1994

The First Editions of Stephen Crane's The Black Riders and Other Lines and War Is Kind

Donald Vanouse
SUNY Oswego

Follow this and additional works at: http://surface.syr.edu/libassoc

Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons

Recommended Citation
http://surface.syr.edu/libassoc/307

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Libraries at SURFACE. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Courier by an authorized administrator of SURFACE. For more information, please contact surface@syr.edu.
"WAR IS KIND"

VOLUME XXIX · 1994
The Syracuse University Professoriate, 1870–1960: Four Grand Masters in the Arts

By David Tatham, Professor of Fine Arts, Syracuse University

Tatham discusses four great teachers of fine arts at Syracuse University—George Fisk Comfort, Irene Sargent, Ivan Meštrović, and Sawyer Falk—whose careers reflected local manifestations of changes that occurred in the professoriate nationwide at four points in its history.

The Sculpture of Harriet Whitney Frishmuth and New York Dance

By Joseph G. Dreiss, Professor of Art History, Mary Washington College

Dreiss sketches the early career of the sculptor Harriet Whitney Frishmuth, and shows how her best work was influenced by New York dance—especially by a certain lighthearted dancer.

Dialectical Materialism and Proletarian Literature

By Leonard Brown (1904–1960)

Introduction: Remembering Leonard Brown
By John W. Crowley, Professor of English, Syracuse University

Crowley places Leonard Brown, the legendary Syracuse University English professor, in the context of his times. In the lecture that follows (probably prepared ca. 1937), Brown, with characteristic precision, interprets for a general audience the ideas of Marx and Engels.

The Moment of “Three Women Eating”: Completing the Story of You Have Seen Their Faces

By Robert L. McDonald, Assistant Professor of English, Virginia Military Institute

McDonald describes the circumstances in the lives of Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White that led to their professional collaboration in producing You Have Seen Their Faces, and how a photograph eased the way.
The Punctator’s World: A Discursion (Part Eight)
By Gwen G. Robinson, Former Editor,
*Syracuse University Library Associates Courier*

Robinson reviews the progress of punctuation between 1850 and 1900, showing how—admirably—the ongoing (but increasingly sophisticated) contest between the demands of the eye and the ear, of grammar and rhetoric—writing in English reached new expressive heights in the work of Pater, Dickinson, and others.

The First Editions of Stephen Crane’s *The Black Riders* and *Other Lines* and *War Is Kind*
By Donald Vanouse, Professor of English,
The State University of New York at Oswego

Vanouse explains how a critical appreciation of two Stephen Crane first editions, which exemplify a synthesis of poetry and book design, can improve our understanding of both the times in which they appeared, and the cultural impact of Crane’s verse.

Stephen Crane at Syracuse University: New Findings
By Thomas A. Gullason, Professor of English,
University of Rhode Island

Gullason corrects long-accepted notions about the brief career of Stephen Crane as a Syracuse University student during 1891, and sheds new light on Crane’s life during that time.

Hats, Heels, and High Ideals: The Student Dean Program at Syracuse University, 1931–1960
By Thalia M. Mulvihill, Doctoral Candidate,
Cultural Foundations of Education,
Syracuse University

Mulvihill tells the story of the Student Dean Program: how it started, what it was all about, and how its impact is still being felt.

News of the Syracuse University Library and of Library Associates

Post-Standard Award Citation for Arthur J. Pulos
Recent Acquisitions:
The William Safire Collection
The Smith Poster Archive
Additions to the Russel Wright Papers
The Odell Cylinder Collection
The Alan Rafkin Papers
Library Associates Program for 1994–95
The First Editions of Stephen Crane’s *The Black Riders and Other Lines* and *War Is Kind*

BY DONALD VANOUSE

The synthesis of poetry and book design in the first editions of Stephen Crane’s *The Black Riders and Other Lines* (1895) and *War Is Kind* (1899) exemplifies the collaborative daring and ambition of American artists and craftsmen at the end of the nineteenth century. They had learned, from such British designers as William Morris, that literature, the visual arts, and the craftsmanship of printing and bookbinding could be unified to challenge the intellectual timidity and shoddy commercial values of what Mark Twain had labeled the “Gilded Age.”

Stephen Crane’s poems offered a particularly appropriate vehicle for such a challenge. Unconventional in form and startling in content, the poems strenuously engage cultural and religious issues. They interrogate sacred texts and rituals as well as poetic conventions and the influence of the popular press. Furthermore, Crane’s poems expose structures of arrogance, violence, and self-deception.

Although the first editions of *The Black Riders* and *War Is Kind* are remarkable achievements in book design, subsequent editions of Crane’s poetry, by Amy Lowell, Joseph Katz, and James B. Colvert, have not included facsimile page reproductions or acknowledged the distinctive successes of these first editions. Recent studies of modernist texts, such as Jerome McGann’s *Black Riders: The Visual Language of Modernism* and Cary Nelson’s *Repression and Recovery: Modern American Poetry and the Politics of Cultural Memory 1910–1945*, suggest, however, that critical appreciation of these volumes can contribute to our understanding of both the creative ambition of the period and the cultural impact of Stephen Crane’s verse.

Donald Vanouse is professor of English and coordinator of the Program in American Studies at SUNY Oswego. In addition to publishing articles on Stephen Crane and editing Crane selections for the *Heath Anthology of American Literature*, he has published articles on relationships between literature and psychology.
The publication of *The Black Riders* was promoted by John D. Barry, an assistant editor of *Forum* magazine. Barry first attracted critical attention to the poems by reading from Crane's manuscript at the April 1894 meeting of the Uncut Leaves Society. Most important, Barry arranged for Crane to send the manuscript to Barry's friends from his college days at Harvard University, the avant-garde Boston publishers Copeland and Day.

Although Herbert Copeland and Frederick Holland Day had just formed their publishing company in 1893, they were already respected as leaders in American Arts and Crafts publishing. Like Morris's Kelmscott Press, Copeland and Day printed hand-set antique typefaces upon thick, handmade or laid paper. But much of their work was done in the Aesthetic Style rather than the medieval Arts and Crafts Style favored by the Kelmscott Press. The Aesthetic Style, the inspiration for their edition of *The Black Riders*, is lighter and more open in format. It was derived from early Italian Renaissance printing rather than illuminated medieval manuscripts.

Copeland and Day were shocked by some of the subject matter addressed in Crane's verse collection. They proposed—and Crane ultimately accepted—the deletion of seven poems.¹ For his part, Crane feared that the volume would be printed in an unreadable "old English type."² However, the publishers were intending to use a modern font to produce a volume "more severely classic than any book yet issued in America."³ In the end, the poet approved of their decisions regarding both typography and design.

The resulting volume has been praised for its "modern boldness

---

¹. Of the seven poems excluded from this edition, two were published four years later in *War Is Kind*: "To the maiden" and "There was a man with tongue of wood." Two of the excluded poems were not published until 1957, in Daniel Hoffman, *The Poetry of Stephen Crane* (New York: Columbia University Press). Three of the excluded poems appear to have been lost. For a discussion, see Fredson Bowers, "The Text: History and Analysis," in vol. 10, *The University of Virginia Edition of the Works of Stephen Crane* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975), 193–96.


³. Ibid., 77.
Fig. 1. Title page of The Black Riders and Other Lines.
of design." The layout of the title page is startlingly unconventional, with closely spaced capital letters placed high on the page, and the author's name, "STE-PHEN," hyphenated (see fig. 1). Copeland and Day continued this format by printing the poems themselves entirely in capital letters at the top of the page. Individual poems are identified by roman numerals rather than titles.

In the twentieth century, we have become accustomed to such experiments in the use of print case from reading E. E. Cummings, the Dadaists, and works of concrete poetry, and from seeing the bold elegance of Jenny Holzer's print messages and LED environments. In his recent biography of Crane, Christopher Benfey reprints several of the poems from The Black Riders in the original capitals. He astutely suggests the possible influence of newspaper headlines and telegram print—which convey urgency and emphasis—upon this choice of capitals.

Such conventions as printing initial capitals to begin a line of poetry are never neutral. The use of capitals for nouns implies a hierarchy like that implied by the words God and human. (Consider that the scribes of the strictly ordered world of medieval monasticism devoted vast energy to the illumination of their initial capitals.) The use of capitals to begin lines of poetry affirms the value of formal structures, in this case beginnings, recurrences, and endings. Crane challenges such conventions of precedence and hierarchy. In addition to choosing innovative and startling poetic forms, he explicitly questions the authority of gods, sages, and sacred texts. In poem XII, for example, he uses an epigraph based upon Exodus 20:5 to rebuke both the Biblical text and the deity:

5. See Michael Auping, "Reading Holzer or Speaking in Tongues," in Jenny Holzer: The Venice Installation (Buffalo: Albright-Knox Gallery, 1990), 25–37. Holzer's language-art and Crane's poetry may both reflect the influence of their Methodist upbringings. She says, "I was always attracted to dire warnings and visions of ecstasy—writings that described extreme or altered states."
AND THE SINS OF THE FATHERS SHALL
BE VISITED ON THE HEADS OF THE CHIL­
DREN, EVEN UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH
GENERATION OF THEM THAT HATE ME.
WELL, THEN, I HATE THEE, UNRIGHTHEOUS
PICTURE;
WICKED IMAGE, I HATE THEE;
SO, STRIKE WITH THY VENGEANCE
THE HEADS OF THOSE LITTLE MEN
WHO COME BLINDLY.
IT WILL BE A BRAVE THING.

By printing the poems in The Black Riders entirely in capitals, Copeland and Day seem to have acknowledged Crane’s challenging of poetic, intellectual, and religious hierarchies throughout his experimental verse.7

The use of roman numerals rather than titles to identify individual poems imposes further stress upon literary conventions. Like the title of a painting or a musical composition, the title of a poem defines the subject or asserts the purpose of the work. It tells us where we are going. Without a title to frame it, the work floats edgeless upon the page. Crane’s verses, like many of his prose works, frequently end without narrative or thematic closure. The lack of beginnings and endings tends to heighten the interconnections among the lines, an effect even further compounded in this case by the deliberate omission of a table of contents. (Several critics have observed that the questions raised in the first poem resonate until we reach the last lines of the collection.) Susan Otis Thompson states that the publishers chose a “format as bizarre for its time as the poetry itself,”8 but we might better say that Copeland and Day’s format for The Black Riders and Other Lines is an appropriate ac-

7. Earlier in 1894, in a much more luxuriously decorated volume, Copeland and Day had joined with Elkin Matthews and John Lane at the Bodley Head in London in printing Oscar Wilde’s The Sphinx in roman capitals. Although more erotic in its subject, Wilde’s poem is like Crane’s The Black Riders in the questioning of religious values and hierarchies.
8. Thompson, American Book Design, 49.
knowledgment of the edgeless, orphic dilemmas of perception and consciousness imposed by Crane’s verse.

Literary scholars have been inattentive to the appropriateness of the typography, format, and cover design of this first edition. In fact, the recent ten-volume edition of The Works of Stephen Crane includes neither a facsimile page nor a reproduction of Frederick Gordon’s cover design from Copeland and Day’s edition of The Black Riders and Other Lines. Such omissions are a form of cultural amnesia. They suppress the particular historical document, and force this bold achievement in publishing to disappear within the realm of the polite, homogenous texts that Crane and his publishers sought to rebuke.

Amy Lowell’s introduction to volume six of The Work of Stephen Crane (1925) may have introduced this modernist desire to distance Crane from the Copeland and Day edition. Lowell presents Crane’s verse as an anticipation of the twentieth-century Imagist movement, and she discredits the format of the first edition as evidence of Crane’s connection to the art of the 1890s. “The supreme irony,” she insists, was that The Black Riders had been “issued as an aesthetic knick knack and its author hailed as an affected ass.”

There were, in fact, some hostile reviews of The Black Riders, but Robert W. Stallman quotes from several positive reviews of the volume and blames Elbert Hubbard, editor of The Philistine, for creating a fictional history of critical abuse. Hubbard probably was seeking to advertise his own critical acumen in publishing Crane’s poems in The Philistine and The Roycroft Quarterly. Perhaps Lowell’s criticism was influenced by Hubbard’s bluster. It is certain that she was outraged by the first edition’s cover design by Crane’s friend Frederick Gordon. She insisted that “the silly orchid which straggled over the cover [was] disgracefully out of place.” (See fig. 2.)


A letter that Gordon wrote to Copeland and Day does place the iconography of the cover in Aubrey Beardsley’s garden of Art Nouveau extravagance:

The orchid with its strange habits, extraordinary forms and curious properties, seemed to me the most appropriate floral motive [i.e. “motif”], an idea in which Mr. Crane concurred before he left New York.¹²

Perhaps Crane felt more respect for Beardsleyesque achievements in black and white than Lowell, writing in the 1920s, could be expected to share; but she might have been more attentive to the intellectual history of the subject matter of Gordon’s design. A botanist’s preface to a publication of Alfred Eisenstadt’s photographs of orchids identifies the Darwinian basis for interest in this floral subject:

¹². Wertheim and Sorrentino, Correspondence, 89.
Orchids are the vegetative counterpart to man. As man is a biped at the highest level of animal development, orchids represent a peak of evolution in the world of plants. . . . Observations of the complex structure of orchid flowers strongly influenced Charles Darwin in his theory of evolution by natural selection.13

The title of Darwin's major study of these plants, *The Various Contrivances by Which Orchids are Fertilized by Insects* (1862) indicates his interest in the complexity of their reproductive adaptations to their environments. Gordon's decision to use the orchid motif is very likely a reflection of the Darwinian significance of the "strange habits, extraordinary forms and curious properties" of these highly evolved plants. Crane himself had annotated copies of *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893) with a social Darwinist comment on the power of "environment" in shaping human lives.14 It seems likely from the cover drawing that both Gordon and Crane saw Crane's verse as the product of an artistic evolution comparable to the emergence of new and strange plant forms through natural selection. For this wedding of art and craftsmanship, then, Darwin seems to have supplied the flowers.

Three years later, Crane was not involved in editorial decisions regarding the heavily decorated first edition of *War Is Kind* (1899), his second volume of verse. He was living in England, quite desperate for money, when he sent the first thirty "lines" to his agent on 1 March 1898. Before sending the remaining poems, Crane left England for the Caribbean where he wrote newspaper dispatches concerning the Spanish-American War. After hostilities ended in mid-August, he returned, inexplicably, to Havana, Cuba, where he completed the "Intrigue" sequence that concludes *War Is Kind*. It is difficult to ascertain whether some of Crane's "uncollected poems" might have been intended for this volume. He directed his agent, Paul Revere Reynolds, to find the poem "War Is Kind" for the volume, but he may have been uncertain about which of his other poems were in Reynolds's possession. In fact, *War Is Kind* includes

what seems to be an inadvertent reprinting of a slightly revised version of "THERE WAS ONE I MET UPON THE ROAD," in *The Black Riders and Other Lines*.

The Frederick A. Stokes Company of New York published *War Is Kind* in April 1899, in an eclectic Arts and Crafts format, with cover, decorations, and illustrations by the noted American designer Will Bradley. Born in 1868, two years before Crane, Bradley had begun his career at age twelve by working as a printer's helper in Ishpeming, Michigan. While still in his teens, he moved to Chicago where he worked as a wood engraver and commercial designer. By the mid-1890s, Bradley's achievements as a designer and illustrator had brought him to international prominence. He was a major figure in the development of the poster in America, for example, and, in his work for the *Inland Printer*, he was the first to design original covers for successive issues of a monthly magazine. In 1895 he designed one of his most ambitious Arts and Crafts books, R. D. Blackmore's *Fringilla*, which was printed on handmade paper by John Wilson. Also during 1895, the very year Crane published *The Black Riders and Other Lines*, Bradley contributed an effective, Morris-inspired title page for Copeland and Day's edition of Richard LeGallicienne's *Robert Louis Stevenson: An Elegy and Other Poems Mainly Personal*. It seems very likely that Bradley developed an interest in Crane's verse during this period.

The designer's responsiveness to the poems in *War Is Kind* was noted in a prepublication comment on the edition. *Publisher's Weekly* of 11 March 1899 observed that Bradley had "found the poems suggestive and did his work on them with enthusiasm." The drawings reflect both the curvilinear lines of Aubrey Beardsley and the rectilinear framing of the designer Charles Ricketts, but the variety in stylistic and structural devices gives the volume an abrasive visual texture.

Influenced, perhaps, by the Copeland and Day edition of *The Black Riders and Other Lines*, Bradley presented most of the poems without individual titles. Only in the previously published title


115
poem “War Is Kind” and in heading the “Intrigue” section did he include titles. His least understandable deviation from Art Nouveau practice was the printing of the poems on grey paper. Thick, often handmade, paper was characteristic of high-quality printing at the time, of course, but there also was a commitment to very white paper as an element in presenting heavily-inked typefonts. Thompson observes that the light Caslon type that Bradley used “is too thin for the heavy, dark paper,” but she adds, “This is the only jarring note in what is otherwise a monument to American Art Nouveau bookmaking.” Thompson concludes by observing, “It is a strong, harsh book, one not for all tastes.”

Amy Lowell approved of the rather conventional decorations used in the volume, but she found the illustrations “perfectly unreasonable.” In her evaluation of the book, she did not discuss the pertinence of Bradley’s designs to Crane’s poems. She simply concluded that “no man could be taken seriously who perpetrated a book which looked like this.” In fact, Bradley’s numerous illustrations and decorations indicate an appreciation of the “strong, harsh” qualities of Crane’s verse. He designed a book of an appropriate, strenuous originality. Even in the illustration for “Fast rode the knight,” which Lowell described as “the worst of these ghastly pictures,” Bradley acknowledges the harshness of Crane’s rebuke of a romantic fantasy. Perhaps, having seen the dying horse at the center of the carnage in Picasso’s Guernica (1937), we are more able to appreciate the iconic juxtapositionings in this woodcut-inspired drawing (fig. 3). Certainly the illustration is pertinent to Crane’s collapsing of the ending of a fairy tale rescue into the image of a horse, dead and “forgotten at foot of castle wall.” The flower-like castle suggests the organic forms in the architecture of Antonio Gaudi and in the stained-glass designs of the Tiffany Studio. It is very likely that Bradley had a sense of ironies and tensions in such forms, which critics sometimes have blurred with a supercilious attitude toward the “decorative” concerns of Art Nouveau. Such

18. Ibid., xxvii.
Fig. 3. Illustration for “Fast rode the knight,” from War Is Kind.
softened, organic architectural forms imply that geometric rigidity is an arrogant presumption or a delusion. Even in the pastoral sweetness of the landscape, Bradley parallels the theme of the indifference of nature, which is found in the poems of *War Is Kind*, such as “A man said to the universe,” and in many of Crane’s prose works.

Other, more visually complex, illustrations also acknowledge the intellectual texture of Crane’s verse. The design for the book cover (fig. 4) introduces many of the images developed in the volume. It juxtaposes organic forms (trees, flowers, and curvilinear leaves) with firmer, more geometric shapes (the lyre, urn, sword, and vase). Furthermore, the vertical and horizontal framing lines impose spatial tensions, not only in presenting depth, but in presenting the relation of interior to exterior spaces. This complex visual surface parallels the juxtaposed, often contradictory, statements that occur throughout Crane’s poems. The drawing also anticipates the profound problematizing of space that occurs in Cubist painting. Most important is Bradley’s complex rendering of the relationship between the somewhat androgynous female figure and the organic and cultural objects that surround her. Her feet are bound by what is, perhaps, her own encircling hair, and she is decentered, nearly bisected, by the vertical panel border. The hilt of the leaning sword is held tentatively in her left hand. The relationship between the decentered human figure and the surrounding objects provides a compelling visual equivalent to an issue raised in many of Crane’s poems: the natural world and the artifacts of human achievement surround and enclose us, but the possibilities for consciousness and action are severely restricted. Poems such as “A slant of sun” and “A newspaper is a collection of half-injustices” illustrate this theme.

The title poem, “War Is Kind,” begins as follows:

Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind.
Because your lover threw wild hands
toward the sky
And the affrighted steed ran on alone,
Do not weep.
War is kind.
Fig. 4. Cover illustration for *War Is Kind*.
Hoarse, booming drums of the regi-
ment,
Little souls who thirst for fight,
These men were born to drill and die.
The unexplained glory flies above them,
Great is the battle-god, great, and his
kingdom—
A field where a thousand corpses lie.

Bradley’s drawing for the poem (see Courier cover) employs
more delicate lines and open, unshaded forms. The two vertical
panels do not impose spatial tensions so much as they allow two
parallel statements. In the narrower panel on the right, the three
doves hovering over the three descending arrows refer to the three
relationships—of lover, child, and mother—to the soldiers in Crane’s
poem. Doves are conventional symbols of love and peace. The
arrows are symbols of war. In the left panel, the angelic female pro-
file, bodiless and wearing a crest of flowers, floats above the clouds.
She holds a sword and, with closed eyes, kisses the delicate blade.
This drawing lacks the harshness of Crane’s images of “hoarse,
booming drums” and his grim “field where a thousand corpses lie.”
Nevertheless, the drawing identifies the major tension in the poetic
refrain: “Do not weep. / War is kind.” The refrain at once contrasts
and creates a junction between the love relationships and the glam­
orous violence and suffering of war. Bradley suggests the need for a
vantage point above the clouds, beyond the human, to see this
convergence.

Throughout the volume, Bradley’s decisions elucidate thematic
and structural issues of the verse. Some early reviewers disapproved
of his spacing—many pages have only a few lines—and modern edi-
tors, for aesthetic or economic reasons, have not repeated this for-
mat. In commenting on the first edition of Hart Crane’s The Bridge,
however, Cary Nelson argues that “a spacious format . . . suggests
the scale of [the poem’s] cultural ambition.”19 In these terms,

Bradley’s spacing of Stephen Crane’s poems can be seen to emphasize the “cultural ambition” of the works and indicate their cosmic scale. In one example, Bradley’s spacing of the four verse-paragraphs of “In the night” upon four pages emphasizes a subject extending across long periods of terrestrial time. Each of the four verse-paragraphs presents a moment in this vast history. The desires of the mountains to praise God are answered by the appearance of the people and the lights in the little cities of the valleys. In the last verse, however, the cities have disappeared: “Grey heavy clouds muffled the valleys, / And the peaks looked toward God alone.” Below this last verse, four candle holders with burning tapers reiterate the four-part structure of the poem. The candles also represent the cities’ “tiny lights,” which Crane defines synaesthetically as song “to the sun.” The two disks in this end-design suggest the relationship between the sun or a planet and its satellite. Bradley’s spacious format and his decorations emphasize the scale of Crane’s poetic speculation upon mysterious interdependencies of nature and culture (fig. 5).

Candles are conventional in Art Nouveau designs, of course, but in this book Bradley includes only two other burning tapers among the numerous page decorations. One drawing of a taper on a columnar stand appears beneath these lines:

You tell me this is God?
I tell you this is a printed list,
A burning candle and an ass. (fig. 6)

Bradley’s illustration gives emphasis to Crane’s imagery, and it also makes a visual allusion to the drawing of the candle on the title page. Such recurrent, interconnecting imagery strengthens the coherence of the volume. Together, the verbal and the visual statements exemplify the period’s critical reconsideration of cultural icons.

Many of the other page decorations provide similar commentaries upon the poems or serve to strengthen patterns of association across the volume. Sword images are central to the cover drawing and to the illustration for the title poem, for example, and a sword also appears toward the end of the volume in a decoration for the “Intrigue” sequence. Bedecked with roses that echo other floral
motifs, this sword appears under a verse paragraph in which a lover beseeches God for “medals” and “honors.” The lover states to his lady that he wishes to “strut” with his decorations.

And be worthy of—
The love I bear you.

Bradley’s drawing of the sword associates this speaker’s displacement of desire with the interpenetrations of love and martial violence in “War Is Kind.” This speaker does not pray for fulfillment of desire or even to be worthy of his idealized beloved. He prays for medals to be worthy of his own disembodied devotion. Bradley’s sword imagery implies that the “Intrigue” sequence is not unrelated “filler” for the volume, as critics have sometimes proposed. The verses of “Intrigue” depict a variety of instances in which sexual desire is expressed as anxiety, self-sacrifice, and even terrorism.

We see such an “intrigue” in his story “The Clan of No Name,” which was also written in Havana during this period. This story’s linking of desire, cultural repressions, sexual possessiveness, and military insurgency presents emotional snarls which are parallel to those found in “Intrigue.” Crane’s observations of the Spanish-
God give me medals,
God give me loud honors,
That I may strut before you, sweetheart,
And be worthy of —
The love I bear you.
American War may have intensified his awareness of relationships between the transgressions and sacrifices of war and cultural suppressions of desire. In discussing the blurring of inner and outer arenas of being in *The Red Badge of Courage*, Mark Seltzer has argued that the novel addresses “male hysteria and the renegotiation of bodily and sexual boundaries and identities.” Such issues of male hysteria are explicit in the compressed emotional diagrams of “Intrigue.”

Such a reading of the “Intrigue” sequence also suggests that the *War Is Kind* volume has a thematic coherence comparable to that observed in *The Black Riders and Other Lines*. Negotiations of desire with nature and culture extend throughout the volume. In helping to emphasize such coherence, this first edition validates the esthetics of Arts and Crafts book design. Even Bradley’s exasperating choice of grey “cartridge paper” contributes to the coherence of the volume by calling to mind the subject matter of war, and by reinforcing visually the recurrent greys and blacks of Crane’s imagery. The following lines are particularly startling in this first edition:

When the prophet, a complacent fat
man,
Arrived at the mountain top,
He cried, “Woe to my knowledge!
“I intended to see good white lands
“And bad black lands,
“But the scene is grey.”

After these lines, the grey page provides a disturbing vista. It seems likely that the paper and typeface chosen for the volume are Bradley’s acknowledgments of the color imagery in the poems (such as the “grey robes,” “dead grey walls,” “greyer night,” and the “grey heavy clouds”) as well as his daring visualization of the subject matter of war and the themes of moral and perceptual uncertainty.

The texts and the values of the dominant culture were under a profound scrutiny in the avant-garde art of this period. Artists sought to expose interrelated problems of consciousness in the religious, sexual, artistic, and economic values of the Gilded Age. In their creative challenges to conventional modes of perception and understanding, these writers, artists, and craftsmen sought to redefine their own relationship to the culture of the past and to expose the unacknowledged demands upon consciousness made by the emerging modern world. The efforts of these artists included a self-reflective irony. They knew that their creative daring could cause outrage as well as provoke appreciation and insight.

The first editions of Stephen Crane’s poems allow us to encounter two quite divergent solutions to the problem of achieving brashness and beauty in such collaborative works. *The Black Riders and Other Lines* is a sternly modernist example of the Aesthetic Style; *War Is Kind* is an eclectic extension of the Arts and Crafts style. Even in the stylistic divergences of these two volumes, however, we can feel the creative energy in the art of this period. In evolutionary terms, these books present images of conflicts in the cultural environment and insist that formal innovation is a necessary characteristic of adaptation and survival.