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“The moon was shining brightly, and the white pebbles round the house shone like newly-minted coins. Hansel stooped down and put as many into his pockets as they would hold.” He would drop them along the path into the forest so that he and Grethel could find their way home again.

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Benjamin Spock: A Two-Century Man
By Bettye Caldwell, Professor of Pediatrics, Child Development, and Education, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

While reviewing Benjamin Spock's pediatric career, his social activism, and his personal life, Caldwell assesses the impact of this "giant of the twentieth century" who has helped us to "prepare for the twenty-first."

The Magic Toy Shop
By Jean Daugherty, Public Affairs Programmer, WTVH, Syracuse

The creator of The Magic Toy Shop, a long-running, local television show for children, tells how the show came about.

Ernest Hemingway
By Shirley Jackson

Introduction: Shirley Jackson on Ernest Hemingway:
A Recovered Term Paper
By John W. Crowley, Professor of English, Syracuse University

For a 1940 English class at Syracuse University, Shirley Jackson wrote a paper on Ernest Hemingway. Crowley's description of her world at that time is followed by the paper itself, which he finds notable for its "attention to the ambiguity surrounding gender roles in Hemingway's fiction," as well as its "intellectual command and stylistic ease."

What's in a Name? Characterization and Caricature in Dorothy Thompson Criticism
By Frederick Betz, Professor of German, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

By the mid-1930s the journalist Dorothy Thompson had become "sufficiently important for writers and cartoonists to satirize her." They gave her a multitude of labels—zoological, mythological, and otherwise—which Betz surveys herein.
The Punctator's World: A Discursion (Part Nine)
By Gwen G. Robinson, Former Editor,
*Syracuse University Library Associates Courier*

In the writing of authors Henry James, Robert Louis Stevenson, D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, E. E. Cummings, Ezra Pound, George Orwell, and Ernest Hemingway, Robinson traces the development in the twentieth century of two rival styles, one “plaindealing” and the other “complied.” In the “literary skirmish” between the two, the latter may be losing—perhaps at the expense of our reasoning powers.

Edward Noyes Westcott’s *David Harum: A Forgotten Cultural Artifact*
By Brian G. Ladewig, Secondary-School Teacher, West Irondequoit, New York

The 1898 novel *David Harum* occasioned a major transition in the publishing industry and, over a period of forty years, profoundly influenced American culture. According to Ladewig, the middle class saw in *David Harum* a reflection of itself.

Marya Zaturenska’s Depression Diary, 1931–1932
Introduction by Mary Beth Hinton, Editor,
*Syracuse University Library Associates Courier*

Selections from a diary kept by the poet Marya Zaturenska reveal her struggles as a mother, a wife, and an artist during the Great Depression.

News of Syracuse University Library and of Library Associates

*Post-Standard Award Citation, 1996, for Mark F. Weimer*

Recent Acquisitions:
- Margaret Bourke-White Negatives of Olympic Athletes
- The Geography of Strabo
- Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
- Materials from the Albert Schweitzer Center
- Albert Schweitzer: A Message for a New Millennium

*Library Associates Program for 1996–97*
Benjamin Spock: A Two-Century Man

BY BETTYE CALDWELL

On 21 September 1996, on the Syracuse University campus, Professor Caldwell gave the keynote address at “Choices for Children and Families: A Symposium Honoring Benjamin Spock.” The symposium, which was sponsored by Syracuse University Library Associates and the College for Human Development, also celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Baby and Child Care and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Bernice Wright Nursery School at Syracuse University. The symposium was funded by Johnson & Johnson, Inc., the New York State Department of Education Early Childhood Services, The Consortium for Children’s Services, and Success By 6.

It was a great honor for me to be invited to give the keynote talk at this symposium honoring Benjamin Spock and celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Baby and Child Care. I am delighted to have this chance to pay homage to a man who has done so much for children and parents everywhere and who has awarded his friendship freely to those fortunate enough to have come into his orbit. Ben Spock the human being is a unique gestalt—that is, his total legacy is more than the sum of his clinical care, his writings, his teaching, and his demonstrations. He is one of those rare human beings whose life adds up to more than 100 percent.

Before offering my comments about Ben as part of today’s celebration, I have to clarify for you the fact that I do not claim to be a close friend of Ben Spock and Mary Morgan, but I do claim to be a friend. (I think Ben and Mary would describe the situation in the same way.) Mary Morgan used to tell people that I introduced them and brought them together, but that is a bit of an exaggeration. However, because I know how much they mean to one another, I am happy to take credit even if I don’t deserve it. I helped arrange for Ben to give a talk at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where I was on the faculty. Mary Morgan heard Ben’s talk and

Bettye Caldwell is professor of pediatrics, child development, and education at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. From 1966 to 1969 she was professor of child development in Syracuse University’s Department of Child and Family Studies and director of the Children’s Center. Her research helped provide the foundation for Head Start. Since 1951 Caldwell has had more than 200 publications.
met him briefly at that time. He described her reaction as follows: "She was not too impressed with the talk . . . but . . . she was impressed by how well I'd handled the questions—and also by how large my hands were. This was the only time I ever made an impression based on the size of my hands." That was the only role I played. They met again in San Francisco a few months later and, as we say, the rest is history. Later I will have more to say about their relationship.

A few years after their marriage in 1976, they invited my husband and me to sail with them for a week in the Virgin Islands on their lovely little sloop, the Carapace. We did this in 1979. For me, having held Ben Spock in awe for years, the invitation itself was thrilling. In addition I have always had an almost mystical reverence for the ocean, which offered promise that the week would be unforgettable. And it was. Two experts taught me to snorkel, to avoid the fire coral, to pay little attention to the barracuda that always rested alongside the keel, and to get out of the water when my hands looked like dried prunes. I was also exposed to the practice of meditation—which I still have not mastered—for the very first time, as Ben and Mary were just beginning that routine. Every day Ben pulled away from everyone for an hour or so to sit at the table in the little galley and write, pencil to tablet, a magazine article or part of a book he happened to be working on. Forget about the torpor of the tropics; when you have the work ethic, you work regardless of distractions.

I mention the intermittence of our acquaintance to establish the limitations of my knowledge about Ben. In my youth I admired him from afar; as a young mother I profited from his wisdom; I have attended every speech he has given in a city in which I happened to be living or visiting; I have followed his career of political and social advocacy with admiration; and I have read most of his books (and even some of his articles for Redbook magazine). But I would be misleading you if I implied that I could give you an insider's view of Ben Spock. I hope you will keep this disclaimer in mind as I now proceed to review some of the features of this man's life that should make Syracuse University rejoice in the coup of having his papers.²


2. In the 1960s Syracuse University Library asked Benjamin Spock for his papers, which have arrived in installments over the years. The collection, if one lined up the boxes, is almost as long as a football field; it contains correspondence, medical reference files, memorabilia, Spock's writings and publications, newspaper clippings, photographs, films, tapes, and—surprising for an antiwar activist—posters related to the two world wars. Ed.
Benjamin Spock and Mary Morgan on their sailboat in Rockport Harbor, Maine. Photograph by Mark Wallack.
In *A Better World for Our Children* Ben says that he has had four careers: a practicing pediatrician (including the writing of *Baby and Child Care*), an educator, a social activist, and a family man. I am going to combine the first two and group my remarks into three sections: his pediatric career, his social activism, and his personal life. This division will not be easy to maintain, however. Individuals who are whole persons live holistically: their professional careers blend with activism, and their belief systems affect their personal relationships, and vice versa.

**PEDIATRIC CAREER**

If it were possible to separate Ben Spock’s pediatric career from *Baby and Child Care* (which no one would want to do), that career might have appeared somewhat undistinguished in the world of haute academe. He can’t boast a CV listing 200 research publications in peer-reviewed journals. Instead he can mention (and he would do so humbly) that he wrote one that has sold 43 million copies!

There have been many analyses of how changes in *Baby and Child Care* have reflected societal trends over a fifty-year period. It is important to acknowledge these changes because they offer proof of one of the traits that has made Ben a great pediatrician and a great author: he can change. There is no way the book could have continued to be popular if he had not been able to change. The famous opening statement—“Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do.”—retains its powerful impact. Ben wanted mothers to feel that they knew how to take care of a baby and not be overwhelmed by the advice given by “experts.” Of course there is a paradox in beginning a manual of child care with that statement and then proceeding to offer a 500-page template covering everything from feeding to manners. In several of his books Ben has mentioned his disappointment upon learning from some of the many mothers who wrote to him that his first edition (which stressed the positive behavior potential to be found in most babies) had increased, rather than decreased, their anxiety and had made them feel ineffective if they tried what he recommended and it hadn’t worked. So, as Ann Hulbert indicated, the second edition, which came out ten years after the first, was “parent-focused” instead of “child-centered.”

Of course, another change—often commented on—occurred after Ben

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encountered feminist ire about the tone of the book. Not only was the
pronoun used for baby always “he” (unless an example referred to a girl),
but there was almost no recognition of trends toward maternal employ­
ment already detectable in the late 1940s and the need for guidance at­
tuned to that reality. I love Ben’s comment on his sexism in the early
editions: “I was no more sexist than the average man, I think, but since I’d
written down so much, the feminists were able to put their finger on it.”\(^5\)

In the same volume he relates that Gloria Steinem “thundered in the
tones of Jehovah, ‘Dr. Spock, I hope you realize you have been a major
oppressor of women in the same category as Sigmund Freud’” (p. 247).
That was in 1972, but later he was pleased when Ms. magazine named
him one of the heroes of the women’s movement in a ceremony honor­
ing the magazine’s tenth anniversary. He comments wryly, however, that
his wife still has some doubts about that!

Personally I see the major changes in Baby and Child Care as a move
from micro- to macroissues. In an era of disposable diapers and laundry
equipment, toilet training is almost a nonissue. Ditto for feeding. Now
Ben is much more concerned, as we all are, about family breakup, about
anomie in our adolescents, lack of respect shown parents and other adults,
vioence, hypermaterialism, and the dearth of spiritual values in our soci­
ety.

In A Better World for Our Children he makes a profound comment about
at least one reason why our society has “misplaced its values and lost its
bearings.”

The gradual acceptance of humanity’s having a less exalted place
in the overall scheme of things has, I believe, had a profound and
depressing effect. It has deflated our spirits, but so slowly that
most of [us] do not recognize how or when it happened. (p. 99)

The other two reasons he cites are (1) the omission from the behavior sci­
ences of what used to be called the soul, and (2) our continued protest
against the artificiality of the nineteenth-century Victorian period with
its rigid stylistic and moral precepts.

With respect to the last of these causes, he offers an explanation of sev­
eral modern trends that many of us have observed with consternation:

It seems to me that in our degrading language, our tattered
clothes, our emphasis on the physical aspects of sexuality we are

\(^5\) Spock on Spock, 247.
still, after a hundred years, rebelling against the pomposity and stuffy propriety of our Victorian ancestors. (p. 100)

Ben goes on to write what I consider to be one of the most beautiful and poetic statements to be found anywhere in his writings:

As powerful as these reasons are, however, I believe we can and should challenge them. Unless a substantial proportion of people hold to positive standards, beliefs and ideals, a society begins to come apart at the seams. We are seeing it happen: materialism unchecked by idealism leads to oppression of the powerless by the greedy; excessive competitiveness hardens hearts even within families; tolerance of violence unleashes all sorts of brutality; acceptance of instability in marriage encourages ever greater instability; the absence of values in children leads to a generation of cynical, self-centered adults.

I believe that spiritual values and idealism—within or without organized religion—are as real and as powerful as the physical and intellectual attributes of human being[s]. (pp. 100–1)

He then ends this section with a beautiful manifesto, which it would behoove all of us to adopt:

I believe that we can give our children standards to live by and keep them from cynically accepting amorality and immorality, even though much of society as a whole may be corrupt and cynical. (p. 101)

But enough of my own critique of Ben Spock as a pediatrician and educator. Clearly I have focused more on what he taught, and still teaches, parents. To do justice to Ben’s pediatric career, I thought it important to call on some of the country’s outstanding pediatricians—all of them concerned with blending pediatrics with child development—to comment on Ben’s contribution. On pages 12–13 there is a montage of their statements, sent to me to be used on this occasion. These statements convey better than I could what Ben Spock has meant to pediatrics. And they provide a smooth transition into a discussion of Ben’s social activism, as each of them referred to his courage in standing up for his convictions whenever national practices ran counter to his conscience.

SPOCK THE ACTIVIST

*Baby and Child Care* made Ben famous for the twentieth century. His so-
cial activism made him a man for the twenty-first—and beyond. In *Spock on Spock* he wrote:

> I got into the antiwar movement in several unplanned steps. If I'd had any idea where it was leading me, I might have paused, though I doubt that my conscience would have let me stop altogether. (p. 167)

Quite by chance, a few days before this trip to Syracuse, I happened to see a line penned by Martin Luther and was struck by the essential similarity of what Luther wrote to Ben Spock's above statement. Although the two re formations (or should I say "revolutions") were separated by four centuries, and though one was theistic and the other humanistic, their descriptions of their own patterns of action are almost identical. Luther wrote:

> God does not guide me. He pushes me forward. He carries me away. I am not master of myself. I desire to live in repose; but I am thrown into the midst of tumults and revolutions. 6

I found myself wondering whether every person who begins a "movement" or joins one very early in the parade, feels this way. It appears quite likely.

But back to Ben Spock. Convinced that, if we did not adopt a nuclear test ban treaty, more children all over the world would die of cancer and leukemia or be damaged by radiation fallout, he joined the board of SANE (National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy) in 1962. In April 1962 SANE ran a full-page ad in the *New York Times* captioned "Dr. Spock is worried." There was no other name that could have been so effective in that context. Ben was allowed to write the message underneath; erasing and rewriting feverishly, he produced some 3,000 words—which the advertising firm insisted he reduce to 200. The message ended up as a simple plea to save the world from self-destruction. That ad was one of the most powerful statements ever made against nuclear proliferation and environmental destruction.

It was an easy glissando from involvement in SANE to participation in other disarmament groups. Ben's involvement seemed to catch the medical establishment and the politically correct in-group off guard. Here was a man who wrote his first political endorsement for Adlai Stevenson

Benjamin Spock changed the lives of parents, children, and family caregivers. By
Benjamin Spock changed the lives of parents, children, and family caregivers. By
Benjamin Spock changed the lives of parents, children, and family caregivers. By
his groundbreaking book and his sensitivity to parents’ concerned passions, he made it
his groundbreaking book and his sensitivity to parents’ concerned passions, he made it
his groundbreaking book and his sensitivity to parents’ concerned passions, he made it
fashionable to begin to understand the child as a person, to understand parents
fashionable to begin to understand the child as a person, to understand parents
fashionable to begin to understand the child as a person, to understand parents
as bringing “ghosts from their own nurseries,” not to harm the child but
as bringing “ghosts from their own nurseries,” not to harm the child but
as bringing “ghosts from their own nurseries,” not to harm the child but
because of their own passionate involvement. He led us all to the
because of their own passionate involvement. He led us all to the
because of their own passionate involvement. He led us all to the
wealth of information about parenting and child development
wealth of information about parenting and child development
wealth of information about parenting and child development
which we have today.
T. Berry Brazelton

Ben Spock taught us, by example, that if you have the courage to express your
Ben Spock taught us, by example, that if you have the courage to express your
Ben Spock taught us, by example, that if you have the courage to express your
parents to trust their capacity to know and to love, or to persuade the medical profession
parents to trust their capacity to know and to love, or to persuade the medical profession
parents to trust their capacity to know and to love, or to persuade the medical profession
embracing diversity, and valuing families, he showed us all the fine
embracing diversity, and valuing families, he showed us all the fine
embracing diversity, and valuing families, he showed us all the fine
with more hope and better purpose.
Peter A. Gorski, M.D., M.P.A.

During the 1960s Dr. Spock provided insight and guidance in child rearing to
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During the 1960s Dr. Spock provided insight and guidance in child rearing to
most American families and practicing pediatricians. Perhaps just as important, Dr.
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most American families and practicing pediatricians. Perhaps just as important, Dr.
Spock established the concept that “parenting” was a skill that, while not necessarily inher­
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ent, could be learned—thus relieving the anxiety of thousands of young mothers and
ent, could be learned—thus relieving the anxiety of thousands of young mothers and
ent, could be learned—thus relieving the anxiety of thousands of young mothers and
fathers.
Betty Lowe, M.D.

Benjamin Spock’s contribution to child care
Benjamin Spock’s contribution to child care
Benjamin Spock’s contribution to child care
in the last half of the twentieth
in the last half of the twentieth
in the last half of the twentieth
century has been preeminent. Through an unequalled ability to
century has been preeminent. Through an unequalled ability to
century has been preeminent. Through an unequalled ability to
provide authoritative and wise guidance to both parents and profes­
provide authoritative and wise guidance to both parents and profes­
provide authoritative and wise guidance to both parents and profes­
sionals, Spock dramatically transformed the culture of child rearing in this
country. All those who care for children are deeply indebted to him for his lead­
country. All those who care for children are deeply indebted to him for his lead­
country. All those who care for children are deeply indebted to him for his lead­
ership, unwavering courage, and a lifetime devoted to the best interests of children
leadership, unwavering courage, and a lifetime devoted to the best interests of children
leadership, unwavering courage, and a lifetime devoted to the best interests of children
and their families.
Morris Green, M.D.
Ben Spock’s greatest legacy is the help he has given to generations of families to rear their children with humanity, decency, and sensitivity. This reflects the range of his interest from the development of each individual child to the fate of children and families all over the world.

In the process, Ben Spock has served as a model for pediatricians to emulate—particularly when the changes he proposed were not popular. But emulate him we did and in the process his ideas and practices have become part of the mainstream of pediatrics. This took imagination, vision, and courage with which he has been abundantly endowed.

Most importantly, he taught us how to go beyond the four walls of our offices and to communicate our knowledge of child care to people in communities all over the world.

Julius B. Richmond, M.D.
In April 1962 SANE placed this full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*. It was accompanied by a 200-word message from Dr. Spock urging the adoption of a nuclear test ban treaty. Photograph courtesy of Syracuse University Library.
(mainly because Stevenson was such a strong supporter of education), who had made a political commercial for John F. Kennedy and attended state dinners at the White House, taking a public stand counter to a government position and appearing at rallies with disheveled and unruly students—wearing a three-piece suit with a watch chain across the vest!

In 1964 Ben supported and campaigned for Lyndon Johnson because he had said that he would not “send American boys to fight in an Asian war.” When, just three months after his election, Johnson began to escalate the war, Ben wrote indignant protests. Johnson did not reply, although immediately after his election he had called Ben at Western Reserve to thank him for his support. Instead, Ben heard from McGeorge Bundy, who replied as follows:

Dear Doctor, you may be assured that we have considered the point of view that you express, and we feel that it has no validity whatsoever.\(^7\)

From that time forward Ben was a much-sought-after speaker against the Vietnam War, appearing frequently in picket lines and protest marches.

Ben writes that people seem to think he constantly committed civil disobedience, but that, over twenty-five years, it averaged out to about once every two years (twelve identifiable acts). The climax of his social activism of this period was his indictment, along with four others (the Reverend William Sloan Coffin, Marcus Raskin, Mitchell Goodman, and Michael Ferber) for treason on grounds that the group had encouraged resistance to the draft, the burning of draft cards, and emigration to Canada to avoid service in the war. After a widely publicized trial, Raskin was acquitted, but Ben and the other three were found guilty; they were sentenced to two years in jail and fined $5,000 each. A year later the Court of Appeals overturned Spock’s conviction “because of lack of evidence of guilt.” It was a sordid episode in American justice. Ben commented on people’s reaction to these events as follows:

I had no idea when I joined SANE in 1962 that this would lead me to becoming a spokesman for an antiwar movement, to civil disobedience, and to indictment for a federal crime. First I had supported an antiwar candidate for the presidency. Then we were betrayed by him. Next he had me and four others indicted for what I would call just telling the truth to the American people. I

\(^7\) Quoted in Spock on Spock, 175.
never thought of myself as a traitor; I felt that my position was
more moral than the government’s. But it did make me unhappy
to have many people turn against me. 8

One final act of social courage shown by Ben Spock was his willingness to run for president in 1972 as the candidate of the People’s Party. Aware of the total lack of success that third-party candidates have had in this country since we became locked into a two-party system, Ben probably knew that it was an exercise in futility—but something that had to be done nevertheless. The party had been founded the year before on a platform that should have had strong appeal for many voters: progressive disarmament, withdrawal from the fighting in Vietnam, opposition to property and sales taxes, a negative income tax, free university education for all students who needed it, local political control, equal opportunity for women and minorities—and other good things. Ben had to pay most of his own travel expenses. He wrote that the greatest frustration was to give his usual campaign speech, to note the people in the audience who nodded in agreement with the principles, who might come up afterward and say that they wouldn’t vote for him because they didn’t want to lose their vote! The party got 79,000 votes in the ten states where it was on the ballot—not a bad showing when you consider the troubled state of America’s political soul during that area. The campaign, run when Ben was sixty-nine years old, was his last highly publicized political statement. But it was by no means his last effort to shape policy in America. Though less often a soloist during the past two decades, he has nonetheless continued to speak out for those causes to which he is committed.

The personal and professional consequences appear not to have daunted him in the least. In Spock on Spock he relates an anecdote about his pain during World War I at having to wear a suit which, because of the wool shortage, had been made from one of his father’s castoffs. His mother upbraided him for his protests, telling him: “You ought to be ashamed of yourself, worrying what people will think of you. All you have to know is that you are right!” (p. 57). That lesson must have registered indelibly. Throughout his career as a social activist, Ben Spock must have been sustained by the conviction that, in whatever he was doing, he was right. Certainly he helped persuade many others to abandon the safety of either doing nothing or taking the politically safe position. A comment I received about Ben from one of his pediatric colleagues, Dr. Robert Haggerty, expresses this beautifully:

8. Quoted in Spock on Spock, 201.
Ben Spock's unswerving opposition to the Vietnam War, and his willingness to sacrifice himself to end this, gave me the moral courage to oppose it. I marched with him and others in Cleveland in the late 1960s to protest U.S. participation.9

Many people drew their strength to oppose—at least by letter if not at the barricades—from Ben's courage. It marked him for all time as a man to whom right meant more than status and acceptance.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

I got to know Ben Spock personally only during the Mary Morgan era, so my comments will be limited primarily to those years and what I think they mean to Ben. I never knew his first wife, Jane, though I have friends who knew her—all of whom spoke very positively of her, and I have never met either of Ben's sons or his grandchildren. I have heard stories about Jane's feelings that she did not get enough credit for her work on *Baby and Child Care*. But this I know: I have never heard Ben say anything but appreciative words about her. A quick glance at the dedication to Jane of the fortieth-anniversary edition of *Baby and Child Care* in 1985, bears testimony to his continued appreciation. As it is very long, I have shortened it slightly:

To Jane
In the first of the three years it took to write this book in the 1940s, Jane typed the original draft of the manuscript from my slow, slow dictation, from 9 p.m. when we finished dinner (after a full day of practice) until 1 a.m. She figured out such details as how many diapers, sheets, pads, nighties, shirts, bottles, and nipples should be recommended. She tested the various ways to prepare formulas, to make sure they worked.

When it became apparent that the job would never be done if we continued our social life, she suggested we give it up immediately—a real deprivation.

In the second year of writing, when I was in the Navy . . . and couldn't get off duty in the daytime, Jane held consultations with specialists and publishers.

In the third year, when I was transferred to California . . . it was Jane who spent hundreds of hours on the last-minute revisions and indexing. She took down the changes I spelled out over the


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long-distance phone at 2 a.m. . . . and later in the morning rushed them to the publisher. She was endlessly resourceful. Her advice was always practical and wise. The book couldn't have been what it is without her.

In this dedication, Ben gave her every credit but coauthorship, which was, according to some who knew her, what she wanted and felt that she deserved. Whatever the procedure for determining authorship (the publishers had sought a single author; dual authorship may have spoiled the "I" style of doctor-parent communication that helped establish the book as a family friend, etc.), the fact that he devotes almost an entire page to spelling out Jane's contribution some ten years after his marriage to another woman says a great deal about Ben's sense of loyalty.

After paying such close attention to the dedication of Baby and Child Care, I thought perhaps I should check the dedication in Ben's more recent books. (And here I have to make a personal confession: I always read book dedications before reading the book, convinced as I am that they tell you something about the author that will help you respond more appropriately to what is to follow.) His dedication to his 1994 book, A Better World for Our Children, validates my theory:

To Mary Morgan

Who can always tell me where to find my pencils;
Who kept track of a thousand wandering pages of manuscript and helped to organize them into a book;
Who never forgets an appointment or a pill;
Whose expertness as chef makes eating a delight; who has magically improved my health and strength with exercises, meditation and group therapy;
Whose energy and cheerfulness are inexhaustible;
Whose compliments on my speeches and writings are my strongest inspiration;
Whose love fills my life; and
Whom I love dearly.

I think that those two dedications say a great deal about Spock the man and his personal relationships, certainly about Spock the husband. And they tell us about the emotional meaning of the last twenty years of Ben Spock's life—perhaps as much as anything else you could read about him. The first dedication speaks objectively of a job well done; the second of a life made more livable. The first offers public recognition of a contribu-
tion; the second is a public acknowledgment of tenderness and love. Actually both are moving. The difference is that the second almost makes you cry.

Many of Ben’s friends would not have predicted much longevity for his marriage to Mary Morgan, which occurred in 1976, when he was seventy-three and she was thirty-three. They differed in many ways other than age and height. She was a Southerner (and at that from a state formerly ridiculed as backward), an ardent feminist, a divorced mother who probably never consulted Baby and Child Care when her daughter was little (and who, I am tempted to say, may well have been the mother Ben had in mind when he wrote “Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do,” as Mary does not, at least on the surface, show much doubt about anything), who was into what today gets called alternative medicine—a true blithe spirit if ever there was one. She came into his life like a hurricane, blew down his reserve and conventionality, and helped create with him a solid structure of a relationship able to withstand the assaults of aging and health challenges. Note what Ben wrote about his relationship with Mary in Spock on Spock: “Mary is by far the person closest to me. When she is away, I miss her and keep looking for her” (p. 225).

It is my conviction that Ben and Mary have found what we all dream of finding—a lasting, mutually enhancing love. And they found it at a time in Ben’s life when such a miracle is not very probable—if indeed it is probable at any time of life. In what they have found in and give to one another, they offer confirmation of the most beautiful line in Les Miz: “To love another person is to see the face of God.”

SUMMARY

In Ben Spock’s life we can trace the outline and the important events of the twentieth century. He has lived most of the century and, I am confident, will be around to sing “Auld Lang Syne” on 31 December 1999. He was a child in the period before the term “family values” had been coined, but even so his upbringing was of the sort that convinced scientists that the term referred to something more than myth and longing. He has lived through two world wars, serving in the armed forces in one of them. And, most importantly, he helped bring to a close the most unpopular nonwar-war in America’s history. He made it through both the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression without being emotionally scarred by either of these periods of economic extremes. Although he couldn’t find exactly the type of training he needed for his unique blend of pediatrics and child development, he took what was available and con-
verted it, like a powerful intellectual enzyme, to a form that the average parent could digest. And, most impressively, while in his sixties he survived "the sixties," proving more conclusively than anyone else alive that there actually were people over thirty who could be trusted! He is that rare human being who has lived by his beliefs and principles.

Ben Spock’s appreciation of the role of development in human history can be seen nowhere more clearly than in the trajectory of his own life. Born into a family of, if not Boston Brahmins, at least New Haven Brahmins, he nonetheless learned to identify with those of less fortunate social and economic histories and to work diligently for their benefit. Exposed to personality-shaping family members with fixed ideas (on everything from proper gender roles to the importance of fresh air), he somehow managed to develop an open mind that could carry out the most valuable of all human functions: the ability to change. And change it did. In good Piagetian terms, he assimilated new information and accommodated his influential positions accordingly—on subjects seemingly as divergent as when and how to toilet train and when and how to make your convictions as a citizen known and felt. Ben changed his thinking, with a great deal of effective prompting from his wife, Mary Morgan, on acceptable roles for women and the implications of these for the rearing of children. Years ago I read and memorized a brief list of characteristics of living organisms formulated by the great physiologist Alex Carlson. At the top of the list was: “Living things change.” Perhaps it is Ben’s incredible ability to change that has allowed this giant of the twentieth century to help all of us prepare for the twenty-first.

For Ben Spock has been a segue man. Very much part of the twentieth century, he has realized how evanescent that 100-year slice of time is. Even fifty years ago, when Baby and Child Care first appeared, he seemed to be aware that the children of the parents to whom his book was addressed would themselves parent the children who would help determine the quality of life in the twenty-first century and beyond. In this context I found myself reflecting that, without realizing it, Ben Spock was writing advice for himself, not just parents, when he penned his opening line, “Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do.” He knew to trust his own thoughts and feelings when the medical and scientific establishments refused to take a stand on nuclear disarmament and what he perceived as an immoral war. Perhaps reluctanty, he knew that you have to oppose a president who breaks his word to you on critical issues. He trusted that there was more dignity associated with riding in a paddy
wagon than in a diplomatic limousine if you had to pay for the limousine ride with a slice of conscience.

Ben Spock is still learning, and growing, and writing. How fortunate Syracuse University is to have the papers of this man of the twentieth century who wrote and still writes for the twenty-first century and beyond!
The Magic Toy Shop

BY JEAN DAUGHERTY

Turn back to the closing months of 1948: Harry S. Truman had just confounded press, pollsters, and pundits by defeating Thomas E. Dewey for the presidency. On Broadway Mary Martin was busy “washing that man right out of her hair” as Ensign Nellie Forbush in the newly opened *South Pacific*. In that year an important event occurred in Syracuse. On 1 December WHEN-TV signed on the area’s first television station, after which life was never quite the same.

It was claimed that Channel 8’s hitting the air by December was a history-making event. The usual start-up time for a new television station was one year. But Central New Yorkers saw their first program sixteen days after the equipment arrived at the site, the old Cine-Simplex Building at 101 Court Street. The owners, the Meredith Corporation, publishers of *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine, felt that this was a good omen and that their decision to enter television had been a wise one.

The local press reported great interest in the new medium, in spite of the fact that most people caught their first glimpse of local television through the windows of a store: only about 100 people in the coverage area owned sets.¹ There were programs from 5:00 to 6:15 p.m. and from 7:30 to 10:00 p.m., although the test pattern was shown from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. People were fascinated by the idea of pictures coming through the air. Progress was swift. Those 100 sets became 2,300 sets within three months. By early 1950 the number jumped to 50,000, and by the time the station was ready to celebrate its fifth birthday it was providing service to 400,000 sets.

I came on the scene in time for the birthday celebration. Television was still young; we were eager to try out new ideas—and idealistic enough to

Jean Daugherty received a B.S. in education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and an M.S. in communications from Syracuse University. Since 1953, when she became a local public affairs programmer, she has written or produced more than 16,000 shows, including 6,200 episodes of *The Magic Toy Shop*.

1. According to Professor Emeritus Lawrence Myers Jr., the extent of a station’s coverage area depends upon such factors as the strength of the signal, the location of the transmitter, and the obstacles presented by the surrounding terrain. Most likely, WHEN reached homes within a fifty-mile radius.
believe that those ideas could be turned into programs that would improve the quality of life for the people who watched them. We had all been told by our management that we were a business and that, to be a successful business, we must serve every segment of the community—a mandate that resulted in one of the longest-running programs in television history: *The Magic Toy Shop.*

General Manager Paul Adanti and Program Director Gordon Alderman thought that as part of our fifth birthday celebration we should develop a program for preschool children. Paul Adanti had only one request: he wanted a trolley car as part of the cast. Gordon Alderman, a graduate of Syracuse University’s Drama Department and a man for whom television was more mission than medium, insisted it must broaden a child’s world; it must help a child appreciate individual differences; and, “If it isn’t fun,” he said, “they won’t watch.”

We didn’t have a big budget, but we had resources. Our first job was to convene a panel of experts: representatives from parent-teacher associations, mothers’ clubs, the Syracuse public schools, the public library system, Syracuse University’s nursery school, and the Oswego State Teachers College (now SUNY Oswego). There was no such term as “couch potato,” but the panel was concerned that children would become passive viewers as they were spoon-fed information. Those of us who were from the station, however, believed that we could help children develop imagination. All of us wanted to stress what we called “the fourth R,” respect. One member said, “We can sit around all day and say what children should watch. But they’ll decide what they will watch.”

We finally agreed that I would develop a pilot. I had to come up with an idea, invent characters, then cast the show. I consulted with our staff musician, Tony Riposo, and talked with experts about what kinds of stories we should include.

The advisory panel thought that my undergraduate degree in education and my graduate degree in communications qualified me for the job. I didn’t tell them that I had spent my childhood putting on shows in the garage and that this assignment was a dream come true. I would have the chance to share a small town childhood with youngsters I’d never met. I was convinced that, although times change, children don’t. The stories I had learned from parents, grandparents, and assorted aunts, uncles, and cousins would appeal to a new generation. (Time proved that theory to be correct.) I had always enjoyed pretending, so it seemed natural to create a make-believe world that came to be known as the Magic Toy Shop.

We decided to air the pilot before sign-on, which was then 9 a.m.
Committee members agreed to select test families so that we would have a broad-based audience. Professor Lawrence Myers Jr. of Syracuse University’s School of Journalism, whose expertise was in research, devised a two-part questionnaire: one part to track a child’s reactions, the other to record a parent’s reactions. (Remember, this was the 1950s, the age of stay-at-home moms.) We had an enthusiastic response. Parents and children didn’t always agree, but both sides gave a thumbs up to the program we’d named *The Magic Toy Shop*.

We polished for more than a year before the program made its official debut on 28 February 1955. There was one major change from the pilot. The original proprietor of the shop was a character named Mr. Fudge. Because the children in the test families had confused him with Santa Claus, he was replaced by Merrily, who didn’t look a bit like St. Nick.

I continue to get questions about where the ideas came from. Some ideas and, most importantly, the philosophy came from my hometown, Barnesboro, Pennsylvania, a small mining community, where we learned at an early age how much we needed each other; and from my parents, who taught us that each person has a talent and an obligation to develop
it. We were taught to look for the good in others and to compliment them on it. Because of that philosophy, the world of *The Magic Toy Shop* was a kind and gentle one.

I've discovered that the adults who were “our children” now want “their children” to know that world. They can still quote the opening: “Boys and girls, this is the door to the wonderful Magic Toy Shop. But to open it you need a key.” Thousands of Central New York youngsters put their thumbs at the corners of their mouths and turned them up into a smile. There was a reason for that opening. We were asking for a commitment; we wanted them to earn their way into the shop.

It was called magic because the toys came to life at night. They reported to Floogie, the general of all the toys. He was part of the show from the beginning, along with Tommy Pup Dog, a floppy dog, who was always tired because he taught dancing at night. Later came Marmaduke, a dog; Cuddle Bunny, a rabbit; and Smokey the Bear. The toys who lived at the homes of the boys and girls in the audience also reported to Floogie.

He in turn shared the news with Merrily—one of four human cast members—who was in charge of all the activities. Her real name was Marylin Hubbard Herr; she had studied at the American Academy in New York and earned a degree from Syracuse University in drama.

Merrily’s chief assistant was Eddie Flum Num, who wore a sailor suit of sorts because he’d once served on a showboat. He was a gifted artist whose special job was drawing stories told by Mr. Trolley. (Paul Adanti got his wish and the character developed just the way he’d pictured it.) Eddie (Socrates Sampson in real life) also designed and built all the sets. He was a graduate of Syracuse University’s School of Fine Arts.

Mr. Trolley was “the greatest story teller in the whole world and outer space.” He was a link with the outside world and an authority figure—kindly, but strict. His real name was Lewis B. O’Donnell, and he had a bachelor’s, a master’s, and a doctorate from Syracuse University.

The fourth member of the cast was Twinkle, a clown and a cousin to all clowns, who talked only in music. Tony Riposo, who created the role, requested he be silent vocally, so children would learn to listen to his music. A graduate of Syracuse University’s School of Music, Tony was, and is, one of the most respected musicians in Syracuse.

The amazing thing to me is that these four were all working at the station. We did not go outside to audition. We were all there at 101 Court Street. Marylin insists it was providence.

At first Tony wondered how fellow musicians would feel about his be-
Mr. Trolley (Lew O’Donnell).

ing part of a “kids’ show.” He didn’t have to wait long for an answer. Because we were live, we had to have vacation replacements; so when Twinkle was away, children said the magic words “hocus pocus, dominocus, abracadabra and there you are,” and the piano played by itself, thanks to another musician, who was out of sight at a keyboard in the corner of the studio. Some of the area’s finest performers belong to the exclusive “Magic Piano Club,” including Mario DeSantis, Sox Tiffault, Joe Carfagno, and Phil Klein. Tony found out that they appreciated the importance of his role.

Mr. Trolley had several vacation replacements: Mrs. Trolley; a cousin, Texas Trolley; and even a British relative, Cecil Tram. We had back-up plans for Eddie Flum Num too. His parents had seven sons, all named Eddie (and George Foreman thought he had something new). Each son had a different middle name: Eddie Tum Num liked to eat, Eddie Sum Num was good at math, Eddie Drum Num was a percussionist, Eddie Hum
Twinkle the Clown (Tony Riposo).

Num was a singer, Eddie Mum Num could keep a secret, and Eddie Crum Num (the only one who actually made an appearance) liked peanut butter crackers and always had a pocket full of crumbs. “Flum” is a word that means very good in the Num family circle. Eddie Flum Num was a very good artist and we used the word “flum” to describe anything extra special.

We hadn’t yet planned a vacation replacement for Merrily, when she broke the news that she was pregnant. We had to decide what to do. She wanted to work as long as she could, and we wanted that too. (Remem-
ber, this was the mid-1950s when pregnancy was something you didn’t discuss on the air, and the term “maternity leave” was not part of our vocabulary.) The first thing we did was put everyone in smocks. Certainly for Eddie Flum Num the artist and Twinkle the clown the costumes made sense. Merrily wore her smock some days and regular clothes on others. Eddie and Twinkle liked their smocks so much that they held on to them till the final closing of the door.

The next step was to reconvene the advisory panel. They worried that, when Merrily/Marylin took time off, the children would resent her leaving or refuse to accept the person who came to take her place. Their solution—as Merrily was seen by many children as a mother figure—was to cast someone in the role of grandmother. “Children need both,” claimed the experts.

They envisioned the new cast member doing what grandparents traditionally do: share stories, bring new toys, praise them, love them, and even spoil them a bit. I thought we’d have to search for a person who could blend into a cast that had become family. The decision was taken out of my hands. “You will do it,” said Gordon Alderman. “You will be the Play Lady from Toyland. Nobody knows the program as well as you do.”

The change was not easy. It meant I could no longer direct the program, although I would continue to write and produce it. I’d have to turn “my child” over to someone else. (I must add here that from the beginning the crew had been completely supportive. At many stations “kids’ shows” receive low priority, but at WHEN no project was more important. So I knew the show would be in good hands.) I moved to a place I never thought I’d be: in front of the camera.

To this day I refer to the Play Lady in the third person: “She did this, she did that.” But one day at the New York State Fair I learned that children didn’t make the distinction between Jean Daugherty and the Play Lady. I was walking along and felt something around my knees. I looked down and found myself in the grasp of a child. “Play Lady,” she said, “how did you get here?” I answered, “They ran a special train from Toyland.” She said, “Isn’t it lucky I picked today to come?” I suddenly realized that this child believed everything I told her. That was an awesome responsibility. We all took that responsibility seriously.

The Play Lady started her visits to the show sometimes one day a week and sometimes two or three. As “due date” approached, she visited every day. Merrily opened the Magic Door right up to the day before the baby was born. On 1 March 1956, when the Toy Shop celebrated its first birth-
day, Corliss Alexandra Herr was born. She weighed eight pounds—the perfect number for Channel 8!

Merrily returned to the show in six weeks, but the Play Lady continued to visit by way of a wonderful invention called the Abracadabra Book that enabled children to explore the world. She escorted them to far-away places like the United Nations, Washington, D.C., and far below the earth into a coal mine. Places that might have been frightening, like the doctor's office or the barbershop, were in this way made familiar. The cast left the confines of the studio too. At holiday time we made eight to ten personal appearances each weekend. Always we strove to let the children know how important they were. The Magic Toy Shop was invited to be part of Onondaga County's first Festival of Nations celebration in 1968. We greeted thousands of youngsters at the State Fair, and never, never, did we step out of character.

For me The Magic Toy Shop was the icing on the cake. My primary job was producing public affairs programming. We attempted to deal with the problems facing our community by spotlighting people who were coping creatively. We celebrated the human spirit by proving that one person who takes action can make a difference. In offering such programs we hoped that we too were making a difference. I don't pretend to be the best writer or producer, but I have to be classed as one of the most prolific because my name appeared on more than 16,000 shows—except for the 6,200 Magic Toy Shop episodes. I suppose I wanted children to think that "it just happened."

Those who analyzed the program realized that it was carefully put together. The child was to be a participant, not just a viewer. There was a quiet time, then an active time. Our audience included babies in playpens as well as kindergartners. We tried to find something for everyone. Parents told us that babies reacted first to Twinkle's music. The stories, which ran three to four minutes, required the greatest attention span. Developing that attention span was an important goal. Kindergarten teachers thanked us.

Each day Merrily taught a song; experts at Oswego had suggested the method. She sang the song, then she said each line. Children repeated it with Eddie Flum Num. Then they said it together, then sang it together. It's interesting to note that college students at Oswego watched the programs so that they could use the same technique when they entered an elementary school classroom.

We actively shared records and music games. Children were invited to wave their arms like windmills or like the trunks of elephants. They
climbed pretend ladders and marched and danced, and in so doing exer-
cised large muscles. Physical education teachers told us that was impor-
tant. Many of them believed that exercise could aid reading readiness.

Most of the stories I wrote for The Magic Toy Shop conveyed not-too-
subtle messages. There was “Wait-a-While O’Hara,” who said it once too
often. As a result he missed out on a trip to the fair because his grandfa-
ther (as warned) wouldn’t wait. But a compromise was reached. After-
wards the young man occasionally said, “Wait just a minute. I’m almost
finished,” but most of the time he was ready before everyone else. The
“Birthday Boy” who wouldn’t show his gifts discovered that it’s not much
fun to teeter-totter without a partner.

The stories I enjoyed most dealt with characters who didn’t always fit
the norm, but who managed by working hard to find a special niche.
“Jennifer Witch” was a failure because her witches’ brew tasted like
onion soup (it was delicious, very unwitchlike). But one Halloween she
carved the first jack-o’-lantern to comfort a lonely scarecrow. Her inven-
tion became an instant hit. Her sister witches applauded her. They even
used her recipe to make onion soup.

“Benjy Polar Bear” was allergic to cold. He traveled to the warmth of
Hollywood and became a star, but he was homesick. So he designed a
thermal cowboy suit and starred in the “Wild North Show.”

There are dozens of such stories about what I call “my people.” The
world didn’t adjust to them, but they found a way to adjust to the world
without giving up their individualism, and in doing so promoted an ap-
preciation of diversity.

In almost three decades the world outside The Magic Toy Shop changed.
There were changes in the station too. Channel 8 became Channel 5. In
1962 we moved from 101 Court Street to new headquarters on James
Street and continued until 1982.

2 WHEN became WTVH when the
Meredith Corporation sold its local radio station and the call letters. In
December 1993—forty-five years after they had embraced television
—Meredith sold WTVH to the Granite Corporation. It’s obvious that the
president and general manager, Maria Moore, appreciates the past. That’s
her reason for approving the new theme: “Then, Now and Always.”

Those words are particularly important to the Toy Shop family—those
who appeared on the show, those who worked on it, and, most impor-

2. On that James Street site, where The Magic Toy Shop ran its course, the home of
Edward Noyes Westcott once stood. There he finished writing David Harum: A Story of
American Life before succumbing to tuberculosis in 1889. See Brian Ladewig’s article,
p. 107. Ed.
tantly, those who watched. For twenty-seven and a half years and 6,200 episodes our goals never changed. We were interested in children and the adults they would become. We wanted them to carry their childhood with them. In that I believe we were successful. Why do I think so? Because young adults whose names I don’t know and whose faces I’ve never seen approach me in a restaurant, at a football game, or on the street and put their thumbs at the corners of their mouths and turn them up into a smile. What was the true magic of the Toy Shop? It was the talent, the skill, and most of all the love that Marylin Hubbard Herr, Socrates Sampson, Lew O’Donnell, Tony Riposo, and those marvelous Magic Piano players put into their performances.

Our grown-up Toy Shop “alumni” often tell us, “We’d like our children to share our childhood; they’ve never seen The Magic Toy Shop.” There are plans to remedy that. We’re working with the Onondaga Historical Association on establishing a permanent exhibition. The sets and costumes are there; and Floogie, Tommy Pup Dog, and all the original toys are ready to take their bows in downtown Syracuse. 3

We tried to create for young viewers a kinder, gentler world, and we’re grateful that now, as adults, they recognize that. It’s trite, but oh so true, that The Magic Toy Shop was a labor of love. When we play the tape of the last show—when the door closed forever—we listen to the final words that Merrily said to the children: “We will be forever friends.” And so we are.

3. WTVH has begun a Magic Toy Shop web site, which can be found at www.wtvh.com/play-lady.html.
Ernest Hemingway

BY SHIRLEY JACKSON

INTRODUCTION:
Shirley Jackson on Ernest Hemingway:
A Recovered Term Paper

By John W. Crowley

If the teacher hadn’t kept the student’s essay, it might have been lost forever. But Shirley Jackson’s term paper, along with several others from the same 1940 course on Ernest Hemingway, was found in the Leonard Brown Papers recently acquired by Syracuse University Library. Maybe Professor Brown never had a chance to return the paper. After Jackson’s graduation that spring from Syracuse University, she immediately moved to New York with Stanley Edgar Hyman, a classmate with whom she had been passionately involved for two years and to whom she would soon be married, despite objections from both their families.

Shirley Jackson’s class-conscious parents had hoped she would unfold as a social butterfly, and they were constantly dismayed by their daughter’s deviations from the upper-crust suburban norms of San Francisco and (later) Rochester, New York. To Leslie and Geraldine Jackson, Shirley was a disappointment: an ungainly girl who preferred reading and writing poems and stories to learning the social graces or practicing the womanly arts that might land her a socially proper husband; a troubled, rebellious adolescent who flunked out of the University of Rochester; an energetic young woman whose high intelligence had yet to find its focus. When Jackson enrolled at Syracuse in 1937, with enough transfer credits for sophomore standing, she was trying to get as far away from home as her parents would allow. She was also attracted to the University’s program in journalism and by its reputation, no doubt exaggerated, as “a hotbed of communism and antisocial attitudes.” This was the view of the “nice”
Rochester boy with whom her parents had fixed her up. But Shirley was set on scandalizing her family—by her choice of a man, if not her choice of a career.

In the egomaniacally brilliant and politically radical Stanley Hyman, an unpolished, working-class Jew from Brooklyn, Shirley Jackson found someone who would not only incarnate her parents’ worst nightmares, but also fulfill her own romantic needs and validate her work as a writer. When Shirley met Stanley, as one friend remarked, “it was nuclear fission... He had a catalytic effect on her life.” Hyman, who aspired to be nothing less than the critical arbiter of the rising generation, believed he had discovered a true genius in Jackson. From the moment of their first encounter, as a result of his reading one of her stories in a campus magazine, Hyman relentlessly encouraged Jackson to answer her literary calling.

The support she got from Leonard Brown was no less crucial to her ultimate success. Jackson later showed her gratitude by dedicating to him her best novel, *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959). Brown was an early advocate of bringing contemporary writing into the classroom, and his courses in American literature and criticism were among the first of their kind in the country. Taking his seminar on Hemingway, offered even before the publication of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, must have been an exciting prospect for students as literarily aware as Hyman and Jackson; for there was no writer in America who seemed more relevant in 1940 than Hemingway.

Brown’s teaching notes from the seminar indicate that the students, most of whom were seniors, read through all of Hemingway’s books, with an eye toward his political stance. Moved by the Marxist currents of the 1930s, Brown himself had drifted leftward; and Jackson, who followed Hyman into joining (at least temporarily) the Young Communist League, was no less concerned than they whether Hemingway was producing the “socially responsible” fiction urged upon him by “progressive” propagandists.

Among these was Malcolm Cowley, serving as a Communist Party stalwart at the *New Republic*. Cowley was invited by Brown to give some lectures at Syracuse during the summer of 1939, when Hyman stayed on campus while Jackson was swept off to California. (This enforced tour of Shirley’s childhood environs was her parents’ last-ditch attempt to distract her from Hyman.) Although Brown made a point of commending Stanley to Cowley, he spoke even more admiringly of the absent Shirley:

“This was the one to keep his eye on.” Hyman may have been stimulated by Cowley, but he was galvanized that summer by another of Brown’s visiting lecturers, Kenneth Burke.

The most original American critic of the twentieth century, Burke always defied categorization, in part because he kept branching out in new directions. When he came to Syracuse in 1939, Burke had already published three books of criticism, and he was assembling the pieces for his next major work, *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941). The title monograph derived, in fact, from the lectures Burke delivered at Syracuse.

Although Shirley Jackson was not exposed directly to Burke, she was undoubtedly familiar with his ideas, if not from her own reading, then from Burke’s impact on her mentors, Brown and Hyman. Her approach to Hemingway may be characterized as Burkean in its search, as Burke put it, for “the clusters of associations surrounding the important words of a poem or fiction.” For Burke, these “associational clusters” led in turn to the formulation of what he called “implicit equations”: linkages that point to underlying thematic patterns. By examining an author’s work, one may “find ‘what goes with what’ in these clusters—what kinds of acts and images and personalities and situations go with his notions of heroism, villainy, consolation, despair, etc. And though he be perfectly conscious of the act of writing, conscious of selecting a certain kind of imagery to reinforce a certain kind of mood, etc., he cannot possibly be conscious of the interrelationships among all these equations.”

As Burke later explained, “The method was somewhat phenomenological in aim, seeking to get at the psychological depth of a work through the sheer comparison of its surfaces.” Both on the surface and at the depths, the clusters usually fell out into binary pairs, dialectical oppo-

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4. Traces of Burke’s influence appear in Brown’s notes for the Hemingway seminar. Apparently, each student gave oral reports on the fiction and/or the criticism, and the professor took notes. The most extensive entry refers to Hyman’s presentation on *To Have and Have Not*, in which he evidently used the Burkean phrase (twice transcribed by Brown) “perspective by incongruity.” This term, taken from Burke’s second book, *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose* (1935), was later used by Hyman as the title for an anthology he compiled of Burke’s writings, *Perspectives by Incongruity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964).
sites that were, paradoxically, at one. That is, according to Coleridge’s motto, which Burke loved to quote, “extremes meet.” (One may see here an American anticipation of the deconstructive method imported from France during the 1970s.)

In Jackson’s paper on Hemingway, the argumentative strategy is to identify “a basic duality” through analysis of Burkean clusters—in this case, of antithetical characters. “The opposition of these two sets of characters,” Jackson writes, “is the personification of the conflict in Hemingway himself, and his attempt to solve it through his writing.”* In 1940, the notion that Hemingway’s work reflected his inner conflicts was becoming a critical commonplace, and in this respect Jackson’s paper is not all that remarkable—although its intellectual command and stylistic ease make it superior to typical undergraduate work, then or now.

The originality of the paper lies in its attention to the ambiguity surrounding gender roles in Hemingway’s fiction. Jackson shrewdly suggests that the “positive” and “negative” character types in Hemingway “may be identified as male and female,” but she also recognizes that “extremes meet”: some female characters occupy the “male” position. Such implicit equations did not receive much attention before the first wave of feminist criticism during the 1970s. Gender issues have since moved to the center of Hemingway scholarship, especially since the exploration of his vast but unfinished late novel, published in a drastically edited form as The Garden of Eden (1986).*

8. “Ernest Hemingway,” Leonard Brown Papers, Syracuse University Archives. Although Shirley Jackson’s name nowhere appears in type on the paper—perhaps a cover sheet was lost—“Jackson” is written, apparently in Brown’s hand, at the top of the first page. Additional evidence that the paper is, in fact, hers may be found in Brown’s notes from the semester. About Jackson’s report on A Farewell to Arms, for instance, he remarked: “‘world breaks everyone’: doesn’t agree with father/son (Nick) story” (i.e., “Fathers and Sons”). The paper refers to this same story. Another of Brown’s notes suggests that Jackson was assigned to summarize Gertrude Stein’s impressions of Hemingway; these are cited in the paper. The best proof of Jackson’s authorship is Brown’s note about her report on The Fifth Column and the First Forty-nine Stories, in which she examined Hemingway’s fusion of love and death: “Women: fear. -> Bullfighting & hunting = perfect sex act;—as in Macomber story.” The paper makes a very similar point, citing “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber.”

9. See, for example: Mark Spilka, Hemingway’s Quarrel with Androgyny (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989); Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes, Hemingway’s Genders (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994). It is notable that one of the earliest discussions of gender coding in Hemingway was written by another of Leonard Brown’s protégés, Ted Bardacke, who was a graduate student at Syracuse when Hyman and Jackson were seniors, and who married one of their friends, Frannie Woodward. See Theodore Bardacke,
Shirley Jackson, ca. 1940. Photograph courtesy of Laurence J. Hyman.

Although Shirley Jackson read through Hemingway early in her own writing career, there is no evidence that his work had any formative influence on hers or that she took any great interest in his later fiction. For

Leonard Brown, however, Hemingway held an abiding fascination. A decade after the 1940 seminar, he prepared for Charles Scribner’s Sons, Hemingway’s publisher, an anthology of Hemingway’s work: an in-house version of the omnibus Malcolm Cowley had edited in 1944 for the Viking Portable Library. Using a similar format, Brown wrote a general introduction as well as a brief critical preface for each selection.

When *The Hemingway Reader* appeared in 1953, however, the editor was Charles Poore. Brown had been kicked off the project by Hemingway himself. Late in 1952, an editor at Scribner’s sent the complete draft of Brown’s editorial commentary to Cuba for vetting by Hemingway. This was a period when Mr. Papa was feeling plagued by what he deemed a swarm of academic parasites. Hemingway was fending off Carlos Baker, Charles Fenton, and Philip Young, all budding scholars who were writing books about his work; he was determined to guard his personal life against scrutiny and speculation of the sort that had appalled him in Arthur Mizener’s recent biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Far Side of Paradise* (1951).

“Criticism is getting all mixed up with a combination of the Junior F.B.I.-men, discards from Freud and Jung and a sort of Columnist peephole and missing laundry list school,” Hemingway ranted to Wallace Meyer at Scribner’s in February 1952, just months before he received Brown’s typescript. “Mizener made money and did some pretty atrocious things . . . with his book on Scott,” he continued in a paranoid vein, “and every young English professor sees gold in them dirty sheets now. Imagine what they can do with the soiled sheets of four legal beds by the same writer and you can see why their tongues are slavering (this may not be the correct word. If not you please supply it.)”

Although Brown certainly didn’t slaver over any dirty laundry, something nonetheless irked the author, who marked up the typescript with iniquitous marginalia that called Brown’s intelligence, writing skills, and manhood all into question! Perhaps Hemingway meant his more vicious vitriol for Meyer’s eyes only, but the manhandled typescript was returned to Brown, who must have been mortified. In any case, he buried the offending pages in his files and spoke cryptically thereafter of a “lost” Hemingway book, which had somehow never seen the light of day.

Brown may have taken consolation from Stanley Hyman’s stinging review of *The Hemingway Reader*, in which he lamented the decay of Hem-

ingway’s talent into self-indulgence and egocentrism, sentimentality and
dogmatism: “Sinking into a self-parody in later years is a fate that has be-
fallen many fine writers before Hemingway and no doubt awaits many af-
ter him.”11

As for Shirley Jackson, in a diatribe she privately unleashed soon after
her marriage, Hemingway was written off with the whole lot of self-im-
portantly argumentative men whose political bickering and philosophical
blathering left her bleary:

Song for all editors, writers, theorists, political economists, ideal-
ists, communists, liberals, reactionaries, bruce bliven, marxist
critics, reasoners, and postulators, any and all splinter groups, my
father, religious fanatics, political fanatics, men on the street, fas-
cists, ernest hemingway, all army members and advocates of mil-
tary training, not excepting those too old to fight, the r.o.t.c.
and the boy scouts, walter winchell, the terror organizations,
vigilantes, all senate committees and my husband:

I would not drop dead from the lack of you—
My cat has more brains than the pack of you.12

Feast (1964), in which he deplored Hemingway’s malicious treatment of former friends
and colleagues. See “Ernest Hemingway with a Knife,” New Leader 47 (11 May 1964):
8–9. It is unclear whether Hyman knew about Hemingway’s cruel treatment of Leonard
Brown, whom he loyally honored in the acknowledgments to his most important work:
“To Leonard Brown, who is, as Ascham said of Sir John Cheke, ‘teacher of all the little
poore learning I have,’ I am obliged, quite literally, for anything of value the book may
contain.” The Armed Vision: A Study in the Methods of Modern Literary Criticism (New York:
Knopf, 1948), xiv.
12. Quoted in Oppenheimer, Private Demons, 90.

Editor’s note: Some minor corrections in spelling and style have been made to improve
the readability of Jackson’s paper.
I am attempting to prove that there exists in Hemingway a basic duality between what I shall call the "positive" and the "negative" sides of his own nature. This duality, very clear in Hemingway's writings, also comes out, I believe, in his personal life and his early experiences as recorded both by Hemingway and his biographers.

That both sides of this duality exist in Hemingway is evidenced plainly enough by his expression of himself in characters of both types, in his constant conflicts, and in the shifts in his writing from one side to the other. [Edmund] Wilson said that Hemingway was both a sadist and a masochist, that he could feel and inflict the same pain. Following this idea through into other manifestations, we find that Hemingway will place himself in either or both of any two positions.

The duality is between strength and weakness, between active and passive—between, in fact, any two diametrically opposed situations when one equals the controller and the other the controlled.

Consider first what I have called the "positive" side of Hemingway's nature. It is that of the sadist, the active man, the virile man. In the bullfight, it is the bullfighter who is dignified, honorable (through technique and skill: "The technique that Marcial Lalande, the most scientific of living bullfighters, has, and which alone makes that position honorable . . ."), graceful, strong (through wisdom and skill: "The matador must dominate the bulls by knowledge and science. In the measure in which this domination is accomplished with grace will it be beautiful to watch. Strength is of little use to him except at the actual moment of killing.

1. In *The Wound and the Bow* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941), Wilson writes (in discussing Hemingway's overindulgence in describing scenes of killing in *The Fifth Column*): "Hitherto the act of destruction has given rise for him to complex emotions: he has identified himself not merely with the injurer but also with the injured; there has been a masochistic complement to the sadism," 24. Ed.

2. Since I am dwelling with a condition which is fundamental in Hemingway's reactions, I have chosen as my standard the one situation in which examples of these two types are put into direct opposition, particularly in Hemingway's own description of them, and I am taking his description of them as basis for a standard.
particularly in the bull or in other bullfighters, and he must possess a certain abnegation and humility, which is based on pride and arrogance and sureness of himself. All of this description is taken directly from Death in the Afternoon and these are Hemingway's words, not mine.

If we take the bullfighter, then, as the standard or embodiment of this positive type, we find that his position in the bullfight is that of the controller, who has the ability to inflict pain, frequently deliberately, who stimulates, rather than responds to other stimuli from other people, who is more or less dominant over weaker creatures (as personified by the bull), who possesses skill, who can control sex, drinking, and, to a large extent, most emotional troubles. Take, as another extreme example of this type, Hemingway's final representation of the bullfighter in fiction: Philip, of The Fifth Column.

Philip is in a powerful position, where he can give orders, where he can control all the people he meets (notice his attitude toward Antonio in Act 2 Scene 1, where, as Antonio is his superior, he is extremely insolent, and, at any rate, never loses the dominant position), where he is in a position to inflict pain (certainly on the prisoners, on the guard who fell asleep, on Bridges and Anita, and on his comrades), where he is the leader and the one from whom comes all initial activity, and where he does not in any case succumb to the solaces of drinking or sex, and his few outbursts are quickly and capably controlled. This is a complete affirmation of the qualities which Hemingway finds admirable in the bullfighter, and a complete representation of the qualities which he has been attributing to various characters throughout all his writing.

The “negative” side, while possessing some positive characteristics of its own, nevertheless follows the part of the bull in the bullfight, and contains the opposites or distortions of all the positive qualities. Thus the negative is the passive, the acted-upon, the hurt, the dominated, the unskilled (because inadequate and unpracticed), and also those who find solace and refuge in drink, or who have no emotional control, or who are sexually impotent, perverted, or in some way completely inadequate sexually. (There is an interesting contrast here between those who can control sex and those who “make love badly.” The opposite of control is not excess; it is lack of skill—sexual excess belongs to the strong, who indulge, to excess, from choice.)

An example of this type is of course the bull, who is certainly dominated by the fighter, who does not take the initiative until he is prodded into motion, who is killed by skill (not by strength: the bull has the physical strength in this case) and who is, as a steer, says Mr. Hemingway, cow-
ardly. Cowardice is a frequent characteristic of the people in this type, although sometimes, as Hemingway says of the bull, they possess a peculiar dogged courage, which is of very little help against those who dominate them, and only makes for a better fight. The bull is noble, has a certain beauty and honor, but he is at a disadvantage. He has none of the discipline of the fighter, and most of his sincerity comes from sheer desperation and knowledge that he is in no position to direct the fight. An extreme example of this type is Richard Gordon of To Have and Have Not, who fulfills all the requirements of being dominated, cowardice (which sometimes, as in the final scene with Helen, gives way to a courage born of desperation and knowledge that he has everything to lose), finding refuge in drinking, being hurt, and, finally, to make the picture complete, Hemingway points out that Richard makes love very badly.

These two classifications may be applied to all of Hemingway's characters, and they fit roughly into the two groups. Usually the two are opposed, with the strong constantly winning (unless, as sometimes in the bullfight, an unexpected lack of one of the characteristics defeats the strong at the last moment). The opposition of these two sets of characters is the personification of the conflict in Hemingway himself, and his attempt to solve it through his writing.

In examining Hemingway's life, we find some very significant things. It has been an active, exciting life, starting with his boyhood summers, hunting and fishing with his father, making friends with the Indians; then later these same tastes are carried into big-game hunting and deep-sea fishing; Hemingway drove an ambulance on the Italian front in the World War; he went to Spain as a correspondent; he quarreled with Max Eastman over his own virility, and married twice to prove it; he saw bullfights and met Gertrude Stein; he lived in post-war Paris and in Cuba. But, added to these are such things as Stein's comment that Hemingway was a delicate person and was always breaking a leg or an arm when he went skiing or riding; his excessive anger at Eastman's comment and the very interesting facts that when he was about to divorce his first wife he

3. Note the reference in this respect to the steer in The Sun Also Rises, in sharp juxtaposition to Jake, who is a very weak person, and decidedly on the negative side of the ledger.

wrote “The End of Something,” when he was contemplating divorcing his second wife he wrote “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” and “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” and that now when he is planning to marry Martha Gellhorn he writes The Fifth Column.

One cannot help believing that there is in this an indication of a definite second side to Hemingway’s nature, and that it is a side opposed to his hunting, fishing, virile, exciting life, and, moreover, a side which Hemingway does not like, and which stands opposed to all that he wants and intends to be. Remember that Hemingway, as Nick in “Father and Sons,” considering his idolized father, who had taught him all he knew about fishing and shooting, and “was as sound on those two things as he was unsound on sex,” and while excusing his father for this unsoundness—Hemingway, as Nick, violently rejects the two identifications with his father that are offered him—once, when they tried to make him wear his father’s clothes, and, again, when, at the end of the story, he finds himself with his own son, standing in the position of his father talking to Nick himself, and Nick avoids the identification by refusing to allow the boy or himself contact with any part or recollection of his father.

I think that this sexual weakness, which seems to play so important a part in Hemingway’s interpretation of the negative character, can be translated into lack of virility, which is the closest he can come, physically, to any manifestation of his positive or negative sides; thus, the positive side is interpreted, concretely and in the character, as virility, and the negative side into lack of virility. Either virility or the lack of it in a character indicates the presence or absence of the characteristics which Hemingway finds so admirable.

Up to To Have and Have Not, all of Hemingway’s important works are autobiographical. This excludes To Have and Have Not, The Fifth Column, and the later short stories. I do not mean by autobiographical that this writing is a word for word account of Hemingway’s life, but an account largely based on his own experience. Thus, A Farewell to Arms is autobiographical because Hemingway, like Frederic Henry, drove an ambulance on the Italian front in the World War, although it is hardly likely that Hemingway participated in the love affair of the book. Hemingway, starting his writing from his own experience, projected his own emotions and convictions into the books, and translated his vague emotional troubles into a physical reality, and then ended his translated troubles satisfactorily. Jake’s castration becomes a reality from a thought or a fear in Hemingway.

Troubles or fears or doubts, or whatever created the need he wrote to satisfy.
way's mind, but it did not need to be a fear of castration in Hemingway to produce an actual castration in Jake. Thus Jake, Frederic Henry, and of course Nick, are Hemingway, actually autobiographical to a certain (approximately determinable) extent, and from that point on they are Hemingway's emotions translated into physical reality. Nick is, I believe, almost completely the reality that Hemingway knew, with little added in most of the stories.

However, from Harry Morgan on, the autobiography has shrunk to such small proportion that it is practically nonexistent. Hemingway knew Cuba, and he knew Spain, but he was never a rum-runner or an intelligence worker. His two latest important works, both of which may be said to have a definite social content, are the non-autobiographical ones. It is foolish to suppose that Hemingway has run out of autobiography for them: there should be a reason.

To find this reason let me go back to the positive-negative categories and examine some of Hemingway's characters in the light which they might shed. In *A Farewell to Arms* we meet Frederic and Catherine, both negative characters by our classifications, for both are completely dominated by a force which they cannot control or even name. ("There's only us two and in the world there's all the rest of them. If anything comes between us we're gone and then they have us.") Both are weak, and find relief in their love from intolerable outside situations. ("You always feel trapped biologically.") Both are hurt, but Frederic, the autobiographical character, is hurt more, for Catherine finds complete escape in death. Although Frederic shows none of the lack of virility which characterizes the weak character, I think that the fact that Hemingway made Catherine die in childbirth is an indication of some sexual falsity in the interpretation of Frederic. His love condemns Catherine to death and destroys her even though she was the most important thing in the world to him.

At this time, when *A Farewell to Arms* was written, Hemingway was still insecure in his own mind, with little or no possibility of security in the future. In the book, Frederic is beaten and defeated by everything upon which he bases his life (Catherine, the code of honor upon which a gentleman acts, and which led Rinaldi to syphilis and Frederic himself to desert from the army) and all the blame is placed upon a mythical "They." Just as the world held no place for Hemingway, it held no place for Frederic, and "They" are responsible. Thus it might be assumed that Frederic is a projection of certain unpleasant factors in Hemingway's life at the time, and that with the destruction of Frederic the unpleasant factors were symbolically destroyed.
In *Death in the Afternoon* we find a peculiar system, with Hemingway’s introduction of an old lady into a purely descriptive book, and, with this, an abrupt change in style from the early novels. Where *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* are in the familiar, hard-hitting, Hemingway style, with carefully chosen words, short sentences,⁶ and seemingly objective first-person writing, *Death in the Afternoon* turns into a rambling and involved creation, with the Old Lady doing a great deal of the talking, and much of the first-person writing subordinate to her. The Old Lady, who “would like to know more” about the love life of the bulls, who, considering the matadors, “would like to know them better,” who contrasts herself with the dead in that “I speak my wishes,” is opposed to Hemingway, who tells her that “Death is a sovereign remedy for all misfortunes,” who believes that “there seems to be much luck in all these things and no man can avoid death by honest effort nor say what use any part of his body will bear until he tries it,” who is preoccupied with stories of death and sexual abnormality while the Old Lady is thinking about the bull-fights, and who, as when they speak of Villalta, constantly makes such comments as “Villalta’s voice is a shade high sometimes. . . .” In this book, or, rather in passages of this book, it is Hemingway, in person, who is the negative character, and the Old Lady who is the positive character, but the two of them play such a small part in the book that few conclusions can be drawn. From what little there is, it would seem from the style and from the fact that neither Hemingway nor the Old Lady are definite enough to be classified completely, that *Death in the Afternoon* is a transitional book, coming between the completely different periods represented by *A Farewell to Arms* and *To Have and Have Not*.

With success for Hemingway, with the understanding of the war in Spain (and I am not sure whether these are all the causes; that there was a definite change in Hemingway’s life just before he went to Spain, or while he was in Spain, I am quite certain, but I am unable to find out what it could have been, lacking a complete biography of him. Perhaps it was at this time that he joined the Catholic Church.), there came a change in his writing. Where before his identification had been with negative Frederic Henry (and just a little bit with Catherine) or with Jake in *The Sun Also Rises*, or with himself in *Death in the Afternoon*, divided up into the Old Lady and Hemingway, now he begins to shift and turn to projection of the strong character. The negative people are being killed off—witness Francis Macomber, whose repentance comes too late, and

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⁶. The style from which Gertrude Stein says she removed all the adjectives!
whose wife would not have considered leaving him if, among other things, "he had been better with women. . . ."

In *To Have and Have Not* the change is nearly complete (it is about halfway with Macomber, and it was also at about this time that Hemingway was beginning to leave his second wife and was perhaps beginning to feel a little freer!), for Harry Morgan, not autobiographical, is in a particularly advantageous situation for displaying a man’s strength: he is not an expatriate in Paris, living on enough money to take him around Europe, nor is he divided between fighting an unseen enemy with mechanized tactics and hiding away in a mountain retreat with his wife. Harry Morgan is facing the necessity for earning enough money to feed his wife and children, and he is not thrown around by a mythical “They” but by a very definite economic situation. Morgan makes his living by actual physical labor, by fighting (hand to hand, not with shells), and by various legal or illegal strenuous methods. Harry is the complete positive character (he checks in almost all points with the positive qualities) but he unfortunately gets himself killed. That is why the change in Hemingway was not complete with Harry, but was carried on into Philip. The social aspects of *To Have and Have Not* are so vague as to be restricted almost to caustic descriptions of the frustrated rich, and “one man alone ain’t got,” but Hemingway’s “They” has become definite, has been narrowed down to a real thing and not an unknown, unplacated force. He has found a secure place to stand, and no matter how much his idea of an economic pressure resembles his unidentified “They,” and no matter how invalid his conclusions and interpretations seem to be when they are seriously considered in the light of social comment, Hemingway has nevertheless succeeded in finding somewhere to base his ideas.

Harry was not satisfactory to Hemingway as a tower of strength and a solution to his problems by wish-fulfillment. Harry was still tied down and bound by the conventional real world of domesticity, economics, the law. In order for Hemingway to project his character adequately, his hero must be removed from such ties, hardly located in space. Philip, then, is put into such a situation. With Philip, Hemingway rejects Bridges and her prospects of a happy home life, fox capes, the need for money and the worries of being tied down. Philip is completely free with a job to do, and he is strong enough to do it. Thus the satisfactory conclusion of the play put Hemingway’s ideals far beyond achievement and let him glory in his complete representation of the positive character. He has become completely the bullfighter he idolizes so much; the bullfighters who “are ruined
if they marry if they love their wives truly.”7 The Communist in Spain has taken the place of the bullfighter in Spain, and the mock conflict has become enlarged into a real conflict. In *To Have and Have Not* Hemingway says: “It takes abnegation and self-discipline to be a communist,” and he uses just those words to describe the bullfighter in *Death in the Afternoon*.

The reasons for Hemingway’s change from identification with the negative character to identification with the positive character are, as I say, buried in the facts of his life which I do not know. However, something made him leave his own solid experience, identify his “They,” abandon his “Gentleman’s Code” idea, and find the need from which he was writing satisfied with Philip. I suspect that either the church helped him to devise this new stand, or that his joining the church was part of the same thing.

Hemingway’s description of the bullfight takes us into another confirmation of the positive-negative category. The words which he uses to describe the bullfight are in part: it is a thing of “action,” by which he means a “feeling of life and death”; it is “complicated,” both in itself and “to write about”; it is neither moral nor immoral per se, except in misrepresentation, interpretation, or attitude of the participants (thus, lack of courage in either the fighter or the bull, or unfair practices by the fighter, or unnecessary cruelty or danger or pain inflicted on either principal, all make the bullfight immoral) but the bullfight is essentially “unmoral”: it is largely and traditionally a thing of “tragedy” and “ritual,” a thing of “art” (when correctly and capably handled); it is of necessity “impermanent” and an “unequal” contest; and, most importantly, it is a performance of “honest and true emotion,” with “no trickery” involved. Then, in many places in the different books, Hemingway uses, sometimes with the same words, these same ideas to describe the sex act. In Hemingway’s categories, the idea of strength is so often concentrated in sexual dominance, and the idea of weakness is concentrated into inefficiency in sexual relationships: the power of the bullfighter lies in his skill: the bull is weak and helpless before the bullfighter’s skill. We have seen how the bull may become the personification of the “negative” category and the bullfighter a personification of the “positive” category. If the bullfight and the sex act are identified, somehow,8 in Hemingway, then the positive-negative categ-

7. *Death in the Afternoon*.
8. I believe that, traditionally, the bullfight is a symbolic representation of the sex act, and Hemingway knows it perfectly well, but I include all this elaborate explanation to show how in Hemingway the idea of the bullfight’s being a symbolic sex act has gained importance, and the positions of the bull and the fighter have become identified, for him, with the qualities he finds in them.
ories should show the effects of this. In the bullfight, Hemingway definitively favors the dominance of the bull by the fighter, and, traditionally, the bull is the female in the represented sex act, as he certainly is in Hemingway’s mind—remember that the bull is “dominated,” is “noble,” has a certain “beauty and honor,” but he is “at a disadvantage.” Remember Bridges, whose “charm” and “beauty” are not enough to get her what she wants: she cannot control Philip, but she has her good qualities, as Philip points out.

From this the positive-negative divisions may be identified as male and female. This does not mean that Hemingway is a woman-hater and wants to see men dominant over women. It does mean, however, that frequently his negative and weak side is invested in the woman, and she is made to represent all this weakness, and whenever he shows fear of the woman dominating the man he is really afraid of the weakness in himself overcoming the strength. What he does with this idea leads to some very peculiar women. Take, for instance, Margot Macomber. Francis had to die, because it was necessary for the weakness he represented to be symbolically destroyed, but it was not inevitable that Margot should kill him (however unintentionally) unless Hemingway was feeling that the destruction came from the woman, who was, of course, “a nuisance on safari,” who “hated” Francis’ killing the buffalo so excellently. The fact that the actual firing of the bullet was done by Margot is important only in this light, since it is not really essential to the story, but very essential to Hemingway.

Bridges more clearly represents woman-and-weakness, but her destructive capacities (in the form of domesticity, etc., which would completely destroy Philip and all the good he could do either in Spain or in the same kind of work somewhere else, besides destroying Philip’s good to Hemingway as a personification of strength) are rejected by Philip and Hemingway, and she, as woman, as weak, destructive force, is completely destroyed so that the ideal of strength may go on.

Marge is rejected by Nick because she knows as much as he does, because “it isn’t fun anymore,” because she can do everything as well as he.

9. All those stories in Death in the Afternoon about homosexual bullfighters fit in very interestingly here as an attempt in Hemingway to justify the weakness in himself by vesting some of it in his hero.

10. If hunting, like bullfighting, does, as Hemingway indicates in several passages in Death in the Afternoon and elsewhere, equal a symbolic sex act, this means an infidelity in Francis. Since one of the main reasons Francis was forced to stay with Margot was the fact that he was not good with women, doesn’t this infidelity in Francis show a very definite threat to Margot’s cherished security? Particularly since she has just been unfaithful to him with the guide?
can, and because through these things she offers a danger to him, since “once a man’s married he’s absolutely bitched.” Through equality the woman can match evenly with the man, and thus there is a chance of the women’s winning out, and weakness overcoming strength. In such symbols as Marge it would seem that the idea of the woman has progressed far beyond its original basis in the weakness idea and stands by itself, without explanation, as the symbol. In other words, there is, after a while, no need for Hemingway to explain to himself all that the woman stands for—she has developed beyond her basis and retains all the ideas implicit in her.

In Brett we find an interesting variation on this idea. Brett becomes, by comparison with Jake (who, sexually impotent, weak, negative, is definitely the female character), the masculine and strong character. Hemingway further enforces this idea by presenting her, first, among a group of homosexuals in which she stands out as the strongest and most important figure, and by giving her the man’s attitudes all through the book on sex, on life, on “Them,” and, often, placing the important words of the book in her mouth. Although Hemingway is identified with Jake, Brett is the main figure in the book, and her eventual defeat by Romero is defeat by the only thing strong enough to conquer her: the bullfighter. All the other characters in the book are subordinate to Brett—the men, all but Romero, are weaklings. Thus we have a peculiar conflict between Brett as the woman and Brett as the strong character filling the masculine position, and the conflict is finally solved by having Brett defeated by the only character Hemingway could find who was more positive than she was.

Hemingway’s style follows, generally, the lines of his growth and development and the confusion which developed in his own mind. The original books were written in the first person, simply, and divided up into unnamed books and chapters. With Death in the Afternoon Hemingway leaves the first person partly and writes some of his book in that style, some in dialogue with the Old Lady, and some in straight expository style. Then, with To Have and Have Not, he abandons his simple style and his writing becomes confused and irregular, so that sometimes the reader is not sure who is speaking, and where the speaker stands in the book. Some of the least important characters are allowed to speak and carry the narrative. The book is divided into sections named after the seasons, and this naming is almost the whole unity the book has. The story follows interpretation of the seasons quite regularly, and it seems sometimes that from the seasons comes the story. After the death of his protagonist the story is carried on for a couple of chapters in a description of the reactions of some of the other characters, and whatever unity there was is lost.
Finally Hemingway turned to the dramatic form in *The Fifth Column*. He had used the dramatic form only once before, in “Today Is Friday,” a four-page play showing the reactions of a group of Roman soldiers to the crucifixion. [Thomas?] Mann says that the very nature of what he had to say drove him into the dramatic form; both these times, when Hemingway was very sure of what he was saying—and it was in each case a sharply divided conflict between the two definite and very clear ideas—he fell naturally into the dramatic form. At no other time does he use the dramatic form, and, also, at no other time does his material present such a clear-cut division, with each side completely defined and easily understood.

As for Hemingway's social ideas, which have so confused both *To Have and Have Not* and *The Fifth Column*, they seem to follow his typical reaction very well. Obviously it is impossible to Hemingway to adopt suddenly an attitude of brotherhood and comradeship and join a number of people all working with hope and faith for a common cause. Hemingway is neither mature enough mentally nor unselfconscious enough to change his whole individualistic, settle-your-own-problems, bread-is-the-opiate-of-the-people attitudes after a year in Spain during the war. His “nada” ideas and his complete rejection of the idea that “They” can be placated or changed, whoever “They” are, whether vague forces or definite social evils, would prevent him from adopting any ideas which so absolutely denied these beliefs as communism does. Moreover, the admitted weakness in Hemingway which is the negative side to his nature would prevent his being his own idea of a communist, since the communist is the completely strong man, like the bullfighter, and Hemingway has accepted the impossibility of his ever becoming a communist, but his Philip represents his own interpretation of communism, in that Philip is free of all responsibility except the ones to his duty, and Philip works alone and is apparently subordinate to no one, or recognizes no subordination. Hemingway has a private social movement all his own: he seems to feel, somehow, that maybe nothing can be done, but *I* (as represented by Philip) can do something; it is work fitting for a man of strength, and it is the only fight permissible under the rules of the game, for it provides an honorable and virile activity for a man, and does not in any sense contradict the idea that “They” are all-powerful and you can fight against them but of course you will not win. Hemingway’s antipathy toward Dos Passos and other social writers evidences this idea that it is something for Hemingway to do, and that it is personal and not social ideals that Hemingway is following.
What's in a Name? Characterization and Caricature in Dorothy Thompson Criticism

BY FREDERICK BETZ

I

DOROTHY THOMPSON (1893–1961), who was a foreign correspondent in the 1920s and a syndicated columnist from the 1930s to the 1950s, is most well known today as the “Blue-Eyed Tornado” or as the “Cassandra” of her profession (see section IV). There were many other names and labels, for by the mid-1930s she had become “sufficiently important for writers and cartoonists to satirize her.” Indeed, “there was no other columnist on the national scene—and no other woman at Dorothy’s level,” as Peter Kurth, her latest biographer, observed, “whose writings and personality so lent themselves to exaggeration,” and “when she could not be dismissed any other way,” “she was dismissed as a ‘woman.’”¹ In representative surveys or collections of biographical essays on contemporary journalists, Dorothy Thompson (DT) stands out, not only as one of few women in a male-dominated profession, but also as the colleague most often subjected to name calling.²

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2. DT is the only woman named in Harold L. Ickes’s 1939 radio attack on the “Columnists and Calumniators,” in America’s House of Lords (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1939), 96. Along with the social columnist Dorothy Dix and the newspaper editor Eleanor Patterson, DT is one of only three women in a collection of twenty-two Post Biographies of Famous Journalists (1942); Jack Alexander’s profile of DT (see n. 4) contains far more names and references than any of the other profiles, including those of such controversial contemporaries as the archconservative Westbrook Pegler or the ruthless gossip columnist
In a more recent biographical anthology of newspaper women in America, *Brilliant Bylines*, one can find other contemporaries who were called names. Anne O'Hare McCormick, the respected foreign affairs correspondent for the *New York Times*, was labeled “Verbose Annie” (171), and Sigrid Schultz, the long-time *Chicago Tribune* bureau chief in Berlin, was called “a female bloodhound,” or “a small Sherman tank in motion,” and the Nazis referred to her as “that dragon from Chicago” (208). But such names or labels do not begin to compare in number or range to those applied to DT.  

What was it about DT’s person, personality, and career that subjected her to such satirical characterization or caricature? DT was, according to Jack Alexander, “statuesque and handsome.” She shone with success and power” (PK, 258). On the other hand, John Gunther, a long-time friend and fellow foreign correspondent, thought that she was “the worst photographed woman in America.” Her lawyer, Louis Nizer, recalled in his memoirs the “malicious intention toward Dorothy” on the part of a photographer, who “caught her [in 1948] with her mouth wide open, eyes distended, hair standing straight up as if lifted by electric shock, copious breasts without a waistline so that they became part of a protruding stomach, and a clenched fist on top of a trunk-like arm to add a touch of belligerence to the pose” (PK, 297).

Beyond her appearance, DT was “a master of the dramatic entrance and immediately made herself the center of attention whenever she entered a roomful of people,” and “she seemed incapable of doing the simplest acts without infusing drama into them in some way.” Perhaps her most celebrated dramatic gesture was her disruption of a German-American Bund rally at Madison Square Garden in February 1939 with “stirring gales of raucous laughter,” until she was muscled out the door by Walter Winchell. Charles Fisher’s chapter on DT in his book *The Columnists* (see n. 12) also contains many more names and labels than the twelve other chapters devoted to nineteen other columnists, all men. John S. Kennedy’s chapter on DT in *Molders of Opinion* (see n. 11) is the only one of his fourteen chapters that profiles a woman journalist.

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Fritz Kuhn’s storm troopers (PK, 288). Similarly, DT was regarded as “perhaps the only person in the United States who [made] a career out of stewing publicly about the state of the world.”

She took up her major themes in her “On the Record” (OTR) column for the New York Herald-Tribune (1936–41) and “rolled them into a ball of outrage, which she commenced to hurl, over and over . . . at the ‘cowards’ and ‘appeasers,’ the isolationists, the America Firsters, and ‘the architects of cynicism’ in American life. . . . Her columns were not distinguishable from her radio broadcasts, nor her speeches from her open discourse” (PK, 308–9). As a news commentator for NBC in 1937, “she had a way of punching her words that was nothing short of electrifying,” but “over time, Dorothy’s sponsors began to worry about her ‘belligerent tone’” (PK, 265–6).

Nevertheless, from then until the end of World War II she was never far from a microphone, which, according to another veteran journalist, Vincent Sheean, did more than anything else to speed her rise as “an American oracle, one of those very few people who have the corporate, general permission to tell people what to think.” In her “OTR” columns, as Lewis Gannett observed in a review of her book Let the Record Speak (1939), she wrote “firely . . . sometimes almost hysterically.” She would get “mad”; she would “plead”; she would “denounce.” Indeed, the reviewer for the New York Times thought that the book would have been better titled “Let the Record Shout,” but not so much because DT’s prose style often produced that effect, but rather “because her book show[ed] how often she [had] been prophetically right” (PK, 264–5).

To be sure, DT had misjudged Hitler in her interview with him in November 1931 and predicted that he would never come to power, but since then she had warned the American public relentlessly about the Nazi terror and persecution of Jews, and then about Hitler’s intentions of conquest, first of Austria, then of Czechoslovakia, and finally, of Poland. For opposing America’s neutrality, or rather isolationism, and urging America’s support of and then participation in the war, however, she was widely branded as a “warmonger” (PK, 311).

When she switched her support from Willkie to Roosevelt in the 1940


presidential election, because she had concluded that FDR could better lead America in the world war against Hitler, her contract for the “OTR” column was not renewed by the staunchly Republican *New York Herald-Tribune*. Her support for FDR was all the more astonishing, as she had persistently warned of fascist tendencies in the economic planning of the New Deal, in FDR’s Supreme Court “packing” plan in 1937, and in the president’s Government Reorganization Bill in 1938, measures which, she feared, would threaten the constitutional separation of powers. For such warnings she was accused, especially by liberal critics, of “hysteria,” “emotionalism,” “wild exaggeration,” and “rampant paranoia” (PK, 228–9). For vehemently opposing first the policy of “Unconditional Surrender” in 1943 (because it would discourage all German resistance to Hitler), and then the “Morgenthau Plan” in 1944 (because it would only repeat the economic consequences of the vengeful and ill-considered Treaty of Versailles following World War I) she was now widely criticized as “pro-German,” even though she had been regarded “around the world as a leading opponent of the Hitler regime” (PK, 364–6, 201). And when, finally, after the war she criticized Zionism and defended the Arab cause in the Middle East, she was accused of being an “anti-Semite” and lost her contract with the pro-Zionist *New York Post* in 1947, even though she had been considered too pro-Jewish when, for example, she urged the United States to take the lead in finding a solution to the international refugee crisis in 1938 (PK, 275–80).

With her commanding presence, then, her dramatic gestures, her insistent, Cassandra-like warnings, and her crusading and seemingly contradictory stands on the issues, DT inspired or provoked her contemporaries to give her a great many labels. Perhaps only H. L. Mencken and Eleanor Roosevelt had more. 8 The following survey presents examples—mostly from 1935 to 1945, when DT was at the height of her career—of labels in

8. Cf. Menckeniana: A Schimpflexikon (1928), in which the most controversial journalist of the 1920s and editor of the *American Mercury* (whose assistant was Charles Angoff) had collected from various sources 132 pages of invective about himself, arranged in such categories as “zoological,” “genealogical,” “pathological,” “Freudian diagnoses,” “penological,” “as a critic,” “as an American,” “as a scoundrel,” etc.! Cf. also George Wolfskill, *All But the People: Franklin D. Roosevelt and His Critics, 1933–39* (1969), chap. 2, “We Don’t Like Her, Either,” especially 37–44, for such references to the tall, unphotogenic, “ubiquitous,” and “loquacious” First Lady as “The Lady Eleanor” or “that Amazon.” *Time*, vol. 33 (12 June 1939), noted that DT and Eleanor Roosevelt were “undoubtedly the most influential women in the U.S.” (47); no doubt they ranked as well among the most criticized or ridiculed women in America!
four broad categories: (1) references to natural phenomena; (2) zoological references; (3) biographical references; (4) references to figures, types, or occupations. These categories reveal a remarkable network of interrelated references to DT, as displayed by techniques of substitution or combination, name association or word play; in many instances the characterization of DT is a caricature, i.e., an exaggeration by means of highlighting or distorting some part (of her physique), trait (of her personality), or aspect (of her work) in order to ridicule or discredit her.

II

1. References to Natural Phenomena

John Gunther’s 1935 profile of DT, published more than a year before her appointment as a columnist for the New York Herald-Tribune, was entitled “A Blue-Eyed Tornado,” referring to the enterprising reporter who would travel anytime and anywhere in Europe in the 1920s to get a scoop or an exclusive interview. For the admiring Gunther the reference to a “tornado” (as a violent or destructive force of nature) had no negative connotation, which he made clear in the subtitle: “For Eight Years in the 1920s Dorothy Thompson Swept Through Europe, a Blue-Eyed, Ami­table Tornado. She Went Abroad an Unknown. She Returned a Famous Journalist.” Gunther’s label captured the essence of the legendary foreign correspondent, and therefore it is not surprising to find variations of it in almost all subsequent profiles of DT, who, for example, had “enormous vitality and moved with irresistible force” (Ross), “tore through Central Europe with a freshness that won prime ministers and rival correspon­dents” (Wharton), or “breezed through Europe in a blaze of newspaper reporting” (Harriman). More critical of her history of “showmanship,” however, Carey Longmire extended the metaphor back to DT’s early life: “Dorothy, by all accounts, was a blue-eyed tornado from infancy.”

Subsequent references to natural phenomena are also not positive. In 1937, during the protracted controversy over FDR’s Supreme Court “packing” plan (see section IV), the liberal columnist and Democratic Party insider Jay Franklin dismissed DT’s “OTR” columns on the subject

as “an avalanche of tosh” (PK, 233). Another liberal columnist, Heywood Broun, commented sarcastically, “If all the speeches she has made in the past twelve months were laid end to end they would constitute a bridge of platitudes sufficient to reach from The Herald Tribune’s editorial rooms to the cold caverns of the moon.” H. L. Mencken, who detested DT’s
"evangelical character," relentless diligence, and missionary zeal "to inform and save humanity," is reported to have referred to her repeatedly in the 1930s as a "shrieking hurricane."\(^{10}\)

Jack Alexander recalled a visiting lady journalist who had started her interview with DT with a casual remark about a move that Germany had made the day before: "The caller was so taken aback by the sight of the volcanic columnist in eruption that she forgot to bring up a list of questions which she had prepared in advance," and "she came away convinced that she had seen one of the natural wonders of America at close range." Similarly, the English novelist and publicist for the armed forces, Hilary St. George Saunders, noted that a meeting with DT in 1943 "was like sitting at the foot of Vesuvius."\(^{11}\)

Finally, there are references to DT as a comet, a meteor, or a cosmic force. In his almost hagiographic account of DT's visit to England in the summer of 1941 for a wartime propaganda campaign, J. W. Drawbell recorded how she had talked for two hours to a gathering of journalists in a London hotel, "her mind flashing like a meteor." DT had already in 1937 referred to herself as "an ascending comet," naturally without anticipating the inevitable descent or decline in her later career. She had gained her reputation as a "cosmic force," directing "her monitorial attention to the whole world," or as a "cosmic thinker" (Fisher), who "in­gests the cosmos and personalizes its pain, thereby conveying in her writings a feeling of imminence that worried citizens find comforting" (Alexander).\(^{12}\)

2. Zoological References

Zoological references in DT criticism are almost uniformly unflattering, starting with Heywood Broun's observation in 1937 that she was "a victim of galloping nascence," a sarcastic characterization of her all too swift development from a reporter to a columnist. H. L. Mencken recalled that

DT “worked like a horse,” while *Time* magazine compared her to a loud grasshopper: “Guided by her most passionate emotion—a consuming hatred of Hitler—Columnist Thompson began writing with shrill assurance that startled readers. As insistent as a katydid, never at a loss for an answer, almost invariably incensed about something, her column has pleased a national appetite for being scolded.” Carey Longmire recollected that “she campaigned so fervently for Roosevelt and internationalism, against those whom she branded as ignorant of realities in the modern world, that some Republicans started calling her a harebrained girl wonder, a fishwife intoxicated with her own voice, or worse.”

Crueler still was Mencken’s comment after DT had left his party at the 1948 Progressive Party Convention (which nominated Henry A. Wallace, whom she fiercely opposed as a “tool of Moscow”), “My God, she’s an elephant, isn’t she?” as quoted by Alistair Cooke, who himself referred to DT as “a lady journalist of declining fame and rising girth.” When she finally retired as a columnist, *Time* hailed her as “the first and finest of political newshens,” with ironic allusion, however, to a hen as a fussy middle-aged woman and word play on newsmen who dominated the profession.

3. Biographical References

In a 1939 cover story, *Time* dubbed DT the “Cartwheel Girl,” tracing her persistent “habit” of contrived exhibitionism back to her childhood, when she came into the parlor one day “doing a cartwheel” and “displaying her panties to six ladies of the Methodist Church.” On 21 October 1940 *Time* attributed DT’s late and sudden switch of support from Willkie to FDR in the presidential election to this same habit: “The sight of Miss Thompson’s skirty cartwheel ‘saddened,’ ‘astounded,’ ‘shocked’ readers of her column in the arch-Republican New York *Herald-Tribune.*”

In 1940 Margaret Case Harriman entitled her two-part *New Yorker* profile “The ‘It’ Girl” to highlight DT’s growing obsession in the 1930s with the political situation in Europe (especially in Nazi Germany), which had alienated her husband, Sinclair Lewis, who simply referred to “the international situation as it relates to Dorothy” as “it.” According to

Vincent Sheean, Lewis would give the ultimatum “No more situations or I will go to bed” at dinner parties with Dorothy’s journalistic friends, and he generally “pronounced it sityashuns in order to make it seem more contemptible”; in his novel, Gideon Planish (1943), published after his divorce from Dorothy, Lewis vented his spleen in the character of Winifred Marduc Homeward, the “Talking Woman.”

Jack Alexander entitled part one of his 1940 profile of Thompson “The Girl from Syracuse” to refer to DT’s formative years (1910–14) as an undergraduate at Syracuse University, where “the men of the campus remember Miss Thompson as a girl who was dated infrequently because she had a penchant for stalling off romantic approaches with arguments on public questions.” Fisher noted in 1944 that there was “still a legend at Syracuse that she regarded a moonlight walk as the perfect time to discuss politics, philosophy and the Meaning of Life”; no doubt for that reason Alexander had entitled the subsection of his profile covering DT’s undergraduate years “The Girl Who Knew Too Much”—perhaps also an ironic allusion to “The Man Who Knew Too Much,” Alfred Hitchcock’s 1934 film of international intrigue and heart-pounding suspense. Margaret Marshall had discerned already in 1938 “the present character and preoccupations of the girl from Syracuse” in DT’s triweekly “OTR” columns, the pattern of which Marshall outlined with a play on the columnist’s own initials: “She begins soberly enough; she gradually becomes intoxicated with her own spirits; and she ends up with D. T.’s,” a sarcastic characterization that anticipated Republicans calling her later “a fishwife intoxicated with her own voice.”

More positive than “The Girl from Syracuse” (part one) is the title of part two of Alexander’s profile, “Rover Girl in Europe,” a biographical reference that serves as a variation on Gunther’s “Blue-Eyed Tornado of


DT had already served as a model, in “a gallery” of historical, contemporary, and literary figures (see below), for the title character in Lewis’s novel, Ann Vickers (1933), and some of DT’s friends from her suffrage days (1914–17) were reportedly not amused by Lewis’s satirical portrayal of a feminist and social reformer (PK, 172).

Europe.” Girl-references to DT’s subsequent career are more critical, however. Following her interview with Hitler in November 1931, DT’s name could not be brought up, as Don Wharton noted, without someone remarking, “Oh, she’s the girl who said Hitler wouldn’t be dictator.” Charles Fisher called the columnist “the Bloomer girl of the trade,” an allusion to Amelia Bloomer (1818–1894), an American editor, lecturer, and reformer devoted to women’s rights and temperance, who advertised and wore clothing that became known as the Bloomer costume or bloomers. The allusion implied criticism not only of DT’s style (technique), but also of her blunders in the “OTR” columns, as also suggested by Margaret Case Harriman’s observation that “among the prophecies for 1939, she made the following bloomers: ‘There will be no new major war,’ ‘The Chinese-Japanese War will end, with a negotiated peace,’ and ‘The vacancy on the Supreme Court will be filled with a mediocrity.’ (The vacancy was filled by Felix Frankfurter.)”¹⁸

There are critical references to the columnist as “child” and “lady.” In part one of his profile, subtitled “The Story of Problem Child Dorothy Thompson,” Jack Alexander detects a connection between the “self-assertive, willful, mischievous” problem child and the later journalist who “savored the satisfaction of getting under Hitler’s skin so effectively by her writings that he had her expelled from the Reich in 1934”: “It was the second time that Dorothy Thompson has suffered an expulsion—she was once fired from high school for impertinence.” Further on Alexander notes that she had described her feeling for Germany as “one of frustrated love,” or “eine unglückliche Liebe,” as DT called it in her article on Germany, “The Problem Child of Europe,” which had just appeared in *Foreign Affairs* (April 1940).¹⁹

John S. Kennedy labelled DT “Global Lady,” not only because she was chiefly interested in international politics, but also because “global” was “one of her favorite words,” although it was, as Kennedy added to underscore the negative criticism, “hardly so frequently used as the word ‘I.’” The year before Charles Fisher had quoted from DT’s article, “I Saw Hitler!” to illustrate “the pontifical manner which has now become the lady’s basic article of trade”: “‘Now he is prepared to address the world,’ she added modestly, ‘and so he granted me an interview.’”²⁰

The largest category of references by far in DT criticism comprises names of mythological, biblical, legendary, historical, contemporary, literary, and film figures, or representative types and occupations.

References to mythological figures ridicule DT’s assumed wisdom and gift of prophecy or allude to her physical attributes. According to Heywood Broun, DT, the reporter-turned-columnist, was not only “a victim of galloping nascence,” but also “unfortunately . . . sprang Minerva-like out of the head of Jove.” The allusion is to the grave and majestic Roman goddess of wisdom, who is fabled to have sprung, with tremendous battle cry and fully armed, from the head of Jupiter (Jove) and whose statue (by Phidias) was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.21

Margaret Case Harriman noted that DT’s “curiously split personality—half mother and half firebrand—was apparent at an early age” and that “anger at inexplicable happenings” was “still a part of Miss Thompson, and . . . never far from the surface, although she” was “physically built to look as placid as Mother Ceres [the Roman name for Mother Earth] walking the abundant fields.” Discussing DT’s caustic radio exchange in 1940 with Clare Boothe Luce (see section III), Carey Longmire referred to “the Junoesque Miss Thompson,” alluding to the majestic, well-developed figure of Juno, the Roman war goddess and wife of Jupiter.22

Most common, however, are references to DT as a modern Cassandra (the Trojan princess and prophetess of doom in Greek legend), which in the late 1930s and 1940s became her national nickname (see section IV), perhaps because she encouraged the comparison herself, as Harriman noted: “In her reflections upon the future of the United States, Dorothy Thompson is so sure of disaster . . . that she has fallen into the habit of referring to herself sombrely in print as a Cassandra.”23

Biblical names refer to the alleged seductiveness and treachery of DT’s stands. In his critical review of her book Let the Record Speak (1939), John Chamberlain warned that “simply because she has the gift of unsettling your mind with an appeal to your emotions, Dorothy Thompson is a dangerous woman, a Delilah of the ink-pot,” an allusion to the beautiful and seductive courtesan in the Old Testament who betrayed Samson to the Philistines.24 And in 1949 a correspondent for the Jewish Advocate in

Boston called DT a “Jezebel,” referring to the scheming and cruel queen of Israel who attempted to kill Elijah and other prophets of God, for her pro-Arab stand and criticism of Israel (PK, 422–3); in the 1950s she was often labeled a “traitor” in the Jewish press in America.

Legendary figures in DT criticism are national heroines or warrior queens who display great physical strength and fighting spirit. Margaret Marshall characterized DT’s relentless opposition to the Government Reorganization Bill of 1938 as that of “our self-appointed anti-fascist Joan of Arc,” alluding to the fifteenth-century Maid of Orleans and French national heroine, who is portrayed in a suit of armor with sword by the French historical painter Ingres (1780–1867). Outraged by DT’s appearance at the war front in France in 1940, Clare Boothe Luce dubbed her “the Molly Pitcher of the Maginot Line,” alluding to the American revolutionary heroine Mary Ludwig Hays, who brought water to exhausted troops at the Battle of Monmouth (1778); retired General Hugh S. Johnson went so far as to call DT “a breast-beating, blood-thirsty Boadicea,” referring to the warrior queen of the Iceni (Norfolk) who rebelled against Roman occupation of Britain in A.D. 61.

Similarly, DT was castigated in Nazi German radio broadcasts to America in late 1940 as “that German-hating Amazon.” To Jack Alexander, however, DT seemed at times to be “setting herself up in opposition to Hitler as the Protectress of the True Germany.” To John Hersey, who

220. Mencken, too, considered DT to be a Delilah who ruined her husband, Sinclair Lewis (see My Life as Author and Editor, 345).


Time, vol. 33 (12 June 1939), characterized DT “as something between a Cassandra and a Joan of Arc” (47); when DT finally retired as a columnist, Time, vol. 72 (1 September 1958), returned to its characterization of her in June 1939 by reporting that “to approving readers . . . durable Dorothy Thompson was a snappish combination of Cassandra and Joan of Arc” (46). To today’s readers, however, she has survived simply as Cassandra or “American Cassandra” (Kurth).

Regarding General Johnson’s comment, see DT’s “OTR” column, “On Hysteria” (25 October 1940), in which she sarcastically wished that “the General,” a columnist for the New York World-Telegram who defended neutrality and supported Willkie, “would straighten out his classical references,” for she had “got accustomed for weeks to being his Cassandra” and did not imagine that she could change so easily to the role of Boadicea. Sheean thought that Boadicea was a better name for DT than Cassandra (see Dorothy and Red, 301); but it was the Cassandra label that continued to be used, while Boadicea was replaced by comparable references, e.g., Brünnehilde (Longmire, “God’s Angry Woman,” 22).
served as Sinclair Lewis’s secretary in 1937, DT appeared in her personal relations as “an overpowering figure in a Wagnerian opera, a Valkyrie, deciding with careless pointing of her spear who should die on the battlefield.” The most famous Valkyrie in Wagner’s Ring of the Nibelungs was “Brünnehilde,” the mighty warrior queen, with whom Carey Longmire compared DT in 1945, perhaps because she had seemingly been pro-German since 1943, when she vehemently opposed the Allied demand (at Casablanca) for the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany.26

Historical figures or representative types of legendary fame or notoriety also serve as models for comparison. According to Klaus Mann (1942), the German exile writer and son of Thomas Mann, DT had begun already in the mid-1930s “to assume the appearance of a Roman Empress, whose imperious charm we can still admire—not without respectful trepidation—in certain busts of the decadent period” (PK, 259–60). In his satirical portrayal of DT in the character of Winifred Marduc Homeward, Sinclair Lewis compares her with, among other historical figures, Queen

Catherine, who after obtaining the crown through the murder of her husband, the legitimate Tsar, ruled Russia with enlightened vigor from 1762 to 1796, and Lucrezia Borgia, the treacherous sister of Cesare Borgia, who is considered to be the model for Machiavelli’s *The Prince* (1513).27

Referring to DT’s earlier career as a foreign correspondent, Carey Longmire noted that in both Vienna and Berlin “she assumed the role of a latter-day Madame de Staël” (1766–1817), the famous French author and critic, and that “through her salons passed diplomats and bohemians, prime ministers and writers, poets and economists.” Heywood Broun used famous explorers of the New World once again to ridicule DT’s development from “an active if not particularly profound foreign correspondent” to a syndicated columnist in America: “Returning to her native land, she [was] suddenly filled with the same fervor of discovery as ‘stout Cortez’ or Columbus.” By referring to the conqueror of Mexico as “stout Cortez,” Broun plays on the double meaning of the adjective to characterize DT sarcastically as both bold in spirit and bulky in body!28

With references to nurses, reformers, and preachers, DT’s critics express admiration for her as a model of inspiration or, more frequently, ridicule her as an uplifter and do-gooder. In 1938 Jay Franklin referred to DT as “the Florence Nightingale of the wounded Tory intellect and Clara Barton of the plutocrat in pain,” alluding to the famous English nurse (1820–1910) and the founder of the American Red Cross (1821–1912), to scorn DT’s conservatism and her labeling of “all critics of plutocracy” as “Fascists.”29 By contrast, J. W. Drawbell depicted DT on her visit to Britain in summer 1941 “as a figure of benevolent inspiration, very nearly the equal of Florence Nightingale” (PK, 337).

To illustrate DT’s “double talent for brooding in print over the welfare of mankind and at the same time inflaming it to further disasters,” Margaret Case Harriman began her profile with a dream reported by one of DT’s millions of readers: “She [DT] appeared . . . as a trained nurse, starched, crisp, and tender, hovering beside a bed in which a sick world lay. The sick world was depicted by the familiar cartoonist’s symbol of a frail figure with a bandaged globe for a head, and Miss Thompson was

ministering to it by taking its temperature with one hand while she deftly
gave it the hotfoot with the other. The chart that hung at the foot of the
patient's bed was labelled simply ‘On the Record.”’ In his review of DT’s
book *Listen, Hans* (1942), however, Hans Habe characterized her with
unequivocal admiration as “an ambulance driver of civilization,” for,
“She knows that an ambulance driver must push on to the front in order
to be of use. Her ‘invasion of the German mind’ does not begin after the
armistice, but right now during the war.”\(^{30}\)

But already in 1937 DT had been introduced on a radio program “as a
cross between Harriet Beecher Stowe and Edith Cavell by an announcer
who said that about her person were ‘crystallized the elements and forces
which are arrayed against the barbarism threatening the civilization of our
day.’”\(^ {31}\) Edith Cavell (1872–1915), the heroic English nurse who enabled
many Allied soldiers to escape to Holland, was executed by the Germans
in 1915, while Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896), whose novel *Uncle
Tom’s Cabin* (1852) is the most famous piece of antislavery literature in
nineteenth-century America, wrote as well on women’s suffrage.

In 1937 it was also predicted that as a result of her frequent lecturing
around the country in opposition to government (FDR’s) policies, DT
“could easily become the Lady Astor of America,” an allusion to the first
woman to be elected (in 1919) to the British House of Commons, where
as a Conservative member Lady Astor (1879–1964) had distinguished
herself with her sharp tongue and passionate espousal of temperance and
reforms in woman and child welfare.\(^ {32}\)

Charles Fisher considered DT to be “one of the most overwhelming
American females since Carrie Nation and quite as noticeable as any
since the determined Amelia Bloomer.” According to Fisher, DT shared
certain characteristics with these two crusaders for women’s rights and
temperance, namely, “an undiminishably aggressive nature; an extrava­
gant lack of diffidence; and limitless faith in herself, her intuitions, her
judgments and her place as a wet nurse to history.” Alluding to the
brawny (6 ft., 175 lbs.) Carrie Nation (1846–1911) and her legendary use
of a hatchet to smash saloons in Kansas around the turn of the century,
Fisher noted, however, that circumstances had not made it necessary for

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32. Wharton, “Dorothy Thompson,” 14. It should be noted, however, that whereas
Lady Astor and her husband supported appeasement in the late 1930s, DT remained an
implacable foe of fascism.
DT “to express herself by chopping saloons into small pieces.” Alluding to Amelia Bloomer’s fashion reform, Fisher added that DT had also “never been obliged to constrict her powers to any issue as minor as a campaign to revise women’s dress,” but had instead “directed her monitory attention to the whole world.”

In the “gallery” of models for his character Ann Vickers, Sinclair Lewis includes, along with DT, such famous American leaders of women’s suffrage and social reform as Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906) and Jane Adams (1860–1935), but also Alice Paul (1885–1977), head of the militant National Women’s Party in the 1920s, and Frances Perkins (1882–1965), the first woman cabinet officer, who served as FDR’s Secretary of Labor (1933–45) (PK, 172). Among the reformers with whom Lewis compares Winifred Marduc Homeward (in Gideon Planish, 320) are not only Lady Astor and Carrie Nation, but also Frances Willard (1839–1898), president of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (1879), Victoria Woodhull (1838–1927), child performer and later editor of Woodhull & Clafin’s Weekly (1870), which advocated women’s rights and free love, and Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), “the holy woman of Los Angeles,” who also served as the model for Sharon Falconer, the evangelist in Elmer Gantry (1927), and is cited as a religious fraud in It Can’t Happen Here (1935).

In 1945 Carey Longmire noted that “extremists” among DT’s critics “have charged her with thinking of herself as a messiah in skirts,” while John Chamberlain predicted that in ten years, “when we look at this war period in a critical mood, she may loom out of the past as the Reverend Newell Dwight Hillis of the Second World War,” alluding to the eloquent preacher and widely known lecturer (1858–1929), whose books include Great Men as Prophets of a New Era (1922). Like the warrior queens and the reformers, General George S. Patton (1885–1945) and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (1895–1972), with whom DT is also compared, were zealous fighters against their enemies, namely, the German Army in World War II, Nazi spy rings in the U.S., and Communists during the Cold War. General Patton had won the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 and crossed the Rhine in March 1945, and

34. Longmire, “God’s Angry Woman,” 75; Chamberlain, “Delilah,” 220.
35. Like J. Edgar Hoover, DT was a zealous opponent of both American fascist organizations in the 1930s and 1940s and of the American Communist Party in the 1940s and 1950s; she relentlessly warned against “fifth columns” taking advantage of free speech in the U.S. for their subversive purposes (PK, 286–9, 391–4).
therefore it is not surprising that Carey Longmire, in June 1945, included “Old Blood and Guts” in his characterization of DT, “who combines the seeing eye of Cassandra and the appearance of Brunnehilde with the gusto of General Patton and the holy fire of a crusading apostle.” Referring to DT’s earlier career as a foreign correspondent, Jack Alexander noted that “often her very presence gave a special significance to the desultory and tarnished affairs of impoverished Austria, Hungary and Germany” and that “the effect was similar to that of having J. Edgar Hoover or Gene Tunney at the monthly meeting of a boys’ club.”

Appropriately enough, Gene Tunney (1898–1978), who defeated Jack Dempsey twice (1926, 1927) for the heavyweight boxing championship of the world, would not be the only boxer used to allude to DT’s physique and fighting spirit, for in Gideon Planish (1943) Winifred Marduc Homeward is described as “just under thirty in 1937” and as having “the punch of Joe Louis” (320), the “Brown Bomber,” who had won the heavyweight boxing championship of the world in 1937 and gone on in 1938 to knock out the German champion, Max Schmeling, touted by Hitler because he had defeated Louis in 1936. Charles Fisher reduces DT, however, to the “principal lady mental welterweight of our current civilization,” and the characterization is all the more ironic in juxtaposition with reference to Carrie Nation (see above).

References to contemporary figures include, finally, fellow journalists. Noting that John Gunther, “the best authority on Dorothy Thompson’s European experiences,” had called her “an amiable and blue-eyed tornado,” Don Wharton characterized her as “a Richard Harding Davis in evening gown,” to whom “nothing prosaic ever happened,” for example, when she “covered a Polish revolution [in 1926] in evening dress and satin slippers.” Called “the Beau Brummell of the Press,” Davis (1864–1916) was a flamboyant, fearless, and indefatigable journalist, war correspondent (Spanish–American War, World War I), and popular novelist, who, however, often gave the impression of being somewhat of a fraud, and so when Time noted that, by the time DT “went to Berlin in 1924, as chief of the Philadelphia Public Ledger bureau, she had a Richard Harding Davis reputation,” it was not meant as an unambiguous compliment. “But,” Time added, “she had the good sense to stop trying for scoops and to study the temperament and philosophy of the German people.”

*Time* also reported that in July 1939 DT would go to Europe and write her “OTR” column from there, and that this would be “good news to those who have detected in some of her recent writings the personal pontifications of a Lippmann, the intransigence of a Broun and the peskiness of a Westbrook Pegler.” As perhaps the most famous journalist in America at the time (Mencken’s reputation having declined in the 1930s), Walter Lippmann (1889–1974) wrote with great authority in his column, “Today and Tomorrow,” which had appeared in the *New York Herald-Tribune* since 1931. As a syndicated columnist for the *New York World-Telegram*, the liberal Heywood Broun (1888–1939) devoted much of his attention to the “underdog” in society, while the conservative columnist for the same paper, Westbrook Pegler (1894–1969), took on the likes of Huey Long, Hitler, and Mussolini, but increasingly attacked his pet hates, such as Eleanor Roosevelt (“La Boca Grande”) and Heywood Broun (“Old Bleeding Heart”).39

The intuitive method and pontifical manner displayed in DT’s interview with Hitler and “still discernible in her work at times” were, according to Charles Fisher (1944), “very similar to” the methods “of the late Arthur Brisbane of the Hearst organization.” Brisbane (1864–1936) had the reputation of a sententious columnist and a master of the platitude; when he visited the trial of Bruno Hauptmann in 1935 for the kidnapping and murder of the Lindberghs’ baby, he explained, as Fisher relates to illustrate his comparison, that he just wanted to see if he was guilty, and after only thirty minutes in court he pronounced that Hauptmann was guilty and then left!40

DT’s critics compare her, finally, to literary or film characters. Alluding to the young woman in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) who, pursued by bloodhounds, makes her famous escape with her boy Harry across the Ohio River on ice, Heywood Broun sarcastically proclaimed that DT was “greater than Eliza because not only does she cross the ice but breaks it as she goes” and because, moreover, she was “her own bloodhound”! In a column of 1938, Jay Franklin quoted from a letter from one of his readers, who characterized DT as “Lady Macbeth in pink tights, alternately babbling of industrial democracy and screaming with rage at every actual attempt to attain it.”41

No doubt with the film version (1939) of Frank Baum’s *Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) in mind, Margaret Case Harriman (1940) noted that in 1920 the young DT “set out—somewhat like that other Dorothy who wandered through the land of Oz—to travel through Europe, writing freelance pieces and selling them at space rates” to various news services and newspapers.42 Discussing DT’s childhood, Jack Alexander was reminded of Lulu, the figure of pure sexuality who causes the downfall of men in Frank Wedekind’s *Lulu* tragedies of the 1890s and Alban Berg’s *Lulu* opera of 1937: “Dorothy rebelled against her world from the start. . . . She was a sort of little Lulu in many respects.” Similarly, the foreign correspondent DT reminded Alexander of the character in the movie series (1914 and thereafter) who was always in danger, but always managed to escape: “Her active days as a correspondent, . . . bore as close a resemblance to the Perils of Pauline as the unsettled state of Central Europe and her own talent for self-dramatization could manage. Miss Thompson was never pushed off a cliff or dynamited in a submarine, but she got into jams that would have flustered Pauline herself.”43

The reporter DT reminded J. W. Drawbell rather of Agatha Christie’s detective Hercule Poirot, who in almost every one of her novels since 1920 says: “Something is missing. One small thing. I do not know what it is, but it will explain everything. It will turn up. I will find it.” Likewise, DT would, according to Drawbell, always look for the one small thing that would give her the clue to the whole. Finally, while Ann Vickers was intended to rival Portia, the “lady barrister” in Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* (1595), as a female advocate, Winifred Marduc Homeward was endowed with not only “the punch of Joe Louis” (see above), but also “the wisdom of Astarte,” the lady who prophesies the death of the title character in Lord Byron’s dramatic poem, *Manfred* (1817).44

42. Charles Angoff records a conversation with a slightly drunk DT in which she accused him of thinking that she came “from Kansas or some such place,” to which he responded in jest: “Why yes, don’t you? Mencken led me to believe that.” (See Angoff’s “Dorothy Thompson,” 121.) Angoff’s title characterization of DT as a “Kansan in Westchester,” picked up from his conversation with her (one of DT’s residences was in Westchester County outside New York City), could perhaps be understood as an ironic double allusion to Carrie Nation, notorious for her saloon smashing expeditions across Kansas, and “that other Dorothy,” a Kansas girl who goes “over the rainbow” to the mythical kingdom of Oz.


As a composite of biographical references as well as of historical, contemporary, and literary figures, Sinclair Lewis’s “Talking Woman,” Winifred Marduc Homeward, is perhaps the most devastating characterization of DT in the contemporary literature. However, DT not only defended her designated role as the “Cassandra of the columnists,” but also anticipated Lewis’s portrayal of the “Talking Woman” with ironic self-criticism: “And as for Dorothy Thompson,” she concluded in her “OTR” column “On Party Material” (29 March 1939), “she is terrible. She always talks politics and has a horrible habit of holding forth. Given the slightest opportunity she makes a speech, and nothing that she says to herself in a cab on the way home seems to cure her” (PK, 260).

On the other hand, DT was quite capable of counterpunching with creative name-calling, which she demonstrated perhaps most notoriously in her verbal sparring in 1940 (the peak year for names and references in DT criticism) with the former Vogue and Vanity Fair reporter and playwright, Clare Boothe Luce, who had married the staunchly Republican publisher of Time and Life magazines, Henry R. Luce, in 1935.

Outraged by DT’s sudden and late switch of support from Willkie to FDR in the presidential election, Clare Boothe Luce devoted her first public speech (15 October 1940) to diagnosing DT as “the victim of that emotional disease called acute fear,” reminding her audience of the attacks DT had made on FDR and the New Deal, and likening DT’s flip-flop to “a girl in an apache dance team who succumbs adoringly to her partner’s brutal treatment.”45 When DT heard this, she was, as Kurth notes, “fighting mad,” and “Clare got back as good as she gave—better, really” (PK, 325). Shrewdly calling her adversary by her maiden name and alluding first to the elegant, but still mass-produced automobile chassis and then to the Debutante of the Year 1938 (featured on the cover of Life magazine for 14 November), DT replied sarcastically that “Miss Boothe” was “the Body by Fisher in this campaign” and “the Brenda Frazier of the Great Crusade,” who “had torn herself loose from the Stork Club to serve her country in this serious hour” (PK, 325).

PM (New York) reported in its cover story, however, that the CBS audience was deeply offended by DT’s vicious attack on Mrs. Luce; to go with the story, the newspaper ran two photos: DT in a stern, straight-on, unflattering pose and Clare Boothe Luce in a three-quarter demure and

smiling face." While FDR went on to win an unprecedented third term in November, DT lost her contract with the *New York Herald-Tribune* the following March; it would not be the last time she would suffer from controversy. When a reporter for the *Boston Globe* assigned to do a story on "the First Lady of American Journalism" asked DT at the end of her career, "What is the best thing you can say about yourself?" DT replied simply, "I never wrote to be popular. It cost me a lot" (PK, 451), a point that is richly illustrated by the great range of characterization and caricature in DT criticism.

IV

The "Blue-Eyed Tornado of Europe" and the "Cassandra" of American columnists are the most frequently cited characterizations of DT, but whereas the source for the first label has always been known, the origin of the second label has remained obscure. This is all the more surprising following the publication of Kurth's 1990 biography, *American Cassandra*.

Discussing the controversy over FDR's Supreme Court "packing" plan, announced in February 1937, Kurth notes that "the outcry against" the president "was swift and acrimonious," and that "one of the loudest voices in the fray was Dorothy's. Between February and July 1937 she devoted no less than eight columns to this one subject, speaking in tones of such rich indignation that Interior Secretary Harold Ickes gave her the nickname Cassandra" (PK, 228). For this reference, Kurth cites three contemporary sources: Vincent Sheean's memoir, *Dorothy and Red*, Dale Warren's recollections, "'Off the Record' With a Columnist," and DT's autobiographical fragment, "I Try to Think," an unpublished manuscript at Syracuse (PK, 502, n. 52). However, none of these sources gives a precise date and citation for the "Cassandra" label! Sheean, who had known both DT and Sinclair Lewis since the late 1920s, merely observed that "she was called, quite currently [in the late 1930s and early 1940s], by a sort of national nickname, 'Cassandra.'" Warren, a close friend and her editor at Houghton Mifflin Company, which published her books *Let the Record Speak* (1939), *Listen, Hans* (1942), and later *The Courage to Be Happy* (1957), recalled only that she was "labelled 'Cassandra' by Harold Ickes, the late Hugh Johnson, and others, and pigeon-holed as a prophetess of calamity." And in her undated manuscript, "I Try to Think," DT simply quotes her critics in general: "'Don't get so wrought up,' they said.

46. Shadegg, *Clare Boothe Luce*, 121.
'Don’t be a Cassandra.’ An unpleasant woman, draped in black and wailing on the walls of Troy.”

Years later Dale Warren remembered DT “shrugging off the epithet by announcing to a roomful: ‘Say what you will about Cassandra, the chief thing about her, and the unfortunate thing about her, is that she was always right.’” By quoting this remark and then commenting that “Dorothy’s first column on the Court-packing plan set the righteous tone for hundreds of others, on hundreds of subjects, in the years to come” (PK, 229), Kurth apparently assumes that Harold Ickes first called her “Cassandra” sometime between February and July 1937. To be sure, she had by then the reputation of a Cassandra, whose predictions, however, had often been dismissed as spectacularly wrong or wildly exaggerated; but neither in the DT literature nor in the national press of that time was she actually called “Cassandra.”

In fact, it was only two years later that FDR’s Secretary of the Interior, Harold LeClair Ickes, the “most vociferous U.S. critic of the U.S. press,” as Time reported on 24 April 1939, “rose to tell the New York Newspaper Guild and a radio audience what he thought of the ‘calumnists’ (columnists).” After prefacing his remarks with one of his own ventures in prosody (“Wouldst know what’s right and what is wrong? / Why birdies sing at break of dawn? / Ask the columnists, . . . / Who run the earth and sun and moon? / Just Thompson, Lawrence, Franklin, Broun. . . . / When F. D. R. you want to sock, / Page Lippmann, Johnson, Kent or Krock. . . .”), Ickes proceeded to characterize individual columnists, including DT, whom he called “the Cassandra of the columnists” and “a sincere and earnest lady who is trying to cover too much ground.”

Time reported that Ickes’s speech had been given “one night last

47. Sheean, Dorothy and Red, 301; Dale Warren, “‘Off the Record’ With a Columnist,” Saturday Review of Literature 27 (10 June 1944): 13; Thompson, “I Try to Think” (ca. 1943), Dorothy Thompson Papers, Syracuse University Library, Department of Special Collections.


49. Cf. Wharton, “Dorothy Thompson,” 9–14; “The Big Debate,” Time 29 (1 March 1937): 10–3. The latter article includes an unflattering photo of Dorothy Thompson Lewis, with the caption: “You can bet that our dictator . . . will be a great Democrat” (11), which is taken from a longer quote (on 10) from her “OTR” column, “Ruffled Grouse,” New York Herald-Tribune (17 February 1937), 23, and echoes the warning of a fascist takeover of the United States in Sinclair Lewis’s satirical bestseller of 1935, It Can’t Happen Here.

50. Time 33: (24 April 1939), 34.
This column, at least, is no longer susceptible to shocks over what is happening in central Europe. We feel pain and sorrow. But we do not share the perennial and amazing surprise of Mr. Chamberlain. On February 18, 1938—that is more than a year ago now, and before the entrance of Hitler into Austria—we wrote: “Write it down. On Saturday, February 12, 1938, Germany won the World War and dictated in Berchtesgaden a peace treaty to make the Treaty of Versailles look like one of the great humane documents of the ages.”

“Write it down. On Saturday, February 12, 1938, military bolshevism, paganism, and despotism started on the march across all of Europe east of the Rhine.”

“Write it down that the world revolution began in earnest—and perhaps the World War.”

“Why does Germany want Austria? For raw materials? It has none of consequence. To add to German prosperity? It inherits a poor country with serious problems. But strategically, it is the key to the whole of central Europe. Czechoslovakia is now surrounded. The wheat fields of Hungary and the oil fields of Rumania are now open. Not one of them will be able to stand the pressure of German domination.”

“It is horror walking. Not that ‘Germany’ joins with Austria. We are not talking of ‘Germany.’ We see a new Crusade, under a pagan totem, worshipping ‘blood’ and ‘soil,’ preaching the holiness of the word, glorifying conquest.”

Dorothy Thompson called herself Cassandra in her 17 March 1939 column.

week,” but the New York Times for 12 April 1939 reported more accurately that Ickes had spoken to the Newspaper Guild of New York the evening before. Moreover, the New York Times elaborated more on what Ickes had said about DT, who was described as “the Cassandra of the columnists” and as “a sincere and earnest lady who is trying to cover too much ground by setting herself up as a final authority on all social, economic, governmental, national and international questions.” Ickes paid tribute, however, to “her really fine stand” against the dictatorships.51

51. Ibid: New York Times (12 April 1939), 24. For the complete text of Ickes’s speech (without reference to 11 April 1939) see his America’s House of Lords (1939), chap. 13, especially 112–3: “She has written and spoken vigorously on the subject of brutalitarian dictatorships abroad, which, I am bound to say, would be more convincing if it were not for her tendency to see an American dictatorship in every move made by the Administration for the improvement of our social and economic conditions. However, Miss Thompson is to be commended for the splendid stand that, with both courage and intelligence, she has taken on the subject of dictatorships abroad, ultra-conservative though she may often be on domestic economic issues.”
What had provoked Ickes to call DT “the Cassandra of the columnists” on 11 April 1939? No doubt it was her own “OTR” column in the New York Herald-Tribune for 17 March 1939, entitled “Cassandra Speaking,” in which she had defended herself by reminding her readers of her correct predictions in 1938 about Hitler’s annexation of Austria and warnings against Chamberlain’s policy of “appeasement.” Possibly Ickes had also read her column “Rebirth at Easter” on 10 April, when she continued her self-defense, referring to herself now in the plural: “Those who for the last three years have been saying consistently, and sometimes insistently, that our world is moving with extreme expedition in the direction of dissolution have been described as ‘hysterical.’ The repetition of unpleasant facts has caused these people to be described as ‘warmongers.’ . . . Events set in motion by the Nazi revolution six years ago have moved according to a pattern that could be predicted.”  

However, the New York Times report makes it clear that Ickes was criticizing DT more for her views on domestic issues than on foreign affairs. Indeed, in his article on “Mail-Order Government” in Collier’s magazine for 18 February 1939, Ickes went after DT and other critics who had loudly and persistently warned that the Government Reorganization Bill of 1938, like the Judiciary Bill of 1937, threatened the constitutional separation of powers. But here he ridiculed her for “pursu[ing] resolutely the starry-eyed Jeanne d’Arc role that she so capably affects” (15); very likely Ickes picked up that reference from Margaret Marshall (see note 17).

When Time quoted Ickes calling DT “the Cassandra of the columnists,” it claimed in an asterisked footnote at the bottom of the page (34) to have “said it first”; in an article on “Who’s for War?” on 27 February 1939, Time distinguished between two camps in the U.S. and included in Camp No. 1 “isolationists like Senator Hiram Johnson,” “the drafters of the 1937 Neutrality Act,” and “such public spokesmen as Mr. Herbert Hoover”; in Camp No. 2 were “liberals who are for spanking the dictators with petitions and boycotts,” “practically all U.S. Jews, many militant Christians and that girlish-voiced Cassandra, Miss Dorothy Thompson” (20). It would appear, then, that by entitling her “OTR” column for 17 March 1939 “Cassandra Speaking,” DT was responding to Time’s characterization of her on 27 February, and that by referring to herself as Cassandra, she inspired Harold Ickes to call her “the Cassandra of the columnists” on 11 April.

52. Thompson, Let the Record Speak (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1939), 307–10, 334.
The Punctator’s World: A Discursion

BY GWEN G. ROBINSON

PART IX

STIRRINGS OF RETREAT: 1900 TO MIDCENTURY

In this section we reach the start of the twentieth-century telecommunication boom. Radios and telephones made tempting alternatives to books and letters, for they could instantly relay the sound of a human voice. As their efficiency and affordability increased, so they insinuated their way into the traditional domain of print. In the century’s first decades, while the established literary artist was still reeling out his thoughts in long, involved fin de siècle sentences, a maverick impulse was developing. The short sharp language of the voice was gaining critical approval for the page. Being robustly straightforward, it required fewer puncts to shape its contours.

The pendulum of taste was on the turn. Once again, the complicated *Say it all* was yielding to a plainer *Say it straight*. To appreciate better the modern aspects of these two age-old, rival styles (once called *Asian* and *Attic* by classical erudites), let us quickly review their development. The story confounds expectations in several ways.

In the long heyday of Asian preeminence—from Gorgias, to Cicero, and through the Renaissance—written language was both loquacious and adorned with euphuistic imagery, rhythms, and alliterations to please the listening ear. As silent reading moved towards eventual public literacy, however, Asianists began to redirect their attentions from ornament to structure, from considerations of ear-tantalizing, euphuistic figures to the bones of grammar, which are the eye’s best friend in the comprehension of involved and discursive sentences. Meanwhile, Atticists simply soldiered on in the tracks of their forebears. Greatly boosted by the Enlightenment as well as by Wordsworth, they continued to pare their sentences in the manner once urged by Alexandria’s librarian Callimachus and Seneca the Elder. Striving for ‘real meaning’ (and to express it when possible in terse, insightful aphorisms), they made their claim on the intellect. Their brief statements readily exposed the underlying grammar and

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thus not only rendered difficult concepts easier to understand, but in time became useful to popularize all materials. Attic writing is comfortably harvested by eye or ear.

Galileo Galilei, in the space of one book, produced examples of both styles. The preface to “Sidereus Nuncius,” dedicated to his patron The Most Serene Cosimo II de’ Medici, is Asian and couched in high-flown imagery, alliteration (not so apparent in translation), commonplaces, and rhythmic repetitions.

Indeed, the Maker of the stars himself has seemed by clear indications to direct that I assign to these new planets Your Highness’s famous name in preference to all others. For just as these stars, like children worthy of their sire, never leave the side of Jupiter by any appreciable distance, so (as indeed who does not know?) clemency, kindness of heart, gentleness of manner, splendour of royal blood, nobility in public affairs, and excellency of authority and rule have all fixed their abode and habitation in Your Highness. . . .

That done, Galileo picks up his Attic quill and tackles the actual treatise. The manner of exposition changes entirely. One senses that Galileo’s pen is moving more slowly, that his efforts are towards transmuting difficult mental images into the plainest possible language.

The most easterly star was seven minutes from Jupiter and thirty seconds from its neighbor; the western one was two minutes away from Jupiter. The end stars were very bright and were larger than that in the middle, which appeared very small. The most easterly star appeared a little elevated toward the north from the straight line through the other planets and Jupiter.¹

By the twentieth century, literary fashion could no longer tolerate hyperbolic rhetoric like that of Galileo’s preface. Walter Pater’s experiments in syntactic and semantic flexuosity had exhausted the mystique of grandiose periodic sentences.² The new crop of Asian–inspired writers would be less garrulous. Three factors instructed their shift towards

². See “The Punctator’s World: A Discursion (Part Eight)”, Syracuse University Library Associates Courier 29 (1994). A period is a full circuit of words that fleshes out what was once termed ‘a complete thought’.
brevity. Foremost was the growing dominance of science: not only in theoretical discovery (particularly in physics and chemistry), but also in practical areas: medicine, engineering, and household invention. It seemed a certainty that science, by feeling its way from truth to truth, would in time demystify the universe. In the glow of this expectation, ambitious students turned in increasing numbers to join the ranks of questing fact seekers, whose habits of communication were necessarily to the point. Expository discourse, being devoted to reason and clarity, encourages the suppression of all that is not objectively relevant.

Another factor evolved within the humanist camp, where yearnings for originality (fallout from nineteenth-century romanticism) were inciting rebellion amongst the Muses. However architecturally complete and aesthetically sound those old, rhetorical, Ciceronian periods may have seemed, they were too contrived for the rush of twentieth-century passions. Strong feelings dilate more freely in structures that align with speech.3

Finally, the increase of unvarnished statement owed much to the accomplishments of democracy, particularly in America, where mass-produced books (as well as Fords) were giving the common man a chance to enjoy life at a rate that his forebears could not have imagined. Public education and libraries had long ago brought literature within reach of people on farms, in factories and remote townships—people who were not at ease with the leisured articulations of aristocrats and intellectuals, but whose lives were nevertheless rich in self-esteem. Joe Average in his home on the outskirts of metropolitan sophistication preferred his own kind of talk and though he respected bookish folk to a degree, he in no way regarded ‘clever talk’ as the mark of a man’s worth. The emerging consensus that ordinary language made a creditable conveyance for literature was well in keeping with the levelings of society and recent public experience: across-the-board, government-financed, high-school education; two world wars; and the depression. Commercial publishers were quick to exploit the trend. Thus, as the volume and speed of communication stepped up, as society became homogenized and mobility increased, so did sentences become shorter. Though they could still incorporate numerous ideas and range over many lines on the printed page, it is fair to

say that, generally, by 1950, the treatment of many ideas within a single sentence was on the wane.

* * *

The incompatibility of the elaborate (Asian) and plain (Attic) styles—their two distinct methods of transmitting meaning and sensation—has fueled debate over two and a half millennia of writing history. Which is more artistic? truer to the mind and nature of man? Which better informs? These questions have never been resolved, but thanks to the Asian's gradual acceptance of logic, the two styles have become less obviously at daggers drawn. No longer dominated by the historical Rhetoric with its apparatus of rules and tools, the heir to rhetorical gush is today best recognized by his sentence structuring skills and a modest bias for complexity. No longer the mesmeric cantor that his ancestors were, he celebrates 'truth' over music, and to that end keeps himself up to date with the 'literate' sciences: psychology, sociology, politics, and philosophy.

Surprising it is that the Asian, once a specialist in Mellifluous Persuasion, should transmogrify into an eye-and-grammar man. Nevertheless, it has proved a good move, insuring for the twentieth century a continuing interest in compositional inventiveness. The Asian's syntactic agility nowadays boasts a poise amongst words, a superior intellectuality that outclasses the pithy truths for which the traditional plain style had long been famous. Being word-crafty and subtle, the Asianist is not willing to leave to chance what is difficult to say. Usurping the Atticist's claims to reason, he supports his effects with causes. Though he likes to attach a contingency to whatever he has just said, he is cautious not to trespass on his reader's patience. His most salient twentieth-century specialty is the conjuring up of simultaneity: that feel for the present tense that comes when the subjective self confronts objective reality. An Asianist is concerned to master time, to stretch space, and to justify the psychological rub that drives his characters into action. In our speeded-up world the success of such aspirations hinges on precision of language: on pronominal exactness, well-placed anaphoric signals, unambiguous verb governances, well-reasoned adverbial connectives, and interior pointing that aids comprehension and does not slow the tempo. Though an Asianist's sentences may from time to time still bloat,⁴ they will be nothing to what his forebears used to serve up.

The success of contemporary euphuistic intricacy depends (in a way

⁴. Though rarely to compete with a Miltonian 400-worder.
that neither its prototype Asian used to, nor speech ever did) on the sover­
eignty of grammar and syntax and the clarity of punctuation. Now that
the classical formulae are out of fashion, euphuists can no longer work on
automatic pilot. If only to prune the unneeded from over-expanded sen­
tences, they are obliged to think. The drive for explicit eye-gatherable
clarity has forced the traditional, arranged-to-delight-the-ear, ‘rhetorical’
euphuism into a tight U-turn. Logic, its age-old demon, now propels it.

For all these reasons we had better rethink our terms. Let us then call
our present-day descendant of Asian extravagance a ‘complectist’, and his
output ‘complected’.5 As for his straight-shooting Attic counterpart, his
style henceforth in this discussion will be known as ‘plain’ or ‘direct’, and
he himself a ‘plaindealer’.

The crafted multiformity of a twentieth-century complected sentence
can be difficult for those who have not been prepared to appreciate its dis­
tinctions or admire its sinuosity. The laconic plaindealers are more popu­
larly accessible. Disposed to intrude less, they invite the reader to imagine
the unsaid according to his own lights, and in this way they touch some
responsive chord in nearly everyone. Whether it is for the sake of clarity
or poetic impact, or even because he does not wish to risk his income
against the unlikely attention span of his readership, the direct-style
writer drops all dispensable supplements and runs straight for the posts.
Informed by the ‘sincerity’ of speech, he advocates an economy of words,
uncomplicated grammar, and conventional vocabulary—a composite of
aims that dispels the need for strong punctuational adjustment. The more
his written sentences approach the intuitional speed and brevity of spo­
ken ones, the more the points will disappear.6 An artful fellow, he has not
changed much over the years, except perhaps to appear less artful.

*   *   *

In the opening years of the twentieth century, both styles lived side by
side. As the plain style grew more acceptable to the public, so its wordier
cousin became more like it, more muscled than sprawling. Parenthetical
interruptions to the steady development of an idea, distant referents, em-

5. From late-Latin complectere, meaning entwine, plait, embrace, interweave.
literature of the day, says Mr. Logan [disdaining the flexible dash], seldom makes use of
more than two structural points, i.e., the comma and the period. Whereas the lengthy
sentences of Samuel Johnson, De Quincey, and Pater require a full battery of points, the
styles of Emerson and Lincoln need only very few.
beddings of phrase within phrase and clause within clause, far-flung boundaries of verb dominion—all of these inherited euphuistic pirouettes were being judged afresh in terms of whether they slowed the pace or impeded a quick comprehension. And always, it seemed that they did.

Thus, by the late 1940s, the clausal modifications and interjections that once bulged the midsections of fin de siècle sentences had shrunk significantly, both in size and in number. They were either abbreviated, transformed to surface-structure modifiers, discarded, or adjoined to the governing idea with conjunctions and pronouns (like train cars to an engine), so that forward impetus, at least, might keep the reader going. The mind can more comfortably comprehend sentence segments when they are in close order than when they are distantly separated, or internally differentiated, that is, couched one within the other, like onion rings. This is the malt that the rat that the cat that the dog worried killed ate is difficult to process, because of the effort required to remember which of the stacked-up verbs at the end goes with which of the stacked-up noun subjects at the beginning. This is the dog that worried the cat that killed the rat that ate the malt is easier to take in on account of the closer groupings of related components. Furthermore, in this latter sentence, the concatenation of clauses moves to predictable rhythm. Historically, Asian euphuists were the masters of rhythm. Stupid stuff, said the Attics: Why not just say what you mean? Surprisingly, in view of contemporary antieuphuistic tendencies, cognitive science and linguistics laboratories are reconsidering rhythm as a viable imparter of meaning, useful in transporting “seemingly constitutive, semantic incoherence toward semantic precision”. There is a fundamental tension, it would appear, between the phenomenon of rhythm and the dimension of meaning.

With rhythm or without, under ordinary circumstances our short-term memories can handle at a blow only about seven (plus or minus two) chunks of information—typically a telephone number. This inconvenient constraint limits how much of a partially processed spoken sentence we can comfortably retain in our heads. Those seven or so chunks can be

more easily dealt with, and even increased, when they are laid out on the page for the eye to study. Visual systems (which are not so bound to time as are aural ones) can support more simultaneous operating processes than ear-oriented language systems can. However, one must remember that all verbal constructs are physiologically oral in their orientation. The mind, which can move like lightning through whole atmospheres of mundane experience, is obliged to slow when the desire comes to extrapolate from its adventures and remodel the segments into words.

Words, which are usually thought of as liberating, do in fact constrain, by delimiting the spaciousness and speed of thinking. In the privacy of our intellects, they evolve out of silent, mental imagery. Upon seeing an object, for example, one quickly converts the perception into a short, unbreached word group—“green, stalked, cool”, perhaps, for a tree; or “busy, furry, zig-zag”, perhaps, for a squirrel. These formulating word groups can be immediately reorganized for parsable surface comprehensibility, and again, if wanted, into full-blown literary sentences—each step demanding more skill and more effort. An analysis of the relationship of one perception to another, or of both to the perceiver (with possible accompanying reflections on the hierarchy of their importance), requires even more labor on the part of the word-smith, although all of these aspects might immediately have been obvious in the silence of his mind. Once he has managed to convert what he can of his ideas into verbal constructs, he will note that they are more easily assimilated by recipient ear or eye when he presents them in forms close to their compact, early stages—that is, before social, rhetorical, traditional, artistic, or intellectual remodelings can interfere. By doing what comes naturally, plaindealers have assured themselves a prosperous future. Vying complectists can no longer stray far from the basic rules.

* * *

11. Jacob A. Arlow, M. D., in “Fantasy, Memory, and Reality Testing”, *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 38 (1969): 28–51, tells us that some eighty percent of learning is effected through vision. Dreams are almost exclusively visual in nature: the closer a thought is to unconscious instinctual tendencies (said Freud), “the greater the possibility that it will be represented mentally in a visual form”. Some neuroscientists are conjecturing that our grammatical concepts and ability to speak have grown out of expanded visual areas of the human cortex. See Jo Ann C. Gutin, “A Brain That Talks”, *Discover*. June 1996, 83–90. See also Minsky, *Society of Mind*, 269.
In England, where stylistic invention was likely to be regulated by classical
Latinate syntactic habit,\(^{12}\) sentence structures during the first half of the
twentieth century remained more durably complex than compound or
simple. Yet even there, a crumbling was in process. On the down-to-
earth frontier of the English Language Diaspora (most notably, in Aus-
tralia, Canada, and the United States), disintegration was faster, and
writers who wrote for the general public in those far-flung places increas-
ingly deployed full stops to break up logjammed sentence parts. While
commas and dashes performed the remaining essentials, semicolons and
colons became rarer. Generally, internal stopping became less needed for
the exfoliation of meaning or the enhancement of nuance.

Also hastening punctuation’s midcentury retreat was the fact that the
reading public had grown very deft at processing text. Ubiquitous print
had so settled the customs of written language that average readers could
on their own more easily anticipate the contours of an unfolding sen-
tence. For college graduates the conventional book had become as easy to
read as breathing the air. By midcentury almost anyone could gather up
prepositional phrases and short introductory clauses without instruction
from commas. In such an environment punctators could somewhat relax.

Despite these frontline shifts to simplicity, conservative schoolmasters
of this transition period kept young scholars at their drills, preparing them
to appreciate, and even to emulate, the circuitous statements found in
‘great books’. The ability to parse a sentence, to spell correctly, and to
plant one’s semicolons and parentheses with confidence were still obliga-
tory sophistications for ambitious youths. Pointing made them think.
The knowledge that a comma would be beneficial in proclaiming nonre-
strictive clauses or in disambiguating ‘the laughable’ from ‘the intended'
remained as essential as ever. School texts from these early years provide
an amplitude of pedagogical injunction on all these matters.

Monomaniac punctators will always be thankful for the practical influ-
ence of the Fowler brothers, who more or less took the world by storm in
1906 with *The King’s English*, of which approximately one-fifth is devoted
to the subtleties of punctuation. Revised three times and reprinted again
and again, it is to this day a classic mainstay on the desks of writers. The
following excerpt comes from the section on independent sentences.

Among the signs that more particularly betray the uneducated
writer is inability to see when a comma is not a sufficient stop. . . .

\(^{12}\) Classical Latin is generally believed to have been exclusively a literary and scholarly
language. Common discourse was far less pyramidal.
It is roughly true that grammatically independent sentences should be parted by at least a semicolon; but in the first place there are very large exceptions to this; and secondly, the writer who really knows a grammatically independent sentence when he sees it is hardly in need of instruction; . . . [It] may be of some assistance to remark that a sentence joined to the previous one by a coordinating conjunction is grammatically independent, as well as one not joined to it at all. But the difference between a coordinating and a subordinating conjunction is itself in English rather fine. Every one can see that 'I will not try; it is dangerous' is two independent sentences—independent in grammar, though not in thought. But it is a harder saying that 'I will not try, for it is dangerous' is also two sentences, while 'I will not try, because it is dangerous' is one only. The reason is that for coordinates, and because subordinates; instead of giving lists, which would probably be incomplete, of the two kinds of conjunction, we mention that a subordinating conjunction may be known from the other kind by its being possible to place it and its clause before the previous sentence instead of after, without destroying the sense; we can say 'Because it is dangerous, I will not try', but not 'For it is dangerous, I will not try'.

At the death of his younger brother, H. W. Fowler continued alone. In 1926 he put out A Dictionary of Modern English Usage, a second classic for the archives of correct usage. He regretted that in this volume he had no room for a treatise on punctuation, a subject, he felt, that was generally understood. Nevertheless, under his entry "Stops" he manages some ten columns of detail.

In 1925 Harold Herd prefaced his Everybody's Guide to Punctuation as follows:

The passing of the more formal style of prose has been accompanied by the discarding of those rules of punctuation which checked the flow of expression. Stops are now rarely suffered to cramp the writer's ideas; the reader is spared the jolts and jerks of mechanical pointing.

Even so, Mr. Herd insisted on appropriate behavior for the colons, semicolons, and commas. He informs us that colons “denote a more abrupt pause” than is marked by the semicolon. Thus, in the following sentence,

Thank you for your suggestions: they strike the right note the break is more compelling than in:

His record commends him; his personality repels.

By adopting old-fashioned temporal terms (previously used for oral renderings of text), Herd ignores that relationship of meanings between sentence parts that must decide the specifics of divisions for silent modern reading. His switch from oral to visual points of view fuses the two separate physiological activities and confounds his reader. Herd was not the only school-text grammarian of his period to play this game.

Mr. Herd approves of commas for adverbial, explanatory, and interruptive phrases: however, furthermore, on the whole, of course, the report proceeded, etc. That we often slur our syllables in speech is a fact unremarked upon as he exhorts us to comma off our vocatives. “Nosir”, we are counseled, must be written: “No, Sir”. As for the unfortunate full stop and what exactly it might be trying to terminate, Mr. Herd is at a loss to say. Use it “at the end of every sentence”15 is the best advice that he can muster.

Generally, as grammatical-rhetorical tensions amongst the points became more acknowledged, so the waffling Herds of the world declined in number. A. E. Lovell’s little book, Punctuation as a Means of Expression (1932), for example, graciously accommodated both logic and feeling.

Man’s mentality will find expression in coherent thought and in consequent coherent language, but his emotions will give colour to his sentences.16

Mr. Lovell recognizes that since the same stop-system has the double function of handling both the grammatical-logical and the rhetorical-emotional, each phase in turn will have its own emphasis. That emphasis will vary with different subjects of discourse and with different individu-

als. Rhetorical punctuation (being the carrier of emotion and hence of authorial personality) should ride on the crest of the logical, for underlying grammatical structures must never be violated. Lovell admits that it is no simple matter for words to express one’s meaning “beyond a doubt or cavil”; to which he adds (quite rightly) that one can more exactly convey one’s meaning in speech sounds than in writing.17

* * *

While texts wholly made up of short sentences could fascinate avant-garde experimentalists and satisfy the intellects of ordinary folk, they were initially rather looked down upon by the graduates of conservative establishments. Those ladies and gentlemen were devoted to complexity amongst their sentences. Educated to read within the traditional boundaries, they approved the advice of old-fashioned textbook pundits and were quite at home with chaotic clusters of nonsubstantive clauses and their tumbling litters of commas and colons. Made confident by learned instruction, these aristocrats of the written word remained the upholders of received punctorial custom.

In tracking the trends of this period, it is elucidating (though admittedly unscientific) to apply the ‘complected vs. plaindealing’ distinction to prominent writers. The following samples come from both sides of the fence, with the emphasis on the ambitious complectists, whose goals are more difficult to isolate. In the late 1800s their stellar exemplar had been the Paterian sentence, whose complex syntax, we remember, only secondarily recalled the structures of speech and whose manifold contortions were better assimilated by eye than ear.

Henry James (1843–1916) is close in time as well as inclination to the inspiration of his style. A reader must be vigilant to gather in the syntactical, almost anarchic, idiosyncrasies of his technique. Like Pater, James attempts the full scene (including the multifarious reactions of the informing observer to the observed object itself). Like Pater, he tries to resolve the incompatibility of instant sensation with the exigencies of time-ridden language—a notable Asian impulse. James’ hesitancies and skips of focus portray a highly aware consciousness experiencing the variousness of life. As his sentence structures peck round and round an idea, so they reveal copious ranges of subliminal possibility.

James’ approach is ostensibly optical, though better perceived as a puri-

fied form of orality that favors plenitude over the jabs of speech. Speech, which is generally delivered within the bounds of an ‘understood’ context, tends to be incomplete. It encourages the “Ya know what I mean?” syndrome. Amongst talkers verbs can be dropped; and gestures and facial expressions allowed to fill in. Denied the sympathy that is standardly established by physical confrontation, writers must express themselves more fully than speakers, for there will be no recourse to repair once the utterance has escaped the writer’s jurisdiction. Everything necessary to the wanted impact must be solidly on the paper, to enable the reading eye to discern the relationship of peripheral to mainstream, and thus clinch the total experience without drowning. In a scene of flashing insights, new assessments, and readjusting attention, the reader relies on punctuation to demark grammatical constituents so that he can know what attaches to what, and thereby gain the sense. With the points in place to restrain the flying components, a Jamesian statement can, in fact, be read aloud with success. The following excerpt, from James’ “Preface to *The Ambassadors*”, was written ca. 1907, by which time his habit was to compose his lines while pacing the room and dictating to his secretary—an oral mode, to be sure, with splendiferous potential when recommitted to the voice.18 Though his writing bore the stamp of literariness—so full of commas and dashes and parentheses—James found his words and settled his rhythms in concentrated ear-to-brain coordination. In the following excerpt James is describing how the germ of his story first came to him.

A friend had repeated to me, with great appreciation, a thing or two *said* to him by a man of distinction, much his senior, and to which a sense akin to that of Strether’s melancholy eloquence might be imputed—*said* as chance would have, and so easily might, in Paris, and in a charming old garden attached to a house of art, and on a Sunday afternoon of summer, many persons of great interest being present.19 (Italics added.)

A long sentence, but a controlled one. Despite the dislocation of normal structure, it provides an ample sweep of information, however inspecific. To achieve his airy mix of chance with practical importance, James staged his ‘action’ in a venue as nebulous as a Monet water garden, and

peopled it with faceless, genteel beings on a leisurely Sunday afternoon—all very offhand. Syntactically, this site description is attached as a coda to the primary statement by means of a dash followed by the anaphoric second “said”. Crafted to offset the so-wispy action of the opening lines from all the buzz of circumambient conditions, this appendage was not implanted in the core of the sentence’s architecture. James deliberately rejected an onion construct. Instead, he built up his narrative and then attached to it (with every appearance of afterthought) the attendant atmosphere.

By uniting the two halves of his statement, James has kept the incident intact and projected its unbroken mass onto the canvas of our attention. The divisive dash relieves the phrasal build-up (those serial glimpses of the overarching idea) and responds to the natural capabilities of linear (that is, uninflected) English. The two-sided structure of the sentence (which heralds a continuing tendency to open up text) stands witness to the shift away from fin de siècle custom (and indeed James’ frequent custom as well) of enfolding all relevant materials within the heart of a ‘complete’ utterance. From here, it is not a long jump to Robert Louis Stevenson’s chains of conjoined sentences.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1886–1925), in keeping with his times and education, was also very much given to complective preoccupations: How can one wrap a ‘complete thought’ in a single sentence? How can it be done without harming that sense of intuitive mental velocity? Stevenson’s answer renders his writings far simpler to the modern eye than does James’. Although he too snowballs ideas into paragraphic statements, he augments their accessibility by parceling them up into short subject-verb-predicates and stringing them one to the other by means of punctuation—most saliently, semicolons. Both in manuscript and in print, his work is full of their sharp drama.

Style is synthetic; and the artist, seeking, so to speak, a peg to plait about, takes up at once two or more elements or two or more views of the subject in hand; combines, implicates, and contrasts them; and while, in one sense, he was merely seeking an occasion for the necessary knot, he will be found, in the other, to

have greatly enriched the meaning, or to have transacted the work of two sentences in the space of one.21

In the same year that James was describing his epiphanic haze-in-the-garden, Stevenson was uniting scraps of pictorial detail into full narrative statements that simply raced along. In Kidnapped we find, amongst similar hundreds, the following whole-scene sentence in which the heel-to-toe fragments induce the exhilarating sensation of covering lots of ground in no time at all. The semicolons in fact mark off complete sentences, both simple and compound. Had Stevenson ignored the unifying aspects of the selected passage and divided each step of it with a full stop instead, he would have verged into plaindealing. Since onion-ringing and simultaneous authorial commentary slow down suspenseful action, modern heroes (if they wish to be successful) must face their perils in conventional time.

With that he got upon his feet, took off his hat, and prayed a little while aloud, and in affecting terms, for a young man setting out into the world; then suddenly took me in his arms and embraced me very hard; then held me at arm’s length, looking at me with his face all working with sorrow; and then whipped about, and crying good-bye to me, set off backward by the way that we had come at a sort of jogging run.22

We turn now to an archplaindealer, a sprinter whose speed on the page is hard to beat. In The Rainbow (1915), D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930) flatly opposed, both in form and in content, almost every principle of the fin de siècle code. His tale nips along at a fast pace, generally in short, persistently sequential SVP-formatted sentences that at times are separated only by commas—commas being notorious tools for shoveling text behind one. Though Lawrence’s directness of manner may succor the reader on a rush-hour subway, it can sorely detract from the fine-tuned pleasures of a belletrist.

They made a line of footprints across the garden, he left a flat snowprint of his hand on the wall as he vaulted over, they traced the snow across the churchyard.23

Complex and compound sentences keep their heads low in Lawrence's *Rainbow*, leaving the burden of delivery to short simple structures. Both the récit and the mental life of his characters are couched in them. In descriptive scenes, where excitement is not building, their unrelenting presence reinforces the spareness of his style. Only the occasional comma infiltrates the parade of full stops. Each sentence stabs its naked idea into the reader's imagination, but is rarely so bonded to its mates as to efface the sense of their separateness. The process (which is so undemanding of semantic or syntactic skills, yet so in tune with the linearity of English and the natural brevity of human 'mentalese') makes Lawrence's writing easy to absorb. Although its quickness might simulate that of speech, it lacks the flow of spoken rhythms, and remains in fact insistently unalive.

It was a beautiful sunny day for the wedding, a muddy earth but a bright sky. They had three cabs and two big closed-in vehicles. Everybody crowded in the parlour in excitement. Ann was still upstairs. Her father kept taking a nip of brandy. He was handsome in his black coat and grey trousers. His voice was hearty but troubled. His wife came down in dark grey silk with lace, and a touch of peacock-blue in her bonnet. Her little body was very sure and definite. Brangwen was thankful she was there, to sustain him among all these people.²⁴

Now comes a taste of Lawrence the critic. In the following sentences he has chosen to magnify (almost caricaturize) the habits of speech—its necessary repetitiveness, its reliance on pronouns, and lack of finish. In the example beneath, each full stop encloses a thought so brief, so slim and slight, that there is room within only for vital content, which is, of course, the paramount consideration of a plaindealer.

The world doesn't fear a new idea. It can pigeon-hole any idea. But it can't pigeon-hole a real new experience. It can only dodge. The world is a great dodger, and the Americans the greatest. Because they dodge their very own selves.²⁵

*Virginia Woolf* (1882–1941) shared her years of birth and death with James Joyce. Though they were both in the lineage of Walter Pater and Henry

James and of the era when the Freudian ego and id were still big news, their manner of expression showed no mutual influence whatsoever. We read in Virginia Woolf's diaries and letters that she did not admire *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and more than that, was repelled by *Ulysses* (whose manuscript The Hogarth Press turned down in 1919), despite T. S. Eliot's gallant praise of it. Yet Woolf's and Joyce's technical concerns overlapped. Both were pursuing effective ways to portray the simultaneous interplay of subjective and objective experience.

Woolf's récit is conveyed by conventional (sometimes elaborate) structures whose dense, time-ridden clumps are lightened from time to time by shafts of present-tense, stream-of-consciousness musings. Her two modes work well in their interchange, not only for the variety of rhythm that they generate, but also for their mix of intellectual feat with less contorted exercise. Generally, Woolf builds her interiorizations out of simple, short, but fully structured sentences that drive as a total towards serious, in-depth, psychological portrayal, and on those grounds (despite their apparent simplicity), must be classed as complectist.

*To the Lighthouse* (1927) offers a rich source of illustration. The following series of unadorned sequential frames evokes a sense of overhearing the private mind-talk of Mr. Ramsay. It teaches us that he is both a lonely man yet dependent on society as well. The segmented language projects a kind of nervous vitality as it pokes nostalgically at landscape specifics, then gathers for the climax. Whereas Henry James might have packed the whole passage into a single, thoroughbred Asian-completed, multipunctuated sentence, and R. L. Stevenson might have separated the various threads with semicolons before plaiting them around his peg, Woolf has improved the sensation of kaleidoscopic simultaneity by fragmenting the lot into ministructures and pumping them at the reader straight from Mr. Ramsay's brain. By fullstopping the jagged thoughts of a single, activated mind, Woolf essentially offers an alternative to the extended, all-revealing Asian sentence. The meandering quality of the piece belies its conceptual unity as well as the importance of its insight into character.

That was the country he liked best, over there; those sandhills dwindling away into darkness. One could walk all day without meeting a soul. There was not a house scarcely, not a single village for miles on end. One could worry things out alone. There were little sandy beaches where no one had been since the beginning of time. The seals sat up and looked at you. It sometimes seemed to him that in a little house out there, alone—he broke off sighing. He had no right. The father of eight children—he reminded himself. And he would have been a beast and a cur to wish a single thing altered. Andrew would be a better man than he had been. Prue would be a beauty, her mother said. They would stem the flood a bit. That was a good bit of work on the whole—his eight children.²⁷

As Woolf’s focus shifts to gain distance over the interplay of plural consciences and the setting in which they are reacting to one another, so her sentences lengthen. In the following instance, after another burst of simple statements representing interior musings (he reflected and she wondered), the movement sweeps into more extensive views of totality. Notice how Mrs. Ramsay’s flighty, classically female, mental responses to the reality that she is seeing are woven into the vaguer, cognitive cloth of what she is thinking great men must be like. Notice also the second and third anaphoric thens (italics added) that reintroduce the basic grammatical structure, as had Henry James’ said.

But then, Mrs. Ramsay, though instantly taking his side against all the silly Giddingses in the world, then, she thought, intimating by a little pressure on his arm that he walked up hill too fast for her, and she must stop for a moment to see whether those were fresh molehills on the bank, then, she thought, stooping down to look, a great mind like his must be different in every way from ours. All the great men she had ever known, she thought, deciding that a rabbit must have got in, were like that, and it was good for young men (though the atmosphere of lecture-rooms was stuffy and depressing to her beyond endurance almost) simply to hear him, simply to look at him. But without shooting rabbits, how was one to keep them down? she wondered. It might be a rabbit; it might be a mole.²⁸

²⁸. Woolf, To The Lighthouse, 108.
In the next selection Woolf almost totally reverts to prototypical complectedness. After hopping in and out of other people’s minds, she now stands back to view with authorial omniscience the subtleties of the Ramsay marital relationship. Her prolonged and inclusive sentence, with all its twists and turns, its psychological nuances and hints of the past in description of the present, relies for its success on copious punctuation. Commas and dashes allow her restive attentions to cohere as a whole, more in the manner of James than Cicero—that is, more linearly, and with an air of insouciance. The midsentence semicolon dominates the entirety: it both separates the interior she from the exterior he and brings the fact of their duality into unified focus.

But through the crepuscular wills of their intimacy, for they were drawing together, involuntarily, coming side by side, quite close, she could feel his mind like a raised hand shadowing her mind; and he was beginning, now that her thoughts took a turn he disliked—towards this “pessimism” as he called it—to fidget, though he said nothing, raising his hand to his forehead, twisting a lock of hair, letting it fall again. 29

The prose of James Joyce (1882–1941), when compared to the seemingly mild experiments of Virginia Woolf, smacked of rampant iconoclasm. Though his sentence structures were mostly simple, his attention to the antics of the mind and the sparkling insights that he continuously projected verify a complective intent. Founded upon Walter Pater with a dash of Newman, he was “a purely literary writer” (T. S. Eliot, as reported in The Diary of Virginia Woolf, vol. 2, page 203: see footnote 26). Joyce’s narrative technique made little use of authorial commentary for moving along his story. By the time of writing A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Joyce had learned to manipulate language for those “aspects of internal experience not usually languaged” in as authentic a way as anybody has ever achieved. 30 The finished Ulysses was so admirable a piece of work that it “showed up the futility of all the English styles” and “destroyed the whole of the 19th Century” (T. S. Eliot). 31 It was the book, according to many—though not all, certainly not Woolf, who hated

29. Woolf, To The Lighthouse, 184.
Joyce's ill-bred lack of restraint. Indeed, fin de siècle eclecticism had nothing on Joyce. He mixed gutter language and frank physicality with Latinisms, with liturgical, musical, literary, classical, and Biblical references, and energized the lot with wordplay and the euphuistic ploys he had learned in his Jesuitical youth. His word choice and speech tempos showed an acute sensitivity to psychological and physiological reflexes. More than his forebears or peers, it would seem, he applied his sensitive ear to the tune of talk, and put this knowledge to use.32

For the foregrounding of character subjectivity, Joyce went beyond the authorial puppeteering that had been James' and was still Virginia Woolf's method of portraying the mental activities of protagonists. Joyce was in search of a truer semblance of what goes on in the mind, some representational form by which he might equate verbal with nonverbal materials—specifically, those fleeting, inchoate, interior responses to external actuality—and found his answer in the simulation of free direct thought. Joyce's interior monologues are unmediated by reportorial signals, i.e., he mused, he pondered, and so on. The thought processes of Joycean heroes are left untouched. They bubble up freely to mingle with the narrative surface, forming a two-way (sometimes confusing) churn of random associations, chains of visual images and perceptions, displacements of past, present, and future, along with abrupt topic shifts that relate the world to the characters and the characters to the world.33 To conjure up the mind's dynamic play both in dialogue and in its intuitive response to reality, Joyce couched his language in strings of short sentences and full-stopped sentence parts. Since words cannot give a candid imprint of what lies deep, internalized, and primary in the human brain, Joyce's artistry (like all artistry) is necessarily flawed. Nevertheless, the interior monologues of his characters Bloom and Stephen represent a genuine technical advance in the externalization of the internal for fictional purposes.34

And for all this, to what use did Joyce put punctuation? Perhaps most distracting for his contemporary readership was his implantation of the single initial dash in the margin to replace the customary dual (begin and end) quotation marks. The device lent itself to a melding of voices—the voice of the récit with the voices of character.35 Most relevant to our in-

33. Wales, Language of Joyce, 72–3.
34. Anthony Burgess, Joysprick (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1973), 59. Also, see Ellmann, Joyce, 528: in time Joyce himself came to regard interior monologue as a stylization, rather than a total exposition, of consciousness.
35. Ellmann, Joyce, 353.
terests are the Joycean rhythms—the rhythms of word groups with their intervals of silence. The full stops that pay out lengths of reverie and chat are thoroughly relevant to the development of Bloom’s character. Their placement suggests a natural lack of fluency: a thinking pace that is measured and deliberative. When, occasionally, commas are used to pick up the speed of his mental verbiage, they confirm the sense of syntactical confusion. The short spurts, couched in down-to-earth vocabulary, evoke a grammatically unsophisticated mind-style, a mix of low culture with spirited curiosity, wherein lie the unique characteristics of Bloom. In contrast, Stephen’s monologues convey incisive yet expansive thinking. His sentences are more ‘complete’, their parts more coherently connected and (when Joyce allows it) subordinated. These signals of intellectuality, which are in Stephen’s case united with a vocabulary that is highly educated, poetic, and literarily allusive, elicit the sound of a very distinct personality. As for the narrator’s infrequent voice, it guides the day’s progress in longer, fully-formed and standardly punctuated, and sometimes complex sentences, whose pace identifies a more disengaged tone.

For the triumphant concluding scene of Molly’s mental drift, Joyce eliminated all pointing and foreign-word accent marks. Woman’s gush, in his unflattering view, was breathless and syntactically undifferentiated, which—judging from extant letters of the uneducated females of his time, most especially Joyce’s wife—it certainly was. In any case, Molly’s slumbrous continuum of verbiage pours forth in a visual disorder that supports her idiosyncracies of character.

... and he so quiet and mild with his tingating zither can you ever be up to men the way it takes them lovely stuff in that blue suit he had on and stylish tie and socks with the skyblue silk things on them hes certainly welloff I know by the cut his clothes

36. See Burgess, *Joysprick*, 79. “Joyce will always avoid a subordinate clause if he can.”
40. By punctuating a section of this tract, Anthony Burgess demonstrates that it is the unorthodoxy of its unpunctuated appearance that made the piece so avant-garde. Dickens had more briefly attempted the same effect in *Little Dorrit*. Though Molly’s syntax does get garbled, jamming sentences into sentences, “on the whole the presentation of her thoughts is orderly, even literary”—in truth, an ideally long letter from his wife Nora. See *Joysprick*, pp. 58, 59.
have and his heavy watch but he was like a perfect devil for a few minutes after he came back with the stoppress tearing up the tickets and swearing blazes because he lost 20 quid he said he lost over that outsider that . . .

* * *

With its rules so settled and its users so agile and confident, punctuation was ripe for the ultimate experiments. During this first half of the twentieth century the most revolutionary manipulator of text was the poet E. E. Cummings (1894–1962). One cannot discuss punctuation's full bag of tricks without coming to terms with his ideas. Cummings' poetry can be difficult to read. It is marked by grammar shifts, word invention, and typographic sculpting. Most eye-catching of all is the punctuation that he used to effect mixes of physical sensation and intellectual insight at the time of their being. His technique pushes the envelope of the Pater-James founding ambition and surpasses even Joyce in creating the feel of immediacy. Cummings' later poems require formidable attention to expose their layered intricacies.

In the following example the poet sees a bird flying across the sun's face. That is all. But in order to capture for the voice the manifold aspects fired by that fleeting experience—its synthesis of psychic and physical response—we must first sort out with our eyes his novel use of parentheses, commas, capital letters, word splits, empty lines, and hyphens, and readjust our expectations to accept an absolute lack of periods. Despite the slim profile of a Cummings poem, there is always a lot going on. Herewith is No. 46, from No Thanks [Poems 1923–1954].

\[
\text{swi(}
\text{across!gold's}
\text{)^ftblac}
\text{kl(ness)y}
\text{a-motion-upo-nmotio-n}
\]

Less?
 thE
 (against
 is
 )Swi
 mming
 (w-a)s
 bIr
 d,

Noteworthy is that terminating comma.

But let us look closely at what is going on, for it is interesting to spot what is gained by such recasting of convention. Though the meaning of the poem very much depends on the printed page, yet it cannot be gathered by visual means alone. The first lines register the poet's impression of something-swiftly-and-blackly-moving-across-the-sun's-gold-roundness. The opening word *swift* is broken by parentheses and obliged to hold its finish in abeyance. While the inner ear is remembering the *swi* sound, the eye is sent searching for the final *ft* to complete it. Thus, the sun's very face is mingled with the poet's stuttering amazement (expressed by the "!" and the jerking line with its capital N and strangely positioned ending parenthesis), and the combination embedded midbird, so to speak. Once understood, this layered image radiates a dramatic sense of simultaneity. And now the black-winged silhouette is in motion against a brilliant, un­moving object, but no! That was the poet's first thought. The "-upon-motio-n/Less?" indicates a query of perception, as he recalls that all planets are moving. And so, mortal-bird-speed overlays a speed that is timeless and to the poet immeasurable. The agitated self-interruptions are remindful of hesitancy and astonishment, of confusion at how best to construe the value of what he is seeing. Verbalization seems impossible. The poet is in fact almost speechless and can suggest only (in severely limited language) the most primary qualities of his experience: speed, direction, color, and shape. The last eight, more syntactical lines, beginning with "thE", attempt an adjustment to his opening, as his mind calms and re-sorts the event. We now have "Against" in place of "across" and "Swi/mming" instead of "swi/ft". But quandary remains. The whole of the statement has ended with a comma, like the tail of a "bIr"d (with the "I" emphasizing Cummings himself and the last line with its single "d"
suggesting "death").

Periods, or final stops, signal death. Commas, however, are life-giving in that they suggest continuation. Thus is the poem left unresolved, to flutter off lamely into the future.

What have such visual vagaries achieved? Certainly something. The placement of points and the skips and raggedness of the lines suggest startled intakes of breath and cultivate a sense of aliveness, of the electrical quickness of a mind as it stalks meaning through thickets of possibility. Art, if it means anything, Cummings wrote, means "to be intensely alive". The first glance at a Cummings poem jolts the eye. The typographical arrangements are vexing to the uninitiated. A huge effort is demanded to make the squiggles and deformities settle to their job, which is the evocation of their oral counterparts. Then bingo! Cummings' entire fact—the simultaneous presence of Physical Event and Human Response—is on the page without a sign of wilt, brought to life, if you will, so that the experience for the reader remains forever in the process of actually happening. Cummings' punctuational inventiveness gives him an unbreakable grip on the oral rendition of his poems. If one honors every typographical symbol while reading the poem aloud, a stunning, but fixed, variety of nuance is aroused. The reader, slavishly tracking each to-be-deciphered signal, has no leeway to add anything of his own response.

Interesting on this subject are the comments of Laura Riding and Robert Graves on the pointing differences between E. E. Cummings and William Shakespeare. Riding and Graves favor the earlier, freer, more elusive punctuation of Shakespeare's time over stricter modern styles that disallow "the eternal difficulties that make poems immortal". A more lax punctuation permits "the variety of meanings [Shakespeare] actually intends". On that count they are wary of Cummings' excessive typographical focus and the heavy punctuation that clamps his poems into definition. No future emendation will ever play false with a Cummings intention, they complain. No one will ever argue about alternative meanings to what he has written. Punctuation of this strong stamp merely shows "how difficult it is for . . . any poet to stabilize a poem once and for all". Also, noticeably, it suggests Cummings' concern that unaided imaginations could not reach his heights of awareness.

Punctuation marks in Mr. Cummings’ poetry are the bolts and axles that make the poem a methodic and fool-proof piece of machinery requiring common-sense for its operation rather than imagination.\footnote{Laura Riding and Robert Graves, “William Shakespeare and E. E. Cummings: Study in Original Punctuation and Spelling”, in \textit{A Survey of Modernist Poetry} (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1928), 74–7.}

We should note at this point that despite his abstruse word-combinations, Cummings’ poetic vocabulary remains down to earth, plaindealing, simple. It is his mastery of time that shoots him into the Asian-completed ethers.

In \textit{Eimi} (1933), a travel diary of his visit to Russia, Cummings applied his poetic punctuation techniques to prose, though less intrusively—a blessing for which even the most avid punctator must be grateful. Paragraphs in \textit{Eimi} frequently end with white space only, instead of full stops. Commas, colons, semicolons, and parentheses are strangely planted dead-center in the space allowed them and their use is often unconventional. Nevertheless, a retrievable oral immediacy has been created. Every signal, be it point or word, is freighted with meaning. Cummings’ lines teem with thought-inducing neologisms and juxtapositions of words that fire off heterogeneous, even conflicting, ideas. It should be noted that the following single sentence (with its strangely adjoined “Where.”) constitutes an entire paragraph. The ellipses are part of the text and do not represent a missing portion.

\& now(now alone, infinitely alone among all unalone lonelinesses)I’m through this very small parkless strolling; in the hot darkness... 3 gypsy children together, 3 little girls in bright rags, earning kopeks: 1 claps while 2 wobble—a comrade-man gives, a comrade-almost.pretty—non-man gives; an earnest scrawny comrade-unman questions abruptly the wobbleclap trio and clapper immediately sidles off(immediately follow the little chubbier dirtier and littlest chubbiest dirtiest wobblers)and the how littlest utters 1—not to be measured—gesture of scorn, and the onlookers(except scrawny)laugh; nudge... & I pass the Metropole Hotel, I round the forepart of that large parkless and I emerge; to climb a steepish street, into an oval, past L’s M and the “internationale”—striking tower(to my right: incredibly a near
sector of moon!) and the Arabian Nights cathedral; on whose steps 2 coiffed crones dream... & past joking astroll man-and-nonman almost-lovers & down to the left through emptily dark soiled streets & back through very small(same almost-pretty-comrade-nonman; she’s talking now with the comrade-man-giver)park & past this dolled up Oreye-entully scornful miss all swathed in blue veils & up Petrovka to a corner. Where

Ezra Pound (1885–1972) classed Eimi alongside Joyce’s Ulysses and Wyndham Lewis’s The Apes of God as a landmark book of the period. He especially praised Eimi for its punctuational technique, which, while difficult, was “necessary to the subject”. Its intervention enabled a “precisely PERSONAL direct perception” to be put down without falsification on paper. Pound elaborates his thinking on these matters in If This Be Treason, a selection of radio talks given in wartime Italy and printed up later from original typed drafts by Olga Rudge. She prefaces her little gathering with the comment that “No cuts, corrections or changes have been made”, a point which becomes more interesting as one takes note of Pound’s own erratic use of virgules to mark pauses (for oral reading) that are not taken care of by commas and full stops.

now mr cummings writes PROSE whereof every word tells its story and I myself made an error first time I tried to read him/ tried to read him too fast, got impatient/ no use approchin him that way/ got to read slow/ more on one page, than on two pages of most authors... . You CAN skip in some authors/ you cannot in cummings skip one word...

Second point is his parenthesis; are his parentheses/ Well old H. J. [Henry James] worried his european readers to death by his parentheses/ they were an american habit/ they mean something to us and for us/ as Americans.

they mean something more than the one track mind/ but they do NOT imply deviation or lack of direction/ they are a desperate attempt no not an attempt a device to avoid leaving out something NEEDED, some part of the statement needed to set down, to register the direction and meaning/

* * *

46. Ezra Pound, If This Be Treason, ed. Olga Rudge (Siena, Italy: Tip. Nuova, 1948), 13.
After the fireworks of Joyce and Cummings, we turn to George Orwell and Ernest Hemingway. Both wrote fables of plaindealing temper that won the hearts of adults everywhere. In his ‘fairy story’ *Animal Farm*, George Orwell (1903–1950) used restrained, unemotional language with graceful simplicity. Typically, in the entire 103-word paragraph below, there are no colons or semicolons. The seven sentences are brief and varied, but complete; and their components require only five commas:

Three days later Mollie disappeared. For some weeks nothing was known of her whereabouts, then the pigeons reported that they had seen her on the other side of Willingdon. She was between the shafts of a smart dogcart painted red and black, which was standing outside a public-house. A fat red-faced man in check breeches and gaiters, who looked like a publican, was stroking her nose and feeding her with sugar. Her coat was newly clipped and she wore a scarlet ribbon round her forelock. She appeared to be enjoying herself, so the pigeons said. None of the animals ever mentioned Mollie again. 47

In his essays, Orwell emerged as the champion that he was. He delivered his ideas, which were always assured, in straight talk leavened with dramatic accelerations. His longer sentences, despite their penchant for fast tempo and sequentiality, are shaped with a wonderful periodicity that delights the ear even as it informs the mind. The overall effect of Orwellian style is one of speed, liveliness, of a voice guided by an ear that knows what it wants to hear. As our sample will show, Orwell measured his rhythms to suit the content of his language. They drive the paragraph to a climactic flourish that does not battle with the logic of his argument. Who is this wise and elegant man? No dancing Asianist, for sure. The following passage on Kipling’s death progresses from point to point with summary wit. The piece was first published in the *New English Weekly*, 23 January 1936.

Rudyard Kipling was the only popular English writer of this century who was not at the same time a thoroughly bad writer. His popularity was, of course, essentially middle-class. In the average middle-class family before the War, especially in Anglo-Indian families, he had a prestige that is not even approached by any

writer of today. He was a sort of household god with whom one grew up and whom one took for granted whether one liked him or whether one did not. For my own part I worshipped Kipling at thirteen, loathed him at seventeen, enjoyed him at twenty, despised him at twenty-five, and now again rather admire him. The one thing that was never possible, if one had read him at all, was to forget him.48

_Nineteen Eighty-four,_ Orwell’s last novel (written more or less on his deathbed), is again straightforwardly told. In this book he rarely attempts to develop the thought processes of his characters, for complected introspection is not Orwell’s meat. He unfolds his story in an easy variation of sentence lengths that keep the reader pulsing along with the protagonist’s responses to difficult experience. In her assessment of Orwell’s style, Victoria Wedgewood had this to say: “The debasement of language, and the consequent deterioration of thought had become by the end of his life of the first importance to Orwell” and thus a main theme in _Nineteen Eighty-four._ He was not interested in grammar, the preservation of obsolescent words, nor the subtle shapes of sentences. “He was interested . . . in meaning and was profoundly disturbed by the growth of meaningless phrases and by the use of language not to convey but to conceal meaning.”49 In this respect Orwell seems almost classically Attic. But while that, he was also versatile. He could (and did) complect when occasion demanded and even arranged his terse phrases to the outmoded music of euphuism. His prose still appeals for its ring of honesty, its lucidity, and its subdued yet persistent play of tempo and form with sound argument and lively attack. George Orwell, we think, is the grandest bird in our plain-dealing aviary.

Though grittier in style and far less precise, _Ernest Hemingway (1898–1961)_ also exercised a huge influence on readers and writers of his time. His years with the _Kansas City Star_ had taught him the expedience of brevity. His view was essentially this: that any written account—be it reportorial or fictional—made more forceful impact when the language was stark,  

shorn of cliché and literary conceit. Then might the reader relive it as though it were his own. Ornament for Hemingway was intrusive. “Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over.”50 To which one must point out that the undeviating plot of The Old Man and The Sea encouraged an intrusive use of the and connective51—a device more suggestive of mortar than brick. Nevertheless, the story is strong. From their beds of childlike sentence structures, the unmodified visual images—fish, bow, stern, thwart, etc.—strike the reader’s consciousness like hard-edged objects, inducing sensations remindful of ‘mentalese’.

He made the fish fast to bow and stern and to the middle thwart. He [the fish, that is] was so big it was like lashing a much bigger skiff alongside. He [the old man] cut a piece of line and tied the fish’s lower jaw against his bill so his mouth would not open and they would sail as cleanly as possible. Then he stepped the mast and, with the stick that was his gaff and with his boom rigged, the patched sail drew, the boat began to move, and half lying in the stern he sailed south-west.52

Hemingway’s novel For Whom The Bell Tolls (1940) was written in a mix of long narrative sentences and the staccato elements that had become by then the customary conveyances for a character’s mental processes. In the first sentence of the following excerpt, note the simple use of just then and as to coordinate time frames. These (along with when, while, and suddenly, and a tendency towards the present participle) are the too frequent tools that Hemingway brings to the problem of describing two simultaneous happenings. His ambiguous ands (which often substitute for punctuation) can be taken as marking time sequences (i.e., first this and then that: She paid the money and put the bread in her basket) or simultaneous action (this while that: He stood on the balcony and waved). As for interior dialogue: it comes in the usual rush, either short, full-stopped sentences or elongated, and-bound ones, erratically punctuated. The predictability of Hemingway’s syntax being supreme, we do not too much notice the absence of standard commas in the following ex-

51. Also interesting: in the selected passage, there are seven commas for 92 words (as opposed to Orwell’s five for 103).
ample, after the *exploding whirr* phrase and the opening *if* and *when* clauses. Indeed, one could say that Hemingway’s prose is no bulwark against Wedgewood’s “debasement of language” and “consequent deterioration of thought”. In the following instance, the mental imagery is strong on specificity but unsatisfying psychologically. Though Hemingway seeks to stretch time and space, his simplistic stratagems and essentially unsubtle language declare his allegiance to the plain style.

Just then, as kneedeep in the gorse he climbed the steep slope that led to the Republican lines, a partridge flew up from under his feet, exploding in a whirr of wingbeats in the dark and he felt a sudden breath-stopping fright. It is the suddenness, he thought. How can they move their wings that fast? She must be nesting now. I probably trod close to the eggs. If there were not this war I would tie a handkerchief to the bush and come back in the daytime and search out the nest and I could take the eggs and put them under a setting hen and when they hatched we would have little partridges in the poultry yard and I would watch them grow and, when they were grown, I’d use them for callers. I wouldn’t blind them because they would be tame. Or do you suppose they would fly off? Probably. Then I would have to blind them.53

* * *

If nothing else, our handful of excerpts is proof that some sort of literary skirmish was kicking up dust during the first half of the twentieth century. As one by one the big guns of complicated experiment were dismantled, so the plaindealing hordes took the field. Writers who could feed their impulses into uncomplicated, speech-driven word strings were rewarded with sales and fame. The trend was self-fueling. The more that authors simplified for public popularity, the more infantilized the public became—and more demanding of simplicity. If this formula plays itself out, authors will one day be struggling to spell the phonemic overtones of grunts.

Hope for literature’s future lies in reversing that swing of the pendulum, which itself so well represents the dual aspects of human nature, with its in-built tensions and passion for change. It is surprising that civilization

(so benign a concept!) has caused and affirmed the growth of our physiological and psychological bivalence. As knowledge accumulated through history, overwhelming the mind with ‘facts’, so codification of detail was required. Answering this need came the invention of catalogues, indexes, divisions of scholarly subjects, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and so on. Bit by bit were we pressed to separate concept from emotion, and objective truths from subjective ones—in short, to divide ourselves in two.

As we have noted before, the world of writing is a silent one, dependent on the eye and conducive to the mental processes of reasoning, study, and contemplation. It is our eyes that measure the distance between us and what we focus on, and in that way teach us of things that are not us. Eyes deal in particulars and so position us in real space. They enable us to emerge from our harum-scarum, primary-process, excitable, self-centered egos and to view the airier spaces of a reality furnished with other things and other people. Complex, ideational materials are best assimilated from the page, where words hold still so that the eye, unrushed by the passage of time, can retrieve and dispatch them to the cerebral mechanisms for logical and conceptual thinking.

While acknowledging the wonders of the eye, we must not forget that the words of all written utterances are programmed by the precepts of speech—the inherent means of human sociability. Successful transmission of speech depends not only on mouth but ear. Aural perceptions are closely bound to rhythm and bodily movement, and are especially susceptible to emotional response. Scientists recognize that “there is a closer relation between hearing and emotional arousal than there is between seeing and emotional arousal”. Indeed, so agile are ears in social participation, in sensing and anticipating someone else’s displeasure or desire, that once a context has been established, they can convert broken bits of talk—loose floating nouns and verbs and phrases—into assimilable information. Voice sounds lie at the core of our memories, carrying with them intimations of life in the womb, the rhythm of maternal heartbeat and breathing, and thereafter motherly warmth and cooings, from which we learn not only the phonetics of our native language but the outlines of its syntax and the give and take of dialogue.

55. Imitated speech sounds can also inform the ear, as is attested by a violin’s mimicry of voice intonation, and a drum’s simulation of talk rhythms. See Storr, Music and the Mind, 12.
56. Storr, Music and the Mind, 23. Also helpful on this topic have been: Justin D. Call, M.D., “Some Prelinguistic Aspects of Language Development”, Journal of the American
All verbalization, even the written kind, is radically a cry—that is, a word (or string of words) emitted from the innermost interior of a person and causing that focus of vitality to invade another's. Once the receiving ear has tracked that cry, it will be understood;\textsuperscript{57} for grammar (our database of sound and meaning correspondences) is shared by both speaker and listener—the lag between speaker's mouth and listener's mind being remarkably short: that is, about a syllable or two, around half a second.\textsuperscript{58} It is in this way, through the speaking mouth and the receiving ear that we are built to know each other and to satisfy "that emotional need for communication with other human beings which is prior to the need for conveying objective information or exchanging ideas."\textsuperscript{59} Like the pings of bell birds, our 'cries' carry news of our whereabouts and aliveness—and beseech the same from our friends.

Writing has no such natural intensity. The more it relates to the voice, the more sensuously thrilling it becomes—and easier to understand. While ears and tongues are miraculous indeed, miraculous too—and compelling—is our ability to reason. Thus, in the arena of literature, the tug between long-phrased, eye-dominated, intellectual control and short-phrased, ear-guided, sociable spontaneity favors first one part of us and then the other, reflecting the dual forces in our human makeup: crafty logic and impulsive emotion. That is the crux of the matter. Twentieth-century reading habits are approving the ear side of our physiological equation and manipulating its heightened-sensation component very frankly. The seeker of whamming impacts and socioemotional instant-intake indulges a hazardous temptation: that is, the abuse of his reasoning powers. For aural-immediacy, by its very nature, tears textual tissue into simple, ever simpler structures \textit{even when that tissue is conceptually of a single piece}. Language, thus shredded, smack of convivial chatter—of birdcall communication. Though it can stir us up right smartly, it does little to invite hard concentration. One might almost ask: Is it good for us?

Historically, during literature's long reign in the civilized world, punc-

\textit{Psychoanalytic Association} 28 (1980): 259–89; and Annick Doeff, Ph.D., Henry Eisner, M.D., and Margaret Moore, M.S.W, “Anclitic Depression, Speech Disorders, and Mental Retardation: A Continuum” (paper presented at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry Research Retreat, October 1986).


tuation has grown to broker for bicephalous mankind. Punctuation has dealt effectively with rhythms to evoke the sound of the voice; and it has put order into text by differentiating complex grammatical structures so that the peculiar quality of aural reality might better transmit to a visual plane. What does the future hold for our commas and colons and dashes now, we wonder, in this straight-talk environment that is so impatient of long thoughts? Perhaps the conventions of print and the surviving bastions of education will keep the points secure until that time comes when the piecemeal and the commonplace have bored everyone to transfixion. Then may complectists get off their knees once again, and challenge the public with eloquence.
Edward Noyes Westcott’s *David Harum*: A Forgotten Cultural Artifact

BY BRIAN G. LADEWIG

David Harum, Banker, is a national type. Nothing like him is to be found in any other country. . . . The book is national, patriotic, wholesome, and above all, hopeful and truthful. Its worth lies more in its humanity than in its humor.

—Forbes Heermans, 1900

Surprisingly, the third-best selling book of the nineteenth century is an almost entirely forgotten novel. It has not been the object of academic scholarship, and most likely it never appeared on a high school or college syllabus. Edward Noyes Westcott’s *David Harum: A Story of American Life*, published in 1898, exceeded 100 printings in thirty years and sold more than 1,190,000 copies. The story of how *David Harum* became a book and rose to such heights of popularity is as interesting as the book itself.

Edward Noyes Westcott (1846–1898), a lifetime resident of Syracuse, New York, made a comfortable living as a banker and commodities trader. He took up writing only when, in 1895, tuberculosis forced him to give up the day-to-day grind of his professional life. Though Westcott claimed that his book was a fictional account of fictional characters, he conceded in a letter to his editor that “I have lived with and among the people I have written about. My father was born and raised on Buxton Hill, and a great many of David’s peculiar figures and sayings were constantly cropping out in his, my father’s, diction.”

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1. *The Criterion*, April 1900, clipping from Onondaga Country Public Library, Syracuse, N.Y., hereafter referred to as “OCPL.” Many clippings on *David Harum*, the novel, can be found in OCPL’s Local History/Special Collections Department.

2. Westcott to Ripley Hitchcock, 19 January 1898, Ripley Hitchcock Papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Citations for material gathered from this repository will hereafter be attributed to “Columbia.”
In the extant correspondence between Westcott and his daughter Violet, there is no indication that he thought of himself as a “writer,” nor that he was undertaking a new vocation. Two years before *David Harum* was published, he wrote to her, “The work has filled up a good many hours which would otherwise have been very dreary, and given me some amusement; but that’s all there is to be said about it.” Having sent the manuscript to the first of several publishers, Westcott wrote a month later, “I have not really the smallest expectation that anything will result except the return of the MS. in about two months or more, but I thought the experiment was worth trying.” After receiving his first rejection, Westcott wrote, “I think I will not press further at present upon a depressed and overcrowded market.” Needless to say, Westcott overcame his initial disappointment, and he sent the manuscript to six more publishers before it was accepted in December 1897 by D. Appleton & Company of New York.

Ripley Hitchcock, the Appleton editor who accepted the untitled manuscript for publication, did so on the condition that it undergo numerous and substantive revisions. Westcott responded, “Whatever may have been my reasons for the arrangement of the book as it is, and I had them, they must go down before the opinion of one whose judgment like yours is worth a ‘whole theater of others.’” However, Westcott noted, “I should be heartily glad to follow your suggestions with regard to the cutting and reconstruction of the book, but it is quite out of the question for me. The excision of thirty odd thousand words would involve a practical rewriting of the whole thing and would be a task of almost as much magnitude as the original construction and if anything of even greater perplexity.” Westcott closed the letter by writing, “I should say that the manuscript might be cut down, say ten thousand words, without leaving very conspicuous gaps or rugged edges, but if much more than that is required ‘David’ must go on to the shelf, or into the fire. If it were to be published even without much delay, it would in all probability be posthumous. I have had the fun of writing it anyway and nobody will ever laugh over it more than I have. . . .” Unfortunately, Westcott’s dire prediction came true; he died six months before his book appeared in print. Before his death, however, Westcott agreed to have the book revised by Hitchcock.

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3. Westcott’s correspondence relating to the writing of *David Harum* has been collected in *The Teller* (New York: D. Appleton, 1899), 72. This excerpt comes from a letter dated 15 August 1896.
5. Westcott to Violet, 9 November 1896, *The Teller*.
cock, who transformed a promising manuscript into a best-selling piece of popular American fiction.

Hitchcock reorganized it, moving five chapters from the middle of the book to the beginning. He cut almost thirty thousand words, strengthened the now-secondary love story, and shifted the focus of the story to the character of David Harum, thus changing the entire emphasis of the novel. Finally, he revised the whole so that it read more smoothly and gave the book its title and subtitle.7

The novel tells the story of an “old country banker, David Harum: dry, quaint, somewhat illiterate, no doubt, but possessing an amazing amount of knowledge not found in printed books, and holding fast to the cheer-

7. The most reliable account of the editorial work done by Hitchcock can be found on a single typed page, written by Hitchcock’s wife, which is inserted into a first edition copy of the novel (Columbia). The typed page is a transcription of a handwritten account which appears on the first few pages of the same book.
ful belief that there is nothing wholly bad or useless in this world."* In an act of compassion, David Harum takes as his apprentice a young, broken-hearted, and somewhat misguided fellow, John Lenox. David teaches him valuable lessons in business and life. As a result, Lenox establishes himself professionally and wins the heart of the woman to whom he was previously an unsuccessful suitor.

Hitchcock’s editorial role was significant not just because it resulted in David Harum’s immediate popularity, but because it constituted a major turning point in the history of American fiction publishing. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, American publishers (at that time publishers were also editors) either accepted or rejected manuscripts based on the standards of the house. They did not suggest revisions that went beyond copy editing or matters of grammar; that is, until Hitchcock, while working with Westcott on David Harum, realized that his experience and insight with regard to the literary marketplace could be used to produce a more salable commodity. Based on his success with David Harum, Hitchcock took a similar approach to the work of other authors, including Stephen Crane and Theodore Dreiser.9 As competition in the book selling industry increased, other editors adopted Hitchcock’s approach. In fact, the editorial practices that he pioneered with David Harum have shaped the production of American literature ever since.

The arrival of David Harum in the literary marketplace in September 1898 was celebrated with quiet praise from a few reviewers. But to the surprise of publishers, the novel’s sales were brisk: the entire stock of 1,500 copies sold within a matter of weeks at $1.50 each. This was a remarkable rate of sale considering that David Harum was placed in the hands of book traders without benefit of advance advertisement. Publishers would not risk the added costs of advertising should the novel merely break even, or, as was the case with so many “first time, no name” novels, result in a financial failure.

A book dealer in Syracuse recalled seeing Westcott’s name in a publisher’s catalogue and was surprised to note that “[D. Appleton & Co.] had neglected to send sample copies to the trade in Syracuse before publica-

9. Hitchcock’s editing of works by Crane and Dreiser has become notorious among textual scholars who have been at pains for years to restore the texts Hitchcock “corrupted” with his editorial license. A dichotomy continues to exist between literature as a sacred and unalterable art form and literature as a commodity that can be adapted endlessly to the anticipated tastes of consumers.
tion; and no advance editorial copies were received by the local papers for review.”  

Out of a sense of loyalty, the book dealer ordered twenty-five copies, and when they arrived, he took one home to see what his “long time friend, Mr. Westcott” was doing in the novel writing business. He writes, “It was along toward morning before I finished it and the next day the book was recommended to everyone who came into my shop. If anybody hesitated about purchasing it, we simply said: ‘Take it along, look it over and if you don’t like it bring it back.’ ” By the week’s close, the book dealer wired the supplier for an additional 350 copies. Amazed at the book’s success, the supplier gladly filled the order. Throughout March and April 1899, six months after the book’s release, the average rate of sale was 1,300 copies per day, and the publisher could hardly keep up with booksellers’ demands for the novel. These statistics reveal the extent of David Harum’s popularity; but to understand why the American public found the novel so entertaining and relevant we have to turn from the story of the book to the story in the book.

David Harum is the middle-class, horse-trading banker of a small town in a rural region that, as Westcott noted, “should be described as northern central New York.” David has subtle wisdom and a rich sense of humor. Although he has a reputation as a “hard sell,” he is both equanimous and scrupulous in all of his dealings. He speaks in a boisterous, rural dialect, for example: “A reasonable amount of fleas is good for a dog—they keep him f’m broodin’ on bein’ a dog.” Or, in a matter-of-fact horse-trading vein, he would say, “Do unto the other fellow the way he’d like to do unto you—an’ do it fust.”

What David Harum lacks in formal education, he makes up for in common sense. He is a turn-of-the-century combination of the “homespun” philosopher and the well-respected middle-class businessman. Though it may appear that David’s dual nature as horse trader and banker is an unlikely, and even a fantastic, mix of qualities, it is exactly this dual nature that made him so endearing to the middle-class American reader.

On the one hand, David Harum is a successful businessman. He exemplifies the industriousness through which middle-class Americans could better themselves socially and economically. On the other hand, Harum, the savvy horse trader, exhibits an “old world” wisdom that is distinct from his capacities as a businessman (though his skills in business contribute to his discerning ability as a horse trader and vice versa). He em-

10. Undated, untitled newspaper clipping, OCPL.
bodies the values of the rural past from which he and his middle-class readers had come. Yet the two aspects are in perfect harmony.

Had David been a farmer/horse trader, he would have been, at best, a character trapped in the nineteenth century, whose appeal would have been limited to middle-class readers nostalgic about their rural past. Likewise, the casting of David Harum solely as a banker or commodities trader would have rendered him inaccessible to middle-class readers who had not yet attained such economic success and social independence. As a character who is successful in both roles, David Harum provided a model against which the middle class could compare its changing social and cultural roles; in his character the qualities of the middle class, past and future, could be celebrated, thus affirming readers’ identities as workers, consumers, and citizens.

Ripley Hitchcock, some years after the novel appeared, remarked that “David Harum still remains the great story of American life. It belongs to that school of fiction which subordinates plot to the realistic portrayal of character.” To the reading public David Harum, the character, embodied qualities that were regarded as distinctly American: common sense, soberness of mind, and sound moral judgment. Nicholas Murray Butler, who was closely associated with the book industry around the turn of the century, saw Americans as conservative and loyal to native institutions. He claimed (ca. 1908) that the “ninety millions of American people are at bottom a single and recognizable type” that was “seen at its purest and best in any one of the hundred or more small cities and towns in the Middle West.” Similarly, George Horace Lorimer, editor of the Saturday Evening Post, said (ca. 1926) of the middle-class American that he “has gained a fair degree of material success,” but is not given to “bookishness and ripe culture. . . . Successful money-getting calls for soberness of living and evenness of mentality. . . . Nothing succeeds like common sense and common sense is an expression of sound morals.”

12. Of course, novels that portrayed the rising businessman solely in the context of white-collar professionalism were being written around the turn of the century. Notable among these is Dreiser’s The Financier. However, sales figures suggest that such novels were not nearly as popular as David Harum, nor did interest in them endure for some forty years.


15. Lorimer quoted in Wilson, White Collar Fictions, 15.
"I reckon you must be Mr. Lenox," said David Harum.
Drawing by C. D. Farrand.

came, for middle-class American readers, a looking glass that reflected their own cultural and social experience.\(^{16}\)

\(^{16}\) An early review of *David Harum* notes that he is "a character entirely unlike those we have had from Dickens, Thackeray, Charles Reade, or any of the English school [all of whom were known for their crafting of memorable characters]. He is distinctively American . . . and those of us who are at all familiar with country people and the lives they live will recognize old friends and their doings somewhere in the book." (*New York Times Saturday Review*, 15 October 1898, 684, col. 1).
David Harum might have won the hearts of the American reading public on his own. However, his character is further developed as he interacts with John Lenox, a culturally refined young man who typifies a well-bred, well-mannered, high-society fellow from the affluent and cosmopolitan city of New York. Shortly after the novel begins, Lenox encounters a number of personal and professional setbacks; and with the hope of starting anew, he ventures into a rural setting in central New York to take a position as a bank clerk in a rural town, a situation that stands in sharp contrast to the comforts of his familiar and worldly New York City.17 Through perseverance and hard work, Lenox finds a place for himself in Homeville and earns the respect of the townspeople and of his employer, David Harum. Lenox meets hardship, responds to opportunity, and overcomes obstacles before finding his place in the world.

The early expositional sections of the book, those which cast the characters and their backgrounds, establish an important difference between Harum and Lenox. As discussed above, David Harum is, in an educative and financial sense, middle class. Lenox, on the other hand, comes from a privileged background, being well educated and groomed for participation in high culture. With these two social and financial strata represented, Westcott plays on his readers' sensitivity to their own place within the social and cultural system. The theme of class differentiation becomes increasingly important because it is Lenox, the well-bred “privileged” individual, who comes under the tutelage of Harum, the middle-class sage. For middle-class readers David Harum was a working-class hero who could “teach that city slicker a thing or two.” With all of his refinement and etiquette, Lenox was to learn weightier lessons about living than would have been possible in the staid and restrictive environment from which he came. It is for this reason that Hitchcock, despite being a man in

17. An early review of David Harum provides an insightful character description of John Lenox. It reads, “John K. Lenox of New York City [is] a young man whose father represents hundreds of men to-day who are successful in business themselves, but whose sons are allowed to drift with the tide. They rise and fall with it. They are educated, no matter how unconscientiously, into thinking that the world was created only that they might enjoy it: They go here and there, they are club members, they study a little, perhaps, in Europe, drawing on their respective fathers for allowances. But they are themselves financially helpless. They earn nothing and lack the ability to earn anything” (New York Times Saturday Review, 15 October 1898, 684, col. 1). For those who held such a perspective, Lenox's success under Harum was a proclamation that middle-class values can succeed where those of high culture failed.
the business of selling literary wares, noted that “the success of the book is less literary than, as one reviewer said, ‘a success of humanity.’”

Much of the published discussion surrounding David Harum’s appearance in the literary marketplace was concerned with the “true identity” of David Harum. Several articles were published, both in the New York Times and in the local Syracuse newspapers, charging that David Harum was not a fictional character created by Westcott’s imagination, but that he was modeled directly after David Hannum of Homer, New York. In fact, Arthur T. Vance went so far as to publish a book in 1900 titled The Real David Harum, in which he points out numerous similarities between Westcott’s character and David Hannum. Westcott’s sister felt compelled, on behalf of her brother, to respond to these charges by publishing an “official” defense, which stated that “no character in my brother’s book was drawn from life. David Harum may be called a composite photograph.” It was even rumored that Rudyard Kipling had pseudonymously written the novel in an attempt to create the definitive American character. Though the rumor was later dispelled, this sort of ongoing discussion about David Harum further increased public interest in the novel.

Of course, David Harum was not without its detractors. Some critics, writing out of the high Victorian tradition that was gradually being replaced by a less restrictive form of realism, attacked the novel for its “unrefinedness” and its appeal to “baser human interests.” One critic, writing for the New York Times in December 1899, made clear his allegiances to the edicts of high culture when he wrote, “To people whose affection for the horse is abnormal, who delight in rural dialect and ‘country talk,’ often coarse and vulgar, and whose ideas of fun are realized in a circus clown, people, in short, never conspicuous for much refinement, ‘David Harum’ is, perhaps, a treasure and a delight. . . . Popular taste is not always refined.” Nonetheless, David Harum remained a viable cultural and literary commodity that was regarded by the middle-class readership as a celebration of the values and ethics from which they came; the values they could take with them as they, like David Harum, made a place for themselves within an industrializing post-Victorian American society as a new class of citizens and consumers.

No less interesting is the rhetoric employed by the novel’s advocates.

The following excerpts from published articles gathered under the title “Their Idol Assailed” respond to the charge that David Harum was perfectly unrefined, utterly uncouth, and unqualified to be called literature.

Ignorant we may be, in comparison with the higher “culture” of modern critics, vulgar in appearance, like our fellow backwoodsmen, not unused to the backwoods’ dialect of our farms and districts; but not vulgar in our feelings, not coarse in our spiritual hopes and aspirations.

“When Alma dwelt in Mardi his mission was with the destitute,” and doubtless the cultured. When God came down from the heaven He chose His disciples from the lower classes. Like our folks, those disciples were “country people,” not agreeable to look upon, not fitted for cultured society. However, one thing stands out from their history—“the common people heard Him gladly.”

—L. G. Moereau

David's character remains with me as a landmark in the desert—a spring of refreshing [sic], where I set up an altar and give thanks for a strong and manly character. His inward life is saturated with the essence of truth and justice, love and loyalty; while he turns to his fellows a genial friendliness. The very force of his character conquers one and converts one into an admirer.

And is it not inspiring and ennobling to see a soul cleave its way through every difficulty and disadvantage of circumstance, surmounting every difficulty, standing at last full fledged, unmaimed by the conflict, master of the situation?

I am reminded there are varieties of vulgarity. It has been said by one: “I do not forgive the failure to know a fine character and to entertain it with thankful hospitality. When at last that which we have always longed for has arrived—then to be coarse, then to be critical, and treat such a visitant with the jabber and suspicion of the streets argues a vulgarity—that seems to shut the doors of heaven.”

—Susanna Morrison

A righteous voice has launched a learned and scholarly bull of
excommunication against the public idol, harmless “David Harum.”

—E. Gunderman

It should be noted that these responses were written by educated people, all of whom assert their allegiances to the shared cultural, social, and moral values of the rural lower and middle classes. In defending David Harum, they are defending middle-class American culture.

Interestingly, many of the defenses of David Harum (and therefore of the lower and middle classes), contain religious rhetoric. It is quite remarkable that David Harum should be likened to a cultural savior who provided for the meek and destitute: faith and hope in their present condition based on the model that his—or His—life provided. Susanna Morrison, quoted above, even wedds Harum’s “strength and manliness” to his sense of “justice and virtue,” converting readers into admirers (and, carrying the Christ-comparison to its conclusion, into followers). For her David Harum is a model of rugged individualism, as well as a cultural hero and savior of the common American citizen. While one could elaborate even further on the rhetoric that cast Harum as spokesperson for a class of Americans, suffice it to say that the advocates of David Harum understood the novel to serve a far greater function than mere entertainment. As one critic wrote, “Few, very few, of the novels today may be regarded as fit text books for use in the practical schools of everyday life. However, we may safely classify David Harum with the happy few.”

An analysis of the cultural work being done through this “popular entertainment” cannot be limited solely to a consideration of the “character story” in book form. In fact, the true “incarnation” of David Harum occurred when the novel was adapted by Ripley Hitchcock and his wife, Martha, as a stage performance. The title role was played by William H. Crane, one of the best-known comedic actors of the early twentieth century. Running from 1900 to 1903 on Broadway, then touring throughout the country for the next twelve years, David Harum reached an even broader audience and was appropriated by the public as a piece of American folklore. In fact, it was even scripted as a silent film, starring William

23. L. G. Moereau even goes on in this same response to quote a lengthy passage from Barbey d’Aurevilly, in French.
24. Unattributed, undated, untitled newspaper article, ca. 1900, OCPL.
H. Crane, becoming the ninth play to be adapted for that new medium of middle-class entertainment.

The challenge in bringing David Harum, the character, before the people was to preserve the “Everyman” quality about him and yet to render him accurately and realistically as an individual man. In an essay that appeared in the *Metropolitan Magazine* around 1900, William H. Crane spoke to this challenge:

Within a short time of taking up the study of David Harum I threw aside all idea of delineating an individual whom I might imitate, and confined myself to the book and to the development of a type that would appeal to and enlist the smiles and tears of a mixed audience, or, to use a better term, a human crowd. If David Harum were to be a success, I realized that my listeners must laugh when he laughed, and furtively brush away a tear in unison with him.

It was extremely difficult to obtain the effect I wanted to produce, for it is to be remembered that “David Harum” is the record of a commonplace country life as seen through the eyes of a jolly, laughing old man, at once tender and obdurate, a sort of human paradox. The situations are not dramatic or stirring. They are simply the lights and shadows of an ordinary day passing over the quiet by-ways of a little village.

I was not satisfied with the results of my work upon the company during our initial rehearsals. I could not imagine where the fault lay. . . . Suddenly the idea came to me, . . . one should not laugh at David Harum, but with him.25

Implicit in Crane’s observations is the realization that the audience should see in Harum what they saw or wanted to see in themselves. Indeed, for middle-class American theatergoers, David Harum represented the best of both worlds: success in the business of getting ahead in an industrializing society, but also a celebration of the values that defined their shared tradition as middle-class Americans.

The first ten years of the century witnessed unprecedented rates of industrial and technological evolution, bringing greater opportunities for employment and significant wage increases. From all accounts, *David Harum* continued to do well as a book, as a play, and as a silent film until

1911. By that time Crane had stopped touring as the inimitable David Harum to pursue other projects. Although the play continued to draw crowds with other characters in the title role, it had become somewhat commonplace and was being overshadowed by newer, more modern productions. By 1915 the revenues of the stage production had slowed to a trickle, and interest in the play was diminishing. The American public sought out new venues, productions, and books (of which there was no short supply).

Nevertheless, David Harum, though temporarily put aside, was not to be forgotten. By 1919 a revival of the play was being organized; its “second life” was being orchestrated, and not simply for the entertainment dollar it could attract. That year Helen Sargent Hitchcock, Ripley Hitchcock’s second wife, wrote to William H. Crane, “It is a time—after the pangs of this horrible war—that we want a refreshing play, native of the soil.” Whereas the first incarnation of David Harum provided a means of unifying the middle class under a banner of both business ambition and rural values, the new incarnation was to serve a broader purpose of inculcating faith in an American ethos.

It was not just the war that created a need for models of American national pride. In the same letter cited above, Hitchcock notes that throughout the war years stage productions had used bawdy material of “suspect moral value” for easy profits. Of the class of theatergoers supplying the demand for this type of “stage folly,” Hitchcock writes to Crane, “Theirs is the type of mind to whom most of the managers are catering— to this lowest class” (H. S. Hitchcock’s strikethrough). Although Mrs. Hitchcock retracted it, the crossed-out phrase indicates that by 1919 the large middle class had become a social and cultural strata unto itself, and its independence from the upper class was as important as its distinction from the lower class. Hitchcock goes on to say, “These managers lost sight of the majority of people who want clean plays.”

It was clear to H. S. Hitchcock that David Harum’s appeal could and would transcend the different perceptions of the generations if given the chance. She writes:

When a [dramatic] revival is given entire families go, the old folks at home who cannot endure the present productions, and as, in all past generations, they feel that their world is [was?] never so

28. Ibid.
wicked, and those fathers and mothers, who only go to good plays[,] live for months afterwards renewing once again their past pleasures.

But the world is not so wicked, the majority of people are good and respond to the good in other men. I know too, that young people will welcome "David Harum", which their parents have read and seen and talked of.29

Such concern for the younger generation had not been present in any of the rhetoric surrounding David Harum just twenty years before. By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, David Harum took on a national importance as one of many efforts toward instilling values in a new generation and reaffirming, for young and old, the values that made them American. Lawrence Levine, a noted social and cultural historian, observed this trend when he wrote that, in "the immediate aftermath of the First World War . . . Americans did not abandon their old verities and values but reasserted them with renewed vigor."30

H. S. Hitchcock astutely predicted that a revival of David Harum would have a nationalizing effect on an increasingly diverse population. As a number of historians have noted, there was, after World War I, considerably less tolerance for ethnic diversity than there had been even during the Progressive Era. There were widespread campaigns to ensure the homogeneity of American social and cultural life for fear that "a house divided against itself will surely fall." Hitchcock writes in her appeal to Crane, "The slogan of today is Americanization. In every city, town and village the Community spirit is bending every effort to make Americans of the Foreigners from all over the world who are making their homes here. . . . Does it not seem a more fitting time than ever to put 'David Harum' on the stage?"31

David Harum, with William H. Crane again in the title role, toured the country for nearly a year, filling playhouses with an eager audience. Through careful management and with different dramatic companies, Mrs. Hitchcock was able to keep it on the touring circuit well into the early 1920s. Insofar as David Harum, the character, represented the middle-class American ideal, both prosperous and full of integrity, he became

31. See n. 27.
a benchmark by which foreigners—or, as David Harum called all non-Americans, “Dutchman”—were to be socialized and subsumed into the American fold. Clearly, David Harum was no simple form of entertainment, nor a trivial type of commercialized escapism. David Harum, along with other forms of “mass entertainment,” helped define the social and cultural awareness of its American audience.

The third incarnation of David Harum would not occur until some fifteen years later, after the American public had witnessed both the frenzy of unprecedented prosperity and the shock of near economic ruin. In 1934, five years after the great stock market crash, David Harum was immortalized in a talking motion picture, and the character was played by Will Rogers. It is evident that David Harum’s arrival on the “silver screen” was carefully calculated for the effect it would have on an American movie-going audience. As Lawrence W. Levine said of the films of Frank Capra and other filmmakers during the 1930s, “They brought nineteenth-century small-town values and expectations to bear on a crisis involving twentieth-century modern bureaucracies.”

Levine makes no specific mention of David Harum, but this nineteenth-century novel was easily adaptable to the context of socially conscious filmmaking during the Great Depression. Though billed as an “Old Time Comedy,” David Harum was offered to the American people as a serious tonic, one intended to restore optimism, a sense of pride, and a faith in American character where faith in the American dollar had failed.

While writing about the myth that disillusionment with failed American institutions was a localized phenomenon, limited to the Midwestern Regionalists or the Southern Agrarians, Levine notes that “the films of the 1930s remind us that similar laments could be found in the mass culture of the Great Depression. A significant number of the decade’s films were concerned with restoration, as if something had been removed from American life.”

Again, it is plain to see how David Harum became a natural choice among filmmakers as a “classic” that could be drawn out of the nineteenth century and brought to bear on the twentieth-century state of “modern decay.” If something had been removed or lost in the lives of Americans, as Levine suggests, then David Harum would, by example, encourage Americans to reinvest their faith in human industry and the once-bold and self-affirming national character. The following excerpt from a retrospective article, written by H. S. Hitchcock in 1938 for

32. Levine, Unpredictable Past, 250.
33. Levine, The Unpredictable Past, 248.
the *New York Times*, places David Harum, the idealized nineteenth-century character, in the context of twentieth-century social reality. She writes:

David Harum [was] not so much created as crystallized out of the native American consciousness. In essence—though he does not wear a chin beard or a stove pipe—David Harum is Uncle Sam himself. . . .

In other words, though the rustic arena has been contracted by the march of civilization and the rustic idiom in which David's shrewdness is wrapped has lost its familiarity, if not its savor, to many city-bred Americans, the combination of gifts which made Harum a popular character is still a typical combination. It is the combination which makes for success today. It consists in having a head for business, a knack for using it, and a gift for the gab which is at once accessory to the main chance, weighted with a true sense of values and armed with humor. The cracker-barrel sage is not essentially changed by becoming the sidewalk philosopher; the born trader is not shorn of his cunning by transferring his activity from the horse market to the stock market.34

The message was not that Americans should return to the rustic past of a now-distant nineteenth-century society, but that the values defining the American consciousness of that age, as embodied by David Harum, should be appropriated and brought to bear on the present (1938) predicament of modernity.

Though the centers of urban industry represented progressivism and a sense of advancement at the turn of the century, during the depression the cities came to represent urban corruption and institutional failure. Levine writes, “Throughout the films of the Depression it was the city, as representative of modernity, that corrupted the traditional dream and fouled the promise of America; the city that spawned the amoral men and fallen women of the gangster films; the city that formed the backdrop for the glittering but empty antics of glamorous men and women of the decade’s screwball comedies.”35 Just as these films critically depicted the moral and institutional decline that beset the depression years, *David

“Mis’ Cullom, I want to tell ye a little story.”
Photogravure by B. West Clinedinst.
Harum offered a subtle commentary on the decadence of the 1930s by standing in contrast to it.

Finally, and perhaps most profound in its influence, David Harum spoke to the interests and needs of common Americans, whose faith in a capitalist system had failed them. Other films of the depression era focused on the banking crisis as the definitive event of the depression and the decade of the 1930s. Levine notes, "In American Madness (1932) ... Capra told the story of Tom Dixon, a banker who championed the average depositor in a manner that buttressed traditional values. 'Let's get the right kind of security,' he tells his directors. 'Not stocks and bonds and that zigzag up and down. Not collateral on paper but character. Character! It's the only thing you can bank on and it's the only thing that'll pull this country out of the doldrums.'”

One scene in David Harum that undoubtedly stirred the depression-era audience shows Harum calling an old widow ("Mis' Cullom"), who had been repeatedly late on her mortgage payments, into his office on Christmas day. As if reminiscing, David tells her a long story about the kindness her husband had showed to him as a child, and in an unexpected gesture of charity, he repays the good will shown to him by burning the mortgage in the stove, thereby releasing the old widow from the burden she could not carry. For audiences in the 1930s, David Harum’s kindness and good will must have been even more profoundly stirring than it had been to an earlier generation, which enjoyed relative prosperity and the sense that the future held unbounded promises.

Clearly, David Harum, as a novel and in its other manifestations, has had a significant influence on American culture. Moreover, the book occasioned a historical transition in the publishing industry, through which editors assumed a new role in shaping American literature. Finally, and by no means the least of its achievements, David Harum is a richly amusing portrait of life in a small town. David Harum, with his wit and wisdom reveals a keen understanding of human nature that is as pertinent today as it was nearly a hundred years ago, when he observed, “The's as much human nature in some folks as th' is in others, if not more.”

36. Levine, Unpredictable Past, 249.
Marya Zaturenska’s Depression Diary,
1931–1932

INTRODUCTION BY MARY BETH HINTON

Although she won a Pulitzer Prize for her 1937 book Cold Morning Sky, most people have never heard of Marya Zaturenska (1902–1982). Her husband, Horace Gregory (1898–1982), the poet, critic, and translator, is somewhat better known. Yet, for her lyric poetry and for her life—her passion for knowledge and beauty, her integrity, endurance, and depth of feeling—she deserves to be remembered.

Born in Kiev, Russia, Marya Zaturenska moved to New York City at the age of eight. To help support her family, she dropped out of public high school and held various jobs in a factory, a publishing house, and a bookstore. By taking night courses she managed to complete high school. Meanwhile, she wrote poetry, some of which appeared in national magazines such as Poetry, and made literary friends. Willa Cather secured a fellowship for her at Valpariso University. A year later, through *Harriet Monroe,* she obtained a scholarship to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Marya Zaturenska would in time publish eight books of poetry and a biography. With Horace Gregory she wrote A History of American Poetry, 1900–1940 (1946) and edited six poetry anthologies.

Her poems have been praised for their “delicacy and grace” and their “exquisite poetic accuracy.” They are often described as quiet, mystical, and subtle. In a 1977 interview with *Robert Phillips,* she said, “I write my poems as if I were writing a song. My poems are mainly, I think, in the tradition of early Italian and early English music.” Indeed, by listening to their music, one discovers the beauty of Zaturenska’s poems.

1. See the end of the article for brief biographical information about Harriet Monroe and others whose names have an asterisk.
Although she did not see herself as a true scholar, her biography of Christina Rosetti is a fine work of scholarship. She wrote half of *A History of American Poetry, 1900–1940*, which was considered to be a highly competent and objective book—except by some of the poets treated therein.4

The papers of Marya Zaturenska reside in Syracuse University Library’s Department of Special Collections, as part of the Horace Gregory collection. Her papers consist of manuscripts of her books, a series of essays,5 several diaries, holographs of poems, and correspondence, along with newspaper clippings and other memorabilia.

Horace Gregory’s upbringing was more privileged than his wife’s, if not less challenging. The son of a successful Milwaukee businessman, he grew up surrounded by books and literary conversation. However, a childhood illness left him partially paralyzed for life. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1923—two years before Marya, who heard about him from their mutual advisor, *William Ellery Leonard. Marya and Horace met and married in 1925 in New York, where he had begun his long struggle to survive as a writer. He wrote movie reviews and real estate advertisements at first and, for many years, book reviews, while making time to read deeply and broadly and to write poetry. Horace Gregory would write nineteen books—ten of poetry and nine of prose (one with Zaturenska)—edit or coedit eleven, and translate three books from the Latin.

It seems that Marya and Horace were never financially secure and never in robust health. The depression years were especially difficult for them—although they did not have much to lose. They were rich in their love for each other and for their children: Joanna, born in 1926, and Patrick, in 1931. They were also privileged to know many of the finest writers and artists of their time.

Following are selections from a diary that Marya kept from early 1931 to the spring of 1938. The book itself has a hand-sewn cover of red, flower-printed cloth, now dingy after six decades. Newspaper and magazine clippings line the inside covers, including a photograph of T. S. Eliot and various poems. Between two middle pages lies a glittering lock of reddish gold hair that must have belonged to their infant son. The diary

4. Robert Phillips to the editor, telephone conversations in 1995 and 1996. Marya was “absolutely frank.” For example, she wrote that Louise Bogan’s tone of voice, in *The Sleeping Fury*, resembled that of a lady “Commando.”

5. Several of these essays were written for a book that was to be called “A Gallery of Poets.” When the Vanguard Press returned her typescript, Marya abandoned the project (letter from Robert Phillips to the editor, 10 February 1994).
entries reveal a mother’s love, a wife’s fierce devotion to her husband, a poet’s frustrated yearning for self-expression, a sensitive young woman’s reflections on herself and her world. Complaints of loneliness are interspersed with comments about their many literary friends—and enemies.
The selections below are from 1931 and 1932. Later passages tell of their meeting with the young *Muriel Rukeyser and their friendship with her, as well as *Louis Adamic, *Van Wyck Brooks, *Robert Hillyer,6 and *Bryher, who invited them to visit her in England in the summer of 1934. There they met with T. S. Eliot, *Dorothy Richardson, *Herbert Read, *Violet Hunt, and, during a trip to Ireland, *Gogarty.7 That year Horace got a lectureship at Sarah Lawrence College, and Marya published her first book, Threshold and Hearth.

In 1935, during a summer stay at Yaddo,8 they met *John Cheever, among others. Horace suffered a “stroke of paralysis” and Marya had “paralysis of the optic nerve due to nervous exhaustion.” She sent off the manuscript of Cold Morning Sky in September 1936, with a prayer: “God be good to me, and to my book...” In the last entry, dated 5 May 1938, she writes of a phone call from Columbia University, informing her that she had won the Pulitzer award for poetry: “Wild excitement—telephones—telegrams—champagne and roses...” Joanna acting as secretary. ... Pat firing off his toy pistols without knowing what it was all about.”

To return to 1931: Marya and Horace were living in Sunnyside, a model housing development for people in low-income brackets, located on the outskirts of Long Island City.9

6. In 1963 Robert Hillyer’s widow gave Syracuse University Library a large collection of his papers and a bequest with which, in 1974, the Hillyer Room was established on the sixth floor of Bird Library.
8. Yaddo is a large estate in Saratoga Springs, New York, that belonged to Spencer and Katrina Trask. After the Trasks lost their children, they decided to make the estate available as a retreat for artists. Yaddo was incorporated in 1922, with Elizabeth Ames as executive director. The mansion was opened for guests in 1926.
9. Some corrections in spelling and punctuation have been made to improve the readability of the diary entries.
Marya Zaturenska’s Depression Diary, 1931–1932

14 January 1931
Horace and I both laid up last week with bad illnesses. Too weak to move around, we were both irritated at the fatal limitations of our too-delicate physiques. Ah why weren’t we born with greater energy. There is so much to be done before the sun goes down. I am frightfully obsessed by death, the passing of time, the passing of youth. The housework fritters away my days in little routine jobs; there is no time left for anything but sleep.

19 February
Saw Harriet Monroe a few weeks ago, looking frail but indomitable and full of gossip. She says there is a rumor that *Vachel Lindsay committed suicide. Of course she did not believe it. She told us that she was on the Guggenheim Committee and I sensed a pride and maliciousness in the sense of power she wielded; a word from her and a year of comparative opulence and financial security would be the lot of some fortunate poet. We were glad to tell her that we hadn’t tried for the Guggenheim award—we were too sensitive about competing for prizes.

Horace went to a Harcourt Brace party given for *Matthew Josephson and *Kenneth Burke. He said that Van Wyck Brooks was there looking fat and flabby and vacant-eyed. *Kreymborg, shabby, whining, complaining that no magazine would take his poetry. *Carl Van Doren looking like a battered red wolf, a dreadful comment on the American literary life. *Paul Rosenfield talking in high falsetto ran up to Horace and denounced him for not praising *Phelps Putnam in his New Republic review, and *Lewis Gannett ran up to him and accused him of praising Kenneth Burke too much. At a party at Chard Powers Smith’s, *Padraic and Mary Colum turned hostile glances at him and made a few sneering remarks about T. S. Eliot, which were obviously pointed at Horace. Horace afterwards remembered that he had written a polite but unenthusiastic review about Colum’s latest book of poems in the New Freeman.11 Enemies spring up from the ground and obstacles everywhere. Yet Horace says, “All my life I have learned to turn my handicaps to advantage, and I must do it now. Even hostility can arouse courage.”

10. See John Crowley’s comments on Burke on pages 35 and 36.
11. The New Freeman journal commenced publication on 15 March 1930, but lasted only until 13 May 1931.
Joanna was 5 years old on the 21st. I told her I was too unwell to give her a birthday party, so she borrowed some cookies, candies, and one horn, invited some of the children from the neighborhood, spread out a little table of goodies very nicely and all by herself arranged a most successful little party in the cellar! The coats were carefully placed in her old baby carriage, and after the party she even got some of the children to help her clean up the mess. I am so proud of her I can burst.

8 March

We saw the *Lewis Mumfords the other day. Both he and Sophia were cordial and very nice. I am beginning to respect and admire Lewis as a human being a lot. He has a code of good living, and an honest sense of values, and more social sophistication than anyone I’ve known.

A vicious attack on Horace in the Modern Quarterly. We found out later that it was done by *Calverton under a nom-de-plume. . . . Calverton praises Horace in public and attacks him in private—and not only that, he plagiarizes passages from Horace’s reviews and never gives him credit and that after such vile attacks. I get shaken with illness and horror when I think of Horace so clean, so honest, so gentle up against such swine. We can fight an honest open battle but this is like fighting in the dark or being caught suddenly by a stiletto in the back—the dog—the louse—oh give us strength to rise above such dogs. Horace’s position is still so precarious, so weak.

23 March

Tomorrow my little boy Patrick Bolton will be 5 weeks old. He was born en-route to the Nursery and Childs’ Hospital in a taxicab. . . . There was an unbearable stab of pain, and a flood of something; “the waters” had burst. It was a cold, cold night and the taxicab we had ordered had come and gone before I was able to go down the stairs again. I sat in the cold half dead with pain till we got another cab. In the city, the labor pains, the cold night, the theatre traffic are all confused into some sort of weird nightmare. I remember screaming and then a sensation of sitting on something soft, squirming and warm. It was the baby, and in a few minutes I heard its squeaks, something that sounded like a cold frightened kitten. Horace lifted it up and said, “poor kid,” and even had the presence

12. The Modern Quarterly was a magazine of literary radicalism founded by Victor Francis Calverton in 1923. It became the Modern Monthly in 1933 and lasted until 1938.
of mind to find out that it was a boy. I forgot to say that Horace by some
miracle unentangled the baby from the umbilical cord. He was a miracle
of level-headedness, calmness, good-sense. No one need speak of him as
an impractical poet! We wrapped the baby in a shawl I was wearing and
arrived in the hospital where my blood-drenched clothes were removed
and oh what a relief to rest! . . .

My father in bad straits—out of work—my stepmother has been asking
for help and how I can meet her demands heaven knows. I rack my brains
thinking, scheming as to what I can do to help, and with our expenses
doubled, my helplessness which has made me obliged to call in a woman
to help me with the housework—our savings low and rapidly dwindling,
it is unbearable to think of—and the misery of all those around us is a ver­
itable Golgotha. The depression has now hit everyone—no one has es­
caped it, unemployment, suffering, fear all around us and no one knows
where it will end. This affects me so that I can’t eat or sleep. The word
“unemployment” has been the terror of my childhood and my adoles­
cence, my whole life, and now it looms like a black flag everywhere. I feel
ready to collapse.

20 April
Reviewing rotten and at a standstill. Competition has become so severe
that in the places where only one cent a word is paid the review offices are
crowded with men and women eagerly begging for work. And the re­
view sections are cut in half. . . .

Horace delivered an address at the *John Reed Club13 on [Carl] Sand­
burg, *[Edgar Lee] Masters, and [Vachel] Lindsay from the point of view
of Revolutionary Poetry. He spoke of them as representative of Jefferson­
ian democracy. Their failure was due to the fact that their philosophy was
inadequate to meet a changing world.

Horace was asked whether it is possible for a Communist to write love

13. Syracuse University Library has a substantial collection of primary and secondary
John Reed material that can be found among the papers of Reed’s biographer, Granville
Hicks. Reed helped to form the Communist Party in America. In Part of the Truth (New
York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), Hicks wrote: “From the first [Reed] had been a
symbol of the revolutionary spirit, and in the early thirties, such symbols were beginning
to be cherished. So, with the leftward swing of young writers and other would-be artists,
John Reed Clubs were founded in the larger cities” (124–5). The clubs were established
by, and served as fronts for, the Communist Party.
poetry? a funeral dirge for General Pershing? whether Proletarian Poetry (whatever it is) could not best be written in the ballad form, if bourgeois art should not be abolished altogether, etc. etc. However, he says his address was received with cheers, which was a great relief. He expected a [hostile?] reception since he started out by saying that there is no proletarian Art, in America at least. *Babette Deutsch who talked afterwards was severely heckled and booed. She made a dreadful faux pas by saying that the origins of poetry lay in religion.

7 June

Patsy will be 3 months old soon. Such a dear little boy; when he smiles he shows two adorable dimples. Only my love for my babies keeps me inwardly alive these days, and yet they sap my courage too. For in these terrible times, I look at them as “hostages to fortune.” Indeed even in prosperous days neither Horace nor I had the gift of earning our own livings and now these two darling beautiful ones so dependent on us give me at least an added misgiving. Our tiny little income has been cut by Horace’s family as business is bad in Milwaukee as elsewhere. Appalling poverty, depression and panic has hit everyone. People walk about as if the end of the world has come—no one knows what will happen next. The corruption of the government, the lack of indignation by the people who are plundered and betrayed is enough to make an angel despair. As long as H. receives the little subsidy that keeps us alive, he will never make any unusual efforts to support us himself. His is not an energetic nature, and he lets opportunities slip in a way that maddens me. But then he has never felt the dreadful penalties of poverty as I did, in my childhood. The hot choking summers in the slums, the pain of tramping heavy terrifying streets looking for jobs at an age when one should have been playing and dreaming like other children, the body worn out before it has had a chance to develop. I want to spare my darlings that. But H., though kind and delicate and subtle, can not understand this. Of course—it is too much out of his experience. I have become so passionately interested in his career that the acceptance of a poem of his by a magazine, the mention of his name in a review is one of the very few things that stirs my heart to any feeling of pleasure. I am no longer interested in any letter addressed to myself; it is his work that matters, the recognition of his talent that I live and pray for. There was a time when I had my own ambitions—I feel that I was unwise to have let them go out like this, for I feel that my ambition for H. is not quite healthy or wise for either of us—
Poetry, Harriet Monroe’s magazine, may go under soon. It’s as if part of
my life will go out with it. There are very few places now where a poet
can send his poems and be paid for it. Horace’s literary agent says that
publishers are not only frantic because people are not buying books but
that they cannot even get good manuscripts to publish. No one is writing
books of any value; the writers themselves are paralyzed by the depres­
sion.

The murder of the Lindbergh baby, with its dreadful social implica­
tions, the death of Hart Crane, who felt that there was no place for poetry
in our civilization, all this has affected both Horace and myself deeply.

29 June
Difficult, difficult times. Horace is finding it more and more of a strug­
gle to get reviews; the competition has become narrow, violent and in­
tense. We keep awake from worry and Horace cannot write, though he
sits from morning till midnight trying to get some work done. We feel
that somehow, sometime that typewriter will help to bring us to that high
impossible place where success lies or where the soul and the mind can
breathe without terror.

Horace has written a magnificent poem called “Homage to an Ances­
tor” that he finds almost impossible to place. *Cowley promised to take
the poem and fight for it with *Ridgley Torrence, who is the poetry edi­
tor of the New Republic . . . [but] the poem was returned. Oh if we had
only one powerful friend to fight for Horace, we are so alone so lonely so
much like whisperers in the dark.

22 August
I have been too busy to write. The very sight of a typewriter or pen
and ink fills me with a psychopathic nausea. All the poems I want to write
are written inside my head. I do not dare to give them life on paper.

*Margery Latimer died last Tuesday after having given birth to a
daughter. She had married *Jean Toomer only a year ago and had seemed
happy in a flood of newspaper publicity and real domestic life after the
torturous Bohemianism of her love affair with *Kenneth Fearing. Horace
was as much moved as he could be. If anything, she represented the most
alive period in both of our lives. . . .
Nothing happens. I try desperately to keep up and budget and save my pennies, but it's a hopeless and losing fight. Try as hard as we may we can never save more than $200 and I see no hope of ever having more.

My dreams of leisure to write, to walk by the sea and grow vigorous and fresh again, that long, long-prayed-for trip to Europe is becoming more of a mist, more of a dream than ever.

Our wedding anniversary yesterday. A wasted lonely day as usual. Horace sat at his desk all day and wrote nothing. For me the customary drudgery that lasts 7 days a week and no escape!—no escape—no escape. And loneliness!!!!

Horace is out tonight making a speech at a Sacco-Vanzetti memorial meeting.

12 September
My birthday. I no longer care to stop, to ponder over the day; let the days pour over me, unknowing, unseeing.

Mildred Gilman Wolforth visited us lately. . . . We talked about Margery Latimer. We try not to think of her but her death troubles us morning and evening.

*James Farrell said that her marriage to Toomer aroused a great deal of prejudice, that his agent Maxim Lieber said that when he tried to sell a story of hers to Harper's, one of the editors said, "Why do you handle stories by that woman? Don't you know she is married to a Negro?" Horace has found it difficult to place a story on her in any magazine, running across similar expressions of prejudice.

27 October
Yesterday Horace handed in the manuscript of his book after laboring over it for a year with mingled despair, passion, exhaustion, hatred and love. . . . Pearce of Harcourt took the title from his last poem, "No Retreat." And so we send another boat upon the mysterious seas. May it return with treasure!

12 November
The tea we gave for Harriet Monroe and Lewis Mumford came off
very well, though as usual I did not have enough tea cups to match and I felt limp with nervousness. . . .

Harriet turned down H.'s interesting new poem and attacked his article on Lindsay, Masters, and Sandburg in a rather nasty way in the November issue of her magazine. We felt rather blue about it. . . . Horace plucked up courage and talked to her about the poem “Valediction to My Contemporaries” and she suddenly decided that she wanted the poem again; she apologized for the attack on the article. . . . Horace has been her only staunch champion in New York; in attacking him she is attacking one of her best friends. . . .

But the *Zabels, the *Winters[es] and the *Tates with their narrow sterile souls, their desperate and uncreative jealousies . . . have hurt Poetry . . . [and poets] by narrowing and sterilizing what should be free and all-embracing, fruitful and fructifying to the souls of all men. It is only through poetry, I feel now, that the spirit can be redeemed today and truly interpreted. . . .

A party at Dr. Wagner's house at the Rockefeller Institute. . . . We introduced him to *Eda-Lou Walton. He was quite taken with her. It would be nice if Eda-Lou was in a practical mood, but underneath her quiet, placid reserve, I know that she is as ardent, and reckless, and romantic as Edna Millay and that in love she would never do the sensible, the practical thing.

I spent last Thursday (election day) with Clara Stillman and Alex Byer. It was a great joy to have a day off. Poor Clara expects so much from her book, that it is painful. . . . To put 20 years of one's life into a book, and then to be satisfied with lukewarm and careless praise. That is the best most authors can expect. . . .

15 November

We visited *Lola Ridge and her husband David Lawson this Sunday. They still live in the top story of an old, run-down office building in a cold, large loft made livable by many books and simple hand-made furniture.

Lola still looks like a corpse, galvanized by a passionate and immortal spirit; it is as if her body was dead, and the spirit alone survived.

Lawson is equally unwordly, equally eerie. They make us think of two innocents alone in this nightmare, this jungle of a city.

On the small sum of $150 dollars Lola suddenly made up her mind to
visit Baghdad, Babylon and Arabia because the scene of her next poem was to be placed there. She starved, and became ill in remote places, but saw every place she wanted to see and returned triumphant. In one city she told of how she found a cheap room in such a nice hotel! It seemed that the bubonic plaque had struck the town and so they let her have the room for almost nothing! And this from a woman who seems so frail that one feels as if at any moment she will dissolve before your eyes. I remember when I first met Lola at a poetry reading in the village, about 12 years ago when she and Edna Millay were guests of honor. The future of the two women could have been foreseen by simply watching their performances. Edna, pretty, gay, graceful, kittenish, dressed all in silver gray, walked in followed by a troupe of love-sick boys who hardly took their eyes off her. She recited some of her love sonnets in her pretty, well-trained voice; she coquetted with the audience; the facile beauty of her poems moved easy tears. I was a mere child then. She excited me, I wanted to be like her, she became my Ideal. I resented Lola who came after her, tall, sorrowful, gaunt, emaciated with starvation, and loneliness. Nobody seemed to listen to Lola. Everybody kept their eyes glued on Edna, who sat poised, graceful, surrounded by adorers. Yet I swear Lola’s poems would have meant more for me today and in a sense they were better poems than Edna’s. Yet Edna had that miraculous, indefinite touch that made her most trivial poem or gesture seem more significant than it really was.

14 January 1932

A few days before Christmas, on Dec. 21st to be exact, Horace went down to Cambridge to visit T. S. Eliot. It took a large part of our little savings, for it’s an expensive trip, but Horace came back so full of excitement, elation and hero-worship that we felt the money well-spent. Horace described Eliot as very tall, with very large hands and feet, which he had learned to control gracefully, very remarkable intelligent eyes, his hair graying—very much like pictures of Matthew Arnold. When he took off his glasses and had had a few shots of home-made gin, he suddenly became young, vivid and gay in a quiet way and looked like his pictures.

He questioned Horace about the N.Y. literary scene. What did he think of Calverton (he found the latter’s book ridiculous and bad)? *Max Eastman? Edmund Wilson? Horace asked him about the new English poets MacLeod, Auden, Spender. Eliot has great confidence in the first two. . . . He spoke of himself as a middle Westerner rather than a New Engander, which may have been a delicate way of putting Horace at his ease. He spoke of his 8 years’ work in a bank, “as a nightmare because I
was not very efficient” and of his few years of teaching as a failure. His room was crowded with undergraduates whom he treated with a gentle and exhausted courtesy. He seemed genuinely pleased to have Horace alone with him and treated him so generously so kindly so delicately always referring to “our work,” or “the kind of work we are doing.” Such kindness, such goodness, such encouragement left him inarticulate with gratitude; he has had so little of it.

His attitude towards Pound was very generous and kind, though H. knows that Pound and his satellites had been unmerciful in their attacks on him. In fact H. says Eliot gave him the impression of being a worldly and wise anchorite, saintly and yet alert, remote from the world and yet aware of it. Of his conversion to the Anglican church he said nothing. In fact he said that the literature he found most interesting lately was the writing being done by the radicals. He found *Mike Gold’s book “fascinating” and “an excellent social document, if not literature.” Horace stayed overnight with him and in the morning left the proofs of “No Retreat” with him.

11 February

We visited the Kenneth Burkes some time ago. A wild large miscellaneous party was there. Burke talked like a house afire; he is the greatest talker in New York. His daughters, pale, tense, precocious little girls who seemed to despise the loud, drunken assortment of talky guests, were interesting. At another evening we called on the Burkes hoping to find him alone. He was out and Mrs. Burke received us, a tired woman, broken by poverty and too many children, with some remains of beauty and intelligence but all crumbling somewhere into a tired gallantry and a little subtle malice.

A political meeting at Malcolm Cowley’s house. *Waldo Frank was there sitting with his hand on his hip and talking in a thin feminine little voice. . . . Next to him sat *Anita Brenner [and] the *Lionel Trillings to whom I was rather rude, but my nerves were on edge at the coolness and unspoken hostility I felt around us (God knows why) and the way Cowley like an absolute monarch was distributing fat jobs to his favorites. *Robert Cantwell is the coming power in the Cowley group, with the result that he is fawned on, flattered, encouraged in his work no matter how shoddy and given jobs, money, influence everything. . . . Cowley announced that Cantwell would get a Guggenheim this year.

14. See John Crowley's comments on Malcolm Cowley on pages 34 and 35.
We've been invited to Yaddo again, such a stroke of luck, I'm so happy.

4 March

We went to Joe Gould's15 party last Wednesday, a sad affair in a village loft on Jones St. Malcolm Cowley and his wife Muriel, Kenneth Burke and his wife showed up. . . . Cowley asked me to dance. I did. He filled me with stage fright, and as usual I uttered terrible, stupid, half-witted inanities to him. He spoke little of course.

Am reading Ezra Pound's beautiful XXX Cantos. I don’t understand them all, but the beautiful music, the sensitive language, the images sunny and liquid are haunting. It is as great as The Wasteland [Waste Land], though as a person Pound has degenerated into a silly and nasty old man. But the Good Lord gives his gifts to strange creatures. The virtuous and the wise often beg in vain.

Inaugural day and a bank moratorium declared; gloom and panic all around.

10 March

The bank holiday has filled everyone with gloom and fear. One feels as if the end of the world has come. We are paralyzed at the insecurity of everything. Is it worth while to save desperately for one's children, one's old age, to provide insurance against disaster if in one day they can all be wiped out through no fault of one's own? We were left with one dollar in our pocket in cash. . . .

3 May

The spring has come on very slowly this year. . . . We have spent so many springs in Sunnyside, and yet each year the place becomes more alien. It is as if my feet never really touched the solid earth here. How can one love the empty lots strewn with tin cans, the changing and ugly advertising billboards, the houses each the exact replica of the other. . . . There is no spot to love, nowhere in which the soul, the heart, the mind

15. In the 1930s Joe Gould was an occasional contributor to the New Republic. The painter Alice Neel writes: “Joe was compiling an oral history of the universe. He was just a little off his rocker, of course.” See Patricia Hills, Alice Neel (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1983), 49.
can take roots in and grow; all becomes thin now, sterilizing and lifeless in one.

Horace [had] dinner with *Horace Kallen and T. S. Eliot two weeks ago, also Eliot’s brother Henry and his wife whom he liked immensely. After the dinner Eliot went to the New School and delivered his lecture, reading his own poems which H. said he did beautifully. The place was jammed, not a bit of room to spare.

Today is the day of the burning of Jewish and radical books in Germany. It is so barbarous that merely thinking of it makes one feel as if one were living in a nightmare. For the first time in my life I feel acutely the dark wave of racial hatred and distrust that every Jew must someday know; it’s like a black mist that is hidden for a time but every once in a while suddenly shows itself in all its gloom.

Horace signed a contract . . . to do a critical study of D. H. Lawrence for the Viking Press.

26 June

Returned late yesterday afternoon from a visit to Milwaukee. The city is as lovely as ever, the lake front silver and shining, a delight, but all was nervousness, depression, worry. Little Patrick was a great hit; everyone seemed to be charmed by him. My own pleasant (really pleasant) experience was a trip Horace and I took to the World Fair at Chicago. We visited Poetry office and had dinner with Morton Zabel and Harriet Monroe, the former a nice, quiet, attractive young man, reserved and intelligent. He does everything for Harriet. I see why in spite of differences of opinion she persists in holding on to him. He’s invaluable to her, like a good and affectionate and slightly humorous son. Harriet took us to the World Fair, a glorified cross between Luna Park, Coney Island and Broadway at night. Horace liked the Hall of Science. I liked the Fort Dearborn exhibit. We saw a Belgian city of the Middle Ages, Hollywoodish but jolly. Miles and miles of tramping. Harriet inexhaustible and indomitable, more tireless, more energetic than either of us. She thought we ought to get ice-cream cones which we did and then we sat around and gossiped. She had just received a $5,000 grant from the Carnegie Foundation which will enable her to continue Poetry. She was as excited as a child. She is a remarkable person, young, sophisticated, intelligent and wise in heart—I adore her. It is hard to believe that she is over 70.
Saw an old classmate of mine at the Wisconsin Library School, an Augusta Morrison. . . . [She] said that . . . my favorite teacher at the library school said to her a year or so ago, “Marya should have let you girls have the children and continued with her writing.” Well—I don’t exactly agree—but I wanted to cry over this—I don’t know why. Somebody believed in me once—how strange!

We’re going to Yaddo Saturday. . . . I am going to Heaven Saturday, to the one home where I’ve had something that approached Love, Beauty, Comfort, Peace.

2 July—At “Yaddo”

It feels as if I had been suddenly lifted from a long death to a glorious resurrection, for I am at beloved, beautiful Yaddo again. . . . Horace feels the same way; he became inarticulate with emotion on seeing the massive entrance to the mansion, the heavy door, its opening, the drawing room, the people in it—Alex Byer’s kind face, *Evelyn Scott’s charming face, *John Metcalfe, and in the evening Clara Stillman!!!

I have Mrs. Trask’s room here on the very top floor. . . . It’s a beautiful room in white, and old; rather fanciful with a medieval balcony spired like a Gothic cathedral.

4 July

From my tower study I can see the hills and the full sweep of this orderly and exquisite landscape. . . .

Had a few talks with Evelyn Scott. Remarkable tact, charm, wit, ease. . . .

To carry disillusion secretly in one’s heart is to feel one’s tissues being slowly eaten away by a slow poison. But no cross lasts forever. I shall always believe that evil is less evil when it is not put into concrete thoughts, words, or images. I do not agree with the Freudians that it is best to bring the secret fear, the dreaded thought out in the open. Let them die in the darkness where they were born, and let your pain be known to no one but yourself.

6 July

At night we sit in the music room, mystical in red, gold, and marble
splendor, and the portraits of the two dead Trask children looking down on us—the jolly rosy cheeked little girl in riding habit, her long brown hair falling down her back, the little boy with his golden hair, standing straight and serious—and listened to the music played on the beautiful victrola. Two bronze angels with slender trumpets seem to blow and fly through the rooms. They are poised above the portraits of the children.

9 July
The Saturday heat dissolved in a big shower and the evening was cool and damp. The rain falling on the beautiful lawns of Yaddo at night gives a feeling of Gothic mystery to the place, a healing musical feeling.

Dreadful nightmares every night, however. I wake up with frightful backaches, pains in my womb. It has been that way since Patsy was born. The doctor told me I was underweight, undernourished, anemic, etc. But that can’t be it. The nightmares come on every night; last night (Saturday) they made me wake up in horror. Here is one of the dreams.

I dreamed that I was in a beautiful city and that (it’s funny I suppose) somebody told me it was Philadelphia, where I’ve never been. Horace had gone to look for a job there from a person I barely know and rather distrust—*Edwin Seaver. I loved the city and felt sure that H. would get the job and I felt sad and relieved, sad because I kept repeating to myself, “I shall never be able to use this beauty to make it really alive in any art form.” Then H. came to me and said that he hadn’t gotten the job after all, since Seaver hadn’t wanted him for the job, and I was both relieved and upset, relieved because I wouldn’t have to live in this beautiful city that showed me my own sterility, and upset because I knew we would go on living in the same terrible loneliness and insecurity as before.

18 July
The day opened with a burst of golden sunshine and I couldn’t rest till I had walked out in the sun. It’s a miracle to be here. I can’t quite grasp the fact and so cannot quite enjoy a pure happiness. My mind is still cluttered with shreds of city-worries, torments as to whether Mrs. Ames will ask us to stay for another month, etc. I had intended to take Yaddo this year with the gay, pure, untroubled heart of a child.

19 July
In the evening Horace and I took a long walk to town from Yaddo.
The racing season is beginning; the town had an air of gayety and excitement that moved Horace who is infatuated with Saratoga. We went into a movie and saw Reunion in Vienna with John Barrymore, one of the Wittiest, gayest, and most romantic plays I've ever seen. Even Horace who doesn't usually like that sort of thing was carried away by it. . . .

On coming home from the movies, an overwhelming spell of worry, uneasiness, and depression came over me. I cannot relieve my mind from torment, from worry, from wordless uneasiness.

Mrs. Ames asked us to stay through September. . . .

A warm friendly letter from Malcolm Cowley and an equally warm, encouraging letter from Pat Covici 16 made yesterday start hopefully and joyfully. A hand of encouragement, a whisper of hope, and we feel as if we can climb mountains.

Here is a quotation from Enid Starkie's Life of Baudelaire which can apply to the work of Horace Gregory and which a just posterity will in some such form repeat. "It was one of his greatest merits, never to have made concessions to the spirit of his times in order to gain popularity. All his life he fought against false reasoning and the false taste of his contemporaries, against all the futile enthusiasms that have dated so much. He had the courage always to proclaim the shortcomings of those with established reputations. He belonged to no school and no creed, he copied no one, but he used everyone that suited him, making what he had taken his own, and something new."

Sunday evening I dressed up in my gold dress and gold earrings. I rouged my lips a little, keeping my skin, which has become lovely again (due to the few weeks of rest, and good food, I suppose, and care), pale. I had on my gold metal beads, black, high-heeled pumps, and had my hair brushed soft and smooth, with a bang across my forehead. Everybody told me how pretty I looked. It was such a nice experience. . . .

Jacob Getler Smith who is rather crude and not given to idle compliments told me that I had the most beautiful hands he had ever seen. It was

16. One of Horace Gregory's publishers was Covici-Friede. Presumably, Pat Covici was writing on behalf of the company.
such a long time since I've heard things like that. I blushed like a schoolgirl.

31 July

Four composers here to arrange the Yaddo music festival. Aaron Copland, tall, young, very Semitic-looking, an elderly *Mr. Riegger, who is amiable, talkative and quite gallant to me. . . .

Mrs. Ames told us that she had received a letter from Van Wyck Brooks in which he had said that though he disagreed with Horace from time to time, he considered him “the most brilliant and promising of the younger men of letters today.”

A terrible, unholy, midnight, thunder, lightning and despair, quarrels with H. which left me weak with sleeplessness and remorse this morning as I know it was all futile, and worthless. Ill this morning. Have a dreadful feeling that the whole world knows everything. I feel as if God has forsaken me. I don’t know how to make peace with my soul or the world, and yet neither Horace nor I were wrong. There are moments when we both go mad with worry. I have resolved to let Horace do whatever he damn well pleases and if his conduct ruins us all—well, it is better than torturing oneself in futile quarrels that eat like acid into the flesh and soul.

1 August

I showed my Yaddo poems to Evelyn and to Clara Stillman, and they both were lovely in their praise, but afterwards as I went up the stairs with my skimpy little note book full of polished little poems, I felt as if I had opened all my secret drawers and showed everything good I ever had—and that it wasn’t really good enough.

2 August

Aaron Copland left after a short stay. He had a quiet monosyllabic way of talking that was quite effective. Sometimes, one didn’t know whether it was humor, wit, boredom or just plain talk.

Horace is writing an answer to Allen Tate’s attack on romantic poetry and on Shelley which appeared in the New Republic this week. He is calling it a “Defense of Heresy” and seems to be walking on flames, shaken as he is by anger, passion, and evangelical fervor to defend the human spirit against the new guise which Humanism has taken under the name of regionalism. From now on there will be no professional cour-
tesy—it is war to the death, and open warfare with Tate, who has openly boasted that he would use every means to exterminate those who didn’t agree with him. It’s sickening. What has that got to do with poetry? It is true that Horace must fight for his work, and his own point of view, since no one seems to contradict Tate. They don’t realize what he is saying, and how dangerous it is to leave him unanswered.

7 August

I’ve written a little poem which is too sentimental to go in my red poetry notebook, and perhaps it’s a little silly, and it’s not as good a poem as I would have wished it to be, but it’s on Patrick and I want to preserve it somehow.

This face of golden light,
These eyes so wide and pure,
Grave stars that make the night
Lovely, serene, secure
This face, which I behold
Mind, mine, in sacred trust
Until the heart grows cold
till the warm senses rust.
Till the warm senses flee,
Till all delight is fled,
My dearest joy will be
This little golden head.

9 August

Zabel arrived last evening in time for dinner. It was nice to see him. He seemed to be much impressed by the beauty of the place. James Daly came, an old beau of mine. When I saw him again I drew a breath of relief and said to myself—“There but for the grace of God.” Weak looking, wild wandering eyes, and soft soft—soft inside, when just breathing and keeping alive in this world at present requires strength and courage.

For the first time I begin to appreciate some of Wordsworth’s best work, and Robert Frost, and to see how much profundity, beauty and vision can be wrung from nature alone.

10 August

Yesterday I felt at my worst, a kind of spiritual dis ease, and a sudden
agony of worry. We have received no mail of any consequence and we depend on it so much. No books have been sent to H. for review since he’s been here and we suddenly realized how tenuous one’s hold on one’s means of livelihood is, “out of sight, out of mind,” and after so much work, there is still no security.

My mind feels scattered and my soul muddled and unclean. I am afraid of becoming insincere and ugly and stupid. I find that at times I can find nothing to talk about, and I realize how limited my interests have become. When there is no inner strength, no core of integrity burning hard and clear inside, one cannot keep up anything but a sham face to the world, a shifting and disquieting face and eventually a repulsive one.

I have a silly, sneaking worldly ambition rankling in me, an ambition I will never realize and it hurts to think of it. I want, for a short while at least, to be beautiful, carefree and gay. It is dreadful for a woman to have to admit before she dies that she has never been beautiful, or gay, and now I know that I have had moments but they were never the real thing.

14 August

Long talks with Zabel about poetry, and life (such as he knows it—not much!). He is cultivated, intelligent but—why are all men of his type so sterile? It is as if they had developed their critical and esthetic senses so highly that they have almost eliminated everything—they are so fastidious that nothing pleases them—they patronize Shakespeare and nod at Homer—nothing gives satisfaction. At last one spends one’s days in dainty trifles, the perfect amateur, the perfect connoisseur. Their prayer ought to be in the words of a favorite poem of mine from Gerard Manley Hopkins; no doubt I’m misquoting very badly.

(something) strains but not I strain,
Times eunuch and awakes
No word that breeds—Thou oh Thou, Lord of Life,
send my roots rain!”

Jim Farrell amusing everyone with wild, incredible, Rabelaisian stories

17. For the complete text, see W. H. Gardner and N. H. Mackenzie, eds., The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, 4th ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 106. The lines in question are: “. . . birds build—but not I build; no, but strain / Time’s eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes / Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.”
of tough life in Chicago, and the sideshow of the Chicago fair. I see Z. shudder with fastidious pain as Jim’s voice rises in his rich, loud argot.

I bought a very beautiful string of glass beads of a mysterious violet-green-blue shade, a turquoise blue, but even deeper, for one dollar. I had a desire to buy something pretty and frivolous for myself; it’s so long since I’ve bought anything for my own use, and the first thing I bought in years for myself that gave me any pleasure in buying and owning.

18 August

Tried to read a book of Virginia Woolf’s—her First Common Reader—but the delicate style, the exquisite perception—the utter sensibility—were too much—all raw nerves—shimmering and quivering—all soul and no sinews and warm blood and body—it made me feel quite hysterical; so I picked up John Stuart Mill’s memoir of his life, and began that. He represents a slightly tougher world.

Dreadful, disturbing thoughts. No matter where I move, or walk, or lie down, they follow me. I don’t know how to evade them.

The Lawrence book [Pilgrim of the Apocalypse: A Critical Study of D. H. Lawrence] is almost finished. It’s beautifully, warmly, brilliantly written. How will any one be so obtuse as not to see its obvious merits; its subtleties may be discovered later. It is a book that Horace may well be proud to see among his published works.

Morton Zabel told me something that expresses most beautifully the fantastic lengths to which Marxian literary criticism can go. He said that Morris Schappes, a critic, is writing a Marxian interpretation of Emily Dickinson! Schappes, he said, considers Emily a test case.

Danced with the Austrian artist Herchenblochner, who took me up in his arms and spun me around in the air. Dizzy but rather exciting.

Danced with Jimmy Farrell who was excellent. He had learned his dancing in tough Chicago dance halls, with the result that he dances with more style and dash than anyone else.

Horace and Zabel had a talk over his (Horace’s) Shelley article, Z. of course disagreeing. But I watched the argument with interest. Horace has passion, insight, creative fervor, and right instinct. Z. has a mind clear,
clean, logical and just, so that even in a futile argument it was interesting to listen.

If I had learned mental and moral discipline, if I had been taught honor and reserve as a child, if I had made better use of my time to make myself fine and strong I would not have been unprepared for any difficulty that arose. I would have summoned dignity, and breeding, and strength and they would have sufficed. I think I would rather gain respect alone than love without respect; for without moral dignity, love itself is without flavor or value.

1 September
An agony so deep, so intense for the last few weeks that it seems as if all the strength, courage, decency that I have tried to build up in the last few years have crumbled down entirely. And deeper than ever the old feeling of frustration and despair. I find that I can’t write poetry (my only outlet) and that I can’t face reality and that I can’t make or keep friends and I have almost no desire or joy in life and yet for the children’s sake. . . . If I could only respect myself.

Horace and I so frantic with worry and fear that we are going a little crazy. Letters from Milwaukee that break our heart and pride; stupid, intolerant—and we are so dependent on them—and no escape. Oh God—how can I live through the strain, stupid, impotent, and weakling that I am.

6 September
I’m trying as hard as I can to get very strong and energetic so as to face life in Sunnyside without torture. . . . [Talked to] *Charlotte Wilder . . . tense, and so introverted that her conversation sounds as if it were torn out of her mind in anguish; strange, disconnected sentences with a weird literary flavor, a sort of inarticulate Emily Brontë; surely the most interesting of the Wilder clan.

Tortured by persecution complexes, hatreds, disillusionments, and above all fears—terrible fears. They no longer have a name. I can no longer see them plainly; they hover over me like an indefinite thunder storm.

Oh save me, save me!
18 September
The trees are beginning to flame into deep red and orange; from my
tower window the hills shine violet-gray. I feel as if I have not fully appre­
ciated the beauty of Yaddo. I must go and look at it again and again, so it
will remain in my mind forever.

29 September
I must must get well. There is Horace, there are the babies so lovely and
still so little. . . . I want to write. I feel as if slowly, painfully, quietly, I'm
finding my medium. And for the first time in years I do not feel hopeless
and ashamed of my own poetry; a slow feeling of creation and achieve­
ment is coming into my blood, and I feel as if I am discovering a pure
articulate line that will be good if I can only keep on developing and
writing.

2 October
The Yaddo music festival the last two days. I don't know a great deal
about music, but was impressed by Aaron Copland's executive ability in
handling the crowds, in rounding up the composers, in the enthusiastic
reception accorded *Walter Piston's "New World String Quartet." *Roy
Harris interested me. He looks somewhat like Vachel Lindsay. His music
seemed fresh and genuine. And George Antheil, fat and short and dy­
namic, and rosy, with a little mustache; and *Dante Fiorillo's lovely deli­
cate lyrics sung by Ada (Mrs. Archibald MacLeish), and Ada MacLeish
not at all what I hoped the wife of such a glamorous poet ought to look
like, short, very fat, dressed in baby blue, with a baby pretty face and fuzzy
blonde hair. . . .

We Yaddoites sat in the balcony looking and feeling very select. . . .

The view from my tower window is inexpressibly beautiful. A static
eternal loveliness, of gold, and russet, and brown-gold-green—it is so
beautiful, and I feel as if I should somehow translate this beauty into a liv­
ing art, before it all melts and flows away under my hands, and from my
heart leaving me empty again.

4 October
Beginning to think of New York with a terrified eagerness, mingled
fear and hope. My life at Yaddo now reads like an epitaph: "Glad did I
come, and as gladly go." But no—I'm a little wavering, my feet tremble—I
want to stay—I want to go. . . .
Unless otherwise stated, the following individuals are American. In most cases, only one example of a work is given.


Antheil, George (1900–1959), composer and pianist. Wrote Ballet Mecanique (1926) and an autobiography, The Bad Boy of Music (1945).


Calverton, Victor Francis (pen name of George Goetz, 1900–1940), left-wing critic and editor. Founded the Modern Quarterly (1923). Wrote The Awakening of America (1939).


Cheever, John (1912–1982), short-story writer and novelist. A New Yorker writer, his stories were later published in The Enormous Radio (1953) and other books.

Colum, Padraic (1881–1972), Irish poet and playwright who, after 1914, lived in the United States. Wrote Wild Earth (1907) and, with his wife, Mary, Our Friend James Joyce (1958).


Fiorillo, Dante (1905–), composer. Wrote *Prelude* for string orchestra.


Gogarty (Oliver Joseph St. John, 1878–1957), Irish physician and writer of memoirs, essays, and poetry. Wrote *As I Was Going Down Sackville Street* (1937).


Harris, Roy (1898–1979), composer. Wrote *Folk Fantasy for Festivals* (1956).


Latimer, Margery (1898–1932), novelist and short-story writer. Wrote *We Are Incredible*.


Lindsay, Vachel (1879–1931), poet, known for his dramatic readings. Wrote *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty* (1914).


Phillips, Robert (1938– ), poet, fiction writer, critic, and, currently, professor of creative writing at the University of Houston. Wrote *Breakdown Lane* (1994).


Richardson, Dorothy Miller (1872–1957), English novelist and pioneer of the stream of consciousness technique. Her twelve novels are known collectively as *Pilgrimage*.


Rosenfeld, Paul (1890–1946), music and art critic. An editor of *The Seven Arts* magazine and music critic of *The Dial* magazine. Wrote *Musical Portraits* (1920).


Van Doren, Carl Clinton (1885–1950), writer and professor at Columbia University (1911–30). Literary editor of *The Nation* (1919–22) and other journals. Wrote *Benjamin Franklin* (1936; Pulitzer Prize).


Wilder, Charlotte (1898–1980), writer of poems and children's literature. (Thornton Wilder was her brother.)


POST-STANDARD AWARD CITATION, 1996

For Mark F. Weimer

MARK F. WEIMER, almost twenty years ago you came to Syracuse University Library as a rare book librarian. A quiet man, of few but substantive words, your influence has grown with every year. Your colleagues rely upon your knowledge and judgment, your kindness and diplomacy, your ability to communicate and to get things done. Today we honor you as antiquarian bookman, teacher, administrator, and curator.

After receiving an M.A. in history at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, and an M.S.L.S. at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio, you worked as a rare book librarian and cataloger at the Washington University School of Medicine Library in St. Louis. In 1977 you joined the staff of Syracuse University Library; in 1983 you were promoted to the rank of full librarian, and in 1990 you became head of the Department of Special Collections. For many years you also taught at the School of Information Studies. You have been a trustee of the Oneida Community Mansion House, a member of the Grolier Club, this country’s most prestigious book collectors’ society, and of many other professional organizations.

You have strengthened the special collections by making wise acquisitions decisions. Through your efforts the Library has acquired a number of major research collections. For example, descendants of the Oneida Community entrusted to you their original records, such as diaries and correspondence, which are now part of the Library’s Oneida Community Collection; you traveled to Hawaii to secure the Melvin Schoberlin Stephen Crane Collection. With perseverance, diplomacy, and investigative skill, you managed, over a period of several years, to recover hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of materials that had been stolen from the Library. Through your guidance, your staff has made great strides in cataloging the special collections on computer and in arranging millions of actual documents and books on shelves, thus serving a wider public than ever before. Much of this work has been supported by grants that you developed.
As curator, you have not kept the collections as hidden treasure; instead, you have brought them to the attention of the campus community and the library world. Students, faculty, and researchers from many countries who come to use the collections appreciate the welcoming and helpful attitude of you and your staff. The members of Library Associates are grateful to you, too, because for many years you have kept this organization alive, working faithfully behind the scenes. We are, therefore, pleased to present to you the Post-Standard Award for Distinguished Service to the Syracuse University Library.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Margaret Bourke-White Negatives of Olympic Athletes
Syracuse University Library has acquired twelve Margaret Bourke-
White negatives that capture an exciting moment in the history of Olympic competition and, at the same time, reflect a pivotal phase in Bourke-White’s development. Between 6 and 14 July 1936, just before the United States team sailed for Berlin, Bourke-White photographed the final United States trials for the men’s track and field events. At that time she was under contract to NEA (National Enterprise Association) Service Inc. and Acme Newspicture Inc. Some letters and memoranda in the Library’s Bourke-White Papers indicate that she was sent to the new stadium at Randall’s Island, New York, with a list of well-known athletes to capture on film. On 16 July 1936 Bourke-White reported to Pete Edison of NEA that she had had “a fine haul the last two days before the athletes sailed.”

In this haul—and now among the Bourke-White Papers—are images of Donald Lash, distance runner, and James “Jesse” Owens, sprinter and broad jumper. Owens would astound the world, and Adolph Hitler, by equaling or breaking existing world records during the Berlin Olympics. The other images are of Glenn Cunningham, Gordon Dunn, Glenn Morris, Gene Venzke, Ernest Torrance, Archie San Romani, William Sefton, Cornelius Johnson, and W. Kenneth Carpenter.

It was in 1936 that Bourke-White, then one of America’s foremost in-
dustrial and commercial photographers, chose a new photographic subject: the human being. By August of that year she and NEA/Acme agreed to part company. In a letter of 16 July she said she was “leaving tomorrow morning for Augusta, Georgia, with Erskine Caldwell”—and the next phase of her life. —By Carolyn A. Davis, Reader Services Librarian, with assistance from Paul Barfoot, Manuscripts Processor, Syracuse University Library.

The Geography of Strabo

Robert and Nansie Jensen have given to the Library the 1494 edition of Strabo’s *De Situ Orbis*, or, “Geography.” Strabo (b. ca. 63 B.C.) was a Greek historian and geographer who studied and traveled widely. The work, first printed in 1469, went through six editions in the fifteenth century, the Library’s edition being the fifth. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed., 1911),

The Geography is the most important work on that science
which antiquity has left us. It was . . . the first attempt to collect all the geographical knowledge at the time attainable, and to compose a general treatise on geography. Strabo designed the work for the statesman rather than for the student. He therefore endeavors to give a general sketch of the character, physical peculiarities and natural productions of each country, and consequently gives us much valuable information respecting ethnology, trade and metallurgy.

—By Mark F. Weimer, Curator of Special Collections

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

In honor of William L. Pollard, Maudie Ritchie and David H. Stam have given to the Library the rare second edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1846), published by the Anti-Slavery Office of Boston. In this powerful autobiography Douglass reveals for the first time the identity of his owners, his original name, and the names of his grandmother and mother. The first (1845) edition of 5,000 copies vaulted him to the forefront of the abolitionist movement. This second edition of 2,000 copies was issued early in 1846. In his introduction to the 1960 edition, Benjamin Quarles estimates that by 1850 “some 30,000 copies of the *Narrative* had been published in America and the British Isles” (xiii).

—By Mark F. Weimer, Curator of Special Collections

Materials From the Albert Schweitzer Center

With a recent acquisition from the Albert Schweitzer Center in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, Syracuse University Library’s Albert Schweitzer Collection is now the largest and the richest in America. The following materials were received: 40 boxes of clippings, correspondence, program files, and manuscripts; 10 scrapbooks; 50 boxes of photographic enlargements; 4 file drawers of color slides; 55 boxes of negatives corresponding to a 21-volume visual index; 4 boxes of glass negatives; 120 videotapes; 800 audio recordings; and 200 reels of film.

Most of these materials were produced or gathered by Erica Anderson (1914–1976), filmmaker and photographer. From 1950, when she met Schweitzer, until his death in 1965, she documented his life in various media. After his death she founded the Albert Schweitzer Center to encourage study of his life and thought. When, recently, the center merged with the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, the decision was made to sell the property in Great Barrington that had served as the center’s headquarters.
According to Professor Emerita Antje Lemke, a world-renowned Schweitzer scholar and member of the Schweitzer Fellowship Board of Directors, the materials were sent here because this Library already has a large collection of original Schweitzer manuscripts as well as important collections of female photographers such as Margaret Bourke-White and Clara Sipprell. In addition, the Library has a fine preservation program.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER: A MESSAGE FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM

Professor Lemke’s interest in Albert Schweitzer goes back to her childhood, when her father, the theologian Rudolf Bultmann, read Schweitzer’s book about life in the primeval forest to her and her sisters.¹ Her father, who corresponded with Schweitzer, told him that his twelve-

year-old daughter Antje wanted to study medicine and then go to Lambaréné in Africa where Schweitzer had his hospital. Schweitzer sent her a postcard (ca. 1931) showing a group of Africans. His message, in German, is translated here:

Dear Miss Bultmann:

All these natives send their cordial greetings! They wish you good health for your studies of medicine. But first you should enjoy your youth! And, most importantly, do not forget to learn to cook well!

Best wishes.

Your Albert Schweitzer

For much of her life Professor Lemke has devoted herself to Schweitzer-related activities, such as translating his work, speaking about him all over the world, and developing Syracuse University Library's Schweitzer collections for the benefit of future scholars. She believes that Schweitzer’s philosophy of “reverence for life” can guide us through the next century. She writes:

In Africa, not during his studies in Europe, Schweitzer found an ethic that would satisfy both reason and spirit. Here is how it came to him: “Lost in thought [on the way to see a patient] I sat on the deck of the barge. . . . I covered sheet after sheet with disconnected sentences . . . . Two days passed. Late on the third day, at the very moment when, at sunset, we were making our way through a herd of hippopotamuses, there flashed upon my mind, unforeseen and unsought, the phrase “reverence for life.” The iron door had yielded. . . . Reverence for life affords me my fundamental principle of morality, namely, that good consists in maintaining, assisting, and enhancing life, and that to destroy, to harm, or to hinder life is evil.”

Schweitzer believed that eventually people would recognize that human survival depends on consideration for all that lives. He saw everyone as being responsible for life. For him reverence

is not passive adoration; it demands active involvement. He said, “If people can be found who revolt against the spirit of thoughtlessness and are sincere and profound enough to spread the ideals of ethical progress, we will witness the emergence of a new spiritual force strong enough to evoke a new spirit in mankind.”

Schweitzer, I think, answers the question with which Carl Sagan concludes his essay “At the Century’s End: Science and Technology in the 20th Century.” Sagan follows a breathtaking account of the great achievements in science and technology, their gifts, and the dangers they have created for mankind with this message: “Whether we will acquire the understanding and the wisdom necessary to come to grips with the scientific revelations of the 20th century will be the most profound challenge of the 21st.”

The benefits of science and technology that are based on Albert Einstein’s principle of relativity can only be enjoyed in the future if the other great principle, reverence for life (articulated at about the same time, by his friend Albert Schweitzer) becomes equally powerful. Albert Schweitzer cannot provide the solutions for our problems, but his philosophy and example make it possible for us to take on the issues of the next century with strength and conviction.

4. In New Perspectives 13, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 54. This was Sagan’s last publication.
PROGRAM FOR 1996–97

September 21, 1996
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sheraton University Hotel
and Conference Center,
2nd Floor

October 15, 1996
Tuesday, 4 p.m.
1916 Room, Bird Library

November 14, 1996
Thursday, 4 p.m.
1916 Room, Bird Library

December 12, 1996
Friday, 5 p.m.
6th Floor, Bird Library

March 20, 1997
Thursday, 4 p.m.
1916 Room, Bird Library

April 17, 1997
Thursday, 4 p.m.
1916 Room, Bird Library

May 9, 1997
Spring Luncheon
Friday, 12 noon
Goldstein Auditorium
Schine Student Center

CHOICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES:
A SYMPOSIUM HONORING BENJAMIN SPOCK

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Department of History, Syracuse University

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Department of English, Syracuse University

JAMES HERRIOT: AN APPRECIATION

William Safire, Columnist
The New York Times

AN UNTITLED SPEECH BY WILLIAM SAFIRE
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