

Modernist Form: On the Problem of Fragmentation

by

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Duke University

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in the Graduate Program in Literature in the Graduate School
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2018

ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation explores formal fragmentation in the modernist novel. It shows that such fragmentation not only represents the historical conditions of modernism, but also posits the potential for new forms of human relation. Each chapter explores test cases of this potential through a close analysis of a novel and argues that in order to understand such literary structure one must look beyond literature to the wider episteme of modernism. Each chapter therefore positions literature alongside a related field, where the affinities are shown to be found not in a shared content but in a shared form. The chapters include explorations of: the problem of language in Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* read alongside advertising; the problem of continuity and fragmentation in Ford's *Parade's End* read alongside security and administrative governance; and the problem of perception in Woolf's *The Waves* read alongside physics. As the discussion of these pairings proceeds from chapter to chapter, it is shown that the fragmentation of each respective novel reveals an increasingly successful utopian experiment in alternative forms of human relationality. At an additional register, this dissertation also shows that such experimentation requires a redefined role for the critic, for the novels each draw the reader into their texts by not only representing but enacting fragmentation in a way that requires the reader to participate in the utopian experiment. Through the practice of criticism, the critic is therefore implicated in the modernist project, and complicit in all of the political and ethical concerns the project carries.

Dedication

For Katie.

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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my dissertation committee, Rey Chow, Antonio Viego, and Fredric Jameson, and especially my adviser, Michael Hardt, for helping me to navigate this long process; and I wish to thank my family: Michael, Suzanne, and Marnee for their encouragement along the way, and Katie, Sophia, and Vivian for their unending support throughout my writing.

Introduction: The Problem of Form

Why is fragmentation a problem? If “problem” is understood in the colloquial sense, it characterizes the way in which fragmentation creates feelings of anxiety, alienation, and discontinuity. For modernism (I use the term loosely to signify the cultural, political, and social conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), these feelings are said to be the result of the fragmentation among people; factors such as an increasing urban landscape and its associated relations of capitalist production isolated people from earlier forms of community. They are also said to be the feelings of a fragmentation within the self, where the Cartesian individual became internally fractured, losing a sense of identity or coherence. The term fragmentation is also used to describe the rupture between the past and the present, where traditions appear lost to a new way of life, and a new generation finds itself disconnected from the historical contexts out of which it emerged. These feelings of fragmentation are often said to constitute the experience of modernism, an experience expressed in much of the period’s aesthetic production.

Fragmentation is also a problem in a technical sense. It calls to mind notions of incompatibility, inconsistency, or tension. It is a problem because inherent to its nature is the fact of being unresolved. In this sense, the feelings of anxiety, alienation, and discontinuity noted above can be said to be the manifestations of an underlying dissonance. Adorno describes dissonance as a simultaneity that destroys rational unity, and instead conveys the sense of a polyphony of voices. In fragmentation, singularity or

totality appear to be absent, and a dissonant multiplicity comes to characterize modernist experience.

These two ways of understanding the term “problem” express two categorical perspectives. The first, that the problem of fragmentation is characterized by its troubling experience, appeals to the content of fragmentation. The troubling nature of fragmented experience renders it problematic. The second, that fragmentation implies notions of inconsistency, appeals to its form. The experience of fragmentation is constituted by the meeting of two incompatible logics.

Although recent trends in modernist criticism will acknowledge the formal nature of fragmentation, they tend to place an emphasis on representations of fragmented experience in modernism’s aesthetic productions. The important work of such trends, including the expansions in the field and its range of objects promoted by the “new modernist studies,” as well as the general thrust of new historicism across literary studies as a whole, attempts to uncover the many contexts and experiences of particular sites of aesthetic production. Such a focus can be characterized as the archeological work unearthing the content of modernism in all of its heterogeneous manifestations. There is no doubt that the field has benefited immensely from such work.

But the focus of this dissertation is not that which has dominated the field in the last decade or two; I instead return to a line of criticism that puts an emphasis on form. My concern in this dissertation is on the problem of fragmentation as understood in the second sense of the term “problem:” that fragmentation characterizes the structural relations proper to the conditions of modernist production. How fragmentation does this

will be explored in the following chapters. But it should be noted that this focus does not discount the centrality of content to this or any related exploration. An assumption implicit to this project is that any investigation into the nature of form always reciprocally informs the nature of content's production. As evident in the following chapters, the reciprocal relationship between form and content will be a central finding of this dissertation's exploration. My discussion, therefore, is not intended to replace other critical perspectives, methods, or findings, but instead to add an additional layer to the criticism of modernism where we might gain a deeper or more complex understanding of the problem of modernist fragmentation.

My wager is that initiating an exploration of fragmentation from a position that focuses on form will bring to light a number of overlooked or undertheorized features of modernism. But I want to be clear about how I use the word "form," for as gestured toward in the formal characterization of fragmentation above—that is, fragmentation as a problem of inconsistency or tension—I employ the word "form" in a specific way. Donald Kartiganer, a critic of Faulkner's work, writes that "By 'form' I do not mean such technical matters as imagery, symbolism, narrative point of view, or specific devices such as stream-of-consciousness. I refer rather to the significant structure of a literary work, the way in which the different units relate to each other, the way in which they become part—or fail to—of a coherent whole" (xiii). For Kartiganer, form refers to the structural relations of a novel's components. For me, the use of the concept indicates something similar, but beyond the scope of the novel or any individual work; "form," as used in this dissertation, designates the nature of modernism's structural relations, as working at all

levels of modernism (the text, the conditions of the text's production, modernism's epistemic relations), and extending into modernism's critical discourse, as will be shown in the following chapters.

I admit that the purpose of this dissertation--to explore the nature of modernist form--is an ambitious project. The question for the dissertation as a whole is not what is the nature of such form in its specific contexts, but what is the nature of the form that defines modernism as an episteme? The sweeping scope of such a question carries inherent limitations for any rigorous attempt to address it, including the problems of defining modernism's boundaries, and those born out of drawing universal characterizations from particular contexts; I accept these (and surely there are others) and the corollary understanding that this project cannot be understood as comprehensive. And yet the concept of fragmentation appears to constitute whatever tenuous cohesion there is collecting the disparate approaches to modernism; reading across a broad sampling of modernist criticism, the fact of fragmentation at times appears axiomatic for the field. And so while it is not my intention to argue the centrality of fragmentation to any totalizing definition of modernism, I simply point out what appears to be a common refrain in the criticism. If fragmentation is generally accepted to be a central feature of modernism, and if it is in its primary sense a question of form, then it would follow that an exploration of the character of modernist form would lead to an understanding of the epistemic relations of modernism itself, however such an abstraction may or may not articulate the particularity of any given context, situation, or example.

However, a rigorous attempt to work at such a high register must nevertheless draw its observations from particular phenomena. Each chapter explores the form of fragmentation in a specific novel (chapter one explores Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, chapter two explores Ford's *Parade's End*, and chapter three explores Woolf's *The Waves*), and together these chapters find a certain correspondence in the structure of the fragmentation explored. And yet an appeal to literature alone cannot assume to stand in for an exploration of the epistemic scope indicated above. For this reason, in each chapter we find that at some point the project of unpacking the structural relations of fragmentation in the chapter's given novel stalls. At such moments, I then turn to an analysis of an altogether different domain of modernism. However distinct the content may be between such institutional domains and their chapter's respective novels (more so in the pairing of *As I Lay Dying* and advertising in chapter one, for example, than the pairings of *Parade's End* and administrative governance in chapter two, or *The Waves* and physics in chapter three), I show that such domains and the respective paired novels share certain formal affinities. The findings of such analyses further the articulation of the respective chapter's form, which I then bring to bear on a return to the chapter's central novel. A comparative reading of this sort, I would submit, allows for such higher order—that is, epistemic—gestures.

On Entanglement

Now if we return to the initial question, “why is fragmentation a problem,” we can approach it in a third way: what is the legitimacy of considering fragmentation

problematic? What if we approached fragmentation not as something with negative connotations, but if we approached it with affirmation? This is ultimately a speculative line of thought, but it posits the possibility that fragmentation can function as a productive form. If the central question of this dissertation is “what is the nature of the form of modernist fragmentation,” the corollary question is, “what is the potential of this form?” While the former question initiates and drives the exploration of each chapter, these chapters’ discussions inevitably transform into an exploration of the latter. This second question does not characterize the purpose of this dissertation, but it nevertheless becomes an inherent part, on equal standing, of the dissertation’s central investigation; and as the reader will see, the nature of this question’s emergence is particular to each chapter.

The discussions of the following chapters each reveal through their own particularities that the form of modernist fragmentation is characterized by what I call “entanglement.” The specifics of these chapters’ entanglements unfold in their own respective ways, but it would be useful at the outset of this dissertation’s exploration to consider the general features of the concept that, at least in the way I employ it, marks its salience. The entangled notions in these chapters (language and materiality in chapter one, reason and uncertainty in chapter two, singularity and multiplicity in chapter three) are understood as such because they comprise a certain intertwined bond, where each reciprocally defines the other, despite what would initially be perceived as their incongruity. One might think of entanglement as Rey Chow does, as “a topological looping together that is at the same time an enmeshment of topics” (1), or as “the

linkages and enmeshments that keep things apart; the voidings and uncoverings that hold things together” (12). The “looping together” and “enmeshment” brings together domains that are not otherwise inherently connected, yet does not consolidate them; rather, entanglement in a way conjoins two domains while preserving their differentiation, their separation. Indeed, as Chow explains, separation is at the heart of entanglement. Building on the field of physics, including the recent work of Karen Barad, as well the valences of biosemiotics and to a greater degree the work of Benjamin on montage, Chow shows that entanglement is the specific condition proper to disparate fragments that have been remixed into some newly coherent expression. We could read what Chow says about montage as a description of the critic engaging or unraveling a newly perceived entanglement: “we move things around from one context into another in the realm of thought, producing unanticipated, unsuspected relations—oftentimes triggering a crisis and a new situation—through the very gesture of juxtaposition” (3). Such sliding into new forms of juxtaposition is what happens in the following chapters, across three registers: at the level of exploring the form of fragmentation, entanglements are found in the reformulating of notions typically thought of as opposed, such as those listed above; at the level of method, fields and institutional domains (literature, advertising, administrative governance, physics) are brought into new contexts to reciprocally explore one another—all creating “unanticipated, unsuspected relations;” and at the level of discourse, the subject and its object—the critic of modernism and modernism itself—become entangled in a shared project.

One might also turn directly to physics to understand entanglement, much as I turn to physics in the discussion of chapter three's analysis of Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*. The idea of entanglement was theorized by Edwin Schrödinger who found that two particles separated in space—that is, not adjoining (and this space has since been found to be, theoretically speaking, of any magnitude, including light years apart)—could nevertheless be somehow bound together in such a way that if an adjustment were made to one, the other would simultaneously respond in kind, as though the two were directly linked. Einstein famously called this notion “spookiness at a distance,” and was skeptical of its validity. But perhaps, at least in how the concept is employed at the register of methodology, something about Einstein's language is right: there is something spectral or immaterial about the affinity identified between each chapter's work of literature and its disciplinary or institutional complement: chapter one explores William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* alongside modern advertising; chapter two explores Ford Madox Ford's *Parades End* alongside modern security and administrative governance; chapter three explores Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* alongside modern physics. That such links exist despite the appearance of existing within seemingly distinct domains is part of my claim: as noted above, the affinities found are not necessarily material or concrete such that a genealogy of influence or circulation can be traced (though, that too may be present); rather, purely formal, these similarities reveal some deeper register of connection, perhaps something not wholly accountable, but which nevertheless seems apparent—and, I might add, helpful in terms of the ability to read one as a route to more deeply understand the complexity of the other.

For the theory of entanglement I employ here, one should take into account all of these valences. But what is most important is to understand that in the register of form, each chapter shows that modernist fragmentation is more than the discontinuity of experience and its aesthetic representation; it is specifically a structure constituted by entangled notions that, through such entanglement, produce for their respective domains the atonal reverberations that were experienced as anxiety and crisis. While the concept of entanglement does not always imply tension (such as my use of the concept at the register of methodology), each chapter shows that for the entanglements found in the form of modernist fragmentation, the entangled notions conjoin in exactly that way: language and materiality appear to be irreconcilable; reason and uncertainty are not contradictory, but still incompatible logics; singularity and multiplicity are not mutually exclusive, but still function from opposing perspectival positions. These entangled pairs each produce a sense of tension or dissonance. As entangled, they function simultaneously, and in doing so overlay the otherwise smooth, continuous sense of experience with friction, thereby jarring relationality, consciousness, and perception—and it is such dissonance, I argue, that accounts for the fragmented experience of modernist life.

The Structure of the Dissertation

There are three parallel organizing principles for the dissertation's chapters. While any one of them might alone justify the trajectory of the dissertation's discussion, they intersect in different ways for each respective chapter. Yet at the global level, these

organizing principles establish three layers of exploration. First, each of the chapters engages a specific problem that might be considered a subset of modernist fragmentation. From this perspective, the chapters could be arranged in a number of ways, but the arrangement here suggests a loose trajectory of becoming, where, moving from the problem of language, to that of continuity, and finally to perception, the chapters chart a path from what could be considered the initial confrontation with fragmentation in the fracturing of thought from experience, to the resulting sensation of discontinuity, and finally to a resulting questioning of the stability of a fixed perspective from which to perceive the world. Second, each chapter of the dissertation explores the tension within what is eventually recognized as an entangled pair. Moving from the tension between language and materiality, to reason and uncertainty, to singularity and multiplicity, the chapters loosely follow a path from concepts experienced in everyday life to a deeper register of abstraction. Both of these organizing principles contribute to the general sense of exploration, where though the chapters function largely independently from one another, threads can be drawn to signal subtle momentum along these two fronts.

The third organizing principle for the chapters of this dissertation is the strongest. Here, the chapters follow a specific investigation into the possible combinations of the tension between form and content. I build on the basic model that Fredric Jameson borrows from Louis Hjelmslev to show a specific unfolding of the form/content relationship which corresponds to the particular ways the subject matter of the respective chapters' novels and/or their critical discourses are structured. The particularities of these correspondences are made clear in the chapters themselves. In the introduction to

The Modernist Papers, Jameson describes the problem with posing form and content as a binary: it pulls the critic to favor one side over the other, and in doing so obstructs the unfolding of one of these two inherent aspects of literature’s complexity. He argues that a more robust sense of these concepts is engaged if one instead approaches each through the perspective of both itself and the other. Following this model, this dissertation builds from one perspective to the next, allowing the strengths that a given perspective offers to guide the discussion of the corresponding chapter. Jameson’s model, below, therefore gives a certain coherence to the logic of this dissertation’s organization (moving counter-clockwise from the top right quadrant), where the horizontal categories (capitalized) are viewed from the perspective of the vertical categories (my additions are displayed parenthetically):

	form	content
CONTENT	form of content (fragmentation of experience) <i>(Chapter 2: The Problem of Continuity)</i> (ideology)	content of content (the experience of fragmentation) <i>(Chapter 1: The Problem of Language)</i> (image)
FORM	form of form (form of fragmentation) <i>(Chapter 3: The Problem of Perception)</i> (concept)	content of form (meaning through fragmentation) <i>(Conclusion: Criticism and Utopia)</i> (potentiality)

While each chapter unfolds its respective quadrant at length, a note on how the chapters each engage this schema may provide a tentative overview of the dissertation’s trajectory. The first chapter (on Faulkner and advertising) deals with the “content of the

content.” The fragmentation of language from the materiality to which it purports to refer results in the emptying of meaning from what I call the first order content, the words themselves. The chapter shows that this opens the possibility to use such words to create an image or impression, what I call second order content, that connects in a significant way to materiality where first order content cannot. Jameson writes that in the quadrant of the content of the content, “we attempt to identify the social and historical realities in which the text comes into being and which it presumably designates” (xv). The designation of the text to such material conditions occurs not by means of the text’s words themselves—that is, by language—but through the meaning carried by the image the words create. The quadrant of the content of the content, then, explores the way in which the experience of fragmentation is an experience of navigating the registers through which meaning does and does not flow.

The second chapter (on Ford and security) deals with the “form of the content,” that is, an understanding of fragmentation as not the sensation of experience but a category designating the structure of experience. The experience of discontinuity creates the conditions from which fragmentation, as a concept designating formal relations, therefore arises. Jameson describes this quadrant as the position of ideology. Ford, and many lines of criticism, employ fragmentation at this conceptual register, and in doing so position it as an ideology proper to modernism.

The third chapter (on Woolf and physics) deals with the “form of the form,” that is, the formal structure of modernist fragmentation as a concept. This chapter therefore explores form as pure abstraction, as a set of relations distinct from any content. With

respect to this quadrant, Jameson writes, “The ideological forms of an older content are somehow neutralized and bracketed by an abstraction that seeks to retain only from them their purely formal structures, now deployed as a kind of autonomy...formalism must therefore necessarily fail...yet the attempt to escape that world’s ideologies must [be]...counted as a Utopian one” (xvii). The exploration of form as such leads to the articulation of pure relationality which, as the chapter shows, provides the dissertation’s greatest potential for utopian imagining.

The trajectory of these three positions from the schema above allows for the conditions of the fourth quadrant, the “content of the form.” The conclusion picks this position up as the dissertation’s site of speculative imagining, the quadrant where Jameson finds “the only productive coordination between form and content,” the location of the production of new meaning or significance (xvii).

Beyond the readings specific to each chapter’s respective literatures and institutional domains, the explorations of the following chapters together continually ask: What is the function of form in modernist fragmentation? What is the relationship between modernist fragmentation and critical fragmentation? And what is the significance of understanding such form as entanglement? It should be noted that I do not turn to contemporary theory, or to the theory and philosophy of the modernist period, to explore these questions. Some of that work has been done elsewhere, and though it could certainly augment the discussion here, my hope is that in focusing instead on the specific pairings within each chapter (and certainly others could be made), a certain unique angle of light will expose something worthwhile for our understanding both of modernism and

of our critical relation to it. In exploring what follows in its unique specificity, my hope is that this dissertation offers an intriguing and perhaps productive way to imagine the possibility of modernist form.

1. The Problem of Language: Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Modern Advertising

Language, Materiality, Experience

Fragmentation is everywhere in *As I Lay Dying*. Within the first few chapters of the novel, each only lasting a few pages, the first time reader is already disoriented by the constant shifting of narrative perspective. Faulkner's novel follows the Bundrens, a poor yet landowning family of rural white Mississippi, as they bury their mother and wife, the strong matriarch that binds them together. The narrative is written as fifty nine monologues split between fifteen voices, each forming some combination of present action, reflection, and remembrance. Each monologue is narrated from the perspective of one character, and while many perspectives reoccur throughout the novel, the shifts between them mark the instability of a common experience; in many such shifts, two perspectives often present incompatible accounts of a person's character or of the events unfolding. As many critics have noted, this leaves the reader without a unified voice to follow, and without certainty as to the nuances of the narrative, however simple the overarching plot of the novel may be.

As one reaches further into the novel, as the experience of shifting between monologues becomes more routine, the language itself begins to disorient. Perhaps the most often cited example is the chapter by the young boy Vardaman who, wrestling with the death of his mother, states, "my mother is a fish," forming the entirety of a chapter. Critics have suggested that the sudden abruptness, and yet simplicity, of this chapter

startles the reader, causing one to pause, and in so doing disrupts the fluid movement across the narrative. Mark Boren had gone so far as to argue that the experience of this chapter forces the reader to wrestle with the complexity of its content at a level that would have never occurred had the language been embedded within a larger body of text. Standing alone, however, these words force the reader to reconcile their odd juxtaposition (literally equating a mother with a fish, almost mathematically) with the experience of a young child, and within the larger thematic elements of the novel.

Similar examples of fragmentation occur elsewhere in Faulkner's novel. Addie, mother, wife, and central figure of the narrative, famously states, "The shape of my body where I used to be a virgin is in the shape of a and I couldn't think *Anse*," (Faulkner 173). Faulkner includes this gaping space in the text, showing visually the lack Addie experiences from motherhood. Some monologues have no ending punctuation, where the voice's thought is incomplete, trailing off into nothingness. When Addie's coffin is finished being built, the neighbor Vernon Tull describes it with "Cash made it clockshape, like this [...] with every joint and seam beveled and scrubbed with the plane," where in the text the geometric image of a coffin appears in the place of the ellipses above. Faulkner also intersperses lengthy moments of narration in italics to perhaps signal something akin to a flashback, but one is never quite sure. In some instances, the meaning if the italics appears wholly elusive, and at best inconsistent. And there is the section narrated by Cash, the oldest son of the family, and a carpenter who built his mother's coffin, laying out as a numbered logical proof why he beveled the edges of the coffin's panels. As many critics have shown, all of these examples bring the experience

of fragmentation directly to the reader. Some parts of the novel show the fragmentation of thought and language, while others, as the brief chapter by Vardaman above, fragment the act of reading; yet, as Donald Kartiganer notes, “This fragmentary structure is the core of Faulkner’s novelistic vision, describing a world of broken orders, a world in which the meetings of men and words need to be imagined again” (Kartiganer xiii). Faulkner’s novel makes fragmentation the central element of his novel. Many critics have noted the similarities between *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury*, where *As I Lay Dying* picks up on the techniques of the earlier novel and pushes them to a further limit. Yet, as critics have also noted, *The Sound and the Fury* has no action, but only the perspectives of its four central voices. *As I Lay Dying*, by contrast, has a simple, and completed action. Faulkner’s emphasis for the novel, then, is not on deciphering the action or timeline of the narrative, but on the function of narrative itself. As Kartiganer suggests, Faulkner’s novel instead portrays the fragmented nature of human relation, the fallout of such fragmentation, and the ways in which we might find some form of recuperation in our relatedness. As we shall see, this reimagining of the “meeting of men and words” forms one of the most important implications for the novel’s central project.

The whole novel hinges on the sole monologue of a dead woman who is so often accused, by critics as well as by characters of the novel, of demanding her family return her body to the town of her ancestry in order to exact revenge for robbing here of the fullness of life. Addie’s monologue often comes as a startling revelation to the first-time reader, for up to that point the characters had spoken of her as a devoted mother and wife, a god-fearing woman, and as the honest woman holding the somewhat objectionable

members of the family together. Yet when the reader finds the opening words of Addie's monologue, more than half way through the novel and after she has died, what one finds is: "In the afternoon when school was out and the last one had left with his little dirty snuffling nose, instead of going home I would go down the hill to the spring where I could be quiet and hate them" (Faulkner 169). The reader's expectations of Addie are disrupted, and one finds her comments disconnected from the impression others had given of her. And yet one part of that earlier impression remains: Addie is still the point of reference for the family, where not only does the novel's action revolve around her request to be buried in her home town, and not only do the voices of the each monologue form the experience of her loss, but Addie's bleak outlook on life, one she works to overcome but which constantly returns, lays out the real project of the novel: to find a way to live amidst the tension between language and materiality.

When Addie first births Cash, the oldest son, she thinks that the piece of her that is lost with the loss of her virginity--that is, her aloneness, her sense of self--is filled by her son, and the two needed no words to express their unity. But when Darl is born, she became fragmented again, split between two children, and she shuns Darl, and hates her husband Anse for it. Looking for a new site of wholeness, she has an affair with the Reverend Whitfield, finding resolution in sexual pleasure. But with the resulting birth of Jewel, whom she cares for the most, she finds herself trapped in a secret, which again brings the experience of estrangement. Addie then births a daughter, Dewey Dell, "to negative Jewel," and then Vardaman "to replace the child I had robbed him [Anse] of" (Faulkner 176). Critics have noted that Addie's childbearing takes the form of an account

to be settled or balanced, and once she births Vardaman, she can “get ready to die” (Faulkner 176). But Addie’s initial loss is never recovered. During the whole of her monologue, and by extension the whole of the novel (as the reader now recognizes upon reading Addie’s monologue), Addie grapples with what she sees at the irreconcilability of language and materiality. She narrates:

So I took Anse. And when I knew that I had Cash, I knew that living was terrible and that this was the answer to it. That was when I learned that words are no good; that words dont ever fit even what they are trying to say at. When he was born I knew that motherhood was invented by someone who had to have a word for it because the ones that had the children didn't care whether there was a word for it or not. I knew that fear was invented by someone that had never had the fear; pride, who never had the pride. (Faulkner 171-172).

After Cash’s birth, Addie finds that no language can capture what she experiences. Instead, she argues, words are merely abstract utterances to fill the lack of one’s own experience. Those who had children had no need to find a word for the experiences. The experience, unmediated, was real; words for the experience are abstractions, mere representations. Fear and pride, then, are words only used and needed by those who do not truly know the proper correlate sensations.

Love is perhaps the worst of these empty signifiers. Addie recounts Anse’s use of the term:

He had a word, too. Love, he called it. But I had been used to words for a long time. I knew that that word was like the others: just a shape to fill a lack; that when the right time came, you wouldn't need a word for that anymore than for pride or fear. Cash did not need to say it to me nor I to him, and I would say, Let

Anse use it, if he wants to. So that it was Anse or love; love or Anse: it didn't matter. (Faulkner 172)

The word love has no usefulness for Addie. If she experiences love with Cash, there is no need for her or Cash to say it. Anse, however, does use the word, and for Addie this reveals something important about Anse: not only the word but he himself is empty, for his need to turn to such an abstraction signals the emptiness of internal being; this lack of substance shows Addie that the words love and Anse are interchangeable. For Addie, neither carries any significance, and so she remains ambivalent about both. Here we begin to understand the lack Addie articulates, and which she often experiences:

I would think about his name until after a while I could see the word as a shape, a vessel, and I would watch him liquify and flow into it like cold molasses flowing out of the darkness into the vessel, until the jar stood full and motionless: a significant shape profoundly without life like an empty door frame; and then I would find that I had forgotten the jar. I would think: The shape of my body where I used to be a virgin is in the shape of a _____ and I couldn't think *Anse*, couldn't remember *Anse*. It was not that I could think of myself as no longer unvirgin, because I was three now. And when I would think *Cash* and *Darl* that way until their names would die and solidify into a shape and then fade away, I would say, All right. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what they call them. (Faulkner 173)

As noted in the shorter section of this passage above, Addie's lack cannot be signified by the abstraction of language. It is too real, the experience of the loss is too material for her. The name on Anse, on the other hand, a word, functions as an "empty vessel," a container in which the amorphous, undefined substance of Anse can be poured. The "significant shape" of the vessel, of the name Anse, ceases to hold significance once it is shown what it contains: nothing of value or meaning, to the point that the vessel itself, the

name Anse, is forgotten. The names of her two children at that point likewise fade away, and names, words, empty abstractions that are only filled by insignificant and unknowable fluid, hold no importance.

Yet, as perhaps already noticed, words and language are not the only domain of being for Addie. Despite the constant emptiness language creates for her, she does have a refuge. After school, Addie literally retreats from the words of her students to a space of solitude, as noted above. Here, Addie describes, “It would be quiet there then, with the water bubbling up and away and the sun slanting quiet in the trees and the quiet smelling of damp and rotting leaves and the new earth; especially in the early spring, for it was worst then” (Faulkner 169). Addie finds a space of quiet, away from the problems of language, where she can instead revel in the materiality of her surroundings. The smell of “damp and rotting leaves” reminds the reader of the smell of her unembalmed decaying body during the trip to be buried, where the “new earth” that forms from the compost of decaying matter signals the return to communion with the material world, outside of the mediation of abstraction and language. Addie inhabits the inverse of the doctor Peabody’s statement when he thinks that, though Addie is still biologically alive at this point, “She has been dead these ten days [...] I can remember how when I was young I believed death to be a phenomenon of the body; now I know it to be merely a function of the mind” (43-44). The bulk of Addie’s presence in the novel, including her monologue, occurs after her death; she dies on page forty eight, but continues to structure the action until her burial on page two hundred and thirty seven. She continues to live through her material presence, where death does not truly occur by the ceasing of one’s

mental functions, but by the return of the body to the ground. Peabody's statement makes the mind/body dualism explicit, and by relief clearly positions Addie within the framework of the body, forsaking the abstractions of the mind. Addie herself makes this clear in her monologue when her thoughts return to the school children. Meaning or significance are found in the experience of materiality: "I knew that it had been, not that they had dirty noses, but that we had had to use one another by words like spiders dangling from their mouths from a beam, swinging and twisting and never touching, and that only through the blows of the switch could their blood and my blood flow as one stream" (Faulkner 172). The relation between the children and Addie could never be experienced in any meaningful way so long as it was mediated by language, for, as "spiders dangling" and "never touching," words close one off from another, and lead to a false and empty sense of connectedness. For Addie, true unity with the other is only achieved through the "blows of the switch," where one's materiality comes into contact with another's. For Addie, language is inadequate and meaning is only found in physical connection. Just as the way in which Jewel becomes the sole recipient of Addie's affection because he is the product of a material, physical relation with Whitfield, while her relation to Anse was only through the empty word "love," Addie sees any significant relation with her students only in physical violence, her here their blood can "flow as one stream." Addie's is a world made real by materiality, and despite her attempts to reconcile the tension between language and the material world, she always returns to her experience of the latter.

If Addie's monologue functions as the centerpiece of *As I Lay Dying*, the tension between language and materiality forms the essential thrust of Faulkner's novel. Floyd Watkins goes so far as to suggest that "Addie's speech is one of the most effective rejections of abstraction written in the early twentieth century" (Watkins 182). Addie appears to stand firmly to one side of the binary, wholly favoring materiality over language and abstraction, and has made a convincing case for many critics. Cleanth Brooks states that "Addie, dead in her coffin, is, in a very real sense, the most dynamically alive being on the Bundren wagon" (Brooks, *First Encounters* 81), where she inhabits the fullest form of materiality, structuring the majority of the events of the novel through the form of a corpse; it is her physical presence that initiates so much of the novel's action.

Some critics have suggested that Addie's antagonism to language is not so much with words as such, but with words deployed in an empty manner. Kathryn Olsen argues that Addie's notion of words is one that gives them a certain ability to make meaning if used properly. She writes, "for Addie, words are both the container and the contained; the empty vessel and the shape to fill that emptiness. They have the power to reveal and give form [...] but they also have the power to conceal" (Olsen 100). Words can take on meaning when they are used to articulate lived reality, or can even produce reality when used to give form to undifferentiated substance. As William Allen notes, "Here Addie gives her most complete statement of her linguistic credo: language must operate ('move') as reality ('doing') moves, staying as close to the line of events in the external world as it can. When words go off on their own to form as abstract verbal complex, they

no longer perform their function” (Allen 192). Following this line of thought, words have a certain purpose in capturing the truth of reality, and when they become too abstracted, they cease to fulfill this purpose; they then err too far from the reality to which they are supposed to adhere.

And yet, even if Addie grants words the possibility of effectiveness, she seems to find that in practice they never live up to such rigorous standards. Andre Bleikasten writes unequivocally on Addie’s position:

But are words capable for recreating the felt quality of experience and expressing it with entire truthfulness? Is it possible to bridge the distance between reality and language? The question is central to the novel; it is Addie who puts it in her monologue, and her answer is a final no [...] Real life, according to Addie, requires passionate personal commitment, and its truth can only be reached through actions faithful to the earth and blood. (Bleikasten 134)

Bleikasten argues that for Addie words are never able to capture reality, and their abstractness is far inferior to the experience of materiality. As Addie finds with the birth of Cash, “language is totally inadequate for the expression of truth and that its main purpose is to deceive,” and with the birth of Darl, that “the seemingly harmless vacuity of words hides formidable powers. Words are traps laid for our weakness, and Addie’s rage comes from allowing herself to be caught in them” (Bleikasten 135). Even when Addie grants word such “power,” it is “formidable,” a “trap” set to “deceive.” For Addie, then, words are either empty or slippery, but either way never representative in any meaningful way. As James Mellard shows, “Addie accepts completely the position of the nominalist, who holds that universals, or abstract and general terms, represent no objective real

existents” (Mellard 512-513). Abstraction is too fragmented from material reality, and thus must be avoided and not trusted.

There is a specific aspect of lived reality that words are not able to capture for Addie, and critics seem to find this particular feature of one’s relationship to reality to be Addie’s most pressing concern. Karen Sass writes:

Just as she is orphaned from parents whose function is to provide her with connections to her world, so is the language available to her orphaned from the feelings and experiences that would make words meaningful. Thus words to her indicate loss, lack of relationship, lack of feelings, and the impotence of one person to influence or affect another. (Sass 12)

The experience of materiality is from Addie’s view fundamental to the ability to form and sustain relations with other people. As Sass argues, Addie sees the abstraction of language as representing the loss of such experience, and therefore as the loss of the ability to form such relations. We become fragmented from each other, siloed in our own closed off worlds, as the spiders dangling above, or as orphans estranged from our parents. Language alienates us from one another, and it is only the experience of the material world that we hold in common. This accounts for the unity Addie first felt with Cash: they formed a physical bond, and thus had no need for words such as “love,” which would be inherently unable to capture the shared experience of material being. Greg Chase suggests that “For Addie here, words fall short of lived experience, are capable only of fumbling awkwardly at ‘deeds’ in the attempt to encapsulate them” (Chase 177). Deeds achieve what words cannot, and when words attempt to signify them, they “fumble” about, perhaps merely obstructing one’s way. Deeds, then, are where Addie

finds the highest good, and critics have noted that Jewel, Addie's beloved son born out of the physicality of her affair with Whitfield, has, like Addie, only one monologue, and says little else throughout the novel. He is instead the character that "does" the most, acting when necessary to propel the narrative, and the journey, forward. And Addie's own concerns seem to ultimately be about action, despite her monologue's preoccupation with the problem of language. Joseph Reed suggests that Addie's monologue functions not as a rational justification, but as an "experiential justification," for "her section is frankly a credo and well organized to convince: this is how it happened, that is what I have decided and this is what I have done" (Reed 110). Even in her discussion of the tension between language and materiality, the section as a whole comes across as the narrating of what was had "done" to resolve or otherwise wrestle with the tension.

The perceived tension between language and action, or abstraction and materiality, constitutes one of the fundamental domains of dissonance in modernism, and it is carried beyond, or perhaps through, the criticism of modernist texts. The related questions modernist writers pose in their literature are never answered, and are likely not intended to be, and so they continue to be explored by critics in different ways along the history of modernist studies. With the rise of theory in American criticism, Addie's depiction of language as wholly detached from reality was seen as a modernist argument for post structuralist thought. Critics focused on this aspect of Faulkner's novel, sometimes to an extent that later critics found problematic. Kathryn Olsen makes this concern clear: "critics of the novel seem so ready to agree with Addie's views on language-- so much so that they argue that the novel itself is an assertion of the same

claims given voice in her section: that language is divorced from its own meaning, that ‘words dont ever fit even what they are trying to say at’ (171)--an assertion that has become the rallying cry for too many Faulkner scholars” (Olsen 96). Olsen argues that critics had taken Addie far too literally, and began working from the assumption that Faulkner’s novel as a whole was intended to convey Addie’s specific views. Mark Boren makes a similar point: “in *As I Lay Dying*, the separation between experience and language is clearly voiced within the text itself [...] but what is curious is that she [Addie] has become a mouthpiece, indeed a sort of keynote speaker, for those metatextual movements dominating literary criticism that disassociate language from the world” (Boren 22). Addie has become that post structuralist critic *par excellence*, pointing out as effectively and convincingly as any other the inadequacies and lack in language. Once this critical claim was made, Boren argues, *As I Lay Dying* became a text participating wholly within such linguistic ephemerality, wholly ungrounded and wholly detached from reality. Boren turns to Michael Kaufmann who suggested that such thought must reach a certain bottom, where even if the words themselves can no longer be understood to represent anything real, they must maintain a certain “vitality” to what is represented. Boren suggests that “it must then be ‘that vitality’ that is somehow perceivable to the astute reader,” somehow still pointing towards the real if not representing it (Boren 23). Such vitality may be found in the experience of the real, which, even if unable to be signified, may allow one to participate in materiality. This is, after all, where Addie herself found meaning.

Olga Vickery, in an earlier generation of Faulkner criticism, focuses on such experience. She shows that for Addie experience must be the exigency for words, since words cannot create authentic experience. She writes, “The ritual of the word attempts to impose an order and a significance of experience, while the ritual of the act allows them to emerge from it” (Vickery 235). The deed, for Addie, is the proper origin of experience, and of any language that arises from such experience. Words themselves cannot replace the deed, and any experience words themselves create is inauthentic. She further argues that “As in *The Sound and the Fury*, each private world manifests a fixed and distinctive way of reacting to and ordering experience. Words, action, and contemplation constitute the possible modes of response, while sensation, reason, and intuition form the levels of consciousness. All of these combine to establish a total relationship between the individual and his experience,” however fragmented that experience may be (Vickery 233). Words, then, are the response to experience, not the creator of it.

Yet, as Boren suggests above, and despite Vickery’s (and by extension Addie’s) claims, language may be able to give a sense or feeling of meaning without explicitly signifying anything real, particularly if we think of *As I Lay Dying*--as a text--as the origin of the reader’s experience. Boren argues that we should “look closely at the material of the text, and inspect its corners and folds until we can locate its seams” (Boren 23). He uses the language of materiality to suggest that in order to work against a criticism of total abstraction, we can explore the sites whereupon we experience the text, as with the Vardaman chapter above, where “the anomaly constructed of two empty signifiers does demonstrate that language possesses more than mere abstraction and

motion-generated lack--it contains an impossibly real force” (Boren 35). As in Vardaman’s sentence, “my mother is a fish,” the words themselves may be empty, Boren admits, but the sentence as a whole, in its context of the novel, has very real consequences for the experience of the reader, and as such the words themselves carry a certain degree of materiality.

Patricia McKee agrees that the text itself creates kind of experience, but she argues it is an experience not of being but of temporality. She writes, “As the title suggests, William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying* presents a process of experience that occurs in time: the novel works to enter into time and to record the story of a woman trying, with eventual success, to do the same. Addie Bundren and Faulkner’s novel both become absorbed in the passage of time” (McKee 579). Addie’s monologue describes her experience wrestling with the tension between language and materiality, and as McKee shows, this experience changes in its specificity over time, even if Addie’s central position remains largely consistent. Yet McKee also shows that this experience is one the reader has of Addie’s monologue, for it is hard to trace Addie’s fluctuations in their specificity; she jumps around in time and seems to resist integrating each individual experience into a systematic whole. The reader must therefore “resist trying to hold it all together and instead take it as it comes,” trying not to grasp the entirety of Addie’s experience once, but instead only experience her fluctuations through the experience of reading in time (McKee 585). For McKee, Faulkner’s text draws the reader in to participate to some degree in Addie’s monologue by cutting through her abstracted

language to the sensation of temporal movement. Addie's monologue as text, then, demands to be experienced, just as she herself favors experience.

Calvin Bedient makes the case for favoring the experience of the novel over reading it for its augment on abstraction most explicitly: "*As I Lay Dying* is to be 'seen,' not understood; experienced, not translated; felt, not analyzed" (Bedient 62). The novel has a certain "immediacy," that allows it to exist with "no explanations" (Bedient 62). For Bedient, the words function almost as a vehicle for experience, fully divorced from their use as containers of meaning. In this claim, he, perhaps more than many critics, does take Addie at her word, but in a way different than the other critics of his moment, whom are now often accused of reveling in abstraction; instead, Bedient follows not only the argument Addie presents, but the spirit behind it: Faulkner's text is to be participated in solely at the level of experience, and not at the level of analysis or interpretation. McKee takes issue with the specific distinctions Bedient describes, and clearly takes a more cautious approach to reading Addie's remarks, but she nevertheless agrees that "though the novel makes understanding difficult, it can absorb the reader in its passions and its actions" (McKee 629).

Joseph Reed seems to suggest that the passions and actions that absorb the reader may be the crux of linking language and materiality in Faulkner's novel. He suggests that, for literature at least, language does carry meaning: "Without the product of words that is fiction--[...]-the Bundrens would remain in the vestibule of the uncreated." It is specifically language--here literary language, but words nonetheless--that makes possible the kind of narrative Faulkner creates. Yet what good is that narrative other than to be

experienced by the reader? In the ellipses of the passage quoted above, between the hyphens, Reed sets off a list of characteristics proper to literary language that give it its vital force, and he ends the list by arguing that these all “determine our dynamic and organic involvement in emotional response” (Reed 110). For Reed, the significance of words is ultimately in their ability to be experienced, where dynamism leads to “emotional response.” Reed’s use for words, then, also falls under the rubric of materiality, where the focus is ultimately one of placing one side of the binary subordinate to the other.

This subordination is at its core what the critics who attempt to reconcile the tension between language and materiality perform. The reaction against the pure abstraction of the post structuralist and deconstructionist critics writing in the heyday of those movements is easily understood; despite the theoretical claims to the contrary, surely there is something worthwhile in materiality, something real that can at least be gestured toward or experienced, if not signified. This later generation of critics makes a strong case. But their arguments maintain the opposition, for, as is so often the case, their reaction reinforces the structure they purport to oppose.

What we can hope for is something that transcends or overcomes this binary. Recognizing that it may be unreasonable to suggest one might resolve the tension between language and materiality, we can still ask what form of relation can function beyond this tension? In other words, how might we view this tension not as the antagonism of two incompatible sides, but as an entangled logic that positions both poles in relation to one another in a reciprocally instructive form? I argue that *As I lay Dying*

allows us to explore this possibility, whereby we approach the text from a perspective that has not been broached. This difference in critical perspective will appear nuanced, and may be hard to track, but its results are markedly different from what current criticism has to offer. This exploration begins with Addie's three oldest sons, for while Addie sets the logic by which the novel operates, this logic is carried out differently in Cash, Darl, and Jewel, and each stands in for one possible implication.

Donald Kartiganer notes that "much of the vitality and resilience that is part of the meaning of *As I Lay Dying* is vested in the figure of Cash" (Kartiganer 30). The oldest son, Cash functions as the moderate voice, steady, reasonable, calculated. Cleanth Brooks calls him "the unimaginative, patient, methodical, quintessentially sober man" (Brooks, *First Encounters*, 88). Cash is grounded, and the figurative as well as literal sense. While Jewel may be associated more so with action, as noted below, Cash is clearly the character most associated with materiality (aside from Addie), and his empiricism informs his decisions and actions. As Darl passes Cash on his way to the family's house, he narrates, "Addie Bundren could not want a better one, a better box to lie in. It will give her confidence and comfort. I go on to the house, followed by the Chuck. Chuck. Chuck. of the adze" (Faulkner 5). The sound of Cash preparing Addie's coffin is a sound of material shaping. This is Addie's last rites. She does not need the words of a priest or a religion, but instead to hear the working of the physical world in preparation for her death. Critics and characters of the novel alike accuse Cash of callousness for building the coffin right outside the window of his dying mother. But Addie asks to see his progress, and he readily shows her the quality of the

pieces he crafts through the window that joins them. Cash is able to prepare the physical resting place for Addie, for his character is defined by his direct relationship to the physical world. A skilled carpenter, Cash has little need for words to shape his surroundings; he can do that himself. Rather, for Cash words follow materiality, and are useful as a way to represent the experience he already has of interacting with his surroundings. For this reason, Cash perhaps represents the “normal” or “standard” middle ground one holds between language and materiality in the practice of daily life—a position not in intense reflection as with Darl, yet also not in ignorance as with Jewel. After Cash re-breaks his leg in the accident fording the river, his family brings his tools to his recovery bedside. Neighbor Vernon Tull narrates, “ So Darl brought them in where he could see them. They shoved them under the side of the bed, where he could reach his hand and touch them when he felt better” (Faulkner 186). Cash relates to the world through physical contact, and his most prized possession, the tools by which he shapes the world, is something that will only comfort him when he can touch them.

Jewel, however, sees Cash differently. In one of the only contexts we hear Jewel’s thoughts about Cash, a commentary on Cash’s seemingly never ending building of the coffin, he narrates: “and that goddamn adze going One lick less. One lick less. One lick less until everybody that passes in the road will have to stop and see it and say what a fine carpenter he is” (Faulkner 15). Jewel is intensely private, and he sees Cash as too public, making a show of what he offers his mother. Jewel is so private, in fact, that he rarely speaks, and when he does, it is often only to react against Darl’s antagonisms. He instead exists in the novel principally by action. At one point Darl recalls a recent

memory about Jewel leaving the house at night while the rest of the family was asleep. Jewel says nothing to anyone about it, and they eventually find out he is clearing a nearby field for a neighbor to raise money to buy a horse; indeed, only when he rides home with the horse does everyone find out why he has been leaving. Jewel does not speak on the matter; he only acts, and he sustains himself, and produces his sense of self-worth, through his action. William Haney suggests that Jewel's "relation between his awareness and the events of the novel is one of intense passion which words cannot communicate" (Haney 105). Olga Vickery characterizes this as "emotions [that] are not subjected to the control of reason but are translated immediately into actions which, unlike Cash's carefully planned moves, are the products of spontaneous reflexes" (Vickery 242). Jewel's sense of purpose is characteristic of what Addie calls the deed; he has no use for reflection or abstraction. He marks his place in the world by working, deciding, and moving life forward.

If Cleanth Brooks describes Jewel as "the unreflective man of action," then Darl is the man of no action, but only reflection (Brooks, *First Encounters*, 88). Donald Kartiganer states that "Darl is the man who rejects the physical, rejects form, pursues a self already committed to absence" (Kartiganer 29). For Darl, materiality has no substance if it is not understood and ordered by language, and so he attempts to recast experience in abstract terms. For some critics, this is an ontological issue. Judith Lockyer, for example, writes that "For him [Darl], the self and its relation to others exist when he can put them into words" (Lockyer 77). While for Addie words are empty vessels because they have no substance, for Darl materiality gains meaning when words

some to encapsulate it. Yet Darl's propensity for abstraction causes him to struggle in relating to others around him. Brooks asks, "Does he really grieve for his mother at all? It would be hard to say. In a sense, he knows too much about her and too much about the absurdity of reality to have any emotional commitment" (Brooks, *Yoknapatawpha County* 145). Darl's ability to understand life and experience at such an abstract level reconstitutes his sense of reality to the point that it is one beyond which the others in his family can effectively participate. Kartiganer also notes that "Darl's alienation from the other members of the family is the price of his remarkable vision. For all the clarity of what Darl sees, the uncanny reports of events he cannot witness, he reveals also a total lack of involvement with those events [...] the vision is sharp, but with the clarity of the disengaged" (Kartiganer 30). Darl's disengagement from the mundane or practical experience of life and relatedness causes him to be disconnected from others, where neighbors tend to think him odd and suggest that there is something not quite right about him. Darl's sister Dewey Dell notices this, too, for example, when she criticizes him for exiting beyond the material world. She narrates, "And I did not think that Darl would, that sits at the supper table with his eyes gone further than the food and the lamp, full of the land dug out of his skull and the holes filled with distance beyond that land" (Faulkner 27). Darl's gaze appears to Dewey Dell as looking beyond the seeable world, into a place he should not be looking, for it empties his mind of the present reality she and the rest of the family inhabit. Yet Darl himself recognizes this absence in the mundane present of the material world. While Addie explicitly finds nothingness in

words, Darl find the opposite: for him, it is in the material world that there seems to be a lack of substance:

And at night it is better still. I used to lie on the pallet in the hall, waiting until I could hear them all asleep, so I could get up and go back to the bucket. It would be black, the self black, the still surface of the water a round office in nothingness, where before I stirred it awake with the dipper I could see maybe a star or two in the bucket, and maybe in the dipper a star or two before I drank. (Faulkner 11).

Darl finds a deep emptiness in the material world, and it at best only reflects a higher reality, that of the stars above, beyond his physical reach. Words, whether in speech, or more often in thought, bring comfort to him, and much in opposition to the stance Addie takes, he turns specifically to language in order to understand what he experiences in the material world.

As one might suspect, given the characterizations of the three oldest boys of the Bundren family as they relate to Addie's outlook--the central organizing principle of the novel--Cash and Jewel are often considered the novel's heroes; Darl, correspondingly, is often considered a failure. Cleanth Brooks argues:

By any rational test, the undertaking is quixotic, but in carrying it out, two of the children, Cash and Jewel, exhibit true heroism--Cash in his suffering, Jewel in his brave actions. Both brothers go far beyond the claims of rationality and common sense. Their brother Darl, of course, does not. His role is that of the critic of the action, who does not believe in honor and has the supreme lucidity of the mad. (Brooks, *Yoknapatawpha County* 143)

For Brooks, Cash and Jewel exhibit productivity for the novel, either through action or moral stance. Cash sacrifices his physical health in fulfilling his mother's wishes to be

buried in Jefferson, and complains little; Jewel takes responsibility for executing the needed decisions, particularly in the face of an inept father. Brooks argues that Darl, on the other hand, simply criticizes the others and at worst attempts to thwart the momentum of the plot.

Jewel's decisiveness places him in the central role of the plot for some critics. Andre Bleikasten suggests that Jewel is the main hero of the novel because he "pushes the action forward" and he "allow[s] the enterprise to succeed;" Darl, on the other hand, because of his "critical detachment [...] assumes in essence the peripheral role of narrator" (Bleikasten 46). Stephen Barnes argues that Jewel is the fulfillment of Faulkner's project to make words "living things" (Barnes 64). He shows that Jewel functions as the production of Faulkner's language that, as following Addie's notions, transfers to complete action, carrying the narrative, and producing the experience of reality with no turn back to language. He writes, "It is in Faulkner's discovery of Jewel, then, that he finds a solution to the modernist disillusionment with words" (Barnes 64). In this sense, Jewel is the hero of the novel, where his character captures the unity Addie (and according to Barnes, Faulkner) sought.

Yet it is Cash who most often takes the place of hero in the criticism of *As I Lay Dying*. Donald Kartiganer notes that "Cash has been pointed to by more than one critic as the figure who goes the furthest in this book in bringing together its disparate motifs" (Kartiganer 28). As the figure of the middle ground, he seems to often successfully straddle the opposition between language and materiality with which Addie, and in a different way Darl, so struggle. Calvin Bedient suggests that "If Darl is our innate

nakedness *in extremis*, impotent to defend itself, Cash exemplifies the pride that saves us and is itself the substance of identity [...] Cash is heroic (unassumingly and narrowly heroic) not so much in mastering himself as in contesting the amorphousness, the appalling anonymity, of existence itself” (Bedient 71). As one whose role is to give form to the material world, Cash seems to exemplify the best possibility for resolution in the novel’s central tension. Irving Howe make this explicit: “at the end Cash is able to reach toward that harmonious relation between word and action which none of the Bundrens, not even Addie, sees enough to desire” (Howe 181). Howe suggests that it is only Cash who is able to “grow as a consequence of [his] experience [...] from unimaginative self containment to human concern,” and in doing so, resolve the tension no one else seems to control; it is with his voice that the novel ends (Howe 188). Olga Vickery agrees. She states that “it is Cash, the oldest brother, who ultimately achieves maturity and understanding by integrating these modes into one distinctly human response which fuses words and action, reason and intuition” (Vickery 233). What Cash seems to achieve, then, amidst the cast of appalling, odd, anxious, or otherwise unconventional character types, is something human, something akin to the “normal,” that the reader can identify with. Joseph Reed writes, “Except for the first section--that list of cold forces and stresses-- his [Cash] voice perhaps most closely approximates a norm of associational thought in the family, a middle ground which tries for less, is more cautious, and survives in the end” (Reed 108). As Reed suggests, Cash may appear the most heroic because he is the most reasonable, the most moderate, and therefore, perhaps, the most “sane” of the

family. From this perspective, if Cash constitutes the archetype of being human, Darl falls to the farthest extreme.

Darl's abstraction leads many critics to assume his institutionalization and supposed breakdown at the end of novel is a result of his inability to reconcile the experience of his mind with lived reality. As opposed to Jewel and Cash, Darl is looked at as a failure, a sort of cautionary tale about over emphasizing the depths of mind and jumping wholly into the slippery world of language. Joseph Garrison argues that "Faulkner presents Darl as a character who cannot distinguish between those perceptual faculties which tyrannize and those which liberate. He is destroyed by his assumption that the world, in order to exist and have meaning, must conform to his conception of it and be utterly possessed by him" (Garrison 51). For Garrison and other critics, Darl's focus on language signals an attempt to conform the material world to his abstract perspective, which results in an "unsuccessful attempt to stabilize the stubborn pressures of external reality with language" (Garrison 53). "Ultimately, Darl cannot distinguish between words and deeds, to use Addie's terms," Garrison continues, for Darl misunderstands the dynamic forces of lived reality in a way that Cash and Jewel do not (Garrison 55). Homer Pettey takes this further, suggesting that Darl's attempt to use language as an ordering agent misunderstands the nature of language, where instead of ordering the world, it further abstracts him from it. He writes, "Darl's madness, then, is due to an inability to recognize his own perceptions as a network of symbols that do not convey reality, but displace it and negate it. Darl's modernist tragedy of being is also the dark, destructive comedy of representation and language" (Pettey 27). Rather than

produce a means of signifying the world in which he lives, Darl's attempt to use language to understand the world results in the creation of an alternative, illusory world within his mind. As this continues, Darl further sees the world only through a fictitious lens where, as Pettey continues, "Darl cannot free himself from the world, because his own perceptions already entrap him in the text of his own making, his translations of phenomena into his own meaning. His only recourse is to read the text of his own existence and perhaps unweave its meaning. Yet, as he unweaves, his mind begins to unravel" (Pettey 34). Darl, perhaps initially distinct from the world he creates, as its creator, becomes a part of that world, and comes to accept it as the truth. If and when he attempts to undo that world, then, he likewise begins to undo his own identity. Judith Lockyer states that "ultimately his [Darl] language will not allow him to control events because he is also living the story he is telling. Once he removes himself, he can be objective, but that means the dissolution of himself" (Lockyer 81). This is what critics suggest happens to Darl at the end of the novel: he appears to have been confronted with lived reality, that in which the others in his family participate, perhaps after attempting to burn the barn in which his mother's coffin temporarily rests, or perhaps upon the eventual burying of his mother's remains. Whatever the reason, the idea is that Darl somehow glimpses that his reality is an illusion and as he attempts to confront this, the result is his breakdown. Whether one takes this critical stance or not, the fact of Darl's fate at the end of the novel leads critics to assume his project is a failure, which reinforces the heroic positions of Cash and Jewel. Writing of Darl's ability to witness events from which he is not present, and to know the secrets of his family members, William Haney argues that

“Darl’s fate reveals the dangers of multiple perspectives that are merely conceptual and not grounded in the experience of a level of consciousness characterized by a unity-amidst-diversity” (Haney 108). Haney argues that even if Darl can witness views outside of his own, he does not experience them at a greater transcendental level, whereupon he participates in some sort of communion with the character he temporarily oversees. Instead, he is as detached from those experiences as he is from his own, Haney implies, and as such Darl abstracts even those potentially transcendent moments. This lack of unity prompts many critics to suggest that Darl’s clairvoyance, as many call it, is at best unaccounted for, and at worst a sign of failure on Faulkner’s part as a writer. But this may not be a fair assessment.

Darl’s position within the novel cannot be so easily discounted, and despite the explicit privileging of Darl’s brothers, and the implicit disappointment in Darl’s ability to reconcile the tension Addie presents so directly, critics appropriately acknowledge Darl’s centrality to the narrative. Donald Kartiganer notes that while Darl’s vision “is one that neither family nor society can afford,” he also recognizes that “Darl Bundren’s miraculous perception depends on his distance from real things--a horse, a coffin, a fish in the dirt--and [...] this vision [is] the deepest and most penetrating in the novel” (Kartiganer xvii). For all its abstraction, Darl’s perspective is indeed the most introspective of those presented. And despite claims to the contrary, Darl’s voice does, along with Addie’s, effectively structure the experience of reading the novel as a whole. Joseph Reed notes that “The ordering of the narrators forces us to adopt Darl as home base because he is the first to speak and most frequently returns. Once we have done

this, his view becomes our norm” (Reed 89). It is through Darl’s voice that the reader questions the other characters, often joining Darl as the critic, and at other times adopting Darl’s perspective to understand the motivations of the characters. Judith Lockyer notes, “As the novel’s most frequent speaker, he [Darl] displays the omniscience, verbal range, and responsibility for interpretation that we associate with a narrator” (Lockyer 75). His narrative style, and his reflective tendencies, closely resembles the somewhat more standard narrators of other modernist novels. If the fragmented nature of perspective in *As I Lay Dying* is bracketed, the modernist scholar would almost be accustomed to Darl’s voice, as it fills the role as guide through the narrative in a distinctly introspective, hyper-conscious manner. Even Cleanth Brooks acknowledges Darl’s position, despite its antiheroic qualities, as one to be reckoned with, for Darl “constitutes something of a subversive and even disruptive force” (Brooks, *First Encounter* 87). As the principle voice of the novel, Darl regularly upends what would otherwise be a collectively different narrative presentation of the plot. Through Darl, Faulkner forces the reader to constantly wrestle with the tension Addie makes explicit, which without Darl would fall to the background, where the reader would implicitly adopt the position of Addie and the materiality of Cash and Jewel--and yet we have seen above that in many cases such adoption is precisely what critics have done. It cannot be ignored, however, that Darl narrates nineteen of the fifty nine sections, with everyone else narrating ten or fewer. Bleikasten notes that Darl “takes on single-handed one-third of the narrative and thus occupies a highly privileged position as narrator” (Bleikasten 56). The sheer proportion Darl takes in the novel places him as its leading voice, even when set in motion by the

centrality of Addie. And from the start, Darl presents his unique position as this narrative voice: in the opening lines of the novel, Darl describes the way in which he and Jewel process up the hill toward their house, in the present tense: “Although I am fifteen feet ahead of him, anyone watching us from the cottonhouse can see Jewel’s frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own” (Faulkner 3). Narrating the perspective from position of the cottonhouse, yet while he and Jewel approach it, Darl begins the novel exhibiting his transcendental consciousness. Despite the observations and claims of the critics above, and others taking a similar position, Faulkner clearly places emphasis on the perspective of Darl. It must be the case, then, that Faulkner is trying to wrestle with something through Darl and his propensity for the abstraction of language, and that it is of a greater importance than what we have to learn from Jewel or Cash, however heroic their “doing” is within the narrative. So the question becomes, is Darl a failure? Even if he is, what is the significance of his perspective, for it must be something beyond the simple explanation that he was unable to cope with the tension Addie articulates. It would be worthwhile to take a closer look at the relation Darl has to language and materiality, and to what his “failure” really means.

If the central antagonism for Addie and Darl, and of the novel more generally, is one of discourse versus experience, abstraction versus materiality, of “words versus doing,” then the novel’s central problem is far reaching, from Darl’s and Addie’s beliefs and thoughts, to the novel as representative of modernism, and finally to our own methodology of critical engagement. These registers are all at stake, are all asking or approaching the same question: How do we find, understand, or approach meaning or

significance in abstracted words if, at face value, they are empty abstractions, if the experience of literature is ultimately an experience of words? Current criticism seems to suggest that the meaning of *As I Lay Dying* is found in the reader's experience with it. If materiality or experience are what is *real*, and words are *not real*, how and why is it that the words of Faulkner's specific text somehow hold, convey, or carry the meaning of a reality understood as material or empirical experience? The question in other words is: If reading *As I Lay Dying* conveys meaning at the level of experience, and yet that meaning is more than just the experience of reading as such (of reading as an activity, where meaning is irrelevant to the text read), it must be the case that it is the experience of the specific words of the text that carry the quality of that experience – even if the words themselves are empty abstractions. How is this so? This question asks something beyond the interpretation of *As I Lay Dying*, to touch not only a central problem for modernism, but one that is just as central for our work as critics and scholars of literature. What critics seem to have identified, without appearing to recognize it as such, is a problem fundamental to both the content and methodology of the field.

So why focus on Darl? Why is it so clear that Faulkner's emphasis is on the character that seems to wrestle with the antagonism between language and materiality so unproductively, ending in failure? In other words, why is there an inconsistency between what the criticism suggests and what the primary text seems to show, that is, between an emphasis on experience when the central character has no use for it? If words are empty, where should we look to understand our place within the world and our relationship to the beings within it, if we wish to take a cue from Faulkner and look to Darl for an

explanation? Asking this question amounts to a shift in critical perspective, away from Addie defining the subject to the text, to Addie merely setting the rules for the text's central focus, and where Darl, reasonably so given his prominence in the novel, becomes the text's subject. Though the criticism which posits that there is something to be learned about language and materiality finds Darl a failure, we have seen that he takes the weight of the text's emphasis, and so we must assume Darl is the locus of Faulkner's "text." Let us, then, too place our emphasis on Darl, but with a specific eye toward the questions of locating the promise, or potential for redemption, Faulkner might have been looking for.

Yet despite Darl taking the focus of our attention, it has already been acknowledged that Addie's monologue functions as the central nodal point of the novel, so we must try to understand the formal nature of language as Addie sees it, where she establishes the "rules" for the nature of language in the text, so to speak. Yet, as critics show, Addie's discourse is hard to unravel, and most critics find it constantly evolving at best, and inconsistent at worst. But there may be something consistent at the highest level of her discussion, something that transcends Addie's experiential observations and their significance for language in that moment of her life. As has been noted, the tension between language and materiality is a problem not only for Faulkner or even literature, but for modernism at large. Looking outside literary modernism, to a domain that shares this tension, I argue, can help us to better understand the form at play in Addie's notion of language. In this chapter, we will therefore turn to advertising as a field that holds a certain affinity with the tension Addie describes, though advertising works within and across this tension in a very different way than Addie. One should note that while in the

next two chapters there may appear to be a content affiliation between the chapters' respective novels and correlate institutional domains, the form is what is at stake for the discussions of this dissertation; in this chapter, such content affiliations might be less visible, and so the reader may find it easier to focus on the formal affinities we shall explore. As we shall see, modernist advertising begins to alienate materiality from language in a specific way: the materiality of the product (not to mention the labor) is alienated from the ad copy: One buys an image, not the use value of a product – but one still pays for the material product. It is thus the image that one purchases, but the product one takes home; the ad copy, in no way directly related to the product, instead produces an image that itself connects to the product. This, as we shall see in further detail, describes the form of the tension Addie describes between language and materiality.

This chapter therefore examines two fields of thought that may at first appear largely unrelated: Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and the history of advertising as relevant to the modernist era. It must be acknowledged that Faulkner's text mentions nothing about advertising, marketing, and only briefly mentions the buying or selling of any kind of goods beyond deals made between neighbors. But, as it turns out, both the novel and advertising are really about language: about the way the perceptions of language changed at a certain moment in history, and about the failures of language, and the way in which that failure could be exploited. *As I Lay Dying* and advertising are therefore not so much compliments as foils of on another, for my thesis is that in order to understand what Faulkner, and the characters Addie and Darl, were mourning and searching for in their recognition of the failure of language can be better understood by exploring not only

those failures, but also the way in which that failure was used toward productive ends. As foils of one another, Faulkner's failures of language are precisely what allowed advertising to take off in the modernist period, and wholly reinvent itself at the most conceptual level, leaving behind the mere need for disseminating product information and awareness, to now instead create the images and ways of life through the very abstraction, or estrangement, between words and deeds that Darl and Addie so mourn.

The Content of the Content

The root of Addie Bundren's fragmentation is in her inability to reconcile the divide between abstraction and materiality, or what she calls throughout her monologue "words and deeds." This inability forces Addie to take a stance on one side of these segregated domains, and her experience tells her that words are empty of meaning, and that only experience itself can approach reality. Addie therefore appears to side with that which is oriented toward the material whenever the estranged pair appears. As a result, and as discussed above, Addie shares little relation with those around her, including her family, despite an outward appearance to the contrary. It is only once the reader reaches Addie's monologue more than halfway through the novel that it becomes evident that her internal thoughts constitute a person wholly other than what those around her perceive.

The way Addie's discusses her estranged relationship with others in her family can point toward some of the specific ways she understands the emptiness of language. For example, she narrates:

I gave Anse the children. I did not ask for them. I did not even ask him for what he could have given me: not-Anse. That was my duty to him, to not ask that, and that duty I fulfilled. I would be I; I would let him be the shape and echo of his word. That was more than he asked, because he could not have asked for that and been Anse, using himself so with a word. (Faulkner 174)

As some critics have noted, it is almost as though Addie views her childbearing as a balance sheet. Once she was robbed of her unity of being, she sought to rob Anse of something, whom she held responsible; but she likewise felt it her duty to ensure his share was fairly provided. Addie says the children are Anse's, for she did not want them. But it was also her duty to not ask Anse for what she wanted: for him to be not himself. It is not clear if by this Addie means she wishes him to cease to exist, or if she would like for her husband to have a different character, or a different essential being. But it is clear that Addie would have requested that what Anse currently is to no longer be. But Addie believes this would be asking too much, for she has already experienced what a partial loss of being can lead to, and she claims that she would not ask Anse to participate in the same experience. Perhaps this is out of some sense of human empathy, or perhaps out of some sense of wifely duty. But either way, for Addie this may not even be as much of a sacrifice as it might have been had Anse been someone with more substance. But as it is, she views Anse as already empty inside: "I would let him be the shape and echo of his word." For Addie, Anse's words are empty of meaning, a mere "echo" found within the shape of a man. Letting Anse keep this essence is more than Anse could ask for. Addie gives a double meaning here, for she at first appears to give Anse more than he allows her, but she notes that in fact he could not have asked for more and still "been Anse," for to do so would require a person whose words had significance, who could ask for

something substantial. Anse, constituted by empty words, could not possibly ask such a question.

This passage shows how Addie views the bearers of empty words as constituted by those words; the emptiness of words strips the substance from the user, leaving only a shell of materiality. For Addie, then, words have become more than estranged from their material counterparts. They have become the antithesis of materiality, undoing its significance through their vacuity. Addie describes how this happens as she considers the development of her ambivalence toward Anse:

I would think about his name until after a while I could see the word as a shape, a vessel, and I would watch him liquefy and flow into it like cold molasses flowing out of the darkness into the vessel, until the jar stood full and motionless: a significant shape profoundly without life like an empty door frame; and then I would find that I had forgotten the name of the jar. (Faulkner 173)

As Anse's name, perhaps the most significant word associated with him, becomes a container for his being, a referential point of whatever significance he as a person has, his substance becomes amorphous, filling the container of his name. This container, the name Anse, then sits "motionless," seemingly inactive in the material world, significant in form, but useless in content, until she forgets the name of the container all together; Anse's uselessness results in the loss of material identity. Now he walks the earth as a sort of specter: empty, nameless, insignificant. This loss of significance occurs through the same process for words more generally. Addie relates elsewhere that "I would think then when Cora talked to me, of how the high dead words in time seemed to lose even the significance of their dead sound" (Faulkner 175). Even if words have no meaning, no

substance, they initially have their sound, the signifier or sound-image itself. But even this is lost in time, Addie argues, for the empty essence of the word comes to constitute the word itself, to the point where the formal container becomes a part of the homogenous whole of being, unidentified and undifferentiated. As one will remember, for Addie this is the worst possible outcome of one's being, for one's separatedness is what allows a unified sense of being or self. Addie had lost this, sometimes thinking she regained it, and only to find it was lost again or never really recovered at all. To lose one's self into the abstraction of being--however material it is not matter if it is still undifferentiated--is to lose one's being, once possessed by the self, and now to enter into the domain of apparent nothingness.

It is interesting that for Addie the self seems to be constituted by identity, which is often assumed as delineated specifically by language. But Addie's belief is that such differentiation is only perceived by one's experience, by one's participation in the materiality of the world: that is, through one's deeds. Addie narrates, "I would lie by him in the dark, hearing the dark land talking of God's love and His beauty and His sin; hearing the dark voicelessness in which the words are the deeds, and the other words that are not deeds, that are just the gaps in people's lacks" (Faulkner 174). This passage can be understood as marking two streams of relationship: on the one hand, there is the voicelessness that, having yet differentiated words and deeds, allows the two to coexist. Critics have suggested that the "dark land" speaks of such metaphysical concepts as love, beauty, and sin in a way that Addie understands, for it is not the speaking of words, but the speaking of being itself, such that words and deeds can reciprocally inform one

another in this non-linguistic landscape. On the other hand, this passage notes that estrangement between words and deeds detailed above, which simply exposes the “gaps in people’s lacks,”--a curious phrase that suggests a double form of alienation, where one lacks substance because of the use of empty words. Addie’s preference for the first part of the two sided reference signals her desire to connect directly with being, and to fully bypass the mediation of language. Cleanth Brooks writes, “Addie resents mere words, for emptied of substance as they are, they stand as a fence between her and experience. She craves some more direct expression,” something physical that resists abstraction, that can be experienced without mediation, and which materially connects her to another (Brooks, *Yoknapatawpha Country* 153). The “voicelessness” that functions as “direct expression” is central for Addie, for it characterizes what she does value, however hard it may be to find such a statement of affirmation in her monologue.

This connection between voicelessness and direct access to being can be better understood by considering what at first appears as an inconsistency in Addie’s monologue. Addie hates secrets. She hates her school children for the secrets they keep, she hates having to keep the secret of Jewel’s paternity, and she mourns after her affair with Whitfield ends, “I would never again see him coming swift and secret to me in the woods dressed in sin like a gallant garment already blowing aside with the speed of his secret coming” (Faulkner 175). Secrets bring about pain, and with her school children they represent the words used to hide from her, to estrange her in such a way that can only be remedied by physical violence. Yet one would think that secrets also allow for individual unity; despite her hatred for secrets, Addie does also seem to revel in them, as

a sort of guilty pleasure. She hides Jewel's paternity partly to get back at Anse, and she is enraptured by the secret nature of her affair with Whitfield. And so despite her student's secrets, Addie also finds that, just like her solitary place to escape those very students, secrets are a space for experience, a space of the unspoken, where words are bypassed. Secrets, for Addie, can be understood as the voicelessness through which one directly experiences being, and from which the possibility of words and deeds coexisting can be posited. They form a sort of utopian space for Addie, then, where one can privately and fully participate in one's own being. This utopian sense is the way in which we can understand Addie's turn toward materiality and experience. If words are empty, and at times even violent to one's significance and sense of individuated self, for Addie material experience fully harnesses that being in its totality.

The significance of the tension between abstraction and materiality for Addie now appears to be about the unity of the self; Addie has tapped into what many critics and historians find as the core of modernism's preoccupation with fragmentation. Through this tension, as Cleanth Brooks states, Addie is:

completely committed to the concrete fact. She has seen through all illusions. She despises words. One thinks of the one long, terrible expression allowed her in this novel in which she tells the story of her life. What Addie lacks, and what she yearns for, is some kind of communion [...] With Addie, the loss of community is at the same time a loss of communication. Language seem to her drained and empty and ineffectual. (Brooks, Yoknapatawpha County 149)

Brooks is right to suggest that Addie's fundamental desire, as her fundamental lack, is some sort of communion. As has already been suggested, Addie seeks the autonomy and

totality of selfhood that she believes she has lost: “My aloneness had been violated and then made whole again by the violation: time, Anse, love, what you will, outside the circle” (Faulkner 172). Addie shows what she cherishes: unity. Her aloneness, her separation, maintains her unified self, and when she becomes pregnant, she feels she has been violated by Anse and left with a new child, both of which implicate her in participation outside her unified self. But when Cash is born, her bond with him brings the two together as one, where the “violation” now also made her whole again. Love, Anse, and the rest are now again insignificant, outside the circle of her unity. Yet, after Darl, the second child, is born, Addie again feels fragmented:

And so when Cora Tull would tell me I was not a true mother [because of these thoughts of fragmentation], I would think how words go straight up in a thin line, quick and harmless, and how terribly doing goes along the earth, clinging to it, so that after a while the two lines are too far apart for the same person to straddle from one to the other. (Faulkner 173)

Again, Brooks is right to suggest that Addie desires a sense of communion--something she temporarily achieves with the birth of Cash--yet such communion is not the sense of community Brooks further points towards. Rather, Addie's fragmentation is not a concern over being alienated from those around her. The passage here shows that she simply observes that Cora, her friend, is among those whose internal substance is lacking. Her words, which Addie extrapolates to words in general, “go straight up in a thin line,” “too far apart” from authentic doing to mean anything to Addie. Cora's words toward Addie are often scathing indictments of her motherhood or faithfulness, and though Addie disagrees with Cora's assessments, she does not chastise Cora, or write her off as a

friend--however superficial Addie must understand friendship--but instead, as her monologue, and those of Cora, seems to suggest, she continues to interact with her, and simply reflects on Cora's accusations as further evidence that Cora doesn't understand what Addie knows about the world. Cora, like Anse, thinks words mean something, but Addie knows better, and so she takes no offense. Addie, then, is as ambivalent toward her relationship to Cora as she is to Anse, and one might then assume she is the same toward all others, aside from Jewel and perhaps Cash. The sort of communion Addie wishes for is not oriented outward, but inward, toward her internal cohesion.

And yet such internal cohesion, such utopian unity, is always at best still over the horizon, and more often only a presence to further constitute Addie's tension or lack. Despite her attempts, Addie never achieves such final synthesis with the material world, except perhaps with her burial, when, as an already decomposing corpse, she finally communes with the wholly material world, at which point the narrative leaves her and turns elsewhere for the last pages of the novel, fully leaving Addie out of the possibility of narrativization. If this is Addie's utopian realization, nothing more can be said of it, just as Anse cannot make requests: to do so in either case negates the essence of the respective subject. And so aside from this possibility, Addie never achieves what she desires. Through the novel, she is always defined in part by the tension she wrestles with, and therefore always defined by an antagonism to words. As her monologue evolves, however, her understanding of words evolves. As noted above, she comes to believe that not only are words empty, but that their emptiness has significance. This was already gestured toward above, when Addie describes the emptiness of words as

constituting the form such emptiness inhabited, that is, in removing the significance and identity of the sound image itself. But Addie comes to find that words wield actual power, despite their emptiness. As Greg Chase notes, for example, “Knowing that Anse will remain unaware of the deep resentment underlying her request, Addie can speak in a way that preserves the distance she sees between conventional speech and private self. Her family’s taking her body to Jefferson becomes an example of ‘doing’ that, like whipping her students, enables a certain extra-linguistic acknowledgement of her experience” (Chase 176). Addie’s request to be taken to Jefferson upon her death is, to her, perhaps, only words, and therefore meaningless, but she knows Anse will mistake them for meaning, and will keep her word, effectively translating her words into his deed. Addie uses Anse’s misunderstood notion of language against itself, exacting, as some critics have argued, revenge on the whole family by tying them down with something she knows, but which they do not recognize, is meaningless.

Chase’s example acts as a sort of gesture toward the structure of the relationship between language and materiality Addie depicts. We know from Addie’s perspective the words she speaks in making the request have no bearing on material life. In themselves, they are empty, perhaps only signaled by the significance of the sounds they make, their sound images, but in substance or content, meaningless. They hold no reference to the material world. However, Chase shows that Addie also knows that with those words a certain meaning--not inherent to them, but somehow attached to them--is carried across to Anse and the family. This connected meaning does have material implications. The form or structure of this relationship is not quite clear, but is perhaps now acknowledged.

Constance Pierce makes a similar gesture toward the form of Addie's perceived tension. Commenting on a moment in Addie's monologue when she states, "Words don't ever fit even what they are trying to say at" (Faulkner 171), she writes:

The 'say *at*' contains a sophisticated perception of the inadequacy of language. Addie knows that we can never hope to create what we 'are' (that is, the Being she thinks we have beneath our social fictions), or even what we think, in words, the arbitrary symbols conceived by people who have never experienced the idea or act they are trying to tag; we can only aim in its general direction, 'say at' it. (Pierce 295)

Pierce notes that Addie's use of "at," the gesture she makes toward the referent of a word, is an indication of the word's inability to signify its referent. Instead, the word can only point, if even that; and its pointing is only approximate. Pierce shows the structural relations between the word and materiality, as Chase shows the relations between the word's correlated (but not inherent or internal) signaling or significance, and from these gestures we catch a glimpse of the form Addie articulates.

But this form, which for Addie prevents the unity of the self, but which also can be put to use as she does with the burial request for Anse, needs further clarification if we are to eventually turn to Darl as Faulkner's test. If what the critics offer here are only gestures, only moments pointing "at" the form Addie describes, without fully articulating it, we must look elsewhere. For even in Addie's monologue this form is not stated explicitly, however much it makes its presence clear. So, as suggested earlier, let us look beyond the novel, and beyond literature itself, to the wider episteme of modernism, where the tension between language and materiality functions as a fundamental aspect of the

modernist experience. If Addie wrestles with this tension, and seems to be consumed by it, modernism's emerging form of advertising takes advantage of it.

By the nineteen twenties and thirties, advertising had become a dominant feature of American consumer culture--something that was not the case even a few decades earlier. Now, advertisements appeared in the popular periodicals of middle class households, in radio programming, and in newspapers. In this era before television, ad copy was just as important as the visual image accompanying it, and advertisers began to use creative strategies to put such copy to use. Such strategies took advantage of the tension between language and materiality, for they moved on from earlier advertisements merely signaling the products availability or branding, describing its uses in a matter of fact manner, or making outlandish and often false claims about the products effectiveness. These forms of advertising all imply a direct connection between the ad copy and the product being sold, that is, between language and its ability to directly refer to the correlate physical manifestation of the words, the product. Now, ad copy began to recognize (if unconsciously; there does not appear to be research tracing the archival genealogy of advertising copy writers and their awareness of linguistic scholarship from the early twentieth century; most connection to scholarship, as discussed later, is to psychology trends) that language and its correlate material manifestations did not function along a direct referential paradigm. Instead, copy writers put the inability of language to refer directly to materiality to work, and in doing so found a paradigm much more successful for sales.

There is very little criticism performing a form-based analysis on advertisement copy; most criticism tends to be about cultures of advertising, about advertising's influence on culture and aesthetics, or about consumer culture/consumption. One of the few critical analyses addressing form, titled "Cultures of Impression," draws a direct link between modernist aesthetics and advertising strategy. Here, Jesse Matz notes that what was often perceived as radical or shocking in modernist aesthetics was sometimes coopted by advertising in order to "disorient" the consumer and thereby prove more effective at persuading, or influencing, the consumer to purchase a product (Matz 306). This points to the kind of abstraction and effect of estrangement advertising deployed during the modernist period. However, Matz states, more radical techniques of this kind were only used for a short time. It became clear that something too avant-garde lowered sales, and so to some degree advertising returned to a more directly expressive realism (Matz 320). Yet the formal structure would remain. I do not suggest that the form of modernist advertising was discovered in modernist art; that would require a different kind of archival work. But Matz's work does indicate the affinity between the two domains. He continues by arguing that modernist art was in fact far too abstract for most advertising. In practice, this may be true. But he suggests this is due to its formal characteristics. He writes:

When advertisers use impressions to get viewer's attention, the attention gotten ends up being a form of distraction; misdirected, it sets up a division, in which the instantaneous impression in fact forestalls instant legibility and engages a perceptual dynamic rather than commercial apprehension." (Matz 321)

Such distraction and its resulting “forestalling” of instant legibility may be the case when modernist techniques are applied to the visual representation of a product; however, I argue that the formal technique of estrangement continues even when a more realist representation is used. Consumers do not become distracted by the fact of abstraction, but instead bypass the problematic nature of representation and accept the image of what is depicted directly--which leads to the purchase of the correlated product. Matz is concerned with the form of the advertisement as visual art; but this form extends to the use of copy in advertisements, whatever aesthetic movement or school it might be associated with. A modernist theory of language makes the advertisement more successful.

This theory of language, where words are alienated from the material world, allows for the separation of ad copy from direct reference to the product such copy is trying to sell. Lauren Maxwell notes that even F. Scott Fitzgerald commented on the changes in advertisement strategies, writing “Fitzgerald’s skepticism about advertising reflects a shift in admen during the 1920s--instead of focusing on the product itself, ads focused of what the consumer lacked” (Maxwell 318). This shift displaces the advertisement’s focus from the product itself to the perceived need of the product, or as was often the case by this point in advertising history, to the manufactured desire for the product. Advertisements now focused on fulfilling a desire, something already once removed from the filling of a need prevalent in the forms of copy a generation earlier. In some cases, desire became not only the focus of the advertisement, but the purpose of the advertising campaign from a marketing standpoint: as advertising historian Jackson Lears

points out, “as rhetorical constructions, advertisements did more than stir up desire; they also sought to manage it--to stabilize the sorcery of the marketplace by containing dreams of personal transformation within a broader rhetoric of control” (Lears 10). The creation of desire creates the conditions in which those who adopt the desire can be managed, once they have bought in, so to speak. This allows for not only the selling of products, but functions as a regulating force in the marketplace. But as Lears also notes, this occurs under the rubric of selling “dreams of personal transformation.” The product no longer merely fulfills desire by promising to fill a lack; advertisements now offer a concept even further removed from the product than mere desire: the opportunity for the transformation of the self.

When the subject of advertising becomes the transformation of the self, the language used to describe such advertising techniques takes on a visual quality. Advertising critic Pasi Falk writes, “There are various different ways to argue in favor of a product [...] the crucial thing is that an image is created of a ‘good object’--to use the psychoanalytical concept introduced by Melanie Klein--that *you* do not yet have” (Falk 186). For the product, the object, to become “good,” it must be cast in a certain “image,” a term regularly used to describe what advertising became oriented toward. The image is carefully crafted to allow the advertisement’s viewer to imagine him or herself as the intended audience of the ad’s message. In the recipient of the message the image produces a certain “impression,” to borrow from Matz’s discussion, and this impression is what the viewer is intended to absorb. For example, writing in an introduction to a special issue on the early history of advertising, Carl Keytes notes that issue contributor

“Marina Moskowitz [...] analyzed the relationship between text and images in nineteenth-century seed catalogs, arguing that illustrations did not represent the actual object being sold--the seeds--but, rather, an idealized depiction of what those seeds might produce” (Keyes 106). Such advertisements would allow the viewer to imagine such bountiful fruit or vegetables as their own, functioning as a sort of promise of future potential. Such an image, through the production of the impression, is ultimately what prompts the viewer to purchase the product.

By this point in the history of evolving advertisement strategy the copy of an advertisement was fully estranged from its correlated product. Falk notes, “As well as a particular mode of production, modern advertising required a particular ‘mode of information’ that made possible the transformation of concrete products into representations, into complex meanings carried by words and images” (Falk 185). Materials products became abstract representations, where meaning was not found within the words or ad copy, but “carried” by them. This “mode of information” would require a particular understanding of the way language works in an ad. Lears argues that “The notion of a thing’s ‘intrinsic worth’ was rooted in producerist definitions of the real; advertising copywriters (like peddlers and other sales men before them) refashioned commercial reality by recognizing the open-ended role of imagination in manipulating appearances, winning confidence, and creating value” (Lears 215). Advertisements were meant for and adapted to the gap in the tension between language and materiality. That “open-ended role of imagination,” the very opening created by the abstraction of language from its material correlate, allows for the advertisement to convey an

impression far beyond a standard referential pointing. This is a gap, and opening, inherent in the form of language as advertisers understood it. Such an opening for the role of the viewer's imagination--the site of upon which the impression is made--was also an opening for creatively exploiting the structure of language, and opening for new strategies of advertising.

Such strategies, then, were based on a fundamental understanding of the relationship between language and materiality. The exploitation of this openness, this gap, was a formal one, yet it functioned in such a way as to affect the content of its particular instantiation. Falk writes, "Whether the advertisement uses the positive or the negative register of representation, the outcome must establish a positive link between the identified product and the 'good' that characterizes it. The building of the link implies a metamorphosis in which the product transforms into a representation--and it is this that modern advertising is basically about." The product's becoming-representation is what allows the consumer to believe he or she is purchasing an image or idea, based on the impression produced by the advertisement. The metamorphosis, according to Falk, often includes the "experiential aspect of consumption" (Falk 187). The consumer does not think of him or herself as purchasing a material product; what is instead paid for is the opportunity to experience the image given in the impression produced by the advertisement. The materiality is alienated from the consciousness of the consumer--and yet it is not lost. Falk reminds us that "These trends in development would seem to be heading towards a form of representation which has increasing independence *vis-a-vis* its point of reference, that is, the product" (Falk 187-188). The impression created by the

advertisement, which produces the exigency for the purchase, has indeed become seemingly “independent from the product,” yet a product is ultimately what is bought and consumed.

The formal structure here is significant: the copy of the advertisement, and its supportive visual elements, refers not to the product, but to an image; the image crates an impression in the consumer, who then purchases the material product. The words on the advertisements are empty; they refer to nothing in the material world. And yet they have the power to address the imagination in a particular way that leads to the material purchase. Language, what one might call the first order content--that is, the content marked on the page, the words, the sound image-- is indeed estranged from materiality; and yet it affects materiality, but mediated through the impression, what might be called the second order content. The material product is created (or planned) first, then first order content is produced to refer to it, but only by being routed through second order content that it in turn creates. This is a formal structure of what one might call “the content of the content,” where the referential chain leaves the material exigency completely behind, and lives within an abstracted world--but one with consequences that return to materiality. The product is no longer important in affecting its sale; it is sold via abstraction, but sold nonetheless.

This form is put to use by advertisements not only in order to produce desire but also to function as a promise to fulfill it. By creating or pointing out a source of tension in one’s life, advertisements focus on a deficiency that the product can remedy, where they signal a “wholeness that buying the product and or using it promises to bring” (Falk 188-

189). This wholeness is a sort of utopian unity, the promise of a better future, where the fragmented self achieves reformation. Tension is promised to be resolved. While one can assume that such resolution is never achieved, the presence of such a promise shows that advertisements use discursive means toward utopian potential. This is possible because of the formal arrangement articulated here. And so advertising not only reveals more clearly the formal structure by which language operates, which we find in Addie's monologue, but it also shows the promise such a structure brings -- it is here, as we shall see, that Darl as a character functions as Faulkner's test case, and unfortunately it is also this that Darl misunderstands or misrecognizes, resulting in what others call his failure.

Addie comes to recognize that words wield such power over material life, where even when empty they have very real effects. Andre Bleikasten writes, "If Addie begins by denouncing the utility of words, experience eventually teaches her to acknowledge their power. Men think they use language for their own purposes, but in fact it is language that uses them and makes game of them, urging them to act in ways which they never intended" (Bleikasten 135). Bleikasten shows that Addie now understands words as something more than merely useless and irrelevant; words are misleading, damaging, and treacherous. She considers that Anse's word love might be what led to her pregnancies, and not because she believes Anse loves her; she never hints at any sense of sentimentality such as that. Addie believes "love" works beyond Anse as a larger enemy tracking her into her situation, where she finds herself pregnant with yet another child she does not want:

Then I found that I had Darl. At first I would not believe it. Then I believed that I would kill Anse. It was as though he had tricked me, hidden within a word like within a paper screen and struck me in the back through it. But then I realized that I had been tricked by words older than Anse or love, and that the same word had tricked Anse too, and that my revenge would be that he would never know I was taking revenge. And when Darl was born I asked Anse to promise to take me back to Jefferson when I died.” (Faulkner 172-173)

Anse tricks Addie, but unknowingly because he is unaware of language's second order effects. Then Addie tricks Anse with full knowledge of this ability --not via the word itself, but with what the word carries. Bleikasten writes, “When she is with child for the second time, however, Addie discovers something else. She then realizes that the seemingly harmless vacuity of words hides formidable powers. Words are traps laid out for our weakness, and Addie's rage comes from allowing herself to be caught in them” (Bleikasten 135). She now despises words, where, embodying the materiality he so cherishes, the tension or antagonism between language and experience becomes her antagonism with words; as one might suggest is consistent with her character, the tension she articulates is no longer an abstract, philosophical problem. Addie feels the tension, her life is determined by the tension, and she eventually sets out to overcome the tension (which, technically, one might say she does, leveraging the word through her request that Anse promise to have her remains buried a long journey away.

Addie's request, which many critics call her revenge, shows Addie's recognition of the structure of language and its relationship to materiality in precisely the form revealed by advertising above. Bleikasten writes that “While being extraneous to action and experience, language is instrumental in determining them. For whoever seeks in it the locus of truth, there can only be the disappointment of finding an empty shell. Yet in

its very emptiness it exerts a coercive power from which none may escape.” (Bleikasten 136). In characterizing Addie’s understanding of language, Bleikasten explicitly outlines its structure: language itself is empty, yet in its emptiness it holds significance that impacts “action and experience,” the domains of materiality. Sean Kelly lays out this form even more precisely. Writing about the layering effect of multiple narrators collectively tying together a complete narrative, he argues:

Assuming that the narrator presents a narrative of the act of storytelling, this would mean a strong move toward the representation of representation should be expected as the story is, so to speak, now out of the hands of the narrator and in the hands of the text. Only once this happens does Faulkner exhibit the primordial experience of which a story emerges” (Kelly 124).

At the level of the novel, Kelly argues that the text functions as a “representation of a representation”--of the narratives within each chapter-monologue. Kelly goes on to argue that for *As I Lay Dying*, the second order story, the “story of the story,” which is “the experience of *the possibility (potentiality) of the loss/impossibility of community*,” exists in as much as it becomes detached from the words, or the signifier to use Kelly’s term, leaving the “material presence of the signifier [as] nothing (in all senses)” (Kelly 131). While the narrators of each chapter-monologue contribute their portions of the plot, the text as a whole takes on its own life, detached from the individual narratives, but also as their collection it works beyond what they collectively depict; the textual narrative as a whole holds its own register of significance. The experience of the possibility of failure becomes its own experience, outside of the text that functions as its exigence. I would disagree with this point--this chapter’s purpose is to show the potentiality of communion,

not its loss; but formally, what Kelly articulates aligns with what Addie structurally describes: the content of the content functioning on its own once produced by words.

When exploring the nature of the content of the content, it becomes clear that the experiences such as those described by critics above, where *As I Lay Dying* is to be experienced and not read or analyzed, where the text forms a site of connection beyond what words can represent--it is important to note that such experiences cannot be found in the content--that is, the language itself--for the words are empty. Such experience would also therefore be empty or meaningless. Rather, the experience must be of this second order content, of the impression the words produce for the reader and the critic: an experience of *the content* of the content. It is an experience of the meaning that is somehow carried or conveyed by the first order content, that is, the empty words. By linking the experience Addie describes to the critical act, such critics inadvertently show that the formal nature of the relationship between language and materiality that Addie describes, as articulated here, is the same form--the same rules, as it were--that we as critics encounter. The implications of the practice of criticism, then, are inherent to Addie's discussion of this form in *As I Lay Dying*.

This would mean, then, that the utopian potential is also inherent in the critical act. But Addie misunderstands the nature of this utopian potential. Her monologue ends: "One day I was talking to Cora. She prayed for me because she believed I was blind to sin, wanting me to kneel and pray too, because people to whom sin is just a matter of words, to them salvation is just words too" (Faulkner 176). While Addie seems to recognize that the impression or second order content that words create can have material

consequences, she does not seem to recognize that words therefore function like something similar to a speech act. She judges Cora and others like her for using sin and salvation as empty words, which in their cases may be true. But Addie's position is to turn to materiality for unity, of not salvation itself. Finding wholeness in the experience shared with Cash, in the whipping of the school children, or in her affair with Whitfield, Addie adheres to the Platonic, and later Augustinian, spectrum between ideal divinity and material animality--only she turns to the latter instead of participation in the ideal. But her paradigm is the same as that which she accuses Cora of functioning under. She forgets the meaning of the Word of God, that as revelation, it is a speech act, that literal union of words and deed, where the speaking enacts the materiality of being. In a sense, this is also the model for advertising above, and it is what Addie describes--only she doesn't recognize the form. This, in part, may account for her misplacement of the idea of utopian totality.

Addie's utopian impulse is structured such that participation in communal activity results in the fragmentation of the self, in her loss of autonomy; she hates such communal participation. Addie's utopia is a turn inward to the material experience of wholeness and individuality, an isolated totality. Her unity is found in separatedness. This is the utopia advertisements similarly describe: the promise of wholeness acquired by the participation in the image connected to a product. Participating in this image, acting on the impression of the advertisement, would heal the fragmentation caused by modern life. Both Addie's and advertising's utopias seek the bourgeois unity of the autonomous self, and as such are mirages; advertising goes no further than the promise; Addie never

achieves permeant wholeness, until perhaps she is buried. Darl's utopian impulse is different. Though he functions under the form of tension between language and materiality that Addie describes, he collapses the materiality/abstraction spectrum Addie functions under, where Faulkner shows him as having no sense of unified self, and where he is instead distributed across multiple characters. The problem is that Darl does not recognize this, and he thinks, following the example of his mother--by misunderstanding the form of the relationship between language and materiality-- that his is an experience of the fragmentation of the individuated self, and he constantly tries to overcome it with language--and yet language continues to draw him into a more communal, distributed existence.

Faulkner's Test Case

Critics have suggested that Darl's consciousness, and its function as the voice through which Darl narrates a large portion of the novel, acts as something closer to a traditional narrator than any other voice in the novel. At times he narrates his witnessing of the plot unfolding; at other times he has the omniscience of an external narrator, relaying the plot unfolding elsewhere; and his voice is certainly the most reflective, where his interior monologue delves deeper into the motivations that drive him and others around him more than many of the surface observations other voices provide. One could say that if Addie gives the novel form, that is, if she sets up the structure by which the novel and its characters operate, then Darl gives the novel meaning. His reflections on being, on perception, and on language and death draw the reader in through their

seemingly logical presentation. This logic is often convoluted or perhaps impossible to follow, but one may not be able to say it is quite inconsistent. Such moments in the novel invite the reader to participate in Darl's line of thought, and the complex nature of his arguments challenge the reader to wrestle with the problems Darl confronts, rather than merely accept what Darl presents. Darl, then, is the reader's Virgil, guiding the reader while opening the space for the reader to come away with something greater than the basic plot surrounding a death, a journey, and a burial.

Darl's understanding of the form of the tension between language and materiality is his mother's, but the edges of this structure are softer, more malleable, so to speak, than the hard edges Addie sees. For Darl, the openings and spaces separating language and materiality are at times large and at other times small. Darl seems to acknowledge the abstraction of language but for him it takes on a quality of something more ephemeral: something perhaps not so much in the realm of the idea, but, instead of adhering to the dualism Addie proposes, language is something more like a specter, still one with the material world, but fluid, fleeting, almost airy: "Tilting a little down the hill, as our house does, a breeze draws though the hall all the time, upslanting. A feather dropped near the front door will rise and brush along the ceiling, slanting backward, until it reaches the down-turning current at the back door: so with voices. As you enter the hall, they sound as though they were speaking out of the air about your head" (Faulkner 20). Darl thinks of the voices that flow through the house as following a current, a sort of energy that while physical or material, is invisible, where one can only make it out by observing that which is caught in it: like a feather caught in a breeze, the voices in the

house meander through space along a sort of defined but ever changing path. If the voices stand in for language itself, Darl's understanding of language is one not quite metaphysical, eternal, or ideal, but rather one immanent, caught only in the moment, seemingly unstable, where it cannot be held, but perhaps still felt, as entangled with materiality.

For Darl, language is not the only side of the entangled pair that exhibits such ephemerality. Material objects, too, stray in this direction. As the sons carry Addie's coffin, Cash, with his previously injured leg, falls behind, leaving Jewel in the front and Darl at the back. Darl observes:

Jewel carries the entire front end alone, so that, tilting as the path begins to slant, it begins to rush away from me and slip down the air like a sled upon invisible snow, smoothly evacuating atmosphere in which the sense of it is still shaped [...] it seems to me that the end which I now carry alone has no weight, as though it coasts like a rushing straw upon the furious tide of jewel's despair." (Faulkner 98-99)

Like the language of the voices floating through the breeze in the family's house, Addie's coffin becomes almost weightless, "rushing," along the "tide of Jewel's despair." The material content of the coffin slips from Darl grasp, "smoothly evacuating atmosphere in which the sense of it is still shaped," where the empty form of the coffin momentarily persists, despite its content's departure. This momentary residual of form echoes Addie's description of the emptiness of words, void of meaning or content; yet for Darl this absence describes not the insignificance of the form, but the fluidity of the content, as it slips away from form momentarily, before, perhaps, inhabiting another form, perhaps

much as Darl's own consciousness does as he slips from character to character, setting to setting. It is not that significance or meaning cease to exist, then, but that they have come to be in excess of form, open to new definition.

Indeed, Darl's consciousness appears to be the precise domain in which abstraction and materiality collapse into one another. In the routinely quoted passage where Darl considers the process of being emptied for sleep, and this processes' relation to having certainty about one's existence, Darl appeals to a kind of formal logic to consider the most fundamental aspect of one's being: "In a strange room you must empty yourself for sleep. And before you are emptied for sleep, what are you. And when you are emptied for sleep, you are not. And when you are filled with sleep, you never were. I dont know that I am. I dont know if I am or not" (Faulkner 80). Critics have made a number of interpretations for this passage, most of which appear valid in the context from which the respective critics approach the passage. But what is important for this discussion is that while Darl's mode of engaging the subject of sleep is in the realm of pure abstraction, that is, according to formal logic, the subject itself is something beyond the division between abstraction and materiality. Sleep is a physical process, but as Darl shows, it is one inherently tied to one's conscious activity. To be emptied for sleep is to move out of a state of wakeful consciousness. But once outside of consciousness, one cannot perceive one's own existence, so there is no certainty of it. But if one cannot be certain of existence while asleep, how can one be certain while awake, even if conscious: "before you are emptied for sleep, what are you?" To know and to not know follows an abstract process for Darl, and yet it is a question of his material and metaphysical being:

it concerns his body that enters sleep and his consciousness that can then no longer be perceived. Darl's experience of existence, then, entangles materiality and abstraction at more than one register. Darl's wrestling with experience and abstraction, here the materiality of sleep and the formality of reason, shows the two as working together. While Addie errs toward materiality, one side of the binary, Darl collapses it, showing that through consciousness, experience and abstraction, materiality and language, are inherently intertwined.

This passage shows the instability of Darl's consciousness (what many would call madness, perhaps foreshadowing what is to come for Darl), and we have seen that as the entanglement of language and materiality, where the binary between the two is transcended at perhaps a higher level of conscious activity, such consciousness is fluid. Despite the arguments of critics that Darl, working within Addie's binary, falls opposite his mother, on the side of language, he speaks little. Indeed, the fluidity of his consciousness, perhaps due to its ephemeral nature, allows him to know things about others without communicating through words. Dewey Dell confronts this as she works through her anxiety about her pregnancy, a secret Darl seems to know:

It was then, and then I saw Darl and he knew. He said he knew without the words like he told me that ma is going to die without words, and I knew he knew because if he had said he knew with the words I would not have believed that he had been there and saw us. But he said he did know and I said "Are you going to tell pa are you going to kill him?" without the words I said it and he said "Why?" without the words. And that's why I can talk to him with knowing with hating because he knows. (Faulkner 27)

Darl appears to have knowledge that Dewey Dell cannot account for, but she nonetheless knows he has it. This suggests that Darl was somehow present for Dewey Dells meeting with Lave when she became pregnant, or was conscious of her thought when she became aware of the pregnancy itself. This disturbs Dewey Dell, both in this scene and others, where Darl has access to secrets by a means no one can account for. His ability to know, and then to communicate with Dewey Dell “without the words” suggests he is working at a higher plane of consciousness that transcends his individuated self, to allow him to participate in the experiences and thoughts of others. He appears to be himself and other, inhabiting both, able to enter the mind of Dewey Dell while still simultaneously existing separate from her such that the two can communicate in unspoken dialogue. This suggests that Darl’s consciousness navigates some kind of multiplicity, where he is both here and elsewhere.

These passages indicate that Darl functions along the form of the relationship between language and materiality that Addie describes. With the ability to engage in the fluidity of consciousness across otherwise stable instances of material being, experience is not bound by stable material forms, but instead slips across the language that purports to represent them. For Darl, as for Addie, words do not give meaning to their material referents; but while for Addie words still wield a mystical power over the material world, where she distrusts them, and works to embody materiality directly, for Darl meaning is found in the consciousness that is created by the manipulation of otherwise empty words. Darl’s appeal to formal logic allows him to use language as a medium across which to form conscious impressions; his narrations, both of what he witnesses materially and

what he witnesses from elsewhere, are the medium across which he experiences his consciousness and affirms his existence. Conscious experience is found in the second order content that is a product of first order language, itself inadequate to connect directly to materiality. The experience of being, that is, any connection to materiality, for Darl, is contingent on the ability to participate in the consciousness of second order content.

Darl therefore functions along the paradigm of “the content of the content” described above, but in a way that collapses materiality and language; this is consistent with a paradigm of the content of the content when viewed not from the perspective of its disparate parts (language and materiality) and processes (the production of meaning or significance), as Addie views it, but as a unity, a whole system in one. For Addie, language is ideal, separated from materiality, and only mystically having an effect on materiality; it is as though this effect is only observable but not explainable. But for Darl, language and materiality are inherently entangled, often characterized by the same imagery, where it becomes hard to distinguish one from the other. Language is not ideal, abstracted, conceptual, but ephemeral and fluid within a material landscape. This is how we must understand Darl’s consciousness: following the root of experience, which we know from Addie is in materiality, Darl’s material nature works in tandem rather than tension with his linguistic nature, and his experience, his consciousness--the perfect union of the two--becomes ephemeral just as in the moments of entangled language and materiality described above. This allows for Darl’s multiplicity. And yet Darl does not acknowledge such unity. He is instead troubled by it, believes through the paradigm of his mother that he is fragmented from himself, that his true self should be the

autonomous individuated ego. This separatedness from a unified self is what critics believe cause his madness, which I argue is a misunderstanding on Darl's part as well as the critics.

In one sense, Cash seems to understand Darl's position upon his breakdown. As Darl is in the process of being arrested, Cash observes, "he sat on the ground and us watching him, laughing and laughing" (Faulkner 238). Darl seems to have become detached from what is happening, ambivalent to or even mocking his arrest. Cash then notes, "It's like there was a fellow in every man that's done a-past the sanity or insanity, that watches the sane and the insane goings of that man with the same horror and the same astonishment" (Faulkner 238). Cash seems to recognize that Darl's response to his arrest somehow signals that he has moved beyond the concepts of sane and insane. Every person, Cash suggests, at some point can become detached from one's self such that their deeds appear objectively, eliciting "horror" and "astonishment," but "a-past" or outside of notions of judgment such as those of sanity and insanity. Horror and astonishment are affective, while sanity and insanity are categorical descriptions. Such descriptions for Cash are discursive, seemingly arbitrary: "Sometimes I think it aint none of us pure crazy and aint none of us pure sane until the balance of us talks him that-a-way. It's like it aint so much what a fellow does, but it's the way the majority of folks is looking at him when he does it" (Faulkner 233). Madness, for Cash, is a function of the judgments of others, not something inherent to the person. No one is "pure crazy" or "pure sane" until others talk about them that way, using what we know to be empty language to fit them into a categorical structure. Cash shows this structure to be empty, based solely on the whims of

observers who have no shared experience with the one being judged. Yet these categories, these empty words, had material consequences for Darl. He is carried away to Jackson. Cash is aware of the power such words yield, too, and finally submits to Darl's fate despite the arbitrariness he recognizes. Cash's last internal thoughts are of Darl, right before he narrates meeting the new Mrs. Bundren. As he momentarily flashes forward to listening to a record playing in the winter, when the family is back home, he narrates, "I would think what a shame Darl couldn't be to enjoy it too. But it is better so for him. This world is not his world; this life his life" (Faulkner 261). However Darl is categorized, Cash believes, Darl is better off with how things occurred. Whatever the word used that caused the family to set Darl's arrest and institutionalization into motion, Darl appears unable to cope with the reality the rest of the family acknowledges. Cash does not wish to judge Darl; yet he seems to admit, quite neutrally, that Darl's experience is not that which everyone else shares. His world is a different one, and as such he does not belong with those participating in the one at hand.

Losing his ability to stabilize an identity, something Cash may not be explicitly aware of but the effects of which he senses, Darl's experience of fragmentation reaches a new level, where he no longer recognizes himself as himself, or as singular. Whether fully alienated from himself, or speaking with a split consciousness, Darl holds a dialogue with himself shortly after his arrest:

Darl has gone to Jackson. They put him on the train, laughing, down the long car laughing, the heads turning like the head of owl when he passed. "What are you laughing at?" I said.

"Yes yes yes yes yes."

Two men put him on the train. (Faulkner 253)

Darl's consciousness has no sense of unity, for it has perhaps become too ephemeral. He speaks of himself in the third person, saying that "Darl has gone to Jackson," and yet refers to himself as an "I" who asks himself the question, "what are you laughing at?" Darl covers all three persons in this passage, where he has perhaps become three, and is certainly multiple. Critics point to this as the central sign of his failure to cope with existence, or to navigate the tension between language and materiality that Addie describes: Darl's consciousness has become fully fractured, losing all sense of any unified, autonomous identity. When read according to not only the form Addie describes, but the ethics or morality to which Addie adheres--the preference toward a stable and autonomous, material experienced, selfhood--the critics appear to be correct: Faulkner's deployment of Darl, however significant his presence may be in the novel, fails to resolve the tension between language and materiality.

The Success of Modern Advertising

Advertising, by contrast, can be viewed as a largely successful deployment of the formal relationship between language or abstraction and materiality that Addie describes. What its history in the immediate decades surrounding the writing of Faulkner's novel shows is that advertising went through a series of shifts in focus, strategy, and purpose, which slowly abstracted the advertisement itself from the product being marketed. As this shift evolved, advertisements became more effective, reaching their apex, as

historians will note, in the consumer culture of the 1920s. By this point, consumers were not buying a product. They were buying a new life, with the promise of freedom from the antagonism they otherwise daily experienced. Advertising historian Roland Marchand writes, “By about 1914, a few advertisers had begun to appreciate the advantages of selling the benefit instead of the product--illumination instead of lighting fixtures, prestige instead of automobiles, sex appeal instead of mere soap” (Marchand 10). The benefits of the product, as articulated here, show not the use of the product but its correlated changed in one’s life, an image of self-transformation. Buying an automobile for the first time does not give one transportation; it places one in a higher social class, something that is enjoyed completely separate from any need to go from one place to another. This promise of transformation carried a promise of completion, a promise to form a new self no longer fragmented by modern life. Marchand continues:

What made advertising ‘modern’ was, ironically, the discovery by these ‘apostles of modernity’ of techniques for empathizing with the public’s imperfect acceptance of modernity, with its resistance to the perfect rationalization and bureaucratization of life [...] advertisers of a wide variety of goods found ways to empathize with the anxieties of consumers who sought to keep pace with the tempo of modern life and to overcome its impersonal judgments (Marchand 13, 24)

Advertisements showed lives that cops with modernity, that can integrate into it, that can even find enjoyment in it. Such lives, the advertisements imply, must carry some sense of unity, no longer fragmented or confronted with the tensions of bourgeois life. The advertised goods would resolve such tension, much as Addie hoped her tension would be resolved. The success of advertising was contingent on the ability to create such

impressions, and it is only by adopting or recognizing the form of the language/materiality relationship described above that advertising could successfully do so.

Earlier in the nineteenth century, and into the 1870s, advertising was seen as corrupt or immoral, sometimes as a scam or even as trying to coerce the consumer. Many advertisements from this period, including the medicine ads often discussed in advertising histories, made false claims, and as a result periodicals often included statements distancing themselves from the advertisements in their pages, removing their liability and legal responsibility for such ads; many periodicals refused to run advertisements altogether. Those that did run them often had their moral character questioned, for they were perceived as participating in uncouth practices for the sake of additional revenue. Businesses were unconvinced that advertising even worked. The stigma attached to advertising made it appear unprofessional, and this hindered its advancement as a respected and methodical institutional practice (Vos and Li 562).

The development of advertising techniques in the last decades of the nineteenth century was in large part due to the settling of a debate over whether ads created desire, and by extension created sales. Those who argued against this position claimed that advertising merely highlighted existing demand and was therefore only functioned as a supporting feature of the larger sales process. However, after the crash of 1893, market analysts began to believe that ads did in fact have this larger role in sales; as the century drew to a close, companies increasingly relied on advertising to create markets for their goods, and this placed a greater sense of significance, and responsibility, on advertisers.

In response, advertisers began to experiment with new techniques to further reinforce this new role in sales, and the nature of ads correspondingly evolved. (Laird 277).

One major shift in advertising occurred with the turn toward psychology. As early as 1895, advertising trade journals began holding discussions about the role of psychology in creating and channeling desire through advertisements. This opened an entire new field of study as, over the next few decades, university psychology and business departments began offering theories that would help advertisers achieve these results more effectively. This led to a meta-discourse on the effectiveness of such theories as academics began to argue over which were authentically scientific, and which only conjecture. Empirical science then entered the discussion, and academics tried to persuade advertisers to adopt one's approaches over another's by claiming a more proper adherence to such empirical methods. This massive development of psychological and scientific research on the effectiveness of advertising approaches (scholars were consulted both in developing advertisement approaches and in evaluating the effectiveness of certain ads after their release) gave advertisers an entire new domain of strategies to deploy, and at the same time further bolstered the professional image of the trade (Laird 288-291). By the teens of the twentieth century, psychology as well as sociology had taken root in advertising. Strategy began to view humans not only as individuals with desires, but also "in the groupings and flailings of mass man," easily persuaded "not by reason but by the heedless irrational drives of hunger, vanity, fear, and sexuality" (Fox 83). Stuart Ewen writes, "The advertising which attempted to create the dependable mass of consumers required by modern industry often did so by playing upon

the fears and frustrations evoked by mass society--offering mass produced visions of individualism by which people could extricate themselves from the mass” (Ewen 45). Advertising worked at two levels, where, as already discussed, advertisers shaped desire to create a certain kind of consumer, and at the same time desire (for transformation or fulfillment) was created by the fragmenting effect of the industry of production and consumption that advertising fostered: As people became discontented with the urban or industrialized life of mass society, advertising offered images of individualism to help guide people out of a lifestyle advertising itself cultivated.

Into the 1890s, advertising had become and much more accepted trade. As ad historian Jackson Lears points out, the turn to scientific rhetoric functioned to both provide empirical evidence for the effectiveness of the product, but also to rhetorically appear to shift responsibility from the subjective advertiser to the objective scientific fact (Lears 174). Ironically, such acceptance of the advertising industry opened it up as a worthwhile career choice for those with more creative aspirations. Writers with literary interest or background entered the field, and some ads began to take on a greater aesthetic quality, moving away from the plain language of descriptive ads (Fox 41). This subset of the advertising domain, combined with the push toward the psychology-backed harnessing of desire, suggests that a shift was underway toward a harnessing of the abstraction of language which was perhaps more understood by those with training in literature and language.

Yet against this trend, other advertisers tried alternative strategies, and some adopted what was considered a more business like voice, where the ad copy detailed an

explanation as to why the consumer should buy the product. This so called “reason-why” approach used language in a straightforward way, purporting to appeal to the reader’s rationality (Fox 50). Such advertising functioned as a transitional phase from producer messages to consumer-oriented messages. The strategy appeared as long, detailed descriptions of the benefits and safety of a product, assuring the consumer through a sort of argument that appeared to depict the product objectively. This was a shift from an earlier generation of ads that employed superlatives or the founder’s image. Here, ads instead began to focus on the consumer’s concerns and took a much more explicit approach to persuading the consumer to try out the product. This was especially helpful for products that were new to the marketplace (Laird 295).

Shortly after, another style of advertisement termed “impressionistic copy” or “atmosphere advertising” arose, which “made its pitch obliquely, by suggestion or association” (Fox 70). This strategy used highly stylized visuals with elegant writing to give the “impression of effortless high quality and class” (Fox 70). Though not quite the selling of an image instead of a product, this strategy abandoned the descriptive aspect of reason-why advertisements, now seen as too closely related to the old false claims of medicines, and they instead focused on inciting a certain sensation or mood in the consumer, implying dignity and high moral ground, even if not stating so explicitly in the ad copy.

By the end of the war, and into the 1920s, advertising came to dominate American society. Historian Stephen Fox writes:

More than ever before or since, American culture and American advertising converged on a single point. Advertising reached its apogee when it became hard to distinguish between ad life and real life ('You resemble the advertisement of the man,' Daisy Buchanan told Jay Gatsby in the Fitzgerald novel. 'You know the advertisement of the man--.') Ad life and real life, it seemed, both offered a clean, orderly existence, a cornucopia of products and promises." (Fox 79)

As advertisements shifted from focusing on a product to focusing on its impact in the consumer's life more generally, they influenced not only buying decisions but actual modes of life. One of the first ads to appeal to the lifestyle of the consumer, creating a bridge from the product to the product's effect, was an advertisement for Woodbury soap.

Pamela Laird writes:

The campaign for 'A Skin You Love to Touch' offered, both verbally and visually, sensual messages that were novel in marketing to proper women [...] These messages implied that these most proper of women should seek such experiences and that the right soap could transform them--first their complexions, then their lives." (Laird 297)

This ad campaign prompted such "proper" women to think not only of the utilitarian need of soap, but of the way their sense of self and its relation to intimate partners could be reimagined. The ad campaign was highly successful at selling soap: Laird notes, "sales multiplied ten times in eight years."

Another strategy that took hold, following the ad campaigns of World War I, where advertisements attempted to use the fear of German invasion and other threats to prompt enlistments and other support for the war, translated the use of fear to the impact on one's life if one neglected to use a certain product. Laird writes, "The rapidly developing narrative techniques resulted in long texts written and illustrated to instill

fears of betrayal in business, fears of social disgrace, fears of grooming inadequacy, fears of harming one's children, and so on" (Laird 299). Such advertisements appealed to one's lifestyle like that of the soap above, but from the other direction: rather than suggest that one's life can be transformed with the use of a product, these instead argued that not using a product would result in one becoming an outcast, shunned from family, friends, or society as a whole. Such failure would further point to deficiency in one's character, the advertisements implied. This strategy, too, points toward a transformation in lifestyle, and therefore in one's sense of self and relation to others, but it is based on fear rather than optimism. And yet it too uses the advertisement as a vehicle to give an impression that exceeds the bounds of the material product itself.

To facilitate such impressions of lifestyle, advertisements began taking cues from the forums in which they were featured. Such advertisements often created narratives surrounding the use or non-use of the product. Historian Stephen Fox writes, "Advertising in the 1920s stressed the results of a given purchase--health, happiness, comfort, love, success--and the corollary disadvantages of not having the product. The selling argument feature not the object per se but its uses" (Fox 95). In many periodicals, where advertisers assumed people spent their leisure time, advertisers likewise assumed readers wanted a narrative of sorts, and so they would depict a story where the use, or non-use, of a product resulted in a desirable or undesirable outcome, respectively, of some larger scope beyond the product itself. The product facilitated something greater, and was shown to do so in an entertaining way (Sivulka 152).

The evolution of advertising during modernism is characterized by a shift from product oriented description to images of the product's use, and finally to images of self-transformation. Historian Juliann Sivulka notes that with bicycles, for example, advertisements initially described the engineering and safety features of the product, which added to sales; but this strategy gave way to images of "sporty, exhilarating fun. Scenes appeared depicting the delight of countryside tours" (Sivulka 77). Such shifts in advertising strategy acknowledge the effect of the content of the content on its correlate material instantiation. That is, they put into use the form in which the material object is estranged from its linguistic signifier, and where this signifier can in turn create a second order content, an impression in the consumer based on an image depicted by the signifier. This impression calls for consumer participation, and to enter such participation, the consumer purchases the material product. It has been noted that this is the same form Addie describes, and under which Darl works. Addie found only antagonism with this form; Darl's attempt reach a sense of unity within this form was ultimately a failure. But advertising flourished under the same form; it was the form itself that allowed advertising to perform the way it did (and continues to do). But as with any formal structure--what here we might call the content of the content's effect on materiality--this form is neutral. That is, it is only a structure, and needs to be set into motion in a contextualized way, by actors: advertisers, Addie, Darl. We have seen why Addie and Darl each unsuccessfully participate in this form, for separate reasons. Advertising seems to have do so successfully, but in a way that should perhaps give one pause. For the history of advertising is also a history of social control, and despite its promises to the contrary, it is

far from providing the freedom of unity or transformation that one might truly find desirable.

The special function of advertising, as a dominant factor influencing the direction of culture, was viewed by advertisers as an opportunity. Genuine or not, they claimed that the power advertisements wielded in effectively creating and then populating certain images of social and cultural life put them in a position to direct the social conditions of modernity. Marchand writes, "Once one came to believe in the larger functional necessity or social beneficence of advertising--or simply stopped considering such wider implications--the actual creation of campaigns and individual advertisements could be played like a game, with the same exhilarating sense of freedom from ethical consequences" (Marchand 48). Marchand describes that the perceived role of advertising as a social force became separated from the actual production of advertisements. Similar to the formal structure under which modern advertising operated, the social role of advertising--its material implications--became estranged from its particular instantiations. Marchand suggests that because at the higher register advertising was considered benevolent, it became mediated from its ethical concerns over individual advertising tactics. He continues, "Most of the advertising elite saw themselves engaged in creating benign deceptions. 'Hook or crook' tactics served a larger, positive purpose [...] The larger purpose, stated in its exemplary form, was to sell a product that would improve the buyer's standard of living" (Marchand 50). Such tactics were put to use in order to serve a higher good, advertisers claimed, and so the ethics of their practices were moot.

In those advertising circles where psychology was prevalent, this separation was explicit. Stephen Fox describes, “As the first great advertising executive from a college background, [Stanley] Resor aimed to create a ‘university of advertising,’ a community of scholars and experts who would give the business new standards of precision and rationality. ‘Advertising, after all, is educational work, mass education,’ he insisted” (Fox 84). Building on behavioral psychology, for example, advertising strategy became oriented toward cultivating and producing certain human behaviors, to “condition” the masses to act in certain ways in response to certain ad-based “stimuli” (Fox 85). What many saw as coercion, especially in earlier generations of ad critique, was now considered positive social engineering.

Such social engineering was a conscious and explicit goal of advertising. Frank Presbrey, an advertising historian, writes in his 1929 book *History and Development of Advertising* that “The function of the modern advertising agency was defined in 1918 by the American Association of Advertising Agencies as ‘interpreting to the public, or to that part of it which it is desired to reach, the advantages of a product or service’” (Presbrey 528). This statement appears to be indicating the role of advertising as a medium of communicating the value of a product. But through the use of the word “interpreting,” such communication is of a specific kind. First, the room of interpretation comes from the opening of space between the materiality of the product and the advertisement as abstraction. This opening is a function of the form discussed here, and it makes possible the room to maneuver in service of an impression created by the advertisement’s presented image. The use of the word “interpreting” acknowledges this

opening. Second, this statement makes clear the perspective of advertisers that their role is to make this interpretation for the consumer, rather than allow the consumer to interpret the value of the product themselves. The maneuverability found in these openings is managed in the advertisement's creation by its effect. Advertisers want consumers to learn something specific.

In a chapter titled "Advertising as a Social Force," Presbrey acknowledges the advertising mission of "education:"

As to the influence of advertising in securing a wide adoption of each new thing that adds to human happiness, and a suspicion in some quarters that a new column announcement that this or that article has been invented might serve as well as the urge of advertising, we shall quote William Allen White--the date is January, 1927 [...] What William Allen White has stated [that advertising is what properly presents a product] is true because the mass of the people do not buy the thing they are unaccustomed to until advertising appears which emphasizes the advantages of possessing the article and invites everyone to purchase it." (Presbrey 609)

Presbrey argues that advertising's role is to make the consumer aware of the benefits of a product, for until the consumer is presented with these benefits, or even with the existence of the product itself, a purchase will not happen. The role of advertisers is therefore to educate the consumer toward these ends. He continues, "There is no refinement in modern American life which advertising has not helped to spread. If it did not first educate, advertising would not sell the article which the manufacturer is seeking to distribute" (Presbrey 610). Here, Presbrey ties the education of the consumer about the value of a product to the good it creates in American life more generally. Presbrey not only acknowledges the educating factor in advertising, but also suggests that such

education is not only for the sale of the good, but for the benefit of the consumer in that it brings the “refinement in modern American life” so often presented in the images of advertisements. The emphasis on the second order content of ads, it seems, is not merely effective, but is in fact a moral agenda. He argues that “Advertising probably is our greatest agency for spreading and understanding a love of beauty in all things” (Presbrey 611).

Such allusions to the influential power of advertisements and the social production they intend to achieve is only implicit to this point. But Presbrey makes these connections clear: the goal of advertising, and the “education” it provides, is not only to sell products, but to produce the “ideal state:”

Advertising, by reason of its technique, possesses similar power as an educative force [...] modern advertising has made the life of the masses so much more pleasant by painting attractive pictures of the things that make it so, and has completely demonstrated its ability to influence the thought of people of all classes, that when it comes to that big, all-comprehensive job of achieving an ideal social state the potent force of advertising will at least be one of the agencies through which it will be accomplished. (Presbrey 617-618)

Advertising is considered so effective in “influenc[ing] the thought of people of all classes” that it is considered an important component of the “all-comprehensive job” of social engineering. This is made possible by the “painting [of] attractive pictures” found in advertisements, their second order content that in turn produces material effects in the lives of “people of all classes.” Presbrey shows that the form of advertising, as a function of the form of the tension between language or abstraction and materiality, allows for the effective coercion of consumers much in the way critics accused advertising of doing a

century earlier. But in the service of the ideal state, this power is wielded toward laudable ends. Presbrey continues:

To national advertising, as well as to editorial matter in our widely read periodicals, has recently been attributed most of the growth of a national homogeneity in our people, a uniformity of ideas which, despite the mixture of races, is found to be greater here than in European countries whose population is made up almost wholly of people of one race and would seem to be easier to nationalize in all respects.” (Presbrey 613)

Presbrey deploys utopian language that signals national unity, and specifically does so in the realm of ideas. Such “homogeneity” crosses class and, as Presbrey notes here, racial identity, claiming to ease such tensions, and possibly any others that might plague the social character of the nation. Presbrey suggests that the United States is more successful than even European states because of its full integration of advertising into culture and the social whole. One finds, then, that in no uncertain terms, by the 1920s advertising deployed the formal character of the tension between language and materiality toward more than the sale of the product, or by extension the domination of capital; it was also explicitly in service of the state and the utopian goal of a homogeneous, though clearly managed, society.

Advertising’s successful deployment of the form discussed here was far reaching, both in scope and register: advertisements helped create the American consumer economy through the dramatic increase in products and associated desires and perceived needs, and it also channeled these desires to purchase products, adopt images of a transformed life, and encourage participation in forming a national character. Yet both

the means by which this happened, and the explicitly stated goals, are questionable. The concerns people had about advertising before its ascendancy to the cultural and economic position it eventually held appears to have been accurate; only the scope of advertising's reach turned out to be beyond what those earlier critics likely imagined. One might then be hesitant to adopt the advertising model as the form of desirable utopia. The questionable ethics modern advertising raises might cause one to ask, is a utopian imaginary we would want possible to actualize? Addie was never able to fully overcome the tension she so materially experienced. Darl's attempt to do so likewise failed. And advertising, though successful in its use of this formal structure, poses ethical problems for such use. But, I would argue, the possibility still exists, and, still arguing that Darl's presence as the central character of *As I Lay Dying* is significant, I suggest that we return to Darl to understand *why* his example was a failure. For, as noted above, his use of the form in discussion was different than Addie's. However, his misrecognition of that form does not negate the potential of the form itself, but only his particular use of it. Part of the problem is that Darl misreads the utopian potential as a future to achieve; he did not realize he already embodied it in the present.

Modernism and the Utopia of the Present

Despite concerns over the ethics of the above advertising strategies, they do show the opening of a space in the form of relation between materiality and abstraction, one which Darl explores but is ultimately not able to consciously inhabit. Though Darl's example is a failure, it is because of a misunderstanding of such form. Darl tries to find

unity in the tension between abstraction and materiality, but he misreads it thinking that such unity is for the individual self, and as a result he misses the opportunity of achieving any consciousness of his already utopian existence.

Though Faulkner set Darl in motion as a test to explore the possibility of reconciling this tension, one cannot assume that Faulkner was aware of Darl's missed opportunity. This would account for the reason so many critics also fail to see what Darl misses. As quoted many times in Faulkner criticism, Faulkner states during an interview, "Personally, I find it impossible to communicate with the outside world. Maybe I will end up in some kind of self-communion--a silence--faced with the certainty that I can no longer be understood. The artist must create his own language" (quoted in Lilly 172-173). Faulkner suggests that communication between individuals is impossible. This is a tension everyone must wrestle with. However, he says, the artist has the potential to recuperate this loss into something different: "self-communion," or a unity of the self, found in the creation of one's own language. This appears to be what Darl strives to achieve, whatever he is actually fulfilling. Faulkner's utopian impulse, then, refers to the autonomous artist depicting the individual made whole through language. However, some critics note that Faulkner's actual project, whatever his own thoughts on the matter, seems to be something different. I follow Kartiganer when he states that the "fragmentary structure is the core of Faulkner's novelistic vision, describing a world of broken orders, a world in which the meetings of men and words need to be imagined again" (Kartiganer xiii). The broken orders of Faulkner's novel, the tension between language and materiality, must be reimagined, and not between man and words, but men

and words--between not only the inner and outer experience of the individual, but across individuals. *As I Lay Dying*, through the character Darl, posits a consciousness that adheres to the formal structure relating language and materiality, but finds these not in tension but in communion, and in doing so allows consciousness to move fluidly beyond the confines of a particular material object to participate in materiality as such. Bedient writes, "Hopelessly open and undefended, at times even plural and familial, Darl's mind leaps barriers of space and flesh, flowing everywhere like the flood waters of the river--but flowing because unformed, because it has no home in itself, no principle of containment" (Bedient 67). If consciousness functions at the register of second order content, it is in excess of the material and its correlate first order abstraction; Allen writes that Darl "has burst the limits of the ego and has found that he no longer has a center" (Allen 194). This bursting forth is the mobility of the utopian consciousness. Yet, as we have seen, the decentering of the ego, the lack of "home in itself," is what causes so many critics, as well as Darl's family, to suggest he has gone mad. But this is because Darl exhibits a different form of unity than what Addie or even Faulkner himself imagined; it is not a unity of the self, but one of relationality between people and things. Darl's trouble, then, is not in finding utopia, but in looking for it in the place of the autonomous self, where his mother believed it would be found.

Critics, with few exceptions, generally agree that any utopian impulse in Faulkner's novel fails, despite the clear signs that the attempt is made. Bedient asks, "Can one imagine a Faulknerian utopia? His books do not hold their head so high as hope. *As I Lay Dying* is a prolonged cry of astonishment; everything within it is recorded as if with a

soundless gasp” (Bedient 62). Bedient, for example, argues that utopian hope is not sustainable in Faulkner’s narrative. But it is curious that he uses the word “soundless,” and does not give the phrase directly, as “everything is recorded as with a gasp.” For it is in the very space of soundlessness, or voicelessness, as we have seen, that the utopian hope is found. Bedient’s own words suggest that the recording of the narrative, the words by which it unravels, or we might say “ravels out,” exude a soundless gasp--a second order content from which to find as-yet-undefined meaning. As he noted above, Darl’s multiplicity is without a “principle of containment,” without a form to stabilize it. This leads to Darl’s unraveling, as one critic puts it, but it also allows Darl to “ravel out,” as he so wishes: “it would be nice if you could just ravel out into time” (Faulkner 208). Darl’s formlessness, the meaning in excess of his empty words, at the register of second order content, is the “soundless gasp,” the space from which Darl’s ephemeral consciousness can slide between forms, between fixed material instantiations of being. Consider Vardaman’s reflections on Darl: As he waits in town by the wagon with his family, after Darl’s arrest, he narrates:

We never did go crazy. We didn’t go to Jackson either. Darl

I hear the cow a long time, clopping on the street. Then she comes into the square, her head down clopping. She lows. There was nothing in the square before she lowed, but it wasn’t empty. Now it is empty after she lowed. She goes on, clopping. She lows. *My brother is Darl. He went to Jackson on the train.* (Faulkner 251)

Vardaman describes a cow coming into the square alternating between vocalizing and making sounds of movement. Before the cow vocalizes, “nothing” is in the square, there

is an absence; but after the cow vocalizes, the square is “empty,” it has form without content. This is visually enacted in the passage where spaces of emptiness punctuate the text. The cow speaks emptiness, a speaking that allows for a second order voicelessness, a formless being (and as such not visually representable--hence the emptiness), which functions as an opening literally within the space of material action, here for that of the cow: the empty spaces reside next to the present action of the cow walking. “Now it is empty after she lowed,” reveals a structure whereby empty formlessness follows action, but precedes it in the sentence itself; a line later, the structure repeats: “*My brother is Darl,*” Darl the formless consciousness, proceeds action: “*He went to Jackson.*” Darl’s action is to approach the opening. We know this because of what Vardaman says shortly after: “*My brother he went crazy and he went to Jackson too. Jackson is further away than crazy*” (Faulkner 252). Through the verb “to go,” Vardaman equates crazy and Jackson as both where one might go. Crazy is an abstract concept, something inherently immaterial, whereas Jackson is a material location. Vardaman collapses abstraction and materiality here, showing that Darl went to both. So perhaps, then, it is Darl that really collapses the two in his “going,” which one might note indicates the “activeness,” the deed, that Addie so preferred, but a deed of consciousness which, even in Vardaman’s indication of the collapsing of language and materiality, frees it to move elsewhere. Such collapsing, such movement, all occurs at multiple registers in these passages, and they have shown to become quickly entangled: in language, in narrative, in form, in material action. It is likely impossible to untangle the threads of such unraveling; and yet to do so, even if possible, may be to contain the fluidity of consciousness, to bind it with form. In

Darl's case, he instead reaches a new transcendent state. Having left Vardaman's monologue to return to Darl's, the narrative shows Darl displaying the speaking patterns of others. Darl's last words of the novel, in a voice not his own, but clearly identifiable as Vardaman's, are:

Darl is our brother, our brother Darl. Our brother Darl in a cage in Jackson where, his grimed hands lying light in the quiet interstices, looking out he foams.

"Yes yes yes ys yes yes yes yes." (Faulkner 254)

Darl's consciousness has reached through the opening described above to now fully commune with the consciousness of other characters from the novel. He is fully fragmented from any sense of self, but in becoming so he has come to fully participate in a form of unity with those around him. And so when critics such as Joseph Garrison acknowledge, "the possibility of a liberated understanding is always present, available to Darl in one form or another; but he does not see it," they are correct (Garrison 54). The great tragedy is not that Darl fails in achieving utopia, but that he had it and did not recognize it. His attention is trapped in an ego-centered modernity.

Once the degree of Darl's multiplicity is recognized, it becomes more than a mere curiosity for critics to mention in passing; it becomes a central function of the narrative. One can note, for example, that in an early chapter narrated from Darl's perspective, he sees Dewey Dell leave Addie's room and then he imagines she goes to Doctor Peabody. Peabody attempts to console her, while she says "You could do so much for me if you just would. If you just knew" (Faulkner 51). A few pages later, at the beginning of the

next Dewey Dell chapter, she narrates, “He could do so much for me if he just would” (Faulkner 58). Darl knows ahead what Dewey Dell will think, which she narrates herself with the only difference being a shift from second person to third. Here, Darl, appears to reach across time to enter another’s consciousness. In other sections, Darl is able to view himself in a detached way, as though he were witnessing a scene as an observer.

Attempting to ford the rising river, Darl narrates:

Cash and I sit in the wagon; Jewel sits the horse at the off rear wheel [...] Cash’s face is also gravely composed; he and I look at one another with long probing looks, looks that plunge unimpeded through one another’s eyes and into the ultimate secret place where for an instant Cash and Darl crouch flagrant and unabashed in all the old terror and the old foreboding, alert and secret and without shame. (Faulkner 142)

In a single sentence, Darl shifts from referring to himself as “I” to “Darl,” suggesting a real time shift in perspective.

Darl’s ability to shift his perspective mid-scene is perhaps most explicit when we see Addie’s movement for the first time, just before her death. Narrated by Darl while he is away from the house with Jewel, he observes: Anse speaks to Addie, Addie sits up, and Dewey Dell speaks to her. Then Addie “is looking out the window, at Cash stooping steadily at the board in the failing light” building her coffin (Faulkner 48). The scene then shifts from inside Addie’s room to outside with Cash, where he looks up at her peering through the window and shows her the boards he is finishing: “For a while she looks down at him from the composite picture, neither with censure nor approbation. Then the face disappears” (Faulkner 48). Then, back inside, “Addie lies back and turns

her head without so much as glancing at pa” (Faulkner 48). Faulkner begins the scene from inside the house, shifts to outside, and includes the image of Addie’s face looking through the “composite picture,” applying such language to make the reader certain the point of view is now from the outside. Similarly, in the first sentence of the shift back inside, Faulkner shows Addie react in such a way that anyone outside would not see. Faulkner’s language appears to intentionally depict a shift between points of view, all the while through the narrative voice of an absent Darl.

Faulkner’s depiction of Darl in this scene then works at two registers: the multiplicity of viewpoints within a scene, and the multiplicity Darl must experience if he is to be aware of his material setting and the scene back at his house, simultaneously. In this monologue, Darl, after all, narrates events from both places. Darl seems to be aware of this multiplicity in one scene narrated by Vardaman:

“Then I am not,” Darl said. “Am I?”

“No,” I said.

I am. Darl is my brother.

“But you *are*, Darl,” I said.

“I know it,” Darl said. “That’s why I am not *is*. *Are* is too many for one woman to foal.” (Faulkner 101)

Darl acknowledges that he is not “is,” because “is” would imply singularity; he is, rather, “are,” the multiplicity now so clearly prevalent throughout the novel.

As I Lay Dying is not a novel about experience; it is a novel about form.

Kartiganer is right to say that Faulkner’s project--however aware he personally was of this--is about reimagining the relations between people and materiality. Darl’s character

does just that, even though, perhaps like Faulkner, he does not know it. But reading across *As I Lay Dying* at this higher register, as an understanding of the structural relation between materiality, first order content, and second order content, shows that Darl's function as a test for Faulkner was not as much a failure as typically assumed. What Darl's case shows is that form is where utopia lies. Existence alone is nothing more than the formless content of being. Utopia is about finding new ways of relating that formless content, about setting the voicelessness into action, about the effect second order content has on materiality--all in the hopes that an imagined form is less oppressive than one's current form of relations. Such new relations, that is, the utopian hope, are relations that free us rather than oppress us. But utopia, then, is all about structure, the form of being--what ultimately organizes, or what functions as the organizing principle of, being. And so like the example of Darl, the project of modernist form, the project of grappling with modernist fragmentation, is inherently a project of thinking about utopia, for imagining new forms of relation is inherently a utopian project, or act of utopian imagining.

And yet Darl's example also reveals something additional about utopian imagining. Darl's failure is due to his looking forward, to a future where the tension between language and materiality is resolved, as his mother sought. If this is the failed utopian impulse, then where utopia succeeds is in the present--where Darl exists, where Darl thinks, where Darl perceives and witnesses. Darl's multiplicity, his participation in communing with the others around him, is something that is always already happening in the novel, from the opening page, as we have seen. As Robert Hemenway writes, "not only did he create Darl's dilemma, Faulkner also responded to it; he assigned 'being'

coextension with the present tense and asserted the necessity of living a highly personalized *present* existence, untrammelled by the past, untroubled by the future” (Hemenway 42 - f and his critics). Hemenway argues that Faulkner’s response to wrestling with the concept of being was to engage it in its immanence, its “being here and now,” which he suggests we regularly find in Darl. Indeed, Darl is hardly troubled by the past, as he seems to approach the legacies of the past in Jewel and Dewey Dell as a sort of game, tormenting them with his knowledge of their secrets, as some critics argue. And Darl’s laughing on the train can almost be read as his ironic ambivalence of what will happen to him moving forward, that the joke is on Jewel and Dewey Dell, so to speak, who wrestled him to the ground for his arrest. Instead, Darl is concerned with, and seems to live in, the present moment. Critics note that there is very little time shifting in *As I Lay Dying*; the narrative more or less precedes in the present progressive, aside from the explicit reflections of past conversations and memories. And despite Hemenway’s claim that this is a “personalized present,” Darl also appears to live in the present of other people. Darl’s failure, then, is not in achieving something oriented toward the future, but in achieving a utopia requiring him to reorient his perception in a way that recognizes an alternative form of the present that already exists.

Where Darl fails we must succeed. So we might ask: How might the opening in language function toward a more utopian success than Darl’s failure to reorient his perception, or the questionable ethics of control put into effect by advertising? Where might we find more successful examples of working, being, and experiencing within this space? And if Joseph Reed is right about *As I Lay Dying*, that “As the novel moves from

the complexity in one individual's haunted consciousness and its invisible ghosts toward the comparative unity of shared consciousness, the reader must be drawn in too. We eventually share Cash's pride in his box [...] and with Darl we burn the barn," (Reed 84) how are we to understand the relationship between the utopian narrative and its ability to draw us, the critics of the text, into its project, a project seemingly already present for the text, and presumably therefore present to us as well?

2. The Problem of Fragmentation: Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End* and the Emergence of Administrative Governance

Fragmentation as a Critical Category

If we are to explore the notion of modernist fragmentation, we must first recognize the concept as a critical category. Even if and when modernist writers themselves, or their contemporaries, use the term, it is used as a way to account for something much more complex; and as the term has been used over the history of modernist criticism, it has naturally come to reduce the experience of fragmentation to a readily visible marker of the modernist aesthetic. In short, the term fragmentation has become ideological in modernist studies, what Sara Haslam calls the “pretense” of late 20th century critics. She writes:

[Many] late twentieth-century critics [are] guilty, possibly, of imposing a pattern instead of deducing one. Use of the term ‘modernism’ itself, implying as it does a coherent movement, post-dated many texts later seen as crucial to it: *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’*, *Heart of Darkness*, *The Ambassadors*, *The Good Soldier*, *The Waste Land*, *Ulysses* and *Mrs Dalloway*. Stan Smith asserts that the term had its ‘formal christening’ in 1927, although it had been ‘in circulation’ informally for some time. Allowing for, or even trying to discount, this general ‘naming’ time lag, however, and the retrospective critical tendency to discern a pattern, modernism still emerges as closely tied to fragmentation. The language employed by those artists who actually inhabited the times illustrates a remarkably similar perspective. (3)

Despite the ideological nature of such categories as “modernism” and “fragmentation,” Haslam argues--and as much as we need to recognize them as such--they still seem to be

apt characterizations. In the case of fragmentation, however, there was perhaps less of a “time lag,” for many of the artists themselves used the term to describe their work. And so the fact of ideology does not necessarily predetermine the ineffectiveness of the category, but we must recognize that it allows one to too easily slip into a reductive, unexamined use that, while perhaps still signaling modernism in relief to other movement or period, says little about the character of modernist form it seems to want to signal.

Fragmentation is therefore employed in an ideological manner in two ways: by critics who use it as an underexamined characterization, and as an historically-based characterization of modernist experience. That is, while critics may have lost the complexity the term carries, at least in the language explicitly articulated in their work, such complexity may be recovered by an analysis of the historicity of the term. For while the former concerns itself with representations of “fragmented” experience, the latter calls for exploring the notion diachronically, or as it *developed* in the given domain under examination. Such an analysis would not necessarily be one tracing the genealogy of the term across critical history, as a concept deployed, though this would itself be interesting and productive; but rather it would explore the form of fragmentation as such form evolves in a given situation. The initial question then becomes: how does fragmentation function as the form of modernist experience, and how does this function, in that it may not be static, change our understanding of fragmentation for a given moment? If we are in any way able to broach this question, we can already see how the concept becomes variable, and much more complex.

It seems almost impossible to escape such an analysis, for the historicity of fragmentation appears inherent to modernism. Samuel Hynes, in *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, describes how Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End* almost seems to channel the soul of modernism through such historicity:

Parade's End is a great historical novel... it embodies the whole historical myth--the world-before-the-war, the gap of the war itself, and the world-after-the-war--in one intelligible story, and in a form that is appropriate to the Myth: a fragmented, elliptical, difficult form. That is to say, it is Modernist. *Modernism* means many things, but it is most fundamentally the forms that post-war artists found for their sense of modernist history: history seen as discontinuous, the past remote and unavailable, or available only as the ruins of itself, and the present a formless space emptied of values. *Parade's End* is a masterly expression of the mythic view. (433)

The mythic view of modernism, for Hynes, is one that understands modernist experience as inherently historical, as wholly about radical change and the disruption it caused. This view of modernism sees a break from the past, from tradition, from the values of an earlier era--as Andrzej Gasiorek argues, Ford "sees the late 19th century as the period in which the process of change accelerated so rapidly that a 'break' with the earlier Victorian age took place during it" (5) --and it sees the horror of war mark this break. For some critics, this is a moment of rupture, for others merely as a sign of the already progressing transition; but for all, it is a form disrupting the continuity of progress, of experience, and of history. As Hynes notes, history becomes difficult. The task of the artist, therefore, could not merely be to represent that experience; as someone in that moment of rupture, of crisis, of fragmented experience, there simply was no other form that could be produced.

Much of literary modernism's criticism attempts to capture this difficulty by unpacking the many articulated experiences of fragmentation. How is it that a writer goes about rendering that experience? What does such a rendering reveal about the modernist moment, about art, about production? These questions orient the critic toward an exploration of fragmentation that opens up a given work and allows the work to speak to the context and contingency of its production. This is no less true for Ford Madox Ford, for whom critics have commented on his ability to capture the experience of the immediate pre and post war world. Indeed, some of this critical work took the form of corroborating Ford's rendering, as many of these critics were Ford's contemporaries, and they too--many themselves knowing Ford personally--lived through the age--something, as recent critics have mentioned, we often now forget, given the temporal distance we only recently have from those living during the period. In "Ford Maddox Ford in Modernism," D. I. B. Smith writes, "The key as always for Ford was the 'accurate rendering' of the age ('pure imaginative writing') which only the artist could accomplish: [Ford writes] 'and what we so very much need today is a picture of the life we live. It is only the imaginative writer who can supply this, because no collection of facts and no tabulation of figures can give us any sense of proportion'"(73). Ford, Smith suggests, finds the task of the writer to be one of capturing the moment, but this process is more than just collecting data; it requires a reconstruction of the age, a "rendering," which implies the conscious ordering of experience. But with this task comes certain implications for the author's role, or perhaps even ability, to authentically capture the moment. As Gasiorek argues:

it is important that we grasp how Ford inflects aesthetic tendencies, for he distances himself from the more extreme versions of art for art's sake, which assert that art should turn its back on a profane world, and argues instead that precisely because reality has become so complex and sorted the writer's most pressing task is to represent it in as accurate and nonjudgmental a way as possible... Ford concludes that any such picture will inevitably be incomplete: 'we may contemplate life steadily enough today: it is impossible to see it whole.' (9)

The accurate rendering of life was the rendering of incompleteness and uncertainty—to know humanity was to know the limits of its possibility. He continues, "the unattainable ability of a totalizing vision lies at the heart of Ford's account of modernity" (9). Gasiorek shows that for Ford, the task of the writer, or of aesthetics, is to both represent and inhabit this "unattainable ability of a totalizing vision." The ability of the writer to capture this experience authentically would require a recognition of fragmentation for not only the experience of the characters or the reader, but also for the writing itself. The author and narrative cannot have omniscience, for an accurate rendering requires the mark of contingency. Ford found a home for deploying these ends in the style of literary impressionism. Gasiorek writes:

I want, rather, to highlight how Ford's Impressionism fits in with his view of modernity and of the challenge it poses to the writer...For Ford, the techniques that constitute Impressionism enable the writer to register life in all its complexity without prejudging it. Impressionism acknowledges the opacity and unknowability of other people; subjective and often unreliable nature of our cognitions; the difficulty of making sense of reality." (13-14)

For Ford, impressionism offered a method of representation and inhabitation that not only recounted, but lived, the dissonance of modernity. The role of the author, and the narrator, was therefore not to function from the omniscient perspective, but to participate in the experience of incompleteness. This, in many ways, accounts for the rise of the unreliable narrator in modernist writing, as many critics have found in Ford's *The Good Soldier*. If the author and the narrator do not have the whole picture, they cannot moralize but only present, perhaps leaving the reader to form her own impressions.

Critics have shown that Ford's deployment of fragmented form is found at a number of registers. At perhaps the grandest scale, Ford was consciously aware of the problem he faced in capturing experience given the upheaval he saw around him. Gasiorek notes that Ford describes himself in *Henry James: A Critical Study* as "'a Tory mad about historic continuity,' an assertion that goes some way toward explaining his concern with tradition" (7). Critics like Gasiorek see Ford as tied to the system increasingly becoming overwritten or irrelevant, where he wishes to chart out the new terrain of modernity without fully ceding his principles or attachments to the tradition with which he identifies. Historical continuity, then, does not become irrelevant, but instead becomes a problem to be addressed, explored, and reconstructed. This perspective was, in a way, Ford's attempt to retain the project of literature while casting it in the light appropriate to the emerging domain. Gasiorek suggests:

[Ford's] search for a sustaining tradition is not just a formalist exercise but a historicizing attempt to discover an aesthetic appropriate to the modern age. Since the threat of comprehension comes mainly from a perceived fragmentation

of social and cultural life, the act of artistic rendering may crystallize, to borrow Ford's own metaphor, the genuinely significant aspects of modernity. (6)

Gasiorek notes that for Ford the question becomes how to capture the new moment not only to represent its experience, but because the new moment demands a new form. This is the difference between representing modernist experience and constructing it. Ford's sense of literary tradition required him to search out new modes of writing that, in their formal production, reenact modernist fragmentation, rather than merely characterize it. This, then, is a project of participation, not mere representation.

For Ford, such rendering, such reenacting, could only happen at the micro scale, through the exploration of individual characters in specific situations. Ann Barr Snitow shows, in *Ford Madox Ford and the Voice of Uncertainty*, that:

From the first, Ford's perception of things was fragmented and subjective. He called modern life a 'gnat dance' that could only be rendered from within on a small scale. In all his novels there is not a moment when one can see the 'round, consummate moon.' If Ford's characters notice the moon at all, it is a flickering, shaking reflection, 'on the face of running water.'(3)

Drawing on the language in Ford's preface to *Collected Poems*, Snitow shows that for Ford only micro experiences can attempt to capture the fragmentation of the period.

Readers of Ford will note the grand scale of his narratives, but would also recognize that his focus is not on the unfolding of world historical events, but on the local tensions specific contexts contain, as a function of the grander scale. If one sees the world in Ford's narratives then, it is as a reflection through these micro scales. In this way, Ford is able to more convincingly present to the reader modernism itself, for the local scale can

be reenacted, while the world historical, as totality, can only ever be represented, and never fully captured.

Often critics turn to Ford's use of "time-shift" to explore his deployment of fragmentation. These moments put into motion the experience of discontinuity; yet, even more so, they accurately articulate for Ford the sensation of lived consciousness, where perception and memory are never linear or continuous. Critics note that Ford's use of this technique is therefore not merely to disorient the reader. Such fragmentation is constructive, and it is here, perhaps, that we find Ford's utopian impulse. Max Saunders, in *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life, vol. 2*, shows Ford experimenting with the potentiality of modernist fragmentation:

The time-shift offers a means of expressing a bewilderment and a sense of fragmentation while at the same time bringing the fragments under control; or rather, like all expressive forms, it expresses *by* controlling the feelings that bewilder and threaten 'Ordered Life', reordering life for its own purposes; winning artistic form from out of psychological and emotional chaos, *Parade's End's* massive scope and intricately tangled complexity enables it to do justice to that chaos. (277)

Saunders describes what might almost be called Ford's use of montage, where he reconstructs linear history to establish not only the representation of modernist experience, but the manipulation of sensation and time to establish meaning. As we will see, this idea or technique becomes tremendously important for understanding both Ford's use of fragmentation, and the wider notion of fragmentation within modernism, but here we should note simply that Ford finds possibility in the form that modernism demands.

While the old models may no longer be relevant or even possible, he can continue his

project, perhaps remaining faithful to his madness for “historical continuity,” by capturing the form specific to the changing current.

In his introduction to an edited collection on Ford criticism, Richard Cassell quotes Snitow to show just what the stakes of Ford criticism are: “‘To study Ford,’ Snitow believes, ‘is to study the history of consciousness between 1898 and, say, 1928,’ since ‘the voice of uncertainty’ is that of both Ford and modernism: ‘subjective, ironic, indirect, often ludicrous or comic’” (9-10). Cassell, following Snitow, shows that Ford’s new sense of historical narrative is bound by uncertainty. Critics often turn specifically to Ford’s tetralogy *Parade’s End* for what might be considered his most comprehensive, encyclopedic, or even totalizing attempt to account for such experience. For many critics, Ford’s rendering amounts to the greatest war narrative written. But it is considered so not merely because of its ability to recount the experience of the war; rather, as Ford’s work is considered to more generally do, it reenacts the form of that experience. In exploring what he calls the “two dualities” in *Parade’s End*, Saunders describes one as “that of trying to visualize the whole of a war which figures in the mind as vivid fragments, disparate scenes” (199-200), where the war is experienced at the micro level, but reflects the global feeling. As Hynes points out, Ford was attempting to tell a history, but that history as a mode could no longer be told in straightforward forms as previously done. Now, Ford believed, history had to be remade: “Ford’s sense of the disintegration of England and English culture appears in the novels as fragments. Narrative point of view is broken down, chronology is disrupted, and characters and events are constituted by accumulation, out of the shards of experience. This

fragmentation is Ford's vision of immediate reality," and this reality, Hynes argues, was for Ford not a result of the war, but rather already present in the prewar period; the war was merely an "acceleration and symptom of that process." (432-434). And so the greatest war narrative recounts the war through the form of the fragmented experience of war itself, as a war that could not be articulated in any other way; but in order to do so it focuses on the specific context of a single character. Tracing the struggle of Christopher Tietjens across the four novels as he attempts to cope with the changing scene, Ford engages the problems of a new modern world. The plot focuses on the specific crises Tietjens faces through the breakdown of his personal life. As Hynes suggests, the war is only the backdrop to the unraveling of a social system and Tietjens more acutely confronts in the tensions he finds at his job in the new Imperial Department of Statistics, in the anxiety of his failed marriage and the uncertainty of his son's origin, and in the reconciliation of his morals with the potential of a love affair. As George Core notes in "Ordered Life and the Abysses of Chaos: *Parade's End*:" "*Parade's End* dramatizes the impact of a historical crisis upon individuals" (97). The facets of Tietjens's personal life capture at the local level what the war signified at the global level, and critics see Ford as artfully deploying Tietjens's contingent situation as perhaps the best achievement of Ford's rendering of the age.

Ford's use of time shift in *Parade's End* is notable for preserving the realistic experience of time and memory for Tietjens. Core suggests that "as Ford said of himself, he was master of the 'time switch'... the time shift is of crucial importance to *Parade's End*, where time is almost invariably presented in the present tense: that gives the action

its immediacy and lifelike quality” (97). Such lifelike quality perhaps lends a certain authenticity to Ford’s narrative style. But it signals to the reader the degree of chaotic tension Tietjens experiences, particularly, as Christopher Brightman suggests, when the narrative turns to a moment of acute anxiety for Tietjens. Describing the loops of time Ford creates, Brightman shows in “Ford Madox Ford: Art Criticism and *Parade’s End*, after describing the opening pages, that “the first of these loops opens with Tietjens sitting in his hotel bedroom playing patience, He starts violently when Macmaster enters. Their conversation is fragmented and largely incomprehensible since it evidently refers to events that have not yet been narrated, but which have already occurred” (129). Brightman describes Ford’s use of such loops where a scene begins in a disorienting way for the reader, and circles back around to the cause of such disorientation - experienced, often, for the reader as well as by Tietjens--to end at the place the scene began. Such manipulation of the continuity of time first displays the sensation of the scene’s central character only to explain it afterward - much in the way the character recounts the cause him or herself, reconstructing it in order to make some sense of it. Brightman argues that this is Ford’s conception of the functioning of consciousness. Paul Armstrong seems to agree, where in “The Epistemology of Ford’s Impressionism” he writes:

Ford’s argument here invokes two different epistemological principles. It would not be realistic, he claims, to give a complete, clear, and orderly account of the scene because memory does not recall events precisely and in an organized manner. But it would also not be realistic to do so, he suggests, because the scene originally presented itself to the perceiver not as a coherent narration but as a shifting ebb and flow of loosely associated thoughts and sensations.” (136)

Rendering the age, therefore, requires the writer to recount experience much as the original experience would have been perceived. The discontinuity of time, for Ford, was inherent to one's perception of experienced events, and capturing it in time shifts and loops reenacted this experience by both showing it to the reader (through the experience of character) and forcing itself upon the reader (through the disorientation of the narrative itself).

Yet, as Paul Saint-Amour shows, Ford's experimentation with form went beyond the discontinuity of time and memory. Giving a litany of formal techniques, he describes in *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form*:

But from early in its first volume the tetralogy takes a compendious interest in at least one nondiagetic object: literary technique. Ford's novel departs repeatedly from its baseline social realism through unmarked leaps in its narrative chronology, recursivities, rotations through point of view and narratorial voice, short spells of visual cubism and mechanomorphism, protracted hallucinations, typographical outbursts to mimic the sounds of guns or bugles, and metafictional curlicues such as a character's editing his own free indirect discourse on the fly. (279)

Saint-Amour argues that these formal techniques are not only Ford's method of depicting the modernist experience of fragmentation; they are also Ford's always conscious struggle with the continuity of history. He suggests that many critics who focus on Ford's narrative form forget this aspect of his work, and in doing so elide a central component to his literary project: "Critics who see the work as thoroughly modernist in its embrace of formal and social fragmentariness abstain from trying to square those disintegrative elements with the work's undeniable centripetalisms--its fealties to realist

historical fiction” (268). Ford, we must remember, felt tied to a certain tradition of realism, and was therefore not working in the form of modernism solely for the sake of artistic exploration. For Ford, modernist form was the method by which one reenacts or captures the reality of the social age. *Parade’s End*, and Ford, cannot be understood as wholly within a modernism that is a reaction to the literary movement that preceded it; rather, Saint-Amour argues, Ford and the tetralogy must be understood as caught between two literary movements, or perhaps bridging them, as some critics have argued, or even entangling them, one for the purpose of fulfilling the project of the other. The intentions of social realism, Saint-Amour suggests, are still at the core of Ford’s project: “it is precisely, I contend, by means of its subjunctive relationship to form--through its perpetual undermining of form’s will to forestructure narrative--that Ford’s novels hope to ward off a particular, war-torn future” (269). For Saint-Amour, who reads *Parade’s End* as the formal usurpation of narrative predestination, Ford’s use of fragmentation is a way to not solidify a future modernist identity but to undermine the necessity of one, where, for his critical project, Ford’s formal experimentation attempts to offer the potential of a future not necessarily headed toward total war.

Even with Saint-Amour’s caveat in mind, *Parade’s End* is considered an archetypal modernist text that helps us understand, among other things, the nature of the period’s cultural tension, the rise of a new middle and administrative class, and the anxiety involving—or even inability to come to terms with—a dramatically changing economic and societal landscape. How *Parade’s End* is understood to represent these domains therefore affects how we understand what, according to critics, are some of

modernism's most critical and essential phenomena. Given that the sense of fragmentation that Ford enacts is generally considered a part of the rendering of modernism, critics read the effects of such fragmentation as representative of the modernist experience. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, the source of such fragmentation, in as much as it can be traced from within the narrative itself, is often read with similarly widespread representative implications.

The Entanglement of Reason and Uncertainty

The source of *Parade's End's* fragmentation, as perhaps already noted, is typically found in the narrative's protagonist, Christopher Tietjens. Critics generally accept Ford's description of Tietjens as a highly rational, "eighteenth century" man more suited for a previous age. In doing so they set up the argument that *Parade's End* is about the rise of a new administrative class that, characterized by Tietjens's friend Macmaster, was quickly replacing the older model of governance, rendering Tietjens's class and world view obsolete. Critics show that this gulf between friends represents the discontinuity between the modernist and preceding periods, and that the formal fragmentation of narrative time and space Ford increasingly deploys as the narrative unfolds represents the inability of Tietjens, and of the class/mode of being he stands in for, to cope with and adapt to a new mode of being. What these critical views implies is that Tietjens's tension as externally derived, due to the incompatibility of his internal character and the emerging external modernist world.

As Saunders notes, Tietjens and his friend Vincent Macmaster--who comes from a more modest background than Tietjens, and whom Tietjens's family has helped rise through society's ranks—are, as the narrative opens, the class that runs the nation. As the two friends ride by train to Rye, Saunders tells us that the “regulated curves” of both the upholstery and the railway “bespeak a world of security and certainty (217).” This is the point of order from which the story enters chaos, Saunders suggests, for though Tietjens is thinking about his disintegrating marriage with Sylvia, at this time at least, “these two men are not only participating in an ordered world of design, communication, service, and authority. They are the source of that authority...Tietjens may be brilliant and eccentric, but he is also a representative of the fundamental principles according to which his society operates” (217). At first glance, these characters both seem to be on an equal plane. Both employed by the Imperial Department of Statistics, and both now of more or less the same social standing, they together represent the rising class of bureaucrats that rule the Britain, its culture, and its society at large. As Saint-Amour puts it, their class is together the group that will face the harsh reality of a changing world made explicit by the coming war: “The famous opening of *Some Do Not...* (1924), the first volume of *Parade's End*, is a paradise of foregone conclusions... In so strongly portending the war, these sentences notify us that Tietjens, Macmaster, and the rest of their generation will be ejected from prewar lives of easy insularity” (272). Saint-Amour suggests that the very ease at which Ford describes their lives signals the coming downfall of their world --a world now ordered by them, and soon to be unraveled.

And yet this opening section of the narrative also begins to suggest that there is some difference between the fates of Macmaster and Tietjens, for, as Anthony Monta shows, even from the first pages they are characterized by differing language. While Tietjens is sloppily dressed, having had little time or inclination to consider his appearance, Monta writes in "Parades End in the Context of National Efficiency:"

the opening scene for example focuses briefly on the "regulated curves" of the railway carriage, which are adorned with the, "minute dragon patterns, the design of the geometrician in Cologne"... One of the public officials seated there, Vincent Macmaster, is described as if he been machined: his hair had been "drilled down with hard metal brushes" and he wears a quick "steel blue" tie to match what Edith Duchemin [Macmaster's future mistress and then wife] later calls his "steel blue" eyes. Early in Valentin Wannops [Tietjens's later mistress] reflections, Macmaster is remembered as "the reliable engine of an express train". (41)

Monta notes the machinic language Ford deploys, describing Macmaster as made of steel, and turning to the language of rails, engines, and trains, signaling the modern appearance appropriate to Macmaster's own characteristics. This juxtaposition suggests that Tietjens is not in the position Macmaster is, characterizing all that is modern and proper to the times.

Indeed, as much of the criticism of *Parade's End* shows, Christopher Tietjens is anything but modern, for, like Cassell and others suggest about Ford, who is "also among those artists who [we find] belonging to both Victorian and twentieth century worlds... (10), Tietjens is caught between two worlds--only his is one perhaps even more out of place than Ford's, and, as the criticism seems to suggest, less reconcilable and perhaps more tragically lost. Core argues that Ford "took the usual plot of the novel of manners

and reversed it. Rather than having an intruder, a Macmaster, attempt to enter a closed society, Ford quite properly decided to present the end of an era by having the new society--now open, fluid, and unsure of itself--victimize a member of the old establishment who had refused to change” (95). Tietjens, Core suggests, is Ford’s representation of a fading world now not only replaced, but eroded by, the new world. Cassell writes in “Images of Collapse and Reconstruction: Ford’s Vision of Society in *Parade’s End*:

Christopher Tietjens, observer and participant, endowed with both insight and the capacity for suffering, serves as the gauge by which Ford measures and finally comes to terms with the losses entailed in the slow transfer of power and influence from the landed gentry to the commercial middle-class completed during the Great War. Every lens focuses on the eighteenth-century Tory protagonist being forced into the cold wastes of the twentieth century. (104)

The critical perspective of those like Cassell sees Tietjens’s misplacement as the singular moral of the narrative, for whom “every lenses focuses” on his struggle. Caroline Gordon, in “The Story of Ford Madox Ford [Review of *Parade’s End*],” writes that “Christopher Tietjens may be thought of as ‘the last Tory.’ Indeed Ford himself says he so conceived him, a man who through no apparent fault of his own is at odds with his times” (91). Saint-Amour puts this in perhaps stronger terms:

Christopher Tietjens, the work’s protagonist, seems in every respect a terminal figure: by his own description he is ‘a Tory of such an extinct type that [you] might take me for anything. The last megatherium’; a man of ‘clear Eighteenth-century mind’ living in the early twentieth century... *Parade’s End* is, by these markers, an extinction narrative chronicling the last days of a doomed social order. (270-271)

Critical views such as these portray Tietjens as Ford's tragic hero, who, despite an impossible tide of change flowing against him, tries failingly to exist in a world no longer compatible with his outlook, personality, and code of conduct. Snitow perhaps describes this most tragically:

In *Parade's End*...this idea of the heroic misfit, the man too good for his times, whose motives must always be ironically misunderstood in a deformed world, has acquired grander proportions than anywhere else in his [Ford's] work... Tietjens is in a state of absolute opposition to his surroundings. He lives among "enemies," in other words, among inferiors who can never understand his moral universe."
(199)

That Tietjens might have the appropriate perspective, and that the world has wrongly shifted around him, seems to be a common refrain in the criticism. Ford, it seems, must find something redeemable or admirable in Tietjens's character, or at least in his sense of being out of place, for, as the critics imply, the narrative ultimately laments the passing of Tietjens's world view for something more disorienting, unstable, and fragmented. As Marianne DeKoven suggests in "Valentine Wannop and Thematic Structure in Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End*", even the criticism that finds possibility in Tietjens's predicament only does so through the situation's hard lessons: "Those critics who do find some brightness in Ford's vision tend to formulate it in the essentially negative terms of Tietjens learning, in the course of the tetralogy, to survive in the tragically altered world" (56).

Tietjens's tenuous position is typically signified by his uncanny rational faculties, thinking and acting according to the logic and morals of a past century. He is the sort of person who would occupy himself with the accuracy of facts. Ford describes him as having "during the last few months... employed himself in tabulating from memory the errors in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*" (10). His chief at the Imperial Department of Statistics would "listen with attention" when Tietjens spoke of "public tendencies that influence statistics," for he would call him "'a perfect encyclopedia of exact material knowledge" (5). As Saint-Amour notes:

Although he [Tietjens] 'despised people who used works of reference,' Tietjens also benefits from the fact that others believe his mind to be just such a work: his admiring boss at the Imperial Department of Statistics calls him a 'perfect encyclopedia of exact material knowledge'... These early chapters establish that the true protagonist of *Parade's End* is not Tietjens but Tietjens's mind... Tietjens, Ford's *Homo encyclopaedicus*. (274)

Such precision was key to Tietjens's outlook, where one could be considered a man because of his "exact eye," yielding "exact observation" (127). Tietjens is said to have "scored" with his chief by "correcting those fellows [in the Colonial Governments] by sheer brain work," deploying his superior reasoning to better interpret the information needed by officials of the British government (15). When accompanying Macmaster for golf, what he called Macmaster's "expeditions for practice," he did so to "engross himself in the mathematics of trajectories... in the way courses were laid out, acquiring thus an extraordinary connoisseurship in golf architecture, and he made abstruse calculations as to the flight of the balls off sloped club-faces, as to the foot-pounds of

energy exercised by one muscle or the other, and as to theories of spin” (65). He prized rationality such that he categorized people by their ability to deploy it, as when reflecting on his feelings for Valentine Wannop, praising her “efficiency” in cleaning up after a meal, yet likening Sylvia with the “inefficiency” of their breakfast room, and the “maddening inaccuracy” of her conversation (121). Even the inevitable speculations running around his social class were tolerable, so long as they were reasonable. Though he vehemently argues early in the narrative that his having an affair with Valentine Wannop is a lie, he understands the rationale behind such accusations: “Upon occasion and given the right woman, quite sound men have done such things;” but for someone like Valentine, at this point in the narrative, “that had seemed to go beyond the bounds of even the unreason of club gossip!” (87). Others saw him this way, too. When Sylvia came back to him after briefly running off with another man, they moved into the Grey’s Inn where Macmaster stayed. She describes the room as having “eighteenth-century distinction. It suited, she admitted, Tietjens, who was an eighteenth-century figure of the Dr. Johnson type” (151). Even later in the narrative, where Tietjens struggles with amnesia from the war, Valentine notes that “once provided with facts his mind worked out sound Tory conclusions--of quite startling an attractive theories--with extreme rapidity” (241).

Yet while at times this hyper rationality serves him well, giving him favor in the eyes of his superiors, or gratitude for helping friends, it more often marks him as an outsider, perhaps more clearly intelligent than others, but not in line with the way society is becoming reorganized. Sylvia, in fact, hated him for this very reason, calling him a

“precise imbecile” (32). The way in which critics tend to focus on Tietjens’s rationality as a sign of his incongruity with the newly emerging scene suggests that there was, perhaps, something to Sylvia’s characterization--that Tietjens was too rational for his own good, and his tension was the direct result of a rational mind confronted by an irrational world. This, at least, characterizes the dominant critical view, as outlined above. But as stated earlier, how Tietjens is read carries dramatic implications for how we understand modernist fragmentation, for in that Tietjens is read as Ford’s representation of modernism’s disorienting and fragmented experience, and *Parade’s End* is looked to as one of the central chronicles of the modernist experience of fragmentation, locating the source of Tietjens’s tension cannot be more significant. If the criticism is right in reading his tension as the incompatibility between his rationalized mind and the uncertain, fragmented reality around him, his source of tension is external, and, as suggested in the criticism above, the narrative begins with Tietjens as a part of the ruling class, where at these early stages we only find the foreshadowing of the unraveling of his position resulting from his unique characterization.

Yet a closer look at Ford’s language in these opening pages suggests a different view. On the first page, as we enter Tietjens’s mind, he thinks about how smoothly the train he rides is running. Had it not run so smoothly, he points out, Macmaster would write to the company, or even to the *Times* - of that Tietjens felt “certain.” The narrative continues: “their class administered the world,” and they saw it their duty to right the wrongs they encountered, especially in regard to the efficient running of the state and institutions. Tietjens thinks, “Macmaster, that is to say, would do all that: of himself

Tietjens was not so certain” (3). Thus, on the first page of the narrative, we find that Ford raises the possibility of Tietjens’s uncertainty. While in regard to this specific piece of uncertain information this may not be so significant, the fact that Ford uses the specific language of certainty from the beginning of the narrative prompts us to doubt the infallibility of Tietjens’s mind.

Ford describes Macmaster on the second page, who, as Monta points out, is tailored to almost machinic precision - what we would expect Tietjens to be, given the aura of efficiency and accuracy that surrounds him. And Yet Ford describes him this way: “Tietjens, on the other hand, could not remember what coloured tie he had on... there he sat...on each knee an immense white hand--and thinking vaguely” (4). Dressed in rumpled clothes that are perhaps slightly too large for him, yet sloppy in his overall appearance, one might align Tietjens with the stereotype of the absent-minded intellectual too busy with his thoughts to bother with appearances. Ford and many critics seem to take this view. And yet, Tietjens sits thinking “vaguely,” not specifically, precisely, toward any particular end or for any immediate purpose, but with a lack of direction or intent. The word Ford uses suggests something more than a nonchalance about appearance. Instead, we catch Tietjens off guard, perhaps, unaware of being observed, and himself unclear, or perhaps uncertain, of the direction his mind wanders. Indeed, the notion of a wandering, “vague” mind suggests an uncertainty, both for the reader and for Tietjens.

On the third page, Ford notes that though Macmaster was his closest friend, Tietjens only knew him to be “a little senior in the service [of their department] as he was

probably a little senior in age. For, as to his room-mate's years, or as to his exact origins, there was a certain blank in Tietjens's knowledge" (5). Ford's turn to the inexact language of "probably," of not knowing "exact" origins, of having a "certain blank in... knowledge" indicates that Tietjens's encyclopedism is not as totalizing as critics seem to suggest. He instead seems to dwell in uncertainty, in a lack of knowledge, and in the hypothetical or possible, without stabilizing in actuality the certainty of information.

These three examples, from the first three pages of the narrative, suggest against the dominant critical view that Tietjens cannot be solely identified with the hyper rationalism on which critics typically focus. Though Tietjens surely functions along a logic of rationality beyond that which his interlocutors are able, as readily shown earlier, he must be understood as embodying a greater complexity than this. As Sondra Stang notes in "Christopher, Sylvia, and Valentine," "All the plumb lines are so entangled, as Ford liked to say about human relation and motives, that human behavior seems incapable of simplicity" (117). Tietjens seems to hold true to Stang's perspective, where, I argue, he cannot be solely aligned with the logic of reason, but instead must be understood as working between, or across two logics: that of reason, and that of uncertainty. His vagueness, his lack of knowledge, his uncertainty above, indicates that these logics are entangled within Tietjens himself. Though critics routinely read him as representing one side of the changing modernist landscape—the side increasingly becoming overwritten—an analysis of even the first three pages of the text shows that Tietjens himself is in tension: Tietjens's sense of fragmentation stems not from a conflict between himself and his external context—read by critics as a representation of

modernism's discontinuity with the past—but is found internally, between two epistemological structures. He is, as critics show, a man of reason and precision, but Ford's language also reveals him to be a character bound in uncertainty. It cannot, therefore, be that Tietjens represents only one side of a changing modernist landscape, where he ineffectively confronts a mode of being that is external to him, and grapples with its effects on his internal self.

Yet if Tietjens's experience is typically read as representing the modernist experience of fragmentation, to recognize this entanglement challenges the dominant critical view of what Ford's text signifies, for the source of Tietjens's fragmented experience must be other than what the dominant critical view suggests. This inconsistency, between what Tietjens represents for critics and what Ford's language reveals, therefore raises a conceptual question: when we turn to the language of fragmentation, as the content of our critical characterizations, what form are we expressing?

This question turns on the ability to read Tietjens's tension, and the related fragmentation of narrative form that Ford deploys to enact such tension, as either external or internal for Tietjens. Core seems to suggest that the tension is found in both:

What is especially impressive about the Tietjens trilogy is that Ford deals at once with both inner and outer reality, with the conflict between the social man and his dark self on the one hand and man and society on the other. We are here faced with politics in the broadest and most profound sense, what Trilling has called "a quick responsiveness to the details of the outer world, an explicit awareness of history, of the grosser movements of society and civilization." (99)

Core suggests initially that Tietjens's tension is both internal and external, both of a tormented self and of the anxiety of his self confronted with the world around him. Yet Core does not follow this up. Instead, he turns to Trilling to focus on the external tension of Tietjens's experiences, and the paragraph ends. He therefore, as most critics, focuses on the outer tension, of Tietjens against a changing society. Core's example is just a sign of the larger critical view. Despite the critical recognition that Ford reenacts the war through the local narration of Tietjens, as detailed above, little critical attention focuses on the most local of registers--Tietjens internal tension. Rather, the dominant critical view focuses is on his external relation to the changing world.

So what is this alternate sense of fragmentation, if based on Tietjens's internal tension? If we are only concerned with the experience of fragmentation, perhaps its form does not matter. Much of the criticism already detailed is concerned with the content of the experience of fragmentation, that is, what the experience is, what effects it leaves, and how the narrative unfolds such experience. The form of fragmentation, in that sense, appears as only a technical tool for representing experience. But we began this discussion by noting the importance of understanding the historicity of the notion of fragmentation, where, as ideology, it structures how we understand the experience narrated. To explore its historicity, then, we must approach not only the content itself, but the form, or ideology, that orders such content. For as an ordering or structuring agent, it matters whether it originates from internal or external tension. To read Tietjens's tension externally, as critics so often do, is to think of Tietjens as the symbol of a dying breed, of the last of a certain perspective of life who tragically faces the new.

This reading renders *Parade's End* a morality tale, testifying to the certain demise of one not changing with the times, or perhaps an elegy, mourning the loss of a previous age. But we have already seen that Ford's approach to literature was, first, not about moralizing, but about reenacting the tensions of modernity as directly as possible, and yet also, as some critics such as Saint-Amour will acknowledge, about testing the new structure of modernist fragmentation in order to unveil its literary or narrative potential--a potential that could, perhaps, save us from another tragic collapse such as the Great War. And so what is this structure, this form of fragmentation? To ask this question, we must read Tietjens's tension as derived internally, for only then can we see that he himself contains the complexity of modernism, not merely one aspect - and the one being overwritten at that. Rather, Tietjens's trajectory through the tetralogy shows us that he is not the tragic hero but instead the explorer or experimenter who, like Ford himself, first comes to recognize the entanglement of his predicament, and then reconstructs it to actualize a new mode of being. *Parade's End*, then, can be read as a utopian novel - one which, as utopian, may or may not provide the model of success, but nevertheless stands for its potential. But we can only approach it this way if we see Tietjens's tension as internal, as the entanglement of the incompatible logics of reason and uncertainty.

The Form of Internal Tension

Some critics do seem to gesture toward this sense of internal tension. Marianne DeKoven describes the dissonance Tietjens felt, where he is not understood as confronting the anxiety of a rupture in history, between the period in which he would feel

most comfortable and the one in which he dwells, but instead that of an entangled modernity:

in fact, Tietjens seems to detest the 20th century itself, with its worship of the applied science which manifests itself in useless gadgets and the horror of trench warfare. He would gladly fight in the French Foreign Legion to defend the 18th century against the 20th; but with England and the war he must use the 18th century to fight for one part of the 20th century against another, and that is hateful to him. (57)

DeKoven reads Tietjens as deploying his rationality to support one of two opposing sides within modernity, rather than to fight for an already passed lost cause. As she describes, this gives rise to the tension Tietjens feels, where the conflict is external, but becomes internalized as Tietjens becomes a participant in it. Perhaps it is his recognition of that fact that drives him to look elsewhere; but he is not driven by the desire to defend something already passed.

In "Parade's End in the Context of National Efficiency," Anthony Monta also sees Tietjens tension as internal. He reads this tension as one between the machinic efficiency of the administrative world Tietjens inhabits, reflected in his own outlook, and his attempts to stabilize or maintain relationships:

a tension at the very core of Ford's presentation of Tietjens (and thus at the core of the novel's linguistic texture): between images and values associated with mechanism and abstract calculation and those aligned with physical vitality and intimacy. These images and associations collide frequently, even in individual sentences. Continuing to reflect upon Sylvia, Tietjens incorporates the image of mechanism himself when he remarks that his body's "nerves, like weighing machines, can't register more than a certain amount, when they go out of action". (42)

Monta shows that Tietjens oscillates between strict rationality and the need to relate to others, or, as with Sylvia, the inability to do so. This internal tension is reflected in the text's turn to mechanistic language as, from Monta's perspective, Ford shows Tietjens caught in the period's ideology of efficiency.

The model of "national efficiency" intended to improve the population's life by raising efficiency for the country. As Monta notes, "Details of the novels' language show that Ford's work is significant in another context: the growth and professionalization of English administrative government, one of the longest-lasting political legacies of the long nineteenth century" (41). He describes how Tietjens's powers of "calculation and abstraction" place him in the heart of administrative Britain, where he "performs computations of the Imperial Department of Statistics, establishes the statistical apparatus for legislative Blue Books, and works with skill and efficiency organizing troop movements as a base camp military administrator" (42). Yet it was debatable if this administrative apparatus should be managed by the aristocracy or the newly emerging middle-class. Monta describes that the "'national efficiency' slogan used to rally support for a variety of Edwardian administrative forms claims to have simple efficiency rather than a partisan goal as their aim" (43). He continues:

the party would restore "virility" in government by restructuring administrative military institutions, enacting sanitary reforms so as to breed a more effectively Imperial race, passing housing regulations that would facilitate military recruiting, destroying slums and sweated trades, supporting a national minimum standard of living, and enacting other reforms designed so that "each department of national

life" could be raised "to its highest possible efficiency". Who would be in charge of making all this happen? A small elite called the coefficients." (43)

The reforms that Monta describes suggest a logic of reason, for at their heart is to allow the nation to reach its highest level of efficiency. The group called the Coefficients -- which perhaps models the house parties hosting prominent intellectuals that Tietjens's modern, bourgeois friends Macmaster and Mrs. Duchemin held -- was a small group that held regular dinner parties at a member's residence for the purposes of discussing these issues and planning how to affect policy change. Monta notes that Arnold White, who would be sympathetic to such plans, and who published polemical works about the need for efficiency in the British government, complained that "the machinery of government" was in the hands of an "inefficient elite, a 'smart set' of upper-class amateurs who have 'riveted the fetters of caste more tightly than ever' upon it" (44). This elite set, certainly the vestiges of an aristocratic class still leading the departments of government, needed to be superseded by the class that Ford describes Macmaster as coming from -- the rising middle class of bureaucracy. It is not quite clear where Tietjens-- having himself come from the set of 18th-century-style country gentlemen, yet no quite titled nobility --sits. But, embodying the rationality to succeed in such a setting, Tietjens is nevertheless tolerated, if not lauded. Here, the alignments of Tietjens and Macmaster with the outlooks of either the modern moment or the past, and with the administrative techniques of the prewar period, seem less demarcated. Who fits within which context, and which is replacing which? As DeKoven notes, the threads of representation are indeed entangled.

But Monta further shows that even if Tietjens is aligned with the dying class that must be replaced in the new world of bureaucracy, those like Macmaster cannot do without him. Monta is clear about the problems the novels show in regard to administrative modernization. He notes that:

what is peculiar about national efficiency rhetoric however is that the image of the state as a machine often attaches itself to the characteristic gestures of other discourses such as imperialism and social Darwinism...the smart set is not always competent: Macmaster for example has to rely on Tietjens for doing difficult calculations for him. Over the course of the series, however, the novels turn the efficiency advocates chief metaphor of the machine against itself by showing that the smart set's operations are indeed grimly efficient and mechanical. (45-46)

Macmaster, despite being above Tietjens in the department, needs Tietjens in order to appear successful in his own right. Yet, as Monta suggests, Macmaster's class ultimately wins out, for, as Ford perhaps laments via Tietjens, the new class does not have the code Tietjens lives by, however outdated it may be. This is, perhaps, how we might understand, or detangle, the alignments of representation noted above. This "grim efficiency" set into motion by the Macmasters of the period is what Tietjens finds in the instrumental rationality of the war, as void of any sense of morality. This brings us back to Tietjens internal tension. Different from what Monta describes above, where Tietjens is caught between his sense of rationality and his desire for relating with others, here Tietjens is caught between two notions of rationality--and it begins to seem that, in Monta's reading, Tietjens is not as wholly aligned with reason alone. For Monta does not appear to read Tietjens's sensibilities as clearly falling into the hard line of efficiency as he sees it play out through the novels. Instead, he suggests that Tietjens mimics the very

entangled nature of the administrative drive toward “national efficiency” that he confronts, as described above. If the instrumental rationality of the war functions as the archetype of national efficiency, Monta suggests that Tietjens seems to stray away from it. And so it seems that Tietjens is, then, caught outside the perspective of the times, but not because he is overly rational, but because he is less one sided. If we remember Tietjens’s entangled nature, as embodying both reason and uncertainty, it becomes more clear how Monta see Tietjens as already less aligned with rationality than the modern world in which he seems lost.

But we must keep in mind that, as Monta reminds us, Tietjens’s shift away from the singular perspective of a logic of reason or rationality occurs as the novels progress. His reading of *Parade’s End* begins to show the transition from emphasizing a logic of reason to placing more emphasis on the logic of uncertainty, particularly through Tietjens’s own disorientation and fragmented experience. Monta writes:

As Tietjens represents England's best administrative mind trying to maintain a productive balance between devotion to abstract efficiency and sensitivity to local needs, Ford's plot stages this balance’s betrayal and disintegration. ... This is not to say that *Parade’s End* stages a complete rejection of efficiency as a value. Instead, it redefines national efficiency as an ideal for reorienting what Tietjens calls the operation of "exact intellect." ... The goal of the exact intellect's activity for Tietjens can no longer be mechanical efficiency but "rest" and "peace." (47).

This balance between abstract efficiency and sensitivity to local needs places Tietjens at the border of these two logics. As a statistician for the imperial government, the rhetoric of efficiency in the administrative network he initially supports follows the logic of reason, yet the local needs his work addresses are inherently contingent, and therefore

require a logic of uncertainty (as does statistics itself): Tietjens's administrative work functions, then, precisely at the border between reason and uncertainty--and this entanglement seems to be inherent in administrative practices themselves.

Jeffery McCarthy takes a slightly different view, arguing in "'The Foul System: the Great War and Instrumental Rationality in *Parade's End*," that though Ford indeed wished to use Tietjens to complicate the administrative governance of modernity, he ends up being swept back into the logic of reason along which administrative rationality ran. The concept of "instrumental reason" came to dominate the practices of administrative governance where, McCarthy writes, "in *Some Do Not...*[the first novel in Ford's tetralogy *Parade's End*] the many struggles that fragmented Edwardian society--suffragettes, labor, Ireland--are overshadowed by something even more fundamental: the overthrow of the old economic/epistemological order by one based on instrumental reason." (182). McCarthy implies that Tietjens is in fact not aligned with the new model of rationality, but with the old order, where his sense of reason described above is of a different nature than that which the newly created Imperial Department of Statistics demanded. McCarthy continues, "*Some Do Not's* episodes with bankers and war officials pushed the conclusion that it is not only the war that tortures Britain but also these administrators and, especially, the epistemology that guides them--the outlook that Ford warned will know human beings only as specialist laborers from whom to squeeze production" (185). In a context a little more than a decade before the rise of the welfare state, McCarthy shows that administrative governance put the ends of government efficiency, and therefore the good of the state, over the welfare of the population. And

though the rationale for the good of the state argues that its achievement would necessarily provide for the good of the people, in practice Ford found it alienating. McCarthy shows how this plays out through Tietjens, who though described as being out of place in the modern world precisely because of his rational intellect, nevertheless comes to find the hyper rationalism deployed in the administration of British war-time governance disorienting. McCarthy describes that:

Ford's characters are imprisoned by what Max Weber calls "the iron cage" of rationality, where both working class and what Tietjens terms "administrative class" are locked within the limited realm of a rationalized world. We will see that Tietjens' war experience witnesses the transformation of reason into a force of domination, and prods Tietjens towards an alternative. You might say that Ford's critique of instrumental rationality is contrasted with Tietjens's formidable intellect. But Tietjens's intellect has been part of the problem in the "the newly created Imperial Department of Statistics," while around him faith and reason has led to dehumanizing technocracy and an economic order calculated to undermine individual identity. The real story of *Parade's End* is the story of Tietjens seeking and discovering another pattern of thinking that offers the whole volume a hopeful conclusion." (178-180)

Here, McCarthy shows that Tietjens becomes increasingly oriented toward a logic of uncertainty, for despite his own propensity to reason, he comes to understand the very rationalization of administration, and its practices, as disruptive to the goal of working toward the betterment of humanity. Instead, he believes, the logic of instrumental rationality alienates the population, rendering people mere tools for the service of the state.

Yet, as Tietjens enters the war, the distillation of such instrumental rationality provides him with a visible antagonist; he now has something legible to work against.

McCarthy argues that as Tietjens joins the war to escape both societal and personal problems, "this intensification proves the key to the novel, because the Army work distills the forces acting to destroy Tietjens into an essence of instrumental rationality he can identify and resist" (179). As Tietjens faces the "grim efficiency" of the war, it has been "distilled" into an identifiable form that he try to out maneuver. Ford depicts this both through the destabilization of Tietjens's logic of reason, and as a response to the logic of instrumental rationality enacted through the very form of the narrative itself.

McCarthy shows that:

another important element is the novel's form...[is that] Ford's narrative technique empowers patterns of thinking to counter the dominating instrumental rationality. *Parade's End* deploys destabilizing narrative techniques like time-shift and narrative intrusion to represent a reified world without validating that reification... time-shifts and anachronic presentation enables the text to work with what Ford called "the Tory at home during wartime" by explaining character, but not limiting that character to quantifiable, inevitable presence... Thus, *Some Do Not's* jumping, looping chronology registers the lived experience of the modern subject without validating that most reified of all modern mediums – time. (190)

Ford's use of fragmented narrative style, in its various manifestations, undermines the efficiency of instrumental rationality, breaking it apart, showing the narrative itself as something that perhaps does not easily or efficiently transport meaning to the reader.

This suggests that Tietjens, as well as Ford, turns to the logic of uncertainty not only to represent the sensation of the modern experience, but also as a refuge from the rationality modern administrative governance so aggressively deployed. And so, while the logic of reason is entangled in its practice with the logic of uncertainty, it here is not merely so as a mode of confronting contingency in the act of promoting the administrative will as

found in the entangled nature of Tietjens statistical work; instead, it is deployed as a disruptive interlocutor. And so Tietjens moves to exploit this perhaps unintended consequence of the entanglement, and appropriate it for his own purposes.

Yet, McCarthy argues, Tietjens's project is ultimately a failed one, as his turn to the logic of uncertainty is eventually corralled and tamed by the persistence of reason, swinging the pendulum of entanglement back to the other term. This plays out, again, in the form of the tetralogy. McCarthy writes:

examples of time-shift are everywhere in *Some Do Not...*, less prominent in *No More Parades*, and still less present in *A Man Could Stand Up*. The conclusion I draw is that as *Parade's End* joins the war the uncertainty, the abandon, of time-shift is reduced. This evolution runs counter to the critical commonplace that the experience of war led to greater and greater feelings of fragmentation and uncertainty, and matches my thesis that the war actually contributes to a culture of regulation and administered order... Across the three novels, the narrative technique that would seem to outflank instrumental rationality actually bows to the growing dominance of a single, controlling mode of understanding. So the *Parade's End* novels swim against the tide of modernist criticism that identifies increasing narrative fragmentation as a hallmark of the movement. Here, time-shift is revolt, and it is slowly brought to order. (191)

McCarthy argues that the logic of reason eventually wins out, for Ford's narrative shows an increasing stability, corraling the fragmentation that sought to disrupt it. This reading suggests that Tietjens's utopian project does ultimately fail, but even further, that *Parade's End* reframes modernism to no longer be characterized as the *increasing* fragmentation of experience. One might then read Ford's text as an outlier, but whether or not one accepts McCarthy's interpretation, what it points to is the larger hypothesis our discussion is exploring: that modernism is not about the increasing fragmentation (and

related increase in uncertainty) of experience, but that such fragmentation is a function of incompatible, yet entangled, perspectives and logics. This, at least, would account for reading Ford's text as modernist while within the interpretation McCarthy puts forth.

Monta's and McCarthy's readings differ from the other interpretations we have explored because they see Tietjens's tension as internally derived. This is possible in part because they both read Tietjens as working against the grain of the rationalism most other critics see him embodying. Reading Tietjens's tension as internally derived, we more easily see the way in which his tension is at root in the entanglement of reason and uncertainty; reading it externally derived, following the dominant critical view, we can only see Tietjens as the rational Tory most critics depict; there is no entanglement in this reading, only a binary positioning Tietjens rationality against the uncertainty and fragmentation of his modernist moment.

This difference is also a function of how one approaches fragmentation. Explored as the representation of fragmented experience, the concept appears little more than the character of represented content in a text. Reading Tietjens tension as externally derived suggests that the source of his experience of fragmentation is a result of the incompatibility of his self with lived reality. The resulting fragmentation would have no specific form, but would instead be simply disorientation, randomness, total uncertainty. Yet if we explore fragmentation as the form of represented experience, rather than explore the representation of fragmented experience, we are only now able to account for the possibility that Tietjens's tension is internally derived --for internal tension, that is, tension within a single domain rather than across two incompatible domains, implies a

formal incongruity. Our question has been what is the nature of such fragmentation? And we have suggested that it is entanglement. Had we followed the dominant critical view, this internal complexity would have been missed. And so it is important to approach fragmentation as a form, and not only as the characterization of experience, that is, of represented content.

In reading this way--reading the fragmentation of experience--Monta and McCarthy are interested in form, and so they look to a wider epistemic form--here, of administrative governance--as the basis for understanding Tietjens's experience. This is a heuristic model, not one concerned with accounting for influence. They are looking to something Tietjens is wrapped up in to understand how his experience mirrors that form, which, as they argue, Ford intended to correlate via a sort of *allegorical proximity*; but they are not suggesting that Tietjens's fragmented experience is specifically and wholly a result of his involvement in administrative governance, nor are they arguing for the extrapolated interpretation that modernist fragmentation is a result of administrative governance. Administrative governance is not the origin of modernist fragmentation, but is rather Ford's allegorical model deployed to reveal Tietjens's fragmented experience.

So it is worth looking deeper into this form of administrative governance, following the cue of these critics, but, now that we recognize it as allegory/ideology, we should, breaking from the Monta and McCarthy, consider the *emergence* of administrative governance, alongside the *evolution* of Tietjens's entanglement, as historically situated. For the form of Tietjens's fragmented experience, reflected in the narrative of the novels, and often read as indicative of modernism itself, now appears

much more complex than the dominant critical view seems to suggest. But as some critics have noted above, Tietjens's story is an evolving one, and so we can assume that his experience of fragmentation evolves, too. And so if we are to use the term fragmentation, we must explore its movement.

For this reason, the remainder of the discussion will focus on the first novel in Ford's *Parade's End* tetralogy, *Some Do Not...* As some critics above have noted, the first novel lays out perhaps most explicitly Tietjens's tension, for it focuses more so on his home life before and after his experience at war, allowing the tension itself to unfold the narrative, while the second two novels focus on the war itself, and the fourth focuses on his brother Mark. As Christopher Brightman points out:

The reader, accustomed to the beguiling but frustrating techniques of the earlier part of *Parade's End*, accustomed too to the text's insistence that he be drawn into its complexities, delayed, frustrated, leaping forward only to return to the beginning again, is now confronted [in the second and third novels] with a narrative that moves forward with dangerous speed. The prose of *A Man Could Stand Up* is explosive and no longer beguiling (133).

Some Do Not... is recognized as the most experimental in form, as it attempts to capture and enact the fragmented tension Tietjens experiences as he tries to navigate the changes modernity presents on both sides of the war; the novels depicting the war itself, instead, move forward with the mechanical efficiency of the war machine, as McCarthy, joining Brightman above, argues. He suggests that Max Saunders is right to see formal fragmentation in the narrative as a mechanism to reorder, and therefore make sense of, the war, but he sees Saunders as "missing the point" that as the war progressed,

administrative order was increased, and Ford's use of the narrative technique of time-shift reduces. *Some Do Not...* may therefore provide the most fruitful exploration of fragmentation.

Administrative Governance and The Emergence Of Entanglement

Christopher Tietjens's work in the Imperial Department of Statistics is not simply apt work given his overly rational outlook. The language Ford uses places administrative governance at the core of Tietjens's identity and tension. At the opening of *Some Do Not...*, Ford make plain that Tietjens belonged to the class that now ran the imperial government in action if not name. Describing Tietjens and Macmaster, Ford writes:

Their class administered the world, not merely the newly created Imperial Department of Statistics under Sir Reginald Ingleby. If they saw policemen misbehave, railway porters lack civility, an insufficiency of street lamps, defects in public services or in foreign countries, they saw to it, either with nonchalant Balliol voices, or with letters to the *Times*, asking in regretful indignation, "Has the British This or That come to *this*?" (3)

The Tietjenses and Macmasters of Britain oversaw the contingencies of the smooth running of government affairs, from service members to utilities, and saw it their duty to correct any wrongs they came across. This was not only their job, but their role in society, for not only did Tietjens and Macmaster administer through statistical analyses, but they spent their leisure time writing "letters to the *Times*," blurring the boundaries between their private and public lives. Even their chief, Sir Reginald, "was not a reader himself of much else than Government publications" (13). If efficiency was the order of

the day, it is appropriate, then, that such boundaries would be blurred, for it appears to have unsettled those like Tietjens and Macmaster in any context where what was proper was out of place.

Ford narrates such scenes as Tietjens and Macmaster maneuver comfortably amidst administrative tasks and jargon. The morning before leaving for Rye to play golf, Tietjens tells Macmaster that he will do the calculations Macmaster must hand in before the day is out. He adds, "I think you made a mistake in overestimating the pull of Klondyke this year on the population. The passes are open, but relatively no one is going through. I'll add a note to that effect." (9) Tietjens corrects Macmaster's error, but the specificity of Ford's narrated remark shows more deeply that Tietjens's rationality is not only about number crunching, but about the larger deployment of reason. It is not that Macmaster miscalculated, but that his calculations did not take into account the contingency of the British Columbian weather and transportation patterns of the moment. And yet the remark is made so matter of fact that there is no dispute over the issue, Macmaster takes no offense, and he simply thanks Tietjens for proofing his numbers--all a matter of routine business.

At the golf club later that afternoon, Macmaster explains to General Campion about a discrepancy at work Tietjens's faced. Using the language of bureaucracy, Macmaster refers to the use of figures the statistical department would prepare for help in drafting a Bill for the House of Commons:

The Government had wanted a set of figures based on a calculation called B 7. Tietjens, who had been working on one called H 19--for his own instruction--had

persuaded himself that H 19 was the lowest figure that was actuarially sound...It amounts to this. Chrissie was asked by the Government--by Sir Reginald Ingleby--to work out what 3x3 come to: it was that sort of thing in principle. He said that the only figure that would not ruin the country was nine times nine...All that Chrissie was asked to do was to say what 3x3 was. (61)

Macmaster explains to the General that Tietjens made the passage of the Bill possible because he countered the bureaucratic impulse of his superiors to simply ask for a certain calculation, rather than useful information. When Tietjens was approached to make this calculation, he saw the qualitative error and explained why a different calculation was more appropriate. Ford turns to the language of calculation names, which he has Macmaster simplify for a non-professional, and in doing so marks Tietjens and Macmaster as specialists. Perhaps Ford's characterization, through the thoughts of Tietjens, best captures the context:

And the bureaucrat then? Growing fat and soft like himself, or dry and stringy like Macmaster or old Ingleby? They did men's work: exact observation: return no. 17642 with figures exact. Yet they grew hysterical: they ran about corridors or frantically rang table bells, asking with high voices of querulous eunuchs why form ninety thousand and two wasn't ready. Nevertheless men liked the bureaucratic life. (127).

Ford satirizes bureaucratic professionals, citing again specific document numbers and the paper-pushing stereotypically associated with such work. But he shows that Tietjens accepts, and indeed valorizes, such work. For these bureaucrats were doing "men's work": running the imperial administration of Britain.

In these contexts, administrative governance seems hardly fragmented. Instead, it appears, much as Monta suggests, as the well-oiled machine Tietjens and Macmaster

praise it for. Yet, like Tietjens's own internal tension, the history of the emergence of administrative governance follows the evolution of a certain fundamental entanglement-- and so it is worth exploring this history and following it as it mirrors Tietjens's own trajectory.

To understand the form of modernist administration, and therefore understand the complexity of the tension Tietjens experiences, which Ford's narrative mirrors, we must see how the form of modernist administration emerged; and to do this, we must start with emerging forms of security. Here, we find the emergence and development of the entanglement of reason and uncertainty, which gets carried into the forms of administration that evolve out of security.

In his introduction to *Police Forces: A Cultural History of an Institution*, Klaus Mladek shows that early forms of policing in Europe, as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were not directed towards preventing crimes or bringing criminals to justice, but rather towards managing the "good order of the state." This was conceived of as beneficial both for the governing body and for the population, for good order provided for the general welfare and well-being of the population, and it was towards these ends that policing became institutionalized. Indeed, as Marc Schweska shows, by the 18th century, it was ultimately believed to be the sovereign's duty to put the welfare of the people above their own rights to knowledge. Frederick II of Prussia, for example, posed this question, and the resulting council decided, as Schweska describes, that "the logic behind the reason of state counted the systematic acquiring of information in military strategies among the duties of the state. The question of whether it was useful to deceive

the people was affirmed by the logic of the reason of the state, with restrictions regarding necessary measures for the state's preservation." (31-32). If the people could be better protected, and a better life could be provided for them, it was therefore within reason that they might be deceived, for this provided for their own well-being. Yet, as he further shows, the final cause for such action extended beyond the well-being of the population, for when the welfare of the people was provided for, this further bolstered the security of the state itself, not merely as a protection of the population, but as ensuring the persistence of the state's own existence. The development of networks and secret organizations of agents, Schweska explains, sprang up across much of Europe and the Mediterranean, where as early as 17th century, Elizabeth I in England, followed by France, Germany, Italy, and others, formed secret services, where information gathering was the primary focus. And thus even in this period, the ability to gather the most amount of information about one's objects of surveillance was considered imperative to preserving one's position of power.

It was at this time that using scientific knowledge as a mode of analyzing the information gathered was developed. Schweska notes that the king and queen of Spain during this time consulted university scholars for plans and for legitimizing their politics, and that even Cardinal Richelieu had access to one of the best libraries in Europe, where he and his colleagues analyzed and gathered the information they sought as a way of consolidating their power (34). Thus, despite the common conception that police forces were not institutionalized until 1800, this example, and the sort of debate that was happening with the questions of deception above, shows that these concerns reach back

into an earlier point of the Enlightenment. For, following the rationale of the Enlightenment, the task was to achieve the highest good for the supremacy of the state and for the welfare of the people within it. The means deployed to achieve these ends eventually lead to our modern conceptions of administrative government. Schweska writes, "in a world of hostile competitors, the logic of the preservation of power via the increase of power forced the development of new resources (territories, people, and finances) and the intensification of their use. In terms of their structure, the politics, the military, the police force, and security services all developed characteristics intrinsic to modern organization – that is, professional, specialized, and bureaucratic"(32). The introduction of security techniques to the modern scene, and the resulting administrative apparatus that formed around them, was therefore toward two ends: to better protect the good of the people, by gathering information about population for policy decisions, and for the sake of consolidating and securing state power - which itself was understood as both an end and a means to the maintenance of the good of the population.

Secrecy and deception, however, did not function solely along the logic of reason, where state agents and political actors attempted to gather the most information as possible, and then make logical assumptions based on what was at hand. Schweska shows that Machiavelli inserted secrecy and deception into his discussions as a way of dealing with contingency. He writes:

this was the same fox that Machiavelli had in mind after godly omnipotence, which indeed it always stood for omniscience, began to quit the political field. Contingency – that is, the possibility of encasing future situations and rules – was the unrest that kept Machiavelli's and his successor's political thought in motion.

Both the openness for the future and the diagnosis that habits of behavior – in other words, nature and traditions - were not enough to claim political power led Machiavelli to introduce secrecy and deception as means of the mastering of contingency. (36)

Contingency, as described here, functions as the bridge across the gap of knowledge, and across the gap of providing for all future circumstances in codified programs of administered and managed power. What secrecy and deception provided, then, was both the means for one to act within the face of uncertainty, and also a means for increasing the uncertainty of those against or about whom one acts. And so even in Machiavelli's period, the logic of reason becomes entangled with the logic of uncertainty, where his discussions of consolidating and maintaining power – what, as Schweska argues, highly encouraged early forms of policing – were founded for the purposes of facing incomplete knowledge.

The ends toward which such secrecy and deception were deployed also encouraged the emergence of more comprehensive forms of administration. As Klaus Mladek notes, the consolidation of state power meant the maintaining of a smoothly functioning society, and this in turn helped maintain state power: “Contrary to the law, the police measured success not on achieving justice or strong law, but on the strengthening of the good order” (3). Mladek shows that early forms of policing were not directed towards preventing crimes or bringing criminals to justice, for from the beginning policing was oriented towards managing the running of the state. This was conceived of as beneficial both for the governing body and for the population, for good order allowed for the general welfare and well-being of the population, and it was

towards these ends that policing became institutionalized. What Mladek argues is that, providing this function, police forces were not merely a response to the need for a growing administrative system, but, rather, their emergence helped constitute what became the larger body of administrative governance.

However, managing the good order of the state required active engagement with the population. This presented what Joseph Vogl calls in his essay "State Desire: On the Epoch of the Police," a "tension between the law of reason and contingent data" (60). He describes the state's need to understand its constituency in empirical terms, and as he argues, this is a need beyond the reach of laws and codified norms. As such, state power has to reach out through what increasingly becomes administrative means, and often times these means are in the form of policing forces, for they are the agents of the state on the street, working within the concrete world of the state, and are able to function amidst the contingency of real-life situations.

As the relationship between the state and its population became one of knowability - a knowability that was believed to allow for the providing of the greatest good for the population - the need for an on-the-ground presence that could collect such information emerged. Policing *as an institution* was thus developed in service of the logic of reason, for it would aid with the reaching of the state and its population toward their absolute form. However, the practice of policing was also immediately recognized as effective precisely because it did not follow the logic of reason in the form of law and codes; instead, policing *practices* functioned according to the logic of uncertainty, flexible in their movements and observations, and acting according to the situation at

hand. Such entanglement of reason and uncertainty was therefore inherent in the inception of early modern forms of security. For only with a *contingent* force amongst the population could the state gather the needed information to fulfill its *rational* duty.

This history of the emergence of modern security suggests an orientation to knowledge where, fulfilling the rational duty of the state --to both provide for the good of the population, and to secure its own power--information is gathered about the population in order to manage the uncertainties or contingencies of local or micro situations. Ford describes a similar orientation to knowledge through Tietjens, where, though he is interested in knowledge for its own ends, "It was in that way his mind worked when he was fit: it picked up little pieces of definite, workmanlike information. When it had enough it classified them: not for any purpose, but because to know things was agreeable and gave a feeling of strength" (70). The working of Tietjens's mind functions in a way similar to the emergence of security. His minds gather pieces of specific, contingent data, which he later synthesizes into a larger body of knowledge. Despite the fact the Tietjens does so for his own interest, he shares an outlook of working among contingencies to fill the gap of an otherwise broader register of knowledge. To see how this functions in some specificity, we can turn to an example from America which, though not in the European imperial context, acts as another vignette of entanglement in a common history of the emergence of administrative governance.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, at a time when police forces in America were still in their infancy, and had little experience with gathering and sharing information and evidence, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency transformed the

practice of policing. When sometime in the 1850s – historian James Horan suggests the timing is somewhat debatable – Pinkerton, in partnership with a young Chicago attorney, Edward A Rucker, began the first private detective agency, he wanted to turn the agency into more of what he considered a profession, and not merely a business. Pinkerton instituted high standards for his employees and the management of the agency: rather than referring to them as detectives, his investigators were called operatives, and Pinkerton wrote that they "must be men of high order of mind and must possess clean, honest, comprehensive understanding, force of will and vigor of body" (30). This was important for effectively noticing and apprehending criminals, for, as Horan narrates, "criminals, he insisted, eventually reveal their secrets, and a detective must have the necessary experience and judgment of human nature to 'know the criminal in his weakest moment and force from him, through sympathy and confidence, the secret which devours him.'" (30). The language of secrets implies a certain totality of knowledge, a portion of which a criminal withholds. Pinkerton operatives were therefore, through their integrity and will, supposed to exact these secrets from criminals and set the omission of information right. But in order to do so, new practices and techniques would also need to be formed. Horan describes that:

in [founder Allan Pinkerton's] time there was no central federal law enforcement clearinghouse such as the present FBI files and laboratory... so Pinkerton devised the earliest central clearing headquarters for the distribution of photographs of criminals, as well as pertinent information about them and their *modus operandi*, to state, local, and government law enforcement agencies... Letters, telegrams, and reports of the early days of the agency show an amazing exchange of information about crimes and criminals, ranging from police officials of large

eastern cities to the obscure frontier Sheriff laboriously writing with the stub of a pencil.

Such information gathering and sharing, which was already found to be important as early as the 16th century, reached a new level of technique under Pinkerton's agency. Indeed, Horan writes, "when the Pinkertons were involved in an arrest, they insisted that the prisoner be stripped at police headquarters and that every scar, mole, and physical deformity be listed." Such information gathering was largely what prompted Pinkerton's success, and as a pioneer in these practices, his agency's methods set the example for police work to come.

Yet despite the advancement in policing technique, the history of the agency suggests that Pinkerton's method functioned solely along the logic of reason, for his operatives were encouraged to learn everything they could of the suspects they were pursuing, and it was believed that with such a comprehensive mass of information they would be able to act the most effectively. What is more, the development of these information gathering techniques –in terms of their circulation, their comprehensiveness, and the expansion of the very types of details they wished to collect – suggested a new way of gathering information, for it seems that not only were they interested in collecting and analyzing information that was clearly pertinent to the crime they were investigating, but that every aspect and detail of the suspected person's life would be one more point in leading to their apprehension. In other words, they reached for totality.

The effectiveness of the agency, however, was not bound solely in its increasing effectiveness of information gathering and analysis, but also in prevention. As Pinkerton's

reputation grew, as the list of his permanent clients was increasingly known in the public, and if and when it became known that his agency was on a case, Pinkerton believed that the potential criminals themselves would think twice. This case in point is made more clearly than any other with the logo of the agency itself. Centered within the script "Pinkerton's National Detective Agency" is a single, giant open gazing eye, with the caption "we never sleep." As Horan narrates, "it was now an established fact that the 'eye,' as they called Allan Pinkerton, would follow you to the ends of the earth to arrest you, and then spend every available dollar to put you behind bars... The image of a staring, unblinking eye seeking out evildoers became a comforting symbol to the utilities and business firms of the 1850s; it gave outlaws and thieves an uneasy feeling that someone was peering over their shoulders..." Allan Pinkerton, "the eye," in a push for amassing totalizing, comprehensive knowledge, meant to see all.

And so what we find at the beginning of the 19th century are the early forms of bureaucratic processes emerging out of the need for information gathering that the previous centuries initiated. As the first half of the 19th century unfolded, police forces remained largely ineffective, yet, with Pinkerton's National Detective Agency, information gathering and the rhetoric of surveillance began to take on a more scientific shape. By the end of the 19th century, Pinkerton's agency had developed new effective techniques of policing, which many local police forces began to draw upon, working directly with Pinkerton's agency, with other detective agencies that had since emerged, and in strengthening their own localized forces. What we find in these early stages of security – both in local police forces and in Pinkerton's agency – is the logic of reason

being deployed in a way that increasingly fosters the development of administrative and bureaucratic procedures. Information gathering was the primary source of such security, and as the 19th century wore on, the sharing and analyzing of information became increasingly robust, all the while developing a deeper entrenchment in administrative procedure, data collection, and the analysis of disparate pieces of information--and in the interconnected networks of information sharing that such practices fostered. And so the logic of reason, while still effectively constituting the outlook of early forms of policing, nonetheless began, through its practices of gathering contingent data by agents on the ground, to set the stage for what would later become the security measures that functioned more so under the logic of uncertainty, when statistics would enter, and effectively constitute, modernist security.

These two vignettes--that of a brief history of early policing, and of the techniques pioneered by the Pinkertons--reveal a specific sort of entanglement where uncertainty is not yet widely acknowledged, and when it is, it is considered something in need of suppressing or eradicating in order to be subservient to reason. This is largely where Tietjens stands in the early part of *Some Do Not...*, where though we have already recognized the uncertainty inherent in Ford's depiction of the character, he is read by others and thinks of himself as functioning strictly according to reason.

Early in the novel, Tietjens and Macmaster discuss the distress Tietjens's marriage is causing him. He knows his wife left Britain with another man, and only this morning Tietjens received a letter from her stating that she wished to come back to him. Tietjens knows he will accept her back, but decides to consider the matter for three days

before going to continent to meet her. Over these three days, he and Macmaster are set to visit various golf courses, giving Macmaster a sort of holiday and Tietjens something to occupy his mind. Tietjens tells Macmaster, “certain discredit is always attached to cuckolds. Very properly. A man ought to be able to keep his wife...[a situation Tietjens recounts of a cuckolded neighbor] wasn’t rational or just. But that’s why society distrusts the cuckold, really. It never knows when it mayn’t be driven into something irrational and unjust” (11). Tietjens uses the language of justice and rationality, and in connecting the two, he reveals something about his code of morality. Yet he also implies that he, admitting of being cuckolded himself, must be distrusted by society, too, for he has the potential to drive it into “something irrational or unjust.” This connection seems clear enough to the reader, but Tietjens does not make it explicit. He remains in the hypothetical, never quite assigning irrationality to himself. At this point, though we know it is nevertheless aligned by the language of the text with his character, irrationality, and the uncertainty Tietjens places upon the figure of the cuckold, is kept implicit, almost covered over, allowing his rationality to remain at the fore.

But a few pages later, as the narrative returns to the train that Tietjens and Macmaster are taking to Rye, Macmaster observes Tietjens around the same time Tietjens likewise observed Macmaster on the second page of the novel, as discussed above: “But there sat Tietjens...Blond, high-coloured, vacant apparently, you couldn’t tell what in the world he was thinking of...for, absurd as it seemed, Macmaster knew that he knew next to nothing of his friend’s feelings” (15). To Macmaster, Tietjens is unreadable. His only discussion about his friend’s crumbling marriage, as we just explored, gave

Macmaster no real sense of Tietjens's inner emotions on the matter, and even now, sitting on the train later on the same day, Tietjens appears "vacant," as if he were void of observable phenomena. To Macmaster, he is unknowable, giving a sense of uncertainty, perhaps fulfilling the prophecy Tietjens gave in the earlier passage. If rationality is the logic of the knowable, Tietjens is here, for Macmaster, uncertain.

Further into the novel, Tietjens again faces a situation where he seems to fall into the characterization he implicitly applied to himself. General Champion says to Tietjens, "You're the sort of fellow to set a whole division by the ears... A regular Dreyfus!... the sort of fellow you couldn't believe in and yet couldn't prove anything against. The curse of the world...fellows like that *unsettle* society. You don't know where you are. You can't judge. They make you uncomfortable..." (75) Champion's remark seems to place Tietjens in the role of disrupter, as unstable, or unpredictable, almost the inverse of what one would expect from a man regarded as highly rational as Tietjens. Yet, as with Tietjens earlier, Champion only initially links Tietjens to the remark, but then follows its thread by commenting of the Dreyfus affair and the disruption it made for society. From that point on it is only through implication that Tietjens follows suit.

Yet Tietjens admits his lack of rationality to himself once he is in the presence of Valentine Wannop. He observes that "they erected themselves intangibly and irrefrangably....he must play stiff and cold, she warm and clinging.... yet she was obviously as cool a hand as himself; cooler no doubt, for at bottom he was certainly a sentimentalist" (129). The language of intangibility immediately gives the sense of an ethereal, immaterial, or non-empirical presence. Their connection, perhaps, was not

directly observable. From here Tietjens suggests that they each fill the gender role appropriate to their social calling, he “stiff and cold,” her “warm and clinging;” but he then observes that not only is she cool like him, but likely more so, for he suddenly regards himself a sentimentalist. Rather than calm, rational, steady, he recognizes that he is carried by passion, or at least has to likelihood to be, and, by all observation, could be carried away more easily than Valentine.

A few pages later, Valentine accuses Tietjens of sloppy argumentation. Referring to an earlier conversation about which she takes issue, Tietjens tries to outwit Valentine, and he becomes disoriented in his own logic:

he didn't know what had happened to him...It was as if for a moment destiny, which usually let him creep past somehow, had looked at him... His own voice, a caricature of his own voice, seemed to come to him: 'Gentlemen don't...' he exclaimed:

'Don't gentlemen?...' and then he stopped because he realised he had spoken aloud.

She said:

'Oh, *gentlemen* do!' she said, 'use fallacies to glide over tight places in arguments' (138)

Tietjens, caught off guard, stumbles through his thoughts, and speaks aloud without meaning to. Valentine picks up his words and completes them, making clear what is at issue: that Tietjens was caught in their earlier conversation in a fallacy, and tried to maneuver himself logically out of it--and Valentine noticed. This scene suggests that Tietjens was doubly disoriented in his thinking, then, but he does not admit to it. He does not seem to understand how or why this has happened.

Perhaps Sylvia's thoughts shortly after help explain Tietjens's loss. Ford narrates, "Occasionally Sylvia was worried to know why people--as they sometime did--told her that her husband had great gifts. To her he was merely unaccountable. His actions and opinions seemed simply the products of caprice--like her own" (153-154). Sylvia does not seem to acknowledge Tietjens's exceptional rationality at all. Rather, she reads him as acting on whim, "unaccountable," thinking and speaking without any particular reason, and as such largely unknowable. We can read Tietjens's loss with Valentine as his thinking in the moment, as unpredictable, such that it even surprises him.

Such characterizations--uncertain, irrational, unaccountable, sentimental--depict a Tietjens far removed from the hyper rational "Dr. Johnson type" that the novel describes more explicitly, and which critics tend to gravitate toward. Yet, as these examples show, through the first half of the novel such alternative perspectives of Tietjens are rarely acknowledged directly, and when they are, they often appear exceptional to that scene or moment. But in aggregate, these moments suggest that Tietjens has always been caught in the entanglement of reason and uncertainty, but that thus far reason is the logic most visible--both to himself and to others. His uncertainty only seems to appear indirectly, however much its corroboration with reason incites his sense of tension.

But in the second half of *Some Do Not...*, after Tietjens has returned from the war with amnesia and difficulty forming new memories, his uncertainty comes to the fore. When Sylvia says to Tietjens, "Do you mind telling me what actually happened to you?" he responds, "I don't know that I can very well... the point about it is that I *don't* know what happened and I don't remember what I did [when it happened]. There are three

weeks of my life dead” (168). With such war trauma, Tietjens recognizes for the first time is inability to *know*. He ironically turns to the encyclopedia to regain his base knowledge, even after previously criticizing it as full of error, but he struggles here, too. This appears to be a turning point in the novel, for Tietjens begins to function more explicitly along a logic of uncertainty - first reluctantly, but, as we shall later see, he eventually does so intentionally.

Such uncertainty becomes clear in the way Tietjens’s work is discussed. While earlier in the novel, Ford describes Tietjens work as precise and infallible, where he notices significant variables others do not, and correct the errors of others, now the domain of his work appears malleable, alterable, contingent. Across three passages, Tietjens discusses a project his department assigned him, which he was reluctant to pursue. Speaking to Sylvia, Tietjens proclaims that he will lose his job because of his lack of memory, even if the department produces a false reason. One such is possible reason, he argues, is that “I won’t fake statistics to dish the French with. They asked me to, the other day, as a holiday task” (171). Tietjens, at this point, refuses to alter statistics for the benefit of his superiors. While he seems to still believe in a certain code of conduct and integrity regarding his work, the narrative recasts the job as one not especially akin to reason and rationality, but to contingency and uncertainty. For though Tietjens refuses to fake the statistics, he acknowledges that such falsehood would not be outside the realm proper to the field. Much later in the narrative, Tietjens thinks to himself: “Now there was nothing straightforward, for him or for any man... One could keep one’s job--which was faking statistics against the other fellow--until you were sick

and tired of faking and your brain reeled. (236). Though it is only a signifier of his new vision of his world, Tietjens post-trauma outlook appears to understand the uncertainty now clearly visible in his experience of life through the lens of the fabricating of statistics. This further reinforces the motif that Tietjens's work was now understood as something lacking inherent precision or rationality, and is instead uncertain. Shortly after, Tietjens thinks about how easy it would be to do what the department asked: "they had wanted to rub into our allies that their losses by devastation had been nothing to write home about--so as to avoid sending reinforcements to their lines!" Tietjens thinks about how, from proving that "the bricks and the mortar of the devastated districts" did not amount to much more than a normal peace time year would require, "and the figures with a little manipulation would prove it!" By ignoring a number of other factors, you could say "you can perfectly well afford to reinforce the weak places of your own lines... and, though they might sooner or later point out the fallacy, you would by so much have put off the abhorrent expedient of a single command" (253). This passage shows how easily Tietjens could, if he chose, manipulate the figures to show what his superiors asked for. This again reinforces the uncertainty now visible in Tietjens work, and by extension, in his new understanding of life. Yet this passage also show how Tietjens is able to reason his way through the logic of fabrication, manipulating the data intentionally to produce such results. The, might we say, dominant position within the entanglement of reason and uncertainty has shifted: while earlier in the novel, reason seemed to be the visible expression of Tietjens and his outlook, overshadowing, but yet supported by, Tietjens

uncertainty, now the reason is put to work for the purposes of a logic of uncertainty. The entanglement remains, but it has evolved.

This shift in the nature of the entanglement mirrors the evolution of reason and uncertainty within the development of modern administrative governance, where previously uncertainty was a necessary evil to be at best eradicated, or at least managed, for the sake of rational ends, as the twentieth century pressed on, administrative governance reached its apex, and here uncertainty came to dictate the conscious and explicit practices, techniques, and overall outlook.

One way of approaching this history is to return to the management of populations, for, as discussed earlier, administrative techniques often appeared because of the need to understand the contingency of local populations and their fit within the larger national whole. Patricia Chu, in *Race, Nationalism and the State in British and American Modernism*, points out that as capital markets required greater pools of labor, migration across borders needed to expand and its restrictions relax. What this required, however, both in terms of tracking and facilitating the movement of these laborers, and in terms of providing for their general welfare, was an increased network of information gathering and analysis. And so while, on the one hand, this allowed for a greater sense of democratization and individualization, such freedom of movement also required a greater degree of surveillance and knowledge about each individual. And so not only did the increase in administration at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century allow for a greater understanding of populations as a whole, it also demanded a greater understanding of each person within them; what this suggests is a newly emerging kind

of national security – one with the knowledge of populations in large numbers, now combined with the contingent knowledge previously managed by local policing forces.

The institutions that managed such information grew in both number and size. As wartime models of efficiency and instrumental rationality flowed into peacetime, they were reestablished toward civil ends, and the vast administrative networks wartime required also remained. Yet the military institution was not the only source of the growth of administrative population management. Chu writes:

20th-century liberal Democratic Anglo-American government emerged as links developed between the nongovernmental 19th-century network of reform organizations with their strategies of "maximizing subjectivity" and apparatuses of the state meant to track and regulate "problematic" elements of the population (courts, performance institutions, schools, clinics). This unprecedented alliance generated a vast, heterogeneous and contesting network of philanthropic individuals and organizations, state agents and institutions, professionalized experts and politicians, all working to define and articulate socially desirable outcomes and the best way to produce them.

The network of administrative organizations that began to emerge during the turn of the century, and which exploded after the Great War, may have resembled in *practice* the orientation toward contingency, particularly in their localized outposts; yet they collectively, as Chu points out, worked toward the betterment of society and of the individuals within it.

The growing impulse to manage society was met around the same time with advances in genetics and evolutionary theory, prompting modernists to deploy the most up to date scientific methods toward social ends. Initially, as David Bradshaw points out in "Eugenics: "They Should Certainly be Killed," eugenics was built on the social reading

of Darwinism and the belief that, given current social conditions, humanity's future as a species looked bleak. He writes, "the writings of [Francis] Galton and other eugenicists attracted a great deal of interest, both within and beyond the scientific community, not only because of a pervasive feeling that 'the racial qualities of future generations' were worth striving for, but also because many believed that the 'racial qualities' of the current population were rapidly deteriorating." In England, this feeling was intensified in what was perceived as the embarrassing defeat and inefficiency of British forces in the Boer War of 1899 -1902. The public became concerned that this functioned as a sign of Britain's decline, and that perhaps Britain was no longer the pinnacle of human civilization. Bradshaw writes, "by the time the Eugenics Education Society came into being in 1907, the ideology of eugenics had already infiltrated more or less every aspect of intellectual and public life in Britain." He notes that while this Eugenics Education Society never held a large number of members, those among its ranks were considered both at the time and even today some of the most prominent intellectuals of the period. But within a few decades, popularity in the concept began to fade, and this was partly because of conditions already changing within British society itself. What Bradshaw shows is that the dramatic popularity of eugenics in the early 20th century did not wane merely because of concerns for its uses elsewhere, but also for the decline of its perceived need. As the very techniques of population measurement and analysis that eugenics pioneered allowed administrative governance to grow, the very classes that eugenics targeted already began to disappear – though not through selective breeding, but rather

through greater advances in promoting the general welfare, along the logic of reason, that the increasingly administrative government so eagerly sought.

The administrative model of governance thus reached its apex in the modernist period with the welfare reforms of the 1930s, first in the United States, and shortly thereafter in Britain. And in this form, perhaps “closer to perfection” than those iterations over the last half century, administrative governance also embodied the deepest degree of entangled logic yet. Michael Szalay writes in *New Deal Modernism: American Literature and the Invention of the Welfare State* that much of the discussion surrounding the creation of the welfare state was couched in the rhetoric of insurance. While insurance itself seems most akin to the logic of uncertainty, where its very existence marks a hedge against the probability of an event in the face of uncertainty, contemporaries thought of many of the New Deal programs as insurance covering what private insurance could not—in other words, filling the space of the unknown, and in doing so, constituting a totality, thereby removing all risk from contingency. Szalay writes, “stressing the fact that the private industry looked to offer ‘insurance for everything,’ as opposed to the government’s ‘insurance for all,’ [poet and insurance employee Wallace] Stevens argued that federal insurance, far from competing with private insurance, provided the precondition for the latter’s efforts to ‘perfect’ insurance coverage.” This perfected form of insurance, in the form of the welfare state, was believed to remove uncertainty, in a triumph on Enlightenment governance, and set the logic of reason free from its fetters. Now, it was believed, not only could the state provide for the general welfare of its population, and in doing so secure its own stability,

but it could do all of this through the absolute rationalization of administrative process and be certain of its success.

However, the development of the welfare state was not merely the culmination of a growing administrative governance as following a direct genealogy from the Enlightenment. Instead, Szalay implies that as the administrative model evolved, its evolution could not be simply about the refinement of efficiency; it had to also adapt to the changing conditions of an evolving modernity. And so while we might perhaps say that the growth of capital and the emergence of administrative governance first constituted a single stream of “progress,” they eventually split, and, running parallel, administration had to begin mitigating the uncertainty that capital presented.

While the logic of reason seemed to have reached its peak in the administrative governance of the welfare state, this mode was nevertheless inherently oriented toward the logic of uncertainty. Szalay writes:

Works Progress Administration Arts Projects proselytized tersely that Americans needed to consume art as surely as they needed Social Security itself... But at the same time, the Arts Projects did far more than simply enhance demand for works of art. The projects led to new ways of conceiving literary labor; in turn, a newly professionalized industry of salaried writers struggled to negotiate, in the work and in their newfound careers, the tension between liberal agency on the one hand, and collectivized and compensatory strategies of risk management on the other.

Bracketing for now Szalay’s very interesting remarks concerning literary labor, what we should focus on here is his indication that risk management had expanded from the domains of finance speculation and a stricter sense of securitization, and had come to

operate in the service of the population's general welfare—so much so that Szalay suggests it even found its way into culture.

The New Deal in America was thus perceived as public insurance for the good of the people – both their economic good, and for the general welfare of their humanity in an increasingly capitalist age. This reminds us of the promotion of the general welfare in earlier periods of security, when policing emerged in response to the issue of contingency as the sovereign began increasing its administrative powers. The difference is that here the general welfare was not understood as a culmination of humanist reason, but instead as the hedging of risk, albeit towards rational ends. Szalay writes:

at the core of this new language was the first rationalized and comprehensive decennial census in 1930, the subsequent founding of the Committee on Government Statistics and Information Services by the Department of Labor, the validation of random sampling techniques, and the invention of econometrics. These developments were at the heart of the Social Security Administration, which was formed in close consultation with all manner of statisticians... Each of [the original services of Social Security] required not simply raw statistical data, but actuarially organized calculations of probability.

With the development of the New Deal, and with it the emergence of the welfare state, the logics of reason and uncertainty became entangled in such a way that they were no longer working within the unconscious of a growing administrative system, but were now both on display. New Deal programs attempted to compensate for the uncertainty in modern life, implying they could now cover the total risk of life—that with the rationality of administrative governance, we had progressed that far - and yet in order to do so, they employed the techniques that acknowledge the inherent-ness of uncertainty. What we

find, then, is that for the welfare state, these logics – of reason and uncertainty – were nevertheless reciprocally dependent.

Though the writing of *Parade's End* predates the emergence of the welfare state, the trajectory Tietjens follows in his entanglement mirrors, or perhaps even foreshadows, that of administrative governance. For both, reason and uncertainty were always functioning hand in hand, but the logic of reason and rationality was originally the explicit, and visibly dominant, position. Yet also for both, uncertainty came to play a more central role in the entanglement, and ultimately was just as visible as reason, itself structuring much of the entanglement's nature.

Yet while the trajectory administrative governance followed yielded the logics of reason and uncertainty functioning side by side, it seems as though for Tietjens internal tension, uncertainty not only took a visible place beside reason, but came to take the more dominant role.

Fragmenting Time and Memory

For Christopher Tietjens, as for administrative governance at large, there appeared to be an opening to work through or from uncertainty, to manipulate information to one's advantage. Was this opening, for Tietjens, a space of potentiality? During their closing discussion of *Some Do Not...*, Tietjens tried to describe the differences between Valentine and himself. He says to Valentine, "Do you know these soap advertisement signs that read differently from several angles?...you and I are standing at different angles and though we both look at the same thing we read different messages...I hope we respect

each other” (234). Tietjens seems to now recognize the possibility of valid, coexisting alternate views or perceptions, that one’s understanding of the world need not be the only understanding. This marks a shift from his earlier outlook where in his mind, reason dictated the truth of life, and someone not adhering to what he found rational must be acting in error, or at least in a way unaccountable. But here, Tietjens attempts to explain to Valentine that their perspectives are not incompatible, but merely alternatives of one experience. Tietjens seems to admit to a certain kind of multiplicity, and we might then wonder if this signals for him the productive possibility or potential of alternate modes of being. The final pages of the novel suggest they do.

As Tietjens and Valentine meet for the last time before Tietjens returns to the war, their discussion turns speculative, almost considering what it would mean to inhabit an alternate reality [ellipses preserved from original text]:

“If we *could* wash out...”

He said, and for the first moment felt grand, tender, protective:

“Yes, you *can*,” he said. “You cut out from this afternoon, just before 4.58 it was when I said that to you and you contested... I heard the Horse Guards clock... To now... Cut it out; and join time up... It *can* be done... You know they do it surgically; for some illness; cut out a great length of the bowel and join the tube up... For colitis, I think...”

She said:

“But I *wouldn’t* cut it out... It was the first spoken sign.”

He said:

“No it wasn’t... From the very beginning... With every word...”

She exclaimed:

“You felt that too!... We’ve been pushed, as in a carpenter’s vice.... We couldn’t have got away...”

He said: “By God! That’s it...”

He suddenly saw a weeping willow in St. James’s Park; 4.59! He had just said: “Will you be my mistress to-night?” (285)

And shortly thereafter, Valentine responds:

“I won’t watch you out of sight.... It is unlucky to watch anyone out of sight.... But I will never... I will never cut what you said then out of my memory...” She was gone; the door shut. He had wondered what she would never cut out of her memory. That he had asked her that afternoon to be his mistress?” (288).

Tietjens and Valentine discuss the possibility of cutting a portion of their day out of memory where, presumably, Tietjens had asked her to be his mistress, though are never quite certain. They seem anxious about that episode, and Tietjens suggests erasing it from memory as though it had never happened, and then rejoining the remaining ends, to literally reconstruct the day’s timeline. Valentine wants to resist this, for perhaps this memory is something she does not want to lose, as Tietjens returns to the war. But perhaps, too, she does not seem to be able to inhabit the new mode of being Tietjens has come to accept, or even create, for himself. If Valentine is still in the old mode, she cannot see time as alterable, rewritable, as reconstructable. But Tietjens by this point in the novel clearly can. Perhaps because of the specific experiences he has faced, he now sees experience itself as something he can edit, something that he can remake, consciously. As we noted much earlier in our discussion, some critics see Ford as attempting to not only come to terms with the modernist experience, but to work through it, finding some sort of utopian mode of production. What Tietjens suggests is precisely what Ford enacts throughout *Some Do Not...* Reconstructing a traditional sense of time to instead loop, double back, and flash forward, Ford not only imagines, but produces modernist fragmentation for his own purposes. *Parade’s End*, then, cannot be solely

understood as the rendering of the age, but as the utopian project of harnessing the age for imaging a new mode of being. But is it successful?

This reading positions both Ford's use of narrative fragmentation and the text itself in a new way, showing that *Parade's End* is not so much about representing the experience of one mode of being as increasingly overwritten by a new mode of being; this would suggest the tension is temporary, only to resolve once the replacement process was complete. Instead, Ford's text reveals a Tietjens who never finds resolution, where the tension pervades the text across the narrative, suggesting that the modernist experience was not so much about replacement as about sustained entanglement, which, creating a sense of perpetual dissonance, better explains why modernism is not merely described as a transition period, but as an age defined at its core by such fragmentation. Though Ford is able to deploy such fragmentation, and in doing so enact the enplanement of modernism through Tietjens, Tietjens never seems to fully escape his tension, for he is left at the end of the novel back with the problem Monta describes earlier, though slightly adjusted. While Monta suggests that Tietjens is caught between his rational intellect and his need for relating to others, here Tietjens seems to have fully transcended his entanglement between reason and uncertainty, now able to exist wholly within uncertainty--but Valentine has not; instead, Tietjens is now caught between his new outlook (as opposed to his old) and his need for relating. For though Tietjens seems able to finally move beyond his internal entanglement, he still faces the problem of relationality; his transcendence would move him beyond Valentine, too. And so,

ultimately, at the end of the first novel Tietjens's utopian project, though with its merits, ultimately fails him.

3. The Problem of Perception: Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* and the New Physics

On the Form of Fragmentation

Critics often explore the form of modernism's fragmentation through the analysis of its representation of the discontinuity of the self, which is often articulated as the fracturing of modern subjectivity. We can think, of course, of Joyce's Stephen Dedalus cut by the divisions of religious and aesthetic loyalties; of Faulkner's Quentin Compson caught between the present and the legacy of the past; of Hemmingway's Jake Barnes immobilized by injury; and, certainly, of the indifference of Musil's Ulrich. Indeed, as this brief list suggests, many of the most identifiably fractured characters in literary modernism are found in its most experimental texts. For this reason, Virginia Woolf is often among the writers most discussed.

Woolf's experimentation with character and narrative often attempts to question the stability of the subject by deploying a certain fluidity of consciousness between her characters. The reader of her works has trouble recognizing the movement between the internal thoughts of characters, as their ideas and interior monologues bleed across one another. Critics generally place this experimentation along one of two threads: articulations of the fragmentation of the singular self, and articulations of the fragmentation of the self from others.

Critics approach the fragmentation of the singular, or unified, self as a sort of modernist corrective of a mythic concept. Nicole Tabor argues in *Gender, Genre, and the*

Myth of Human Singularity that the notion of the individuated enlightenment subject is heavily problematized throughout modernist literature. She shows that in their intention to question the stability of literary genres, modernist writers such as Joyce and Woolf engaged in formal experimentation that further troubled the fixity of gender, and finally of human singularity:

Bloom, Joyce's 'Irish Jew,' emerges from his odyssey complete because of this very lack of singularity—never selling his soul like Faustus or twisting with guilt like William Dodge. This Homeric journey represents what a rational age, not an 'Age of Reason,' should recognize as a multidimensional humanity, sans Homeric warriors. (136)

Tabor's use of the phrase "Age of Reason" signals the difference between the stable notion of the rational Cartesian man on the one hand, and on the other the rational observation made by the modernists that the self is in fact not a discrete entity, but one amidst a context-specific world. For this reason, Joyce's Bloom "emerges from his odyssey complete," not as a complete individual, but as a complete human, as one fully aware of his situatedness. The subject of the "Age of Reason" is instead a fractured subject, for it is constantly—though not knowingly—confronted with its incompleteness. In this way the bumbling Bloom is shown by Tabor to be more authentically complete, as opposed, perhaps, to the tormented Stephen, who, too engaged in the intellectual problems of the legacy of the enlightenment, follows a much more troubled path toward unity than Bloom.

M. Keith Booker makes a similar case for the modernist subject caught between the myth of selfhood and lived reality. In "Tradition, Authority, and Subjectivity:

Narrative Constitution of the Self in *The Waves*,” Booker writes, “individuals are themselves dominated by this myth of selfhood, and the inability to live up to this myth only exacerbates the already tenuous sense of self so often displayed by characters in Woolf’s work—and by people in the modern world” (35). The “tenuous sense of self” is precisely what modernist writers aimed to articulate, as a self that is constantly undermining its own stability and identity. Tabor and Booker both follow a line of criticism that shows literary modernism’s project as one of revealing, as it were, some sense of truth—however tenuous that notion itself may be for the modernists—that the unified individual is a notion historically constructed, and that the tension and anxiety so characterizing the modern experience is a result of the inability to live up to this mythic totality.

Yet critics also follow another thread of fragmentation which positions the self in relation to those around it. Such discussions often center on the inability to relate to others, sometimes despite the unstable borders demarcating the self from another. Ralph Strehle reads Woolf with Husserl to ask how one’s experience is different from another’s, and how this is a function of a shared experience of the passing of time. Husserl suggests that such experience can be divided into two notions of time and subjectivity: subjective internal time and objective external time. Strehle shows in “A Risky Business: Internal Time and Objective Time in Husserl and Woolf,” that Woolf follows a similar line of thought:

form of temporality—a single, linear, continuous time with a shared, objective existence that can be communicated—is not the only way of conceptualizing time,

or indeed of experiencing it. Even the most casual readings of Woolf or Husserl reveal another, more obvious common point of emphasis: a fascination with the very different experience of time that takes place subjectively or internally...The difference between subjective and objective time is the central theme of *Mrs Dalloway*... (83)

Strehle argues that both Husserl and Woolf are interested in thinking through the nature of experience from within the subject, and to show that this is a sense of experience that can therefore not be communicated in a shared way. For Husserl, internal, subjective time is experienced in the constant present, where the present is continuous with the past in that it is recognized as a modification of past experience. As the present continues, new impressions are then understood as modifications of those more recent impressions. The past therefore retains its identity and unity with the present through the trace it leaves on a given present instantiation. In that internal time is never understood through outward experience, then, it is not easily understood in terms of another person's experiences. Strehle shows that this incompatibility is the constant root of tension in Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, as when Mr and Mrs Ramsay's perceptions of each other are constantly at odds. He argues that this inability to empathize with each other is a direct result of their different experiences of temporality (86). Here, Woolf and Husserl point toward a radical sense of individuation; yet, Strehle shows, as any reader of *To the Lighthouse* would also recognize, the consciousness of the text ebbs and flows from character to character, where it is often hard to pin down whose consciousness one is reading.

This multiplicity presents a new form of consciousness that likewise signals new forms of narrative production. As Yaxiao Cui notes, in *Mrs Dalloway* narrative consciousness is not found in a single character, even within a given scene. Instead, it

shifts unexpectedly from one character to another, blending subjectivities in a disorienting way (176). In “Parentheticals and the Presentation of Multipersonal Consciousness: A Stylistic Analysis of *Mrs Dalloway*,” Cui shows that Woolf’s use of parentheticals breaks with typical convention and instead presents simultaneous conscious experiences. She writes:

...instead of a change in topic as is frequently seen in spoken discourse, Woolf uses parentheticals to enact a change in narrative viewpoint... Pragmatically, a parenthetical and its host make a collective contribution to the expression of the meaning of a sentence... the consciousness presented in a parenthetical works collaboratively with the consciousness presented in the host to depict a whole picture for a certain scene. The text no longer revolves around a single source of consciousness; simultaneity and multiplicity have become the new mode. (184)

Cui suggests that Woolf’s use of parentheticals presents a wider experience of the scene as a whole, for the reader is allowed to witness the thoughts of multiple characters at once.

Such multiplicity does not unify the scene, however, for the subjectivities in this case remain distinct. In *Mrs Dalloway* we find atomized subjectivities working in tension. While such a narrative form may not present the continuity expressed in the flow of consciousness found in *The Waves*, or even *To the Lighthouse*, where the concept of the stable subject is undermined by the individual consciousness’s participation in the communal multiplicity, here, Cui finds, “parentheticals break up not only the linear syntactic structure of a sentence, by adding a new source of consciousness in the ongoing discourse, this linguistic device also undermines a coherent narrative viewpoint” (184-185). Cui shows that the multiplicity of individuated, and therefore discontinuous,

subjectivities in *Mrs Dalloway* undermines the concept of traditional narrative structure. This form is much more akin to Husserl's distinction between internal and external time-consciousness. Here, the reader witnesses the internal experience of multiple characters simultaneously, as something one would not experience in reality, but in a way that disrupts the narrative form to reflect reality's instability—and this, Cui argues, characterizes Woolf's notion of consciousness and its effect on the relations between individuals (185).

The perspective taken by critics such as Strehle and Cui reads modernist writers such as Woolf depicting the self as discrete from other selves, which is interpreted as representing the dissolution of social unity. This sometimes takes the form of the mourning of past social bonds now eroded, and at others takes the form of representing a more authentic version of interpersonal relationality. But this critical perspective, either way, finds literary modernism expressing the problem of fragmentation through the inability of the individual to effectively communicate or relate to, or share in experience with, the other. The perspective of critics such as Tabor and Booker, on the other hand, sees literary modernism exploding the notion of the unified self, where the subject or individual is fractured and without stable identity—sometimes, again, read as a more authentic representation of experience, and sometimes read as the historically determined fragmentation of modern subjectivity. We should note that these two critical perspectives, exemplified above, are not necessarily at odds; rather, they each approach the fragmentation of the subject from a different angle, together providing a sense of modern experience projected both inward and outward.

Tracey Sherard appears to combine both perspectives, reading the modern subject as torn between inner tension and outer isolation. In “Voyage Through *The Waves*: Woolf’s Kaleidoscope of the ‘Unrepresentable,’” she shows how Woolf explores the malleability and “contingency” of the subject, and that such instability results from the subject’s interaction with others:

Her [Virginia Woolf’s] chain, circle, and bubble imagery in both novels [*The Waves* and *The Voyage Out*] is a kaleidoscope, engendering a shifting, contradictory, in-process effect that is her attempt to render not the *existence* of the self *per se*, but the contingency of its *location*, which contracts and expands in relation to shifting communal alliances. (125)

Sherard’s reading of Woolf suggests a form of individuation, but not of the Cartesian individual within a vacuum; rather, it is an individual placed within a roving context of similar individuals, who together mutually inform each other’s existence, in “shifting communal alliances,” or as multiplicities. To account for the individual subject one must also account for the other individuated subjects with whom it interacts. Woolf takes this concept of multiplicity to imagine a new form of self in *The Waves*, where, as Sherard notes:

The model of the split subject manifests itself in readings of *The Waves* that posit the six characters [around whom the narrative revolves] as ‘fragments’ of the same self... Such ‘location’ [of the self] may be ultimately un(re)representable, but might possibly be intimated through imagery that undermines language’s attempt to freeze the transitory nature of subjectivity. (126-127)

Reading the characters of *The Waves* as “fragments” of a unified self, Sherard notes, does not allow us to better fix a notion of the self, even when identified in some unified way as here, but it does reinforce the idea that even a totalizing self, perhaps as the unity Woolf’s characters form in *The Waves*, or as Leopold Bloom exhibits above, cannot be easily located without quickly slipping through our grasp of recognition or perception. And so even in combining the perspectives of the self to understand a larger picture of both inward and outward fragmentation, any characterization of the self—as well as, perhaps, any definition—continues to be elusive.

But what this understanding of the representation of the fragmentation of the self does is allow us to grasp what is at stake in the project of literary modernism. Writers such as Woolf attempted to capture the inner experience of such fragmentation, making its structure explicit—that is, consciously present, even if not wholly knowable—for the reader, and in doing so they cause the reader to confront the processes and forms of interior thought and exterior relationality. The complexity of such narrative techniques has been well analyzed, and while such critical work may not necessarily get us any closer to an understanding of the nature of consciousness and relationality, it has destabilized our comfortable notions of identity and unity. And so while these critical perspectives uncover the techniques of narrative that force us to grapple with the fragmentation of the self, they are also in a way participating in the project their sources had begun. What is at stake in such a critical project, then, is more than just an understanding of literature itself; a critical project that approaches the problem of fragmentation shapes the very articulation of the form of fragmentation in a cooperative

act with literary modernism. The term fragmentation, even when used by modernist writers themselves, functions in a different register than the representations of fragmentation such literature expresses. For it is a critical category that, as such, functions at the level of ideology. Perhaps we cannot escape the fact of needing to turn to such categories if we are to not wholly abandon the project of criticism, but we must, then, at least be aware of what we are saying. And so the question, what is the nature of modernist fragmentation itself, as a concept, becomes not merely a question about the form of the narrative expression of modernist experience; it is also, already, a question about how we understand, convey, and participate in the modernist project.

Though the critical perspectives above approach the fragmentation of the self at different registers, each perspective—that turning inward as well as that looking outward—sets up a binary opposing the continuous, singular, or unified self, against the discontinuous, multiple, or fractured self, where the dominant critical view is that the modernist experience, that is, the form of modernist fragmentation, is the latter. This impulse, to pose the one notion or set of concepts against the other, has almost become axiomatic for the field, so much so that the nature of modernist fragmentation has, indeed, become orthodoxy, assuming that the form of the modernist project is one of undoing a previous set of assumptions, where one side of the binary is actively overwriting the other.

And yet Virginia Woolf shows us that notions of discontinuity, multiplicity, and fracturing are not enough to understand the fragmentation of the self, or of the experience of the modernist moment. Rather, she has in mind something much more specific and

precise. Following her experimentation with the comingling of narrative form and narrated consciousness in *Mrs Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf pushes the limits of the discrete self in *The Waves*, but without undoing it.

Written through the voices of six friends across their lifetime, *The Waves* challenges the reader to track the rhythm of consciousness, experience, pleasure, and pain between characters as they interact with, critique, and reflect on each other, as they contemplate their own subject positions within the group, and as they mourn the sudden loss of a common friend. Woolf's narrative is comprised of successive vignettes from the characters' lives, separated by interludes following the path of the sun across the daytime sky. The interludes give a sense of movement within the otherwise fragmented and static moments of the characters' vignettes, and yet they also create space for the reader, allowing the characters' lives to pass unseen while attention is focused on the conceptual apparatus the interludes more explicitly portray. It is almost as if the interludes function as the common thread that allows the complexity of the narrative to be unraveled, revealing the inner problem the characters face. For though the voices of Woolf's characters often explicitly question their positions and emotions in relation to the others, and for themselves, the real conceptual work Woolf performs happens somewhere just beyond the reach of their spoken words and phrases.

Though the discontinuity of the narrative vignettes appears altogether more self-evident by the severing function of the interludes, one might, at least at this point, question the stability of the separated-ness within the narrative, for though the interludes clearly split the narrative into discrete portions, between which years of narrative time

passes, their imagery suggests a more complex motion. Initially, we do find the action of fragmenting. The novel opens with, “The sun had not yet risen. The sea was indistinguishable from the sky...Gradually as the sky whitened a dark line lay on the horizon dividing the sea from the sky” (7). Out of the visual amorphous nothingness there emerges a single line distinguishing two separable objects, but which each thus far remain within themselves empty. Yet as the sun continues to rise, the two objects further fragment within themselves:

Gradually the dark bar on the horizon became clear... Behind it, too, the sky cleared... as if the arm of a woman couched beneath the horizon had raised a lamp and flat bars of white, green and yellow, spread across the sky like the blades of a fan. Then she raised her lamp higher and the air seemed to become fibrous and to tear away from the green surface flickering and flaming in red and yellow fibres like the smoky fire that roars from a bonfire. (7)

The sun’s light divides the sky into segments of different color, which, “like the blades of a fan,” radiate outward from a central origin on the horizon, but which also stripe the sky across its entirety. Woolf describes the division between the sea and the sky, and the fragmentation within the sky, as successive movements of increasing divisibility. The imagery she employs, where a “line” of the horizon separates the objects in the first separable moment, and the “bars” and “blades of a fan” do so in the second, draws our attention to the clear distinction between segments, where objects and colors do not blend into one another at the borders, but form a clear line of demarcation. This movement of increasing discontinuity mimics an origin story of becoming, from undifferentiatedness to discrete individuation, but it also gives the reader the first indication of multiplicity.

Though Woolf describes the separation of objects, she does not focus our attention on increasingly smaller scales of being; rather, instead of drawing the reader's gaze from the amorphous darkness to the separated sky, and then to a particular blade of light, she maintains the scope of totality, breaking from one to two, and then to many. The reader thus perceives not only the individuation of an ever-increasing smaller portion, but also such individuation across the entire scale of the originary object. What we are left with is not attention on a particular blade of light, but on the multiplicity of blades spanning the morning sky.

The maintaining of multiple parts that were once perceived as a whole is perhaps made more explicit as the sun continues to individuate to smaller and smaller scales. Woolf continues in the opening prelude: "Gradually the fibres of the burning bonfire were fused into one haze, one incandescence which lifted the weight of the woolen grey sky on top of it and turned it to a million atoms of soft blue" (7). The emerging light of the sun spilling over the horizon pushes the "woolen grey sky" that preceded it upward until enough light emerges to break the sky apart into "a million atoms of soft blue," where what was once dull sky is now a multiplicity of brilliant colored objects. The imagery Woolf uses calls us to sense the movement from a flat to a dynamic scene, where the contrast created between the singularity of one color and the multiplicity of the next exudes a visual image of motion, that the sky is beginning to stir, to awaken, so to speak. From this imagery, too, then, the becoming of individuated objects appears to bring a certain sense of vitality. One might initially posit from this, then, that Woolf does appeal

to a sense of growing discontinuity, and that it is from such fragmentation that a sort of life force is made possible.

And yet the first part of this passage complicates such a thesis, for the “fibres of the burning bonfire” that signaled not only the light, but the actual sun’s cresting of the horizon, “fused into one haze.” As the sun itself first became visible, it appeared to be composed of separate “fibres” that we can imagine to be of somewhat undefined edge, but clearly multiple, flickering among each other. However, these “fused” into a whole as the newly formed mass replaced the grey sky with the soft blue that followed. Woolf depicts not only the dynamic multiplicity as re-coalescing—the reverse movement from above—but it is now this singular “haze” that brings about the multiplicity of atoms. The haze is not merely a point of origin, as perhaps the indistinguishable sky of the predawn might be considered, but rather it is a dynamic force itself “lifting the weight of the woolen grey sky.” What this movement shows is that the bringing together of the fibres into a single haze is not a reset, so to speak, of the primordial phase, out of which something discrete (where the implication is “with value”) can emerge; instead, the haze is just as full of energy and vitality as the multiplicity of atoms it creates. The structure Woolf describes, then, is not one of progress from the singular to the multiple, repeated, but rather the alternating, pendulum-like motion between individuation and unification, between multiplicity and singularity.

Such movement is carried throughout the novel. In the next interlude, as the sun rises higher, “sharp stripes of shadow lay on the grass, and the dew dancing on the tips of the flowers and leaves made the garden like a mosaic of single sparks not yet formed into

one whole” (29). As the blades of light come to touch the surface of the land, their discontinuous composition leaves “stripes of shadow” on the grass. As the sun rises further, its movement creates an alternating pattern of light and darkness that sweeps across the garden, touching the dew for only a discrete moment at a time, giving the impression of sparks firing at intervals throughout the scene. And yet the way Woolf describes such movement causes one to anticipate the coming together of the sun’s roving light, for the scene does not simply describe the sun’s effect on the dew, but its effect at its current range of angular motion, suggesting that a certain threshold will be passed where the light will at some point become “formed into one whole” —something that will, too, pass once the sun has reached the corresponding angle on the opposite side of the garden.

The birds in the garden also move along such a pendulum-like track. By the third interlude, “the birds that had sung erratically and spasmodically in the dawn on that tree, on that bush, now sang together in chorus, shrill and sharp; now together, as if conscious of companionship, now alone as if to the pale blue sky” (73); and again, in the following interlude, when the sun has fully risen, “their songs ran together in swift scales like the interlacings of a mountain stream whose waters, meeting, foam and then mix, and hasten quicker and quicker down the same channel brushing the same bread leaves. But there is a rock; they sever” (109). Alternating language of “erratically,” “chorus,” and “alone,” and “interlacings” and “sever,” mimics the unifying and individuating movement and effect of the sun and its light. Even at the largest scope of the interludes, the individuation of the sky itself alternates back into an amorphous landscape, where “now the sun had sunk.

The sky and sea were indistinguishable,” just as they were as the novel began, made possible only by the movement of the sun (236).

This analysis seems to suggest a paradigm different from the dominant critical view that modernist fragmentation is characterized by one side of a binary positioning discontinuity, multiplicity, and fracturing over and against continuity, singularity, and unity. Woolf’s language does not depict the overwriting of multiplicity over singularity, where multiplicity represents the new, modernist paradigm, replacing an outdated notion of singularity or unity; rather, Woolf’s language reveals the entanglement of multiplicity/singularity, where each is maintained by modernist form simultaneously, in this case expressed in a pendulum-like alternating motion. This discrepancy prompts us to question the dominant critical view. Why is there such an inconsistency between the criticism and what the text seems to so readily show?

This inconsistency is, I argue, a function of critical perspective: If one asks, what is the nature of the modernist experience of fragmentation, one focuses on the experience of characters and the narrative representation of that experience. But if one instead asks, what is the nature of modernist fragmentation itself, what is being asked is not a content-related, descriptive question as would be a question about representations of experience; it is a conceptual question: what is the nature of the concept of modernist fragmentation? This is a question that rather than exploring the form of the representation of experience, or the “form of the content,” instead explores the form of modernist fragmentation, or the “form of the form.” The dominant critical view reads modernist fragmentation as a binary because it addresses fragmented experience, as represented in literature, rather

than fragmentation as a form. Fragmented experience may indeed appear as a binary positioning multiplicity against singularity, for in a sense by focusing on the representation of experience, critics are taking modernists at their word, so to speak, where the representation of fragmented experience is derived from the conscious sensation of discontinuity, fracturing, and multiplicity. The dominant critical view, even that exploring the nature of the fragmented self, falls within an analysis of the form of the content, and therefore does not open up the form of the form, that is, the form of fragmentation itself, at all.

If, then, modernist fragmentation itself is our object of inquiry, rather than the content of its experience as represented in characters and narratives, the field of inquiry opens beyond that of representation, which allows for a more cross-disciplinary comparative approach to the question. To consider the form of modernist fragmentation, it may be useful to look beyond literature, to the larger period. Though we will nevertheless return to literature, as this larger question ultimately holds significance for how we understand fragmentation in literary modernism, Woolf is not alone in depicting the form of entanglement shown above; she is participating in a wider epistemic movement.

Physics and Form

To explore the question of fragmentation's form further, through an understanding of the entangled nature of concepts such as individuation/unification or singularity/multiplicity, we can look beyond Woolf, and turn to the larger field of inquiry

that modernism offered. The emerging scene of what has come to be known as the new physics—the shift in physics that began to question and overturn some of the most basic assumptions of Newtonian mechanics—grappled with many of the same concepts as Woolf. Questions about the relationship of objects both to each other and to their internal constituents, about the fluidity and discontinuity between objects, and about the place of the observer in experiencing such relationships were at the core of the field's exploration. And so it may be instructive to consider some of the major moments in the history of that field, and see what bearing they might have on our larger emerging sense of the form of modernist fragmentation.

The relevant history begins with a line of inquiry that leads to what became known as Brownian motion, the unexplained and seemingly random movement of particles. In 1804 John Dalton, a former professor of natural philosophy and mathematics at the New College in Manchester, England, and now teaching in his own Mathematical Academy, announced his second chemical law in as many years. It was already known from the law of definite proportions that the weight of the components of a chemical compound are in a fixed ratio. Dalton's law of multiple proportions expanded this notion to show that for two given elements that can combine into different compounds according to different ratios, such ratios would differ by whole numbers. This means that not only does a given compound form in the same way each time, but that different compounds that are formed from the same elements share a certain regular equivalence. From this law and the one he proposed the previous year, known as Dalton's law—which states that the total pressure of a compound is equal to the sum of

the pressure its separate elements would exert if alone in the same volume of space— Dalton concluded that the elements that constitute such compounds are discrete objects, a notion which was consistent with what was then a theory of atoms.

As discrete instances of substance, “atoms” had been a reoccurring notion for a few thousand years, and now Dalton had found evidence for their existence. If the elements that make up a compound combine their total pressure to form the pressure of the resulting compound, such elements must be made of individual, discrete substances; and if the formation of different compounds from the same element constituents merely means adjusting their ratios along whole intervals, such intervals must signal the ratios of individual units. For a given element, such units, or atoms, would therefore be identical in nature. Dalton’s laws began the serious consideration of atomic theory, and evidence for atoms as the basic constituents of matter began to accumulate through the nineteenth century; but it would be just over a century before their existence would be finally proven.

In 1827, the botanist Robert Brown observed that pollen grains move in a random, zig-zag motion when suspended in water, almost as if alive. He and others throughout the nineteenth century began to observe this phenomenon among various particulate matter suspended in both liquids and gases, and it became known as Brownian motion. By the 1860s, scientists speculated that this random motion was the result of rather large particles—though smaller than the pollen grains, as only the pollen was visible under the microscope—hitting the pollen, moving it into alternating directions. Yet the size such particles must reach seemed unlikely, and so toward the end of the century Louis-

Georges Gouy and William Ramsay independently suggested that Brownian motion would be better understood as the force exerted by multiple particles of appropriately small size, according to statistical terms, and not by individual large particles. Under normal conditions, the forces of such particles against a pollen grain would be roughly equal from all sides, indicating very little motion for the grain. Yet on occasion, statistically speaking, the number of particles pushing on one side would outweigh those of the other sides, and the pollen grain would be briefly pushed in one direction. However, Gouy and Ramsay did not follow up with their proposals. It was not until 1905 that Albert Einstein found that they were correct.

In 1905, and with a revised version in 1906, Einstein published “Investigations on the Theory of the Brownian Movement,” a project he initially began in order to study atomic theory and to determine the size of molecules, but which ultimately brought him to describe the phenomenon so titled. Rather than begin with measuring the pressure of gases, as those who tried to determine the size of molecules had done before him, Einstein instead worked with liquid solutions. Starting with an understanding of the second law of thermodynamics, that two different systems interacting will work to achieve equilibrium between them, he measured the rise in a solution of sugar water that was separated by a membrane from pure water. As the pure water filtered through the membrane by osmosis to dilute the sugar content of the other side, the sugar could not likewise pass through the membrane, as its particles were too big. The sugar water solution therefore rose, while the side of pure water dropped. By measuring the difference in rise, and calculating the pressure that would cause osmosis to eventually

stall, Einstein was able to calculate the size of the water molecules and determine, with later refinements, Avogadro's number—the number of molecules in a gram mole, or standardized unit, of any gas. Einstein's precise calculations largely convinced any remaining skeptics of the existence of atoms.

In the same article, Einstein went on to use his calculations of the sizes of molecules to predict their movements. He showed, as proposed by Gouy and Ramsay, that such motion would be calculated statistically. While a particle is bombarded with other particles from all sides, at any given moment there is the chance that it will be bombarded from more on one particular side. What Einstein showed, beyond what Gouy and Ramsay suggested, is that statistically, the likelihood of such unequal force is reset after each particle movement, and such likelihood is for any given direction. Thus, such movements, as Brown had earlier observed, appear random, but Einstein showed that they can be calculated. The precision of Einstein's calculations allowed him to predict the speed at which particles move and the rate at which they drift from a given starting position. In 1909, French physicist Jean Baptiste Perrin performed experiments verifying Einstein's statistical predictions, and verifying Einstein's calculation of Avogadro's number.

By linking the work of various investigations and the conclusions of otherwise unrelated questions, Einstein and later Perrin completed the interconnection of a physical system of knowledge, and it was with such equivalences, and through the agreement of such disparate conclusions from roughly the past century, that proved the existence of atoms. Einstein's paper on Brownian motion marked the first time statistical analysis

was heavily used for calculating material phenomena in physics. The interval beginning with Dalton and the serious scientific consideration of atomic theory, to Einstein's use of statistical calculation, marked the emergence and final constitution of what has come to be called the new physics, or as physics historian Roger G. Newton characterizes it, the shift from deterministic physics to probabilistic physics. No longer would physical phenomena be simply observable and predictable, as classical Newtonian mechanics suggested. With the recognition of atoms and particles too small to directly observe, and the related need to turn to statistics for calculating their probability of motion and position—and the implications this had for the impossibility of predicting the precise movement of any given, specific particle—the understanding of the physical world changed.

Demonstrating the existence and nature of atoms solidified for physics the notion of individuation. Atoms would now be recognized as discrete instances of a given substance, and that a given element was made up of their multiplicity. Yet this understanding also brought further complications to the new physics. Since the seventeenth century there had been an ongoing debate about the nature of light. Dutch scientist Christiaan Huygens proposed that light moved like a wave through an unseen substance called ether that makes up the air. This was an innovative proposal for the period, but it was soon overshadowed by Newton's corpuscular theory of light, which proposed that light was made up of tiny particles, later known as photons. It turned out that both scientists were right—that light quanta are discrete particles, but that they together behave as a wave. But it would be over two hundred years before this was

determined. In the meantime, British physicist Thomas Young confirmed in 1801 that light did indeed function as a wave, for it formed the same sort of interference patterns proper to wave forms. This discovery only further fueled the debate between atomic theory and wave theory throughout the nineteenth century, and it wasn't until Einstein published a different paper in 1905 ("On a Heuristic Viewpoint Concerning the Production and Transformation of Light") proving the discreet nature of light particles that it was found that light functioned as both, known as its dual nature.

With Einstein's discovery of light as discreet particles, combined with its already acknowledged functioning as a wave form, Victor de Broglie suggested that perhaps other particles, such as the newly confirmed atoms Einstein discussed in his paper on Brownian motion, also functioned as a wave. In 1927, Americans Clinton Joseph Davisson and Lester Germer, and Scottish George Thomson, independently confirmed this notion through experimentation: a beam of electrons would create the same sort of interference pattern that light did. The physics world now confirmed that atoms exist and function as both discrete units and wave forms.

The dual nature of waves forms and atoms, as the entanglement of singularity and multiplicity, thus became a foundation for the new physics of the early twentieth century. Yet we know from above that these concepts were not confined to the scientific world. Rather, they were a feature common to the epistemological outlook of the modernist period. This is not to say that such discoveries in physics were a result of a larger cultural perspective, and therefore merely historically contingent metaphors; but this does suggest that the entangled notions of singularity/multiplicity or unification/individuation

unfolded as concepts across the spectrum of modernist life, and as such certain affinities can be found in its different disciplinary and institutional domains, as when historians note the similarity between Einstein's theory of relativity in physics and Bergson's notions of continuity and duration in philosophy—to use a common example. Both the mechanics and our very experience of the world were under question, and it was becoming less clear how fixed and stable our previously assumed concepts really were. Yet as we see here, such previous concepts were not wholly cast aside or overwritten; instead, it just became clear that they were much more complicated than previously assumed.

Literature and Physics: Toward a Collective Exploration

Woolf's play with the concepts of singularity and multiplicity, and that of her contemporary writers, echoes the conceptual findings of the new physics. As almost seems appropriate, the atomistic nature of particles and of discreet subjectivity, and the wave-like patterns of continuity and interference, never seem to solidify into a stable unity, yet for temporary periods they do seem to work in communion. It is all too fitting that Virginia Woolf's most complex and experimental novel should be titled *The Waves*, as the singular washes to the fore, only to soon recede back into the multiple, and then wash forward once again. The entanglement of modernism is about the ebb and flow of the singular and the multiple, a continuous motion that at times seems to raise one form above the other, but only briefly. Susanna Rich, in "De Undarum Natura: Lucretius and Woolf in *The Waves*," writes, "for an anchoring metaphor she [Woolf] adopted...

waves—unfeeling, incessant, impersonal, controlled by the distant moon and its reflected light: instead of fluttering atoms, falling drops,” and yet continues, “the method of the steady drill of ‘said,’ of the separation of the characters, treats experience as comprised of discrete, indissoluble atoms” (254-255). Rich recognizes the wave-like form of Woolf’s narrative, but notes that the incessant pounding of the waves on the shore—something Woolf regularly draws the reader’s attention to, both in the interludes and in the narrative itself—mirrors the repetition of Woolf’s repeated mantra, “Bernard said,” “Susan said,” “Neville said,” and so on, without variation. The attention this repetition draws makes the reader hyper conscious of the break between characters, as their dialogue itself marks their separation. Perhaps Rich’s atomistic reading of *The Waves* places her argument within the dominant critical view, that modernist fragmentation functions along a binary, where the self is constantly fractured from, and never unified to, the other; yet her reading nevertheless shows the productivity of at least thinking through the interpretive lens of physics’s lexicon, even if at this point of our exploration one might challenge the form she articulates.

And yet the affinities shared by the new physics and modernist literature are not typically understood according to seemingly parallel notions of reality. Instead, the critical discourse likening literary modernism to its contemporary scientific development has done so by following the circulation of influence. On occasion, critics and historians will note what they have considered to be an aesthetic influence on physics. As Roger Newton writes, “Many physicists, Schrödinger and Einstein among them, were guided in their search for new insights by aesthetic considerations; beauty was an important

criterion for them” (236-237). Such scientists found the physical world a totality that needed unlocking, and their interest in new questions was often guided by a perceived beauty in completing and understanding a system in its simplest terms. Indeed, this was often the goal of physicists: to take the myriad of theories and formulas and condense them down to a few simple equations from which all of the known physical phenomena could be extracted. This quest for simple beauty sometimes led physicists to odd conclusions, and they were occasionally slow to abandon them. Yet Newton continues, “[physicist] Paul Dirac made no bones about being strongly influenced by aesthetics; as he wrote in capital letters on a blackboard during a lecture in Moscow in 1955, ‘Physical laws should have mathematical beauty.’ And the relativistic electron equation he found is universally acknowledged by physicists to be remarkably beautiful” (237). Dirac’s major contribution was to find an equivalence to the models that Schrödinger and Heisenberg separately proposed in explaining quantum mechanics. Finding such an equivalence validated these models, and further reinforced the larger picture of the quantum world, for Dirac showed that their independent methods yielded the same result. Dirac’s electron equation therefore connected and yet also simplified the previously disparate theories being considered in the field, showing that sometimes working in the name of aesthetics, or for the beauty of simplicity, led to exciting discoveries.

James Paxson suggests that physics has been influenced by aesthetics in a specifically literary way. In “Allegory and Science: From Euclid to the Search for Fundamental Structures in Modern Physics,” he shows that physics, and science in

general, functions along a secessionist flow, where one paradigm emerges from the previous one, and where one signals the presence of the other. He writes:

I shall put forward the radical idea that some of the most important advances in modern science, namely in physics, rely on tacitly allegorical structures. More precisely, the grand narrative containing the succession of scientific models that seek to describe the fundamental structures of matter and energy, of space and time, might just involve an allegory of some prior, even archaic, though holistic form. (249-250)

These new scientific models can be considered allegories of models from the past, where the “secessionist narrative of better models or pictures obviating and replacing prior ones instead might itself be obviated by an ‘allegorical’ system in which the newer model or picture faithfully though furtively incorporates or reproduces a far older scheme by actually instantiating an allegory of that older scheme” (251). Paxson argues that using an allegorical model, we might better understand the roots and networks of knowledge that form new paradigms, and also better understand the perspective that frames them. Yet allegory functions in an additional way for Paxson, too, where in recognizing contemporary scientific references to the past, we are able to place contemporary paradigms within a much broader philosophical, theological, or historical context—for the paradigms, past and present, also signal outside of the scientific genealogy, to the wider situation in which they were developed (250-251). In this way, Paxson’s turn to the concept of allegory implies the workings of literary characteristics within scientific thought, if not a direct influence from literature to physics.

Yet the direction of influence most critics acknowledge is the reverse. Critics have argued for decades that aesthetics are regularly influenced by their contemporary scientific models and discoveries, and this seems to have never been more true than for modernist writers and artists during the rise to prominence of the new physics.

In some cases, the influence of science on aesthetics appears to be mediated.

Gavin Parkinson, in *Surrealism, Art and Modern Science: Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Epistemology*, shows that solidarity with the emerging paradigm of science was the case for visual art, where Surrealism emerged precisely during the decade when relativity became popularized and quantum theory had some of its most important breakthroughs. Noting that the Surrealists found quantum theory through the work of Gaston Bachelard, he writes:

I want to show primarily how the 1930s alliance with Bachelard both sanctioned and refocused the direction taken by Surrealism, equipping it with a language emphasizing the *coupure* that lay between it and previous forms of (Enlightenment) knowledge... Bachelard...occupied a dual position: between the humanities and science in the thirties, and to the dawn of modern French thought. (8)

Parkinson argues that Bachelard brought the new physics to the surrealist movement and in doing so provided a new perspective from which to break with traditional modes of art and thought. The new physics helped imagine new axes of space and time, which is clearly depicted in the work of artists such as Dali, but it also signaled the related break with previous modes of representation that aesthetics was finding across various domains.

As with literature above, physics and art began to approach knowledge in corresponding ways.

Yet there were questions about the ethics of circulating influence, which was in part a function of whether such influence was mediated or direct. Even as early as the 1950s, when many of the writers and artists, as well as physicists, of modernism were still at work, F.R. Leavis and C.P. Snow had a now often cited debate over literature's adoption of science and scientific popularization. As Randi Koppen shows in "Modernism's Einstein: Wyndham Lewis and the Politics of Science Popularisation," Snow argued that modernist writers, in their excitement over the picture of the world the new physics painted, misunderstood the science itself, but more importantly also misunderstood the potential it had in its application. This, Snow argued, was largely because modernist writers were ignorant of how the science actually functioned. Leavis, on the other hand, was skeptical of the scientific role in progress. He saw modern science as what Koppen describes as the "standardization and leveling down of mass-civilization" (148). Leavis argued that modernist writers provided a healthy critique of the notion of progress and of the uncritical faith in science that was characterized by Snow.

Koppen also shows that Wyndham Lewis took a strong stand against the popularization of science during the modernist period. Concerned about the reception of Einstein's relativity, Lewis argued that modernist writers too readily adopted a too-fluid perspective of narrative, breaking down the subject-object distinction, and thereby translating the science of the day into a space without ethics. The philosophizing of

relativity by contemporaries like Bertrand Russell led to a primitivism that Lewis likened to the sensations of a child, and that such scientific popularization rendered the masses as children, ready to accept whatever groundless claim was given to them (144). For Lewis, then, this became an attack not only by science, but by commodity culture: “The problem is not simply that the artist as receptacle and mediator channels the force of popularization, but that art and literature in this way serve to naturalise an epistemic shift while covering over the conditions and consequences of its ascendancy” (146).

Yet as Koppen also discusses, drawing from Michael Whitworth’s work in *Einstein’s Wake*, the reason modernist writers and artists felt it so acceptable to turn to scientific models was specifically because it was filtered to them at a philosophical level, and not through its popularization. Theories such as relativity therefore felt as collaborations with the projects of the literary modernists in imagining new understandings of humanity and the world, breaking from the traditional modes of thought. As Kumiko Hoshi writes in “Modernism’s Fourth Dimension in *Aaron’s Rod: Einstein, Picasso, and Lawrence*,” “What these [Einstein’s] theories achieved was first and foremost a subversion of the traditional paradigm of the universe as explained by Newton’s idea of absolute space, and secondly the presentation of an alternative vision of the space-time continuum” (102). Einstein’s alternative vision made legitimate the flexibility of temporality, almost as if to give license to such experimentation in the arts. Hoshi shows that D.H. Lawrence, for example, took keen interest in the theory of relativity, and with it found “a theoretical framework to revitalize his own concept of

living relationships in the world” (103). Similarly, in “Virginia Woolf’s ‘The Mark on the Wall’: An Einsteinian View of Art,” Wayne Narey shows that:

In breaking with a literary past, Woolf gives particular emphasis to the relationship between time and perspective, where motion is always relative to the viewer, much as Einstein’s scientific theories focused on the concept of relativity. What Einstein achieved was a new cosmology; what Woolf aspired to was a new style of fiction. ‘The Mark on the Wall’ sees a practical example of her artistic vision, which can be viewed, as relativity implies, from several equally valid perspectives. (36)

Hoshi and Narey argue that Lawrence and Woolf, respectively, were among those who found inspiration in the theories of the new physics, and brought it to bear on their exploration of the relationships between individuals, between the subject and consciousness, and between subjectivity and the newly conceived spatio-temporal world. Their experimental work, and their playfulness with the flow of perspective and consciousness, reveals a sense of cooperation with the physics of their moment, a joint inquiry into a new understanding of modern existence.

So perhaps the pervasiveness of such correspondences suggests a circulation beyond mere influence, despite examples such as the surrealist’s turn to Bachelard. As Narey argues when discussing Woolf’s reception of relativity:

Her diaries and letters give no direct evidence of such an influence. But while Woolf’s ‘practical’ knowledge of Einstein’s theories remains unknown, ‘The Mark on the Wall’ gives evidence of a familiarity with the rudiments of Einsteinian physics... Whether Woolf has a cursory or fairly developed knowledge of Einstein’s work is moot; the point is she may have used an understanding because it coincided with her own approach to fiction as a nonlinear view of events, one in which time is relative to the observer. (35)

Narey suggests that Woolf seems to have had some sense of Einstein's theories, but he shows that this is not necessary to understand the correspondence between her work and relativity. It is beside the point if she read Einstein, or intentionally deployed his concepts of time and space. What is important is that her work shared certain affinities with his. If exploring influence deals in the circulation of content, it characterizes an exploration of the "content of the content." For an exploration like ours, attempting to understand the form of the form, that is, the form of modernist fragmentation, the formal affinities themselves are what matter. We will see, as with the reading of Einstein's paper on special relativity below, that modernist literature and the new physics are participating in a collective project that moves beyond the influence of a reductive articulation of a complex scientific notion, beyond the idea that "everything is relative." For specifically related to our exploration, it is not enough to simply say that Woolf and physics posit a common form of entanglement. We must continue to ask further, what is the specific nature of this affinity, of this form?

Observing Entanglement

Woolf's unfolding of the entanglement of singularity/multiplicity—which begins, as suggested above, to form a new understanding of modernist fragmentation—also includes a discussion of quality and position.

In addition to the earlier examples of this entanglement, where a given object within a multiplicity is either of differentiated quality when between only a few objects,

as when recognizing the sky from the sea, or of undifferentiated quality when amongst a large number of like objects, as with the million soft blue atoms, Woolf also allows the moment of vast multiplicity to reveal individual differentiation. She describes the movement of leaves as the wind blows in the later interludes: “now and again some level and masterly blast blew the multitudinous leaves up and down and then, as the wind flagged, each blade regained its identity” (182). Whether it is the leaves or the stripes of light that regain their identity—which is not clear—what is important to note is that the individuated blades also regain differentiation, that is, they temporarily, at the least, hold some sort of unique quality. This maintenance of quality while individuated, coupled with the ceding of quality when under unification, bears significance for understanding the relationality of the narrative’s characters, which will be considered below. But for now it is necessary to recognize that the movement between singularity and multiplicity is not merely about a structure, for the position within the structure impacts the perceived quality of the object. If the fragmentation of modernism was simply defined as discontinuity, it could imply a mere structural arrangement, where singular objects that succeed each other are not comparable synchronically and need carry no sense of differentiation; they can simply exist severed by time. But within the scope of discontinuity, Woolf articulates a multiplicity that does include the side-by-side existence of co-present individuated objects, which are therefore comparable, and which therefore more readily submit to being explored according to differentiation and quality.

To explore a multiplicity according to the quality of its individuated objects requires the recognition that a given object’s position within the structure of entangled

singularity/multiplicity has meaning. This becomes complicated for modernism, for an object's position is just as hard to define as one's own as observer, and often these positions are contingent on each other—think, for example, of the “observer effect” in physics where the act of observation affects what is observed: as one bounces photons (casts light) on a particle in order to observe it, the velocity and position of the particle, due to its size in relation to the size of the photons, is changed. Woolf makes this problem readily apparent in *To the Lighthouse* where as the reader tries to follow the movement of consciousness between the thoughts of Mr and Mrs Ramsey, the understanding of the scene changes depending upon where the reader identifies the indeterminate transition. Yet in *The Waves*, Woolf directly turns to the language of uncertainty, and in doing so not only represents the problem, but participates in it. In the third interlude, as the sun rises higher, the birds turn their heads toward one direction, where, “perhaps it was a snail shell... or perhaps they saw the splendor of the flowers” (74). “Perhaps” denotes possibility, but without certainty, where we find here two potential explanations for the birds' reaction. In the same interlude, Woolf writes that as the sun's light entered the window of the house near the garden, “Chairs and cupboards loomed behind so that though each was separate they seemed inextricably involved” (75). The chairs and cupboards were not involved, but “seemed” so, indicating both a sense of appearance, and appearance's correlative possibility without certainty. It is important to note in these passages that the uncertainty of the language used by Woolf here, perhaps in contrast to earlier passages, implies a more variable observer. One might suggest, then, that perhaps the stronger sense of an observer in and of itself marks the uncertainty of the

object's quality, where in previous passages events simply occurred, without uncertainty and without such hyper-conscious language.

Our discussion to this point, we should note, has become much more complicated than where it originated. For not only must we now recognize the specific way in which Woolf deploys the imagery of multiplicity, and the movement between unification and individuation it implies, but we must also come to terms with the related implications: that, at least in all appearance thus far, Woolf's notion of multiplicity allows for the exploration of quality within the individuated object; that such an exploration requires a sense of the object's position within the structure or movement of entangled singularity/multiplicity; and that the possibility of determining such a position can be uncertain. As one might assume—it having been our discussion's starting point—these problems fall under the rubric of the now increasingly complex concept of fragmentation.

Yet perhaps the most important implication of Woolf's depiction of an entangled fragmentation is the way in which it contains its own contradiction. As we saw above, Woolf proposes that perceived objects are not only discontinuous or individuated, but also unified. Such unification does not mean continuous, which would imply a connection between objects; rather, Woolf shows that in addition to their multiplicity, objects are also singular with others. How we view such objects, that is, whether we perceive an object as among a multiplicity or a singularity, depends on our perception of the object in the moment, as Woolf shows above. The concept of fragmentation, it therefore seems, is really a problem of perception.

However, for Woolf the problem of perception is tied to perception's uncertainty. Such uncertainty is not a formal concern, where the validity of a given perception is uncertain; Woolf's concern, instead, is phenomenological: that uncertainty is not found in the fact of perception, but in its position. Through Woolf, the modernist problem of perception becomes one not of trusting what we apprehend, but of understanding a given moment and quality of perception according to its relational context. We see this distinction clearly in Woolf's imagery of the sun. By the fifth interlude, the sun has risen to its apex, where it was "no longer half seen and guessed at...now the sun burnt uncompromising, undeniable" (148). Woolf's language shows a certainty rooted not in the object's confirmation but in its presence and recognizability. "Undeniable" and "no longer half seen," the sun is perceived distinctly, and its certainty bestows the like upon the spaces it reaches, giving "to everything its exact measure of color" (148). At the same time, out of the sun's reach, uncertainty prevails: "Behind the conglomeration [of cabinets and bookcases] hung a zone of shadow in which might be a further shape to be disencumbered of shadow or still denser depths of darkness" (150). Woolf plays on the language of light and darkness to show what is visible, recognizable, certain. Yet more interestingly here, as above, she turns to the language of possibility without certainty, where in the shadow a shape "might" be found. Certainty is shown as relative to the position of the sun, and perhaps even to the observer. But it is clear that certainty is now a factor in determining the quality of the object. In a later interlude, as the sun begins to set, where it reaches a lower angle relative to the house, "all for a moment wavered and bent in uncertainty and ambiguity" (183). As the curtains on the window flap in the

evening breeze, the slanting light differentiates what it touches, and then leaves “ambiguous” and “uncertain” what it recedes from. The ambiguous room, like the indistinguishable sky and sea, leaves the discrete components uncertain, both in number and quality. And so we return to the way in which the problem of perception ties together the position, quality, and certainty of what is perceived.

If the form of fragmentation is a function of the problem of perception, where the position of the perceived object in its context affects the nature of such perception, the quality of the object must be understood as the status of the fragmentation of a perceived object—whether it is perceived within its multiplicity or as a singularity. It is in the quality of the perceived object, then, that we find the possibility of meaning. For Woolf, meaning seems to only reside in the perception of the object, and that perception is inherently uncertain—as we noted above, the quality of a perception is contingent on the object’s position (and arguably on that of the observer—but the language of Woolf thus far addressed has not engaged the case of the observer quite yet). However, this logic is beginning to sound cyclical. Before addressing meaning as a function of fragmentation, as the content of the form, we need to continue to press the concept of fragmentation—and this, as we have found, is understood now as the problem of perception. To avoid our increasingly cyclical discussion, then, it may be useful to again turn to a discourse parallel to Woolf’s.

Locating Perception

In 1905, the same year that Einstein published his work on Brownian motion, he published a work of much more paradigm–shifting importance: “On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies.” This work is perhaps best known for its collapsing of space and time into a single continuum, where Einstein defines a complete spatial system as having the familiar coordinates of x , y , z , but now with an added t (43). In this continuum, moving through time and moving through space are connected in such a way that one’s speed through space affects one’s sensation of temporality as relative to the motion of any other object moving in space. Einstein describes, as an example, that because the earth’s equator spins faster than its poles—that is, because the distance one standing on the equator covers in a twenty four hour period is greater than the distance one standing at one of the poles covers—a clock at the equator appears to show time moving slightly slower than does a clock at the pole, when observing from the position of the pole. This is because though the clocks at each position are, as Einstein regularly reminds the reader, of the same type in all respects, the one at the equator moves slightly closer to the speed of light compared the clock at the pole, and so at the equator time seems to slow, however imperceptibly this would be at such a relatively close cosmic distance (49). While this notion maintains a concept of individuation, where two moving objects are discrete from each other, it too allows for a multiplicity of perspectives—and what Einstein’s special theory of relativity did most was change the notion of perception.

In articulating his theory, Einstein hoped for the “attainment of a simple and consistent theory of electrodynamics of moving bodies based on Maxwell’s theory for stationary bodies” (38). Beginning in 1855, James Clerk Maxwell developed a system of differential calculations that fully explained the nature and functions of electromagnetism, or the field of intertwined light and magnetic waves. Yet his system was grounded in the mathematical constant of an all pervading ether—a notion that, while common to the period because of its need for solving calculations, had never been confirmed by any experimental evidence. When in 1905 Einstein approached Maxwell’s theories of electromagnetism, he wrote, “It is known that Maxwell’s electrodynamics—as usually understood at the present time—when applied to moving bodies, leads to asymmetries which do not appear to be inherent in the phenomena” (37). Maxwell’s equations only worked for static bodies, and as helpful as his breakthrough was in its own right, no one had yet worked out the electromagnetic relations of objects in motion.

In that bodies-in-motion implies bodies-in-time, and that Maxwell’s descriptions of static bodies could therefore only be understood spatially, Einstein needed to develop a strict definition of simultaneity, for this would allow him to at first import the concept of time to Maxwell’s theory, yet not bring in the complications that two different accelerations would pose. Such complications would come later in the article. So first, Einstein suggested, “We have to take into account that all our judgments in which time plays a part are always *simultaneous events*. If, for instance, I say, ‘That train arrives here at 7 o’clock,’ I mean something like this: ‘the pointing of the small hand of my watch to 7 and the arrival of the train are simultaneous events’” (39). This definition of

simultaneity is a gesture to what Einstein means by the concept of time: that a given time, a simultaneous time, is simply when two things happen concurrently. But Einstein frames this definition of time according to our reading of clocks, as in the example above, so as to maintain the link between time and motion in space: “The ‘time’ of an event is that which is given simultaneously with the event by a stationary clock located at the place of the event, this clock being synchronous, and indeed synchronous for all time determinations, with a specific stationary clock” (40). Since an event’s time is what we read on the stationary clock that is simultaneous to the proximal location of the event, time is understood immediately as perceived, in this case, by observing the event and the numbers on the clock. Already, the concept of time is relational just by its definition.

But perception becomes a much more interesting concept when Einstein proceeds to discuss the nature of space in its intertwining with time. Just as the rate of the time on the clock at the equator appeared to change when perceived from the position of the clock at the pole, as an observer in motion approaches the speed of light other objects of a different speed begin to appear to morph in shape—their very quality appears to change. Imagine two Cartesian coordinate systems of axes x , y and z . In order to understand them relative to one another, they must be connected. If the speeds of the objects on each of them are the same, their events are considered simultaneous to one another, and as shown above, their clocks would remain synchronized. But if the speeds of the objects positioned on these two coordinate planes are different, as time continues the relationship lines become skewed, and the visual image of one object, from the perspective of the other, changes. Einstein does not therefore break down the Cartesian system of

coordinates with the concept of space-time, but instead shows how they will appear to morph depending on one's position relative to motion (43). He writes, "A rigid body which, measured in a state of rest, has the form of a sphere, therefore has in a state of motion—viewed from a stationary system—the form of an ellipsoid" (48). As the sphere accelerates beyond the observer at a faster and faster speed, its shape appears to change at a rate corresponding to the rate the observer might find the sphere's clock to slow. As noted above, this is the imagery found in surrealism, and it dramatically alters the common notion of an object's quality as fixed in space and time. Perception becomes the medium of measurement, where an object is only found to have a certain position in time or a certain form when observed relative to a particular observer; perceptions of shape and time are therefore not inherent to the object, but dependent on its situatedness—and perceived in multiple ways by multiple observers. Such an object is therefore individuated, yet also multiple if, from its own perspective, it accounts for the perception observers in other positions and speeds have of it.

Einstein's theory of special relativity therefore challenged the static sense of individuation proposed by and held since Newton. But the theory also changed notions of knowledge and what was knowable. In determining the speed of light, Einstein found this speed to be the constant by which all relative bodies in motion are related. And yet he also found that nothing could surpass the speed of light—that light functioned as a limit: "Thus, when v [velocity] = c [speed of light], W [motion of electron] becomes infinite, velocities greater than that of light have—as in our previous results—no possibility of existence" (63-64). This has a number of implications for a notion of

knowability. First, “it follows, further, that the velocity of light c cannot be altered by composition with a velocity less than that of light” (51). Since light always moves at a constant speed, it acts as the standard by which all other speeds are measured, but it does not interact with other objects in such a way that its own speed would change; objects therefore have no influence on their limit. Second, “it follows from these results that to an observer approaching a source of light with the velocity c , this source of light must appear of infinite intensity” (57). As one approaches the speed of light, one comes closer to traveling alongside light itself. This would mean that the light does not pass by as quickly, and so its intensity would grow— to infinity, if one reaches its speed. The limit, therefore, appears all encompassing, as a flattening of individuation, where all becomes unified. Einstein continues that as the velocity of an object approaches the speed of light, “all moving objects—viewed from the ‘stationary’ system—shrivel up into plain figures. For velocities greater than that of light our deliberations become meaningless” (48). The limit of an object’s velocity, reaching the infinite intensity of light, functions as the erasure of differentiation. Here, the speed of light acts as the limit of knowledge, something that if reached would have “no meaning.”

Yet as a limit, the speed of light does not act as an absolute, for a limit is approached but never actually reached, as Einstein shows. And so meaning may be recognized and perceived in greater or fewer degrees according to one’s perception as based on a relative position to the object observed. For this reason, when Einstein begins the third section of his article on the special theory of relativity, where he introduces the variable of motion, he begins to put the word stationary in quotation marks (43). The

concept itself has lost all meaning, as “stationary” is now only a relative term, and as such, contradictory to its definition. He notes that “Examples of this sort [as described in earlier sections]...suggest that the phenomena of electrodynamics as well as of mechanics possess no properties corresponding to the idea of absolute rest” (37). Rest, or the act of being stationary, can only now be understood as the starting point for measuring an object with a different speed. There is therefore no universal starting point; light acts as a standard for calculations, but it is not a position. This is correspondingly true for time, too:

So we see that we cannot attach any *absolute* signification to the concept of simultaneity, but that two events which, viewed from a system of co-ordinates, are simultaneous, can no longer be looked upon as simultaneous events when envisaged from a system which is in motion relative to the system. (43)

Simultaneity is, like rest or “stationary,” only a heuristic concept for beginning to understand relations. Its absolute nature vanishes. To account for the problem initially found in using Maxwell’s equations for bodies in motion, Einstein concludes, “the introduction of a ‘luminiferous ether’ will prove to be superfluous inasmuch as the view here to be developed will not require an ‘absolutely stationary space’ provided with special properties, nor assign a velocity-vector to a point of the empty space in which electrodynamic processes take place” (38). Solving the nagging problem of the seemingly ever-present ether, the substance that had not yet been observed, but which was mathematically required to balance the relationships between moving objects, was superseded by the constant speed of light. A stable substance was no longer needed.

Einstein simplified the paradigm of motion, and simply removed ether as a superfluous agent. With the special theory of relativity, an absolute was no longer necessary to understand the mechanisms of the physical world, as all measurement and observation was necessarily a function of perception.

Einstein describes the erasure of any absolute starting point; the absolute, he shows, is meaningless; meaning is purely relational. In this way, Einstein's work on special relativity begins to show the complexity of the inextricable link between perception and relationality. If we recognize that perception not only dictates our observation of an object's position, but is also a function of our own position as observer, we see that, as Einstein argued, no absolute reference is possible, much less needed. Instead, subject and object positions are always relational. This alone may be enough to explain the inherent uncertainty of perception.

And so we find that if in the form of fragmentation, as the entanglement of multiplicity/singularity, there is the problem of perception, such a form, as pure relationality, provides the potential space for actualizing meaning. This is perhaps a counterintuitive idea—that fragmentation does not inhibit meaning, but cultivates it. But cultivated how? For this, we must return to Woolf.

The Potential of Pure Relationality

The form of modernist fragmentation, functioning along pure relationality, would involve a negotiation between objects, where one perceives another, but where that perception also dialectically informs one's perception of the self. In *The Waves*, the

characters' concerns encompass both orientations where, focusing equally on their perceptions of the others as much as how the others perceive themselves, the two become tightly bound. Indeed, this is much of where Woolf takes her exploration: into the interwoven dynamic of the self and other, which always appears both separable and unified. The characters constantly weigh their perceptions in relation to the others, where their position in relation to another at any given moment impacts the quality of their perceptions and the certainty of their relatedness. Certain characters, such as Rhoda and Louis, always find themselves at the fringes of the group, overly sensitive to their differences, as with Louis, or feeling alone and unrelatable, as Rhoda. Yet others, like Susan, who simultaneously loves and hates, seem almost impossible to narrate without having another to work against. Jinny, for example, relates almost solely on touch, living through the physical contact that drives her understanding. Yet the entangled nature of individuation and unification, or singularity and multiplicity, is perhaps most deeply portrayed in Bernard, on whom the narrative both begins and ends.

While Neville is the more scholarly member of the group, Bernard is the most intellectual, and certainly introspective—yet he is also acutely aware of his position in relation to the others. He is constantly bound up in his “words and phrases” which occupy his sense of perception, despite the fact that they also seem to routinely fail him. Bernard never ceases trying to tie his perceptions together through words. He is always left on the verge of losing his sense of position, and only therefore too aware of the ever shifting pendulum-like motion that moves him between a sense of differentiated self and a sense of unity with the others. Throughout the narrative, he makes observations such

as, “When we sit together, close... we melt into each other with phrases. We are edged with mist. We make an unsubstantial territory” (16). Bernard’s early sense of self, in the first section of the narrative when he and the others are children, is one without borders. He sees himself as “melting” into his friends, forming a space “unsubstantial,” without specific quality, simply existing together. This is made possible by his use of phrases, the medium through which he chooses to relate. Yet the innocence of pure communion does not last. As he ages, he thinks, “it becomes clear that I am not one and simple, but complex and many” (76). His thoughts now turn to the intricacy of his relationality, where he recognizes the entangled nature of his self: “at the moment when I am most disparate, I am also integrated” (77). Bernard’s perception of himself as individuated and unified, simultaneously, constitutes his position in relation to the others throughout the rest of the narrative. As he reflects on his life at the end of the narrative, speaking to a stranger he meets at dinner, he says, “and yet, when I meet an unknown person, and try to break off, here at this table, what I call ‘my life,’ it is not one life that I look back upon; I am not one person; I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am—Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda, or Louis: or how to distinguish my life from theirs” (276). Bernard has come to perceive himself as indistinct from the others. His life, as the novel shows, has been so intricately intertwined with the lives of his friends that he cannot understand himself as discrete among them. His perception flows between them all, circulating, at times even perceiving what the narrative portrays as happening to another; when Susan loves and hates, Bernard loves and hates; when Jinny kisses Louis, Bernard feels it on his neck.

But we must note that Bernard's focus on language, on words and phrases, and on telling his story, is significant, for the narrative begins and ends with his voice. Critics have argued that *The Waves* is about challenging the notion of a stable identity, throwing into question the way in which we can define ourselves in some absolute manner. This is clear in the narrative, for Bernard and the others flow in and out of one another, layering perceptions through the narrative itself. But this is perhaps the clue to another way of understanding Woolf's text: As the narrative weaves in and out of the different characters, it is constantly bound by Bernard's voice, who is himself most interested in the possibility of language, of stories, of narrative. *The Waves* may indeed be about a groups of friends whose identity is fluid between them; but, as Tracey Sherard similarly suggests when she reads the "six characters as 'fragments' of the same self" (126), we cannot be certain it is not instead about a single character, most legibly known as Bernard, but also as Neville, Susan, Jinny, Rhoda, Louis, and perhaps even Percival. Where Bernard seems most "disparate," he is also "integrated." Yet this is the nature of perception, as we have found: The fluidity of the characters, and the fluidity of our own perceptions as readers, prevents us from locking down a stable notion of an object. Always in flux, it at times may appear continuous from one moment to another, but at others differentiated. Through Woolf's narrative, we apprehend the quality of each character, but we cannot know for certain that these are not the complex, unified qualities of one voice. Bernard may simply be reflecting on his experience, on his perception of himself within the world, and the multiplicity that such perception implies.

This becomes especially compelling when we consider what Bernard says about story-telling. For though he comes to know that his “words and phrases” are no longer adequate to order his perceptions in any meaningful way, he still feels the need to grasp onto the fiction. He says, “let us pretend we can make out a plain and logical story, so that when one matter is dispatched—love for instance—we go on, in an orderly manner, to the next” (251). Storytelling seems to be his way of ordering his life, of dealing with the entanglement he deeply experiences. Stories allow us to make our subject position known, as clearly perceived within a specific context. Bernard struggles with this, as do the others, and his appeal to language is his way of trying to find some unifying concept to cut across the disparate perceptions he holds and shares. In the last section, he seems to justify this impulse: “Should this be the end of the story? a kind of sigh? a last ripple of the wave?... let me touch the table—so—and thus recover my sense of the moment... but if there are no stories, what end can there be, or what beginning?” (267). Stories are what Bernard finds most tangible, for despite his attempt to position himself materially, he needs to know where he fits within a narrative. Physical contact in the moment may connect us to pure perception, but we have found that perception in the moment is fragmented. Bernard narrates to bring about continuity, to find some sense of stability.

And yet, this too appears to fail, for Bernard’s own sense of continuity, however fictitious, is disrupted. In the last section, he describes, “one day as I leant over a gate that led to a field, the rhythm stopped: the rhymes and the humming, the nonsense and the poetry. A space was cleared in my mind... I said life had been imperfect, an unfinished phrase... It had been too vast an undertaking” (283). Bernard’s ability to continue his

narrative ceases, for accounting for such a multiplicity has become too complex. He loses his words and phrases: “This self now as I leant over the gate... made no answer... he attempted no phrase... life has destroyed me. No echo comes when I speak, no varied words” (284). Language has finally failed Bernard without recourse. He describes the landscape vanishing, his sense of self breaking apart, and his utter disillusionment; he asks, “how can I proceed now, I said, without a self...without illusion?” (285). For even as illusion, Bernard needs language to make sense of his life.

Yet, now that Bernard has nothing, that he has lost everything, the scene changes in a way reminiscent of the opening prelude:

How then does light return to the world after the eclipse of the sun? Miraculously. Frailly. In thin stripes... the earth absorbs color like a sponge... so the landscape returned to me; so I saw fields rolling in waves of colour beneath me, but now with this difference; I saw but was not seen... Thin, as a ghost, leaving no trace where I trod, perceiving merely, I walked alone in a new world, never trodden; brushing new flowers, unable to speak save in a child’s words in one syllable; without shelter from phrases... But how to describe the world seen without a self? There are no words... how describe or say anything in articulate words again? (286-287)

Bernard experiences the entering of new light and the bringing forth of substantiality that such light entails. He experiences a sort of rebirth, viewing and perceiving the world without a “trace,” leaving no impact of his own, but solely taking it in. As a child, similar to the first section of the novel—or perhaps an actual return to it—when Bernard and the others were children using words as media of direct perception, simply stating what they saw, without reflection, Bernard now sees the world as it is. Yet this, too, fades as it “undergoes a gradual transformation, becomes, even in the course of one short

walk, habitual—this scene also. Blindness returns as one moves and one leaf repeats another” (286-287). Mirroring Woolf’s changes in diction and syntax as the narrative of the novel develops, Bernard sees language return to his new form of existence, and it grows in complexity, mirroring, also, the complexity of the relationality it attempts to capture. But there is a difference, now, for Bernard does not need language to position himself any longer. After his rebirth, he has nonetheless not recovered his sense of self; he instead exists in pure multiplicity, and as such no longer needs the illusion of an absolute that language previously gave him. He continues, “And now I ask, ‘Who am I?’ I have been talking of Bernard, Neville, Jinny, Susan, Rhoda and Louis. Am I all of them? Am I one and distinct? I do not know... We are divided... There is no division between me and them.... This difference we make so much of, this identity we so feverishly cherish, was overcome.” (288-289). As the larger frame of the narrative, Bernard’s story now appears as one moving beyond identity and stability. His story is recognized simply as perception, multiplicity, and pure relationality. The narrative tells the coming of that position, layered across these entanglements, but in such a way that no longer seems problematic. For the problem of perception is only when we assume it is, can, or should be fixed. But Woolf shows through Bernard that perception is, instead, about the layering of multiplicity and one’s motion across non-fixed relations—and, most importantly, about the production of new forms of narrative, both for Bernard and for Woolf.

If we are to explore fragmentation conceptually, to understand its formal characteristics, its entanglement—if we move beyond the binary of the dominant critical

view, beyond the notion that multiplicity is simply overwriting singularity—we find that the problem of perception that the form of fragmentation inherently carries provides an opportunity: For Bernard, it is an opportunity to redefine a sense of self, even if his utopian impulse appears too unsubstantial, where he is no longer able to engage with materiality. But was it a failure? That may be a question that follows a different line of inquiry. For us, the problem of perception, and the pure relationality it entails, provides the opportunity to recognize the potentiality of narrative. This, ultimately, is the utopian project of modernism: to not only reflect a fragmented experience of life, but also, through such fragmentation, propose new forms of relation and being.

Yet what does it mean to produce a narrative without any reference point? Is there a possibility of constructing meaning out of pure relationality, with no absolute to ground such meaning? This question seems to raise, or at least shift, the stakes of the modernist project.

Conclusion: Criticism and the Utopia of the Present

There is one quadrant of the form/content schema presented in the introduction that has yet to be explored, and it is perhaps the most speculative. “To speculate” suggests a looking, related to the Latin *spectare*, to see, but it suggests a looking beyond or over the horizon of what is knowable. Speculation is the contemplative plane of imagination and possibility. The remaining quadrant of the form/content schema is the “content of the form,” where form is said to precede content, and content arises out of form. At first, this suggests a temporal relationship. The speculative act here is the deployment of form that, from the moment of deployment, promises a content as yet unrevealed.

Let us consider what we have passed through: the position of the content of the content revealed that meaning or significance is found in the form of the multi-layering of content, where first order content, the originary expression, is empty, but produces a second order content that does hold significance for the material conditions from which the act of expression occurs. The form of the content, the second position, is the formula for the discontinuity of experience. It is from this position, it seems, that the problem of fragmentation labeled as such arises, where fragmentation becomes a signifier for such experience, and comes to form an ideological concept. In the third position, the form of the form, fragmentation as a concept, that is, the formal relations of fragmentation itself, are explored. And as seen in the last chapter, this exploration leads to the realization that

the form of fragmentation is pure relationality. It is from these conditions that the fourth position, the content of such form, would arise.

In the last chapter, Bernard is left in what is for him a utopian form, embodying a purely relational being that freely moves across and experiences the lives of his friends, fully ungrounded from any absolute of fixed position. Bernard's is the existence not of having been delinked from, but rather of having transcended a point of origin altogether. He is both one and many, fully fluid. One might say that this form is somewhat reminiscent of Darl's from the first chapter; yet while Bernard fully rejoices in this transcendent state, Darl does not appear to recognize it.

The problem for Bernard, however, is that his utopian existence is merely (though not to minimize such an achievement in itself) the participation in the full conditions of the possibility of utopian production, not the participation in the production itself. Characterizing the form of the form, Bernard's existence, as pure relationality, is purely formal. It is the form of relations that make a new content possible. We saw that he aligns such ungroundedness with the absence of an absolute origin. Another situation, however, is possible, for the grounding of content does not necessitate an origin or fixed position; grounding can instead simply signify the materiality of form. It can mean that purely formal relations have, or come to have, a material basis. But this material basis does not have to suggest that such materiality is an absolute position. If we temporally conceive of such material content as arising out of form, it takes the conditions or relations of such form – however fluid they may in fact be—as the template of the material content's character. This would certainly allow for a situation of material becoming. What it does

not require is an absolute origin or fixed position, as would be implied in a situation where content dictates form, which is what Bernard believes he has escaped or transcended. With Bernard's example, pure rationality is a step toward the potentiality of becoming utopian, unconfined by any sort of material conditions; instead, his purely formal existence escapes the sovereignty of materiality. Yet the fourth quadrant of the schema we have adopted here moves one step further. Not only is it not a situation in which material content constitutes the form of existence, it is not defined either as pure form without content. It is instead the situation in which purely relational form constitutes content. In this position, then, the content is not sovereign, but form is; the materiality of one's existence then is not itself constitutive, but instead constituted by the possibility of form.

If we are to follow the model of the chapters above, we would find that an example of the potential in this "content of the form" in speculative finance. Louis Bachelier is credited as both the first to use advanced mathematics in finance and, more specifically, as the first to mathematically model Brownian motion (as discussed in the last chapter), which he used to describe financial markets. Such advancements in financial theory appeared in his doctoral dissertation, *A Theory of Speculation*, published in 1900. Here, Bachelier argued that despite the inherent volatility of financial markets and the unpredictability of their actors, risk can be limited through certain statistical methods in order to balance investment portfolios. What Bachelier specifically introduced was the use of statistical modeling for layering financial instruments. He notes that though the probability of the price of a stock as moving up or down is hard to

determine, what became known as the *financial option* allows for the trading of instruments that are based on the difference between the current price and its anticipated future, and not on price itself—that is, options are instruments based on the formal relation between current and future prices rather than the content of the price. When paired with stocks, options substantially lowered the risk of investment, and yet as the representation of risk they could also nonetheless be traded alone. They therefore functioned as something beyond insurance – they created an entirely new market, abstracted from their origin of value: pure formal relations come to have a fluidity in themselves, wholly removed from any absolute position of price (think Bernard at this point). And yet, thinking one step further, these pure relations come to produce a new content, that is, they come to have value, which is translated as their trade price, since they are themselves traded as financial instruments. This example may not be inherently utopian, but it articulates the way in which pure form, having arisen out of a particular content, but having also become wholly abstracted from that content, reaches over the horizon (as perceived from the original content) to produce a new content, as if out of nothingness, seemingly fully emancipated from the original content. But we must keep in mind that options do not replace stock prices. Instead, they often exist side by side in financial markets, particularly when bundled as Bachelier suggests, to hedge against the risk of drop in stock prices; I call this a kind of layering of the financial markets.

In literature, this paradigm is perhaps most evident in a novel like Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* and the way it works through its narrative. As a mythology imposed over a dream landscape, Joyce pushes the use of language and explores the potential in

tracing narrative patterns, throwing into question the possibility of knowledge being grounded from an absolute or originary position. The plot not only layers over itself, but allusions and even characters follow a layered trajectory. Meaning is found in navigating the relations between these layers, whereas any attempt to find meaning in the content of the novel itself seems almost impossible. Such meaning, then, is produced out of the pure form of the text; it is a content which arises out of the conditions of pure relationality. As with finance, the relationality in Joyce's text allows for greater degrees of speculation, which in turn allows for the production of a far greater multiplicity of interpretations and paths of reading: new content.

Jameson states that this quadrant "constitutes the only productive coordination of the opposition between form and content that does not seek to reduce one term to the other... there is thus a way in which the notion of the content of the form stands as a philosophical and dialectical solution to the initial binary dilemma" (xvii). The position of the content of the form is the site of production--a production that, perhaps solving the "initial binary dilemma," moves beyond the binary, produces something that exceeds the initial form and content in tension. This production of excess is the crossing of the horizon, the production of a content now liberated from its origins, a content without a fixed defining position.

Jameson notes that this position "does not reduce one term to the other," for each term persists. Because the form constitutes the nature of the content, as the form meanders, so does its content. The two are linked, working in tandem, seemingly no longer in tension. Jameson describes this as dialectical, but I would note that in this

paradigm not only do the terms not reduce the other, but they are not superseded by a third term; here, the content at hand is the fulfilled promise of the paradigm, and it coexists with its constitutive form. There is no need for supersession, and no synthesis arises. For this reason, I would characterize this position instead as entanglement: a state of indefinitely intertwined terms, neither of which collapses into the other but where each remains distinct, where together they are inherently connected in perpetual simultaneity.

Remember that in the examples of finance and literature above, the content of the form is characterized by a feature of layering, where the content is not produced by a temporal process, but is revealed by the already present multiplicity of formal relations. Here, then, we might be able to abandon the need to assign temporality to the quadrant in order to distinguish it from others; it may not be necessary to conceive of this content as coming out of something if instead we think of it as already there, as perceived upon liberating one's self from the oppression of an absolute content by inhabiting such content's pure formal relations--and only from this point perceiving and inhabiting the other possible contents existing under such formal relations. This is the "process" of crossing the horizon, yet it is a process only in a heuristic sense. The perpetual simultaneity of terms within the entanglement means it is an entanglement of the perpetual present, without or beyond the passing of time. The conditions of its possibility are already here; in this sense, the "production" of content takes on an atemporal connotation. So when we think of entanglement as having a utopian quality, as it does in the preceding chapters, and combine this with the collapsing of temporality suggested here, we find that with entanglement comes the possibility of what might be called a

“utopia of the present,” where utopia is found not in the promise of future content but in the revealing of the already-present alternative content made possible by the given formal relations.

In this sense, “horizon” is indeed a fitting term. While in some recent theories of utopia the horizon is a figurative concept denoting an alternative futurity, here horizon does not require time. A temporal horizon is one necessarily not yet at hand, where, even if reached according to various fluid notions of internal or external time, time itself must still elapse. One’s experience of crossing such a horizon, the experience of becoming, is mediated by time. Becoming is here distinct from being, not entangled with it.

Alternatively, in the notion of horizon proper to the forms of entanglement described in this dissertation, becoming utopian takes on a character not determined by temporality. While time may be an aspect of such becoming, it is not its defining feature; the horizon is not a threshold in the future.

Any yet, perhaps, the becoming of the forms of entanglement articulated here is not strictly geographical or spatial, either, where being would take precedence over becoming. It does not require the relocation of the self, and the language of “shifting” one’s perspective to view the alternative content made possible by the formal relations at hand is then only figurative. Bernard’s transformation to pure relationality—the space from which one could discover and potentially inhabit the alternative content such relations make possible—did not require movement. It happened for Bernard experientially. Time and space became secondary to, and therefore cease to mediate, sensation and perception.

Experience, sensation, and perception would here indicate an entanglement of being and becoming, where the two function together, simultaneously, co-productively, as one (and here we ourselves begin to see the emptiness of language, for all concepts seem immediately inadequate to articulate what is being said—yet, perhaps, one still has a sense of it). The transformation, or crossing of the horizon, occurs when an already present content is recognized; this content is made possible by the formal relations at hand, and is only said to be “potential” when articulated from the site of the original content (that oppressive content from which form is articulated). I suggest that the “possible” content of a given form always already exists; it only “comes into being” for us when we come to sense or experience it. This is what is meant by becoming: the coming to sense, experience, or perceive the always-already content that is to this point veiled by the already perceived content. Bernard’s transformation was the liberation from his already-perceived content; though, as we have noted, his transformation was only liberation, without new production. Here, then, again, production is only such from the perspective of the one liberated; in an ontological sense, what we call production is actually an unveiling.

In some ways, then, the character of liberation described here follows the utopian strain of Marxism. The conditions of utopia are already here; the path to overcome the dominance or oppression of the current moment already exists in the form of such oppression itself. The first act of liberation is the unveiling of oppression’s formal relations. Yet, differently from utopian Marxism, the theory articulated here suggests that once the formal relations are unveiled, it is not necessarily the case that a new formal

relation must be produced; this discussion instead posits that from that same set of formal relations a new content is perceived, a new possible existence within the same form.

Yet this very articulation between the utopian strain of Marxism and what is discussed here shows that instead of there being a competing set of claims between the two, the notions of form and content each focuses upon must be different. For the discussion here does not suggest that, for example, the relations of production under capital can be maintained while one assumes an alternative existence within an alternative content made possible by such conditions; it is not even clear what that would mean or look like. I cannot say here what, then, the notion of “form” is in as much as it is not the same as the “form” articulated in discussions of Marxism and “relations of production” or social relations; this requires some further thought. But we can, at least, then, acknowledge that we should not mistakenly elide the two discussions as though they are speaking of the same types of transformation or liberation. We can think of this as a caveat to this discussion; something at a different register is being articulated or theorized here.

What is being suggested here, then, might best be summarized as follows: from the position of existing within a content already at hand, liberation begins when one comes to recognize the formal relations of such content, and is achieved when one fully leaves such content behind, fully inhabiting form itself. This is Bernard’s state. Yet from this position, one is able to then see alternative content within this form, and can come to take on such content—that is, once liberated from the oppression of the original content, alternative meaningful or significant existence is unveiled which one can take on,

regrounding oneself in a new materiality. What makes this new content emancipatory is its becoming: one comes to inhabit it freely, through recognition, as if “chosen” from the position of pure form; the original content, by contrast, is ideological, oppressive, veiling its form and such form’s potentiality, as perceived of as always already, as the truth of being.

The preceding chapters have also gestured toward something that can now be articulated more directly: entanglement, working across the multiple registers explored throughout the dissertation’s discussion, collapses the distance between the critic and the critical object. In *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner’s narrative places the reader in the position of Darl, confronting the entanglement of language and materiality, and able to experience the distinct perspectives of various members of the Bundren family. In *Parade’s End*, Ford enacts fragmentation through the disruption of rational temporality, such that the reader experiences the entanglement of reason and uncertainty with Tietjens. In *The Waves* Woolf draws the reader in to question Bernard’s individuation from the other characters via the entanglement of singularity and multiplicity within the novel’s narrative form, just in the way Bernard himself articulates his experience. It is not in the scope of this current project to say whether the entanglement of the critic with the text occurs in the study of other literatures or domains of analysis, but modernism, at least, appears to implicate the critic in its formal fragmentation, where such fragmentation is not merely represented, but engaged, where the reader participates in a shared experience with the text’s characters, sometimes its authors, and with other readers. Criticism becomes a cooperative experience. The text’s fragmentation becomes our fragmentation,

as we become entangled in its project. If this is the case, not only is the modernist project our project, but modernism's utopian potential is also ours; it is a common participation in the utopia of the present.

Modernist form, as fragmentation, as entanglement, is therefore utopian not only in the potentiality it makes possible in the content of its narrative (which is what this conclusion has focused on thus far), that is, as a model for utopian becoming; it is also utopian in its form, that is, in the relation it constitutes between the text and the reader. It appears to transcend space and time and become entangled with the reader's own experience, such that the experience depicted in the novel and the experience of the novel are one. This characteristic heightens the stakes, but also the potential, of modernist criticism. Such critical practice cannot be understood merely as an academic exercise, for its ethical consequences reach deeper than aesthetic critique; they touch not only the understanding of human relations between one and another and to our surroundings, but touch also the constitutive processes of such relations.

If modernism is both the production and critique of modernity, both it and its criticism are collaborative in a singular act of producing and critiquing our modernity, too. The entanglement between modernism and modernist critique renders both moments simultaneous, as a constant present: Ford's writing, Faulkner's writing, Woolf's writing, are writing happening now, in a way that we must understand as having more than mere significance for our time; their production and our criticism must be understood as a constant becoming, a perpetual present, a simultaneous utopian gesture.

Because it can inherently be a criticism oriented toward formal relations, toward fragmentation and entanglement, toward utopia, modernist criticism is always an act both political and ontological: it always explores, unpacks, and constitutes our relations of being. Such criticism does not have to be political in its conscious discussion; but one should always be conscious of, and rejoice in, its inherent political implications. And so why not unveil such implications when possible—especially when explorations of this kind bring us closer to crossing the horizon.

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