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Photo titled *Four Immigrants and Their Belongings, on a Dock, Looking Out Over the Water; View from Behind*. 1912. (Source: The Library of Congress)

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Abstract: Faulkner's Pulitzer prize winning novel *A Fable* has been under-appreciated and under-read since it was published in 1954. This is a pity. Faulkner's bold idea of re-enacting Christ's Second Coming in the bloody trenches of the First World War; the absurdity of industrial strength killing in the modern era; how dim the intermittent intercessions in the gloom are in the end; the wild rivalry of conspiracy theories. The centerpiece for these violent outbursts is an intense exchange between the Christ figure, a French corporal, and his father, the Supreme Commander of the Western forces, an exchange that pits expediency against idealism and leaves readers to sort through the ambiguities this creates. A thoroughly modernist project, in short. Recuperating this novel for a new generation of readers involves giving them a better guide to it. A particularly useful starting point in this regard is all the allusions in *A Fable*. Properly annotated, such references help fill in gaps that students continue to encounter. The result can be new perspectives on one of Faulkner's most audacious novels and of our most shameful history.

Introduction

"The past is not dead; it's not even past"—Faulkner's pronouncement about the past's refusal to die, refuses to die. Included in lists of online aphorisms, admired by nostalgists for the Lost Cause, quoted by President Obama in a famous speech on race, and analyzed at length in a famous copyright violation case, Faulkner's apothegm captured his readership's imagination, confirmed his reputation as a public sage, and highlighted the importance of history in his work. For years his novels have been taught in courses devoted to Southern history (Watson ix). In *A Southern Renaissance*, Andrew Lighter analyzes the effects of memorial statues for Confederate leaders. In his *Mastered by the Clock*, Mark Smith adopts a historian's view of the changes wrought by a new consciousness of time to the American South. In *Faulkner's County: The Historical Roots of Yoknapatawpha*, Don Doyle discusses Faulkner's take on local history. Joshua Rothman investigates the conflation of myth and history in 19th-century America, in *Flush Times and Fever Dreams: A Story of Capitalism and Slavery in the Age of Jackson* (2012). James Cobb, in an article called "'Saturated with the Past: William Faulkner, C. Vann Woodward, and the 'Burden' of Southern History" (2017), analyses how Faulkner's fiction makes history and is made into history. Teresa Towner defines Faulkner's ideology as a simultaneous erasure of the past and an assertion of its intricacies (138). For Michel-Rolph Trouillot, it is the "tell-tale omissions and reverberant silences" (xii) of history that

make Faulkner's novels such a searching commentary on the past. As Carl Rollyson puts it,

Since the "authorities" on the past cannot wholly be trusted, and since the novels themselves refuse to yield up a definitive or conclusive "formula" that would neatly link up the conflicting testimony, it is imperative that we assemble our own evidence, become our own historians, and interact, personally and individually, with the experience of the past. (268)

In Rollyson's own biography of Faulkner, published last spring, he is careful to situate Faulkner's fiction as a search for lost time. This idea of interacting with the past because we are "our own historians" is a particularly evocative one.

Using specific characters taken from southern American history who act as commentators on history is an integral part of his work from the beginning, but arguably the Faulkner novel that most engages with the past and its "presentness" is *A Fable*. That may well seem odd, especially because this Pulitzer prize-winning novel published in 1954 is set, not in the South but in northern France, and represents Faulkner's counterfactual, anti-historical account of World War One. *A Fable* is not only the most historically-oriented novel Faulkner ever wrote, it is also his longest, written as a series of reader's guides that enable students to navigate them successfully. The Paris mob scene that begins the book, the debates about the conflicting claims of the personal and the political, the interpretative intricacies of the novel's conspiracy theories, and the revisionist views of ethics and history—these work better when we ask ourselves what Faulkner is thinking about when he looks forward to the past.

This is where the idea of entering the lists comes in. *A Fable* conjures up its absent subject by including the roll calls of figures from history, industry, art, and culture generally, arguing that the figures on his lists are more than mere simulacra of history featuring names in a book. The matrices in the novel cry out for context: they urge silence to speak and give them an individual and collective humanity. Faulkner's attempt in *A Fable* to fill the gaps between past and present leads to a new way of configuring such gaps. Even the South's famous "lost cause" is conflated with such meditations. Take, for example, Nancy and Keen Butterworth's annotations to *A Fable*. The helpfulness of their guide to Faulkner's allusive strategies is a function of the range of topics they tackle. He

knows a lot about military history—World War One, the weaponry, its planes and pilots, its major battles and campaigns, and so by the end of Faulkner’s novel do we. But the Butterworths’ book does not want to spend much time on Faulkner’s use of general history and myth. Neither do they have a lot to say about the cultural work done by the lists of names as we try to think about them together, about how the figures mentioned in a given list are situated in Western history. In the end, it comes down to the credibility of Faulkner’s erudition. The Butterworths are convinced “that Faulkner had [no] more than a general knowledge of World History” (iii). The novel’s reviews are littered with “failure.” An index is dismissed as a disaster and worse. I think that Faulkner knew more than such criticism gives him credit for, and that it gave him a specialist knowledge integral to the discussions about “Whither Western Culture?” that figure so prominently in *A Fable*. For this is, *inter alia*, the story of a mutiny and a veiled account of the most spiritual must suffer.

A phrase like “specialist knowledge” may be misleading here. For *A Fable* also resonates with students because it enacts a distinctively Faulknerian definition of a new mode of intellection, of how to think about ideas: “To think: not that dreamy hoping and wishing and believing (but mainly just waiting) that we would think is thinking, but some fierce and rigid concentration that at any time—tomorrow, today, next moment, this one—will change the shape of the earth” (244). Intense, inflexible, apocalyptic, the grandeur of such aspirations is impressive. Note how starting with a negative (“not that dreamy hoping,” etc.) increases the assertive power of the positive definition when it comes, and reminds us how stark the contrast between “dreamy hoping” and the fierce rigidity that stands in for thinking in Faulkner’s novels. Equally interesting is the fact that he evidently sees this thinking as grounded in real prospects for political and social reform (“change the shape of the earth”). His mention of “tomorrow, today, next moment” brings students up to date on Faulkner’s engagement with history by getting inside the figures that we find on those lists. They will continue to influence us, but we have to think more about exactly how. The future too is not dead, because it is pure potential, but it is something that is not quite alive either. In what follows, I want to show how lists of names in *A Fable* can better help students to think about past and future in Faulkner’s world, and more

specifically the “changing the shape of the earth” idea that he singles out for special attention.

Ghosts of Coke upon Littleton

The first list to be entered here involves the legal authorities and their importance in legal history. Faulkner imagines them like some characters communing like revenants in a quasi-sacred venue, “the ghosts of Coke upon Littleton upon Blackstone upon Napoleon upon Caesar” (144). Ghosts are always important in Faulkner’s fiction, and students tend to perk up when they are first mentioned. These particular ones live on because they helped make the laws that gave Europe its legal systems. The figures on this list all contributed to the making and enacting of the most important legal questions in Europe. Littleton is Sir Thomas Littleton (1407-1481), an English judge and jurist, a distinguished legal thinker who wrote a *Treaty on Estates and Tenders* (1475). Edward Coke (1552-1634), another English judge, described this *Treaty* in his commentary on Littleton as “the ornament of the common law, and the most perfect work that ever was written in any human science” (x). Coke wrote legal treatises for both Elizabeth I and James I. His commentary, *Coke upon Littleton*, is so important for the development of ancient common law that, as Thomas Coventry, a nineteenth-century barrister, put it, “to abrogate it would be to demolish one main pillar of the state” (viii). William Blackstone (1723-1780), yet another English judge, wrote a four-volume collection of *Commentaries* (1765) on English Laws that during the 1770s and 80s profoundly influenced Jefferson, Adams, Jay, Madison, and the other founders of the American republic. In other words, in the English transition from autocracy to parliamentary democracy, these masters of jurisprudence all played the same sort of crucial role. They changed the way that the legal system was evoked and interpreted.

The very idea that this criticism of the judges, based on a deep reading of the figures mentioned in the list, shows that what they wrote is obviously important for anyone interested in the legal and political underpinnings of the United States and the nations of Western Europe. But hasn’t history gone a little astray here? What, for example, is Napoleon (1769-1821) doing on such a list? Blackstone could hardly have written a commentary on someone who was only a boy when the famous British jurist died in 1780.

Similarly, Coke, who was Shakespeare's (1564-1616) coeval, should come before the eighteenth-century Blackstone. It could be that Faulkner is simply circling on himself, reminding readers of history's erratic nature, or having sly fun with the anachronisms at the heart of the list (Butterworth 127). But, ultimately, he is preparing the reader for an analysis of the laws governing France at the outbreak of World War I. Napoleon is of course there, despite being out of chronological order, because of the Napoleonic Code, which has been described as one of the most influential, widely read legal documents in the world. When creating it, Napoleon drew on Roman law for its first principles, as opposed to using previously existing French laws as a basis. Hence the references in the list singling out Napoleon the lawgiver and linking him to Julius Caesar, the first emperor to deal with what became the codified Roman Civil Law.

More generally, the "common law" referred to in Faulkner's novel is "judge-made" law, as opposed to the kind made by legislative bodies like a parliament. So these people did change the law, and the crowds that constantly mill about in *A Fable* serve as a means of testing the laws' usefulness. The lengthy and learned discussions in the novel are ultimately about the distinction between judicial and extra-judicial proceedings. It is also important to remember that what Blackstone et al. wrote is not a collection of archaic notions buried in dusty volumes, of interest only to those who dabble in historical curiosities. Coke's *On Littleton*, for example, has been cited more than 70 times in the U.S. Supreme Court's rulings, for example, in its ruling on *Roe v. Wade*: Coke insisted that before the fetus had "quickened," access to abortion was a woman's right. Blackstone's idea of nature affected the way the Declaration of Independence was written and helped the jurists in his time develop the idea of "unalienable rights." And his commentary on habeas corpus and personal liberty is a useful preamble to Giorgio Agamben's claims concerning state of exception and the private individual. In other words, Faulkner's fascination with legal proceedings throughout history—trials, the marshalling of evidence, the complicated business of determining guilt, the creation of the legal structure by which we are governed—are orchestrated and extended by this list featuring some of the world's most eminent jurists. This flexible view of history's grim chronological march shows just how creative Faulkner was with his lists, the homage he paid to the science of the law, and its power to shape a nation.

Long Heroic Roster

Once one realizes that Faulkner's lists richly reward such scrutiny, the novel becomes somehow larger, even more all encompassing. Right after all those important legal thinkers, we read about "that titanic congeries of the long heroic roster who were the milestones of the rise of man [...] Caesar and Christ, Bonaparte and Peter and Mazarin and Alexander, Genghis and Talleyrand and Warwick, Marlborough and Bryan, Bill Sunday, General Booth and Prester John" (153). The Butterworths identify these figures as military, political and religious leaders (133) and include only the briefest of commentary. History is more than epigraphs or epitaphs. As we shall see, seeking to nuance and extend the reasons for the inclusion of these worthies tells us even more interesting things. Some of the figures are so well known that their relevance to Faulkner's views on the "ascent of man" is obvious enough, but he also wants his readers to be intrigued by how such figures interact across history. Along with his military leaders and political heavyweights are religious revivalists and skillful diplomats. As Taylor Hagood points out, "There is a marked slippage between imperialist and anti-imperialist in this litany of figures" (186). This is true and makes for some unevenness, but Faulkner's novel actually resists the notion of ideological catalogues. The list clearly supports the case for the primordial role of individual leaders and the complex impact they had on great masses of people, friends and enemies. Students can straighten things out by taking a look again the relevance of the "great man" theory of history.

Let us start with some points of interest on the list just cited. Genghis Khan led the Mongolian invasions that swept over Eurasia in the twelfth century. His name is fearsome: like Napoleon, he was responsible for the death of millions of people, and to this day he is one of the most hated figures in the Middle East. Yet he could be tolerant of those willing to acknowledge his power. Like Napoleon, he trusted his generals, modernized his country, and reinvented its institutions. He even convened a symposium of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism in order to help his people understand better what others believed in. In Mongolia he is a national hero and celebrated as a liberator (Turnbull 97-101). That is, human allegiances depend on circumstances like nationality or military conflict, not only the drafting of clear laws. Presumably Peter the Great makes the list because he modernized his country, changing it from a medieval backwater to a European power.

Peter's reform of medieval institutions also involved a cultural revolution, an embrace of modernity in the social and scientific sense. He was as brutal with his enemies as he was kind to his supporters, and the civil service he designed influences public life in Russia to this day. Such figures serve as tutelary deities in Faulkner's novel by highlighting history's different ways of creating and maintaining nation states and ethnic entities.

Presumably Faulkner puts Cardinal Mazarin on the list because Mazarin, serving his King, Louis XIV, for twenty years (the first part as *de facto* regent), was crucial in the making of a seventeenth-century New World Order. He preached religious toleration, negotiated the end of the Thirty Years' War, pursued a flexible course in resolving disagreements about the power of the monarchy throughout Europe, and generally helped prepare Europe for a new era of international law and political equality. The fact that discussing these very ideas shows how potent they are in our own century (Goubert 10-14). Faulkner probably chooses Talleyrand for similar reasons: his ability to work with Louis XVI, then after the revolution as foreign minister for the ambitious Bonaparte, for Louis XVIII when Napoleon's star faded, and finally for Louis Philippe in the July Monarchy of 1830. Talleyrand was as flexible and ambitious as Mazarin, as successful in helping to guide France through tempestuous times, and as resourceful in helping his successive masters change the face of the earth (Dwyer 4-5). A shrewd cynic always on the lookout for the main chance? A selfless servant of his people? A serial traitor to his country? The answers to these questions are surely some combination of all of the above and, therefore, another reason to interrogate the history that he anticipated, created, and represented. The great debates about European history at the end of *A Fable* about are organized by high achievers like Mazarin and Talleyrand, those who can perform as effectively in the shadows as he can in the spotlight.

Like Talleyrand, John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, served an impressive number of monarchs with great distinction as a statesman and soldier. Throughout ten consecutive campaigns during the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1714), Marlborough held together a discordant coalition through sheer force of personality and raised the standing "of British arms to a level not known since the Middle Ages" (Churchill). Although in the end he could not compel total capitulation from his enemies, his victories allowed Britain to rise from being a minor to a major power, ensuring the

country's growing prosperity throughout the 18th century (Chandler 11-29). Louis XIV's potential power was severely curbed by the English victory and the loss of all the Spanish dominions in the four corners of the world. Both these statesmen constitute a shrewd commentary on the vexed ethics of nation building at the heart of the debates in *A Fable*. A name in a list resonates with the course of a continent.

At this point the list seems to wander a little. Who were Warwick and Bryan, Billy Sunday and Prester John, and why are they here, in a group with all the better known players on the world's political stage? Yet they deserve to be there in Faulkner's view, according to his criteria. The Earl of Warwick, Richard Neville, was the last of the great barons, more powerful than England's fifteenth-century monarchs. He was a deeply committed participant in the War of the Roses on both sides, and served as "kingmaker" for Edward IV and Henry VI. His populist approach to power relations endeared him to the people and mitigate history's verdict on his artful behind the scenes maneuvering (McFarlane 231-45). As for the remaining names on the list, Faulkner has chosen to end with something that only looks like a dying fall. William Jennings Bryan was an extraordinarily gifted American politician at the start of the twentieth-century. Perhaps he is best known now for the unfortunate role he played as prosecutor in the Scopes "Monkey" trial, in which the brilliant Clarence Darrow, arguing against creationism, took Bryan apart like a defective coffee machine. Yet Bryan was a mover of men, certainly one of the greatest American orators who ever lived, and had a large and enthusiastic following the three different times he ran for President on the Democratic ticket (1896, 1900, 1908).

William Sunday was cut from the same cloth. The contemporary era's first great evangelist preacher, someone who spoke to the common man and hobnobbed with the great and good, another one of those figures who stayed on the high moral road and managed to make a lot of money advising people to turn their back on materialism. General Booth was Sunday's British counterpart, a populist minister with a simple and direct message for the downtrodden: salvation by acknowledging Jesus as savior. Booth's sublime indifference to the social standing of his parishioners and his extraordinary capacity for incurring public opprobrium without in the slightest deviating from his task made him that much more remarkable. His movement became known as the Salvation

Army. One can readily see how the religious sub-structure in *A Fable* gives Booth and Sunday pride of place on the list. They are practical believers in the born again Christ, the one whose return is eagerly awaited but constantly pushed off into the future. Their ability to use rhetoric to convince attaches them to various groups in the novel as well.

And, finally, what better name to end this mini-catalogue than Prester John? He was a twelfth-century figure who claimed descent from the Magi, served as a missionary in India, became King of the Three Indias (including Ethiopia), wrote a marvelous letter recounting marvels in which he had been involved on his travels, crossed paths with Marco Polo, crossed swords with Genghis Khan, and inspired countless others to follow in his wake. That is quite a list of accomplishments, particularly in view of the fact that Prester John never existed. His life is a legend, born of colorful accounts of semi-supernatural occurrences and a fascination with the exotic. The story of his adventures incarnated the marvels and magic that his followers wanted to believe as they contemplated the Christian response to the changes taking place in Medieval Europe (Silverberg *passim*). Imaginative literature, rumor, myth—these all count in the tracing of world historical moments that Faulkner chronicles here. Characters on a quest can be so charismatic that they create a past and a present for themselves.

As the first long list concludes, Faulkner tells us how all these figures have affected their followers. This itemizing then has less to do with thumbnail sketches and more to do with charting historical figures' capacities as guides to their spiritual and practical usefulness. These people are "thinkers," in the broad sense quoted earlier. Their intensity has made them determined to change the world. What would that entail more specifically? The narrator of *A Fable* talks about putting man "in one motion in one direction, by him of him and for him, to disjam the earth, get him for a little while at least out of his own way—standing there a moment, then two, then three, not accepting but compelling the entire blast of the cynosure as in the twilit room the mirror concentrates to itself all of light and all else owns visibility only at second hand" (153). This is part of a long passage full of similarly gorgeous things, and students should already be able to see some of the well known Faulkner signatures. There is the effortless adding of detail to detail, the impression that he is just extemporizing, that the words can keep coming forever. Then there is the count-down, or rather count-up ("a moment, then two, then three"), the

inevitable “not” (“not accepting but compelling”), and the consequences of the explosion that the creator of this scene has so carefully prepared. This explosion is all inside, and the emphasis on the history of the individual moment involves “the entire blast of the *cynosure*,” a word that designates the absolute center of attention. The figures mentioned have changed the world because they have convinced humanity that it is worthy of occupying this center. Finally there is that dazzling simile, the one in which the mirror refuses to reflect light but instead arrogates all of it to itself. The stage is set for some insight into the deeper meaning of things, a moment of revelation, the time at which history makes sense and one can move from passivity to action.

Precentors of his Seething Moil

What form might this action take? In pondering the question of what might convince the mass of men to move, to co-operate in achieving a common goal, Faulkner supplies us with—what else?—another list, one that begins with his favorite, a series of negatives and moves through a series of names who still inspire, even though he insists they cannot inspire in the new era: “not Genghis’ bone horns nor Murat’s bugles, let alone the golden voice of Demosthenes or Cicero, or the trumpet-blast of Paul or John Brown or Pitt or Calhoun or Daniel Webster” (157) can lead us now. These men are introduced as titanic, heroic milestones, giants who led their “myriad moil.” However, as impressive as this group is, the plebeian sorts who listened to their inspired counsel and to their own demons have a chance for greatness, too.

The word moil is derived from the French for “soft” (*mou*) and “damp” (*mouillé*). Now normally used as both a verb meaning hard work (“men who moil for gold”) and noun meaning a state of continuous movement, it appears eight times in the novel. Faulkner likes to blur this meaning: for example, “Let the whole vast moil and seethe of man confederate in stopping wars if they wish” (45), where the word means crowd and movement together. The names of the greatest orators the world has ever seen naturally come to mind when Faulkner wants to exhort humanity to do some fierce thinking. Speakers as great as these changed history by inspiring the nameless, faceless predecessors of this fiery desire for freedom. The men in question are described (once again) as “thinking with pride and awe too, how threatful only in locomotion and dangerous

only in silence; neither in lust nor appetite nor greed lay wombed the potency of his threat, but in silence and meditation” (157). This is a silence that permits one to fall into “thought and then action as into an open manhole.” That is, there is something headlong and inevitable and doomed about the consequences of this meditative process, no matter how quiet and measured the preparation, once the moil decides to moil.

Back to the list. The figures out of history whose names appear there are still very powerful, “proprietors of his massed breathing, the hero-giant precentors of his seething moil”—that word again. A precentor leads a choir or prepares religious services, which at first blush seems a curious way to describe some of these figures, but it makes more sense if read as a metaphor. Such men make order out of chaos, harmony out of discord. There is the quasi-obligatory mention of the Far East (Genghis again), the choice of one of Napoleon’s most famous commanders (Murat), platinum standard classical orators (Demosthenes, Cicero), and religious zealots fighting their own world war (Paul), all stunningly successful in achieving what they set out to do, in the world-changing sense, I mean. (Well, maybe Murat was not a particularly distinguished King of Naples, but that came after all the military victories to which he contributed so much.) Here is what Plutarch said about the two orators in Faulkner’s list: “The divine power seems originally to have designed Demosthenes and Cicero upon the same plan, giving them many similarities in their natural characters, as their passion for distinction and their love of liberty in civil life, and their want of courage in dangers and war” (143). The authors of *The Federalist Papers* learned a lot from Demosthenes during their discussions of the American Constitution, enshrined laws of the Athenian Senate and laws of Congress. According to Pliny, Julius Caesar claimed that Cicero had “extended the frontiers of the Roman spirit” (117), something more important than extending the frontiers of the Roman empire. Voltaire insisted that Cicero “taught us how to think (23)”. This idiosyncratic mix of meditation and nationalism is one of the most interesting ways that Faulkner fleshes out his central ideas in *A Fable*, in effect, by asking us to flesh them out, to think more about how all names fit the fable organized around our history.

The last four names on the list—John Brown, Pitt, Calhoun, Webster—make clear that, as interested as he is in mobs and their workings, Faulkner’s ultimate goal is an explanation of how America came to be a great country, an update on the status of its

manifest destiny. If one asks which destiny that is exactly, Faulkner has an answer. The last four names are associated with the slavery issue, and the extraordinary oratorical skills these people showed when speaking about it. Arrested for his role in an attempt to foment a slave insurrection that resulted in the killing of four men, John Brown gave a speech at his trial that helped make him a hero for the abolitionist camp, and confirmed for the South and its supporters that abolitionists were evil, unscrupulous and a threat to the Union (Stoneham, 162-64). Like the corporal in *A Fable*, Brown dies for his cause, after refusing to embrace life as the highest good.. William Pitt the Elder was a British statesman who gave a famous speech in 1792 in support of the abolition of the slave trade. In less than a generation it was abolished in lands controlled by the British, but Pitt died just over a year before the Abolition Act was passed by the British parliament in 1807.

James J. Calhoun was an extraordinarily gifted orator from South Carolina and a fiery supporter of states' rights. He called slavery not a "necessary evil" but a "positive good." Calhoun gradually became the South's choice to win the battle for slavery, make the case for the plantation system, augment its ability to create prosperity, and improve its capacity to unite the secessionists (Current 19-24). Calhoun is now a pariah, a statue relegated to the dusty backrooms of a museum, a figure who excites utter contempt. The second coming can't be delayed long enough as far as he is concerned. And the last name on the list? A distinguished lawyer, brilliant interpreter of the Constitution, esteemed diplomat, and fierce defender of the Union, Daniel Webster was widely seen as the greatest American politician never to be elected President. Frightened by the prospect of civil war, he appalled the abolitionists when he voted in support of the Fugitive Slave law in 1850, and died in ignominy shortly after. Webster chose compromise and expediency over universal law and human decency (Dalzell ix-xv). Faulkner's strategic use of these references is prescient in a very compelling way. Musing about how Faulkner plays off the tension between expediency and artificial justice in *A Fable* suggests how much he has to tell us about the larger issues raised by yet another list.

The Roots of Western Civilization

When the fighting on the WWI front pauses, Faulkner's narrative takes a break as well. An engineer seeking desperately to be useful ends up in conversation with some military men. Once again a fierce sort of thinking holds sway and world historical moments are evoked. "What is Western Civilization?" is the question guiding the discussion, and Faulkner provides us with another list of those who in his view should figure prominently in such a discussion, as he argues that rapacity is the root of all Europe's magnificent achievements. Look at religious art, says the engineer first, invoking the uplift of Gothic architecture in Chartres and the Sistine chapel in Rome. The case for calling the great churches as "the literature of the poor" starts to take on new meaning.

The list continues: "Michelangelo and Phidias and Newton and Ericsson and Archimedes and Krupp [...] Caesar and the Barcas and the two Macedonians [...] Bonaparte and the Great Russian" (219). Such a list at first glance might seem unexceptionable: the first names refer to the idea of art as a world-historical event: Michelangelo, a sublimely talented artist, Phidias, a sculptor responsible for one of the seven wonders of the world, the statue of Zeus at Olympia, and Newton, the world's most important scientist pre-Einstein. They are followed by a clutch of doughty explorers. Ericsson is there as the symbol an elaborate cultural crossover by which a hardy Norse adventurer makes landfall on the east coast of Northern America—guesses range from Labrador and Boston—and begins the process of dispossessing the indigenous peoples. Archimedes is there for his claim to be the most important classical mathematician, scientist, and engineer, another curious universal character, as well as for his apocryphal "Don't touch my circles," a plea to the Roman soldier sent to kill him. The list continues with a reference to the Krupp family. Gustav Krupp (1870-1950) built the Krupp empire and was directly responsible for inventing the means by which steel is made to this day. Then there is Alfred Krupp (1907-1967), the German industrialist and arms dealer who was tried for war crimes after the war: he used slave Jewish labor in his factories during WWII, following in his father's footsteps. The Barcas are Hannibal and his father Hamilcar, two of Carthage's greatest military leaders. They fought the Romans in successive Punic wars and helped destroy the Romans' quasi-mythic status. Finally, the Macedonians, Alexander the Great and his father Philip II, the former a conqueror of the known world,

the latter a formidable military commander who fought successfully against the Greeks and then convinced them to form part of a federation of which he would be King. Thus we have two more father-son teams, four more extraordinary military men who doubled as leaders of nations. Compare the Generalissimo and the Corporal as they try to work out in similarly their disagreement about how history is made in similarly risky circumstances.

What Faulkner calls “the hegemony of ruthlessness and rapacity” (220) is splendidly exemplified by these murderous military campaigns on the eastern and southern edges of Christian Europe, with all the immiseration, theft and corruption endemic to the process. The outliers in a list like this are the names that appear just a page before it, Mithridates and Heliogabalus. The former, the King of Pontus (in present-day eastern Turkey), was one of Rome’s great external enemies. A scientific and military genius, Mithridates’s name is permanently associated with an immunity to poison, and he is supposed to have spent a good part of his adult life in search of a universal antidote to any poison that might be used against him (Mayor 2-4). Heliogabalus was an internal enemy, one of the most dissolute Roman leaders ever. He was convicted in the public mind as much for his lascivious lifestyle (he married a vestal virgin and lavished political favors on his various lovers) as he was for his incompetence as a ruler. Heliogabalus and his mother were murdered by his own guard, urged on by his grandmother (Grant, 126-29).

So it would seem that Western Civilization is a combustible, unstable mix of Renaissance art, massive industrialization driven by military glory, occasional debauchery, and extraordinary scientific advancement. We began with the proposition that the lists in *A Fable* are not eclectic collections of incidentals but crucial pieces of information, carefully arranged, for those who want to read Faulkner against the backdrop of western history and to listen for the resonances of such a reading. Such references, we found, can help serve as a commentary on the debate between secular humanism and religious ethics, and mediate between those convinced that *A Fable* is an intrinsically dialectical text and those searching for certainty.

Caesar and Christ

Of particular interest and worthy of further study are the repeated references that come right out of central casting, the ones to Caesar and Christ. They are the leadoff pair in one of the heroic achievement lists considered earlier and are discussed at length by the characters in *A Fable* itself. A single quotation drives home the point. When the Herodians try to fool Jesus into sanctioning a refusal to obey Caesar, refusing the authority of temporal power more generally, he famously gets them to produce a coin, shows them the face on it. Christ then says “Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s” (307). This attests to the peaceful co-existence of political and spiritual obligations. But, as Thoreau points out, Christ’s riddling answer here is lost on his listeners, particularly when he says that they owe allegiance to Caesar only in the sense that they are “men of the state.” If they choose not to be such men, that bond is dissolved, in Thoreau’s view. Spiritual affinity can militate against the obligations of public service, the old confliction raises its head again.

This conflation of the religious and the political is cleverly registered in an exchange that precipitates the Caesar example. Faulkner likes the word “suzerainty”: it occurs in *Go Down Moses* (1942), *The Hamlet* (1940) and *The Town* (1957), as a legal term with important historical and political implications, used to describe a situation in which, for example, a nation controls the foreign relations of another, subsidiary state. It once designated the position of a feudal lord or sovereign and his power over his vassal, but it is a modern term as well, used in a range of courtrooms, rich in history and tradition. The idea of suzerainty, for example, had far-reaching implications for America’s native peoples in Georgia, who failed to convince the Supreme Court of their independence in four different cases that ended up in that court. Near the end of *A Fable* a priest uses the word three times in a single paragraph (307). The context makes it clear that he is using it in a religious sense, reminding the Corporal that Christ with his sacrifice is suzerain over fallen man, but as we have just seen, the word’s connotations are social and political as well. It hardly needs to be pointed out just how crucial such a concept was for the South when they debated their decision to quit the union.

Dystopian America

Evidence for reading the novel as a dystopia accumulates at the end of *A Fable*. Faulkner offers his readers two scarifying visions: one turns around the idea of the unmoving mover, a kind of madness in which humanity sustains itself with the illusion of movement while it becomes increasingly sedentary. Faulkner seems to have been particularly troubled by mobile homes: “He [man] has already begun to put wheels under his patio his terrace and his front veranda ... invented his own private climate and moved it stove bathroom bed clothing kitchen and all into his automobile [...] the entire earth one unbroken machined de-mountained dis-rivered expanse of concrete paving” (298). This is the Marshal’s proleptic glimpse of the degeneracy of America forty years on., articulated in the course of a fateful conversation with his son. Here Keen Butterworth insists that one can make too much of Faulkner’s allusions, that the Generalissimo’s “only resemblance to Caesar is in his role as military leader” (59), yet passages like the one just quoted suggest that Faulkner’s military leaders have a shrewd insight into the historical, social and legal issues that their respective republics have taken upon themselves to resolve. After all, the Marshal resembles Caesar in many ways: they both knew the importance of attaining high office, entertaining the masses, redistributing the wealth, presenting a unified face to the world, encouraging republican sentiments, and ruthlessly putting down rebellions.

These satiric accounts augur ill for the future, and not only the future of the United States. An inert populace is only partly living. Violent spectacles, real and imagined, like the ones just cited, can only divert the moil for so long. Yet Faulkner refuses to discount the possibility of redemption. If we take seriously the proposition that *A Fable* is best read dialectically, Faulkner does have an alternative to this “all mod cons” view of American life in the 1950s, and it is pronounced with a foreign accent, a French one in this case. Before the novel concludes, there is one more list, one more matrix of allusions, this time to places as opposed to people. Here is the passage in question (the Generalissimo is speaking to his son about one of the wonders of the modern world): “Paris, which is the world as empyrean as the sum of its constellations—not that Paris in which any man can have all of these—Rome, Cathay and Xanadu—provided he is connected a little and does not need to count his money” (294). Baiae is added to the list on the same page. So

what's so great about Paris, and how does it differ from the exotic alternatives mentioned? And what does this have to do with knowing world history and trying to change it?

First of all, Paris is there and the other places mentioned on the list are not. Rome is a ruin, or rather multiple ruins, a palimpsest of multiple ruins, different cultures and eras, and a monument to multiple histories, memorializing the clash between time and Roman engineering. Cathay was never built, let alone ruined. It is a legend, a fiction, a ghostly, non-existent country that travelers, some unwittingly, some not, located on a map beyond China itself. Xanadu was the famous summer house built by Kublai Khan in the thirteenth century. It comes to us, not so much from history as from literature. In Coleridge's famous attempt to write up his vision of Xanadu ("not even a poet's rounded and completed dream but a drug-sodden English one's lightning-bolt which electrocuted him with the splendor he could not even face long enough to get it down" [294]), he drew on Samuel Purchas's account of the golden city, and Purchas in turn borrowed from Marco Polo's description. Baiae, a coastal resort on the Bay of Naples in classical times, was where Julius Caesar had a villa. It became a watchword for all kinds of licentiousness and vice and was eventually destroyed by volcanic activity. What remains of the city is now mostly underwater. The Romantic poets rhapsodized about its loss.

If we think about Paris in this context, we have to remind ourselves that first and foremost it is not a ruin; it survived the Napoleonic Wars, the Franco-Prussian War, and World War I without substantial material loss (Hausmann's *blitzkrieg* was something else). The past builds itself in myths that have grown up around these events and an aristocratic enclave is born. It is the city of the Enlightenment as well. D'Alembert, Diderot, Voltaire, and Rousseau published their books and found their readership here. Yet in *A Fable* Paris is also a city full of working people with calluses on their hands, like the ones executed in 1871 after the Prussians successfully besieged Paris and defeated the Communards. It's the first democratic European state. The tomb of the Unknown Soldier is Paris as well, and in one sense *A Fable* is Faulkner's grotesque account of how that soldier got there. The City of Light burns brighter than all the rest but it too can get lost in some fairly dark shadows, become a tunnel at the end of the light, as Abba Eban once described the situation in the Middle East.

Conclusion

I have argued that the lists of names Faulkner uses in *A Fable* should encourage our students to do some “fierce thinking,” to make some important connections, and to rethink critics’ pronouncements about Faulkner’s loss of control over his material. The lists reflect history but they change it too. They annotate to explain. Susan Stewart suggests that “The gesture of allusion is more than a mere trope, shaped by a nostalgia for the lost event; the object serves only as a souvenir of our knowing. In allusiveness we seek to follow the trace of the event to its origin.” Very Faulknerian this, but Stewart goes on to suggest that “The devices of allusion and the devices of nostalgia work by display and not by explanation” (1128-29), which seems too categorical for him somehow. In effect what he does is conflate the devices of allusion and the devices of nostalgia, in his idiosyncratic, anti-rational way. Such devices enable him to make the case for the importance of the past, in a congeries of encounters to which its shades are summoned, for which its names are called.

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William Matthew McCarter "Am I My Brother's Keeper?": Navigating the Color Line in William Faulkner's *Was*

Abstract: Slavery is America's Original Sin. Few authors have explored the relationship among slaves, slaveholders, and poor whites in the South than William Faulkner. This article explores how Faulkner develops those relationships in the short story, *Was*, the first chapter of his book, *Go Down, Moses*.

William Faulkner's novel, *Go Down, Moses*, is a collection of short stories that are put together as chapters of a novel. In the book, Faulkner opens the New South up to the reader and shows readers what lies beyond the moonlight and magnolias of his native Mississippi. Faulkner intended the reader to read the entire book as a novel rather than as a collection of short stories. In the opening story, *Was*, Faulkner shows the reader how the novel's main character, Ike McCaslin, came into being. In this story, Faulkner explains how Ike's father met and then married Ike's mother, Sophonsiba Beauchamp. Ike's parentage is the explicit message of the chapter. However, there are many questions that Faulkner brings out in the story that help to elucidate the implicit message in the story: America's original sin of slavery.

Specifically, *Was* focuses on Buck and Buddy, the McCaslin twins, and their failure to function as proper slaveholders in a slaveholding society. *Was* illustrates the myriad implications of the color line in Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi, and by extension, the South as a whole. *Was* begins with the narrator explaining that this was a story that Cass Edmonds told his younger cousin, Ike McCaslin and that the story took place long before Ike McCaslin was born.

After establishing the context of the story, the narrator places the reader in the middle of the action. When Cass Edmonds and Uncle Buck run back to the house, they find Uncle Buddy cussing in the kitchen because a fox and several dogs are running loose. While Uncle Buddy's turmoil with the fox and the dogs is indeed a distraction, Cass Edmonds and Uncle Buck come back to the house with a purpose: "Tomey's Turl had run again," they explained to Uncle Buddy (9). It is here that the reader learns that Tomey's Turl is a runaway slave. This incident tells the reader that *Was* takes place before the Civil War.

Their urgency for tracking down a runaway slave seems perfectly reasonable for the time. Uncle Buck says, "Tomey's Turl has broke out again. Give me and Cass some breakfast quick" (9). However, Uncle Buck follows that by saying, "We might just barely catch him before he gets there" (9). The dialogue tells the reader that Tomey's Turl had run before and that

Uncle Buck knows where he is running. A few sentences later, the narrator explains, "they knew exactly where Tomey's Turl had gone, he went there every time he could slip off" (9). Typically, when hearing about a runaway slave, the reader would not expect the slave to slip off "every time he could." The narrator clarifies this by saying, "Tomey's Turl would go there to hang around Mr. Hubert's girl, Tennie, until somebody came and got him" (9). It is then that we find out that Uncle Buck's urgency is more because he sees capturing Tomey's Turl as a game than because he is concerned about his runaway slave.

Uncle Buck knows where he is going because he has done this before. However, Uncle Buck does not appear to be angry. He just does not want to get bested by Tomey's Turl in this cat and mouse game that the two play. This brings up some interesting questions for the reader: Why isn't Uncle Buck more concerned about the runaway slave. How is it that Tomey's Turl runs off multiple times and appears to have suffered no consequences for doing so? This clearly is no ordinary story of a plantation owner's interactions with his slave.

After setting up this conflict, the narrator then explains that Uncle Buck could not sell Tomey's Turl to Mr. Hubert because Mr. Hubert said that he "not only wouldn't buy Tomey's Turl" but that he would not have "that damn white half-McCaslin on his place even as a free gift" (10). The narrator goes on to add that "if somebody didn't go and get Tomey's Turl right away, Mr. Hubert would fetch him back himself" (10). If Mr. Hubert brought Tomey's Turl back, he would want to stay awhile. This visit would be problematic for Uncle Buck and Uncle Buddy because they moved all the slaves into the big house and lived in a cabin by themselves (10). This event creates many questions for the reader. Why wouldn't Mr. Hubert buy Tomey's Turl? What exactly is a "damn white half-McCaslin" (10)? These further complicates the question about Uncle Buck and Uncle Buddy's relationship with the slaves on their plantation. What slave owner moves into a small cabin and lets the slaves live in the plantation house?

Finally, after finishing their breakfast, they leave so they can catch Tomey's Turl. The narrator explains that "Uncle Buck put on his necktie while they were running toward the lot to catch the horses." Later, the narrator adds, "the only time he wore the necktie was on Tomey Turl's account" (11). After leaving the McCaslin plantation, Uncle Buck sees Tomey's Turl about three miles from Mr. Hubert's gate. Tomey's Turl is riding a mule ahead of him. Uncle Buck tries to catch up with Tomey's Turl on his horse, but Tomey's Turl escapes. The playfulness of the competition comes out in the narrative when Faulkner writes, "he had never seen old Jake go that fast, and nobody had ever known Tomey's Turl to go faster than his natural walk, even riding a mule" (12). The narrator explains that "Tomey's Turl should have

jumped down a run for it afoot as soon as he saw them" and that "maybe Tomey's Turl had been running off from Uncle Buck for so long that he had even got used to running away like a white man would do it" (12). Uncle Buck's first encounter with Tomey's Turl illustrates the playfulness of the chase. The narrator's choice of the phrase "even got used to running away like a white man would do it" (12) illustrates that Tomey's Turl was not too afraid of being caught. It is also the second time that Faulkner used the term "white" to describe Tomey's Turl.

When Uncle Buck reaches Mr. Hubert's plantation, he greets Mr. Hubert and Mr. Hubert's sister, Sophonsiba Beauchamp. When he explains to Mr. Hubert that Tomey's Turl had run off again, Mr. Hubert responds by saying, "We'll find him after dinner" (13). Here is where the reader learns of another twist in the plot. Earlier in the story, the narrator explained that "it was always he [Cass Edmonds] and Uncle Buck who went to fetch Tomey's Turl" and that Uncle Buddy never went anywhere although he "could have risked it ten times as much as Uncle Buck could have dared" (10). It is here in the story that the reader learns that Sophonsiba Beauchamp is an old maid and that Mr. Hubert had been trying to marry her off for years. We also learn that she has a thing for Uncle Buck. That is why Uncle Buddy "could have risked it ten times as much as Uncle Buck could have dared" (10). However, the reader wonders if maybe Uncle Buck "doth protest too much" about not liking Sophonsiba because he always wore a necktie when he came over there, and that was the only time he ever wore a necktie.

Mr. Hubert invited Uncle Buck to have supper and reminded him of the dowry that went with Miss Sophonsiba. However, the narrator explains that "it did not seem as if they were going to eat" and that "Mr. Hubert and Uncle Buck had a toddy" (13), and then "he and Uncle Buck had another toddy." A short time later, Miss Sophonsiba came outside with a tray that had another toddy on it. At this point, all that Uncle Buck and Mr. Hubert have done is drink whiskey. Meanwhile, Tomey's Turl is running around the plantation somewhere.

After doing all this drinking, Mr. Hubert says that he was going to take a nap and then Uncle Buck "drank the toddy and said if Mr. Hubert were going to lay down, he would lay down a while too, since from the way things looked Tomey's Turl was fixing to give them a long hard race" (16). Here, Faulkner illustrates how there is no real urgency in Uncle Buck's finding Tomey's Turl. After waking up from their nap, Uncle Buck joined Mr. Hubert in the springhouse and "sat with his feet in the water," claiming that soon "it would be cool enough for a race" (17). Thus far, all Uncle Buck has done since arriving at the Beauchamp Plantation

was drink liquor, take a nap, and wade in the springhouse until it was “cool enough for a race” (17). Instead of immediately looking for Tomey's Turl, Mr. Hubert and Uncle Buck came out onto the back gallery," with Miss Sophonsiba right behind them with the toddy tray" (17).

Later on, that afternoon, after they had waited for it to cool off and drank more liquor, they came over the crest of a hill "just in time to see Tomey's Turl away out across the flat, almost to the woods"(18). Mr. Hubert then says, "we'll get him tonight though," by going "around Tennie's house about midnight" (18). Uncle Buck does not want to wait, so Mr. Hubert sends one of his slaves after a fyce. Later on, he returns with "a little bob-tailed black fyce and a new bottle of whiskey" (19). Before long, Mr. Hubert says, "Let's go eat supper" (20).

Uncle Buck and Hubert Beauchamp then get sidetracked from their mission of capturing Tomey's Turl and start gambling. Uncle Buck took some heavy losses and then asked Cass to go get Uncle Buddy, who was supposed to be the best card player in Jefferson. Cass Edmonds brings Uncle Buddy to Mr. Hubert's, and they strike up a deal: If Uncle Buddy wins, then the McCaslin's get Tennie, and Hubert Beauchamp must pay Uncle Buck five hundred dollars. If he loses, then Beauchamp gets Tomey's Turl. Meanwhile, Tomey's Turl was "squatting against the wall just outside the door" (31) and Hubert Beauchamp even calls Tomey's Turl into the room to cut the cards. This illustrates the playfulness behind Tomey's Turl running off. He was never very far away from Uncle Buck and Hubert Beauchamp and when they need him to cut the cards, he is right outside. The narrator explains to the reader that "the light was moving up Tomey's Turl's arms that were supposed to be black but were not quite white" and that his Sunday shirt "wasn't quite [white] either" and that he "put it on every time he ran away just as Uncle Buck put on the necktie each time he went to bring him back" (32).

While slavery is America's original sin, and it is hugely problematic to be gambling with the lives of slaves and women, the story ends well. Tennie Beauchamp got to move back to the McCaslin plantation with Tomey's Turl so he would not need to run off anymore to go and see her. Uncle Buck did not need to put on the necktie and get Tomey's Turl anymore. Later, he and Miss Sophonsiba married, and they had a child – Ike McCaslin. Hubert Beauchamp got precisely what he wanted: he married off his sister Sophonsiba. The story, *Was*, took place many years before Ike McCaslin was born but is the historical antecedent to his coming into being. That was why the story was remarkable in terms of the development of the novel's protagonist, Ike McCaslin.

However, the story also shows the depth of America's original sin of slavery. From the beginning, Faulkner was hinting about Tomy's Turl's racial identity. Early in the story, Hubert Beauchamp calls him "that damn white half-McCaslin." When Tomy's Turl first outruns Uncle Buck just outside the Beauchamp plantation, Faulkner explains that Tomy's Turl was "running away like a white man would do it" (10). Later, Faulkner describes Tomy's Turl's arms claiming they "were supposed to be black but were not quite white" (32). Tomy's Turl is very light-skinned. This skin tone suggests that he had some white ancestors in his family tree. At first, when Mr. Hubert calls him "that damn white half-McCaslin," one just thinks that he is talking about his racial makeup. However, Mr. Hubert calls him a "half-McCaslin." He does not call him "half white." There is a big difference.

After considering these details, one must conclude that Tomy's Turl is somehow related to the McCaslin family. Later in the novel, Faulkner makes this more explicit: Turl is the son of Tomasina and the McCaslin family patriarch, Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin. That would make Tomy's Turl Uncle Buck and Uncle Buddy's brother. No wonder Uncle Buck seems so carefree about hunting down his runaway slave: It was his brother. That also might explain the cat and mouse games that Tomy's Turl and Uncle Buck play when Tomy's Turl runs off. They are brothers, so they do not want to hurt one another. It is only the color line that keeps them from experiencing one another as a full family member.

Uncle Buck and Uncle Buddy did not know what to do about their slaves. They moved into a small cabin and let the slaves live in the plantation house because that made sense to them – they did not need to live in a giant house. They did not know what to do about Tomy's Turl, either. They could not claim him as a brother because of the color line. However, they must have felt compelled to help him somehow. In the end, they could do that by winning Tennie for him in a card game and winning Uncle Buck a wife, too.

This story illustrates a facet of slavery that is rarely seen or discussed: What happens when fundamentally good people are trapped in a morally corrupt system? Moreover, how do they function within that system? Uncle Buck and Uncle Buddy seem like they are good people. Because of the color line, they must gamble with people's lives so that their brother can find the happiness that comes with being in a loving relationship. While it is wrong to bet the lives of people on a poker game, they must have felt as if they had noble intentions. The behavior of Uncle Buck and Uncle Buddy demonstrates just how monstrous the system of slavery was to everyone and not just to those who were enslaved.

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Gail Shanley Corso, "A Vehicle of Saving Grace": Pauline's Enduring Presence in Alice McDermott's *After This*

Abstract: In this psychological analysis of Alice McDermott's *After This*, published in 2006, the nature of nurturance within the family is analyzed. The role of a caring lifetime friend surfaces as instrumental in integrating some semblance of peace in a household that is fraught with the debilitating effects of undiagnosed and untreated trauma that the father post World War II continues to experience. Through analysis of divergent attachment styles for each of the characters and the complication of the father's unaddressed post-traumatic stress and ensuing depression, the life choices and traces of trauma for each of the children can be understood. Through the lifetime connection of one sole friend to the mother and lastborn child, however, this family receives much needed moral support after each hardship, and ultimately learns from her, and acknowledges how they, too, can emulate her self-sacrifice and nurturance to ease their friend's pain.

Keywords: *After This*, Alice McDermott, Regina Coeli, family connection, friendship, trauma, attachment style, depression

In an interview with Alice McDermott at her office at Johns Hopkins University on May 10, 2011, I asked her about one of the seemingly less significant characters in her 2006 novel, *After This*. This character, Pauline, a co-worker of Mary's before marriage to John Keane, like the fairy godmother in fairy tales, or even the old crone in folktales, despite her own problems, provides much needed support to Mary through decades of her troubled relationship with her husband, John. In an aside by the narrator, we learn that she becomes the sounding board for much of Mary's grief after the loss of their oldest child, Jacob, a casualty of the Vietnam War, and through several unexpected challenges posed by the three other children within her friend's family. McDermott's novel of the Keane family's trials and tribulations during turbulent years of change from the 1940s to the 1970s becomes a microcosm of other struggling working-class families seeking harmony within their home and a better life for their children. Aspiring to achieve the American Dream, this family like many others from this time, wished to achieve individual success, to live in a home with some open space, and to experience some personal wealth and autonomy, or freedom. They little considered any possible effects of the father's unresolved grief from his experiences during the War, nor any effects of their isolation from other extended family members in what appears to be their isolated existence in suburbia. Pauline, though, an outsider to the Keane's DNA, remains steadfast and loyal to them; she acts more like a trusted family member despite her not receiving that similar acceptance from her friend, her friend's husband, and even the first three children— Jacob, Michael, and Annie. Not until the birth of the lastborn child, Clare, does Pauline at last receive

that much needed attachment, this form of unconditional love from the newborn, Clare, and then gradually from her lifelong friend, Mary.

McDermott had explained to me during our dialogue how for some strange reason, almost like the Keane's own attempts in the novel to dismiss Pauline, she, too, could not write Pauline out of the story:

“Her [Pauline's] role is interesting because I think she does become sort of a vehicle of grace across..., and that was something that I didn't even expect to happen to her. I found that I just couldn't get rid of her.... Oh God! She was really annoying, and I really would have liked to write her right out of the book. But she held on and had a role, a very important role to play.” (Corso, “Go Ask Alice: Dialogue with Alice McDermott on May 10, 2011, 62)

Through this character, estranged from her own family, as the narrator explains, McDermott provides a lens into recognizing the significance of Pauline's attachment to this other family in a lifelong relationship that redefines the meaning of close family ties. That lifelong caring friend shows needed emotional support about which characters in the novel remain unaware or simply take for granted. Such a need can be understood as Pauline's anxious-preoccupied attachment style. For adults, such as Pauline who in later incidents in the plot shows some serious disturbances, this attachment becomes evident. Courtney Armstrong explains this attachment style for persons who become “preoccupied with how to get attention and affection from other people. They are sensitive to the slightest hint of rejection and jealousy in relationships. They fear they'll be abandoned if they don't stay in close proximity to their partners and can be quite intrusive and demanding in relationships” (40). Through incidents in the plot we see how Pauline ingratiates herself, perhaps even “intrudes” into the lives of the Keanes.

Unlike Pauline's attachment style, Mary and her husband John's attachment style can be identified as avoidant-dismissive. Such adults with the avoiding and dismissive attachment style seem very in control or self reliant “because they rarely turn to others for help and [they] withdraw from relationships under stress” (Armstrong 36). In addition to the Keane's detached style for relating to Pauline, John Keane suffers from physical and psychological effects of the trauma he had experienced during World War II. From the outset of Mary and John's marriage, Pauline senses that something is amiss in this couple's relationship, and only a slight description of her body language before their wedding suggests that keen insight. Later

in the novel, the family suffers from the death of the eldest child during the Vietnam War. While this novel is very much about this middle-class American family, the Keanes, it chronicles more so Pauline's journey toward a more secure attachment with this family as the trusted empathic listener, a role that psychoanalysis has come to understand and value as part of the healing processes for those who have experienced loss of love, loss of a loved one, and even a sense of estrangement from others.

Such losses while minimally understood during these decades that span the plot of *After This* now have come to be understood as causing a person's even more intense emotional distress or a psychological disorder. When depression of a parent is untreated, as is the case with John Keane, the children begin to act out even at an early age. Three of the Keane's children show signs of intergenerational trauma. Suzanne Mayer describes through several cases the effects of unresolved trauma passed down from one generation to the next. Issues when ignored and when there is an absence of mental health support persist as "the images associated with the trauma [then] are part of the heritage of the survivors" (192). The wounds caused by the father's unresolved post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are passed on to the sons and one daughter as they attempt to create their own lives apart from their parents and the place of their upbringing. Both Michael and Annie relocate in their search for their own happiness in a haven removed from the unnamed distress when they lived in the same home with their father. Each attempts to escape from that reality.

By the end of the novel, however, McDermott allows the reader to sense hope for both Pauline and the youngest Keane daughter, Clare, who still lives at home. When Clare finds herself in a quandary—a pregnant teenager, Pauline intervenes to provide a support system. The relationship between Clare and Pauline has been reciprocal as Clare cares for and loves Pauline as much as Pauline has loved this child from their first moment together. The infant and Pauline very naturally attach to one another, as the older sister, Annie, observes in what seems to be a reflective comment made to Michael at a non-specified time in the future. Pauline intercedes on behalf of the child Clare from her infancy and unlike the other family members' perceptions of Pauline, Clare recognizes Pauline's caring nature and love. As in McDermott's other novels, especially in *Someone*, as Michael O'Connell observes, patterns of such grace surface in the characters' lives even when the other characters neglect to understand these behaviors, or they dismiss them as trifling. Through Pauline's presence and her patterns of loyalty, this sacramental sensibility of grace is evidenced in *After This*.

McDermott seems to have created through this unrelenting Pauline, a character who epitomizes ongoing forgiveness, mercy, and unconditional love. Mary Keane's co-worker and lifetime confidante reveals the characteristic of misericordia and fraternitas—her unrelenting choice to care for the Keanes in compassionate ways that she could. Through her love and acts of mercy, and when in her moment of need, they finally accept her as part of their own family unit. She becomes more than a friend; by the end of the novel, she through her unconditional love for them acts in a way commensurate with that of their own guardian angel, their own empathic, loving support system. When Pauline becomes most vulnerable, both Mary and John finally realize their needed role as Pauline's caretaker, and they take needed actions on her behalf, as Mary though "Just a friend" is the most trusted person in Pauline's life. Mary and John become Pauline's health advocate and make sure that her life will be on track when she recuperates. We begin then to understand the significance of this novel's title, *After This*. This phrase, part of the line from the Catholic prayer, "Salve Regina" or "Hail, Holy Queen" often added to the conclusion for praying the rosary, reads, "And after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary." Pauline, a disavowed Catholic, through her words and actions shows her felt sense of the contemporary person's need to belong- to love and to be loved. Pauline lives her life with her loving and caring actions not quite aligning with Catholic belief, yet through her maternal and nurturing actions, the Catholic sacramental view of reality is shown- "the world, and everything in it, [that] can lead one to experience grace, or to have an experience of the divine" (O'Connell 500). She has modelled for Mary and John how to act on behalf of a lifelong friend. In the lives of these rather ordinary people, glimpses of grace allow us to find hope even faith during trying times, or "light amidst the shadows" (502).

Through the four segments of the novel, the reader can detect Pauline's muted role as a healer and peacemaker, a role that allows for hope. Even at the end of the novel, Pauline intervenes on behalf of the Keane's fourth child, Clare, and her boyfriend, Gregory, to address their unplanned for pregnancy and sudden marriage. She provides a solution for the teenagers' quandary of where to live, and how to survive without their families' support. Pauline without hesitation volunteers herself as caregiver, so the young couple can exist as Clare's parents relocate from Long Island to Florida. At the end of the novel when Gregory's mother asks about where they will live when married, Clare reveals in her response the caring confidence that she already has established with Pauline:

“We thought we’d make an apartment, out of the basement. Until we can afford something more.” She smiled, as if it all had been arranged already, as if it were all working out quite well already. “You and Pauline will be here to help me with the baby, especially if I want to take some classes at Malloy. And if you guys want to move to Florida, well, maybe by then”— it was all part of what she and Pauline had planned, whispering in the lost hour— “we can rent this house from you, or even buy it, if we have jobs. You won’t have to sell it to strangers, anyway.” She looked at Pauline. “We can keep the house, and, if Pauline wants to, she can stay.” (McDermott 271-272)

Once Mary Keane’s confidante, Pauline now appears to serve as the loving maternal caregiver to Clare in her hour of need. Clare recognizes her and Pauline’s need to love and to be loved. To her, Pauline is a godsend, one who probably had rehearsed the young Clare on what to suggest to her parents and to her future in laws to persuade them to this solution for the young persons’ dilemma.

Pauline has witnessed other major life and death events in the Keane family, and it is through her presence, that Mary Keane coasts through dilemmas, “breaches,” emotional pain, and even, serious trauma. The narrator describes Pauline as the all-knowing confidante to Mary, the person who knows unfiltered stores about each of the Keane family members:

A repository, Pauline and her laugh, for every moment in their marriage when Mary Keane had not loved her husband, when love itself had seemed a misapprehension, a delusion (a stranger standing outside of Schrafft’s transformed into an answered prayer), and marriage –which Pauline had had sense enough to spurn – simply an awkward pact with a stranger, any stranger, John or George, Tom, Dick, or Harry.

A repository, Pauline and her laugh, her knowing eye, for all that Mary Keane should have kept to herself. (103)

At times a sense of shame for Mary is mitigated by Pauline’s presence and tolerance. Through fraternity or lifelong connection to this one character, one who serves as the empathic, trusted listener, at least one of the Keane’s children also seems on course to break somewhat from two generations of unrecognized and unaddressed trauma caused by sudden death of two young men during different wars. By the end of the novel, Pauline and Clare maintain the family tie in close geographic space and remain grounded in strong emotional ties; the other family members are scattered to the wind, or plan to reconstruct their lives elsewhere.

Others have written about the complex imagery and detailed description of ordinary women and the choices they have made in their lives. Margaret Hallisy explains that *After This* “is centered on the physicality of women’s lives and the innate spirituality of those lives” (8). This interpretation while excellent omits a significant aspect of the story-- the profound insights into the male characters and their experiences, and the overall effects of unaddressed trauma upon themselves, and other members of their families. Each member of the Keane family is carefully portrayed over the decades—not just the women in relation to gender, life choices, and their spirituality. Major incidents in the plot relate to John Keane’s traumatic loss of a much younger soldier, his own replacement, during World War II, the loss of three of his toes during the war, and then approximately twenty years after he returned from the Battle at Ardennes, the Keane’s loss of their firstborn son, Jacob, during the Vietnam War. This son, named after the young man, Jacob, who had died during World War II, shows the father’s inescapable grief from the loss of his younger replacement who lived in that role for less than 24 hours. This traumatic loss, and perhaps John’s ensuing and unresolved shame and guilt for having left the young, inadequately-trained soldier on his own, haunts him. This day in the Ardennes consumes John’s being, leaving him lost in the horrors of war and the death of this young man.

Once early in the novel, during a severe storm when the family was sheltered in place in their basement, John tells a war story of that day when his replacement was killed. During a severe storm, when the family shelters in their basement as they fear that a willow tree could uproot and crash onto their home, John Keane tells the story of Jacob’s namesake— “In that foxhole in the Ardennes in the winter of ’44 or ’45, the worst yet to come— more death and the bitter sun, shrapnel, three toes of his own lost in the cold” (55) —when the other Jacob replacement was killed. The narrator states how Mary questions to herself the wisdom of John’s having told her and the then three children this story when they all were fearful during the storm, especially when his son Jacob already had shown his fear that the storm would kill them.

Charles Scott, distinguished professor of philosophy and founder of Vanderbilt University’s Center for Ethics gives a possible explanation of why a person might share such a chilling story when triggered by some other frightening event. By explaining functions of parts of the brain after a traumatizing incident, the reader can identify the effects of this fearful incident upon one’s psychological well-being when experiencing another fearful incident. In the plot when the storm triggers John’s fear for loss of his family, he is compelled to tell his

wife and young children about incidents from the Battle of the Bulge that caused over 100,000 casualties, one of which was his own replacement, Jacob. His elder son then learns of his namesake, which probably intensified the child's own fear and sense of eeriness about his own identity. The narrator explains how Mary not only reflects upon the inappropriateness of her husband's having told the children about the young Jewish soldier's sudden death that day, but she considers how their second-born son, Michael, would somehow use details from the story and even Jacob's fears against him to humiliate him: "Michael would surely use it against his brother. There was always the possibility of bad dreams" (McDermott 56). Michael's jealousy of his brother Jacob intensifies his cruelty toward him. It seems to become an indirect way for Michael to gain favor with the father who seems critical of his elder son's gentler nature. John Keane responds to the children and to Mary in other ways that show his detached, indifferent, or inappropriate feelings toward his family members. While John Keane might evidence a detached attachment style, it becomes complicated by some unresolved trauma that he experienced during the War. Scott explains the complexity of trauma, especially that which is unrecognized and untreated:

Traumas persist— remain as presented— in symptoms that carry forward the shock, in manners of sorrow and mourning, in phobias, obsessions, self-pity. These are all manners of memory in which a terrible shock or injury is infused into the lives later and after the initiating event. It is infused as well by a dimension of detachment and indifference, a dimension that comes with the differentiating forces of what we call trauma. (cited in Golden and Bergo 115)

Throughout the novel John Keane's sense of detachment and indifference seems to relate to his own unaddressed trauma. Scott identifies how talk "with our friends, our therapists, ourselves" and our need "for sympathy. Often, for understanding. We cry and grieve. We drag ourselves through days and nights...Mostly we want to live" (123) indicate one's need to be heard and to connect. Courtney Armstrong explains the devastating effects that combat trauma has upon its survivors. In 2018 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs estimated that "only 11 to 20 percent of combat veterans meet the full diagnostic criteria of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome [PTSS]" but the stressors of war are known to contribute to a host of emotional problems, such as "depression, anxiety, insomnia, substance abuse, and readjustment difficulties" (173). Aside from current therapies to desensitize "soldiers to sensory reminders of war," Armstrong explains how veterans report that they are far more

harmful by “the moral injuries of war” with several examples, such as being unable to save another soldier’s life, guilt or remorse over killing the enemy, feeling demoralized by a sense of societal disregard, and finally, a lack of government support— “deeper demons that keep them awake at night” (174). John Keane’s peculiar behavior in several incidents suggests to the reader that he suffers from PTSS which could account for his sense of being detached from his wife, Mary. Pauline remains steadfast though as the family companion; she listens, and she takes action when needed.

Through the four segments of the novel, the third-person narrator reveals the inner thoughts and longings of the characters and describes specific incidents that show how John Keane’s unaddressed survivor’s guilt and depression affect members of his family: his cruel, obstinate behavior is imitated by Michael the second born son, while Jacob, the somewhat effeminate firstborn is almost coerced into the military to follow in his father’s manly footsteps; Annie gravitates toward breaching from her Catholic beliefs and asserts later in the novel her need to separate from family, as the narrator explains her detached identity:

At the end of the year, when she moved to London with him [the stranger she had met], quitting school, quitting home, dealing her parents (it could not be helped) another blow, she would recall the story Professor Wallace had told them that night, she would begin to see the wisdom of it– the wisdom of scattering, each to a different corner of whatever shelter they had found, so that should the worst happen, happen again, it would not take them all. (McDermott 250-251)

Annie’s realization “that it would not be the life she had wanted” (250) shows her attempts to escape from the deep sorrow of loss, and her home without shelter from her father’s unaddressed trauma from the War.

Clare seems less questioning of her home as a haven though she fumbles into her own sexuality as a result of peer beliefs and cultural mores about sexual freedom. Pauline perhaps soon to be left behind by the Keanes with their plans for retirement to Florida, finds her place as the caregiver for Clare, her soon-to-be husband, Gregory, and their unborn child. Their need for support sustains Pauline’s need to connect in her role as caregiver to the third generation of the Keanes and promises to provide stability and love for her and for them in their home as a haven.

Segment I of the Novel

In the first segment of the novel, Mary and Pauline are introduced as working-class citizens. Through the women's tedious tasks of transcribing their stenographic notes of others' decisions into typed-up reports, the women break the monotony by gossiping. Pauline especially likes telling these kinds of stories. At lunch each day Mary lights a candle at church to pray for those serving in World War II, and even after the war, she continues this daily visit to church to pray for "if not a better life than this daily lonely one, a better way to be content with it" (14). Pauline, we learn, remains in the rear of the Church as she is "no longer on speaking terms with Catholicism" (20). Another part of a ritual prayer, "Feed my lambs," is an expression that Mary reflects on when she considers, "What is the cost of a little kindness toward someone who found her pleasure in being unkind?" (15). This is Mary's understanding of Pauline before Pauline enters into lifetime connection with Mary's family. Mary shows her condescending acceptance of Pauline's delight in office gossip and her own tolerance for Pauline's uninvited presence. She begins to think of Pauline's delight in gossiping as a way to ameliorate any shame or pain any of the women in the office secretarial pool might feel—"of the decadence and the decay, the homeliness, the paucity of good intentions that plagued the world? Evidence that no one else's life, despite whatever false appearances, was any better than her own" (McDermott 13). Pauline breaks her arm before Mary and John wed, so in the photos, she appears with a "reluctant smile." This break or "breach" shows how their relationship now will have another person around whom Pauline must learn to navigate. The other repeated phrase "the march of time" begins to surface (McDermott 13) which indicates how Pauline is the witness to the Keanes' lives before marriage—John Keene at around age 40 and Mary at about age 30 through four subsequent decades until the 1970s. By the end of segment 1, however, we see how Mary, as a newlywed, wonders about her husband's affect in his response to sensory experiences, to those around him, and even to her:

Did he hear it, she wonders as she glimpsed her husband's face through half-closed eyes and saw what was quickly becoming a familiar look: a kind of determined concentration, a grimace to the lips, and a far-off gaze to his eyes that marked a consummation that she was beginning to suspect turned him in on himself far more than it would ever turn him out toward her.... Does he even see my face? (26-27)

This early observation by Mary of John's detached emotional response to her even during intimate moments signals some psychological distress that Pauline might have noticed even

earlier than Mary. John shows signs of his unrecognized trauma from having witnessed the deaths of many other soldiers and from considering how his replacement Jacob very well could have been him that day in June 1944.

Segment II of the Novel

In segment II of the novel, ten or more years later, John and Mary now are parents to three children with Mary expecting another. John's behavior during the incident at the beach reveals further his impulsivity and rush to anger with his children, and again his poor judgment when he tells a war story to his wife and children. Other incidents show his indifference to his family, his sudden impulsive anger, and his own willfulness to treat his own injured leg, the one with three toes missing from that day in the Battle of Ardennes. Through each of these incidents, John Keane's words and behaviors suggest that some deep moral wound clouds his ability to discern when it is safe to enjoy a day at the beach with his family, when it is appropriate to explain to Jake the origin of his namesake, and how he responds in a sudden fit of anger to reprimand his sons when they banter with each other. This early incidents in the plot show the Keane home life as anything but a shelter from some emotional abuse by their father.

Aside from John's having told his family about Jacob's namesake, earlier in the day, he persuaded the very pregnant Mary to neglect to take the children to Sunday mass, so they could venture to Jones Beach on a day without lifeguards with a hurricane in the South causing the ocean to be rough and the wind to be wild. This risk taking with his family at Jones Beach after Labor Day shows through the details of the treacherous waves, the gusty wind, and the isolation of this family that something is amiss with him and any wise paternal instincts. One telling detail when John relocates "the wool blanket and moved it farther inside the dunes, to a shallow valley where even the sound of the moving air seemed suddenly to retreat" (32) may come from his storehouse of memories about his war experiences in a foxhole in the Ardennes. That day even their sons play war games with their little action figures, and when they begin to fight, John responds aggressively both in his words and actions. Michael's response to his father is described by the narrator as revealing the boy's shock:

Michael— it was not the fear on his face, only a kind of disbelief, as if this tall, red-faced, shouting man had materialized out of the wind— [and] looked up to say, "Just

playing. I was just playing.” But his father shook his arm with the litany of his transgressions: “Hurt your brother, hurt your sister, ruined the day.” He finally tossed aside the boy’s arm as if it were something to be thrown away. (McDermott 40).

The children, especially Michael, see his father “as if he were an utter stranger, materialized out of the salt air” (40). During this incident in the plot the narrator explains how John “did not love his oldest child [Jacob] as he should” (45). John’s verbal microaggressions against this son for his delicate facial features and for the boy’s fears are described:

There was the ache in his heart, and now over his shoulder and down his arm, as he caught the reflection of the boy’s pale cheek and full girlish lips, his dry mouth hanging open in fearful expectation of what?– “What are you afraid of?” More derisively than he’d meant it. (46)

John Keane’s microaggressions are internalized by his younger son, Michael, who taunts his older brother, and as we learn later in the novel, never experiences happiness.

The tone of the father’s words, his body language, his silences show his cruelty and even contempt for his gentle son, Jacob, and his outbursts of anger instill fear in the other children, even in Mary. Family life is edgy, and “As suddenly as the peace of the morning [that day at the beach] had turned to bedlam, peace returned” when the father suggests that they eat the food that they packaged for the day. Just as they were feeling the “brunt of the hurricane,” (45) the Keanes were experiencing the brunt of their father’s swift and sharp shifts in mood. Michael picks up on his father’s disdain for Jacob’s fears, and even “some weakness in his brother” that the father had already complained about, yet Michael would “still be reprimanded for it as severely as if he alone had let the cat out of the bag” (47). It appears that Jacob may be thought of as homosexual without the narrator stating it explicitly, but by innuendo, John’s disappointment in him is shown.

Again Keane shows his unease when Mary Keane receives the assistance of a neighbor, Mr. Persichetti, for her unexpected at-home birth of Clare. Persichetti serves as a character foil for John. The narrator describes him as the living proof of an ordinary person who was an angel or saint, and who despite his own troubles with his children, cared for Mary Keane and her baby, born six weeks before its due date. Knowing full well that the infant might not survive, this neighbor, a registered nurse who worked at the Creedmor mental health facility, maintained positive energy and hope for the best outcome: “he took her hand as if she were his child, or his own wife” (McDermott 64). Mr. Persichetti, like Pauline,

communicates with Mary, and responds to her real needs for compassion and understanding. Mary tells Mr. Persichetti to call Pauline to let her friend know that it is time earlier than anticipated for her to arrive to care for her family until she and baby Clare returned home.

Through incidents in the novel, McDermott shows how this unmarried woman, Pauline, holds undying love for the Keanes through the joys and sorrows in their lives, but she never asks anything in return; the narrator explains how the Keanes often are irritated by her presence. After Pauline cared for the family when Mary and baby Clare were in the hospital, Mary explains to her three older children what she perceives as their relationship to Pauline: “‘You must be kind,’ she said. ‘I know it’s not easy. Pauline’s not easy. But what would happen to her if there was no one willing to be kind?’” (78). The narrator then explains how Annie recalls to Michael this homecoming of Mary and infant Clare: “like the infant in a fairy tale, Clare’s fate, her future, at that moment, must have been sealed” (78). The narrator then comments upon what ultimately happens: “Long after all of them had scattered, Jacob, Michael, Annie, their mother and father, scattered – as their parents would have said– to the four winds, Clare would have Pauline, still a royal pain in the ass, in her care” (78). Pauline’s abiding support in the face of their loss of their eldest child, Jacob during the Vietnam War, the incidents their other children get involved in, the struggles that both John and Mary Keane, husband and wife, experience remain unrecognized by the family members other than by Clare. This seemingly less-significant character, Pauline, (one of two in this narrative, the other being Mr. Persichetti) reveals the restorative powers of fraternal love. In this novel about one family’s post World War II experiences through the 1970s, especially the experience of losing a child during wartime, Pauline functions as an instrument of peace for them through their challenges to their values and Catholic beliefs.

Segment III in the Novel

In yet another incident in the plot, John Keane’s silences with his wife and his begrudging attitude toward her are shown. When Mary and Annie need his assistance to return home from the 1964/65 World’s Fair in Flushing Meadows, Queens, his response to their having taken a later bus home shows his unhappiness about his discomfort, “unhappy about the late hour” (McDermott 101) for his having to drive them home from the bus terminal later than he wished, not his joy that his wife and daughter had enjoyed themselves seeing replications of places from around the world and the actual statue of the Pietà at the Vatican exhibit. Through this incident, the reader begins to see how John’s life is ruled by the clock.

For this day at the World's Fair to occur, Pauline watches the younger daughter, Clare, for a day of activities at her apartment. Not at all a boring day for the child, Pauline shares with Mary all of their engaging activities:

an excursion to the fabric store and lunch at a diner, two cute gingham aprons run up on the sewing machine, cookies baked and nails painted and a walk around the corner for Chinese— making each occasion sound, to Mary Keane, like a compensation Pauline had rendered, since attached to each one was some surprise, on Pauline's part, that Clare had done none of these things in exactly this way before. "And she said her mother only knew how to make Christmas cookies." (102)

Mary's response to her daughters Annie and Clare about this wonderful experience shows her own jealousy, her "unkindness" about Pauline's connection to the Keane's children, and states, "I wouldn't mind if Pauline got mad and stopped speaking to us for a while. It would be a nice break" (104). The narrator though comments that some special ties that bind would never allow any "untangling" of Mary's web of connection to Pauline, especially "Not with Clare already so fond of her" (104).

The most significant incident in the plot in relation to John Keane's unaddressed trauma occurs when he attempts to rig a pulley-style self remedy to alleviate the pain in his leg. This desire to control his fate and to resolve his own problem with his own solution shows his stubbornness and fear of being humiliated by others in the medical field for his physical weakness. While Pauline suspects that his pain is caused by problem in his spine rather than in his leg, John rationalizes that he is saving costs to provide for his family, but his damaged self esteem and sense of class consciousness cause him to seek self remedy at home. John's peculiar behavior as he struggles to maintain control adds another level of tension in the home. He wears his combat boots just as he has done for two decades of housekeeping chores. The narrator also reveals John Keane's inner conflict in the script that he tells himself: "he had wasted his life with painting and gardening and leaf raking. He had squandered his time" (McDermott 120-121). He negatively perseverates that he has been wasting his time these past two decades. As he reflects upon his brother's widow and their daughter's ongoing avoidance of him due to the different levels of wealth between his family and theirs, he experiences exclusion due to classism, yet another unrecognized assault upon his dignity and sense of pride (124). He is sensitive to this offense in their rejecting him and his family. As an effect, he seems to take out his emotional pain on his own body: "He pulled at the leg

again— it was only stubbornness that made him continue to believe that what he was doing was therapeutic” (124). Pauline consoles Mary and offers her advice about John’s pains in his leg, yet her insights are dismissed. After she accompanies Mary and Clare to one of her passions, the theater, to see *The Man of LaMancha*, Clare has a very tender moment with her father when she tells him a bit of the story and sings Dulcinea’s song about the impossible dream. This is one of the few joyful interactions between the depressed father and any of his children, yet his transient joy is disrupted by the thought of his own mortality. As she sings, John, we are told, “knew, too, that some part of his future had been retracted, foreshortened by the pain. That it had added, if only by a month or a year or two, to the time she would have to miss him” (135). The narrative voice projects into the future to describe the loneliness that Keane ultimately experiences on his deathbed at a hospital isolated from family, friends, even hospital staff: In fact, he would die alone, accompanied only by the high-pitched pulse of the hospital machines, his last breath missed even by the nurses who were distracted by the changing shifts. None of them gathered at his bed, no candles lit. The offending leg already amputated in the doctors’ routine efforts to save him (131).

Aside from John Keane’s self-defeating behavior, and his ultimate sorrowful fate, the narrator projects into the future to comment, too, on how the middle child Michael’s life ends— death at 42. This middle child, diagnosed with cancer at 42, dies young. He is described as a man who enjoys hosting annual barbecues, “famous for the Gennie Cream Ale he served long after any of them still wanted to drink it.” While he is a professional teacher, and a married man with three children, “one with problems,” Michael is described as engaging in excesses with descriptors like his “rowdy wedding,” the hint of his over indulgence in alcohol, and finally, “his tacky affair with another teacher which almost cost him everything and then didn’t” (184). From an early age, Michael has compromised his integrity. After his church funeral, the party moves to his backyard where the indeterminate bereaved persons echo what might have been Michael’s and their own sense of self esteem: “They decided that if they weren’t the middle children born at mid-century to middle-class parents and sent from middling, mid-island high schools to mediocre colleges all across the state, they were close enough” (184). In some ways, John Keane’s microaggressions, his own unaddressed trauma from the War, his avoidant-dismissive style of attachment, and his own sense of low self esteem have influenced this son negatively.

Through actions related to both Michael and Annie, we see how they each desecrate life. Annie gives Susan Persichetti money, her phony birth certificate and driver’s license as

identification for an abortion. Annie leaves home to study abroad, and ultimately drifts through her life.

There's a disturbing sequence of incidents in this part of the novel relating to Pauline. She seems to regularly attend Sunday dinners with the Keanes. After having three Manhattans with her dinner on one such occasion, she experiences a bad fall during her excursion on mass transit from the bus stop near their home to her apartment. On the bus ride she is described as impatient and suddenly disoriented when she does not seem to recognize familiar landmarks on the journey home. The odor of diesel fuel also makes her dizzy. As she gets aggressive with her shouting at the bus driver to pull over, she realizes that he is driving on the correct bus route, but it is too late, as with her instability and the bus's quick movement to the stop, Pauline experiences a traumatic fall.

[She] felt herself thrown forward and her feet, moving to regain her balance, stepped inside into the well of the stairs. She cried out, lunged forward missed the handrail, and then felt herself collapse, giving in to the fall, the harsh bang of the rubber tread against her hip, against her thighs, her good coat and good skirt, surprised herself at all the noise she made, against the fiberglass and the steel and the *oof* of her heavy flesh, her arm and her shoulder and her face against the curb. (190-194)

When the Keanes are called, their first thought is that Jake, their son in Vietnam, may have been killed in action. John Keane explains to the hospital that his wife is her friend, "No, not her sister. Just a friend" (195). Again, the role of trusted friend, "Just a friend," is little recognized as a possible close family contact in an emergency. Later in this segment, as Mary explains to the girls that Pauline may need to live with them for several weeks as she recuperates, she adds that she will move Pauline into the brothers' bedroom rather than the basement. Ironically, the day after Pauline's accident, and Mary's decision that Pauline will become part of their home, at least for the duration of Pauline's recovery, the Keanes are about to be notified of their looming worst fear--Jake's death.

Segment IV in the Novel

Mary neglects to visit Pauline while institutionalized at Creedmor as she is consumed by her grief over the death of her son. Pauline indicates that she understands. She also indicates to Mary that she understands that Creedmor is not the typical hospital to help her

heal from her fall. The narrator explains that she has experienced shock treatment therapy at Creedmor for her psychosis that was “brought on by depression and alcoholism” (204). Pauline’s needs have been hidden throughout most of the novel as she seems to have been more of the listener than the one in need of being listened to. In this segment, Mary and even John show compassion for Pauline. When the Keanes transport Pauline to her new place in their home, they are tender to her, having taken care of major details- her apartment to be sublet for a year, her early retirement for medical reasons that would allow her to keep most of her pension, and her particular cherished items still remaining accessible to her. Through the narrator’s comments, Mary recognizes Pauline’s significant role in helping her maintain some joy and well being in her own life.

There had been a trick of living well, living happily, even under the eye of a woman who always saw the dashed tear, the torn seam, who remembered the cruel word, the failed gesture, who knew that none of them would get by on good intentions alone, or on the aspirations of their pretty faith.

“I’ll never get over it,” Mary said. It was a phrase she had kept to herself, until now....

“I don’t expect you will,” she [Pauline] said. (207)

The trust and honesty between these two psychologically wounded women finally become explicit. Mary finally recognizes in Pauline the special gift she has experienced in this relationship with her lifelong nurturing friend. In yet a more tender detail, the care and love of Clare for Pauline is described as she chooses to sleep in the other empty bed in the boys’ bedroom that now has become Pauline’s space. Pauline is no longer alone; she is connected to this family, “In a moment, she could hear her [Clare] breathing softly, sweetly, into the dark” (209).

Pauline’s inescapable presence in the novel, Lorraine M. Lopez also identifies as significant in the buildup to the conclusion, a conclusion that some readers might identify as Pauline’s serving as *deus ex machina* for the young couple “in trouble,” or even as the beginning of another story, one of reciprocated love, just beginning for Pauline as an invaluable member in Clare and Gregory’s fledgling family dynamic. Lopez identifies in the novel’s structure the rhythmic and repeated words, such as “breaches,” phrases, such as “feed my lambs,” and allusions to prayer, as “the novel is built on echoes,” such as the wind repeated throughout significant scenes, such as a motif for the winds of change, and the reverberant sounds of a piano as a frame for an early incident in the plot when Mary and John

Keane, newlyweds, hear the pianist in the apartment above theirs playing on a “baby grand.” Early on John misunderstands Mary’s meaning of “baby grand,” a play with language that as a motif focuses the reader on this couple’s ongoing misunderstanding in this relationship. In the conclusion to the novel, a slight modification to the church ceremony occurs— a non-Catholic pianist from Julliard rather than a member of the church music ministry performs exquisite sounds for Clare’s somewhat-shameful at that time and less-than-public sacred Catholic wedding ceremony. The beauty of music at both the beginning and end of the novel counters any fears, struggles, or anxieties the characters may be experiencing and allows the listeners who are attentive to enter into a transcendent moment, a motif for the beauty of life.

Aside from the beautiful music, another motif frames incidents in this novel. At the very beginning of the novel, Mary Keane leaves church, and in the final setting, the Keane family, excluding the now dead eldest child, Jacob, enters the church for Clare’s sudden and less ceremonious wedding when the priest acknowledges the extraordinary beauty of the piano sounds. The priest says about the pianist’s quality for the musical performance, “It’s a gift, then” (279), as is what the reader may understand about the gift of the baby that this young bride carries, the gift of the ever supportive, empathic friend, who intervenes to smooth over any possible hardships that the young couple soon to become parents might experience, and finally the gift of self sacrifice and nurturance that Pauline has modeled for her lifelong friends.

Lorraine Lopez acknowledges how Mary Keane’s friend, Pauline, “insinuates herself into the fabric of the Keane family life through indispensable acts of self-sacrifice and by becoming Mary’s confidante” (239). It is Pauline who cares for Mary’s family when she and baby Clare are brought to the hospital after Clare’s birth at home. When Mary returns home, they tell her, as the narrator describes it, “that they hated Pauline. That they would never again be left in her care. (77). The narrator then explains “It wasn’t true, they hadn’t hated her at all.... But it was an explanation that lingered, a conviction they would share for the rest of their lives” (77). At this time, Mary responds by explaining Pauline’s presence in their lives: “You choose likable people to be your friends.... And you have to love your family whether they’re likable or not.... But the people you have to feel sorry for are the ones without family. Unlikable people without family or friends. Who’s going to care for them?” (77). Through their mother’s cruel words, the children internalize this condescending, dismissive stance toward Pauline, without recognizing how much she fulfills the only extended family tie or even trusted friend with whom the Keanes interact.

Throughout the novel, though, Mary and her family members except for Clare, dismiss the important role this lifelong friend plays for members of this family. They even consider excluding Pauline from their plans; they neglect to understand the beauty of this gift of a lifelong empathic friend, the grace through her presence. At the end of the novel when Pauline finally intervenes to help the young couple being married quietly without the typical ceremony, she finds her true presence in her own family when she experiences reciprocal love and acceptance from Clare. Pauline's nonjudgmental presence dismisses any additional concerns about survival for this young family as she joyfully suggests that she will serve as the caregiver i.e., a surrogate mother to Clare, her husband, and their unborn child in a family relationship that by Clare's response shows love that continues to be reciprocated.

This theme of the importance of compassion and encounters with others leading toward healing is echoed through phrases and lines from Catholic prayers that the characters recite during difficult times, yet they remain throughout most of the novel unconscious of the words' meaning in their own lives. The prayer, *The Salve Regina*, includes references to "our sighs, mourning, and weeping in this vale of tears" as "poor banished children of Eve." The appeal to "the gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us" is followed by "And after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, o loving, o sweet Virgin Mary." Phrases from this prayer are echoed by characters throughout the novel to indicate how they have grown up within a religious tradition, yet they little recognize the mysteries in life and grace in the ordinary actions of self sacrifice by one of the less significant characters- Pauline. Such may be the case in many of our lives.

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Abstract: The major concern of this study is to simultaneously dissect and scrutinize English Language and Literature professors' feedback on the various literature and culture courses taught in the Department of English at the Hashemite University, Jordan, and by doing so, the researchers hope to reorganize the kind of literature that is mostly appropriate to be taught to its students and the best academic practices to instruct it. In its attempt to do so, the study complements former studies conducted by the researchers that examined both undergraduate and graduate student responses to this cluster of courses in the department in question. In order to attain the main aim of the study, the researchers developed a questionnaire asking colleagues who teach the literature and culture courses to answer its questions. A total of fifteen professors responded to the questionnaire, which is designed in a way to help the researchers better understand and describe the relationship between non-native literatures and the Arab students' moral, cultural, political and religious character. A scrupulous scrutiny of their responses revealed that most professors believe that it is more effective for Arab students to learn English in its context in literature in order to avoid alienating them. However, these professors emphasize the important role of professors in helping their students transcend the local and moral interpretations of English literary texts and move on to the commonly more universal readings that build bridges instead of walls among the diverse human cultures and societies.

Key Words: Pedagogy, Anglo-American Literature, Anglo-American Culture, Teaching Methodology, Moral Interpretation, Alienation.

Introduction

In this article, we attempt to detect and uncover the professors' perspectives on the kind of literature that is mostly appropriate to be taught to students majoring in English Language and Literature and in Literary and Cultural Studies in English at the Department of English of the Hashemite University, Jordan. As we do so, we endeavor to realize and expose the best academic practices to be adopted in order for the English department professors to be able to teach this kind of literature. To do so, we have developed a questionnaire to survey and pedagogically assess the diverse opinions of the department's professors.

Fifteen professors/respondents were asked to respond to certain questions including the following as paradigms¹:

- What literature is appropriate for our (i.e., Arab) students, British or American, poetry or prose, modern or non-modern?

¹ The complete questionnaire is reproduced in the appendix.

- Should they (the professors) include its historical, cultural and political milieu, or should they simply teach the text as a text (the words on the page) in isolation from all its other aspects and attributes?
- Do they need to focus on the text as language or go beyond the language level?
- Are the cultural, political and social values embodied in the English literary tradition alien and opposed to the common moral, social, religious and cultural values held by Arab students?
- What kind of relationship is there between non-native literatures and the Arab students' moral, cultural, political and religious character?
- Is it perilous (unsafe) to teach Arab students (at both the graduate and undergraduate levels) literatures that pose a major moral, cultural, political and social setback for English departments?
- What benefits and/or rewards are there in teaching a foreign literature? What moral, cultural, or political effect (or effects) does a foreign literary text have on our students?

Before presenting the research findings, it would be a useful starting point to give a brief idea about the Hashemite University and its Department of English. The Hashemite University is the fifth largest state university in Jordan. A royal decree ordaining its establishment was issued on June 19, 1991. Teaching at the university started on September 16, 1995. It is located on the outskirts of the city of Zarqa (a 45-minute drive) to the east of the capital, Amman. Al-Zarqa Governorate is the second most populated governorate in the country. When teaching started at the onset of the academic year 1995/1996, students were admitted to the only three established colleges: Sciences and Arts, Economics and Administrative Sciences, and Educational Sciences. Presently, the university encompasses more than fourteen colleges, and that number is likely to increase in the very near future.

As it is already mentioned, the College of Arts at the Hashemite University is one of the first three colleges that were established at the opening phase; it has been in existence since 1995. Until the end of the academic year 2004–2005, there was a combined College of Sciences and Arts, but they were separated into two colleges in 2005 to give each of them more independence and improve their academic mission. The College comprises four major departments: Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Department of English Language and Literature, Department of Human and Social Sciences, and that of Allied Humanities. While the Department of Arabic Language and Literature offers PhD, MA, and

BA degrees in Arabic Language and Literature, the Department of English Language and Literature offers BA degrees in English Language and Literature and Cultural Studies in English, as well as an MA degree in English, and there is a near-future plan to launch a PhD program in Translation. However, the Department of Human and Social Sciences offers a BA degree in International Relations and Strategic Studies and an MA in Peace and Conflict Studies. The last, the Department of Allied Humanities, is a support service unit that supervises the teaching of various courses within the category of the University compulsory and optional requirements in the fields of human and social sciences.

Historically speaking, the Department of English Language and Literature was established in 1995, the same year in which the university was established. It currently offers two majors for the BA degree: English Language and Literature and Literary and Cultural Studies in English. In addition, the department offers one major for the MA degree: English Language and Literature. The study plan for the BA degree in English Language and Literature and the BA degree in Literature and Cultural Studies in English comprises one hundred and thirty-two credit hours that include university, faculty, and department compulsory and elective courses. The department compulsory required courses for the BA degree in English Language and Literature cover different kinds of course that include skills, literature, language and culture courses. Some of the literature courses include Introduction to Literature, English Literature I and English Literature II, American Literature, Introduction to the Novel, Introduction to Drama, and Literary Criticism. As for the other program in Literature and Cultural Studies in English, it includes several other compulsory courses in literature and cultural studies including Arabic Literature, English Literature, American Literature, Globalization of Literature, World Literature, Comparative Literature, Modern Anglo-American Literature, Critical Theory, Introduction to Third World Cultures, Introduction to Western Thought, Media, and Theories of Culture, to mention just a few instances.

Since the present study is mainly concerned with the literature and culture courses, it is useful to give a brief idea about the content of at least one course in each study plan as a sample. One of the literature courses that is directly related to the research purposes of the present study is a course entitled Modern Anglo-American Literature. In this course, students examine the literature written in the twentieth century by English and American writers within socio-political and historical contexts where students read texts written by major writers such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, John Steinbeck (American) and George Orwell, Graham Greene, William Golding and Anthony Powell (English) from

modernist and postmodernist perspectives. The reading selections for the course include varieties of modern Anglo-American literature like Irish, Welsh, Scottish, African American, and Native American literature.

The culture courses of the Cultural Studies Program, on the other hand, include a key core course entitled Introduction to Third World Cultures, a course mainly intended to familiarize students with the intricate relationships that exist between the different cultures of the Third World. Here, students are introduced to a variety of texts coming from different Afro-Asian and Latin American cultural backgrounds, and thus are exposed to certain cultural traits that separate, or bind these cultures. By the end of the course, students will be able to see the intra- and inter-cultural aspects that characterize these cultures.

On the other hand, the study plan of the MA. Degree in English Language and Literature comprises thirty-three credit hours divided as follows: fifteen compulsory credit hours, nine elective credit hours and nine credit hours for the thesis. All MA students are required to study fifteen compulsory credit hours that include the following courses: Topics in Linguistics, Topics in Literature, Critical Theory, Topics in Translation, Research Methods and Research Seminar. After passing these courses successfully, students should choose one out of three areas of concentration for the elective courses. These areas are Linguistics, Literature, or Translation. Some of the elective courses in literature include Modernism and Post-modernism in Literature, Special Topics in American Literature, Special Topics in British Literature, Topics in Literary Genre, Film Studies, and Comparative Literature, to mention just a few courses as illustrations.

One of the fundamental courses in the MA program is Topics in Literature. After discussing some selected primary and secondary texts in classical and modern literature, students attempt to answer basic questions at the heart of liberal study such as: what does it mean to be human? How have human beings of different times, places and cultures made sense of themselves and their world? How are we to live as responsible global citizens? It is clear that questions such as these are very much related to the questions raised by this study, especially those that try to find out if the cultural, political and social values embodied in the English literary tradition are alien and opposed to the common moral, social, religious and cultural values held by Arab students. They are also related to the questions raised about the benefits of teaching a foreign literature, and the moral, cultural, or political effect (or effects) that a foreign literary text has on our students.

To be sure, all the BA and MA courses in literature concentrate mainly on different literary genres, representative authors and different periods and trends in English and American literature. They also give a general idea about Western cultures in general. So, examining these courses and the professors' perspectives and feedback on their content and the way to teach it in particular is made pertinent to the primary aims of this study.

Methodology

For this purpose, fifteen professors of English Literature and Cultural Studies were asked to respond to a questionnaire comprising eight questions and indicate their responses fulsomely to the Anglo American literature and culture courses they have taught. By analyzing their answers, the researchers would be able to know their colleagues' opinions in isolation from those of their students, and thus come up with new strategies for enhancing the teaching strategies and positive practices and avoid the negative ones towards exploring non-native literatures and cultures. Therefore, this article mainly focuses on the pedagogic approach to come up with the anticipated results of the study. In addition, the researchers have adopted the analytical approach to analyze and better understand the opinions of the fifteen professors/respondents.

Review of the Related Literature

Similarly, this article complements two other related articles conducted earlier by the researchers. In the former two articles, the researchers emphasized the importance of exploring the opinions of both undergraduate and graduate students regarding the various literature and culture courses taken as part of their course requirements in partial fulfillment of the BA and M.A. degree in English Literature.

The findings of one of the previous studies emphasizing the opinions of the undergraduate students were published in an article entitled "Bridges or Walls? A Study of the Hashemite University English Department Undergraduate Students' Responses to Anglo-American Literature and Culture" by Kifah Al Omari and Marwan Obeidat (2011), where the researchers find out that undergraduate students have many conflicting responses to Anglo-American literature and culture. While some of them have positive responses to this kind of literature and culture, others have negative ones. However, the study finds out that the majority of students view Anglo-American literature courses as bridges that can help them

understand Western culture. They generally believe that studying literature helps them judge "the other" rationally and objectively, rather than emotionally.

The findings of another study, on the other hand, however, emphasizing the opinions of the graduate students, were published in an article entitled "The Hashemite University English Department Graduate Students' Perspectives on Anglo-American Literature and Culture" (2020). Once again, the researchers find out that graduate students have conflicting opinions about the Anglo-American literature and culture courses that they study for the purposes of their MA degree. Similarly, the study has revealed that most of these students/respondents have positive attitudes towards the teaching practices of the courses under investigation. In their responses, they stressed that they have benefited a lot from their experience in studying courses like "Topics in Literary Genre," "Modernism and Post-modernism in Literature," "World Literature," and other similar courses. The main reason for their benefit from these courses is the teaching practices adopted by the instructors who have taught them.

In addition, this work also complements a third investigation entitled "How Professors of American Literature Teach Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher' to Undergraduate English Majors at Arab Universities: The Hashemite University, Jordan as an Example" (2013). Similar, but different in form, is the study in question, conducted by Kifah Al Omari, Marwan M. Obeidat, Nazmi Al-Shalabi, and Shadi Neimneh, in the sense that it emphasizes the opinions of the professors, and in being more focused on investigating the methods of teaching only one American literary text written by the famous American writer Edgar Allan Poe; that is, his short story entitled "The Fall of the House of Usher."

Furthermore, a considerable number of other studies investigate the opinions of the undergraduate and graduate students, in an effort to realize and examine their perspectives on the content of the Anglo-American literature and culture courses included in their study plans. In their article entitled "Literature, Language or Linguistics? Student Perspectives on What English Departments in Arab Universities Should Focus on" (2012), for instance, Rahma Al Mashrooqi and Hooriya Al-Shihi conduct a study based on students' perspectives in order to find out "what courses an English Language Arts study plan should include" (165). They deem this question to be very critical and essential "for any effective attempt to evaluate and restructure these study plans and even English Departments as a whole" (165).

Albeit, other scholars in the field did the same thing and used the same pedagogical approach of emphasizing the students' perspectives to find out the best practices in teaching

Anglo-American literature and culture courses to Arab students. Such studies include, but by no means are limited to, the following: "Globalization and EFL/ESL pedagogy in the Arab World" (2003) by Muhammad Zughoul, "Communication problems facing Arab learners of English" (2003) By Ghaleb Rabab'ah, "Some Reading Problems of Arab EFL Students" (2006) by Kamal Mourtaga, "Language vs. Literature in Departments of English in the Arab World" (1997) by Marwan M. Obeidat, "English Literature and Arab Students" (2005) by Layla Al-Maleh, "The English Department in the Arab World Re-Visited: Language, Literature, or Translation? A Student's View" (2009) by Aladdin Al-Kharabsheh, Bakri Al-Azzam and Marwan M. Obeidat, "The Reception of American Literature in Jordan" (2010) by Nazmi Al-Shalabi and Marwan M. Obeidat, "From Language to Literature in University English Departments" (1986) by M. H. Salih, "Literary Texts in EFL Classrooms: Applications, Benefits, Approaches" (2018) by Shamsur Khan and Ali Alasmari, and the recent extensive full-book study, *Opinion Essays on Higher Education, Culture and Socio-Cultural Politics* (2020) by Marwan M. Obeidat—as a case in point.

Traditionally, there has been a customary pattern of thought handling down an on-going heated debate among scholars of English at Arab-World Universities regarding the validity of teaching non-native literatures to Arab students and its influence on their moral, cultural, political, and/or religious character. Some claim that teaching this kind of literature introduces a culturally superior, if somewhat "threatening," subject matter that corresponds to a world more dominant, more dictating and more ordaining than our own. This hostile view might be more prominent nowadays, especially with the daily violence spread all over the world, mostly by those who have the power against those who don't have it. Others such as John Monroe, Mohammad Asfour, Eid Dahiyat and Muhammad Zoghul emphasize the argument that the cultural and social values embodied in the English literary tradition are alien to the moral and social values held by Muslim Arab students. Similarly, in his article entitled "Restructuring the English Department in Third World Universities: Alternative Approaches for the Teaching of English," Mohammad Zughoul argues that all English literature teems with "racist, reductionist, prejudiced and hostile views of our own" (221).

In contrast to the opinion of the scholars who have the opposing view, scholars like Marwan M. Obeidat, M. H. Salih, R. Webster and Layla Al-Maleh contend that teaching the Western literature and culture is an attempt toward a better understanding of the culture which this kind of literature exemplifies. They also emphasize the validity of teaching English language in its actual context in literature. Obeidat, for instance, argues that without

"immediate acquaintance with words and idioms in their actual context of literature, the formal knowledge of grammar and grammatical rules alone is futile, if not worthless" (33). Similarly, Salih emphasizes the same view by saying that language skills seem to develop through studying literature in English (25). Likewise, in her article entitled "English Literature and Arab Students," Layla Al-Maleh emphasizes the importance of teaching Anglo-American literature to Arab/Muslim students, and she recommends teaching literature amorally in order to encourage free interpretation of literary texts to avoid alienating the students.

From this comprehensive, related literature review, it becomes axiomatic that the issue of teaching Anglo-American literature to Arab/Muslim students has received a lot of critical and analytical attention since the establishment of English Departments themselves in the Arab World. The importance of the present study, therefore, comes from the point that it complements a sequential series of earlier studies by adopting a pedagogic method that investigates the Hashemite University English Department professors' standpoint on teaching Anglo-American Literature and Culture to Arab/Muslim students. The researchers claim that the fifteen professors/respondents who teach in the department make a good sample group to discuss the issue in question. First of all, all of them have graduated from prominent Western Universities with PhD degrees in English Literature and Cultural Studies, a fact which gives them the best possible knowledge in this field of human knowledge. Secondly, all of them have taught literature courses to students coming from different cultural backgrounds in these Universities, which gives them the necessary practice and expertise in this regard. Finally, the Department of English Language and Literature at the Hashemite University has a unique BA program in Literature and Cultural Studies, thus giving professors the ability to teach courses in both literature and culture, and finding the best educated practices and methods to teach such courses and get the utmost benefit for the students out of them.

Discussion and Results

After investigating the responses of as many as fifteen professors of English Literature and Cultural Studies at the Department of English Language and Literature in the Hashemite University, Jordan, the researchers find out that eleven (73.33%) of the whole group of professors/respondents, have positive attitudes towards teaching Anglo-American literature and culture to Arab/Muslim students. Only four (26.66%) of the whole group of professors/respondents, have a negative response, in one way or the other.

In a general sense, however, the professors' responses can be divided into three groups. The first, including seven professors (63.63%) have positive reactions, and have responded to all eight questions positively and they even recommend including as many Anglo-American literary texts as possible in the study plans of both majors, English Language and Literature and Literature and Cultural Studies in English. In their responses, they agree that the world has become a small village, and that our students will be exposed to the Western literature and culture in many ways, so, it is better for these students to be guided by their professors who have a wide experience in this regard. They also suggest that many literary works have a universal appeal and they can be taught to our students without any challenges to their cultural and religious values. Concerning the teaching methodology, they argue that it would be better to include the text's historical, cultural and political milieu in order for the students to go beyond the language level.

Here is a sample of some responses made by the professors from this group:

- "I think it would make more sense if we contextualize literature. After all, the work of art is the production of its milieu and the author does not live in a void."
- "It is the function of the professional critic to go beyond the surface level of language into deeper analysis and understanding. You know literary language is figurative. That is why we need to look for these figures of speech as they will help us analyze the concealed meaning of the text."
- "I think the world has become a small village. Thanks to modern technology and the Internet communication! In the modern age, Arab students are now open to Western values. We can speak of universal values that can be held by all. I think the relationship between these values in the English literary tradition and Arab ones can be unitary. Both traditions cherish honesty, courage, love, equality, democracy, etc."
- "I think students of literature need to expect anything. It is okay to teach them or to show examples of any setbacks if found."
- "We benefit from learning foreign literature since we live in the age of globalization. We travel a lot. Learning their literature teaches us about their culture and lifestyle. This will open more space for international relationships, dialogue and peace among nations."
- "Developing students' critical thinking skills is expected to illuminate them about challenges involved in their exposure to other nations' ideologies and lifestyles."

- “The advantages of teaching foreign literature include broadening students’ horizon, skills and knowledge. It can boost their understanding of themselves, other people and the world at large. Studying foreign literature can also alert students to the importance of diversity and accepting/appreciating differences among people coming from various backgrounds.”
- “Safety depends on raising the students’ level of awareness of the issues that surround them.”
- “The linguistic level is one among many equally important levels of signification, which should be taken into consideration.”
- “Foreign literatures provide a good opportunity for learning various aspects of other cultures (such as social norms, ways of thinking, historical developments, philosophical tendencies, ideological sentiments, and artistic values).”
- “Despite the many differences we have between both cultures, I still think that ethics and moral values are almost universal in most cultures. Religion and politics might be understood clearly within the cultural framework, and many things are in common, especially in a globalized modern world.”

From responses such as these provided above, one can overtly notice that the majority of professors/respondents agree about one point: that there is no danger in teaching Arab/Muslim students Anglo-American literature and culture. On the contrary, they believe that it is better to teach this kind of literature in its context and go beyond the language level. Instead of alienating students, this way of teaching will illuminate them, develop their critical thinking, and widen their perspectives about the West in general. After all, we nowadays live in a small village where information is available to everyone at any time.

The second group, including four professors (36.36%) among those who have positive feedback, respond to most of the questions positively. Like the earlier group, they encourage teaching Anglo-American literature and culture to the students, but they have some reservations about the kind of texts to be taught and the methods of teaching them. They think that the cultural, political and social values embodied in certain texts might be alien and opposed to the common moral, social, religious and cultural values held by Arab students. However, they don’t think that it is perilous (unsafe) to teach students such texts that challenge their beliefs because they will widen their perspectives and help them to avoid alienation.

What follows is a sample of some responses made by the professors from this group:

- “Students need to have sound readings of literary texts as well as good knowledge of their social, intellectual and historical background.”
- While there are many advantages for teaching foreign literature, there are some disadvantages that “may be noticed in the behavior of some students who are tempted to blindly imitate foreign lifestyles.”
- The relationship between non-native literatures and the Arab students’ moral, cultural, political and religious character should be “a cultural relationship of taking what is appropriate and leaving the inappropriate.”
- “Sweeping generalizations may not yield a precise answer in this regard because many literary works do preach good values. However, there are works that unfold obscenities and propagate ideologies that stand against Arab culture and traditions.”
- Whether to focus on the text as language or go beyond the language level “depends on the students’ competence levels and the language skills they have already mastered. In general, literature cannot only be seen as language because it contains many other essential elements in it as well. Language is an important element in literature which should be studied in association with thought and content.”
- “Open-mindedness is an excellent quality for an avid learner of literature. With a reasonable conservative sense, provocative questions about major issues in literature would likely make the students abler to think critically and seriously about matters that concern their own cultures.”
- “There are those works that not only capitalize on Orientalism and stand against Arab and Islamic values but also attack openly Islamic ideals. That is why it is significant to analyze how such works are consciously ideologized. Nevertheless, other works exhibit a relatively objective attitude toward Arab culture. Thus, the literary content and context (of the two types mentioned above) condition the nature of the relationship between the reader and the literary work.”

From the aforementioned responses, one can conclude that such professors still have a positive view about teaching Anglo-American literature and culture, but, on the other hand, they stress the importance of selecting the material to be taught in order to avoid possible textual complexities and culturally insensitive intricacies that “unfold obscenities and

propagate ideologies that stand against Arab culture and traditions,” according to one of the professors/respondents.

The last and third group of four professors (26.66% of the over-all groups) have, in turn, a negative (if somewhat unfavorable) response to almost all eight questions. They believe that the values embodied in the Anglo-American literary texts are alien to our students. In addition, they believe that such values represent a culture which is superior to our own. For this reason, students, it is believed, will be pulled between two conflicting cultures, and there is always a possible danger to be more easily attracted to the more superior, more dominating and more hegemonic one.

The responses made by professors from the last group bring in the following (but somewhat alarming) views:

- It is perilous (unsafe) to teach Arab students literatures that pose a major moral, cultural, political and social setback for English departments, “especially when teaching such works at an undergraduate level.”
- “The cultural, political and social values embodied in the English literary tradition are alien and opposed to the common moral, social, religious and cultural values held by Arab students.”
- “Non-native literature has a great influence on students’ cultural, political, and religious character. Students maybe pulled between two conflicting cultures.”
- Non-native literature is “in the Arab mind reminiscent of what colonization has done to [Arab students] and to their countries.”

From the few negative responses cited above, it becomes clear that these professors are against any contact with the West. Even worse, they are against reading any kind of Western literature. They accept as true that it is unsafe to teach this kind of literature to our students because it embodies, among other things, political and otherwise, the literature of a more superior, exceptional and powerful culture.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing empirical analysis and on the professors’ responses to the eight questions provided in the questionnaire, one can conclude that professors have many conflicting opinions regarding the relationship between non-native literatures and the Arab students’ moral, cultural, political and religious character. However, the majority of them have

a positive reaction regarding this relationship; they think that in the age of globalization, and in the small village where we live nowadays, it is almost impossible to keep our students away from texts that belong to Anglo-American literature and culture. So, it is better to teach them such texts under the guidance of well-experienced professors who will stress the universal aspects of these texts and transcend any local ones.

After investigating the perspectives of the undergraduate students and the graduate students and their professors, the researchers recommend conducting a study that investigates the influence of the most recent trends in on-line and distance education on this whole issue of teaching non-native literatures. The aim is to find out if this new teaching methodology will yield the same results or not, especially when it comes to the role and practices expected from both the students and their professors in this kind of education. The central presumption for this kind of study, and for the earlier ones as well, is that education in general, and literature in particular, have a communally deterministic nature that significantly affects the culture of any society. In addition, the whole educational system in any society can persist in structuring an intellectual perspective which is consistent with the dominant values and conditions of people's everyday life.

To cut a long story short, in conclusion, we (professors and students alike) need to devote ourselves to in-depth knowledge, in any way we can, because the only thing, in our view, that is capable of constructively transforming the world and its chaos (not to say mess, cultural and otherwise) is profound, insightful EDUCATION!

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

- What literature is appropriate for our students, British or American, poetry or prose, modern or non-modern?
- Should we include its historical, cultural and political milieu, or should we simply teach the text as a text (the words on the page) in isolation from all other aspects and attributes?
- Do we need to focus on the text as language or go beyond the language level?
- Are the cultural, political and social values embodied in the English literary tradition alien and opposed to the common moral, social, religious and cultural values held by Arab students?
- To put the matter in clearer terms, what kind of relationship is there between non-native literatures and the Arab students' moral, cultural, political and religious character?
- Is it perilous (unsafe) to teach Arab students (at both the graduate and undergraduate levels) literatures that pose a major moral, cultural, political and social setback for English departments?
- What benefits and/or rewards are there in teaching a foreign literature?
- What moral, cultural, or political effect (or effects) does a foreign literary text have on our students?

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Jennifer J. Smith, “How Do You Do It?” Make It Local: Re-thinking the Survey of American Modernism

Abstract:

This essay takes the lessons of “new modernist studies”—to expand modernism temporally, spatially, and culturally—and applies those principles to the teaching of a traditional survey of American modernism. The course’s design and structure tracks four locations—Chicago, Harlem, Paris, and the South—where American modernism flourished. As we move between these modernist centers, students come to understand the little magazines, feuds, and friendships that gave rise to the aesthetic and social movements we now call modernism. I map a course plan that charts current scholarly insights onto the undergraduate classroom where students need to read widely but deeply, hone their research and writing skills, and apply the methodologies of literary studies.

Conventional wisdom dictates that students in an historical survey of a literary period must become familiar with the major writers, ideas, and movements of a commonly agreed upon era. How best then to approach a period wherein the scholars of that era have so thoroughly and convincingly resisted the rigid classifications that a historical survey would seem to center? When there is no consensus on when it begins and ends? Codified in a 2008 essay by Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz, “The New Modernist Studies” has expanded the study of modernism temporally, spatially, and culturally. Addressing how to teach a survey for a topic that has been so reimagined animates my design of the syllabus and assignments in “American Modernism,” a 300-level undergraduate survey of literary modernism in the United States. The course I have designed takes the lessons of new modernist studies and translates them to the undergraduate classroom where students still need other fundamental skills: the ability to read widely but deeply, to hone their research and writing skills, and to apply the methodologies of literary studies.

Students learn how changes to war, media, communication, and citizenship in the early twentieth century fundamentally altered the way writers render language and meaning from the world. They encounter canonical and marginalized authors who experimented with the very ideas of representation as they attempted to treat the cultural and social upheavals of the period, and they learn about the material and cultural contexts from which these works emerged. The course’s design and structure tracks four locations—Chicago, Harlem, Paris, and the South—where American modernism flourished. As we move between these modernist centers, students come to understand the little magazines, feuds, and friendships that gave rise to the aesthetic and social movements we now call modernism.

This 300-level course is meant to be a survey of the period that integrates literary research as a practice. It is middle ground course between a gateway, introductory course on literary studies and a senior seminar featuring a capstone research project, which has been an integrated high-impact curricular practice across the colleges at which I have taught. Therefore, the class is structured around an assignment sequence that is “backwards-designed” so that the shorter, earlier assignments all build to the large research project which asks them to research one of these sites of modernist production. Although it primarily serves English majors and minors, this course has been cross-listed with gender studies and American studies.

The course, designed to be face-to-face twice a week, begins from two points of inspiration. The first is Rita Barnard’s essay “Modern American Fiction,” which compellingly argues that to understand American fiction of the early twentieth century we must turn to “an older writer, Sherwood Anderson, who gives us the most vivid thumbnail sketch of the changes from which modern American fiction emerged” (39). The 1919 short story cycle, *Winesburg, Ohio*, provides a blueprint for a particularly American modernism—one that ties modernism to the rural and to the aesthetic moves of realism and regionalism. This “old-fashioned modernism,” as Andy Oler outlines, “counters the simple binary of progressive urbanity and retrograde rurality that has been perpetuated in literature and criticism about the region” (6) and, as such, distinguishes U.S. based modernism from its European or global counterparts, often understood as primarily a cosmopolitan and urban venture. This class, in contrast, paints American modernism as much belonging to rural Ohio and northern Florida as it does to Chicago’s loop or Paris’s left bank. Beginning with Anderson has another benefit, as he had a direct influence on three figures that still loom large in modernist studies: Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and William Faulkner.

The second point of inspiration for the course came from a 2013 NEH Seminar at the Newberry Library called “Making Modernism: Literature and Culture in 20th-Century Chicago, 1893-1955” led by Liesl Olson. I participated in the seminar’s first iteration, and the month-long seminar would go on to reach other scholars in 2017 and 2019. This seminar examined how the historical and material culture of “Nature’s metropolis” (Cronon) shaped Chicago’s particular brand of modernism. In her book, *Chicago Renaissance: Literature and Art in the Midwest Metropolis*, Olson describes Chicago’s modernism as a revolution to “speak straight” (19). In the seminar, we examined how cultural events, such as the World’s Fair, and cultural institutions, such as The Art’s Club, Hull House, and *Poetry* magazine, shaped Chicago’s

modernism. The seminar and Olson's book centered women and people of color in ways that earlier accounts of Chicago modernism failed to do, and the course presented here reflects this centering in its course design. I wanted to bring the seminar's attention to the aesthetic innovations and material conditions shaping not just Chicago's modernism but American modernism more broadly to bear, as this course is meant to be survey of the period. Finally, I also wanted to suggest the ways that modernism is a broad set of artistic and social movements, even as the focus of our class is literature.

And, so, I begin our history of American modernism in Chicago with Anderson, Edgar Lee Masters, and Carl Sandburg. We read excerpts from the little magazines founded here, most notably the *Little Review* helmed by Indiana native Margaret Anderson and *Poetry*, edited by Harriet Monroe. I recently returned to a suburb near Chicago, and this location allows my class to travel to the Newberry Library, the Poetry Foundation, and Hull House and see their city as part of literary history. We talk about Chicago as a way-station for so many writers and artists enroute to New York and Paris, the latter of which is our next destination. In the Paris unit, we read Chicago-born expat Hemingway and fellow Midwesterner, Fitzgerald, and we read about the "women of the left bank" (Benstock) who infused American modernism with its avant-garde elements. We spend time in Gertrude Stein's salon, examining Picasso's painting of her and her poetic rendering of him. Next, we move back across the Atlantic to gravitational pull of Black American life after World War I: Harlem. When we read Langston Hughes, we look at advertisements for rent parties and learn about the cabaret culture that shaped his poetics (Vogel). We look at the intellectual debates around the idea of art as the means of racial uplift and the debates circulating about the "proper" form for Black poets. Nella Larsen's taut novella *Passing* (1929) builds a bridge between Chicago's south side and Harlem. We examine the little magazines, social organizations, and geography of Harlem to understand how so many writers came into its orbit. Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) provides another bridge, but this time to "The South," where we encounter Jean Toomer and Faulkner. We question the very construct of "The South" by ending the course with a reading by the Caribbean critic Edouard Glissant. Larsen and Hurston help contextualize how, even if we are encountering a writer in a single locale, the writer themselves often circulated among many places. By ending with Glissant's interrogation of Faulkner, we begin to see the transnational networks that lines of literary influence have. By organizing the course around these four sites of modernism, I am able to

give students a framework to understand how a place and its players shape a global movement.

As we explore these sites of modernism, I introduce them to the value of archival research and to literary scholarship on the period as they begin thinking of themselves as student researchers. I taught versions of this course in 2013, 2017, and 2019 at two different institutions. 300-level classes at my institutions ask students to write a research-based 8-10 page essay that engages with the themes and texts of the class and also encourages undergraduate student research interests. Students from this class may develop one of their 200- or 300-level essays into a journal-length article in their senior capstone project. For this reason, I infuse a mid-level treatment of literary scholarship and research into the course. To affirm the need for strong close reading and to ensure class preparation, students write three short essays that respond to a particular passage. I encourage students to write about those primary texts that most interest them and allow these short essays to contribute to their larger project. In previous iterations of the course, I would include a mini-lecture, generally about ten minutes, on various issues important to modernism (such as the influence of psychoanalysis, the Great Migration, etc.). In this past year of hybrid teaching, due to the conditions wrought by CoVID-19, I have been using Loom to deliver any lecture elements of courses. The benefits have been many. I keep my lectures short, focusing on the most essential elements, which leaves us class time to apply and discuss the ideas. In the future, when I again teach this course face-to-face, I will retain Loom for these short, informational lectures.

Literary modernism is so shaped by the friendships and feuds that developed around artistic debates of the period, and the class explores this through primary materials and an assignment practicing light archival research. As we begin *Winesburg, Ohio*, I share a letter Anderson wrote to his brother in 1917, in which he admonishes Chicago's pretensions: "On Michigan Avenue in Chicago young men and women strut along striving to imitate the manner of the Parisian." Instead he longs for a time "when the country was new and men were often along in the fields and forests they got a sense of bigness outside themselves that has now some way been lost." He feels hopeful that the city can be bridged to the pastoral as "it is but a step from the heart of the loop district in Chicago to the shores of Lake Michigan." Letters and primary materials such as these give context to how the authors conceived of their time and place. In the Chicago unit, students explore the online Modernist Journals Project to read original issues of the magazines we have been studying out of Chicago. Students present on

one interesting piece; they have brought in socialist tracts, photographs, rare poems never again published, manifestoes on women's rights, and even advertising. By bringing in selective archival materials, the students begin to see how their understanding of a period and even a single text can become richer by understanding the milieu from which it emerged.

In each unit of the class, we read at least one scholarly book chapter or journal article. For the Chicago unit, we read Olson's "Introduction" wherein she maps out how and why Chicago became the destination of so many Midwestern modernists in the first half of the twentieth century.. For the Paris unit, we read Shari Benstock's chapter on H.D. which shows how American women in Paris were leading avant-garde poetries. We also read Kirk Curnutt's article that contextualizes *The Great Gatsby* in terms of the gender politics and the emerging film culture of the 1920s. In the third unit, Shane Vogel's essay places Hughes's poetries in the landscape of Harlem's cabaret and nightlife scene. Finally, Sally Woolf's essay uncovers the real-life plantations accounts that Faulkner read as a child and young adult that seem to be the inspiration for the famous scene of Ike McCaslin reading the family ledgers in "The Bear" and denying his inheritance, which was built on the exploited labor of the enslaved. Students work in pairs or small groups to present on one of these articles. By hand-picking these essays, I ground their understanding of each location of modernism and expose them to different modes of literary research: archival studies, film studies, queer theory, and recovery work, to name just a few.

All of this practice in close reading, archival research, and scholarship lays the groundwork for their major project: an 8-10 page essay that investigates an "ecology" of modernism. Each student chooses the location and text(s) that most interests them. This assignment was inspired by one of the guest scholars in the 2013 NEH Seminar, Jacqueline Goldsby. At the time, she was concluding work on a project called *Mapping the Stacks: Cataloguing Chicago's Hidden African American Archives* at the University of Chicago. Goldsby argued that Chicago offered an ecology from which Black writers emerged, so to understand Gwendolyn Brooks or Richard Wright, the literary historian needs to understand the newspapers and magazines, libraries, reading groups, and arts clubs that shaped them in the city of Chicago. This research is shaping her forthcoming book, *The Birth of the Cool: African American Literary Culture of the 1940s and 1950s*. Inspired by this framework of ecology, which implies a living, multifaceted system, I charged my students to study one of their texts in relation to the ecology from which it emerged. Their scope of inquiry led to fascinating undergraduate projects emerged: the effect of inflation on the money that

circulates in *The Sun Also Rises*, how the rise Chicago as a crossroads of rail lines filters into *Winesburg, Ohio*, how the bisexual and lesbian circles of Europe influenced H.D.'s treatment of desire in her poetry, and on and on. Students would study the original publication of the materials they had first encountered in the *Norton*, observing how the paratextual shapes the textual and how something once radical becomes canonical, even sedate. They read the letters the authors exchanged and compared their artistic manifestoes to their practice. In doing so, students get exposed to how primary materials from the period and secondary scholarship can make our understanding of a literary text more nuanced.

The depth of curiosity and ambition during the research process for the long essay reflects how engaged students are in their learning. I include a step-by-step process wherein they write an abstract and annotated bibliography and they have to meet with me one-on-one with a partial draft. This ensures they get feedback and direction on their big project and allows me to see the learning in process and not just the final product. Students showcase their learning in our Artists' Salon, which takes place in lieu of a final. We spend two hours together as a class, dressed up in our 1920s finest, learning from each other's projects. Students can try their hand at writing an artistic manifesto, singing the blues, or teaching us a dance; for the less artistically-inclined, they can give a *TEDTalk* version of their research paper. The actual final exam happens on the last scheduled day of class and covers the second half of the course. Both the midterm and final exams focus on showing their comprehensive understanding of the material through passage identification, short answer, and a long essay, whereas the presentations and research project ask them to show a depth of knowledge. Combined, this gives the class many ways to show their engagement with the material.

Syllabus: American Modernism

Course Description

The increased visibility of and changes to war, media, communication, and citizenship revolutionized the way writers told stories and made sense of the world in the early twentieth century. We will study authors who experimented with the very ideas of representation and language as they attempted to treat the upheavals that followed World War I, urbanization, and industrialization. As we do so, we will learn about the places that inspired and enlivened modernist writers. For our course's organization, we will trace the locations—Chicago, Harlem, Paris, and the South—modernism emerged to understand the little magazines, feuds, and friendships that gave rise to this movement, ranging roughly from the First World War through the Second World War. Although its creators were scattered and diverse, a loss of faith, psychic and formal fragmentation, and alienation connect modernist writers as they used language to make meaning of the world.

Learning Objectives

- Identify, define, and analyze major movements and trends in American modernist literature (Exams)
- Explore the locations and environments that fostered modernist production through research (Ecology of Modernism Essay; Short Essays)
- Understand and articulate scholarly treatments of primary texts (Scholarly Article Presentation)
- Present work to the class and campus community (The Artists' Salon)

Required Texts

- Anderson, Sherwood. *Winesburg, Ohio*.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.
- Hemingway, Ernest. *The Sun Also Rises*
- Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.
- Larsen, Nella. *Passing*.
- *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry Vol. 1*

Assignments

Short Essays (3 @ 20 points/each)	60
Scholarly Article Presentation	40
Little Magazines	10
Ecology of Modernism Essay	100
The Artists' Salon	20
Midterm	75
Final	75
Quizzes/In-Class Writing	<u>30</u>
Total	410 points

Assignment Descriptions

Short Essays

Three times over the course of the semester, write a short essay consisting of the following:

1. A selected passage from the written work to be discussed that day. The passage should be significant to the work, rich in detail, and lead to interpretation and discussion. Type the passage before your essay commences.
2. A 500-600 word explication of the passage. Begin with a 1-2 sentence thesis (no need for a formal introduction or conclusion). An explication derives an interpretation of a text by close reading the text, paying attention to and making arguments about details. Analyze the construction of the passage, its connection to the larger work, and its connection to the larger themes in the course.

Short essays must be written before the class in which we discuss the reading. At least two of these short essays must be submitted by the end of week six. This ensures you get early feedback on your writing.

Scholarly Article Presentation

Working with a partner(s), develop a 30-minute class lesson or presentation on the scholarly article or chapter they have been assigned (articles/chapters by Liesl Olson, Shari Benstock, Shane Vogel, Kirk Curnutt, and Sally Woolf). You may prepare a handout, give a PowerPoint/Prezi presentation, or use any other visual aids, but a clear, cogent understanding of the critical work and its relationship to the primary text is paramount.

Each presentation should include at least these five components (although they don't have to be in this order):

1. Summary of the work, highlighting 2-3 major points
2. An identification and evaluation of its methodology (what kinds of evidence does it engage? What kinds of questions does it ask? What assumptions does it make of the text and/or the topic?)
3. An evaluation of the merits of the work—what does it add to our understanding of the author, topic, or text? What does it illuminate?
4. An evaluation of the limitations—what does the work ignore, dismiss, or inadequately develop?

5. How does this article help us understand the text as a product of and contribution to its “ecology”—the Chicago literary renaissance, the Harlem Renaissance, the Parisian expatriates, the Southern renaissance? (note: these ecologies are not exclusive of each other)

You can teach this as a lecture, class discussion, or a mix. You can have activities or break your classmates into groups. Think about and apply what works for you as a student, bearing in mind that you also need to cover the material. As this is a pre-cursor to the research essays in this class, the fifth question is the most vital.

Little Magazines

We will dedicate a class session to dipping our toes into the archival waters. Together, we will learn about and begin to use online archives of modernist little magazines, which were the first outlets to publish most of the authors in our course. Then you will try your hand at archival research by following the steps below:

Step One: At the beginning of Week Four, print, read, and annotate “Introduction on *Poetry* and *The Little Review*” and the excerpt from *My Thirty Years’ War*, an autobiography by Margaret Anderson, the founder of *The Little Review*.

Step Two: The “Introduction” you read is from the Modernist Journals Project. Go to <http://www.modjourn.org/index.html>. This is a wonderful archive of many modernist little magazines and journals and a great resource for the longer essay in this class.

Step Three: Skim through the archives of *Poetry* and *The Little Review* up to 1940. Find one piece (a poem, story, essay, piece of visual art, etc.) that interests you. Print that piece.

Step Four: Write a 250-word response to your selected piece. What interested you about it? How does it fit into the aesthetics or ethos of the magazine? How is it modernist?

Step Five: Print and bring your selected piece and response to class at the end of Week Four. You will present what you found.

Ecology of Modernism Essay

When describing the emergence of a black Chicago literary scene from 1947-1965, scholar Jacqueline Goldsby describes Chicago as an “ecology” rather than a Renaissance, the often preferred term for the flowering of art in Chicago, Harlem, Paris, or the American South. Instead of thinking of these locales as witnessing a “rebirth,” she argues that we should think

of the writers and artists working as a cohort in an environment that fostered and nurtured art and literature. It's not a rebirth but a creation of a new literature.

The assignment is to research and write on one of these so-called "ecologies" as a means to interpreting at least one of our primary texts. You should get to know the place and its players. Read about how modernism functioned specifically in that place and time. Ecology implies a system. As such, research the system that supported and responded to the text: the magazines, the clubs, the salons, the manifestoes, the economics, the correspondence, and the space. The essays that result will offer an interpretation of at least one of our primary texts based on the information the research process uncovers.

Drafting Schedule

- Abstract and Annotated Bibliography due in Week Eleven. 10 points.
- 5 rough draft pages or a complete, thoughtful outline due in office hours or by appointment during
- Week Thirteen. 5 points.
- Final Paper due Week Fourteen. 10-12 page essay. MLA style. At least four outside sources (two of which must be scholarly works). 85 points.

The Artists' Salon

For the Artists' Salon, you will do a 5-7 minute creative presentation of your research. 20 points. You have a few options:

1. Present in a *TedTalk* style—giving us the most exciting and illuminating insights from your research in an easy-to-understand, engaging style.
2. Teach us something—a song, a dance, a mocktail recipe, maps of a city—that helped you make sense of the text you studied.
3. Create a supplemental document that might help the next reader of the text—a family tree for Faulkner, a timeline of Janie's life for Hurston, a wordle of Hemingway's prose.
4. Craft your own little magazine, publish a modernist manifesto, or produce a modernist photograph or painting.
5. Put together a photo essay from Eatonville or Harlem or Paris, whatever your site, from the period.

Midterm & Final

Each of these exams will be in three parts: (1) passage and author identification, (2) short answer, and (3) long essay. The first two parts will be closed book. I will provide more passage and short answer questions than you will be required to answer so that your answers can show your learning, rather than know every detail of the course. The long essay will be open book, and in it, you will have to address a major theme/topic of the course in relation to at least two of our primary texts.

Quizzes/In-Class Writing

Through a series of low-stakes writing prompts and reading quizzes, you will showcase having read and prepared for class discussion. For instance, on the day we read Langston Hughes's poem, each student will be assigned a poem. You will come to class with an annotated copy of the poem and two discussion questions. At the end of class, I will collect these and assemble them as a study guide for the exam.

Course Schedule

Note: when we read from the *Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*, read the author biographies too.

WEEK ONE

Thursday Course Introduction
Visual Art and Modernist Style (in-class mini-lecture)
Stein, "If I Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso"

Chicago

WEEK TWO

Tuesday "Modern American Fiction" Rita Barnard
Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio* "The Book of the Grotesque" through "Nobody
Knows"

Thursday Letter from Anderson (handout)
Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio* "Godliness" through "The Teacher"
Watch Loom: Psychology and Crises of Faith

WEEK THREE

Tuesday Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio* "Loneliness" to the end
Watch Loom: Nothing Happens and It Changes Everything

Thursday Masters, all (*Norton*)
Sandburg, all (*Norton*)
Watch Loom: Industrialization and Urbanization

WEEK FOUR

Tuesday Little Magazines in Chicago: *Poetry* and the *Little Review*
Watch Loom: Queer Modernisms

Thursday Little Magazines, cont.
Liesl Olson *Chicago Renaissance* excerpt

Paris

WEEK FIVE

Tuesday Stein, from *Tender Buttons*, "Susie Asado," "Idem the Same: A Valentine to
Sherwood

Anderson," (*Norton*)
Thursday Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, Book I
Watch Loom: Modernist Style

WEEK SIX

Tuesday Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, chapters VIII-XV
Watch Loom: Ex-Pats and World War I

Thursday Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, chapters XVI-end

WEEK SEVEN

Tuesday Fitzgerald, chapters 1-3
Thursday Fitzgerald, chapters 4-6
At Least Two Short Response Essays Due

WEEK EIGHT

- Tuesday Fitzgerald, chapters 7-9
Curnutt, "The Great Gatsby and the 1920s"
- Thursday Ezra Pound, "Portrait d'une Femme," "The Pact," "In a Station of the Metro,"
"The
River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter" (Norton)
H.D., "Oread," "The Pool," "Sea Rose," "Mid-Day," "Garden," "Sea-Violet,"
"Helen" (Norton)
Shari Benstock *Women of the Left Bank* excerpt

Spring Break

WEEK NINE

- Tuesday Midterm Exams
Harlem
- Thursday DuBois, excerpt from *The Souls of Black Folk*
McKay, "The Harlem Dancer," "If We Must Die," "The Lynching" (Norton)
Cullen, "Yet Do I Marvel," "Incident," "Heritage" (Norton)
Watch Loom: When Harlem Was in Vogue

WEEK TEN

- Tuesday Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "When Sue Wears Red," "The Weary
Blues" "Suicide's Note," "Cross," "Song for a Dark Girl," "The Bitter River"
(Norton)
Watch Loom: Walt Whitman, Music, and Hughes
- Thursday Hughes, all from *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (Norton) and excerpt from
The Big Sea 1324-1334
Vogel, "Closing Time"

WEEK ELEVEN

- Tuesday Toomer, "Her Lips are Copper Wire," "Reapers," "Portrait in Georgia" (Norton)
Larsen, Part 1
Watch Loom: Race and Modernism
- Thursday Larsen, Parts 2 and 3
The South

WEEK TWELVE

- Tuesday Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* chapters 1-5
Abstract and Annotated Bibliography Due
- Thursday Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* 6-17

WEEK THIRTEEN

- Tuesday Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* 18-end
Gates, *The Signifying Monkey* excerpt
- Thursday Faulkner, "The Bear"
Watch Loom: The South with excerpts from Glissant's *Faulkner, Mississippi*

WEEK FOURTEEN

Tuesday Faulkner, "The Bear"
 Woolf, "The Ledgers of History"
Thursday Final Exam

WEEK FIFTEEN

The Artists' Salon—Ecology of Modernism Due

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JENNIFER J. SMITH is an Associate Professor and Chair of English at North Central College. Her book, *The American Short Story Cycle*, was released by Edinburgh University Press in 2018, and her essays have appeared in *Pedagogy*, *Meridians*, and a number of essay collections. Her research and teaching focus on American literature and culture from the nineteenth century to the present, with special interests in narrative theory, gender studies, and comparative ethnic approaches.

Nina Bennett, "How Do You Do It?" Using a Reflective Annotated Bibliography in a Literature Course: Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall* and Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*

"She had not the slightest idea, till long after, what an incredible amount of labor she accomplished, or how her mother's heart was goading her on." *Ruth Hall*

"I'm not going down that way, I've worked too hard." *Sweat*

Abstract: Why not use women and their complicated relationship with different types of work as a frame for a literature course? Exploring paying jobs, motherhood, and traditional women's work would make for a substantive and engaging class. Students read Fanny Fern's autobiographical novel *Ruth Hall* (1854) alongside Lynn Nottage's contemporary play *Sweat*. What kind of high-stakes writing assignment would I assign? It took some time to figure out, but the results were worth it. Assigning a reflective annotated bibliography for which students conducted contextual research proved to be an effective high stakes assignment, drawing upon current composition pedagogy. This essay discusses the reflective annotated bibliography and includes the writing guidelines along with a sample annotation and student reflection.

Women and work: a topic very much in the news because of the global pandemic. Why not use women and their complicated relationship with different types of work as a frame for a literature course? Exploring paying jobs, motherhood, and traditional women's work would make for a substantive and engaging course on women writers. How can I move beyond the standard literary research paper? What sort of high-stakes writing assignment would I use? It took some time for me to figure out, but the results are worth sharing.

For the past twenty years, I have been a faculty member at New York City College of Technology, the senior college of technology in the City University of New York (CUNY) system. City Tech, as we call it, is not a liberal arts institution, and as such, does not offer a traditional English major. Instead, our students take literature courses as part of their general education requirements. More recently, the college began offering a minor in gender and sexuality studies and Introduction to Women Writers, a course I developed and teach frequently, counts towards that minor. Introduction to Women Writers is a writing intensive course, meaning that I must assign a minimum of fifteen pages of writing, encompassing both low and high stakes assignments.

Returning to teach the course after a period of several years, I was eager to make changes to the course content and major assignments. Typically, I teach Introduction to Women Writers as a survey course, sometimes teaching nineteenth-century texts, sometimes twentieth-century texts, but always fiction, a novel, a play, and some poems. In this case, fall

2021, my course was fully online due to the pandemic, and I wanted to provide a sharper focus. With our class meeting synchronously online only once a week, I thought it imperative to keep students engaged. I decided upon a course theme of women and work, which would give the course a sharper focus than it had in previous semesters.

I'd had much success pairing the Lynn Nottage play *Intimate Apparel* with Edith Wharton's novel *Summer* in previous semesters and I gave a lot of thought as to how I could build upon that success.² My husband had taught Lynn Nottage's contemporary Pulitzer Prize winning play *Sweat* in his literature course and had raved to me about it at the time. I read it over the summer and quickly shared his enthusiasm. *Sweat* is a rich text, teeming with conflict, focusing on factory workers facing a lockout in Reading, Pennsylvania in 2000. Lynn Nottage did extensive research for two years, interviewing residents of Reading, and her preparation shows. Nottage dramatizes not only the external conflict of management vs. labor, but the internal conflicts of the workers, including one worker who is promoted to a management job not knowing of the plan to lockout her friends. *Sweat* goes back and forth between 2000 and 2008, when two of the former factory employees are released from prison. The reason for their incarceration is kept from the audience until late in the play.

I immediately knew which text I would pair with *Sweat*: American author Fanny Fern's novel *Ruth Hall*, an extremely popular novel in its day, published in 1854. An autobiographical novel, *Ruth Hall* centers around its title character, a smart, caring woman who suddenly finds herself an impoverished widow with two young daughters to support. Much of the novel's second half focuses on Ruth's unsuccessful efforts to find decent paying work, key to keeping her children with at a time when women did not automatically keep custody of their children. Ruth's wealthy family refuses to support her financially, even though they have the means to do so. She tries her hand at being a seamstress, tries to become a teacher, but no longer has the social connections to be hired. Eventually, Ruth begins writing a column for a local New York paper, then for more newspapers, ultimately becoming famous, and gaining not only financial independence through her pen, but financial jubilation. Rather than ending in remarriage, *Ruth Hall* ends with the image of a stock certificate, made out in Ruth's name from a local bank, garnered from the royalties from her best-selling book. Work pays off for

² See Nina Bannett. "Developing Sympathy: Teaching Edith Wharton's *Summer* with Lynn Nottage's *Intimate Apparel*." *Teaching Edith Wharton's Major Novels and Short Fiction*. Edited by Ferdâ Aysa. Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, pp. 113-129.

Ruth, and she overcomes her financial and emotional hardships. She can perform the unpaid labor of motherhood without further sacrifice.

While *Ruth Hall* was quite popular in the 1850s, it is now relatively unknown, as is its author Fanny Fern, the pseudonym of writer Sara Payson Willis Parton. It is not a conventional sentimental novel, at times relying on these conventions and at others, subverting them. It is a suspenseful, poignant, funny, sharp look at the world of work for American women in the mid nineteenth-century. In the past, students had found it readable and compelling. Surely in a course on women and work, they would find it even more satisfying. It would pair well with *Sweat*, directly engaging with our course theme of women and work. I had taught *Ruth Hall* several times in the past and seen students root for Ruth to triumph over her obstacles, which include a lack of income and an unsupportive family.

My next challenge was to figure out how to design a high stakes writing assignment on *Ruth Hall* and *Sweat*. Traditionally, I assign a paper asking students to compare the protagonists of the works and to incorporate research. This time around, I wanted to try something different. But what? Our department had recently undergone a curriculum change to our first-year writing courses, with faculty now often assigning a reflective annotated bibliography. Why not try a reflective annotated bibliography in my course on women writers? I could ask students to conduct contextual research on *Ruth Hall* and *Sweat* rather than having them write a research paper. Students would hone research and writing skills they acquired in freshman composition. Surely this would be of particular benefit to students who are not literature majors and who would not be expected to write a literary paper in courses in their major.

In the end I decided to design an annotated bibliography assignment that would require five sources, accompanied by a one-page reflection in which students would write about their experience of conducting research and writing annotations. Students were instructed to find five sources of specific types, with every student being required to locate and work with one scholarly article on *Ruth Hall*.

Students then would find four additional sources out of five possibilities:

- (1) one biographical source on Fanny Fern such a website,
- (2) one print or video interview with Lynn Nottage where she discusses *Sweat*,
- (3) one news article from 2021 that focuses on American women workers,
- (4) one news article after 2008 that focuses on Reading, Pennsylvania, and

(5) one review of a performance of *Sweat*. Students would gain valuable experience using databases like Academic Search Premier and websites like Google Scholar and Google News.

I framed the assignment around a specific audience and purpose, utilizing the key pedagogical concepts of audience and purpose from first-year writing courses, which were a pre-requisite for taking my women writers course:

Your audience for your annotated bibliography is a future student like you who is studying *Ruth Hall* and *Sweat* in a college literature class like this one. By compiling an annotated bibliography, you are helping a future student understand that doing contextual research on literature is valuable. Our overall class goal is to compile a class handbook of primary and secondary sources that would be useful to future students who are reading these texts in a college course.

Students were instructed to draft annotations with three required components: a summary, an evaluation, and a reflection. In essence, annotations should provide a response to three questions: What is this source about? How credible is this source and its author? How useful is this source in understanding *Ruth Hall* or *Sweat*?

In addition to their five annotations, students were required to include a one-page reflection as the last page of their paper where they discussed the overall process of researching and writing their annotated bibliographies. I gave very specific questions for students to respond to in their reflections. What were the main challenges of researching and writing? What did they learn about *Sweat*, *Ruth Hall*, and about the process of researching literature? What advice would they give to future students who are given this assignment? Students were also asked to identify two sources that they felt were the most important for future students to consult and explain why. Providing guiding questions for the reflection insured that any transfer students who had not been exposed to reflective writing in their first-year writing course would understand the expectations. Submitting a one-page reflection would let me see what challenges the assignment posed for students. The five annotations plus a one-page reflection worked to about six pages of writing. Once I graded the papers, I would compile a class annotated bibliography comprised of ten sources, with contributions from each student and post it to our online course site, showcasing all of the hard work students did. Compiling a group annotated bibliography would highlight student achievement

and make use of their final reflections, in which I asked them to point to two sources that they thought were the most useful.

I found many benefits in pairing *Sweat* and *Ruth Hall* together and to having student do contextual research instead of writing a traditional literary research paper. Writing a reflective annotated bibliography kept research relevant for the students—they learned about Reading, Pennsylvania, changes in the workforce, women working at home during the pandemic, and more about Fanny Fern, whose real-life challenges after being widowed inspired her to write *Ruth Hall*. I required my students to include one academic essay about *Ruth Hall*, to expose them to literary criticism. The assignment also worked as a deterrent to deliberate plagiarism since it demands that students summarize recent sources and reflect upon them. Writing a final reflection also insured that students had a place to vent about any challenges in research and writing. Including a one-page reflection guaranteed that students consider the writing process and compose their thoughts.

Having had such positive results, I plan to assign a reflective annotated bibliography in all my literature courses from now on. Using this writing assignment, adapted from current writing pedagogy, with its emphasis on reflective writing and writing transfer, worked extremely well in my themed literature course on women and work. The labor students put into this project paid off for them, and for me.

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Appendix A

Paper #2: Annotated Bibliography on Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall* and Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*

Assignment Overview: 5 Sources

An annotated bibliography is a list of sources that includes a summary and/or evaluation for each source. *Each of your 5 annotations should summarize, assess, and reflect on your source.*

Your audience for your annotated bibliography is a future student like you who is studying *Ruth Hall* and *Sweat* in a college literature class like this one. By compiling an annotated bibliography, you are helping a future student understand that doing contextual research on literature is valuable.

Our overall class goal is to compile a class handbook of primary and secondary sources that would be useful to future students who are reading these texts in a college course. *Your completed annotated bibliography will be about 5-6 pages of writing.* However, you'll be doing some writing to guide you through the different steps of research and writing that are involved in composing an annotated bibliography.

Choices of Sources: You must have five sources in your annotated bibliography. For your annotated bibliography, pick a combination of 5 sources from the list below to locate, read, and write an annotation. However, you must include a scholarly article on *Ruth Hall* or Fanny Fern as one source.

- 1 scholarly article on *Ruth Hall* or Fanny Fern (use Academic Search Complete or Google Scholar) this kind of source is required for everyone

Then, choose 4 out of these five sources:

- 1 biographical source on Fanny Fern like a website (not something from our course site)
- 1 print or video interview with Lynn Nottage where she discusses *Sweat*
- 1 news article from 2021 that focuses on American women workers (use Google News)
- 1 news article after 2008 that focuses on Reading, Pennsylvania (use Google News)
- 1 review of a performance of *Sweat*

Method for Writing Your Individual Annotations

- Summarize the source: First, what type of source is this (ex: peer-reviewed journal article, book, website, review of a play, interview, news article). What are the main points of this source? If someone asked what this source about, what would you

say? Who made it available and for what purpose? Who is the audience/who is it written for? For example, for an interview with Lynn Nottage: who interviewed her? Where was it published? *Aim for a five to six sentence summary.*

- Assess the author and source: After summarizing your source, evaluate it. How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Who is the author/who wrote this? What do you know about their background and expertise? What makes them qualified or unqualified to write about the topic? How do you know/how did you find out? *Aim for a five to six sentence assessment.*
- Reflect on the source's usefulness: Lastly, explain how this source helps you better understand one aspect of *Ruth Hall*, *Sweat*, or our course theme of women and work. Explain in what ways this source is useful for a student studying this text or theme. *Aim for a five to six sentence reflection.*

Final Reflection

As the last page of your paper, you must include a one-page reflection where you discuss the overall process of researching and writing your annotated bibliography. What were the main challenges of researching and writing? What did you learn about *Sweat*, *Ruth Hall*, and about the process of researching literature? What advice would you give to future students who are given this assignment? Identify two sources that you feel are the most important for future students to consult and explain why.

MLA Format

Cite each source using MLA format and list your five sources in alphabetical name by author. Use the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) for help with MLA format for Works Cited page:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_works_cited_page_basic_format.html

Timeline for paper #2

Week of November 8: Begin your research and find scholarly article on *Ruth Hall* or Fanny Fern

Friday, Nov 19: Draft one annotation on scholarly article on *Ruth Hall* or Fanny Fern—upload your draft as a journal entry

Sunday, November 28: Draft a second annotation on a source on *Sweat*—upload your draft as a journal entry due on Blackboard

Sunday, December 12: Paper #2 due via Blackboard-use the Assignment Link in the Annotated Bibliography folder

Sample Annotation

McNulty, Charles. "Review: As Blue Collar Jobs Leave a Pennsylvania Town, Lynn Nottage's *Sweat* Reveals the Racial Faultlines Left Behind." *Los Angeles Times*, 7 Sept. 2018, <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/theater/reviews/la-et-cm-sweat-review-20180907-story.html>

This source is a Theater critic review from 2018. Charles McNulty is a writer for the Los Angeles Times and he does great job describing *Sweat*. McNulty summarized the play in a way that brings up the most important topics Lynn Nottage addresses in her play and perfectly describes what Nottage wanted her audience to see, but also brings up other topics even I didn't read into. McNulty begins by bringing up the state of the nation plays that are a tradition in Britain. This genre has been more American recently, but usually many play writers before Nottage were preoccupied writing about "family affairs and identity crisis than economic realities and race relations." McNulty describes the pros and cons of reading the play and seeing the play but "When Violence erupts near the end, the effect is bracing." McNulty has reviewed *Sweat* before 2018, back in 2016, and does this brief before and after effect and even describes the reasoning of why Pennsylvania changed from a blue state to a red state. This source helped me better understand Nottage's intention for writing a play such a *Sweat* and why it caught so much attention by many. This source helps better understand the topics we addressed in class but also how racial divisions aren't important to these workers who have other things to worry about. This source simplifies *Sweat* scene by scene and I would recommend this for students next year. It discusses the key topics we spoke about but also brings up other topics I didn't realize were also happening in the play.

More Resources for Help with the Annotated Bibliography

- "Citation and Formatting Guides." CityTech Library, CUNY, <https://libguides.citytech.cuny.edu/citations/writing>
- "Annotated Bibliography." OWL, Purdue University, https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/annotated_bibliographies/index.html
- "A Short Guide to Annotated Bibliographies." uploaded by nool—Ontario Tech University, 25 June, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAgmmJV3RIU>

Method for Compiling Your Annotated Bibliography into One Document

Your completed paper will have your 5 annotations in alphabetical order in MLA format, followed by your one-page reflection.

- Double-space the entire document and use size 12 Times New Roman font.
- Make sure you put your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner as your header.
- In the upper left-hand corner, put Your Name, Instructor's Name, Course Section, and Date.
- Title this paper Annotated Bibliography on *Ruth Hall* and *Sweat*
- List your annotations in alphabetical order by author's last name.

Appendix B: Sample of Student Reflection

The most challenging part of writing this paper was definitely researching and looking for a reliable source with useful information that had to do with the topic. It took me a long time to get to the sources that I chose for this essay. There are random websites with no authors listed and that would be my first red flag towards not choosing them. Also using a variety of key words to get the specific information was a challenge. During the process of writing this essay I learned a lot of background information about the authors and what it took to create these literature that is so important to the history of women. I was mostly shocked at how close Ruth Hall's life came to Fanny Fern's life. I learned how Ruth Hall became almost like an answering to prayers for women, encouraging them to fight for rights and independence then deserved, creating hope and showing that women could also succeed in life just as men do. For the play *Sweat*, I had no idea the lengths Lynn Nottage went through to obtain and create the play. It is an amazing play but also brings up a huge issue of the American labor force and it's way of treating women who are more than capable and willing to work. For this essay, my advice to future students is to not settle with the first website or article you stumble upon that has an intriguing title. I took a long time to write this paper but am very happy with the sources I choose. I feel like they are solid ones that provided me with great information. Also don't be scared to delete what you have written to replace it with a stronger source. Two sources that I feel would be the most useful for future students would be *Snapshot: Creating sweat* YouTube video and the "Feminize Your Canon: Fanny Fern" article. These two sources go into the life of author Fanny Fern and Lynn Nottage.

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Review of Christopher Schaberg's *Pedagogy of the Depressed*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2022.

Schaberg is a professor at New Orleans' Loyola University and the editor of the Object Lessons series, edited by Bloomsbury Publishing.

CNN advertising, Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time...in Hollywood*, Zoom meetings, and miniscule student attention spans. These topics and many more form stops along the wandering path that is Schaberg's latest book, *Pedagogy of the Depressed*. To begin with, there is a lot to unpack in the title of the book. The most obvious is the reference to Brazilian scholar Paulo Freire's critique of the banking model of education from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968). Readers will assume that Schaberg is influenced by Freire's ideas and in part he is. Readers will also assume that the book has to do with the often depressing factors that accompany any foray into today's institutions of higher learning, both for the faculty and for the students. Again, these assumptions are correct. However, what readers may not anticipate and should be delighted by the presence of, is a vast range of topics—seemingly randomly interspersed throughout the book—that break up the chapters of both theoretical musings and practical applications of managing the college literature classroom in the early twenty-first century world of pandemic lockdowns, changing university concerns, and the post-Postmodern world of businessmen in the White House. The honest tone of Schaberg's prose is refreshingly welcome—he is continuously questioning what he is doing, why, and how is it affecting his students as well as providing critiques of what is wrong with higher education.

In Chapter 9, Schaberg talks about his 2017 book, *The Work of Literature in an Age of Post-Truth*. He says the book “ended up being about how downtrodden I was—concerning the state of literature, teaching, and language's relation to truth and the world—in the aftermath of the 2016 US presidential election” (74). He laments the loss of time for slow study, but he also celebrates courses designed to “pinpoint deep dives into specific texts that exemplified certain shifts, ruptures, experimental breakthroughs, and so on” (84) and that try to replace the stale chronological examination of texts in the literature classroom.

Some of the more interesting features of the book are Schaberg's description of teaching techniques and strategies he has tried and how they turned out. For example, one chapter

addresses his “un-grading.” What Schaberg does instead of spending hours grading is provide feedback through texts and emails, Zoom meetings, and working individually with students on various academic and professional projects—as he says “a different kind of teaching” (108). He does admit that there are problems with un-grading however; the term itself can be disconcerting to students, universities demand grades, and students do not get the feedback on submitted work that, Schaberg admits with some ambivalence, often are not read by students anyway, and which is draining to produce. Also, since Schaberg works closely with students who know what they want to work on, some students may be falling by the wayside if they are less committed to the learning process.

One depressing issue familiar to all levels of institutions is the loss of faculty at the heart of specialist programs, which threatens the variety of programs available to students at affected schools. He also reviews the issues surrounding departments that rely on non-tenured faculty to teach the bulk of their courses and the loss of research faculty and the repercussions to a school when this happens.

Even though the topic of exhaustion is not specifically addressed until chapter 18, the tenor of the book is that of depression laced with fatigue. As Schaberg puts it, “Maybe what’s so depressing about all this is that it feels very much like living at the end of something” (115). The phrase “about all this” sums up the experience of many of us in higher education. Critical inquiry, the heart of the college experience, has in many instances given way to a customer service model based on satisfaction surveys that are demoralizing for faculty. The exhaustion is worsened by seeing the divide between the two houses of most academic realms—administration (paid considerably more, which adds to the depression) and faculty grow ever wider as talks of accountability, retention, and student support services (all important to both sides of the house, of course) push out discussions of one’s favorite subjects with colleagues. We are all racing to fulfil ever more seemingly unfulfillable goals and the question of why we were attracted to teaching becomes increasingly difficult to answer.

He also addresses the practicalities of the classroom, interrogating why he does what he does, which asks us to reflect on why we ourselves do what we do. Schaberg approaches the biggest concerns we have, including engaging with the useful and necessary, but often

daunting technologies, such as Blackboard and Canvas, Google products, and Web Ex teams. We learn about using Google Docs to create “living” syllabi to accommodate changes in classroom tastes, needs, and weather conditions. We learn how to move discussion-based classes online during lockdown. We learn how to merge theory and practice of asynchronous courses and keep students engaged in a virtual classroom. We are warned, though: “the beginning of this process is almost always nightmarish and unwieldy...it will feel messy and awkward and clunky—not necessarily productive in any clear sense” (133-134). The optimism and pessimism of our current teaching mode alternate throughout *Pedagogy of the Depressed*.

Schaberg's deepest concerns mirror many of ours. That administration will not see moving online as a fearful, temporary situation, but rather as a new efficient system that eliminates all sorts of issues, including those of class size limits or scheduling issues. We are depressingly isolated from our colleagues and valuable impromptu discussions and collaborations.

A bonus? Throughout the book, Schaberg also talks about other texts that speak to the issues he is addressing. This is a great, and much appreciated, way to increase our academic TBR piles.