flatten reality and erase any meaningful sense of context; all of the images in the magazine—whether sexual, conventionally wholesome, vaguely fascist, or simply entertaining—seem similar in the way they are presented and presumably received (308). From the perspective of Jack's inside political knowledge and hard-boiled sensibilities as a reporter, these photographs seem to lack the complex sense of reality found in his own observations and the story he narrates. At this point, the picture magazines still represent a feminized domestic space that Jack finds to be artificial and apolitical, and he only flips through the pages to kill time.

Later in the novel, however, when he returns to the hospital to see if Willie will survive his gunshot wounds, he sees the world depicted in the picture magazines more favorably. After Lucy invites him to wait upstairs with her and her sister, he is glad to find himself in a safe domestic sphere, looking again at the picture magazines. Even he though he feels a bit uncomfortable

waiting there for the doctor's report, he decides that being with Lucy and looking through the picture magazines is better than waiting outside "with all the newshawks and politicos" (398). Following the deaths of Irwin and Adam, Jack has no desire to identify with those who share his occupation in reporting facts and directing politics. Though he has not yet embraced his own return to the home, he has begun to question the superiority of the male world of "newshawks and politicos" and taken a first step towards his acceptance of the picture magazines and the implicitly private, domestic world they represent.

Given the importance of Jack's work as a reporter and his early responses to the press, it is appropriate that his hard-boiled attitude definitively ends in the newspaper reading room of the library, a male space that nonetheless occupies an intermediate position between the public and the private spheres (418). Warren's description of the shabby reading room and the way the newspapers become a substitute for reality rather than a representation of it recalls the way Theodore Dreiser describes Hurstwood's decline in *Sister Carrie* (1900). Even as Hurstwood begins to spend his days in hotel lobbies looking out at the world through their windows and losing himself in the newspapers, Carrie begins to appear in the papers as she lives out her dream of becoming a successful actress. In this way, the newspaper becomes not only a means for representing events that relate to the community at large, but a means for constructing a new perception of reality which allows individuals to focus more exclusively on their own personal desires and fears.[12] However, Jack differs from Hurstwood and Carrie in that he not only appears in the papers and consumes them; he also helped produce news stories as a reporter for the *Chronicle* who took pride in his work (301–302) and as a kind of secretary for Willie who helped shape Willie's public image. When, after Willie's death, Jack turns to the newspapers and picture magazines as a reader, he begins to change the way he thinks about reporting the news and recording history, and eventually, he quits defining history through the facts he uncovers and reports and begins considering history as a constructed narrative or willed fiction. History, for him, is no longer the accumulation of facts or inevitable twitches in the nerves but a process of interpretation that must take a more thorough account of personal motivations and desires.

The change in Jack's perspective is clear from the way his last visit to a reading room differs from his earlier visits to such rooms while investigating Cass Mastern and later Judge Irwin. In trying to understand Cass and the love triangle that brought about his demise, he learns the name of Cass's lover, Annabelle Trice, by going through the Lexington newspapers of the

1850s. He contrasts the newspaper report of the accidental death of her husband, Duncan, with Cass's journal and his account of how Duncan committed suicide after finding out about his wife's infidelity (164). Here, Jack gets information from the newspapers to help him assemble history as an accurate accumulation of facts and again enhances this accuracy by including his own inside information. Later, in following Willie's orders and trying to find dirt on his old friend and neighbor, Judge Irwin, Jack goes to Savannah to investigate Irwin's deceased second wife. Though Jack does not know anything at all about her since she was a homebound invalid when he was a child, he finds the information he needs "in the newspaper files of the public library" (216). Once again, he enhances printed information with his own investigations: After working through the newspaper files, he finds and interviews the elderly editor of the newspaper from the time when Irwin's wife had lived in Savannah (218). Through his investigations, Jack learns that Irwin became involved in a corrupt deal in order to solve his financial problems and that this led to the suicide of an innocent man. This all took place when Irwin was attorney general and Anne and Adam's father was governor, and Jack further discovers that Governor Stanton acted, without Irwin's knowledge, to cover up the truth for his friend (225–226). Though Jack might be tempted to follow Governor Stanton's example and keep these facts to himself to spare Irwin, as a "newspaper fellow" and politico who still believes in the objective truth he feels that he is not responsible for these facts and only obliged to assemble and report them (228).

When, some time after the death of Irwin, Adam, and Willie, Jack meets Sugar Boy O'Sheean, Willie's driver and henchman and Adam's killer, in the library's newspaper reading room, he no longer sees history as an inevitable chain of events to be simply uncovered and shared. Instead, he begins to accept that history is constructed on the basis of belief, and it is this realization that is reflected in the way he comes to view his work as a journalist and respond to the picture magazines. Jack could continue accepting that history is simply an immutable chain of events by telling Sugar Boy that Willie's assassination was instigated by Sadie and brought about by Tiny, the current governor. He knows that sharing this bit of information with Sugar Boy would undoubtedly lead him to murder Tiny out of his boundless loyalty to Willie, and Jack recognizes the perfect symmetry of such an action (420). Tiny triggered Willie's death by supplying Adam with information about Willie's affair with his sister, Anne, that he picked up from Sadie, and he can be killed in exactly the same way, through the consequences of the bits of information that Jack himself picked up from Sadie. In choosing not to share his information with Sugar Boy, Jack leaves behind his identity as a hard-boiled reporter

and realizes that history is more than reporting twitches—it is an act of interpretation made through individual choices and beliefs and the needs of the future.

Jack knows that his decision is more than an act of charity, since he denies Sugar Boy one last chance to feel that his life is meaningful. Jack speculates on Sugar Boy's future, thinking that he will either read about Sugar Boy's death in the newspaper or that Sugar Boy will continue his inevitable decline, sitting each day "in the newspaper room of the public library . . . bent over a picture magazine" (422). Jack clearly imagines Sugar Boy's future in terms of the dichotomy between the pulps and the slicks: His death will either be reported in the hard-boiled terms of the newspapers, or he will escape into the fantasy of domesticity portrayed in the picture magazines. Tellingly, however, Jack admits the possibility that hard-boiled reality may actually be "romantic" (422); like Hemingway's hard-boiled reporter, Jake Barnes, he has come to recognize the fictiveness of his own cynical posturing, his embrace of disillusion as the last illusion. As I show in Chapter Three, Jake, until the end of *The Sun Also Rises,* takes his wound to be a mark of professional, journalistic objectivity even as it actually involves him in the lives of his subjects and allows him to believe that his life might have been different. Jack similarly accepts the moment when he decided not to touch Anne as a kind of wound in his identity that seems to vouch for his status as an objective reporter merely recording facts. In claiming a cynicism that allows him to report on reality while seemingly beyond any responsibility for it, he has failed up to this point to recognize that his objectivity is an illusion, a pose just like any other. As Jack decides to withhold the facts from Sugar Boy, he finally reaches a turning point and recognizes that his hard-boiled, masculine perspective as a reporter of found truths is really a romance that structures the way he sees reality. Yet confronting this illusion of himself, he turns to another illusion, the illusion of domesticity found in the picture magazines. After Sugar Boy leaves, he tellingly assumes the same position he had envisioned for Sugar Boy: He returns to "the newspaper room and . . . bent over a picture magazine" (423).

The difference here between Sugar Boy and Jack is that Jack does not merely look at the domestic world of the picture magazine—he moves into that world by becoming a husband. In embracing this new role and the perceived security of the home, he is able to further consider how history is not discovered but invented.[13] While Jack's marriage to Anne in the novel's conclusion seems jarring at first, in retrospect Jack's transformation can be seen in these various responses to the picture magazines and in his decision to withhold the truth of Willie's death from Sugar Boy. As a husband, he

accepts not simply the illusion of domesticity found in the picture magazines but, more significantly, the realization that the truth of history must be made from the lies, half-truths, and unproven beliefs that are inevitable aspects of life and indeed make it more meaningful.

As Jack comes to see that reporting history is inseparable from the process of interpretation, he demonstrates that the most honest reporters and historians are those who acknowledge the effects of this process and the influence of people's beliefs. Willie raises this issue in a conversation with Jack just before he dies, imploring Jack "to believe" that everything might have been different (400). Tellingly, Jack finally examines his own beliefs through his responses to the women in his life, beginning with his consideration of the way Lucy remembers Willie after his death. In firmly asserting Willie's greatness, she tells Jack she has "to believe that." As he responds in his thoughts to her statement, he affirms this need, repeatedly rephrasing her statement of belief as if to convince himself of its power and truth: "You have to believe that to live. I know that you must believe that. And I would not have you believe otherwise. It must be that way, and I understand the fact." Here he affirms Lucy's belief in Will as a fact, knowing that he, too, "must believe that Willie Stark was a great man" (427). Though he had previously found Lucy's belief in her family and her husband's greatness to be naïve, if admirable, Jack now realizes that it is necessary for him to take on this same belief in order to "think better of all other people, and of myself" (427). Similarly, the apparent sincerity of his mother's response to the death of Irwin, her former lover and, as Jack discovers, his biological father, allows him to recognize her beliefs as facts. Accepting the sincerity of her feelings for the first time further enables him to accept the importance of his own necessary beliefs, find the past acceptable as a subject of interpretation, and be reconciled with Anne as well (433).

This reframing of the overt Oedipal drama between Jack and his mother in the novel's conclusion can also be seen as part of the transition from wartime to Cold War culture. During the war, there was a perceived threat of overprotective mothers redirecting their sexuality from their missing spouses towards their children and making their sons effeminate (May 74–75). While a similar Oedipal drama is prominent in the drafts of *All the King's Men* written during the war, the revised conclusion restores "normal" sexual and gender roles: As Jack's mother leaves behind her marriage to a man nearly as young as Jack, she becomes more of a maternal figure, and this new role is one factor which helps Jack reestablish his relationship with Anne. When he tells Anne about his mother's scream at hearing the news of Irwin's death, his discovery that Irwin was his biological father, and his

subsequent acceptance of the past as the basis for the future, Anne responds with her own similar affirmation of the past, stating that "if I had not come to believe it I could not have lived" (435).

Jack's transformation, then, is based in part on his reevaluation of how he views the women in his life and feminine identity in general. While Jack's understanding of history and sense of identity are transformed by the beliefs of these women, the new perspective he assumes actually seems linked to the way women are confined and contained at the end of the novel. Sadie, the most independent of the female characters, has admitted herself into a mental institution after suffering a breakdown brought about by her remorse for contributing to the plot to assassinate Willie. Though Jack's visit to Sadie is similar to his earlier investigations as a reporter, he decides to follow her advice and protect Anne rather than tell her all of the facts about Willie's death, thereby renouncing his earlier work as a newspaperman and the hard-boiled attitude that goes with it in order to protect Anne (416). He even more explicitly rejects his earlier work in this way when a newspaperman photographs Anne as they are leaving the cemetery following Adam's funeral. Jack is not sure if he knows this man, since he claims all the young reporters "look so much alike when they grind them out of journalism school" (402), but he tells him angrily that "there are some kinds of a son-of-a-bitch you don't have to be even to be a newspaperman" (403).

In this criticism of journalism schools and popular views of hard-boiled newspapermen, Jack definitively breaks away from his identity as a reporter and embraces his role as protector of the sanctity of the home. While in the opening of the novel he shapes pictures of the family and the home for newspapers and voters, and while throughout the middle of the novel he interprets such pictures and reports on facts from his position as a political insider, here, in the conclusion, he tries to separate the family from the public world of the press and politics. Though he passively bears the "burden" of history throughout the novel, in the conclusion he gains control over the narratives of history as a husband and, in doing so, accepts strictly defined gender roles. While his first wife, Lois, paid for their upscale apartment through the inheritance she had received from her own widowed mother (303), Jack now pays for his and Anne's home through his inheritance from his biological father, Irwin (436). Meanwhile, Sadie, the female character who shares Jack's hard-boiled attitude and language, ends up alone, chastened, and defeated in a mental sanitarium; Jack's mother leaves the younger husband she controls to lead a quiet, humble life (430); and Anne disappears from the final pages of the novel entirely as her reactions and decision to marry Jack are recounted only through his introspective reflections (436).[14] In leaving the seemingly

masculine space of the newsroom and governor's office for the seemingly feminine space of the home, Jack actually assumes a new and more strictly defined masculine identity.

While Jack's transformation is evident in his reactions to the picture magazines, in the end he uses the contributions of these women to receive and make sense of his own new picture of the world. When Jack lies to his mother, claiming that Irwin's suicide was brought about by an illness rather than by any sense of dishonor, he allows her to believe in Irwin the way Lucy believes in Willie (431). Though this lie covers his own involvement in Irwin's death and helps him move on with his own life, he twice asserts that he did it for his mother and not for himself. After a break in the text that calls attention to the importance of Jack's remarks, he considers how his mother gave him a sense of "truth"—"a new picture of herself" that made for "a new picture of the world" (432). Speculating that perhaps his mother has simply finished a picture given to him by the people in the novel whom he has so closely observed, he feels that this new picture is a way of getting the past back: "I could accept the past now because I could accept her and be at peace with her and with myself" (432). As I am arguing, this new picture emerges from the specific context of the pictures of the home staged for the newspaper, the picture of "the American Madonna," Lucy Stark, and the pictures in the illustrated magazines. While Jack protects Anne from the publicity of the newspaper photographer, she allows him to protect his own private image of her by becoming his wife. Where once the image of the domestic space was clearly manipulated by politics and invaded by political maneuverings, these feminine images are shown to be the basis for a reconstituted vision of the domestic space as a place apart from the public world where Jack finds he can safely interpret the public world of politics.

The willed innocence of this new picture of the world represents a particularly American take on early Cold War culture, and with its emphasis on individual consciousness and private redemption, it stands in marked contrast to perspectives on the Cold War that emphasize how individual consciousness is largely shaped by history. For example, while Warren ends his novel by asserting the power of the personal image, Milan Kundera, writing about the other side of the "Iron Curtain," his native Czechoslovakia, begins his novel *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (1982) by describing how a public image, a photograph of government leaders, is violated and changed by government censors, and he goes on to show how the constant revision of official, public history throughout the Cold War threatens the integrity of personal memory and inevitably intrudes into the private lives and desires of individuals. Likewise, George Orwell's late works illustrate how the manipulation of public

history distorts and even determines private memory. In *Animal Farm* (1946) and in *1984* (1949), Orwell presciently describes how rewriting history would become one of the primary ideological weapons for both sides fighting the Cold War.[15] While Jack goes from working as a newspaperman to writing history according to his own perspective, in *1984* Winston Smith is forced to rewrite and reedit newspapers as a bureaucrat following the authoritarian dictates of the state. Whereas Winston and his lover, Julia, are arrested for political crimes while in their supposedly secret apartment, Warren shows how Jack and Anne separate themselves from the "dirt" of politics in their new home.[16]

They way Jack and Anne begin their new lives together underscores this sense of a break from Jack's past identity. When Irwin dies, Jack inherits his house, while his mother decides to leave the Burden house to her latest husband. With his new wife and home, Jack, like many Americans following the war, can be seen as transforming his private images of Anne into an acknowledged public reality. As May notes, the many marriages that followed the end of the war gave young couples a sense of participating in history through individual, private acts rather than through the overtly political and collective public acts of the Great Depression and World War: "Domesticity was not so much a retreat from public affairs as an expression of one's citizenship" (160). Like these new couples, Jack also seems to have left behind generational ties to focus on his own nuclear family. However, in reality he does not break off generational ties so much as remake his family according to his own needs. At the end of the novel, Lucy adopts a grandson while Jack essentially adopts a father. After Tom's death, Lucy attributes the questionable patrimony of Sybil Frey's baby to him; her choice to recognize the baby as her grandson corresponds with her renewed belief in Willie, a point made obvious by her decision to name the baby Willie Stark (425–426). Jack makes a similar gesture when he explains that he has invited the sickly Ellis Burden to live with him and Anne in Irwin's home even though he now knows that Ellis is not his biological father. In both cases, the reconstructed family represents a reconstructed view of history; these families show that history is not determined in advance by biological twitches or a sense of destiny but made from a series of choices based on beliefs and the needs of the present and future. This connection between the family and history is exemplified in Jack's decision to return to his dissertation and complete his study of the life of Cass Mastern (438). Since Cass was Ellis's uncle, not Irwin's, Jack is no longer a "Burden" by blood and no longer resigned to bearing the "burden" of history. With this new sense of separation, he can choose how to approach his subject and write his study according to his own understanding of himself, Cass, and his family. In

announcing his intention to use the remainder of his inheritance to complete his book on Cass, Jack shows that his refuge in the home and his ability to shape his family according to his own desires have given him a new perspective on how to construct history as well.

Jack's new sense of separateness also lets him examine Ellis's religious beliefs in light of their usefulness rather than their absolute "truth." Earlier in the novel, Jack was arguing with Ellis about the nature of God, when Jack thought instead of his work for Willie on the eve of Willie's impeachment. With his inside information, he looks down on the capital and feels that he shares a perspective with God in knowing in advance the outcome of events that will comprise the record of history (151). Believing his work with Willie gives him a sense of objectivity that surpasses his previous work as a reporter, Jack cynically speculates on how the newspapers are likely to describe the crowd supporting Willie and the impeachment proceedings against him, and he even imitates what their likely copy will read (151–152). While the newspapers interpret the events according to their political allegiances, Jack does not believe it is possible to attribute a cause to these events or interpret them since they are the result of an immutable chain of events (152). Unable to answer whether the gathered crowd is the cause of Willie's power or an effect of it, Jack nonetheless believes at this point that history is determined in advance and reporting is a matter of objectively and thoroughly observing the facts as they unfold.

At the end of the novel, Jack does not make such grandiose claims about seeing history through the eyes of God but shows, instead, how he constructs history himself through his own eyes and with an awareness of human motives. Free to accept Ellis as his "adopted" father, he feels free as well to accept some elements of his religious beliefs. In quoting part of a tract that Ellis has dictated to him, he sees similarities between his new view of history and Ellis's religious views on the necessity of "separateness" in God's creation of humanity (437). After Ellis finishes dictating this tract to Jack, he asks Jack if he believes his ideas. Jack initially affirms Ellis's statements to comfort him, though later he admits, "I was not certain but that in my own way I did believe" (437). In language that repeats Jack's "true" conversation with his mother, he again finds value in affirming a "serviceable lie" (Burt 171), and he claims that in his own way he has come to agree that God is defined by a sense of separateness that makes identity and free will possible and hence evil an inevitable consequence of human nature. By accepting that evil is necessary to affirm and measure the good that is done, Jack also contributes to the rehabilitation of Willie's memory by implying that the ends he achieved should not be seen as tainted by the means he used; rather his

accomplishments should be seen as rising above the inherent flaws of human nature and unavoidable evils of life.

In reevaluating Willie's accomplishments, Jack goes one step further, however, and reevaluates the entire political system Willie had tried to change. This is evident when, in a parenthetical aside, Warren brings Hugh Miller, Willie's former attorney general, back into the novel. Though he is mocked by Jack throughout the first part of the novel for his politically ineffectual ideals and naïvete (97), and though he is not mentioned for almost 300 pages after he resigns his position in disgust at Willie's strong-arm tactics (138), Jack asserts in the conclusion that Miller is going to get back into politics with his help (436). Though not at all convincing, Miller's reappearance illustrates the extent to which Jack has reassessed the lessons he learned as a reporter and political observer and the extent to which his new picture of the world requires him to ignore the unsightly aspects of his former pictures. In this way, Jack is like the many Americans in the postwar period who found that a willful restoration of innocence and optimism could contain the threats of social unrest raised by the Great Depression, the specter of fascism, the devastation of the war, and the new threat of nuclear apocalypse. Such containment strategies were especially effective when they focused on the security of the nuclear family and the newfound possibilities for greater financial security and affluence that opened up for many individuals in the postwar United States.

While, as a narrator and reporter, Jack once felt certain of the objective facts and their worth, at the end of the novel he is not so certain and takes an open-ended perspective that allows him to interpret history as it becomes separate from the present and is evaluated according to changing needs and beliefs. The bombast of his hard-boiled language has been replaced with thoughtful qualifications and a humble sense of uncertainty, and he acknowledges that his version of history will be shaped in his own way. In the final sentence of the novel, Jack asserts that he and Anne "shall go out of the house and go into the convulsion of the world, out of history and into history" (438). This conclusion, with its two "histories," one in the house and one out of it, underscores Jack's new position: Separate from the world of politics, he can interpret history; separate from his dead and dying fathers, he can choose from among their values; separate from the destruction of the atom and the "atom smashers," he can contain the threat that they represent.

Jack's concluding affirmations and interpretative strategies recast how the preceding novel is read. While his optimistic closing remarks are in keeping with the relief felt at the end of the war and the unprecedented prosperity

that followed for many, though certainly not all, Americans, his reflections throughout the novel reflect the flip side of this optimism—the uncertainty caused by a rapidly changing social and economic landscape and the guilt and fear that went along with the dropping of the atom bomb and the threat of nuclear destruction. Jack's claims to a restored innocence and socially recognized and stable identity in the revised conclusion of the novel need to be read against the more precarious sense of self in the introduction, which Warren also revised in the fall of 1945. While the conclusion contains threats to the self in the safety of the nuclear family and contains threats from history in acts of personal interpretation, the opening of the novel describes the dawning atomic age in terms of a relative, fluctuating sense of self marked by possibilities as well as perils. Speeding down the highway, in an unnamed state, in an unnamed car, the unnamed narrator first speaks in the second person "you" and projects you headlong into the future, reminding you that your inevitable death could occur at any moment along this stretch of highway. When you arrive in a place identified as Mason City, the speeding car slows down, perspectives become more fixed, and identities are characterized according to existing social categories: You discover that the car is a Cadillac, that the driver is named Sugar-Boy, and that he is white—an Irish Catholic—and not black as you might have guessed from his name (4).

Even as relative perspectives and nameless identities become more clearly defined in the introduction, time remains elusive. While in the first paragraph the future impinges on the present, as you continue towards Mason City, time moves backwards as well as forwards, from the garden to the apocalypse. In this case, the automobile is "the machine in the garden,"[17] but it does not shatter silence as a train whistle does. Instead, it raises the threat of annihilating nature itself—a threat made all too real by the bombs that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki just days before Warren revised his introduction. The Cold War implications of Warren's introduction to *All the King's Men* are brought into sharper focus by two later works that specifically pick up on its opening images and themes. William Styron, who later became friends with Warren, clearly models the opening of his first novel, *Lie Down in Darkness* (1951), on the introduction of *All the King's Men* (Blotner 371). Like Warren's novel, *Lie Down in Darkness* begins in the second person "you" with an anonymous identity in motion and in flux and with silent black witnesses observing the action (9–11).[18] While Warren describes Willie's car as looking like a "hearse," in Styron's novel the train in the opening scene carries a coffin (14) while the car that waits at the train station is actually a hearse (11). Warren, writing in August 1945, implicitly connects the deaths that frame his novel with the new, pressing reality of the

atomic bomb; Styron makes these connections literal and explicit. His novel begins in August 1945, and on the evening before the opening scene, one of the central characters, Helen Loftis, after just learning of her daughter's suicide, is shown reading about the dropping of the atomic bomb and the possible Japanese surrender (24). These ominous connections are even more evident when she waits at the station for her daughter's body to arrive and dust and cinders fill the air with the smell "of burning flesh" (246). In drawing closely upon the opening chapter of *All the King's Men,* Styron, then, brings out the details in Warren's novel that clearly situate it at the beginning of the Cold War.

Warren's later novel *Flood* (1963) similarly highlights the Cold War implications of *All the King's Men* by revisiting some of its key imagery and themes. The opening chapter of *Flood,* like the opening chapter in *All the King's Men,* begins in a car on a new highway with the threat of a fatal accident. Bradwell Tolliver, the novel's central character, initially describes his hometown, Fiddlersburg, Tennessee, by claiming that it is "as far as you can get outside of history and still feel that history exists" (46). Yet Bradwell, like Jack Burden, comes to reflect on history as he spends time in the town, and he also comes to resist the idea that history is materially determined or defined solely by an apparently objective public record. Instead, he ultimately views history as being shaped by personal motivations and interpreted in individual stories. While Jack is a newspaperman who, as the narrator of the *All the King's Men,* serves as the imputed writer of Willie's story, Bradwell is literally a fiction writer. Like Jack, Bradwell possesses a hard-boiled attitude, presents stereotypical views of female sexuality, and equates picture magazines with a feminine domestic sphere. For example, as he reflects back on a break in his writing career, he remembers when "[a] slick-paper magazine asked for an article" and he decided not to accept this offer even though he needed the money (142). While Jack observes characters in *All the King's Men* who possess "atomic energy" and are "atom smashers," in *Flood* Bradwell is paired with Yasha Jones, a physicist who worked on the construction of the atom bomb and later turned to filmmaking, and the impending flooding of Fiddlersburg as a result of a new damn equates modernization with the threat of nuclear war.

In explicitly addressing the central feature of the Cold War, the struggle between the two superpowers and the threat of nuclear annihilation, *Flood* also places a greater emphasis on the role of the image in shaping identity and influencing art. Bradwell, like Jack, has a sense of the meaningful images of memory, which, with their "special vividness," can offer a profound sense of meaning and identity (104). However, while Jack uses his images of Anne

to ground his identity in the home and write history, Bradwell is translating the images of memory into images for the movie screen, as he has returned to Fiddlersburg to write a treatment for a movie that Yasha will make. In this way, *Flood* shows how Jack's personally validated "new picture of the world" has become a new way of showing pictures to the world. This is evident when Yasha remembers when he learned of the dropping of the atomic bomb (265–266), and then considers how he came to define the success of his movies according to the purity of the images they present rather than according to the effectiveness of the stories the tell (266–267).[19]

Seen through these later works and through the conclusion of *All the King's Men* itself, the Cold War themes and the dawning atomic age first emerge in the way the introduction of the novel shows individual identity as being in flux through time. When the car in the opening scene comes to rest, the still unnamed narrator flashes back three years to 1936 (3), and he goes on to begin his story across many layers of time, each of which overlaps with the present. In the first chapter alone, he moves from 1936, ahead to 1939 (3), back to 1922 (12), ahead to 1934 (15), then returns to 1936 and the speeding car (19). Near the end of the first chapter, Warren shows how the ride to Burden's Landing represents a specific journey back in time for the narrator, who, after identifying himself as a reporter, is finally named as Jack Burden. As the speed of the car approaches, however remotely, the speed of light, identities are merged and split, and the narrator goes from using the second person "you" to the first person "we" and then divides his perspective. Even as he looks out of the Cadillac at the landscape speeding by, he considers how a cow along the roadside must "look at the black blur we were as we went whirling into the blazing corridor of light which we could never quite get into for it would be always splitting the dark just in front of us" (36).[20] Jack merges the cow's indifferent perspective with the similar way the car would appear to "God-All-Mighty," "Fate," or himself, if he was out in the field watching the car go by. While Jack compares his perspective to that of God, as he does later in his view of the capital, in this case he is not only watching others but watching himself as well. Here, in the introduction, history seems to be fixed while identity is in flux; in the conclusion, identity is fixed in the space of the home while history is open to change and different interpretations. In other words, though Jack initially seems to exist in an atomic world of relative perspectives, he later needs some fixed frame in order to perceive and interpret an event.[21]

Throughout the novel, Warren actually depicts how motion threatens identity by creating a sense of indeterminacy. For example, as the Cadillac in the introduction reaches Burden's Landing, Jack sees himself from mul-

tiple perspectives and returns to the second-person to voice others' thoughts. He almost expects to see himself as a small child—as "you" would if you went back to your hometown in the middle of the night—and he wonders if anything has ever really happened since he was a boy. However, he realizes that he has to account for the grown man in the back seat having these thoughts, even if he is still bound to be recognized by his old neighbors as the child he once was (40). Later, when Jack is leaving his hometown, he explicitly considers this relative sense of identity. He thinks that if your identity "only has meaning in relation to other people," then being alone in a car offers a needed "vacation from being you" (128). Yet as Warren shows, there are really no such vacations and such relations do not ever stop: Here, this "Jack," like all the others in the novel, exists retrospectively in relation to the Jack who tells the story. In this scene, the image of the spider web, later used to represent an understanding of history, conveys the temporal relativity of identity, as the car's engine seems to spin a web which relates the you who departed one place with the you who arrives somewhere else (128–129). As Jack later shows, the web of identity, like the web of history, only seems discontinuous when one's perspective is limited to a single moment. In the conclusion, he realizes that each moment is subject to endless interpretation and revision when seen in relation to the needs of the future and the perspective of other moments. In this way, the spider can continue to spin its filaments rather than inject its poison. At this point, though, Jack still sees history as an inevitable unfolding of discrete, linked facts; while he questions his relative sense of identity, he directly links this present moment and his presence in the car, the effect, to the moment when Ellis Burden met his mother in 1896, the cause (130).

In the revised introduction, an identity in flux is overshadowed by the sense of an impending threat, and history is narrowly defined as an inescapable chain of cause and effect. In the revised conclusion, on the other hand, identity is firmly fixed in reassuring social roles, and from the security of the home, history is seen as being subject to multiple interpretations and the contingencies of belief. Willie is the ideal subject to help Jack make this transition because he challenges pre-existing definitions of identity and history and offers Jack the means to move out of history as an inevitable stream in order to turn back to history as an ongoing subject of interpretation. When the car in the introduction arrives in Mason City, Jack describes the courthouse, which was built before the Civil War, as having a clock tower with the clock faces painted on. Though the town is seemingly frozen in time, Jack notes that Lucy must recognize all of the changes brought about by Willie's various development programs (5). A bit later, Jack remembers his first meeting with

Willie, and he describes how Willie reveals the latent possibilities within a moment of time and stretches each moment towards the edge of eternity. The force of his personality makes others feel as if they have reached the point where "the stream of time dwindles into the sands of eternity" (19). Until the end of the novel, Jack grapples with the apocalyptic possibilities he finds in both frozen moments and fluid streams of time. While in Jack's image of Anne playing tennis, a moment held in memory seems ready to explode outwards into history, the times on the painted clocks in Mason City recall the watches and clocks stopped by the atom bomb. Warren returned to this image in his poem "New Dawn"; this poem, which appeared in a limited edition of John Hersey's *Hiroshima* (1946), begins with a list of times to indicate the exact moment the bomb dropped on Hiroshima (*Collected Poems* 794).[22] However, the descriptions of the car speeding through time on the highways Willie had built and of Willie sweeping up others into a "stream of time" also suggest that there is a danger in getting caught up in a relative sense of identity. Again, though, these images from early in the novel need to be read in conjunction with the conclusion of the novel and the way Jack comes to interpret such individual images and moments by connecting them in meaningful historical narratives.

Jack does this after he casts aside his role as a reporter. When, in the conclusion, he acknowledges that Willie's story has become his own, he most clearly and consciously articulates his own assumptions about history (435), and he shows that historians, to some extent, always tell their own story and the story of their time. In the way Jack mediates how readers view Willie, the ostensible subject of the novel, *All the King's Men* presents the paired structure of observer and observed that is found in many influential American novels, including *Moby Dick* (1851), *The Ambassadors* (1903), *My Ántonia* (1918), and *The Great Gatsby* (1925).[23] Each of these novels is based on two intertwined narratives, the dramatic account of the actions of the observed subject and the more subtle account of the transformed consciousness of the observer. In *Romantic Re-vision: Culture and Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century American Painting and Literature* (1982), Brian Jay Wolf traces the use of this structure in American literature back to Charles Brockden Brown and the way that his work "anticipates the later efforts of writers like Hawthorne and James to penetrate the mystery of human behavior through the organizing vision of a character to the periphery of the novel's central action" (114). In linking Brown to Washington Irving as well, Wolf describes how Irving's stories "direct the attention of the work from the story's center to its circumference, where the reader hears the machinery of consciousness clattering in the wings and substitutes its hum for the buzz of an objectively given world"

(115). As Wolf suggests, since it is the narrator in these texts who survives some key experience and tells the story of the observed subject, this observed subject is viewed speculatively, and he or she often appears to be beyond the conventions of "objective," realistic portrayals of character. In this way, this observed subject can appear to be larger than life and offer an idealized view of some aspect of individuality. At the same time, in emphasizing the interior consciousness and evolving subjectivity of a mediating narrator, novels which include this kind of relationship often present history as the process of transforming raw facts into fiction (Wolf 116). Like *All the King's Men,* such novels often begin after some key event has already occurred, so that they seem to have begun after "the Fall" into history, and the narrator's reflections come to recount not only a particular story but point more broadly to the process of how history is constructed (Wolf 99).

Wolf's analysis helps to further account for the seemingly jarring ending of *All the King's Men.* While most novels mediated by an observing narrator end on an elegiac note, linking the passing life of an individual with the passing of an era, the conclusion of Warren's novel tempers any such loss by attempting to restore a sense of innocence. Rather than just looking back to the events leading up to the climatic deaths in the novel, Warren finishes with several paragraphs told in the future tense, so that Jack's story looks ahead to the Cold War culture in which he will make his home, and the conclusion suggests a new, fully functioning social order even though the preceding text describes how the existing social order has been undermined and called into doubt. While Willie's story most clearly reflects the anxieties about fascism that had come to the fore during the Great Depression and World War II, Warren's final emphasis on how the individual can interpret history and contain its threats is particularly timely, and Jack's surprising and fragile optimism is in keeping with a nation whose hard-won military victories were immediately overshadowed by the nuclear threat, confrontations with the Soviet Union, and widespread fears about an economic backslide.[24] In embodying this historical transition and in changing his own ideas of history, Jack begins the novel as a reporter who corrects the failings of politics and the press while telling the story of a powerful but corrupt politician and ends the novel as a husband who, through his own hopes and beliefs, redeems the integrity of the family and the political process while leaving behind the realities raised by his reporting work.

In both *The Great Gatsby* and *All the King's Men,* the narrator reserves the last word, the insight that comes after the death of the observed subject, and finally places the subject's story in the broader context of history.[25] While Gatsby's murder comes to mark the end of an era—the Jazz Age and

the roaring twenties—Willie's murder concludes two separate eras: the Great Depression, when experience itself seemed to overwhelm the imagination, and World War II, when the horrors of the war were concluded by the "new dawn" of the atomic age and the Cold War. While Nick Carraway looks back on a moment of discovery and possibility, a moment that can never be recovered, no matter how much "we beat on, against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past" (Fitzgerald 182), Jack looks ahead to the future and the Cold War from the periods of economic depression and war during which Warren composed his novel. While *The Great Gatsby* concludes with a glimpse back at the virgin forests, *All the King's Men* begins after the fall: "There were pine forests here a long time ago but they are gone . . ." (2).

* * *

The introduction and conclusion of *All the King's Men,* which were revised just after the dropping of the atomic bomb, can be seen as marking the beginning of the Cold War in American fiction. In the revised introduction, the speeding car, the new highway, the possibilities raised by multiple perspectives all demonstrate that the distinctly American propensity for self-transformation also represents a threat to any stable sense of identity. This potential loss of self is set against the backdrop of the threat of nuclear annihilation, as the forces of modernization take on a power seemingly beyond human control. The revised conclusion of the novel, on the other hand, contains such threats to identity by placing the individual safely in the home and the family, a move that not only restores the individual to a known, stable, social order but allows the individual to act as an arbiter and narrator of history itself. While at the beginning, Jack is a political reporter, a producer of political images for the news, and cynical commentator on the press, politics, and the inevitability of history, in the end he optimistically explores ways to interpret texts and write history from a personal perspective which reflects the urgency of individual beliefs. At the same time, this conclusion points ahead to the increasingly reified gender roles of the postwar period. Jack's new found agency seems to be a distinctly male prerogative, and in the conclusion, the female characters disappear or silently take up their roles within the home.

While the novel provides a provocative commentary on the bridge from the Great Depression and wartime culture to an incipient Cold War culture, it also points to the increasingly prominent if increasingly vexed relationship between journalism and the novel. The other authors that I have considered in this study engage forms of journalism and consider the journalist as a representative of the public in order to address contemporary social and cultural issues. Each of these authors, like Warren, draws on different aspects

of journalism in constructing works that are at once accessible in their language, styles, and themes and surprisingly intricate and complex in their forms. Likewise, in striving for a literary status that was also being questioned and redefined, these writers draw on the popular—even populist—status of journalism to consider pressing issues of representation, culture, and community. In the overtly masculine perspective and hard-boiled language of Warren's narrator-reporter and in the way this narrator finally acknowledges his own role in the story he reports, *All the King's Men* is clearly similar to Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* in the way it handles these issues. In effect, Hemingway concludes his novel at a moment of contingency and revelation, as Jake has discarded even the illusion of his own disillusion, and Hemingway thus lifts the screen of detached objectivity so that the preceding events in the novel can be read retrospectively through the lens of Jake's desires and beliefs. Jack Burden, on the other hand, replaces his belief in his own hard-boiled objectivity as an historian and reporter with an articulated, new set of beliefs based on Willie's greatness, the lessons of those he has observed, and his future as a husband. While Warren's conclusion also provide a lens through which the previous novel needs to be read, this lens is more obviously colored by Jack's final statements about his own needs for determining what is true.

As is the case with *The Sun Also Rises,* the changes recorded by Warren's reporter have broader implications for how journalism as a profession and journalism as a popularly received form would continue to relate to fiction and other literary narratives. Jack's increasing emphasis on individual desire suggests a conception of the journalist as someone who writes on the basis of personal needs and experiences largely apart from constraining institutions. As I argue in Chapter Four, Zora Neale Hurston in *Mules and Men* and James Agee in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* each create reporter figures who challenge existing genres and the limits of their writing assignments. In both texts, the emphasis on the individual identity of these reporters prefigures the later writing of the New Journalists. However, both Agee and Hurston are limited, to an extent, by their sense of obligation to their subjects and the communities they represent, and they both challenge institutional constraints without fully leaving these institutions behind. In *All the King's Men,* Jack explicitly makes Willie's story his own, and in the conclusion he appears to write from a perspective that is separate from his previous professional responsibilities as a reporter and political operative. Even his beliefs in Willie, which represent a kind of loyalty, are personal rather than professional in their substance, and they do not extend to carrying on Willie's vision of politics or meeting his obligations to his

constituents. In this more dramatic turn towards the individual, Jack can even more clearly be seen as prefiguring the rise of the New Journalism, including two of Warren's works of the late 1950s and 1960s, *Segregation* (1956) and *Who Speaks for the Negro?* (1965), in which Warren appears as both a kind of reporter and character.[26] However, throughout most of the novel, Jack, like the other figures that I have considered in this study, uses his knowledge and perspective as a reporter and insider to act as a representative of the public. Though he is never really as objective as he claims to be, the emphasis in his early participation is on providing accurate information rather than simply recording his own responses, and the way he corrects news reports and describes the production of news photos lends credibility to the story he narrates. Even as his individual consciousness assumes greater importance, Jack remains focused throughout much of the novel on timely political and media issues of broad concern, and in doing so, he indicates that journalism remains a common ground in which contentious values and boundaries can be negotiated.

Though Jack's later acknowledgement of his participation in his reporting can be seen as a necessary step in achieving authenticity and admitting the limits of any claims to objectivity, he replaces his belief in his ability to report the news and record public history with a belief in his ability to redeem his private images of Willie Stark and Anne Stanton, and he leaves behind his earlier critical readings of the press in order to enter the world portrayed in the picture magazines. Unable to maintain an indeterminate position of suspended judgment, he finally affirms Willie's greatness and discards his earlier skepticism and emphasis on correcting reported facts. While early on in the novel he emphasizes his own investigative reporting and privileged, inside perspective, the story he offers finally becomes an "inside" story in the sense that it emphasizes his own internal growth as an individual. In this way, Warren's narrator-reporter not only bridges the cultural gap from the Great Depression to the Cold War, from the image of the committed, hard-boiled reporter to the image of the devoted if domineering husband, but suggests a new conception of history as it is defined through personal experience and private interpretation. In *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age* (1995), Alan Nadel considers the powerful role that a few central narratives played in Cold War culture and argues that in this context "narratives are not the opposite of facts, but rather their source and their condition of possibility." Given that the Cold War challenged existing notions of the relationship between individual events and history, Nadel argues that "personal narration is required for any form of historical narrative and also, necessarily, disrupts it" (3).

In the way Jack comes to affirm the need to believe as the basis for constructing historical narratives, he affirms this importance of personal narrative even as he indicates some of the ways that the New Journalists would seek historical relevance in their own lives and experiences. New Journalist works like Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel, the Novel as History* (1968) would take this affirmation of individual participation to its logical extreme, finding the self in the subjects of history and defining events strictly through individual perception. Likewise, other New Journalists, such as Tom Wolfe and Hunter S. Thompson would use a hyperbolic, simile-laden language, not unlike the language Jack uses in *All the King's Men*.[27] While the hard-boiled language Jack uses in many public exchanges contrasts with his private, often lyrical observations, these New Journalists more obviously construct such a style as the basis for promoting their public personas and erase this distinction between the public life of a celebrity and the private life of a reporter.[28] In short, Warren's story of a political reporter who becomes a husband reflects the change from the collective politics of the Great Depression and the World War to the postwar affirmation of the personal as political, and it points ahead to a new kind of celebrity journalism in which the interpretation of private images has been subsumed by the endless circulation of images from magazines, television, film, and now the internet. *All the King's Men*'s contribution in recording these changes is only underscored by the way the novel itself was transformed—and now re-transformed—into a film.

Jack's exploration of the relationship between the individual and history, then, looks back to a period when print journalism had a unique role in shaping how communities are defined and imagined and offered a powerful resource to writers attempting to negotiate the pressing demands of critical and popular audiences. At the same time, Warren's conclusion looks ahead to the postwar period when journalism and literature would exist in a broader media network and compete with a proliferation of images, even as some journalists would directly address the bounds of fiction and in doing so suggest that personal experience is in fact the very subject of history itself.

Notes

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. As Janet Malcolm notes in *The Journalist and the Murderer* (1990), the term "participant observer" applies as much to the fieldwork of journalists as to that of anthropologists and sociologists; it indicates the complexity of representing an unfamiliar event or group to an audience by acknowledging one's conflicting loyalties and roles in the scene at hand (161–162). In the study that follows, these issues apply most obviously to Agee and Hurston, but the other writers under consideration here also explore similar questions of divided perspectives.
2. See Chapter One below for more on Bourdieu and Strychacz and the way the American modernist writers under consideration here present a different understanding of the relationship between modernist artists and their audiences.
3. See Frank Luther Mott's *American Journalism: A History: 1690–1960* (3rd ed., 1972) for a thorough and definitive history of American journalism.
4. See also Michael Robertson's *Stephen Crane, Journalism, and the Making of Modern America* (1997) for an extended reading of Crane's influence as a journalist and writer.
5. See William Stott's *Documentary Expression and Thirties America* (1973), especially pp. 178–189 and pp. 163–170.
6. For an interesting reading of these issues and the New Journalists, see Chapter Five of Phyllis Frus's *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative: The Timely and the Timeless* (1994), "The 'Incredibility of Reality' and the Ideology of Form."
7. See also, Habermas's "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere" (1992), pp. 438–439.
8. See especially pp. 32–36 of *Imagined Communities.*

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. Indeed, in "The Count of Crow's Nest," the count of the title captures Harold's interest precisely because he is an immigrant and suggests different conceptions of the values and purposes of art.
2. See M. Catherine Down's *Becoming Modern: Willa Cather's Journalism* (1999), a work I consider more fully below.
3. Down also examines "what being a woman in an office, writing journalism, editing journalism did to Willa Cather the author" (12).
4. Besides those works discussed here, Cather includes important references to journalism in "The Burglar's Christmas" (1896), "The Willing Muse" (1907), "Flavia and Her Artists" (1905), and "Ardessa" (1918). Under the name Henry Nicklemann, she also published "Dance at Chevalier's" (1900), a story which prominently features a reporter.
5. Recent critics have examined two of her longer journalistic works, the biography of Mary Baker G. Eddy, *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy and the History of Christian Science* (1909), which she wrote from the notes of Georgine Milmine, and the autobiography of S.S. McClure, *My Autobiography* (1914), which she ghost-wrote, to examine how Cather developed her voice as a woman writer. See Sharon O'Brien, *Willa Cather: The Emerging Voice* (1987), pp. 296–297, and Emmy Stark Zitter, "Making Herself Born: Ghost Writing and Willa Cather's Developing Autobiography" (1996).
6. This group of listeners replicates the sense of physical proximity and intimate community that Walter Benjamin saw disappearing from storytelling with the rise of print culture and the novel, and the scene can thus be viewed as presenting a transitional sense of community between oral and print cultures ("Storyteller" 87, 93). See Chapter Two below for more on this topic.
7. Though the Mont Blanc fire is a fictional composite of the many deadly fires around the time Cather wrote the story, the title refers to an historical building, the Singer Tower, which was constructed from 1906 to 1908 and notable for being the tallest building in the world when it was completed and the first to have its spire illuminated by electric light (Haller 47). In 1968, it became the tallest building ever to be demolished (*New York City Skyscrapers*).
8. Cather's stereotypical descriptions of Italian and Jewish characters are drawn directly from her work as managing editor of *McClure's.* While with the magazine, she "either acceded to or actively participated in the publication of a series of articles written by fellow editor and *McClure's* staff writer George Kibbe Turner." These articles "were directed at exposure of urban corruption but repeatedly targeted Italians and Jews, which were the two most disfavored immigrant groups" (Stout 152).

9. See Sean McCann's "The Ambiguous Politics of the Aesthetic" (1999), which I consider below, for a reading that connects Cather's idea of culture and aesthetics with Arnold's.
10. Cather's choice of the Singer Tower underscores this potential relationship between commerce and culture. Besides its obvious reference to a "singer," the building refers to the Singer Manufacturing Company and the company's founder, Isaac Merritt or I.M. Singer, whose life was in many ways a success story involving art, business, and the American dream. Singer only turned to a career in business in midlife after failing as an actor, while his children used their inherited fortunes to become patrons of the arts. See Ruth Brandon's *Singer and the Sewing Machine: A Capitalist Romance* (2nd ed., 1996), Chapter Two, "The Strolling Player," and chapter eleven, "The Immigrant's Dream Fulfilled." Merryweather and Singer also seem to share some notable similarities. Like Merryweather, Singer most likely came from a mixed religious background, and it seems that his grandfather was Jewish and emigrated to the United States after marrying a Protestant woman. Just as Hallet speculates about Merryweather, so too did people speculate about Singer's background, not so much because he might be Jewish but because his failure to identify openly with any religion was seen as scandalous at the time (Brandon 6–7).
11. As O'Brien argues, Cather's aesthetic is most clearly articulated in the image of female singers as vessels who momentarily embody the ideals of art and the vivacity of living in much the same way jars hold water (172–173). Read in this context, Caesarino, despite his status as a laborer, represents a European version of such an organic aesthetic ideal.
12. I further consider Frus's arguments in Chapter Three, "The Camera Eye and Reporter's Conscience in Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises*."
13. While *The Song of the Lark* is not marred by the anti-Semitic descriptions I have noted in other works by Cather, her inclusive perspective does not directly address the full range of immigrants in New York at the time, and the only African-American figure in this novel is referred to using a racial epithet (692). See note 24 below.
14. All references are from the originally published version of the novel.
15. Parisier also writes, "Far from a simple celebration of artistic awakening, Cather's *The Song of the Lark* evokes the problems of artistic creation in a world configured for the commercial manufacture of creative work—the world of both opera and Cather's journalistic apprenticeship" (110). All citations for Parisier are from "Novel Work: Theater and Journalism in the Writing of Theodore Dreiser, Edith Wharton and Willa Cather." Copyright 2001 by Nicole H. Parisier and quoted with the permission of the author.

16. See Bernice Slote's comments on the variety of Cather's reviews in the opening sections of *The Kingdom of Art,* "First Principles," pp. 7–8 and p. 42, and in the body of the text itself, p. 357.
17. See note eleven above.
18. Interestingly, in his reading of Theodor Adorno, Andreas Huyssen argues that Richard Wagner's operas mark one of the foundational instances of modernism's engagement with mass culture. See pp. 34–43. In *Nietzsche Contra Wagner: Out of the Files of a Psychologist* (1889), Friedrich Nietzsche similarly distances Wagner from the popularity of the theater in a way that anticipates the distinct, elite audiences often associated with modernism: "*Success* in the theater—with that one drops in my respect forever; *failure*—I prick up my ears and begin to respect" (665; italics in original). Having Thea perform Wagner thus seems to be an appropriate choice in terms of Cather's exploration of popular modernism.
19. Michael Schudson discusses these issues in *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (1978). See especially the section of Chapter Four entitled "The Decline of 'Facts' in Journalism," pp. 134–144.
20. It is worth noting that Cather's story can be seen as an example of the kind of celebrity scandal that it seems to be criticizing, suggesting how she herself felt entangled in this world of gossip and publicity. Publishers and, most likely, some readers as well, recognized that Cressida was based on the singer Lilian Nordica and that Cressida's fourth husband, Jerome Brown, was based on Nordica's husband, George Young. Because of this, Cather's agent had trouble selling it, and the story finally appeared in *McClure's* (Woodress 279).
21. See Chapter Four of Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism,* "Hebraism and Hellenism."
22. As Down notes, "Money, getting money, and self-advertisement are important themes in Cather's fiction, as they were in Cather's life," and Cather was one of the first American writers to use a professional agent (15).
23. Kitty Ayrshire also appears in "A Gold Slipper" (1917), a story which touches on some of the same ideas about artists and their audiences. However, "A Gold Slipper" does not include depictions of journalism or immigrants, and it is not as complex or fully realized as "Scandal."
24. See my introduction above for a consideration of this view of modernist audiences.
25. To give one example, James Woodress argues that Cather's attitudes were no worse, if no better, than the common conceptions of her day, and he notes that when *The Professor's House* was published no critic found Cather's portrayal of Louis Marsellus to be anti-Semitic, though many later critics have found it to be so (377). Woodress also claims that "to call her anti-Semitic is to exaggerate considerably. She had many loves and many hates, and among each were a few Jews" (284). He further speculates that Cather's portrayal of Louie in *The Professor's House* may have originated in her jealous reaction

to Jan Hambourg, the Jewish violinist who married Isabelle McClung, the women with whom Cather had the strongest emotional attachment of her adult life (284, 377). In describing Cather's view of American culture as largely inclusive, a more recent critic, Guy Reynolds, acknowledges, "Cather's heterogeneous, pluralist immigrant culture is, nonetheless, essentially white and of North European descent. The culture described in the letters, the speeches and the novels overlooks the immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. It also omits the Chinese and the Jews who made up so much of the immigrant population." He adds, "There is extensive evidence in Cather's work of indifference to, if not hostility towards certain ethnic groups—notably, America's Jews," and he goes on to describe her "developing self-consciousness about this issue" (80).

26. As Slote notes, the idea for Scott's uplifting prose-poems seems to be taken from Cather's early days as a columnist for the *Nebraska State Journal* when she worked with Walt Mason, who wrote similar pieces in his column entitled "Important If True" ("Writer in Nebraska" 13).
27. Citing evidence such as this, Walter Benn Michaels in his book *Our America: Nativism, Modernism, and Pluralism* (1995) reads *The Professor's House* as a prominent example of "nativist modernism," a kind of American literature of the 1920s in which foreigners are symbolically excluded from American culture (48–52). Michaels finds this "hostility to assimilation" in Cather's work as she depicts "the emergence of culture not only as an aspect of American identity but as one of its determinants" (36). In other words, he sees Cather portraying American culture as already defined and closed to outsiders. While Michaels' argument is provocative in challenging accepted notions of the literature of the period, his reading of Cather is cut to fit into the neat split he sees between earlier Progressivism and the later literature of the 1920s. He skips over Cather's work of the 1910s, despite her frequent, sometimes troubling considerations of immigrants and anti-Semitic descriptions, many of which are noted above, and he ignores the ways in which Cather shows individuals shaping an American culture and identity that are very much in flux. While Michaels argues that nativist modernists note cultural differences only to suggest that there is no common basis for comparing members of different groups and hence exclude "alien" influences (137), Cather often judges immigrants as well as native-born Americans on the same basis, their ability to support the artist's efforts in shaping culture, as I show in my reading of *The Song of the Lark,* another work which Michaels passes over in his book.
28. These comments appeared in the Lincoln *Courier,* December 11, 1897, in reference to the actress Minnie Maddern Fiske. In the *Nebraska State Journal,* on March 10, 1895, Cather similarly wrote of the playwright and actor Clay Clement: "He has yet to pass over that treacherous isthmus which lies between the troubled changing tides of commercial art and the remote still

waters whose stars do not set and whose depths are not gauged" (*World* 192). In Pope's *An Essay on Man* (1733–1734), he writes at the beginning of Epistle II, "Know then thyself, presume not God to scan; / The proper study of Mankind is Man. / Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state / A Being darkly wise, and rudely great" (53).

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Anderson originally subtitled *Winesburg* "a group of tales of Ohio small town life" (qtd. in Ferres: 7). However, he later argued that it was a new American form: "The stories belonged together. I felt that, taken together, they made something like a novel, a complete story. . . . I have even sometimes thought that the novel form does not fit an American writer, that it is a form which had been brought in. What is wanted is a new looseness; and in *Winesburg* I had made it my own form. There were individual tales but all about lives in some way connected" (qtd. in "On *Winesburg*": 14).
2. Earlier commentators also linked the rise of modern media with this process of imagining communities that exist beyond the realm of everyday experience. In *Public Opinion* (2nd edition, 1932), Walter Lippmann states, "The function of a vocation, a great industry, a district, a nation is a concept, not an experience, and has to be imagined, invented, taught and believed" (304). In *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962), Marshall McLuhan claims, "Print, in turning the vernaculars into mass media, or closed systems, created the uniform centralizing forces of modern nationalism" (199).
3. Though many critics have compared Anderson with D.H. Lawrence, a writer he later admired, as Howe notes, Anderson had not yet read Lawrence when he wrote *Winesburg* (186–192).
4. For a succinct summary of Habermas's argument, see Craig Calhoun's introduction to *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (1992). For more on this topic, see also Raymond Williams's *The Long Revolution* (1961).
5. Elsewhere Benjamin specifically identifies the novel as the form of writing most responsible for "the decline of storytelling" because it has developed uniquely apart from the "oral tradition." He writes, "The storyteller takes what he tells from experience—his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale. The novelist has isolated himself. The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual" ("Storyteller" 87).
6. James Nagel and Hertha D. Wong, among others, have noted that the contemporary short story sequence (or short story cycle) can be seen as existing at this intersection between traditional oral forms and modernist experimentation. See the introduction to Nagel's *The Contemporary American Short-Story Cycle: The Ethnic Resonance of Genre* (2001) and Wong's

"Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine:* Narrative Communities and the Short Story Sequence" (1995).

7. Furthermore, given that the elderly man who appears in the introductory tableau has written an unpublished "The Book of the Grotesque," the same title that Anderson originally gave to *Winesburg,* it seems as though George is meant to be this man, and the book that follows is, by implication, the published version of this "lost" text. Though there is also a narrator in this opening tableau, this additional, shadowy narrator further suggests the complicated ways in which Anderson identifies with an older version of George.
8. See Howard Good's *Acquainted with the Night: The Image of Journalists in American Fiction, 1890–1930* (1986), pp. 72–76, for more on the importance of the small town paper as it was popularly conceived.
9. In "Anderson's Expressionist Art" (1990), David Stouck notes that Anderson's expressionism is also linked to elements of oral storytelling (36).
10. Anderson's description of Enoch's friends and his misgivings about the type of artist who enjoys talking more than anything else (168–169) prefigure the attitude and comments of a later friend of Anderson's, Ernest Hemingway, who would make similar comments about the artists of the Left Bank while a young reporter ("American Bohemians" 25) and throughout his career, most notably in his Noble Prize speech.
11. According to Edwin Fussell, as each character comes forward in *Winesburg,* "the book begins to take on some of the formal quality of a procession, imbued like a ritual pageant with silent and stately dignity" (108).
12. To take just one example, Anderson describes Louise Bentley, daughter of Jesse Bentley, by noting that much will have to be done before her story and the stories of other women can properly be understood and their lives improved (87).
13. See *Return to Winesburg: Selections from Four Years of Writing for a Country Newspaper* (1967) for a selection of Anderson's writing for these two papers. Ray Lewis White's introduction provides an account of how Anderson came to purchase these papers and the kind of work he later did for them.
14. Anderson collected much of his writing from his first year with the newspapers in *Hello Towns!* (1929). His writing under the name Buck Fever was later collected in *The Buck Fever Papers* (1971).
15. White describes how the printshop of Anderson's newspapers fulfilled this function as well, serving as "a social center for the town, rivaling the drugstore and the courthouse steps as a popular meeting place" ("Introduction" 15).
16. Some of Anderson's earlier comments on the value of the small town and country newspapers can be found in *Return to Winesburg.* See "An Answer" from February 26, 1931, pp. 179–182, "Lazy Newspapers," from August 13, 1931, pp. 195–199, and "Travel Notes," from November 19, 1931, pp.

203–205. In this last article, he also discusses how he lectured on this topic and found "a tremendous interest . . . particularly in universities where they have schools of journalism" (205).

17. Schudson describes this centralization of newspaper ownership and the increasing reliance on news services and pre-printed materials in *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (1978). See especially pp. 133–144.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. In *Hemingway: The Paris Years* (1989), Michael Reynolds quotes some of Hemingway's comments about the destructive effects of journalism but also suggests Hemingway's comments were misguided: "His journalism, he later insisted, should not be considered as part of his collected works, for he did not write it to last. Had he realized that his fiction and non-fiction flowed from the same well, he might have worried less" (118). Shelly Fisher Fishkin, among others, emphasizes the importance of the *Star*'s rules and "cablese" (137–138, 144).
2. For a thorough history of the complex composition and publication history of *In Our Time,* see Michael Reynolds's "Hemingway's *In Our Time:* The Biography of a Book" (1995).
3. Hemingway went to Paris on the advice of Sherwood Anderson, whom he had met in Chicago, and Anderson gave him letters of introduction to Pound and Stein (Reynolds, *Young Hemingway* 181–182, 252; *Paris Years* 14).
4. In fact, two vignettes from *in our time* did not become numbered interchapters in *In Our Time* but instead became the titled stories "A Very Short Story" and "The Revolutionist."
5. For more on this subject and for a thorough analysis of how earlier criticism has misread journalistic objectivity, see Chapter Two of Frus's book, "'News That Stays': Hemingway, Journalism, and Objectivity in Fiction." Frus rightly questions accepted ways of reading the role of journalism in Hemingway's fiction, but her supposition that "minimalist modernists" (including Cather, Anderson, and Hemingway) hide the context of their production and reify existing social structures misses, in my estimation, the complex ways in which these writers critically engage their historical moment and challenge existing ideas of literature, perception, and community.
6. In *The American Newsreel, 1911–1967* (1972), Raymond Fielding notes that the silent newsreel reached its high point from 1920 to1927, while the sound newsreel was most experimental and influential around the time of its inception, from 1927 to1932 (314–315).
7. In the November 1925, *New Republic,* Paul Rosenfeld writes, "We are given chiefly, at times with marvelous freshness and crispness, what the eyes sees and the ear hears" (19); Schuyler Ashley in *The Kansas City Star* of December 12, 1925, writes that Hemingway "always makes you *see* the thing he

writes about" (22; italics in original); an anonymous reviewer in Omaha's *World-Herald* of January 10, 1926, claims the interchapters are "taking the place perhaps of illustrations" (24). These and other reviews are reprinted in the "Reviews" section of *Critical Essays on Ernest Hemingway's* In Our Time (1983), edited by Michael S. Reynolds, pp. 13–26.

8. Harold Bloom follows Angus Fletcher in describing a similar effect of parataxis in Hemingway's syntax and the inflection of his sentences. He argues that in his best work Hemingway's sentences seem to be of the same order of intensity and interest, so that there is a sense of a deeper, more profound level of meaning below the surface (6).
9. See David Seed's "Media and Newsreels in Dos Passos' *U.S.A.*" (1984). See also, Meyer Levin's novel *Reporter* (1929), which also incorporates newspaper clips into the text.
10. For example, Reynolds writes that "the book is a series of long and short takes, close-ups and wide angles, creating a visual scrapbook of the age that spawned it. It is the repetition of thematic experiences that binds the collage together: war, violence, water, darkness, isolation, babies, and most centrally, failed relationships." In other words, while acknowledging the text's dynamic visual effects, he compares it to a static "scrapbook" or "collage" connected by thematic characteristics ("Biography" 47). Jackson J. Benson, following Earl Rovit, similarly emphasizes Hemingway's interest in perception as a self-reflective process: "This act of seeing is the central unifying force in *In Our Time;* it is the *modus* which brings together what superficially appear to be a number of different materials" (106). In considering the relationship between Hemingway's journalism and his fiction, Fishkin similarly describes how in his fiction Hemingway "would settle for nothing less than communicating a new way of seeing" (155). However, she ultimately privileges fiction over fact and values *In Our Time* for what its themes and language indicate about Hemingway's later novels. Likewise, Matthew Stewart writes that the interchapters, like the fragments of a cubist painting, "acquire multiple meanings from the context of the entire painting" (34). He describes how they "freeze the moment, objectifying it; and taken as a fragmentarily presented whole, they constitute a cubist picture of the period" (102). While Stewart offers an interesting reading of *In Our Time,* he largely stresses its value in revealing the terms of Hemingway's later fiction; for him, the continuity in Hemingway's writing "is to be found in Hemingway's themes and not in the experimental form of *In Our Time*" (110.) Robert M. Slabey comes closest to suggesting the implications of Hemingway's visual form in the way that I am pursuing. He writes, "In both chapters and stories there are parallels between present and past, maturity and youth, war and peace, death and life, bravery and cowardice. The relationship between the two is similar to that of a motion picture which has newsreel clips inserted at strategic moments within its dramatic action, for

either realistic background or ironic contrast" (83). Though Slabey offers a convincing, if limited, reading of the structure of *In Our Time,* he places more emphasis on the unity of the themes in the text and the way they anticipate Hemingway's later work rather than on the text's connections with its contemporary historical moment.

11. The American newsreel, unlike its European counterparts, relied on newspaper-like captions and lead stories and was most often staffed by former newspaper reporters and editors rather than filmmakers (Fielding 135–136).
12. The term "newsreel" replaced the more general "news film" by 1914 (Fielding 88), by which time the standard topics and form of the newsreel that would be used for the next 50 years had largely been developed (Fielding 310).
13. Though not much information is readily available about Shorty Wornall, he seems to be the same "Shorty" mentioned by Esther Lovejoy in her book, *Certain Samaritans* (2nd ed., 1933), an account of the early days of the American Women's Hospital which includes Lovejoy's first-hand description of the burning of Smyrna. See chapter fifteen, p. 139, and chapter eighteen, pp. 171–172.
14. See British Pathe Limited at www.britishpathe.com.
15. Fielding's book, the definitive history of the American newsreel, provides many valuable quotations from obscure and hard to find publications. This quotation is originally from Stuart Mackenzie's "How the Movie News Man Gets Pictures of World Events, *American Magazine,* January, 1924, p. 40.
16. This statement comes from Emmanuel Cohen's "The Business of International News by Motion Pictures," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* November 1926, p. 76.
17. Similarly, while royalty took advantage of the publicity the newsreel offered, they were careful to appear with proper dignity and decorum (Fielding 165–166). Hemingway, on the other hand, concludes his work with the trite words of a king watching his queen work like a commoner in the garden. Before the Sims Act banned interstate trafficking of fight films in 1912 (Fielding 60), the newsreel producers often rigged prizefights (Fielding 39), and in fact, the newsreels in general increasingly staged stories that relied more on sensation than facts. In "The Battler," a story that features Nick Adams, Hemingway presents a prizefighter, Ad Francis, but he gives his readers a sense of intimacy, accuracy, and psychological depth unavailable in most newsreels. See also Chapter Three of Fielding's book, "Faking the Early News Films."
18. According to Fielding, this statement comes from "The Historian of the Future," *Moving Picture World,* July 8, 1911, p. 1565; the writer is simply identified as "Henry."
19. Fielding identifies the sources of these two quotations as Stuart Legg's "The Cinema: The Coronation Films," *Spectator,* May 28, 1937, p. 991, and

Newton L. Meltzer's "Are Newsreels News?," *Hollywood Quarterly,* Vol. II (April, 1947), p. 270, respectively.

20. In fact, Hemingway would continue to deal with the importance of having the right voiceover, when, during the Spanish Civil War, he participated in the filming of the documentary *The Spanish Earth* (1937) with a group of his friends, including Dos Passos, who called themselves "The Contemporary Historians." After the group was dissatisfied with the commentary provided by Orson Welles, Hemingway did the voiceover for the film himself (Garrick 86). With the newsreel as its model, *In Our Time* shows Hemingway rehearsing many of the issues he would later explore in the making of this documentary film.
21. Nick appears in Chapter VI and in the stories "Indian Camp," "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," "The End of Something," "Three Day Blow," "The Battler," "Cross Country Snow," and the two parts of "Big Two-Hearted River." See my chapter above, "Sherwood Anderson's Imagined Communities," for a reading of George's role in *Winesburg, Ohio.*
22. Like most of the events from the Greco-Turkish War and the creation of the modern Turkish state, there are sharply different accounts and lingering, bitter controversies among Turks, Greeks, and Armenians. In my own research, I found Marjorie Housepian Dobkin's *Smyrna, 1922: The Destruction of a City* (2nd ed., 1988) to be very useful.
23. Though the speaker seems to be Hemingway's friend, "Chink" Dorman-Smith, Hemingway refers to descriptions of this scene himself in *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) (135).
24. David Seed similarly describes how Hemingway transformed this piece of journalism into the form it takes in *In Our Time.* He notes with some surprise, "The article is far more discursive and far less focused than anything which appears in *In Our Time*" ("The Picture of the Whole" 14).
25. In *Certain Samaritans,* Lovejoy also comments on this use of searchlights as ineffective protection for the refugees along the harbor in Smyrna. See chapters sixteen and seventeen, and chapter eighteen, p. 175. In *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception* (1989), Paul Virilio comments on the connection between such searchlights, the finders on guns, and the use of the camera in modern warfare (15).
26. For more on the extent of Anderson's influence on Hemingway, see Reynolds's *The Young Hemingway* (1986), particularly chapter seven, "The Last Robin: 1921."
27. Stanley Corkin also describes how Hemingway's text arises out of the same conditions as the cinema and engages positivist science and mechanized production. However, while I argue that *In Our Time* is influenced by the newsreel and ultimately challenges the limits of its methods, he argues that the text affirms a conservative perspective by naturalizing and hiding its cinematic techniques (Corkin 149).

28. See chapter six of Michael Robertson's *Stephen Crane, Journalism, and the Making of Modern America* (1997), "Journalism and the Making of Modern American Literature: Theodore Dreiser and Ernest Hemingway," for another take on the connection between Hemingway's journalism and the modernist style of *In Our Time.*
29. Fielding identifies the source of this quotation as *Moving Picture World,* July 29, 1911, p. 187.
30. The way Nick seems to move from private dreams to public life is similar to what Hemingway experienced when he returned to the United States from the war in Europe and stepped out of his fantasy of being a war hero and into the New York papers as the first American casualty on the Italian front (Reynolds, *Young Hemingway* 18–19). Likewise, having Nick both direct the camera and appear in front of it anticipates the moment in *The Spanish Earth* when Hemingway, who narrates the film, momentarily appears on the screen (Garrick 87).
31. The deleted material was published posthumously as "On Writing" in *The Nick Adams Stories* (1972).
32. It seems likely that Harold, after leaving home for Kansas City, will seek a job as a reporter at *The Kansas City Star,* the newspaper on which Hemingway himself worked. Hemingway's desire to avoid being too closely associated with Nick may explain why he made Harold rather than Nick the protagonist of "Soldier's Home," though Harold's return home from the war would chronologically fit with Nick's return. The fact that he did not change Harold's name or add any of his later stories about Nick to *In Our Time* when he added his new opening for the Scribner's edition lends support to the idea that Hemingway saw *In Our Time* as being unified through the fragments of Nick's life story that he had originally included.
33. In this way, *In Our Time* tends towards the individual purity of the lyric poem. Wallace Stevens, who came to blows with Hemingway in 1936, continued to admire this aspect of his writing and wrote in a later letter, "Most people don't think of Hemingway as a poet, but obviously he is a poet and I should say, offhand, the most significant of living poets, so far as the subject of EXTRAORDINARY ACTUALITY is concerned" (*Stevens* 411–412). Robert Penn Warren describes Hemingway as a "lyric rather than a dramatic writer" ("Hemingway" 28). Similarly, Wendolyn E. Tetlow argues that the coherence of *In Our Time* comes from its lyric structure (13–14).
34. While in *Heart of Darkness* (1902) Joseph Conrad offers a similarly limited view of women, the conclusion of his novel serves as a useful contrast with *In Our Time.* When Marlow returns home, he meets Kurtz's "Intended" and lies to her; unlike Nick, he recognizes that he is unable to escape from social relations and a shared language tainted by the inevitable "flavour of mortality in lies" (90).

35. For example, noted journalist and commentator Walter Lippmann, writing around this time in his well-known book *Public Opinion* (2nd edition, 1932), declares that there is no real "authority to direct the journalist's mind when he passes from the news to the vague realm of truth. . . . His version of the truth is only his version. How can he demonstrate the truth as he sees it? He cannot demonstrate it, any more than Mr. Sinclair Lewis can demonstrate that he has told the whole truth about *Main Street.* And the more he understands his own weaknesses, the more ready he is to admit that where there is no objective test, his own opinion is in some vital measure constructed out of his own stereotypes, according to his own code, and by the urgency of his own interest. He knows that he is seeing the world through subjective lenses" (360).
36. See Chapter Four below, "Divided Identities, Desiring Reporters in Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men* and James Agee and Walker Evans's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.*"
37. The introduction at the galley stage is reproduced by Svoboda in Appendix B (131–137). For Jake's comments on these topics, see especially Svoboda, pp. 133–134.
38. For Jake's comments on his transition from a newspaperman to a novelist, see Svoboda, pp.134–135.
39. This early notebook is also stored in the John F. Kennedy Library. Svoboda describes this material from the notebook in his Appendix A. See also Svoboda, p. 38.
40. See chapter six of Svoboda's book, "Late Revisions: Hemingway and Fitzgerald." As Svoboda demonstrates, Hemingway did not strictly follow Fitzgerald's advice: He decided to keep the material on Robert Cohn that Fitzgerald disliked and made additional cuts on his own. Svoboda reproduces Fitzgerald's letter in Appendix C.
41. Some of these commentators were people who recognized themselves in the novel. The novelist Harold Loeb, Lady Duff Twysden, her fiancé Pat Guthrie, the humorist Donald Ogden Stewart, Hemingway's friend Bill Smith, and Ford Maddox Ford, all are identified by name in Hemingway's early drafts. These drafts also include his wife Hadley Richardson Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and F. Scott Fitzgerald, none of whom appears in fictional form in the published version (Svoboda 8).
42. Svoboda also emphasizes this distinction elsewhere, noting that Hemingway includes descriptions of Jake and Bill's fishing trip "not as part of the sort of journalistic account that the novel has sometimes been viewed as, but for reasons that are important to the overall effect it will have in juxtaposition to other actions of the characters" (15). Later, he stresses that "even in the first draft of *The Sun Also Rises,* Hemingway carefully distanced himself from his fictional narrator; and this distancing is one thing that makes the novel much more than a simple journalistic recounting of events" (84).

43. Another self-reflexive trace in the novel occurs when Jake is in Spain. Describing a visit he makes to the town archivist who buys tickets for the bullfights for him every year, he concludes by admitting that this incident "has nothing to do with the story" (96), seemingly referring to the novel itself.
44. This conversation obviously plays off the introduction that Hemingway deleted. There Jake comments on the deficiencies of "irony and pity" in the story he recounts. See Svoboda 133–134.
45. Edmund Wilson comments on just this difference. Writing of Nick in "Big Two-Hearted River," he asks, "Is it possible to attain to such sensuous bliss merely through going alone to the woods: smoking, fishing, and eating, with no thought about anyone else or about anything one has ever done or ever will be obliged to do?" (217). He then adds that "in *The Sun Also Rises,* all the things that are wrong with human life are there on the holiday, too" (218).
46. Hemingway often affirmed this goal of making fiction part of experience (Plimpton 125). In a 1934 article, he writes, "All good books are alike in that they are truer than if they had really happened and after you have finished reading one you will feel that all that happened to you and afterwards it all belongs to you; the good and the bad, the ecstasy, the remorse and sorrow, the people and the places and how the weather was" ("Old Newsman" 184). He makes similar observations in *The Green Hills of Africa* (1935), a work that itself blurs the distinctions between fiction and fact: "I still had the Sevastopol book of Tolstoi and in the same volume I was reading a story called "The Cossacks" that was very good . . . and I was living in that Russia again. I was thinking how real that Russia of the time of our Civil War was, as real as any other place, as Michigan, or the prairie north of town and the woods around Evans's game farm, of how, through Turgenieff, I knew that I had lived there, as I had been in the family Buddenbrooks, and had climbed in and out of her window in *Le Rouge et le Noir,* or the morning we had come in the gates of Paris and seen Salcède torn apart by the horses at the Place de Grèves" (108).
47. The story is "The Crystal Trench" which was published in *The Four Corners of the World* (1917).
48. For more on this topic, see especially Chapter One, "The Journalist, the Immigrant, and Willa Cather's Popular Modernism."
49. See Wallace Stevens's *The Necessary Angel: Essays on Reality and Imagination* (1951).

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Like other recent critics, I use "Zora" and "James" to make a critical point rather than to suggest a personal sense of connection with Hurston or Agee. As Sonnet H. Retman notes, an uncritical use of "Zora" can reproduce "an essentialist stereotype of African-American women as all-giving, earth-mothers

who are rooted firmly in a 'folk' spirituality." She suggests that "to some degree, Hurston colludes with this discourse, particularly in her attempts to gain authority through invocations of authenticity as both a scholarly folklorist and woman born of the 'folk'" (160). All citations for Retman are from "The 'Real' Collective in New Deal Documentary and Ethnography: The Federal Writers' Project, the Farm Security Administration, Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men* and James Agee's and Walker Evans' *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.*" Copyright 1997 by Sonnet H. Retman and quoted by permission of the author.

2. Interestingly, while Hurston first asked Ruth Benedict, whom she knew from her Barnard days, for her input on *Mules and Men,* she later offered Benedict some of her own advice. In a letter to Benedict, Hurston first describes how *Mules and Men* is "not for scientists, but for the average reader. Hence the lack of documentation and the inter-story dialogue." She then advises Benedict to do a similar book on Indians and suggests, "It would be worth money" (*Letters* 329).
3. The recently published *Every Tongue Got to Confess: Negro Tales from the Gulf States* (2001) gives some idea of what her earlier folklore manuscript looked like.
4. Of course Agee's book was complicated by his tortuous struggles to shape his material and his difficulties with finding a publisher, and its reception was affected by its belated publication in 1941, just as the nation was preparing to go to war and most readers were losing their taste for social criticism.
5. In his criticism of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* Tom Wolfe, however, is defensive in distancing Agee's book from what he sees as the originality of New Journalism. Oddly praising Agee for "going to the mountains and moving in briefly with a mountain family," Wolfe goes on to criticize Agee for his "extreme personal diffidence" and limited perspective. He writes, "Reading between the lines you get a picture of a well-educated and extremely shy man . . . too polite, too diffident to ask personal questions of these humble folks or even draw them out" (44). Though *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*—like Wolfe's anthology, *The New Journalism* (1973)—is situated in the context of its times, its participant reporting, iconoclasm, and confrontational stance towards journalistic conventions and the expectations of its readers all point ahead to New Journalism. While Agee is self-conscious about his obligations to his subjects and his literary ambitions, the way he scorns his original reporting assignment, employer, and publisher, is similar to the way that Hunter S. Thompson similarly uses specific journalistic assignments as the jumping off point for books like *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1971).
6. David G. Nicholls summarizes many of these readings at the beginning of his useful article "Migrant Labor, Folklore, and Resistance in Hurston's Polk County: Reframing *Mules and Men*" (1999).

7. In Hurston's case, this doubleness more obviously relates to the conception of "double-consciousness" that W.E.B. DuBois describes in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). As Carla Kaplan notes, Hurston, who knew DuBois and often rebelled against his perceived authority, "explores secrecy and dissembling as fundamental to a tradition of double voice and masking, devices central to African American literature since its inception" (22). See also the introduction to Susan Edwards Meisenhelder's *Hitting a Straight Lick with a Crooked Stick: Race and Gender in the Work of Zora Neale Hurston* (1999). As I argue below, in Agee's case as well the double-identity of his reporter reflects, in part, divisive race relations.
8. See Agee's *A Death in the Family* (1957).
9. In addition to the two thorough biographies on Hurston, concise chronologies of her life can be found in the Library of America editions of her work and in *Zora Neale Hurston: A Life in Letters* (2002).
10. *Mules and Men* combines Hurston's two trips from 1927 and 1928 into one narrative. The first trip was sponsored by Carter G. Woodson, director of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (Boyd 142); the second trip was sponsored by Hurston's patron, Mrs. Charlotte Osgood Mason (Boyd 159). See below for my comments on Hurston's relationship with Mason.
11. See Ann Douglas's introduction to *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s,* "Orphans: Loss and Liberation" (1995).
12. Roy Stryker typified this process in his efforts as head of the FSA's project to create a photographic record of the nation: "Stryker emphasized the nation through an invocation of the anonymous region: in terms of production, he insisted upon a centralized office and archive, in spite of the FSA's eleven regional offices" (Retman 122–123).
13. See Chapter Two, "Sherwood Anderson's Imagined Communities," for more on how Anderson also taps into the oral tradition of storytelling and incorporates a pre-modern form into a modernist text.
14. In Chapter Two, I offer a reading of the ways in which an idea of "sophistication" in one individual's life can grow from an understanding of shared collective experience.
15. Through this split identification, both writers largely avoid the economic tourism that William Stott finds in such documentary works of the 1930s as *You Have Seen Their Faces* (1937) by Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White and *An American Exodus* (1939) by Dorothea Lange and Paul Taylor (51) and that Retman finds creeping into the WPA guides (22).
16. It is worth noting that Agee's depiction of the porch as a place of individual meditation contrasts directly with Hurston's depiction of the porch as a place where individuals share stories (Wall 663).
17. For example, when a group of black singers is forced by a white landlord to stop on their way to church and sing hymns and a bawdy song, then listen

to sexual jokes, James sees in them a sense of dignity and propriety absent from the white landlord and tenants (28–31). Likewise, in the famous scene in which James and Walker encounter a black couple walking near a church, their white clothes and apparent purity is used as a foil for James's own guilt and divided feelings about the intrusiveness of his reporting (40–43).

18. In suggesting that authentic experience is based on closeness to the land, Agee participates in a similar strain of anti-modernism as the Agrarians, though he was by no means in total agreement with many of the premises of Agrarian criticism. For example, in one letter to Father James Harold Flye, he writes that "my hair stood on end both with interest and at times intense disagreement (on many points in this you and I couldn't agree), reading Donald Davidson's article about some aspects of the so-called Negro Problem" (*Letters to Flye* 148).
19. In "Post/Modern Documentary: Orwell, Agee and the New Reportage" (1997), Keith Williams ascribes the distinctiveness of the text to this handling of consciousness: "Agee acknowledged the ideological impasse in which his own discourse was caught: its very subjects were disabled from fully understanding his self-conscious analysis of their predicament by the facts of that predicament itself as they were lived. . . . *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* may not have succeeded in negotiating all the disjunctions in consciousness between the creators, subjects and audiences of thirties documentary discourse, but its transitional post/modern form strove to objectify them more fully than perhaps any other reportage . . . of the period" (177). Stott also comments on how Agee's complex consciousness distinguishes him from the simple consciousness of the tenants, as evident in his ability to don different disguises (274–275).
20. In beginning a later lie that complements this one, Jim Allen, another Eatonville resident, tells his listeners that the old expressions have meanings only some are able to recognize (124). In the story he tells, a son returns home after seven years of schooling, and his father tells his mother not to worry anymore about their troublesome cow—he is confident that the son will know exactly what to do about it. However, when the son tells his father to sit on the cow to calm it, the father bounces off out of control, ending the story with a comical commentary on the value of formal education (125).
21. Writing to Carl Van Vechten, Hurston explains that her publisher, J.B. Lippincott Company, wanted something more than just her folk tales, a longer "$3.50 book" (*Letters* 295), and in the end, she added the hoodoo section from material previously published as a lengthy journal article, "Hoodoo in America" (Boyd 280). Writing to Boas, she states that Lippincott "wants a very readable book that the average reader can understand, at the same time one that will have value as a reference book" (*Letters* 308).
22. Given that Mason is mentioned in the introduction, it seems logical to assume that she is the white woman Hurston mentions here rather than

one of the other influential white women in Hurston's life, such as Fannie Hurst, the novelist and Hurston's friend and one-time employer, or Annie Nathan Meyer, one of her benefactors while she was at Barnard and the woman to whom the book is dedicated. Boyd also concurs in identifying this woman as Mason in her reading of this scene (183).

23. See chapter nineteen of Boyd's *Wrapped in Rainbows,* "Godmother's Rules."
24. Hurston also uses limited references to whites in "Folk Tales" to suggest how language signifies differently for different audiences. For example, in the "John" and "Massa" stories, the ingenuity of the slave, John, in outsmarting his masters suggests a parallel with Hurston's own inventiveness and playfulness in her writing (Meisenhelder 19).
25. Finding a common function in all kinds of communication, including journalism and literature, Williams writes, "Since our way of seeing things is literally our way of living, the process of communication is in fact the process of community: the sharing of common meanings, and hence common activities and purposes; the offering, reception and comparison of new meanings, leading to the tension and achievements of growth and change" (55).
26. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein describe a similar division between centers of consumption and peripheries of production in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (1991).
27. Agee goes on to attribute greater creativity to southern blacks in creating similar artifacts, as he does elsewhere in the text as well (263–264).
28. In "The Ambiguous Politics of the Aesthetic" (1999), Sean McCann makes a similar point about Agee's paradoxical position: "Wanting not just to document but to capture and celebrate the beauty latent in the lives of the rural poor, he can turn only to the aesthetic vocabulary whose 'false beauty' he distrusts. Indeed, he acknowledges that he sees the real beauty of his farmers' lives, which they cannot articulate themselves, only because of his very schooling in the false beauty they both distrust. Wanting to deny the shallow superiority of art, then, he turns the rural poor into artists of their own lives" (52).
29. Among Agee's idiosyncrasies in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* is his use of lower-case letters for the days of the week.
30. As Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson show in *And Their Children After Them* (1989), their book-length investigation of what became of Agee's and Evans's subjects, even tenant farming, that seemingly immutable system of misery and exploitation, would virtually disappear within a generation after the publication of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.*

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. "New Dawn" is Copyright 1997 by the Estate of Robert Penn Warren. Reprinted by permission of William Morris Agency, LLC on behalf of the

Author. The poem is reprinted in *The Collected Poems of Robert Penn Warren* (1998), pp. 549–556. The lines quoted here appear on p. 554.

2. The original introduction is included in the "restored" edition of the novel as Appendix A. All references to *All the King's Men* are taken from the originally published edition of the novel.
3. See *All the King's Men: Three Stage Versions* (2000).
4. From the beginning, *All the King's Men* was described as a hard-boiled novel (Blotner 228); more recently, it has been described as a "unique *noir* novel" (Zizek 52).
5. In "The Pastness of *All the King's Men*" (1980), Glen M. Clark notes how Warren manipulates the historical dates of Long's career to create a rhetorical significance that includes the reader in the destruction the novel anticipates (554–556).
6. While Warren was taken to task by early critics for not criticizing Huey Long more explicitly, his characterization of Willie Stark is typical of Warren's ambivalent admiration and distrust for the "Great Men" of history and the role of government in everyday life, and it certainly reflects his own misgivings about not only Long and Mussolini but also Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal (Ruppersburg 10–13).
7. See Warren's poem "Wind and Gibbon" for a similar take on his views of history (*Collected* 580).
8. In *Robert Penn Warren and The American Imagination* (1990), Hugh Ruppersburg accurately notes, "History for Warren is always perceived, experienced, and acted out by the individual" (21).
9. See the beginning of Chapter Three, "The Camera Eye and Reporter's Conscience in Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises,*" for a reading of how this popular conception of the male reporter influenced Hemingway's early career as a writer. For a consideration of the connections between conceptions of journalism and realism, see the introduction to John C. Hartstock's *A History of American Literary Journalism: The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form* (2000).
10. This was particularly true of the most notable of the hard-boiled writers of this period, such as James M. Cain, Dashiell Hammett, and Raymond Chandler. Describing Hammett, Sean McCann writes of how he tried to reach "an elite readership at odds both with the cultural stewardship of literary tradition and with the prominence of the commercial mass media" (93). McCann also describes how these hard-boiled writers, like the writers I am describing in this study, were "imagining a democratic culture in a literary marketplace shaped by the institutions of mass communication and professional expertise" (4). While the hard-boiled writers McCann examines address legal questions and issues of justice, the writers I am describing in this study more clearly engage journalism as the means of examining transformations in mass communication and issues of representation.

11. Jack, in typical hard-boiled fashion, initially scorns both a popular readership and academic criticism. While in his relationship with Lois he mocks slick magazines, in his relationship with Anne Stanton he associates her increasingly passionless life with her reading of critically accepted fiction and nonfiction (308).
12. See chapter six of Amy Kaplan's *The Social Construction of American Realism* (1988), "The Sentimental Revolt of *Sister Carrie,*" for more on this subject.
13. In a later novel, *The Cave* (1959), Warren similarly considers the domesticity portrayed in picture magazines, as evident when one of the characters imagines the future of his pregnant daughter and the baby's father: "Then, in his mind, he saw Jo-Lea sitting with a baby in her arms, her head bowed in a gentle light to look at the baby's face, and Monty Harrick, who was sort of a nice-looking boy, seated at a table, leaning over a book. He thought it was just like an advertisement, a life-insurance advertisement maybe. He thought of it now, not as a fantasy, but as a picture, in color, in beautiful, rich, subdued color, full-page, in a big magazine, perhaps in a Christmas issue. The sweetness flooded his heart" (397).
14. For a feminist reading of Warren's female characters and a fuller consideration of Anne Stanton's character, see Lucy Ferris' *Sleeping with the Boss: Female Subjectivity and Narrative Pattern in Robert Penn Warren* (1997).
15. For a brief look at how Warren compares to other "political writers," see Chapter Two of Orville Prescott's *In My Opinion: An Inquiry into the Contemporary Novel,* "The Political Novel: Warren, Orwell, Koestler" (1952).
16. See Part I, Chapter Four, of *1984* for a description of Winston's work at the Ministry of Truth; see Part II, chapter ten, for a description of the apartment and their capture.
17. See Leo Marx's classic study *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (1964).
18. Like James Agee, Warren seems to place black witnesses on a higher moral ground than white figures, though in doing so he also silences them and makes them merely functional rather than fully drawn characters. This is particularly evident in Jack's digression on Cass Mastern. There, he recounts how Phebe, a slave owned by Duncan Trice, is aware of the adultery that takes place and Duncan's suicide and is subsequently sold down the river by Annabelle Trice (175- 176). While Phebe's punishment serves as a judgment on Annabelle's affair with Cass, and while her light skin color serves as a judgment on Duncan's own probable adultery, Phebe's voice is never presented directly in the novel.
19. Warren himself would be criticized for writing with the movies too much in mind after the success of the 1949 film version of *All the King's Men* (Blotner 264).

20. Later, the speed off the car again causes Jack to consider himself from another perspective, and he perceives the jealousy of the men in the small towns who watch as a car "as big as hearse" speeds off into the night (37).
21. In this way, Warren anticipates the containment strategies that John Hersey uses in *Hiroshima* (1946). Describing Hersey's work, Alan Nadel writes, "The fixed relationship between events and their historical frames had to be stable, and had in turn to stabilize the difference between Other and Same in global and domestic scenarios, personal and political relationships, social and sexual economies" (67).
22. Ruppersburg makes this point about a similar clock that appears in Warren's later novel *Flood* (1963): "The big clock in the town square has long been stopped at 8:35 (like the watches found in Hiroshima, fused to a stop at 8:16)" (175). See above for a comparison of the Cold War themes in *All the King's Men* and *Flood.*
23. Warren also used a similar structure in his second novel, *At Heaven's Gate* (1943), as the younger Jerry Calhoun observes the older Bogan Murdock and becomes involved in his affairs. However, *At Heaven's Gate* also focuses on Murdock's daughter, Sue Murdock, and recounts the experiences and observations of Ashby Wyndham, so that the direct pairing of observer and observed is less prominent than it is in *All the King's Men.*
24. See, in particular, Agee's contemporary reflection on the dropping of the atomic bomb, "Victory: The Peace," which was published in *Time* on August 20, 1945 and reprinted in *James Agee: Selected Journalism* (1985).
25. As noted above, *All the King's Men,* like *The Great Gatsby,* was initially conceived as a play, and Warren, like Fitzgerald, only decided to use a first-person narrator after he was far into the writing of his novel (Blotner 223).
26. As Ruppersburg notes of *Who Speaks for the Negro?,* "Very much a topical, even journalistic work, it compares favorably with other examples of the New Journalism which had begun to appear during the mid-1960s" (131). He also notes, "Warren's 'journalism' often resembles the work of John Hersey, author of *Hiroshima* and *The Algiers Hotel Incident,* to whom Warren dedicated his poem 'New Dawn,' about the bombing of Hiroshima" (187, n.3).
27. See Tom Wolfe's *New Journalism* (1973) for the most well-known collection of New Journalism and for Wolfe's attempt to define and defend New Journalism as a literary movement. See Phyllis Frus's *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative: The Timely and the Timeless* (1994) for an interesting reading of New Journalism in the context of earlier connections between journalism and American fiction.
28. See Chapter Five of Morris Dickstein's *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties,* "The Working Press, the Literary Culture, and the New Journalism."

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Index

A

Agee, James:
- education and background, 2, 130–131, 137–138, 140-141, 222n28
- as a journalist, 1–2, 126, 128, 131–132, 135, 146, 151, 160, 225n24
- works:
  - *A Death in the Family*, 220n8
  - *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Three Tenant Families:*
    - composition of, 1-2, 133, 139–140, 146, 162, 219n4
    - and developments in journalism, 128, 135, 219n5
    - gender and sexuality issues in, 130, 137, 153, 220n17
    - and the Great Depression, 124–125, 127–128, 132, 136, 167-169
    - kinds of language in, 126, 133, 139-141, 157
    - as modernist text, 1-3, 126, 128–129, 146, 162-163
    - photographs in, 76, 155-157
    - and questions of genre, 125, 128–129, 146, 168, 221n18
    - and race, 137, 220n7, 220n17, 222n27, 224n18
    - readings of cultural artifacts in, 130, 133, 154–163, 168, 202
    - reception of, 3, 126, 128-130, 132
    - reporter "James" in, 1-2, 5, 12, 125, 127-128, 130, 132-133, 135–140, 146, 150–151, 153, 156–159, 161–164, 167–169, 218n1
    - subjects of, 1–2, 126, 136–137, 139–141, 156-163, 168-169, 221n19
  - "Victory: The Peace," 225n24

Anderson, Benedict, 11–12, 50, 62–63, 59, 68–70, 95, 205n8

Anderson, David D., 77

Anderson, Sherwood:
- on developments in journalism, 65–66, 75–81
- work in journalism, 76–77, 79–80
- works:
  - *The Buck Fever Papers*, 211n14
  - *Dark Laughter,*110
  - *Hello Towns!*, 211n14
  - *Home Town*, 5, 77–81
  - *Perhaps Women*, 78
  - *Poor White*, 51
  - *Puzzled America*, 76
  - *Return to Winesburg: Selections from Four Years of Writing for a Country,* 211n13, 211n16
  - *Windy McPherson's Son*, 51
  - *Winesburg, Ohio*
    - on community, 5, 49–52, 55–56, 61–62, 65–66, 69–76
    - depictions of the newspaper, 49–50, 53–56, 58–59, 61–66, 68–69
    - and developments in journalism, 55–56, 63, 124

and gender and sexuality, 53–55, 57, 70–74, 211n12
historical context of, 51, 53–55, 63, 75
on language, 57–58, 64–65, 70–73
and modernism, 56–57, 60–61
narrator's role in, 63–67, 211n7
and oral storytelling, 60–62
as short story sequence, 49–50, 54–55, 60–61,
stories in:
"Adventure," 66, 70–73
"The Book of the Grotesque," 59, 71–72, 75, 211n7
"Death," 72
"Departure," 70, 72–75
"Godliness," 63–65, 70
"Hands," 56–57
"Loneliness," 66–69, 75
"A Man of Ideas," 64–66
"Nobody Knows," 73–74
"Sophistication," 70–75
"The Untold Lie," 57–58, 65, 70, 74
George Willard's role in, 49–50, 52, 55–57, 61–62, 65–78, 80–81, 93, 100
See also Ernest Hemingway and Sherwood Anderson
Arnold, Matthew, 18–19, 32, 44, 207n9, 208n21
Ashdown, Paul, 126–127

B

Baker, Sheridan Warner, 123
Balibar, Etienne, 222n26
Benedict, Ruth, 131, 219n2
Benjamin, Walter, 10–11, 58–63, 65, 76–77, 80, 206n6, 210n5
Benson, Jackson J., 213n10
Bergreen, Laurence, 2–4, 126, 128, 131, 133
Bloch, Marc, 95
Bloom, Harold, 213n8
Blotner, Joseph, 172, 195, 223n4, 225n25,

Boas, Franz, 9, 127, 131, 135, 138, 140, 143–144, 148–150, 221n21
Bourdieu, Pierre, 4, 21, 23, 146
Bourke-White, Margaret, 220n15
Boxwell, D.A. 150
Boyd, Valerie, 126–127, 129, 131–132, 149, 153, 220n10, 221n21, 221n22, 222n23
Brandon, Ruth, 207n10
Brown, Charles Brockden, 199
"The Burning of Smyrna," 91, 93, 106, 214n14

C

Cain, James M., 223n10
Caldwell, Erskine, 220n15
Calhoun, Craig, 210n4
Cather, Willa:
on advertising, 14, 16–17, 30–32, 34–39
on American cultural identity, 18–20, 24–26, 29–31, 34–37, 40, 46
on commerce, 25–26, 32–33, 36–40, 42–43, 46–47, 207n10
on developments in journalism, 13, 15, 30, 124
education and background, 13–14
on immigrants and immigration, 13, 16, 19, 24–26, 29–33, 36, 39–40, 42, 45–47, 206n8, 207n13, 208n25
as modernist and "popular modernist," 13, 20–21, 37–38, 40, 45–47, 126, 184
work as a journalist, 13–15, 20, 26, 209n28
works:
"Ardessa,"206n4
"Behind Singer Tower," 15–20, 206n7, 207n10
"The Burglar's Christmas,"206n4
"The Count of Crow's Nest," 206n1
"Dance at Chevalier's," 206n4
"The Diamond Mine," 30–35, 208n20
"Flavia and Her Artists," 206n4
"A Gold Slipper," 208n23
The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy and the History of Christian Science, 206n5

"A Lost Lady," 43
"Miss Jewett," 46
My *Ántonia*, 199
My Autobiography, 206n5
My Mortal Enemy, 15, 41
"The Novel Démeublé," 22–23
One of Ours, 40, 43
The Professor's House, 5, 20, 41–46, 124, 126, 208n25, 209n27
"Scandal," 30, 35–40, 208n23
The Song of the Lark, 20–30, 39, 43, 45, 209n27
"The Willing Muse," 206n4
Chandler, Raymond, 223n10
Clark, Glen M., 223n5
Conrad, Joseph, 216n34
Corkin, Stanley, 215n27
Covarrubias, Miguel, 150
Crane, Stephen, 8, 84, 205n4
Cullick, Jonathan S., 176–177

D

Dickstein, Morris, 225n28
Dobkin, Marjorie Housepian, 215n22
Dos Passos, John, 9, 21, 30, 88, 133, 215n20, 217n41
Douglas, Ann, 220n11
Down, M. Catherine, 15, 206n2, 206n3, 208n22
Dreiser, Theodore, 21, 186
DuBois, W.E.B., 220n1

E

Eliot, T.S., 56
Evans, Walker, 135, 141, 155–157, 160–161

F

Fauset, Arthur Huff, 138
Fenton, Charles, 84–86, 90
Fern, Fanny, 8
Ferris, Lucy, 224n15
Fielding, Raymond, 87–89, 91–92, 101, 107, 212n6, 214n11, 214n12, 214n15, 214n17, 214n18, 214n19, 216n29
Fishkin, Shelley Fisher, 85–87, 100, 104–106, 212n1, 213n10
Fitzgerald, F. Scott, 111, 199–201, 217n40, 217n41, 225n25
Fletcher, Angus, 213n8
Flye, Father James Harold, 2, 137, 139–140, 221n18
Franklin, Benjamin, 8, 55
Friedan, Betty, 185
Front Page, 177
Frus, Phyllis, 22–23, 85, 108, 158, 205n6, 212n4, 225n27
Fussell, Edwin, 211n11
Fussell, Paul, 8–9, 95

G

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr., 148
Good, Howard, 84, 211n8

H

Habermas, Jürgen, 10–12, 59, 205n7, 210n4
Hammett, Dashiell, 223n10
Hartstock, John C., 223n9
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 199
Hegeman, Susan, 129–130, 132, 146
Hemenway, Robert E., 128–129, 132, 138, 154, 163–164
Hemingway, Ernest
and Sherwood Anderson, 83, 92–94, 100, 102, 110–111, 124, 211n10, 215n26
and developments in journalism, 5, 84, 87–89, 91–93, 101, 106–108, 121–122
works:
Death in the Afternoon, 215n23
The Green Hills of Africa, 218n46
In Our Time:
authenticity of the newsreel, 91–93, 101, 106–107, 214n17
and the burning of Smyrna, 90–91, 93, 215n22, 215n25
cinematic and visual elements of, 86–90, 93, 100, 103–105, 213n10, 215n27
composition of, 84–86, 89–91, 215n24
and contemporary science, 96–100, 103

language of, 85–87, 90, 92–94, 100–102, 104–105
reception of, 87–88, 212n7, 213n10
relation of fact and fiction, 84–87, 100–101, 105–107
role of Nick Adams in, 83, 92–93, 99–107, 216n30, 216n32 *See also* Jake Barnes in relation to Nick Adams
stories and interchapters in:
"The Battler," 214n17, 215n21
"Big Two–Hearted River," 83, 93, 101–107, 110–111, 114, 116–117, 123, 215n21
Chapter I, 91–92
Chapter II, 90
Chapter V, 90
Chapter VI, 101–102, 215n21
Chapter XIV, 86
"Cross-Country Snow," 106, 215n21
"The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," 215n21
"The End of Something," 215n21
"Indian Camp," 215n21
"L'Envoi," 83, 89, 93, 107, 115
"On the Quai at Smyrna," 89–91, 93–94, 101, 107
"Out of Season," 105
"The Revolutionist," 212n4
"Soldier's Home," 101–105, 216n32
"Three Day Blow," 215n21
"A Very Short Story," 212n4
depictions of war, 91–96, 101–103, 121
"On Writing," 216n31
Selected Letters, 1917–1961, 87, 90
The Sun Also Rises:
composition process, 109–112, 217n41
Jake Barnes:
as participant reporter, 108–116, 121–123, 125, 188, 202
in relation to Nick Adams, 110–111, 116–117, 124, 218n45
as reporter and writer, 83, 108–118, 120–123, 176, 217n37, 217n38, 218n43, 218n44
and language, 107, 117–118, 123–124
relation of fact and fiction, 83, 112, 117–123, 217n41, 217n42
Torrents of Spring, 110–111
works of journalism, 84–86, 89–90, 94, 103–104, 218n46
Hersey, John, 199, 225n21, 225n26
Herskovits, Melville, 131
His Girl Friday, 177
Howe, Irving, 51–53, 60, 210n3
Howells, William Dean, 8, 183
Hurst, Fannie, 221n22
Hurston, Zora Neale:
education and background, 130–132, 135, 138–139, 141–143, 147, 149
as a journalist, 127–129
works:
Every Tongue Got to Confess: Negro Tales from the Gulf States, 219n3
Jonah's Gourd Vine, 126
Mules and Men:
composition of, 145, 147–148, 220n10, 221n21
and folklore, 126, 129, 131–132, 134, 142–145, 147, 149, 152–153, 164–167, 221n20, 222n24
gender issues in, 129–130, 139, 153
and the Great Depression, 124, 128, 132, 167–169
and hoodoo, 129, 134, 147–150, 221n21
kinds of language in, 134–135, 141–143, 145, 153, 165
and questions of genre, 125, 129, 145
and race, 128–129, 138–139, 142–144, 148–150, 153, 163, 220n7

readings of cultural artifacts in, 130, 154–155, 163–169
reception of, 126, 128–129, 132, 134
reporter "Zora" in, 5, 125, 128–130, 134–139, 141–145, 147–150, 152–153, 163–169, 202, 218n1
the song "John Henry" in, 165–166, 168
subjects of, 126, 134, 136, 139, 141–145, 152–153, 163–165
Tell My Horse, 134
Their Eyes Were Watching God, 134
Zora Neale Hurston: A Life in Letters, 220n9
Huyssen, Andreas, 4–5, 208n18

I

Irving, Washington, 199
James, Henry, 8, 21, 26, 99, 199
Jewett, Sarah Orne, 14, 46
journalism:
and advertising, 11–12, 14, 16–17, 30–32, 34–39, 78, 157, 178, 193
development of, 5–9, 13–15, 30, 55–56, 63, 65–66, 75–81, 84, 87–89, 91–93, 101, 106–118, 121–124,128–129, 135, 183–184, 203–204, 208n19, 212n17, 214n11, 219n5, 225n26, 225n27, 225n28
and literary history, 2–12, 21–23, 49–51, 68–70, 128, 183, 199–200, 203–204, 211n8, 212n5

J

Joyce, James, 3, 56, 73, 94, 102, 126

K

Kalaidjian, Walter, 4–5
Kaplan, Amy, 224n12
Kaplan, Carla, 220n7
Kazin, Alfred, 9
Kennedy, J. Gerald, 49–50, 61–62
Kundera, Milan, 191

L

Lange, Dorothea, 220n15
Lawrence, D.H., 210n3
Levin, Meyer, 213n9
Lippmann, Walter, 7, 210n2, 217n35
Lovejoy, Esther Pohl, 214n13, 215n25
Luce, Henry, 131
Lynn, Kenneth S., 84

M

Maharidge, Dale, 2, 222n30
Mailer, Norman, 204
Malcolm, Janet, 205n1
Marx, Leo, 224n17
Mason, A.E.W., 119, 218n47
Mason, Charlotte Osgood, 148–149, 152, 220n10, 221n22
May, Elaine Tyler, 177, 181, 184–185, 192
McCann, Sean, 44–45, 183–184, 207n9, 222n28, 223n10
McLuhan, Marshall, 210n2
Mead, Margaret, 126
Meisenhelder, Susan Edwards, 220n7, 222n24
Modernism, definitions of, 3–6, 12, 20–23, 37–41, 43, 45–47, 56–57, 60–61, 119, 126, 128–129
Moon, Henry Lee, 134
Mott, Frank Luther, 205n3

N

Nadel, Alan, 203, 225n21
Nagel, James, 210n6
Nathan Meyer, Annie, 221n22
Nicholls, David G., 219n6
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 208n18

O

O'Brien, Sharon, 206n5, 207n11
Orwell, George, 191–192, 224n16

P

Parisier, Nicole H., 25, 207n15
Park, Robert E., 65–66
Penny Serenade, 177

Pope, Alexander, 47, 209n28
Pound, Ezra, 85–86, 102, 212n3
Prescott, Orville, 224n15

R
Retman, Sonnet H., 129, 136, 141–142, 218n1, 220n12, 220n15
Reynolds, Guy, 208n25
Reynolds, Michael S., 84–86, 90–91, 95, 102–103, 109–110, 212n1, 212n2, 212n3, 212n7, 213n10, 215n26
Riis, Jacob, 9, 17
Robertson, Michael, 205n4, 216n28
Rosowski, Susan J., 15, 20
Rovit, Earl, 88, 101, 213n10
Ruppersburg, Hugh, 223n6, 223n8, 225n22, 225n26

S
Schudson, Michael, 8–9, 55, 65–66, 108, 121–122, 208n19, 212n17
Seed, David, 93, 213n9, 215n24
Singer, Isaac Merritt, 207n10
Slabey, Robert M., 213n10
Slote, Bernice, 14, 208n16, 209n26
The Spanish Earth, 215n20, 216n30
Stein, Gertrude, 85, 102–104, 111, 212n3
Stevens, Wallace, 121, 216n33, 218n49
Stewart, Matthew, 85, 89, 213n10
Stott, William, 9, 77, 133, 205n5, 221n19
Stouck, David, 211n9
Strychacz, Thomas, 4, 21–23
Styron, William, 195–196
Stryker, Roy, 80, 220n12
Svoboda, Frederic Joseph, 109, 111–112, 117, 217n37, 217n38, 217n39, 217n40, 217n41, 217n42, 218n44

T
Taylor, Paul, 220n15
Tetlow, Wendolyn E., 216n33
Thompson, Hunter S., 204, 219n5
Thoreau, Henry David, 105
Turgenev, Ivan, 117–118, 218n46
Twain, Mark, 8, 84

U
Urgo, Joseph R., 19–20, 29

V
Van Vechten, Carl, 126, 221n21
Virilio, Paul, 95, 215n25

W
Wallerstein, Immanuel, 222n26
Walters, Keith, 148–149
Warren, Robert Penn, works:
All the King's Men
Jack Burden:
as cultural critic, 171–172, 178–180, 183–188, 190, 224n11
relation to Willie Stark, 172–177, 189, 198–199, 202–203
as reporter, 171–176, 178–180, 183, 185–187, 190, 194, 200–203
transformation of, 171–172, 178, 184, 186–194, 197–200, 203–204
and Cold War culture, 171–174, 181, 183–185, 189, 191–192, 195–197, 200–204, 225n21
composition of, 171–174, 195, 201
and developments in journalism, 183–184, 203–204, 225n26
gender issues in, 177–178, 183–186, 190–191, 224n14
as hard-boiled fiction, 173, 183–184, 186–187, 196, 202, 223n4
historical context of, 5, 171–174, 223n5, 223n6
role of the image in, 178–182, 185–186, 191, 196–197, 204, 224n13, 224n19
relation to New Journalism, 202–204
and theories of history, 175–176, 181–183, 192–194, 197–200, 223n8
All the King's Men: Three Stage Versions, 223n3
At Heaven's Gate, 225n23
The Cave, 224n13

Flood, 196–197, 225n22
"Hemingway," 216n33
"New Dawn," 171, 199, 222n1, 225n26
Proud Flesh, 172
Segregation: The Inner Conflict in the South, 203
Who Speaks for the Negro?, 203, 225n26
"The Wind and Gibbon," 223n7
West, Nathanael, 21
White, Ray Lewis, 76, 211n13, 211n15
Whitehead, Alfred North, 96–100, 103
Williams, Keith, 127–128, 221n19
Williams, Raymond, 6, 135–136, 151, 153–154, 159, 210n4, 222n25
Williamson, Michael, 2, 222n30
Wilson, Edmund, 87, 89, 105–106, 123, 218n45
Wolf, Brian Jay, 199–201
Wolfe, Tom, 204, 219n5, 225n27
Wong, Hertha D., 210n6
Woodress, James, 14, 43, 46, 208n20, 208n25
Woolf, Virginia, 56
Wornall, "Shorty," 89–91, 94, 107, 214n13
Wright, Richard, 129

Y

Yingling, Thomas, 52–53, 61–62

Z

Zitter, Emmy Stark, 206n5
Zizek, Slavoy, 53–55, 59, 223n4