

Dreiser Studies

ISSN 0896-6362

Volume 32, Number 2

Fall 2001

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Announcing

The Third Annual Dreiser Essay Prize

The International Theodore Dreiser Society is pleased to announce the Third Annual Dreiser Essay Prize. The award is sponsored by the Dreiser Society and is given annually to the graduate student or untenured faculty member who submits the best previously unpublished essay on any aspect of the work of the American writer Theodore Dreiser.

Applicants may submit essays that consider any part of Dreiser's corpus or that connect his life or work to those of other writers or to his times. In addition to a cash award of \$250, the winning essay will appear in *Dreiser Studies*, a refereed journal sponsored by the Society. Other worthy essays besides the winner will be considered for publication as well.

Essays should follow MLA style. Applicants should not identify themselves on the essay but should instead provide their names, addresses (including email address), and "Dreiser Essay Prize Competition" on a separate cover page. Submit *three* copies of the essay by August 1, 2002, to

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Life on the Margins: The Silent Feminist in Theodore Dreiser's "Marriage—For One"

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In *The Small Canvas*, Joseph Griffin concludes that Theodore Dreiser's "Marriage—for One" "seems more a veiled promulgation of ideas than a successful piece of fiction" and suffers from an "absence of setting and metaphor" (87-88). But this "slight story" is more successful as fiction than Griffin recognizes, especially in its narrative technique. When "Marriage—for One" first appeared in the Philadelphia *Evening Public Ledger* on 14 October 1922, it marked Dreiser's return to the "narrative voice" he initially made use of in the 1909 story "The Cruise of the 'Idlewild' " (Griffin 87). In both stories, a first-person narrator enters into a collaboration with another man and, with his seemingly superior intellect, influences events to the detriment of a third character who remains for the most part on the story's periphery.

Of the two stories, "The Cruise of the 'Idlewild' " is more deserving of the adjective "slight." Based upon Dreiser's experiences as an amateur laborer following his breakdown of 1902-03, the story is narrated by an intellectual named Henry who, in order to restore his health, has taken a job sweeping shavings in a railroad carpentry shop. Out of boredom and inspired by the luxury yachts that cruise the nearby Hudson River, he convinces the shop's engineer and other workers to imagine their shop as a yacht, which he names "Idlewild." He assumes the apparently subordinate position of mate to the engi-

neer's captain, but his whims actually drive the action. Whatever serious interest the story possesses is centered on his collaboration with the captain in playing cruel tricks on the lowly menial serving as bos'n's mate, a sweet-tempered but physically deformed boy named Ike. When continuous humiliation drives Ike to quit his job, the older men are so moved by guilt that they cajole him into signing on for another cruise. However, the theme—that power corrupts the ruling class—is subordinated to the fanciful situation, and the pain caused by the abuse of power is easily resolved in a spirit of male bonhomie.

In "Marriage—for One" the unnamed narrator is less directly involved in the action than Henry is in "The Cruise of the 'Idlewild,'" but the advice he offers his male friend at crucial moments in the story makes him complicit in the suffering of another. Power relations are at the center of interest, and the focus is on gender rather than social class. There is no easy solution to the problems arising from men's abuse of their power. They remain blind to their own culpability, and their victim is no longer a pathetic boy whose happiness depends upon the patronizing charity of his superiors but a New Woman who finally refuses to be lured back into her subordinate role.

At issue is whether readers should side with Wray, the abandoned devoted husband, or Bessie, the deserting adulterous wife. The story consists largely of the narrator's observations of Bessie and Wray and his reports of what Wray has told him, so Bessie has little opportunity to speak for herself. However, the narrator's comments often reflect Dreiser's own liberal ideas on sexuality, which consistently undermine Wray's more traditional philosophies, creating a difference in perspective that shapes the reader's attitude in favor of Bessie. According to Wray, Bessie is cold and unreasonable. But his name, suggesting a ray of light, is ironic, and he remains in the dark when it comes to seeing his wife's true nature. In contrast, the narrator sees and empathizes with Bessie's need to escape the doomed marriage. Nevertheless, he too is finally unable to transcend the patriarchal ideology of his day and contributes to Bessie's troubles. Through this complex male perspective, the reader infers the reality of Bessie's situation. She is caught in a world dominated by males who manipulate her and, without regard for her needs and desires, make decisions that will change her life forever. However, Bessie finally refuses to mold herself to fit a man's ideals, demonstrating that women can, and should, rebel against

domestic patriarchy.

Shelley Fisher Fishkin has suggested that "Dreiser both challenged and reinscribed the discourse of gender of his day in his art and in his life" (2). Miriam Gogol has accurately observed that although feminist critics are often "repulsed by some of his own relationships with women," we still recognize that Dreiser "was one of the few American authors—male or female—who in creating characters defied many of the culture's stereotypes" (viii). In "Marriage—for One," Dreiser both confronts and reinscribes an oppressive "discourse of gender," and he creates a character who "defies" cultural stereotypes. The distinctly male perspective necessarily relegates the newly liberated woman to the silent margins of the narrative. Yet Bessie's marginalization does not simply reinscribe the current gender ideology; it is the very point of the story: she cannot be contained within the narrative structures that men would impose on her.

Creating a Liberated Woman

"Marriage—for One" is the story of Wray, a "clerkly" (293) but ambitious man climbing the ladder of success when he meets Bessie, a conservative young woman he believes would make a suitable wife. Wray, a man firm in his beliefs, possesses traditional American values: "If a man did as he should do, if he were industrious and honest and saving and courteous and a few more of those many things we all know we ought to be, then in that orderly nature of things which he assumed to hold one must get along better than some others" (287). This idea of success based upon good works is also reflected in Wray's views of romance and marriage. Wray believes that a carefully cultivated relationship will result in a happy marriage; thus, he searches for a wife who possesses very specific characteristics. Wray wants a woman with "sense as well as charm, one who came of good stock and hence would be possessed of good taste and good principles" (287-88).¹ In addition, as a man with high aspirations, Wray yearns for a woman who can "help a serious man to succeed" (288) and imagines that his ideal woman will submit herself to his desires and be a charming helpmate—a True Woman. However, Wray's desires are complicated by the fact that he also wants a woman with a mind of her own. His ideal woman will be both a helpmate and an "intelligent and prac-

tical and *liberal* girl, if he could find her, one who [is] his mental *equal*" (288, emphasis added).

Bessie comes from "good stock" and is "the daughter of very modestly circumstanced parents" (288). Like Wray, Bessie has a strong work ethic, for she is "a very capable and faithful stenographer" (288). Despite these positive attributes, she is what Wray describes as intellectually, philosophically, and culturally "narrow":

She was really pretty and appeared to be practical and sensible in many ways, but still very much in leash to the instructions and orders and tenets of her home and her church and her family circle. . . . [S]he was opposed to the theatre, dancing, any form of night dining or visiting in the city on weekdays, as well as anything that in her religious and home world might be construed as desecration of the Sabbath. (288)

Bessie's attitudes are an extension of the conservatism of her family and community. She has fully embraced her place in life, but Wray, who possesses "the air of a man of the world" (289), has aspirations to "make her more liberal in the course of time" (288). After a courtship spanning two to three years, Bessie's resistance weakens, and she gives herself over to Wray's influence, at last fully conforming to his feminine ideal. Wray convinces her to begin reading "bits of history and philosophy that he thought very liberal and which no doubt generated some thin wisps of doubt in her own mind" about her conventional beliefs (289). He takes her to musicals and the theater and eventually decides that he has "emancipated her in so far as he could, and [is] delighted with the result" (289). However, in becoming the woman of Wray's standards, Bessie is merely transforming into a reflection of Wray himself. She reads *his* books, attends *his* shows, and accepts *his* views of history and philosophy; therefore, while Wray's manipulation has made Bessie more confident, intellectual, and cultured, her liberation merely reaffirms the patriarchal status quo. True liberation can occur only when she takes control.

The Breakup of a Marriage

When Bessie and Wray exchange nuptial vows, the formerly insular young woman has become quite cosmopolitan; however, her in-

dependent pursuit of art, literature, and philosophy brings instability into the relationship. Not only has Bessie "joined a literary club" and befriended "a certain type of restless, pushing, seeking woman" (289), but she also has been "proving almost too apt a pupil in the realm in which [Wray] had interested her. It was plain that she had been emancipated from quite all of her old notions as to the sinfulness of the stage, and in regard to reading and living in general" (290). Because Bessie speaks confidently of literature, history, philosophy, and poetry, "Wray was beginning to feel that the unsophisticated young girl he had married a little while before might yet outstrip him in the very realm in which he had hoped to be her permanent guide" (290).

Throughout their relationship, Wray's unquenchable desire to be her "permanent guide" exposes his inability to accept Bessie as an equal and eventually leads to the demise of their marriage. As Bessie's confidence and intellectual ability increase almost exponentially, Wray feels threatened. He complains that "she was becoming more aggressive and argumentative and self-centered all the time, more this, more that. She was reading a great deal, much too much for the kind of life she was called upon to lead" (291). As his intellectual dominance withers, he feels emasculated and grows defensive; he demands that Bessie submit to the traditional role for wives inside the home—to be, as one *Harper's Bazar* writer pointed out in 1904, a wife who is "healthy, joyful, and yielding, and [who] always has time for her husband" (T. 706).

Clearly, Wray has never intended for Bessie to become his intellectual equal, much less his superior, and he regrets the change that he has fomented: "I wish to God . . . that I hadn't been so anxious to change her. She was all right as she was, if I had only known it" (292). Now with the modern wife that he wished for, Wray exposes his conservatism and egoism. Despite his professed liberality, he truly wants an intellectual and cultured trophy wife whom he can show off at dinner parties, perhaps, but who, at home, will contentedly stay in her place. As the narrator notes, "Observing them together one could see how proud he was of her and of his relationship to her, how he felt that he had captured a prize" (294). Wray's satisfaction in his "prize" demonstrates that he desires an intellectual female only as long as she remains the student whose success boosts the teacher's self-esteem.

As the marriage disintegrates, it becomes clear that Bessie has

outgrown Wray. She can no longer accept his dominance or ignore the growing breach between them: “[S]he could not love or admire [Wray]. . . . [O]ne could easily see how little she held him in her thought and mood. She was forever talking to others about those things which she knew did not interest him or to which he was opposed” (294). Eventually Bessie leaves, accusing Wray of being “narrow and stubborn [and] trying to hold her back intellectually” (292). It is becoming clear, at least to Bessie, that their compatibility has run its course. She is no longer an impressionable young woman who needs to be taught the ways of the world, and because she has metamorphosed into an independent and culturally-aware woman, Wray is no longer capable of providing the intellectual exchange that she now demands.

Dreiser’s own fatalistic views regarding the nature of marriage are echoed here. In his 1920 essay “Marriage and Divorce,” Dreiser argues that

Nature has not provided all its creatures with the capacity for a happy marriage. Plainly, it has cursed or endowed many of them with strange and horrible vices, with vast and self-torturing passions, with immeasurable longings and desires, which unfit them for the proper fulfillment of the monogamic conception of the perfect marriage. (216)

For Dreiser, these passions and longings and desires are likely sexual. At this point, Bessie’s burgeoning desires are intellectual and cultural, but Dreiser clearly suggests that such desires are just as incompatible with monogamy as lust, that marriage is inherently at odds with human nature itself. In “Marriage and Divorce,” Dreiser maintains that

Human beings are apparently capable of higher and more enduring synthetic and chemic affinities. . . . Yet for all this higher development, the strain of practical life appears to be too much for it. Besides the compulsion imposed by the biologic process which draws two people together there is a process of self-evolution and variation which seems to conflict with the marriage tie. (215)

The “strain of practical life” is indeed “too much” for Bessie. As a result of her “self-evolution,” her interests and her very identity “conflict

with the marriage tie," and the "chemic affinities" that once held these two young lovers together necessarily dissolve as a consequence of what Dreiser calls the "law of change" (217).

Second Chances and the Challenge of Motherhood

Despite their differences Bessie returns to Wray, but not for love. Knowing her lust for all that is intellectual and cultural, Wray cajoles Bessie with promises of a "larger apartment in a more engaging part of the city" along with an agreement to let her "go her intellectual way" (293). She thus returns but continues to pursue her old social and intellectual goals; consequently, Wray becomes increasingly distressed by her behavior, demonstrating that marriage demands much more than simple compromise. His willingness to resort to extreme measures to lure Bessie back makes him appear weak and pitiable, not at all representative of the strong American man who is the head of his household. Emasculation is the price that Wray pays for losing himself in love. Meanwhile, Bessie moves farther from her conventional wifely duties. It becomes evident that marriage is a fluid, even temporary institution, as she and Wray continue to drift apart.

However, Wray persuades Bessie to have a child, secretly hoping that motherhood will quell her non-conformist tendencies. Although Bessie does become a mother, her passion for the culture and intellectualism of the larger world cannot be quelled. As W. L. George observed in 1916 when writing about the growing number of women renouncing domesticity, such a woman "is growing aware that she is a human being, a discovery which the centuries had not made, and naturally she hates her gilded cage" (49). Bessie has evolved into a New Woman, and motherhood, with its diapers and feeding schedules, is not compatible with her new identity. Regardless of Wray's demands for conformity, Bessie will never proclaim, "I want a man's love. I want marriage and I want children more than anything else in the world," as does the unnamed author of an essay published in *The Delineator* in May 1919 entitled "Should the Woman Choose?" (36). The domestic life is stifling to Bessie, and she feels overwhelmed by the demands that her child makes on her. Confiding to the narrator, Bessie complains that "mothers [are] bond-servants, that even though she adored her little girl she could not help seeing what a chain and a

weight a child was to one who had ambitions beyond those of motherhood" (293).

With Bessie's disdain for motherhood, Dreiser challenges another facet of the conservative ideology which prevailed in the 1920s—the belief that motherhood was a requisite for women. Nancy Warner Barrineau has commented that "Dreiser, like Chopin, refused to insist that motherhood is essential to every woman or that all women are fulfilled by motherhood alone—or by motherhood at all" (65). Barrineau's comment that Carrie Meeber "seems to have no maternal instincts whatsoever" (65) can aptly be applied to Bessie. In creating a woman who not only defies the mother stereotype but who also seems to hold contempt for her child, Dreiser flies in the face of tradition. Furthermore, in his portrayal of parenting, Dreiser creates an interesting role reversal. Bessie is at best apathetic in regard to her motherly duties, whereas Wray is "all but lost in rapture" over his daughter (293). Once Bessie has "resumed her intellectual pursuits and her freedom," Wray accuses her of not loving the child "as she should" because if she did, "she could not do as she was doing" (295). With the help of a nursemaid, Wray takes on the role of the nurturing parent, an act that emphasizes both his fall from masculinity and Bessie's portrayal as a woman who is unable or, rather, unwilling to provide the love and tenderness that is expected of a mother. It is Wray, not Bessie, who takes their daughter to a neighborhood park where "he could be found trundling his infant in a handsome baby-carriage" (293) or contemplating "the charm and innocence of babyhood" (294). But Dreiser seems conflicted about a deliberate challenge to the traditional ideology of parenthood. When Bessie leaves Wray for the second and final time, she takes the child with her, an odd turn of events since she believes the child limits her active social life and since Wray is clearly the better parent. Even the narrator, whose sentiments typically lie with her, reproves Bessie for removing the child from Wray's care, commenting that the act is "perhaps illegal or unfair" (295). Readers too are left wondering how Bessie will provide for the child unless she is being kept or remarries; she certainly cannot provide adequately for herself and the child on a stenographer's salary. These questions are left unanswered. Perhaps Dreiser finally is unable to imagine a father who can provide sufficiently for both the material well-being and the "maternal" nurturing of a child.

Sexual Liberation and Sexual Awakenings

The intellectual awakening that transforms Bessie into a New Woman also changes her sexual attitudes. As did many intellectuals of the time, she finds in the new depth psychology, particularly the work of Freud and Kraft-Ebbing, a justification for breaking the chains of sexual repression. Like Phyllis Blanchard, a New Woman who speaks of her own sexual awakenings in the 1927 essay "The Long Journey," Bessie discovers her "normal sex emotions" and realizes that the "necessity of a normal sex life for women was a scientific fact" (164).² Although Bessie is married and has given birth, her sexual life with Wray seems nothing other than the fulfillment of her duty as a wife. Throughout their relationship, there is no evidence that Bessie desires physical affection from him. Perhaps Bessie does not demonstrate desire for her husband because her passion has been sublimated into her interest in art, literature, and philosophy. Rather than longing sexually for her husband, she desires only freedom from his overbearing demands. Bessie is not celibate, however, for she finds sexual gratification outside of her marriage.

Eventually, Bessie tells Wray that "she was in love with another man" (297), but this is not the first indication that Bessie has been unfaithful. After their final separation, Wray reveals to the narrator that throughout their marriage Bessie engaged in "certain mysterious goings to and fro" (297) and displayed "actions and evidences and moods and quarrels that pointed all too plainly to a breach that could never be healed" (297). On numerous occasions, Wray reports, he saw Bessie in the company of other men: looking out the window of a man's apartment, leaving a restaurant with a man, and meeting yet another man at a hotel. The very openness of Bessie's affairs reveals that she is finally experiencing a freedom of sexuality that had been impossible in her marriage.

Sukrita Paul Kumar has observed that Dreiser "did not view the institution of marriage as desirable. He prized 'freedom,' and felt that marriage would only chain and curb his emotional reaching-out to the other sex. A pagan varietist, he shied away from a girl who wanted inviolable monogamous Christian marriage" (33-34). Dreiser asserted this aversion to marriage consistently throughout his life and writing.

His beliefs regarding open sexuality are revealed clearly in *American Diaries 1902-1926*, where he confesses on 6 June 1917, "And I believe it would almost kill me—be absolutely impossible for me to be faithful to one woman. At this date it would be almost the severest strain I have yet endured" (165). Although we do not know if Bessie would say that monogamy would "almost kill" her, we do know she could no longer live in a monogamous relationship with Wray. Moreover, the fact that Wray sees her with numerous men suggests that Bessie, like Dreiser, is a varietist who believes that conventional marriage "chains and curbs" one's desires for independence.³

The Question of Point of View

According to the traditional standards of her society, Bessie is a fallen woman who would have been denounced for her "unwomanly" behavior. Yet the narrator does not reprove Bessie; in fact, he makes the reader empathize with her. From his perspective, Bessie is not fallen but rather is victimized by a man whose "love" is based upon manipulation and obsession, a man who stalks and threatens to kill her when he is no longer the center of her world (298). Wray's allegations that Bessie "tried to poison" him and "tortured" him (297) may cause some readers to side with him. His seemingly heartfelt declarations of love—"The more she disliked me the more I loved her. And I love her now, this minute. I can't help it" (299)—may also rouse the reader's sympathies. But in the end, we recall that Wray has never expressed passion for Bessie prior to her departure, and we can conclude that these declarations mask the desperation of a man who is losing his prize, not his true love. In fact, we wonder if he has ever truly loved Bessie. He has based the decision to court and marry her upon the fact that she "seemed to . . . embody nearly all of the virtues or qualities which he thought necessary" in a mate (288). Now, he is distraught and finds fault with her actions, with some justice perhaps.

But Wray cannot be viewed as reliable reporter of events. In fact, what has "interested" the narrator from the first is the incongruity between Wray's work and his intellect. By profession, Wray is a corporate spy working for "one of those large commercial agencies which inquire into the standing of business men, small and large, and report their findings, for a price, to other business men." Yet despite "all his

wealth of opportunity before him for studying the human mind," he is "largely concerned with the bare facts of the differing enterprises whose character he was supposed to investigate" and whose interests are "largely confined" to surface issues (286). It is not surprising, then, that he is equally unable to judge his wife's character from the "bare facts" that he turns up in his investigation of her. Furthermore, he tends to become "by turns . . . amused or astonished or made angry or self-righteous" (286) at what he takes to be moral lapses in others. Not only is Wray obsessed with Bessie, but he also perceives himself as the victim of her betrayal; therefore, his judgments, despite his "love" for her, are fatally skewed by self-righteous anger.

Since his initial analysis of Wray's character is borne out by later events, the narrator does seem reliable when he observes that Bessie and Wray are "two differing rates of motion, flowing side by side for the time being only, his the slower, hers the quicker" (294) and concludes that no amount of cajoling or compromise can unite their disparate streams. While Wray "conform[s] more to the conventional thought and emotions of the majority" (294), the new Bessie exhibits a propensity for liberalism and professes ideas with which the narrator agrees. According to Griffin, the narrator is "affected by Wray's dilemma and willingly listens, sympathizing with his intense suffering. But ideologically he is unable to identify with Wray and, in fact, is more closely aligned in spirit with Wray's wife, Bessie" (87). Dreiser's "own voice" may be heard in the narrator's comments on art, and his "philosophy and style of life are reflected in . . . his tacit sanctioning of Bessie's conduct" (Griffin 88). Like the narrator, Dreiser would not have viewed Bessie's behavior as either particularly unusual or immoral. Even though "[s]he had gone with another man" (296), Dreiser would normalize and rationalize her behavior, noting that a break from monogamy is just as common for a woman as for a man. In "Neurotic America and the Sex Impulse," Dreiser asserts that "a moderate percentage of women, in marriage and out, seek the affection of a given type of man temperamentally or chemically agreeable or appealing to them" (139). Later in "Marriage and Divorce" he questions, "Does the average strong, successful man confine himself to one woman? Has he ever? Does the exceptionally beautiful and dynamic woman confine herself to one man? Has she ever?" (214). For Dreiser, the answer to each of these questions is a resounding "no."

The narrator's ideological alignment with Bessie, and with Dreiser, seems particularly evident when Wray approaches him for advice following the first separation. After Wray reveals the details of Bessie's flight and professes his love for her "in spite of all the things that had come between them," the narrator "shook [his] head" as if in frustration or confusion and debates what can be done to save this doomed relationship:

Of what value was advice in such a situation as this, especially from one who was satisfied that the mysteries of temperament of either were not to be unraveled or adjusted save by nature—the accidents of chance and affinity, or the deadly opposition which keep apart those unsuited to each other? (292)

Using language that clearly reflects Dreiser's own views, the narrator believes that any advice to salvage this relationship would be futile since an individual's "mysteries of temperament" can be changed only by "nature" (293).

Yet despite his better judgment, the narrator offers a "silly suggestion, borrowed from another" and encourages Wray to "win her back by offering her such terms as she would accept, and then, in order to bind her to him, induce her to have a child" so as to "capture her sympathy" and to "insinuate an image of himself into her affectionate consideration" (293). This advice, based on the idea that "[t]hose who had children rarely separated," belies the narrator's true feelings on the subject. His afterthought, "or so I said" (293), more accurately reveals his skepticism and simultaneously predicts the demise of the marriage.

This willingness to offer advice he knows to be faulty incriminates the narrator in Wray and Bessie's distress. Though Wray could have opted to ignore the advice, he desperately wants to keep Bessie and is captivated by the idea; it "satisfied his practical and clerkly nature" (293). However, the stakes have been increased. No longer is Wray merely plotting to undermine Bessie's ideology. The failure of the marriage affects not only Wray and Bessie but their child as well, who now is separated from her doting father. Even though the narrator sees the imprudence of Wray's attempts to hold on to Bessie, he cannot firmly place himself on her side of this gender war, and his meddling brings misery for all involved.

Dreiser: The Feminist?

However, while Dreiser is to be praised for liberating Bessie, one must exercise caution in labeling him a feminist, for that liberated woman speaks only from the periphery of the narrative. Perhaps, as Irene Gammel has noted of "Emanuela," one of the stories in *A Gallery of Women*, a New Woman may be "far beyond the narrator's realm and imagination, a life that he is not capable of writing and that is therefore relegated into the gaps of his text" (51). Such a narrative replicates American society, where marginalized female voices struggle to be heard as they compete with the centered voices of the dominant males. As Gammel observes,

Dreiser's writing is full of contradictions and tensions between the male narrator's omniscient voices on the one hand and the erupting female voices on the other; between the narrators' rejection of conventions and their embracing of biological normality; between the female characters' claims for independence and their subjection to male sexual conquests. It is the internal contradictions and tensions of the texts that inevitably expose the inherent gender bias. (50)

The same "contradictions and tensions" that exist in "Emanuela" are present in "Marriage—for One" between Wray and the narrator on the one hand and Bessie on the other. Because Wray is at the center, Bessie is presented as an unfortunate event in Wray's life; that is, she is only an extension of Wray. After being introduced as "an office girl who seemed to embody nearly all of the virtues or qualities which he thought necessary," for nearly two pages the narrator discusses Bessie, referring to her only as "she" (288). Thus, Bessie remains nameless; she is defined only by her conservative background and the transformation that Wray plans. After her liberation, the silencing continues, for Bessie still is denied the opportunity to speak for herself. However, despite the imposed silence, Bessie's escape from her marriage speaks volumes, asserting her triumph over domestic patriarchy loudly and clearly.

"Marriage—for One" resists being pigeonholed as just another story about female submissiveness and male dominance. The narrator's implicit endorsement of Bessie's struggle for independence com-

bined with the lack of closure at the end of the story prevents such a prosaic reading. The narrator reveals that Wray is still living in their old apartment after three years, hoping that Bessie will return. Indeed, Wray's story has reached its conclusion. He is "spiritually wedded" to Bessie; he will spend the rest of his life waiting for her return: "I wait and wait. I know it's foolish, but still I wait. Why? God only knows. And yet I wait" (299). The image of weak, emasculated Wray waiting for Bessie, a broken man still in love with the woman who left him, suggests that his fate is sealed. The story thus might be read as a cautionary tale about how love can chain even the most practical of men in an endlessly tormenting marriage for one.

Conversely, the narrator cannot conclude Bessie's story with such certainty; he is left only with questions: "I wondered where she was, whether she ever thought of him even, whether she was happy in her new freedom" (299). Yet he cannot resist thinking of another possibility: "She *may* be spiritually wedded to another man who *may* despise her" (300, emphasis added). Considering the totality of Bessie's transformation, this final hypothesis seems unlikely; perhaps as a final expression of his conservatism, he secretly hopes that Bessie will get what a fallen woman deserves. The more likely outcome is that she is fulfilling herself as a New Woman, never once looking back at the life she cast off. If this is the case, then Dreiser has truly imagined a new ending for women, since a woman's life traditionally began with marriage and motherhood and Bessie's life actually begins when she escapes marriage. At any rate, the questions regarding Bessie's fate finally are left unanswered, male dominance has been relinquished, and Dreiser refuses to deny this New Woman the opportunity to write her own ending.⁴

Dedicated to the memory of my mother, Maybell P. Packer, 2 December 1925–11 October 2001. Though she did not have the opportunity to see this essay in print, she told me that she was proud of me and that was enough.

Notes

1. Wray's traditional ideas about life and love run counter to Dreiser's own. In "Marriage and Divorce" Dreiser postulates that "The trouble with this world is that no ideal, however eagerly pursued, is guaranteed a happy fruition.

You may lay down your formula for happiness and say: 'Thus and so being done all will be well,' but can you make human nature do anything according to any one finite individual theory?" (217-18).

2. In "The Long Journey," Blanchard reports that her conservative sexual ideology was supplanted after she learned that "women needed men even as men needed women" (164). Blanchard, like Bessie, obtains sexual enlightenment by becoming educated. However, unlike Bessie, Blanchard does eventually find full sexual autonomy within marriage.

3. Irene Gammel has posited that "Dreiser celebrates sexuality as the major driving force in life, holding it up as a force of progress endlessly engaged in battles against sexually repressive social conventions and institutions" (32). To achieve sexual and intellectual liberation, Bessie battles against Wray's attempts to impose "repressive social conventions" on her, and her sexuality is a "force of progress" in her own life. In this sense, "Marriage—for One" does endorse at least some of the tenets that were the foundation of the early feminist movement. As Dreiser remarks in "Neurotic America and the Sex Impulse," "there is nothing inherently disgraceful about having sexual desire, or at least knowledge of it, and of eventually gratifying it" (133), a comment with which the early feminists certainly would have agreed.

4. In "Sexualizing the Female Body," Irene Gammel examines Dreiser's use of the "ambiguous" ending in her discussion of "Emanuela" (50). Gammel notes that in "Emanuela," "the narrator ends his sketch on a deliberately ambiguous note . . . and thus there remains a slim chance that Emanuela may have discovered a new life" (50). Dreiser's use of this ambiguous ending reasserts his unwillingness to limit women to conventional roles and, likewise, invites readers to consider the alternatives.

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An Emersonian Perspective on Dreiser's Characterization of Carrie

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After its inauspicious debut in 1900, Theodore Dreiser's first novel would become recognized as a remarkable new work of American literary realism—in time, accorded great critical attention and acclaim that has by no means diminished even now, just past the centennial celebration of its original publication. But one aspect of *Sister Carrie* that has struck quite a few critics (even those generally admiring Dreiser's art in the book) as problematic, as at least less than fully convincing, is the novelist's attribution of a kind of "emotional greatness" (271) to his heroine in her career as an actress.¹ Diverse other commentators on the presumably flawed portrayal of Carrie's sources for success on stage may be represented by one notable critic—F. O. Matthiessen. For although he thought enough of Dreiser's fictional achievement to devote a book-length study to the subject, this distinguished critic regarded the rendering of the desire-driven actress's centrally important special "talent" as quite unsatisfactory. According to Matthiessen, "Dreiser's realm of 'the spirit,' in rejecting conventional standards, is so loosely defined and moreover so cluttered with clichés that it is hard to respond . . . to his sense of liberation in it. . . . The only way we could sense what Dreiser calls [Carrie's] 'feeling mind' would be to see her deeply stirred, and this she never is." And Matthiessen suggests that the specific reason why Dreiser fails to make Carrie's emotional depth convincing is that he never portrays her as "a woman in love" (*Theodore Dreiser* 73). However, as most modern readers have realized, the idea of Carrie's being "a woman in love" is

completely inappropriate to the novel's unconventional view of her relationships. And as I will strive to show in this discussion, the meaning of "spirit" in the novel is neither as vague nor as artistically ineffectual as this critic's significantly typical response has claimed.

Exploration of some previously overlooked sources for Dreiser's depiction of Carrie's artistic self—and supposed "emotional greatness"—can prove crucial to an improved understanding and appreciation of the writer's purposes in this key aspect of the novel, especially in the episode of his heroine's performance in *Under the Gaslight*. Using this scene as a main center of focus, one can start to see the meaning of the realm of "spirit" to which the artistic Carrie is sensitive, and to find both credible and meaningful the special "greatness" with which her character is finally invested (through the perceptions of Ames). The most significant source for reevaluation of this essential element of plot and characterization in *Sister Carrie*, I will soon argue, is Emerson.

Both primary and secondary sources prepare a foundation for the Emersonian perspective that this discussion will suggest is a key to the novel. Students of Dreiser find that his literary apprenticeship writings during the 1890s repeatedly reveal his keen interests in the intertwined subjects of artistry and beauty and his diverse expressions of them. The two volumes of Dreiser's *Selected Magazine Articles* from this period, edited by Yoshinobu Hakutani, convey, as their subtitles put it, an emphasis on "Life and Art in the American 1890s"; further, the "Checklist" of the young writer's articles before *Carrie* (see 243-49, in volume 2) shows over thirty of them concerned with artists and their roles in society—with quite a few of these pieces specifically on women in the arts. During the two years that Dreiser edited the magazine *Ev'ry Month* for his brother Paul's music publishing house (October 1895 through September 1897), the aspiring author devoted many columns of this periodical—written under several names for the illusion of a substantial literary staff—to themes preparing for his first novel's protagonist's artistic nature. Nancy Barrineau's edition of Dreiser's writings from this periodical has at last made it easy to assess Dreiser's concerns and views just before he turned novelist, and this volume not only spotlights his interest in actors and actresses (see 100-01 and 273-74) but also presents his columns on drama.² And Volume I of Richard Lingeman's biography of Dreiser naturally also confirms

the young writer's keen interests in art, artists, the theater, and the expressing of beauty (see 169, 177, 194, 227, 276, and 404).

Dreiser continued to address similar themes in essays written long after the publication of his first novel, too, and a pair of passages from such later non-fiction also sets the stage for the effort to cast new light on Carrie's artistry. In his oft-quoted discussion of "Life, Art, and America" in the philosophic volume *Hey Rub-a-Dub-Dub* (1920), after attacking all forces of "Puritanism" and stubborn narrowness that subvert the expression of real art, Dreiser asserts that "Life is to be learned as much from books and art as from life itself" (276). And he indicates at length that society depends on all forms of true art for emotional or intellectual "insight[s] into life!" (266). Still more suggestive for present purposes is an article written many years after *Sister Carrie*. In it, Dreiser analyzes the difference between the temperament of the "artist" and that of the person of practical affairs:

It was Oscar Wilde who once said very daringly, and to a degree shrewdly, "Life imitates art." What he was fumbling with was the truth that the artist, being more sensitive to and subtle in the matter of those mysterious ways in which creative energy expresses itself, is the first to detect and indicate those new ways in which Nature or creative energy is likely to shadow itself forth, to which the so-called realist or practical man of business is a little obtuse. But the artist (the creator with this gift of "imagination" so-called) senses and shadows forth in what he does a deeper reality than your man of practical affairs ever dreams of. . . . The only beauty in the world is in the minds and hearts of these dreamers and thinkers, however meager their reward. ("Temperaments" 654)

Except for Dreiser's use of a masculine pronoun here—and for the reference to artists' receiving a "meager . . . reward" so ironically in contrast to her ultimate fame and fortune in New York—this theoretical statement has clear pertinence to the story of Carrie's creative "force" on stage.

Informing the treatment of her theater career in the novel, just as in the quoted polemical passage making this idea explicit, is Dreiser's metaphysical view that artistry can give access to life's deepest realities, in the process making possible (as for Carrie) a most authentically

personal way of being. From the start of the novel, when Carrie is truly being herself (rather than a conformist obsessively seeking those materialistic goals tending to thwart or distort genuine artistic possibilities), she “senses and shadows forth in what [s]he does, a deeper reality” than that known to the world of “practical affairs.” And in an idea fundamental to Dreiser’s outlook in virtually all of his writings, the “deeper reality” that Carrie responds to at key moments in her life is that of the Beauty glimpsed behind the shapes of the material world. With these points in mind, one is prepared to understand why Dreiser equates Beauty and Spirit—and how his doing so ultimately underlies his concept of “emotional greatness” in the fictional portrait of Carrie “Madenda” (nee Meeber).

There have, of course, been several studies of Carrie and the question of her artistic quest through the theater, and a few of them are especially notable for my present critical purposes. As the title of his influential study “Gaslight and Magic Lamp in *Sister Carrie*” (1971) foretells, Hugh Witemeyer offers a reading which demonstrates how “[l]ove and the theater both beckon toward fairyland” for Carrie (239) and stresses the view that “[t]hroughout the novel characters exist for one another primarily as stages upon which the ego enacts its subjective dramas of self-gratification” (239). Valid and persuasively useful as this discussion is, its emphasis on Carrie’s and other characters’ self-absorption and drive toward self-gratification actually foregrounds an aspect of the novel quite in contrast to the perspective I intend to present in these pages. Casting light on Carrie’s artistic aims through the lens of Emerson will instead underscore the idea that her acting could and should unselfishly help others gratify their search for beauty and its window to meaning in life. Barbara Hochman’s intensive study “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Actress: The Rewards of Representation in *Sister Carrie*” (1991) explores in great detail Dreiser’s fictive concern with “representation”—defined, says this scholar, not as “the imitation of an objective reality, but rather the expressive impulse as it seeks articulation, especially in front of others, whether in words, in music, or in person” (43). As this comment suggests, some parts of her essay parallel ideas I will highlight with the help of Emerson. However, much of the reading by Hochman has a very different direction from the one I will take. This is readily clear, for example, when this critic asserts the following:

Within the text of *Sister Carrie* the theatre emerges as an arena for the flow of desire, expressed both in the very act of representation and in the interaction between performer and spectator. But Carrie's "desire to reproduce life," as expressed on stage through her histrionic gift, fulfills a number of other functions that underscore the difference between desire as passion and desire as representation. For one thing, the organization of the theatre enforces that separation between audience and actress that allows Carrie unabashedly to display her desire-full self, without risking its being appropriated. (52)

Further, Hochman's interpretation uses several intriguing methods and perspectives to consider the relationship between the "artist" and her audience as based—very unlike the view of that relation Emerson will offer—on a complex kind of "collaboration" (see 50ff).

What appears to be a contradiction in Hochman's intricate argument—as she speaks of Carrie's being liberated to "display her desireful self" by the "separation between audience and actress" in the theatre, and yet sees a kind of "collaboration" between Carrie and her spectators—is actually explained by this critic's view of how the *Under the Gaslight* experience affects the aspiring artist. Hochman asserts that this Avery Hall performance brings out the best in Carrie and gives her special satisfaction because "the process of [her] representation is accompanied by immediate response and collaborative support from intimate spectators" (45). In fact, according to Hochman, Carrie's later "professional" acting career, making "her audience increasingly distant," creates a sense of increasing "isolation" for her, with the ironic result that the emotional "rewards of the dramatic enterprise progressively diminish" (45) for the famous, celebrated "star." At the center of Hochman's perspective, meanwhile, are assumptions about the relation between Dreiser's desire-driven thespian and her audiences, which are quite different from mine. For Hochman states that "throughout *Sister Carrie*, the act of representation is seen to have . . . its greatest satisfaction in a process that begins in collaboration—even dependency—but that ultimately affords the self a euphoric if short-lived experience of soaring autonomy" (46). Quite in a contrary manner, the Emersonian outlook I propose here, far from seeing any "dependency" of an artist such as Carrie upon her audiences, emphasizes *their* reliance upon and rewards from the powers of individual self-expression she

shares with them and representatively helps them be attuned to at memorable moments of theatrical epiphany.

But an earlier analysis of Carrie's problematic role as an artist serving most significantly to point us toward a reading like mine is presented by Stephen C. Brennan. In "*Sister Carrie* and the Tolstoyan Artist" (1979), Brennan proves that Dreiser's depiction of Carrie's conflicting artistic and selfish, materialistic aims was influenced by reading Tolstoy's *What to Do?* and *What Is Art?* Brennan argues persuasively that Dreiser's treatment of his heroine is informed, in part, by "Tolstoy's belief in the great social responsibility of the artist" (2) as well as by Tolstoy's idea that an artist failing "to devote himself to others . . . will produce only imitations of art and in satisfying only his own desires will eventually destroy his talent" (3). Brennan's discussion develops, too, from a focus on the onus placed on Carrie (as Ames explicitly notes) to enact the potentiality of art that Tolstoy had proclaimed: "What makes the artist special, according to Tolstoy, is his ability to express what others feel but cannot express for themselves" (4-5). Through its emphasis on this idea in tension with those values and desires subverting Carrie's incarnation as an actress, the Tolstoyan approach of the study creates a context for reading the novel that—despite its interestingly different sources—anticipates and parallels the context to be suggested here.

Now, it has been established by several scholars³ that, from the 1890s on, Dreiser had a great interest in, and even personal relationships with, some of the young American "naturalist" painters (later, often referred to as the "Ashcan school" of artists)—William L. Sonntag, Jr., Everett Shinn, John Sloan, Robert Henri, and others. An excellent study by David Brion Davis comparing Dreiser's aesthetic premises with those of these painters helps to illuminate the nature of Carrie's artistry as an actress:

Henri had said that "No thing is beautiful. But all things await the sensitive and imaginative mind. . . ." A beautiful object seen in a glimpse from a train window might "dissolve into mere materialism" from a different perspective. Dreiser was expressing the same conviction of a mental reality above external existence. . . . Henri . . . stressed the word "spirit" in relation to beauty in a sense that would have been acceptable to Dreiser. Spirit was not thought of as a physical organ or as

an efficacious power, but rather as the distinctively human capacity for beauty through detachment and sympathy. The artist is the man who develops this spiritual sense and thus lifts the flux of material life into a new realm of meaning. (232)

As this passage serves to suggest, Dreiser conceives of Carrie as an artist because she is gifted with a "sensitive and imaginative mind" which engages her in the spiritual reality of the beautiful. When she goes astray under the influence of her society—with its pull toward money and all the tangible objects it can purchase—things seen or sensed do, of course, "dissolve into mere materialism" for Carrie. But in her finest moments on stage, she transcends her concern about the external world and, in doing so, shows a very individual "capacity for beauty through detachment and sympathy." Here, the insight into Dreiser's aesthetic kinship with analogously radical realists in the visual arts begins to demonstrate that the novelist's sense of an artist's attunement to spiritual beauty in life is neither vague nor arbitrary.

Further, Dreiser's narrative voice explicitly emphasizes the importance of feelings in everyday human experience, from the opening pages of the novel on (5-6)—making emotions more important than words in life. The narrator asserts that "As a matter of fact, words are, as a rule, the shallowest portion of all the argument. They but dimly represent the great surging feelings and desires which lie behind" (88). Since Dreiser emphatically frames his fiction and its characters in these terms, he shapes a context for seeing his essentially inarticulate protagonist as nonetheless profoundly expressive of her sensitive responses toward beauty. Given his trademark emphasis upon emotions and desires, it is scarcely surprising that Dreiser should regard the artist's responsiveness to beauty beyond appearances as a very special facet of human nature. And it is his idea that an "artistic temperament" involves this kind of aesthetic response which underlies the "greatness" he portrays in Carrie.

Surging emotions would appear to be antithetic to "the capacity for beauty through detachment and sympathy" that Henri attributes to the artist. Henri himself, in the romantic tradition of Keats and Poe, identifies beauty with the eternal, unchanging world of spirit, a neo-Platonic "realm of meaning" above "the flux of material life," while Carrie's shifting desires for clothes, nice apartments, and the men who provide them reveal her to be drifting on that very flux. In the epi-

logue, Dreiser explains this apparent contradiction. The “emotional nature” of the artist is the motive force in an endless quest for peace and contentment. Because what is permanent appears only in that which changes, the artist’s shifting “moods” necessarily voice “all the ebb and flow of the ideal,” and life becomes a journey down the “long, long road which never reaches beauty” (368) and never arrives at the “happiness” (369) that comes with the satisfaction of desire.

When Carrie becomes stirred by the dramatic situation in *Under the Gaslight*, she is transformed into a medium that powerfully conveys a mood of beauty, a mood of sad yearning for an unattainable happiness. In the role of the abused social outcast Laura, Carrie feels the “old melancholy of desire” (134) that produces a striking effect on her new lover: “Hurstwood blinked his eyes and caught the *infection*. The radiating waves of feeling and sincerity were already breaking against the farthest walls of the chamber. The magic of passion, which will yet dissolve the world, was here at work” (135). Carrie has in fact entered that higher realm Henri associates with spirit and beauty: “[Hurstwood] thought now that she was beautiful. She had done something which was above his sphere” (135). In Carrie’s last scene in this piece of sentimental fluff, she achieves something of the detachment and sympathy of the true artist. While her part continues “to take a feeling hold upon her,” she has also “resolved to make something of this scene” (138) and thus has not entirely lost herself in the role. In her final speech, Carrie-as-Laura expresses a deep sympathy for Ray, the character who seemingly has thrown away his own chance for happiness with her. Carrie here becomes even more detached from her personal desires as she generalizes about the enduring quality of a woman’s love, “the treasure without money and without price” (139). Of course there is a deep irony in such words from Carrie, whose own love at this point seems negotiable. But then such irony is perhaps a natural consequence of artistic detachment.

At a point in the story several years later, Hurstwood, having forgotten the effect that Carrie’s performance in Chicago had had upon him (despite its prompting of passions that did indeed “dissolve” his “world”), reacts to her hope of seeking a stage career with the thought that her talent will prove inadequate to the challenge of New York’s theatrical realm. Dreiser then quickly intrudes as narrator to point out the ex-manager’s mistake: “Strangely, he had not conceived well of

her mental ability. That was because he did not understand the nature of emotional greatness. He had never learned that a person might be emotionally—instead of intellectually—great” (271-72). Obviously, this observation of Hurstwood's misunderstanding of Carrie also aims to direct readers toward proper perception of her unique potentialities as an artist. And Dreiser gives the idea of her “emotional greatness” a more specific meaning through his spokesman in the novel, Ames.

Having earlier absorbed from him the ideal of being a “fine” actress (238), and having achieved her popular success on the New York comic stage, Carrie re-encounters Ames at a time (in chapter XLVI) when disillusionment with her career is making itself felt. So she listens with intense interest as Ames urges her to pursue roles in serious plays:

“I know why you should be a success,” he said . . . “if you had a more dramatic part. I've studied it out—”

“What is it?” said Carrie.

“Well,” he said, as one pleased with a puzzle, “the expression in your face is one that comes out in different things. You get the same thing in a pathetic song, or any picture which moves you deeply. It's a thing the world likes to see, because it's a natural expression of its longing.”

Carrie gazed without exactly getting the import of what he meant. (356)

Dreiser's first scholarly biographer, Robert Elias, established that, as early as 1891, the novelist had been reading about “heroes” and “representative men” (38). And it seems to me that the key to “getting the import of what [Ames] mean[s]”—and to giving enhanced recognition to Dreiser's rendering of his “artistic” heroine—is to be found in a strikingly relevant, if surprisingly overlooked, source in the novelist's thinking: Emerson's *Representative Men* (1850).

Emerson's work was influenced by Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841), but as F. O. Matthiessen has noted (making a point subsequent Emerson scholars have echoed), “Carlyle's book was more than a stimulus: it provided the assumptions against which Emerson made a quiet but fundamental counterstatement. The difference between the titles is significant” (*American Renaissance* 631). The idea of greatness in Emerson's lectures bears the stamp of the American

democratic ideal as well as the impression of the transcendentalists' faith in the divine potentiality of the individual person. Indeed, as one authority on Emerson observes of the vision informing *Representative Men*, American transcendentalism "converted the romantic idealization of the common man into an assertion of the infinite potentialities of all men and of their equality before God" (Carpenter 135). Clearly, an Emersonian slant on the issue of greatness would offer Dreiser both a basis and a reason for showing that his extremely "common" Carrie could still be extraordinary in some respect. As Robert Weisbuch has stated, the whole idea of greatness in Emerson's volume derives from a "democratic search for individuals who represent various human capacities at their peak" (209).

In the opening lecture on "Uses of Great Men," Emerson begins with the admission that it "is natural to believe in great men. If the companions of our childhood should turn out to be heroes, and their condition regal, it would not surprise us. . . . Nature seems to exist for the excellent" (3). But for Emerson, unlike for Carlyle, there is no hero-worship, no belief in a greatness that divides the outstanding few in a given era or society from the mass of humankind. In fact, Emerson asserts, "great men: the word is injurious" (17). In his view, "The cheapness of man is every day's tragedy. It is as real a loss that others should be low, as that we should be low" (18). For this famous transcendentalist, there is "a speedy limit to the use of heroes" (16). In *Representative Men*, Emerson frames the issue of greatness and heroism in the context to be expected from his conviction about the importance of self-reliance. Thus if Carlyle's title indicates the schism he sees between heroes and common people, Emerson's conveys the ideal of unity and interrelation he *wants* to see between all individuals in the society his challenges are meant to promote.

According to Emerson, "He is great who is what he is from nature, and who never reminds us of others. But he must be related to us, and our life receive from him some promise of explanation" (5). The "promise of explanation" offered by Carrie's unique talents on stage—as Ames perceives—is the power of "the expression in [her] face" to communicate to an audience "a natural expression of its [own] longing" (356), of what Dreiser in the epilogue calls the "blind strivings of [her] human heart" for beauty (369). For in Emerson's view, the effect of greatness of any kind should not be to reduce the stature of those

who perceive it or learn of it but rather to benefit and to elevate them: "It is the delight of vulgar talent to dazzle and blind the beholder, but true genius seeks to defend us from itself. True genius will not impoverish, but will liberate, and add new senses" (11). Notably, Emerson's ideas about the nature of genius affirm the potential greatness of any person who discovers his/her own true individuality. And further, it is Emerson's inspirational theme that the essential use of greatness—wherever and by whomever manifested—is to educate men and women to an awareness of what they themselves may best be or experience: "We love to associate with heroic persons since our receptivity is unlimited and with the great, our thoughts and manners easily become great. We are all wise in capacity, though so few in energy. There needs but one wise man in a company, and all are wise, so rapid is the contagion" (14-15). The reference here to "energy" is important, for as Robert D. Richardson, Jr., says in his recent award-winning book on Emerson, the great philosopher of Concord "associated the human mind and its capacity for thought with activity and energy. He hated the passive notion of the mind as a blank slate. He concentrated instead on the individual's sources of power" (xi). And it may be more than merely curious coincidence that Emerson's word "contagion" (for the process by which any species of greatness is imparted to others) is essentially echoed by Dreiser in the narrative comment that, at Carrie's debut in *Under the Gaslight*, Hurstwood and the audience in general "caught the infection" (135) of Carrie's emotional performance as the long-suffering Laura. In the very Emersonian vein that Richardson's point helps to highlight, Dreiser makes it clear that even superficial, cheerfully insensitive Drouet experiences in Carrie's ultimately momentous performance "a power which was . . . a revelation" (140). In fact, the impact of this epiphany of Carrie's acting (of a role in many ways at odds with her own true nature) ironically leads a temporarily transformed Drouet to love her with truly new ardor, "resolv[ing] a thousand things" (140) about devotion to her.

In Emerson's perception, direct aid from superior individuals is an ineffectual thing; it does nothing "compared with the discoveries of nature in us" (6). Such discoveries are at the root of the process of the education or unfolding of people in any group exposed to excellences. And it is in this sense that great men are, in Emerson's incisive term, "representative." In other words, individuals of superior stature (in

whatever human striving and achievement) open to their associates new aspects of nature and of themselves. "Certain men," writes Emerson, "affect us as rich possibilities" (5). Dreiser analogously suggests that "certain [wo]men" affect others as sources of "rich possibilities"—in the force of Carrie's effect upon her two lovers that night at Chicago's Avery Hall and later upon the theater audiences of New York insatiably drawn to her. True, Carrie's performance contributes significantly to the developing "tragedy of affection" (138) of Hurstwood by raising to critical intensity his desire to possess her. Yet for both Hurstwood and Drouet, Carrie's dramatic expression of love opens up, at least for a moment, their own potential capacity for self-transformation through love. Drouet resolves "that he would be to Carrie what he had never been before. He would marry her, by George!" (139). Hurstwood too would transcend the falsity of his current existence: "He cursed the luck that could keep him smiling, bowing, shamming, when he wanted to tell her that he loved her, when he wanted to whisper to her alone" (140). Even the stage-door johnnies who try to woo Carrie in New York express exalted motives. It is not his money, one suitor writes her, that she should consider but the fact that "I love you and wish to gratify your every desire" (333). It is a tribute to Carrie's power that such men probably half-believe their professions.

And readers of the novel are given relevant insight into the sources of Carrie's emotional powers. During her performance in *Under the Gaslight*, Carrie's power of emotional projection into her role remains unaffected, it is worth noting, by the mediocrity of the other actors. "The accessories she needed," observes Dreiser, "were within her own imagination" (139). This statement is true of Carrie in all the key situations that fascinate her, inside or outside theater buildings. The magical power she divines in things comes from her own way of seeing the objects of her desire: "[H]er own exuberant fancy . . . ran riot with every straw of opportunity, making of it a golden divining rod whereby the treasure of life was to be discovered" (121). One of the central narrative comments on Carrie in the book, in fact, implies that her extraordinary imagination is a magic wand of sorts in its shaping powers: "Every hour the kaleidoscope of human affairs threw a new luster upon something, and therewith it became for her the desired—the all. Another shift of the box, and some other had become

the beautiful, the perfect" (107). True, this very quality in Carrie in part ensures, ironically, that she cannot ever find enduring contentment within the quest which is her story. But far from diminishing Carrie's credibility as an artist of imagining and desire, this fact about her often wistful ways should actually enhance it for readers of *Sister Carrie*—given Dreiser's own famous contention (quoted for many years as an epigraph to introduce each issue of what would become *Dreiser Studies*) that "Art is the stored honey of the human soul, gathered on wings of misery and travail" ("Life, Art, and America" 276).

Early in *Representative Men*, Emerson asserts that "Genius is the naturalist or geographer of the supersensible regions, and draws their map" (10). It is apt to say that Dreiser presents Carrie as a genius in her sensitivity to, and gift of reflecting, the "supersensible regions" of Beauty. And according to Ames, her face and personal presence on stage essentially draw the map of those "regions" for her audiences. In Emerson's language, "if persons and things are scores of a celestial music, let us read off the strains. . . . With each new mind a new secret of nature transpires" (12). Through Carrie and her dreaming, longing mind, an aspect of nature or "celestial music" becomes disclosed in dramatic moments in ways for which (the novel establishes from the start) words are not even needed—as when Carrie, "putting herself . . . in harmony with the plaintive melody now issuing from the orchestra" so affects Drouet and Hurstwood that "[t]hey scarcely heard the few remaining words with which the scene concluded. They only saw their idol, moving about with appealing grace, continuing a power which to them was a revelation" (140).

"Other men are lenses," explains Emerson, "through which we read our own minds" (4). We can readily see the curious connection to be drawn between this idea and the comments that Dreiser has Ames make upon (and to) Carrie:

"The world is always struggling to express itself. . . . Most people are not capable of voicing their feelings. They depend upon others. That's what genius is for. One man expresses their desires for them in music; another one in poetry; another one in a play. Sometimes nature does it in a face—it makes the face representative of all desire. That's what has happened in your case." (356)

Lending further support to Dreiser's attribution of a kind of greatness to Carrie like the Emersonian account of it is the special emphasis put upon imagination in a passage in Emerson's essay on "Uses of Great Men":

[We] learn to choose men [as great] by their truest marks, taught, with Plato, "to choose those who can, without aid from the eyes, or any other sense, proceed to truth and to Being." Foremost among these activities are the summersaults, spells, and resurrections, wrought by the imagination. When this wakes, a man seems to multiply ten times or a thousand times his force. It opens the delicious sense of indeterminate size, and inspires an audacious mental habit . . . [so that when anything sets free our fancy] instantly our heads are bathed with galaxies. (10)

Dreiser's picture of Carrie when her imagination awakens on the Avery Hall stage is an illustration of this Emersonian theory, the last sentence of which in turn stands as a suitable description of Carrie's increasingly vague, transcendent ideas of the things she longs for. Emerson's viewpoint helps us comprehend, then, the connection Dreiser postulates between his heroine's greatness and her special power—and identifying quality—of remarkable imagining.

Both Emerson's essay on great men and Dreiser's presentation of the idea of Carrie's "emotional greatness" finally rest on the crucial premise that genius or special talent must be seen as more than an individual's quality. Speaking of all the best masters, the representative individuals with true genius, Emerson insists that the "power which they communicate is not theirs. When [for example] we are exalted by ideas, we do not owe this to Plato, but to the ideas, to which also Plato was debtor" (12). Similarly, Ames is careful to explain to Carrie that her special talent as an actress and as an image of human desires for Beauty (desires which for Dreiser constitute the nature of what he calls her "emotional greatness") is not something she ought to take personal credit for. Rather, as Ames tells her,

"[It] puts a burden of duty on you. It so happens that you have this thing. It is no credit to you—that is, I mean, you might not have had it. You paid nothing to get it. But now that you have it, you must do something with it. . . . You have so much sym-

pathy and such a melodious voice. Make them valuable to others. It will make your powers endure. . . . You have this quality in your eyes and mouth and in your nature. You can lose it, you know. If you turn away from it and live to satisfy yourself alone, it will go fast enough." (356)

Ames's words will prove prophetic, for, by the final part of the novel (despite her great outward success), in turning away from devotion to a true development of her unusual powers to be a medium for disclosing Beauty (through artistry) to others, Carrie begins to sense the costs of the fame and fortune she achieves.

Since Carrie lives and evolves in a society driven by the creed of materialistic success and comforts, her pursuit of self-expression through the theater is shadowed by—and challenged by apparent inseparability from—financial considerations. So after Ames has helped inspire her to want to be “an actress—a good one” (238), and after she is impressed by his urging to “get into some good, strong comedy-drama” (355) for proper use of her powers and more potential spiritual fulfillment, Carrie keeps pursuing the light comic roles of the popular stage that first gave her addictive celebrity. Even though she has decreasing satisfactions in her wealth and stardom and realizes that she “had failed” to fulfill her talents, in Ames's eyes (354), she cannot bring herself to risk her comfortable niche at the top of the ladder in new sorts of roles. In short, one key aspect of Dreiser's portrait of this aspiring and desiring actress is an anticipation of the Dreiserian theme so clearly central to *The “Genius”* (1915)—the dilemmas faced by an artist choosing, in many cases, between artistic integrity and materially measured success. Caught in this dilemma and indecisive about the ways available to her to satisfy her longings, Carrie continues to please the commonplace crowd and to provide it with amusement at the expense of her own self-respect and deeper needs as an actress. This is in fact ironically symbolized by her role as “the frowning Quakeress” that thrusts her to “the top”—with audiences laughing all the more as she frowns ever more intensely (326-27). Victimized by the illusion of self-fulfillment such stage work (and its rewards) first seem to offer her, Carrie experiences that role as a turning-point toward the disillusionment described so incisively by F. Scott Fitzgerald's paradoxical perception that “Nothing fails like ‘success.’” Just so, the close of the novel shows Carrie moving “amid the tinsel and shine of her state . . .

unhappy” (368) and “[s]itting alone . . . an illustration of the devious ways by which one who feels, rather than reasons, may be led in the pursuit of beauty” (369). And this is to say that (as I have elsewhere documented in a detailed study of her confusions between the longing for beauty and for its outward, material forms in her world⁴) Carrie unknowingly squanders the greatness her acting talent might have made a continued means of aesthetic/spiritual satisfactions for herself and for many others—as Emerson’s theories and Ames’s mentoring both suggest. In Wordsworth’s famous phrases, pursuing a life of “getting and spending” causes her to “lay waste her powers.”

Yet in the novel’s ultimate depiction of this subversion of her artistic possibilities by the pull of materialistic goals, Dreiser still reminds us, poignantly, that Carrie *had* some true “powers” to “lay waste.” In the episode at Avery Hall in Chicago, at the very start of her stage career, she had shown an emotional greatness in Emersonian terms. Just as Emerson holds that “true art is only possible on the conviction that every talent has its apotheosis somewhere” (18), the episode of her *Under the Gaslight* debut—the clearly pivotal point in the plot of *Sister Carrie*—reveals Carrie’s talent finding its apotheosis with a “power which [to both her lovers] was a revelation” (140). And even in the final chapter, the novel insists upon the special nature of her potential as an instrument for expression of desire and attunement to the beautiful by characterizing Carrie (in part of that chapter’s significant title) as “a harp in the wind” (357).

In quoting as well as commenting on the Emersonian outlook in “Uses of Great Men,” Gay Wilson Allen remarks, “There are no unappreciated geniuses, for ‘Nature never sends a great man into the planet without confiding the secret to another soul’ ” (453). Unfortunately, though, many readers’ responses to the title character in Dreiser’s first novel have in fact left her “unappreciated” as a “genius” of emotions (and stage artistry). Even at this time when the hundredth anniversary of its original appearance as a landmark work of modern American fiction has recently elicited celebratory praises for Dreiser and for the general excellence and importance of *Sister Carrie*, Carrie’s own “emotional greatness” has remained problematic for many. Such a paradoxical sense of a presumed central flaw of character-drawing within a work so vividly realized and lastingly acclaimed is a strange problem indeed.

However, in the new light on the matter cast by Emerson's ideas about genius and greatness, perhaps we can recognize that the problem has stemmed less from deficiencies in Dreiser's portrayal of Carrie (in her desire-driven career) than from our ignorance of his purposes in that portrayal. Reading through the lens of *Representative Men* enables us to find quite credible the novel's assumption that, despite her limited intellect and theatrical background, Carrie can be emotionally, even artistically, extraordinary. One scholarly summation of the Emersonian slant on the issue seems rewardingly suggestive of the aims with which Dreiser has brought to life his female protagonist: "Each great person represents, for Emerson, the full flowering of some one aspect of our common nature. Great persons are not superior to us; they are exemplary, symbolic, or representative of us" (Richardson 414). Dreiser surely has given us a fictional heroine memorable and poignant precisely because she embodies a "full flowering" of human desires for beauty (in both material and spiritual forms)—a figure "representative" of seeking after the emotional richness of life on stage as well as in those luminous cities that are like theaters without walls. Despite being affected by her performance in *Under the Gaslight* in diverse ways which would later literally change his destiny, Hurstwood—in his fallen, embittered state in the story's second half—makes the intensely ironic mistake of underestimating Carrie's potential for the stage. With the benefit of the Emersonian paradigm in mind, perhaps readers of the novel need not continue to make the same mistake of underestimating Carrie as a character created so essentially as "the genius with imagination" (6), inherently a symbol of her society's longings.

Notes

1. My discussion of *Sister Carrie* concerns—and is based upon—the original version of the novel published in 1900, now most readily and reliably available in the Norton Critical Edition edited by Donald Pizer. To my mind, the interesting yet controversial Pennsylvania Edition of the work (1981) has by no means supplanted the traditional version of Dreiser's text as the book one should know and study as his first novel. But in any case, controversies aside, the altered version of the story offered in the Pennsylvania Edition is not significantly different from the standard 1900 text for purposes of the present discussion. Therefore, all page references from Dreiser's work are cited paren-

thetically within my essay from the second edition of the Norton Critical text.

2. Evidence of Dreiser's strong interest in the theater, and in actors and actresses, can readily be found by seeing many of the novelist-to-be's columns (signed in several ways) presented in Barrineau's edition of his *Ev'ry Month* writings—as even a quick glance at page 334 of her volume's Index helps suggest.

3. Regarding this influence on Dreiser, see Matthiessen (*Theodore Dreiser* 162); Moers, *Two Dreisers* 22, 34, 324-25, and "New Light on Dreiser in the 1890s" 15-19; and Lingeman 227, 276.

4. See Paul A. Orlov, "On Language and the Quest for Self-Fulfillment: A Heideggerian Perspective on Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*" (*Theodore Dreiser, Beyond Naturalism*, ed. Miriam Gogol [New York: New York UP, 1995] 134-75). In this essay I examine at length the textual evidence of the novel's treatment of Carrie's quandary—in her struggle to distinguish "authentic," spiritual "Beauty" from its mere material manifestations—as a source of the subverting of her quest for self-expression and meaningful life through theatrical art. That earlier exploration of this theme in the characterization of Carrie both complements and provides a background context for the present discussion.

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EDITORS' NOTE

The following two essays were originally presented on 10 November 2000 at the *Sister Carrie* Centenary Conference at the University of Pennsylvania in a session devoted to textual issues. In "The *Sister Carrie* We've Come to Know," James L. W. West III looks back at the controversy surrounding his editing of the 1981 Pennsylvania edition and ponders whether he would make the same choices today. In contrast to this personal essay, Donald Pizer's "The Text of *Sister Carrie*: Where We Are Now" surveys changes in the landscape of textual theory that have made the earlier controversy largely irrelevant. Despite their different emphases, the two essays converge on the practical problems classroom teachers face given the existence of multiple texts.

The *Sister Carrie* We've Come To Know

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I'm sometimes asked whether, if I had it to do over, I would again edit the text of *Sister Carrie* as I did for the 1981 Pennsylvania edition. I always answer yes: I would restore the same passages, reinstate the profanity and the real names, drop the chapter titles, and print the original endings for the final two chapters. But I would present the text differently, using an alternative rhetoric, similar to the language with which I presented *Jennie Gerhardt* in 1992 and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Trimalchio*, an early text of *The Great Gatsby*, in 2000. I would not be as insistent about the virtue of what I was doing.

This requires a short diversion into editorial theory. Speaking very broadly, there are two traditions of editing that operate in the academy today. One, the Greg-Bowers-Tanselle tradition, accepts the idea of authorial intention, values that intention above all else, and relies on editorial judgment. The other, the Peckham-McGann-Reiman approach, insists to the contrary that the culture speaks the text, that all works of literature are collaborations, that they exist in versions that shouldn't be tampered with, and that the modern editor's judgment should be exercised sparingly if at all.

The virtue of the first approach is that the scholarly editor is cast as hero and savior. He or she is the defender of the author's textual rectitude. The vocabulary here is indicative of the moral cast: one does away with "corruption" and "tampering"; one restores a text to the original "purity" of the author's intentions. It's a romantic notion, appealing because it puts the editor in a favorable light. It also delegates to the editor a great deal of authority. The virtue of the second approach is that the scholarly editor cuts a more modest figure: he or she

is a presenter or mediator, not a knight-errant. An editor of this persuasion assumes a less confident stance and is reluctant to participate in the creation of an alternative text. Such a reduced role is more attractive to editors hesitant to make aesthetic judgments or to execute emendations; the variant passages are simply presented, and the user of the edition is supposed to contemplate which, if any of them, is preferable to the others. I should add that the labor is the same for editors of both persuasions. We poor, plodding comma-counters must still hunt up the surviving textual forms, collate them one against the other, and present the results in textual tables or electronic lists. (And then wonder whether anyone ever really uses those lists.)

I remain an intentionalist. I would edit *Sister Carrie* again by attempting to recapture, through editorial labor and literary imagination, what I thought to be Dreiser's intentions for his first novel, before he began to listen seriously to advice from his wife Sara and his friend Arthur Henry and before Doubleday, Page required him to expunge profanity, sexual innuendo, and real names. But I now understand that a culture can speak a text too and that the 1900 edition of *Sister Carrie* is as good an example of such a collaborative work of art as we are likely to find in twentieth-century American literature. Texts of this sort are of considerable value; they are worth studying and writing about, just as surely as restored texts (spoken by their own scholarly cultures) are deserving of close attention.

The controversy over the restored *Sister Carrie* helped to bring into the light similar questions about other literary texts. No teacher who stands before a college class today can teach *Sister Carrie* or *Jennie Gerhardt* or *The Great Gatsby* or *Tender Is the Night* or *Sanctuary* or *Go Down, Moses* or "The Yellow Wall-Paper" or *Women in Love* or *Lady Chatterley's Lover* or *Ulysses* or *The Jungle* or *The Sun Also Rises* or *A Farewell to Arms* or *Lie Down in Darkness* or *Black Boy* or *The Floating Opera* or—this list could go on—no one can teach these works responsibly without knowing something about their textual histories and without explaining to the students, undergraduate or graduate, whether the paperback that they hold is a text spoken by a culture or by an author.

I've found my students to be curious about such matters and almost always uninformed about them. The concepts aren't hard to grasp; everyone understands the issues right away. Stories about the

composition, editing, bowdlerization, and restoration of texts can be presented effectively with photocopies or slide projectors—or from computer disks, if the classroom is fitted out with digital equipment. These presentations capture the attention of students, unlike much of what has been coming out of English departments for the past twenty years. Teachers who take the trouble to work up such lectures can use them semester after semester; they can also require something more from their students than (as we used to say in the 1970's), "Read the text, man, and describe your vibes."

I'm glad now that we had a controversy over the text of *Sister Carrie* and that the disagreements haven't gone away. I think we conducted ourselves very well, as opposed, say, to the Joyce scholars with their loud fussing over the text of *Ulysses*. Our controversy made people think about issues of intention and authority; it also helped them to see that a text is not an icon but a process, forever in flux. Texts remain in motion, indeterminate and unstable. Those words are tossed around casually by literary theorists; I like it that we have real, concrete examples of unstable texts—such as *Sister Carrie*.

A final point: I've come to believe that scholarly editing is a species of biography. This insight grew on me while I was writing *William Styron: A Life*, published in 1998. Like biographers, scholarly editors attempt to recapture and describe behavior from the past. Biographers and editors use the same evidence and speculate in the same ways. They also offer moral judgments—or refuse to do so, or pretend not to do so—giving similar reasons for what they are doing or not doing. Editors construct portraits of authors which will legitimize what they mean to do with the texts those authors have written; editors use the methods of biographers to assemble these portraits. Certainly that is what I did with Dreiser and *Sister Carrie*. I meant to present him as a disciplined professional and a serious young artist, not as a poorly educated rube from Indiana who needed chastisement with the blue pencil. I would do it again, but the second time I'd be more aware of my methods and my intentions—for editors have intentions too. I know I did when I edited *Sister Carrie*.

The Text of *Sister Carrie*: Where We Are Now

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To review briefly: the version of *Sister Carrie* which Doubleday, Page published in 1900 remained, with the exception of a brief passage in chapter one, the text of *Sister Carrie* until the University of Pennsylvania's edition of the novel in 1981. Initial reports of the new edition, in newspapers and magazines, usually echoed the claims of the editors of the Pennsylvania version that *Sister Carrie* was now at last available in a more authentic form. Scholarly reviews, however, were more mixed, based on what was then a fundamental schism in editing theory, a schism which Dreiser's habits of composition brought to the fore.¹

Dreiser seldom destroyed his early drafts or indeed any of the documents which constitute the pre-publication history of a work. (With a few exceptions, all of this material is in the Dreiser Collection of the University of Pennsylvania Library.) It is usually possible, therefore, to construct a cradle-to-grave textual history of a Dreiser work. For *Sister Carrie*, for example, there exist Dreiser's handwritten (or "holograph") first draft and the typescript made from this draft (which was itself used to set type for the novel), with both the holograph and typescript containing significant revisions. Only the proof is missing. An editor can thus determine what was revised or cut from the novel, and indeed can often determine who made the revisions or cuts. The issue presented by the availability of this material is whether in the preparation of a scholarly text of the novel the editor should stress its pre- or its post-publication form. To put the matter perhaps too simply, the basis for accepting the text written by Dreiser before revision and cutting is that he was either consciously or uncon-

sciously responding to a need to make his book more salable and that his early version of the novel, before this motive became operative, is thus the one truer to his artistic intentions.² The bases for adopting the published text as authoritative are that Dreiser, both for *Sister Carrie* and for all his subsequent novels, sought out and welcomed pre-publication aid in the editing of his work, that it is usually impossible to determine his motive for accepting or rejecting editing suggestions made by others, and that, in any case, the cultural process by which a literary work reaches its audience is as much a part of the work as the author's original intent and should not and cannot be separated from the work.³

Since these are not easily reconciled positions, it is no wonder that the Pennsylvania edition of *Sister Carrie*, which is based on the primacy of Dreiser's holograph version of the novel, occasioned controversy. I do not wish in these remarks to rehearse this argument in the terms in which it was pursued twenty years ago. I wish rather to survey briefly where we are today, in the light of several major developments in textual theory over the last two decades, in our conception of the issues presented by the text of *Sister Carrie*.

It is generally accepted by textual theorists that the various conceptions of how to edit a text held in any age are inseparably linked to larger critical and theoretical assumptions of the age.⁴ Since the early 1980s, two major paradigm shifts in the academic study of literature, and thus in editing theory as well, have rendered largely obsolete the controversy presented by the 1981 edition of *Sister Carrie*. In addition, a new method of transmitting literary texts has also tended to neutralize the earlier controversy.

The first such shift is that occasioned by the widespread influence of deconstruction on literary interpretation. Implicit in a deconstructive frame of mind is the notion that an instability of meaning is inherent in the very nature of language and thus of course in the literary text itself as an instrument of language. This frame of mind soon found a home in textual studies as well as in other areas of scholarly inquiry.⁵ The Greg-Bowers theory of textual editing, the basis of almost all editorial practice in American and British editing for over half a century, had posited an "ideal" text—that is, an eclectic text, drawn from various sources, which constituted the author's final intentions in the composition of his work. It is this text which is offered to the

world by the scholarly editor in a so-called “definitive” edition as a basis for both critical study and reproduction in cheaper reading versions. However, to a generation deeply suspicious of seemingly inevitable meanings in a literary text, the air of certainty and finality in the notion of a single purportedly authoritative edition of a text, a text which limits the varied possibilities of meaning present in the multiple versions of a work, is equally suspect. Just as the inherent indeterminacy of language should stimulate a multiplicity of possible readings of a passage, so multiple versions of a text should be celebrated and studied for their contributions to textual instability. To a textual theorist of this persuasion, in short, the issue is not that of preferring and therefore selecting either the Pennsylvania or the Doubleday, Page edition but of recognizing the legitimate presence of both texts in any discussion of *Sister Carrie*.

This theoretical skepticism toward the idea of a single authoritative text was strengthened by the somewhat later impact of cultural studies on textual theory.⁶ To the cultural historian, all manifestations of a culture are of interest and importance, since whatever their possible status in any traditional hierarchy of value in a specific culture, they nevertheless reflect the deep roots of belief and feeling in that culture. To the deconstructionist’s belief that an eclectic edition inhibits an awareness of textual indeterminacy, the cultural historian adds his concern that such an edition reduces the cultural richness of a text to a single textual critic’s notion of a “best” text, a process as invalid as any method which recognizes the hegemony of any person, group, or ideology. Furthermore, to a cultural critic, the study of literature is in large part the study of the product of a social dynamic—that is, a study of the various ways a culture expresses itself through the process by which a literary work is transmitted from the author to a reading public. Every stage in this process is therefore of interest, since it manifests an aspect of that dynamic. Thus, for *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser’s holograph reflects changes made on the advice of his wife and in response to his own second thoughts, while his typescript was revised after careful scrutiny by his friend Arthur Henry, with perhaps an eye toward a publisher’s concerns, and also bears the evidence of changes made in the publisher’s office. Both of these pre-publication forms are of great value as evidence of the cultural forces at work, both within Dreiser’s mind and in the minds of others, during the process which produced

the Doubleday, Page text. To textual critics of this persuasion, in short, it is neither the holograph nor the typescript nor the first edition which is of principal interest, but rather the process by which the holograph became the first edition.

Both of these recent tendencies in the conception of literature, and thus the conception of textual editing, have contributed to a belief that an editor's function may well be not to construct a single ideal text but to present the multiple texts which constitute the principle evidence in the textual history of a particular work.⁷ In part coincidentally and in part in response to this desire, there has arisen during the last decade an editorial method which by means of electronic transmission makes feasible editions of this kind. Known as "hypertexts," such editions present the multiple versions of a text not in the expensive and cumbersome formats required by a print medium but on the computer screen, where every variation in the multiple texts of a single work can be made immediately available through the click of a mouse.⁸ Hypertexts, of course, have not made obsolete the long and impressive rows of definitive editions found in academic libraries. The method is still in its early stages, with more discussion than actual production of texts, and scholars are indeed still producing volumes in Greg-Bowers-based traditional editions, and critics are still citing these editions for their references. But the great interest in the form suggests that technology, in this instance, may in fact supply a means for the achievement of intellectually based hypotheses.

It is necessary, however, to conclude this brief survey of where we are now in theorizing the text of *Sister Carrie* on a less positive note. One of the conventions in the teaching of literature in American universities is that students are assigned a specific text of a work, usually with the assumption that they will purchase a copy of that text, in order to assure a common basis for classroom reference and discussion. Despite the theoretical support for a multiple-text conception of the literary work, and despite the technological instruments which are being developed for delivering such a version of the text, it is difficult to conceive of electronic multiple texts ever becoming common in the classroom. As most teachers of literature know, it requires a heroic effort to get students to read one version of an average-sized novel, let alone two or three versions. In addition, it boggles the mind to picture a lecture-size class of, say, 60 students huddled over individual per-

sonal monitors or viewing a distant large screen while attempting to follow the instructor's guidance through specific passages of multiple texts. In short, while the theoretical push is toward the denial of the premise that there can be an authoritative single text of a work, the practical need for such a version still remains. For *Sister Carrie*, for example, most teachers will still have to choose between the Pennsylvania edition, available from Penguin, and the numerous paperbacks of the Doubleday, Page edition. Thus, as teachers of *Sister Carrie* who need to assign a class text, we have not made that much progress since the early 1980s. In fact, we may have retrograded. Then, we could make an informed choice with some confidence that at least in our own minds it was the correct choice. Now, we are even more informed, but whatever choice we make, we do so with considerable doubt that it is the right one.

Notes

1. On the whole, newspaper stories about the new edition endorsed the project (see Mitgang), while early reviewers tended to welcome it but to question whether it was indeed a better novel than the 1900 version (see Brodhead, Kaplan, and Kazin). Reviews of and essays about the edition by textual scholars, however, divided sharply into those accepting its editorial method (Parker, Hayes) or rejecting it (Pizer, Rev. of Penn SC; and Brennan, Rev. of Penn SC and "The Two Endings of *Sister Carrie*").

2. See West, "Manuscript to Print," Dreiser 503-41; and West, *A Sister Carrie Portfolio*.

3. See Pizer, "Self-Censorship and Textual Editing." See also Dowell for an even-handed review of the issues in the controversy.

4. See Cohen, ed., *Devils and Angels*, especially Cohen and David H. Jackson's "Notes on Emerging Paradigms in Editorial Theory."

5. See Greetham, "The Deconstruction of the Text: [Textual Criticism] and Deconstruction," *Theories of the Text* 326-66.

6. See McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*; and Greetham, "Society and Culture in the Text," *Theories of the Text* 367-432.

7. See Cohen, "Textual Instability" xi-xxxiv.

8. For representative studies of the nature and possibilities of hypertext editions, see Hockey; Landow, "Hypertext and Critical Theory," *Hypertext* 2-34; Lavagnino; McGann, "The Rationale of Hypertext"; and Schillingburg, "Electronic Editions," *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age* 161-71.

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On First Reading *Sister Carrie*

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Certain novels, even when diligently first read, go in one eye and out the other. But sometimes a first reading makes an indelible impression on the mind recalled at intervals afterward as an intensely moving or deeply disturbing or undeniably seminal experience. My own record of these opposite responses includes an "introduction" to a Jack London novel. Checking my personal library last summer for reading material, I came across *Burning Daylight*. I knew I had long since read *Martin Eden* and other London books, and I was equally sure that I had never read this one. Imagine my surprise when, taking *Burning Daylight* down from its shelf and paging through it, I found that I had not only read it but also copiously annotated it at some time in the recent past. That discovery made, I then remembered that I had even referred to the novel in an article I had written about naturalism. This sort of experience with novels has happened before, producing a mild shock on the order of the eye-opener I received a couple of years ago when I came across my high school grade reports. During an excursion into my storage attic, I found in those ancient documents, despite having absolutely no memory of ever having studied Latin, incontrovertible evidence that I had taken four years of it.

My slippery initial exposure to *Burning Daylight* and its ilk contrasts most markedly with my fateful first readings of other novels. I initially read Virginia Woolf's remarkable *To the Lighthouse*, for instance, while vacationing with in-laws at a northern Indiana lake. My mind's eye can recreate to this day the way in which the sunlight, filtered through the wind-tossed canopy of shoreline trees, dappled the

pages that brought to vivid life Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey, Lily Briscoe, and especially several incandescent passages like the dinner party scene with its stunning circle symbolism. Each of my many rewarding rereadings of *To the Lighthouse* in the ensuing years has served to summon the remembrance of that erratic sun on its pages when I first turned them.

My equally memorable first acquaintance with *Sister Carrie* was made relatively late in my literary education. I discovered Dreiser's existence while consulting the reading list provided to prepare candidates for the Ph.D. general examinations at the University of Michigan in the late fifties. Those were the days when literature was regarded as something more than a subset of theory. I was in the middle of my master's degree work at the time and hoping to prolong my student status by pursuing a doctorate, thus avoiding entry into what was even then called "the real world." Although I had been an English major as an undergraduate, that had been at a particularly wretched Catholic university noted at the time, according to one national news magazine, only for "piety and basketball." Since what passed for an intellectual climate there put most writers after the Protestant Reformation in the category of Godless heretics, Dreiser, to be sure, failed to make the cut on any course syllabus. And my post-B.A. two-year stint in the military, courtesy of the local draft board, had done little to broaden my literary horizons.

My search for a copy of *Sister Carrie* took me to one of the several second-hand book stores that flourished in Ann Arbor during those days when the place was a large but relatively bucolic academic enclave, not the frenetic high-tech center it is today. Even though those were times when a decently bound, brand new paperback could sometimes be had for as little as thirty-five cents, I was trying to live on just over one hundred dollars a month supplied by the G.I. Bill. And I had long before decided that a personal text I could augment with marginalia, rather than a library loan, was essential to graduate study. My *La Bohème* existence, however, demanded the utmost frugality in book purchases and even stimulated creative culinary innovations, including a version of the classic grilled cheese sandwich consisting of Cheese Whiz dribbled on one slice of Wonder Bread and heated on top of the clanking steam radiators in my thirty-dollar-a-month rented room. I think the dog-eared copy of *Carrie* I eventually found (the Doubleday

edition, of course) cost me fifteen cents.

It was around eleven o'clock on a cold and snowy Michigan winter evening when I slipped into bed intending to read the opening pages of my new purchase as an aid to falling asleep. (This was a couple of years before I discovered that the arms of Morpheus were laden with late Henry James novels.) Within the first few pages of *Carrie*, I became hopelessly hooked and read through the night. What first attracted me was Dreiser's managing, through a couple of opening passages, not only to chart his young leading lady's entry into Chicago from her small hometown but also to empathize ardently with her enthrallment while at the same time warning her through his narrative voice about the perils of extravagant expectation. As Carrie gaped from a railway car window at the city's seductive surface, the "lighted chamber set for dining . . . the theater, the halls, the parties, the ways and the paths of song" spurring her "dreams of some vague, far-off supremacy," I couldn't help relating her sense of the overwhelming possibilities of the city, and therefore of life, to my own first trip to Chicago and my own young hopes. And with each of Carrie's successive failures to find happiness in her acquisitions and accomplishments in Chicago and New York, my own vague discontents were stirred anew. As I read, I began to see that Dreiser's aim in the novel, clearly indicated in his authorial intrusions, was nothing less than to account for the serial disillusionments that nearly every character in thoughtful fiction experiences but that none of their creators directly explains.

When Stephen Crane decided to break his classic short story "The Open Boat" into several distinct segments, he did so primarily to indicate lapses in time. In this way he avoided the need to inform his readers again and again that his four castaways "rowed and rowed and rowed." Even though the extended form of *Sister Carrie* greatly lessened Dreiser's need of a similar strategy, he felt compelled, in the midst of a narrative already exhaustively embedded with examples of Carrie's all-consuming urges, to tell us that she "longed and longed and longed." On that Michigan night over forty years ago, this was the line that struck me, as it strikes me to this day, as the most telling in the book. Not only Carrie, but also Drouet, Hurstwood, and, as I would subsequently learn, Jennie, Cowperwood, Clyde, Haymaker, Etta Barnes, and all of the rest of Dreiser's fictional company are to a greater or lesser degree tormented by desires, the seeming objects of which are

never sufficiently salient to account for the obsessive hunger for them. What makes *Sister Carrie* a great and continuingly relevant work is Dreiser's persistent, artful, and empathetic examination of this frustration of fulfillment in the context of an America we still know, the one country in the world blessed with the material resources and the institutions of government seemingly sufficient to satisfy the individual's need. Indeed, desire and its disillusionment became the most pervasive theme of serious fiction written in the United States after *Sister Carrie*. If, as Harold Bloom contends, Shakespeare invented the human, then Dreiser surely defined the American.

Not that this was entirely clear to me at first sight. I began to appreciate Dreiser's achievement fully only in later years after having returned to *Sister Carrie* in the context of his subsequent work and that of his American successors. What was clear from the start, however, was that the novel spoke volumes to me. I knew on finishing that first reading that Dreiser had managed, in recounting his heroine's struggle to locate a path to secular salvation between the poles of self-gratification and the claims of others, to demonstrate how complex even simple people's perhaps illusory "choices" necessarily are. And I saw, in his own futile struggle to point an appropriate direction for Carrie, that Dreiser had exposed another truth, namely that even highly intelligent thinkers can be at a loss to make moral or any other kind of sense of modern life with its enfeebled belief systems. My later reading has turned up no one notably more insightful than Dreiser in probing this problem and certainly no one any more successful in solving it.

Perhaps the best test of any novel's enduring value has to do with the frequency with which we call to mind and use its insights after the fact of our having read it. Again and again over the years, Dreiser's depiction of Carrie and his other characters has served me as a Rosetta stone with which not only to gloss later American literature but also to make sense of my own life. *Sister Carrie's* major theme, that the individual must necessarily remain curiously empty even in consumer-catering America with its abundance and opportunity, explains for me much of the national angst and my own portion of it. I believe we are all akin to Dreiser's dreamers with their anxious anticipation. And this is what stamps *Sister Carrie* with the most important of Henri Bergson's measures of mastery as set forth during his brief discussion of

novelistic aesthetics in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. According to Bergson, after a novelist has portrayed characters through speech and behavior, we may feel that we understand them, but our knowledge is superficial unless we can “become” the characters and experience their feelings and drives. Those lacking this identification with the major players in *Sister Carrie* should have the appropriate tags tied to their toes.

That our reach should perpetually exceed our grasp is an idea so resistible that down through the ages the great philosophers and theologians and poets have felt compelled to remind us of it regularly. At the same time, it is an idea so transparently true that it often turns up in far less venerated venues. For example, one scene on the highly popular situation comedy *Seinfeld* has Kramer, who is about to leave for California in pursuit of his quirky dreams, quiz George in the familiar corner diner as to whether he ever “yearns.” His neurotic friend admits that, though he seldom yearns, he “craves a lot.” Perhaps the two friends should have met for their discussion in a Chinese restaurant since the idea that we should not expect too much from life turns up surprisingly often in post-Peking duck fortune cookies. But chances are the change of scene wouldn’t have helped, because most of us, an hour after consuming the wisdom of even Aristotle or Augustine, still hunger for some substance commensurate with our capacity for wanting.

As Don DeLillo writes on the very first page of his ambitious novel *Underworld*, “Longing on a large scale makes history.” On first reading *Sister Carrie*, I came to see not only that Dreiser was a great novelist who had in his very first fiction captured the spirit of a nation but also that he had taken the measure of my own marrow.

Reviews

Arthur Henry. *The House in the Woods*. Edited with Foreword and Afterword by Donald T. Oakes, with an Introduction by Alf Evers and Preface by Neda M. Westlake. New York: Black Dome P, 2000. 206 pp. Paper, \$15.95.

Dreiser's poignant description of Arthur Henry in *Newspaper Days*, together with a later sardonic expose ("Rona Murtha") in *A Gallery of Women*, has assured Henry a conspicuous, if modest, place in American literary history. He appears most famously as an influential presence in the compositional history of Dreiser's early fiction. The highlights of the friendship are now part of Dreiser lore: the meeting of kindred spirits in Ohio when Dreiser, then a twenty-two-year-old foot-loose newsman, walked into the city editor's office at the *Toledo Blade*; their joint venture in New York's freelance market; the 1899 visit to Henry's home on the Maumee River in Ohio, where they pledged to write stories and novels together; Henry's editorial and advisory role during the composition—and publication woes—of *Sister Carrie*; the cooling off of the friendship after Henry's unflattering portrait of Dreiser in *An Island Cabin* (1902). All this celebrity has, surprisingly, produced little in the way of sustained inquiry into Henry's life and career.

This neglect has to a degree been set right in the notes and lengthy biographical "Afterword" to Donald T. Oakes's edition of *The House in the Woods*. Oakes is an Episcopal minister, an educator, and an independent researcher who lives in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. He first read the book, at a neighbor's suggestion, over twenty-five years ago. Himself a student of the forests and mountains of the Northeast, Oakes found Henry's account of his woodland adventure engag-

ing enough to warrant a new edition.

Oakes is right about the quality of the book. Henry's novels—including *A Princess of Arcady*, which Dreiser claimed to have completed—have little value today, except perhaps as biographical sources. But he has a genuine talent for autobiographical-reportorial narratives that focus on romantic interludes in his life. He published a trilogy of such books within a four-year period: *An Island Cabin* (1902), *The House in the Woods* (1904), and *Lodgings in Town* (1905). The first two explore Henry's romantic quest for a simple pastoral life outside the industrial urban world depicted in *Sister Carrie*. In *The House in the Woods* the locale is the Catskill Mountain Top region, specifically the land that borders the hamlet of Platte Clove and the town of Tannersville in the Valley of the Plattekill, which Thomas Cole and William Cullen Bryant earlier had celebrated for its dramatic landscape.

Into this setting steps Henry, disguised as a fledgling author, and his companion "Nancy," both of whom appear in the other two books of the series. The self-portrait is true to Dreiser's description of the young Henry in "Rona Murtha." He is ever the optimist, "a dreamer of dreams, a spinner of fine fancies," a poetical and sprite-like figure whose first act in the woods is to run naked and turn handsprings: "I was a healthy savage, a true child of the wilderness" (13). The story turns on the checks placed on his exuberance by the realization that he has wandered not into a pastoral landscape but into an unforgiving world of rural toil. Yet this is not an anti-utopian fable of disillusionment. The dominant note is comic, a record of hardships overcome and of community celebration. The joke is finally on the city boy who confronts his limits beside the rough folk who have tamed the land. The literary dreamer begins with Thoreau-like desires to live the simple life among his books and garden while communing with nature. Instead, he finds himself totally preoccupied with an endless round of tending pigs and chickens, milking cows, and protecting himself from the harsher elements of nature. The epigraph to the book could have been taken from one of two concluding sentiments of the narrator: "If we would live in our palace of dreams, we must do the chores" (152) or "If we run from the city to escape its vexations, we will find the vexations of the country in wait for us" (154).

Fortunately, this light fare is fortified by Henry's extraordinary

observations of American country life, written at a time when tourism was already beginning to change the social order of places such as Platte Clove. This is a must read for anyone curious to learn how early communities broke ground and constructed homes and farmland out of rough mountainous terrain. Henry records such events as the construction of a cellar over watery soil and the clearing of a rocky field for a “garden.” What makes such seemingly mechanical chores good reading is that Henry builds them around individualized portraits of his neighbors. He skillfully renders the speech, temperaments, and physical presence of a range of characters—from well-fed innkeepers to lonely spinsters to dirt-poor squatters—with an attention to detail and a surprising feel for regional dialect. The locals are treated with a sympathy that Dreiser later claimed was his friend’s blind spot. Dreiser, however, overstates the matter, for even though Henry overpays the shrewd locals who work on his property, he is keenly aware that rural living narrows as well as nourishes people. (Oakes enhances the book’s realistic side by providing excellent photographs of Henry’s neighbors, in portraits and at work.) All are shown at the occupations that define their daily existence. It is a life of “toil, toil, toil,” as Henry observes, but the work that provides men and women with land, shelter, and sufficient food is a different order of labor than that of the factory and the sweatshops that preoccupied Dreiser.

Oakes adds significantly to our knowledge of Henry’s youth and of his subsequent relations with two minor characters in the Dreiser story: Henry’s first two wives, Maude Wood Henry and Anna Mallon. Like Dreiser, Henry spent his adult years reacting against early wounds inflicted by the religious strictures of a zealous parent. His mother, Sarepta Irish Henry, was a well-known Temperance evangelist who wrote a memoir which is included in her daughter’s amusingly titled biography, *My Mother’s Life: The Evolution of a Recluse* (1900). Henry quit school in his teens and became a reporter in Chicago; he left for Toledo shortly before Dreiser took his first newspaper job on the *Chicago Globe*. Oakes speculates, with little justification, that Dreiser belonged to Chicago’s Whitechapel Club, a literary circle that included Henry and another reporter, the novelist Brand Whitlock. Further, Oakes feels Whitlock must have sent Dreiser to Toledo with a letter of introduction. A few other inaccuracies of this sort exist, in part because Oakes trusts the word of Maude Wood Henry, a strong-willed

and admirable woman whose copious letters to biographer Robert Elias are fascinating but also filled with mistakes of memory. The Toledo *Blade's* first woman reporter, she claimed to have covered the strike in that city, though Dreiser actually reported on the event. In addition, she insists against all solid evidence that Dreiser began writing *Sister Carrie* during his summer visit to Maumee—which is a possibility, except that in addition she misremembers the year as 1897 and that Dreiser was editing *Ev'ry Month* in 1899, two years after he left the magazine.

Oakes is especially interested in Anna Mallon (the Nancy of this book), who ran the copy service that typed the manuscript of *Sister Carrie* and the original chapters of *Jennie Gerhardt*. Maude Henry is again Oakes's source, this time for the story that Dreiser and Henry parted company because of Dreiser's jealousy of Anna, with whom Henry preferred to spend his time. Maude's recollection corresponds to Dreiser's anecdote on the subject in "Rona Murtha." But whereas Dreiser recalls his response to Anna Mallon with self-deprecating humor, Maude interprets his reaction as the cause of life-long enmity between the two men. Whatever biographical reality exists is probably located somewhere between these two accounts.

Readers may sense that Oakes finally is more sympathetically drawn to Mallon than to Henry as a biographical subject. One can understand the temptation. There was enough drama in her life to encourage someone to write one of the now popular "women of great men" biographies. After she and Henry divorced in 1910, her life slowly fell apart. Oakes had access to a remarkable cache of sensational and revealing letters that Mallon wrote to Delia Farrell Seifferth, a friend from the Platte Clove days. Mallon's last years were spent in and out of sanitariums for treatment of a host of psychosomatic symptoms. She was fatally attached to Henry, attempting even after the divorce to continue in the Henry family business at Yakima, Washington. Oakes implies that she may have been abused sexually by Henry's brother Alfred, a Methodist minister and author of an unflattering book on the Mormons. Oakes somewhat moralistically takes Henry to task for having affairs with other women and for leaving Mallon; he sees these as the causes of the emotional decline of an otherwise stable and talented businesswoman. Her unhappy last days ended in 1921 when, at age 59, she died in what probably was a suicidal drowning in the Naches River

at Yakima.

Oakes presents his documentation and conclusions clearly and diligently. There is no doubt that Anna Mallon was a capable business-woman; unlike Oakes, however, I see evidence in her letters that she remained professionally competent long after the split with Henry. Her emotional security is another matter. In examining this aspect of her life, Oakes has inadvertently focused attention on an element of the book that readers might otherwise have missed. "Nancy" is as content as she can imagine herself being in her house in the woods, and Anna Mallon's letters say as much of herself. Yet the portrait of her in this generally upbeat book is of a woman already fighting demons other than Henry. She is "quick to give and quick to resent" (5). Even her "sentimental delight [in the place] took the form of restlessness and activity" (50). She is a brooder whose face often becomes "overcast with the shades of disappointment and anger" (51). Her sensitivity is a burden to her: "A pinprick in the affections is a sword-thrust to one like Nancy. It stirred emotions that she really was unable to control. . . . Great happiness is possible for such a woman. She can both feel and bestow it, but she cannot find or keep it herself" (73). The dark undercurrent that Henry sees running through Nancy's happiest days is consistent with the depressing self-portrait that emerges from Mallon's later letters. Although this connection is not mentioned in Oakes's pages, the bringing together of these documents for public scrutiny is one of the many achievements of his research.

Oakes has little interest in Henry's later years, in which he had a long and seemingly good marriage to the playwright Clare Kummer before his death in 1934. (Dreiser wrote to Kummer that "Hen's death struck close to me.") In contrast, the final years of Anna Mallon are presented in considerable detail. One fact among the many is worth noting. For reasons that are not altogether clear, she strongly disliked Dreiser. One of the cruelest blows to a fuller understanding of the post-*Sister Carrie* relationship between Henry and Dreiser is Mallon's decision in 1909 to burn the correspondence. Interestingly, this action had its immediate cause in Dreiser's presence at the house in the woods, where he and his wife Sara spent time as Henry's guests in 1908. Living at the time on the West coast, Anna wrote Delia complaining that Henry had promised "that he would not permit the Dreisers to go again, because it made me suffer so." She asked her to take

the letters from a trunk and subsequently ordered them to be burned.

Oakes reports that he has met people who have seen Anna's ghost, which some believe inhabits the dwelling. Others say that Anna and Henry can be heard arguing at night on the grounds between the house and the woods. In the absence of a much-needed biography of Henry, the best starting place to learn more about these two notable spirits is in this new edition of *The House in the Woods*.

—Thomas P. Riggio, The University of Connecticut

Theodore Dreiser and American Culture: New Readings. Ed. Yoshinobu Hakutani. Newark: U of Delaware P, 2000. 321 pp. Cloth, \$49.50.

On my recent flight from Frankfurt to Stockholm, my plane was delayed by several hours during a stop-over in Amsterdam; I counted myself lucky that I had come equipped with Yoshinobu Hakutani's new collection of essays, *Theodore Dreiser and American Culture: New Readings*. Perhaps prompted by the airport atmosphere of journalistic and tabloidese, I first plunged into Philip Gerber's chapter, "Jolly Mrs. Yerkes Is Home from Abroad: Dreiser and the Celebrity Culture," a compelling and elegantly written essay about the spinning of celebrities in the life of the traction king and notorious womanizer Charles T. Yerkes, the man behind Dreiser's Cowperwood trilogy. Gerber's story of Yerkes and the public media is a profoundly modern one, peppered with sensationalist newspaper gossip, America's desire for celebrity, and Yerkes's wrestling over control of self-imaging. Mrs. Yerkes, the vibrant Mary Adelaide, becomes the victim of the media, as her own life spins out of control, while Yerkes's young mistress, Emilie Grigsby, the daughter of a Louisville madam, not only miraculously survives the media frenzy but appears to thrive on it.

Gerber's is one of several gems in this fine collection that proposes to probe Theodore Dreiser's relationship to American culture. Another significant contribution—on American working women's culture—comes in Laura Hapke's "Men Strike, Women Sew: Gendered Labor Worlds in Dreiser's Social Protest Art." Drawing on the work of cultural historians, including Kathy Peiss's *Cheap Amusements*, Hapke argues and documents that Dreiser distances himself from what the

new labor historians term “women’s work culture”: that is, the working woman’s response to both her female peers and the employer’s rules. Hapke also traces Dreiser’s working-girl stories to documentary classics like Elizabeth Beardsley Butler’s *Women and the Trades: Pittsburgh, 1907-1908* (1909), a work that provides “many capsule case histories for women who bartered sexual services for the possibility of ascension” (109).

An intriguing discussion of America’s emergent body building culture comes in Kathy Frederickson’s “Working Out to Work Through: Dreiser in Muldoon’s Body Shop of Shame,” an essay that investigates the wrestler and body builder William Muldoon, aka “Culhane, the Solid Man” from Dreiser’s *Twelve Men* (1919). Against the backdrop of Theodore Roosevelt’s *The Strenuous Life* (1900), a work that extols the virtues of physical work and exercise, Frederickson documents that Muldoon participates in the contemporary health reform movement. His “repair shop” allows men to participate in the fantasy that they can rejuvenate their bodies and repair their egos, as the sixty-year-old Muldoon presents his ageless and flawless body as an armor that contrasts with the grotesque body parts and shapes of the male customers, including Dreiser himself. It is in these cultural essays that we recognize the modernity and significance of Dreiser for the twenty-first-century reader.

Hakutani’s collection of sixteen essays follows in the wake of Miriam Gogol’s edited volume *Theodore Dreiser: Beyond Naturalism* (1995), a work that programmatically opened Dreiser scholarship to psychoanalytic, feminist, and new historical readings. Hakutani’s title promises a similar programmatic opening of Dreiser studies by propelling the field into the arena of cultural studies, a most promising and exciting enterprise given the importance of cultural phenomena in Dreiser’s fiction: fashion, leisure, tabloid journalism, movies, sports, travel, visual art, consumer culture, and popular culture. Indeed, even the movies based on Dreiser’s fiction present an important subject of study within the arena of cultural studies.

Still, the title of Hakutani’s collection may set up wrong expectations, in that only a minority of essays are really about cultural issues in Dreiser’s work, the majority of the essays covering areas of textual editing, biography, and literary intertextuality. Hakutani’s title, then, is really used in the broadest understanding of the word “culture,” an un-

derstanding that may create confusion for some cultural studies readers, who after two decades of rigorous academic theorizing, may expect a more consistent engagement of core cultural theorists, many of whom are not even cited once in the otherwise helpful bibliography. Moreover, the collection might have acknowledged more forcefully the pioneering work of Rachel Bowlby, or Walter Benn Michaels, scholars who have developed highly sophisticated models for exploring consumer culture in Dreiser. The easy dismissal of these two scholars in Kiyohiko Murayama's essay did not entirely persuade this reader that their important work on consumer culture was adequately represented in this volume. Finally, as the past president of the Canadian Comparative Literature Association, I must also take issue with the following sentence in Hakutani's introduction: "There have been, however, no in-depth comparative studies investigating the important relations between Dreiser and other writers." Indeed, there has been a plethora of earlier intertextual studies including comparative scholarly articles and chapters and at least one recent book connecting Dreiser with Richard Wright (Hajek 1972). Other writers linked with Dreiser include the Americans Stephen Crane (Katz 1972, Hussman 1984), Edith Wharton (Price 1980), and Hamlin Garland (Love 1982); the Canadian Frederick Philip Grove (Gammel 1991, 1993, 1994); and the Europeans Fyodor Dostoevsky (Hoffman 1960), Emile Zola (Furst 1972, Lehan 1984, Langland 1984), Marcel Proust (Moers 1974), and Albert Camus (Purdy 1967), to name but a few.

These more theoretical concerns and issues of framing aside, however, this is a valuable collection of new readings with important contributions in the categories of biography, gender, textual editing, intertextuality, *and* culture.

In the category of gender, Stephen C. Brennan uses Luce Irigaray's gender paradigm to advance our understanding of Dreiser's fictional representations of masculinity in an essay entitled "This Sex Which Is One: Language and the Masculine Self in *Jennie Gerhardt*." Tackling issues of gender and biography, Miriam Gogol's "Interlocking, Intermeshing Fantasies: Dreiser and *Dearest Wilding*" has the courage of naturalistic honesty in dealing with Dreiser's foibles. Gogol bravely discusses Dreiser's "statutory rape" of the sixteen-year-old Yvette Szekely (later Eastman), as well as documenting that the fifty-nine-year-old author was also courting Yvette's fourteen-

year-old sister. These explosive biographical issues—in addition to the auto/biographical sources that have been made available over these past two decades—suggest a rich field for further inquiry for Dreiserians, one that may open the category of biography to include larger issues of life writing.

In the category of textual editing, Annemarie Koning Whaley's "Obscuring the Home: Textual Editing and Dreiser's *Jennie Gerhardt*" argues that the sense of home in the 1911 edition of *Jennie Gerhardt* is not as strong as in the restored 1992 Pennsylvania edition of the novel; James L. W. West III's "Alcohol and Drinking in *Sister Carrie*" traces the removal of references to alcohol in the first edition of *Sister Carrie*; and Renate von Bardeleben's "From Travel Guide to Autobiography: Recovering the Original of *A Traveler At Forty*" documents that Dreiser's attempts at self-portraiture were turned into a "convenient manual for the transatlantic tourist" in the process of revision.

Finally, in the category of intertextuality, we find several meticulously researched influence studies, including Thomas P. Riggio's "Dreiser, Fitzgerald and the Question of Influence." The reader is intrigued to learn that Dreiser's raw stylistic energy was at the heart of F. Scott Fitzgerald's stylistic elegance. Indeed Riggio very persuasively insists on the *stylistic* influence: "A more complex level of influence is found in the rhythms and images of *Gatsby*'s prose, which at important moments reveals the ways in which Fitzgerald had imaginatively absorbed Dreiser's language" (239). Lawrence E. Hussman examines the trajectory from "Naturalism to Postmodernism," tracing desire in Don DeLillo's postmodern fiction to a tradition begun with the naturalists; Yoshinobu Hakutani discusses "[Richard] Wright, Dreiser, and Spatial Desire"; while Robert Butler closes the collection with "Urban Frontiers, Neighborhoods, and Traps: The City in Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, Farrell's *Studs Lonigan*, and Wright's *Native Son*." In this review I can touch on only a few of the many intriguing essays. Ultimately, Hakutani has brought together an exciting array of essays that document the richness and vibrancy of Dreiser studies today. This book will please the international Dreiser community, and especially the International Dreiser Society to which this book is dedicated.

—Irene Gammel, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Germany

Getting at the Author: Reimagining Books and Reading in the Age of American Realism, by Barbara Hochman. Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 2001. 216 pp. Cloth, \$29.95.

Are you ever nostalgic, Gentle Reader, for those bygone days before the realists ruled the roost, when reading a good book was like having a conversation with its author? When the author entered the text as an engaging chatty friend? As the 19th century turned into the 20th, Barbara Hochman tells us in *Getting at the Author: Reimagining Books and Reading in the Age of American Realism*, serious novelists came to reject that delicious sense of intimacy as suitable only for popular fiction and began to insist on making themselves invisible in the text. (If you hunger for that pleasing sense of connection that comes from being addressed directly by the author, just find your way to the nearest column or book by Miss Manners and your craving will be sated.)

Paralleling similar developments in journalism, history, ethnography, medicine, and other fields, late nineteenth-century American literature became increasingly dominated by the “impersonal voice” as a “sign of authority and value.” “By 1900,” Hochman writes, “the aesthetic of authorial self-effacement—what Frank Norris called ‘suppression of the author’s personality’ in fiction—had become a basic tenet of literary realism.” By the first two decades of the 20th century the idea of the author as “a knowable, palpable human being communing with an actively participating reader had virtually disappeared from American fiction”—or at least from those books which would come to form the literary canon. The realists erased their own presence in their texts and wrote stories that appeared to tell themselves.

Dreiser scholars may find themselves arguing gently with Hochman at numerous points, saying to themselves, “but Dreiser didn’t do that,” or “but that doesn’t apply to Dreiser.” Hochman confirms those suspicions, but not until her final chapter, when we learn that Dreiser “is something of an anomaly as a realist.” Throughout the book Hochman argues that authorial invisibility was the price one had to pay to be taken seriously as an author in the late 19th and early 20th century and to get canonical status later. Dreiser, however, “often ignores the imperative of authorial invisibility as formulated by James, Norris, Wharton, and others.” Should the fact that Dreiser resisted this

trend yet got into the canon anyway make us at all uncomfortable with the accuracy and utility of Hochman's larger argument? Rather than viewing Dreiser as "something of an anomaly," one might reasonably ask whether Dreiser's "anomalous" status calls into question the utility of a paradigm shift that purports to make a general claim about realist novelists. In other words, how useful is this story if you have to leave Dreiser out to make it work?

Some other questions: Why did the authorial presence largely disappear at this point in history? Hochman posits authorial anxiety over exactly who the reader is in an increasingly diverse book market as one plausible answer but does not share with her own reader all of the evidence that must have led her to this conclusion. And why does the practice of marketing an author's life develop just as the author becomes invisible in the text? Hochman never really reconciles the apparent contradiction that the same period that ushers in the "invisibility" of the author within the text also brings us the hyper-visibility of the "author celebrity" outside the text.

Although Dreiser may well be something of a "spoiler" in this book when it comes to some of Hochman's overarching theories, he also inspires some of the book's finest moments. I was almost willing to suspend my doubts and sign for the whole shipment when I read the following about projections of authors' anxieties about their readers during this period: "Like Theodore Dreiser's novel *The Financier* (1912) in which a lobster devours a squid in the glass tank in a fish market window, many fictional texts of the period contain oblique and fanciful vignettes in which a beleaguered figure, defended only by 'a cloud of ink,' is gradually devoured." The author as a beleaguered figure "defended only by 'a cloud of ink.'" Inspired. So inspired I *want* it to be accurate, as well, but I'm afraid I remain unconvinced. If authors felt this afraid of their readers across the board, Hochman should have given us more evidence to that effect from the authors themselves. At the very least, from Dreiser, who planted the lobster and the squid in our heads in the first place.

This book may raise more questions than it answers, but Hochman deserves credit for drawing our attention to a number of aspects of the relationship between writers and readers in this period that previous scholarship has largely ignored, and for encouraging us to think about the role of the authorial personae both within and beyond

the text. Anyone who spends time teaching and thinking about turn-of-the-century fiction will find this book interesting.

—Shelley Fisher Fishkin, University of Texas at Austin

Labor's Text: The Worker in American Fiction, by Laura Hapke. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2001. 544 pp. Paper, \$30.

I'll never be your beast of burden.

—Rolling Stones

We got to move these refrigerators/ We got to move these color TVs.

—Dire Straits

I don't want to work/ Just want to bang on these drums all day.

—Todd Rudgren

Everybody's working for the weekend.

—Lover Boy

You got to lift up every stone, my sister, got to clear this field and build this wall.

—John Hiatt

If the theme of work is inextricable from much of popular culture's ditties and top-ten hits, what we hear is the ubiquitous voice of the proletarian who polarizes, without questioning, work (read struggle, oppression, containment, repression, submission, powerlessness) and leisure (read Bobby McGee's freedom, deliverance, reprieve, escape, pleasure). As the nature and perceptions of work and the definitions of "meaningful" or "gainful" employment are up for grabs, along comes Laura Hapke, the muse of us folk, and her huge chronicle of literary history to help us better contextualize our individual and collective relationships to labor—as sweating participants, as privileged spectators, as students of cultural history, as advocates for reform, as thoughtful scions of toilers intent on recovering and dignifying our forebears' alienated labor.

Laura Hapke, eminent and authoritative scholar of labor and gender studies, not only broadens analysis of American fiction but explores how the intersections of labor politics, cultural conflict, capitalist commodification, and ideology affect the history of worker representation in her incredibly comprehensive tome, her obvious labor of love, *Labor's Text: The Worker in American Fiction*. The adjectives

that come to mind to describe this encyclopedia of references are legion, like the texts and the range of genres she carefully explicates. Heading the list is “awesome” in that the book inspires awe—how could one woman produce so much knowledge?—and it is awe-inspired: the impetus to, as she describes it, “uncove[r] the literary iconography of sweat” (xiii) that was rooted in her studying her own father’s novella serialized in a 1930s radical journal. Like a good construction worker, Hapke keeps the staging, the tools, and the labor backgrounded to the finished product; what coalesces is a gorgeous, palatial house of analysis that wows passersby and visitors alike.

Though, Hapke reminds us, recent years have witnessed a dearth of “bards” to chronicle workers’ disillusionment with the American Dream and “the American dreaming” and labor fiction has retained only a marginal status, perhaps a new awareness is burgeoning. Recently, the Harvard Living Wage Campaign sit-in at Harvard University—protesting the lack of a living wage for campus maintenance workers—as well as the anti-globalization protestors in Seattle and Genoa, have recentered activism and labor in the news. Reminiscent of the 1964 program Freedom Summer, which enabled students to work for civil rights in the South, today’s “Union Summer,” inculcating a mind-frame of awareness and exploration, offers internships to college students who align themselves with group efforts to improve concrete conditions of working people’s lives. Also in the news is Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry’s ice cream, who is investing in “sweat-free” labor. With the backing of Pierre Ferrari, Cohen plans to open a clothing factory in Los Angeles that would maximize technology, pay livable wages to workers, and allow them to form unions and buy stock in the company. And along comes Barbara Ehrenreich’s *Nickle and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt, 2001) to complement Hapke’s work nicely. Ehrenreich’s ethnographic venture into the economy’s “lower depths” demonstrates her first-hand encounter with the impossibility of maintaining a modicum of material security on minimum-wage service jobs; she alerts middle-class readers (who can afford the \$23.00 for the book) that “there are no secret economies that nourish the poor” (27). Her posing as a “displaced homemaker” returning to the workplace exposes the ubiquitous race/class/sex-gender arrangements that continue to disenfranchise 30% of the current workforce.

Hapke's book offers a much-needed lens through which we can situate and appreciate recent labor-related events as they unfold daily. We are better equipped to anticipate how new labor narratives, as they see print, reflect our constructed social categories as well as our current cultural climate of disaffection and economic anxiety. Time in its historical matrix provides the frame for exploring how workers experience time by the clock, which is to say, more often than not, as exploited losers deprived of a fair share of abundant resources. One hundred and fifty years of fiction are neatly periodized into a tripartite division: before, during, and after the Great Depression. The sweep generally—she offers highlights of labor history, social conditions, and political ferment prefatory to discussing individual fictions—and the analyses individually follow a central question she consistently asks: “to what public rhetoric did the myriad of workforce fiction contribute?” For the most part, the antebellum script of self-betterment created an enduring legacy of Franklinesque bootstrap ideology compounded by the perception of America as “exceptional.” The tensions between class distinctions—their limitations and constrictions or privileges and endowments—and upward mobility, both reinforced and challenged, are core themes Hapke recovers in text after text while she “cast[s] a particularly critical eye on the erasures, harmful distortions, and unjust stereotypes” (xiii) of the prevailing discourse.

Capital begets more capital, and workers' resistance and capitulation to hegemonic structures are charted in hundreds of documents: Hapke reveals workers' lived experience, imaginatively recorded by diverse authors—mainstream writers, worker-writers, and working-class writers—“whether [they] address middlebrow readers, liberal or radical sympathizers, or, far less often, the proletariat itself” (14). Working lives have been, she reminds us,

inaccurately portrayed as either falsely conscious or too fully conscious . . . folk have been demonized, sanitized, co-opted, erased, infantilized, mythologized, depoliticized, politicized, and anesthetized. Workingmen have been called both democracy's lynchpin and its enemy, and workingwomen are either duty-bound but secondary wage earners or rootless vixen. More, if less honorable roles have been available to working people of color: sinister plotters or subnormal drudges, luckless menials or manipulative cheats, “low-down folks” or in-

cendary outcasts. (14)

As a woman reader of working-class ethnic origins, I identify with the legacy of immigrant family value systems of social ascension, economic gain, personal agency, embourgeoisement, but especially, specifically, with ethnic tenement woman's work-floor oppression and the redemption for sexuality via the Madonna complex, as well as the strangeness of the garlic-wearing Sicilian (knife in boot). I have not read one quarter of the texts Hapke explicates, but she has guided my own education and, since the personal is political, I am grateful and eager to hit the library.

The narratives of Part I, "From Antebellum to the Progressive Era" chart the rise of the American Dream of personal mobility through the creation of Mose the Bowery B'hoy, the ennobled, industrious mechanic, to black workers as "labor's fugitive: nowhere at home" (40), to the publicizing of "Riisian peeps at working-class squalor" (29), to the Knights of Labor fictions that enact their motto, "Organize, Agitate, Educate," to depictions of women's overall entrapment, to the taxonomy of types, and on to the decade of strike-fiction with its atavistic protagonists and morally suspect women.

Part II, "The Road to 1930," follows 1920s fiction and variations of desire. Dreiser's Clyde Griffiths signifies one kind of "hungry eye," the worker overcome with intense longing to consume objects, achieve status, and acquire women. Hapke claims Clyde is Dreiser's "pre-Depression era figure caught up in the irrelevance of work to belief or desire" (177). But other writers travel other paths; Upton Sinclair's novelistic rendition of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial, for example, critiques the conditions that allowed a "red scare" to proliferate and destroy the two immigrants. Anzia Yezierska scripts an "updated ethnic Horatio Alger fantasy" (181), and Mike Gold, one of Hapke's favorites, "became a one-man Proletkult factory" (186), that is, a movement meant to promote real-life representation by worker-artists. Gold's "proletarian bildungsroman" *Jews Without Money* (1930), the culmination of his experience with the Wobblies, the Communist Party, and the *New Masses*, which he edited, is a novel-memoir that portrays the patriarch's downward mobility and the son's political initiation. Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited* (1933) also offers a model of the father's disenfranchisement, while works by blacks during this time, before the Harlem Renaissance, express an all-consuming desire "to define and

ensure their legal status—to be allowed the full participation of citizens” (215) before the WWII era ignited the black rage expressed in Richard Wright’s “Blacks without Money.” A quintessential novel of the period, *The Grapes of Wrath*, Hapke notes, does the cultural work of erasing ethnics, “resurrect[ing] the Forgotten Family,” and reinforcing the unnaturalness of the nonpatriarchal family” (239-41), thereby propping the systemic discourse of self-reliance and white family values.

Following a detailed discussion of the political scene of the 1940s and 1950s, the McCarthy-era “American Inquisition,” and reactivation of 19th-century ideologies, Hapke examines postwar texts of Swados, Arnow, Algren, Mailer, Petry, Chayefsky, Williams, McGrath, Bonosky, Fast, Brown, Himes, and others; the workers of many of these authors “walk alone, tormented in the midst of plenty” (278). A running theme of “red-baiting the un-American, unhappy left-wing worker was counterpointed by the critique of working-class success and the ravages of consumerism” (278). Her chapter on the Civil Rights Era discusses Chicano, Asian, and Native American literatures, and though she clearly does not endorse “bundl[ing]” these writers under one rubric, she does “risk certain generalizations” (283) to explicate how various writers refashioned a usable past—the 1930s collective novel—creating ethnic voices of the downtrodden: Latinos’ stream-of-consciousness modes, Asians’ talk stories of ancestral history, and American Indians’ foregrounding of the supernatural and local legends. All three groups “ethniciz[ed] the trope of otherness and compliance, nobility and atavism, work culture and work strictures” (284). In the work of Banks, Terkel, Giardina, Carver, Oates, Chute, Allison, Bukowski, Burke, Sayles, Kennedy, Dickey, and others, the Vietnam decades “seemed to witness . . . the twilight of the white work ethic” (303). These writers, Hapke says, “struggled to work out the triangular relationship between traditional myths of classless self-advancement, the erased legacy of the mass-unionist 1930s, and the puzzling new apolitical working-class self-involvement” (305). Their anomie has influenced the current ethos of “easy money and the search for escapes from wage-earning work” (322). (Who wants to be a millionaire?)

If, as Traci Chapman sings, “poor people gonna rise up and get their share/Talking ‘bout a revolution,” then they need first understand,

as Ehrenreich notes, that “they have disappeared from the culture at large, from its political rhetoric, and intellectual endeavors, as well as from its daily entertainment” (118). Hapke renders them visible as she fleshes out narrative after narrative and scripts the history of working class literature.

—Kathy Frederickson, Quinsigamond Community College

News & Notes

The **Dreiser Edition** will now be published by the University of Illinois Press. The following editions will be forthcoming from Illinois: *A Traveler At Forty* (ed. Renate v. Bardeleben); the 1911 *The "Genius"* (ed. Clare Eby); *Theodore Dreiser: Interviews* (eds. Frederic E. Rusch and Donald Pizer); *New Dreiser Letters*, 2 vols. (eds. Thomas P. Riggio and Donald Pizer); *Dreiser's European Diaries* (ed. Renate V. Bardeleben). Riggio is General Editor of all these volumes.

Since publishing "Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser: New Letters and a Reexamination of Their Relationship," *American Literary Realism* 32.1 (Fall 1999): 69-81, I have received new information that calls into question the authenticity and provenance of the letters reprinted therein. I must therefore ask scholars to discount this essay until the matter can be settled definitively. My apologies to anyone whose research may be disrupted by this unwelcome news.

—James M. Hutchisson, Department of English, The Citadel

The Indiana Repertory Theatre's fourth production of its 2001–2002 season is the world premiere of *Sister Carrie*, in a new adaptation by playwright Charles Smith.

Smith most recently wrote for the IRT *Les Trois Dumas*, which was produced in the 1997–1998 season. Smith's latest success, *Puddin' Head Wilson*, recently opened in New York at the Julliard School and will be touring later next year. Smith currently serves as playwright-in-residence at Victory Gardens Theatre in Chicago and is the author of two Emmy Award-winning teleplays, "Fast Break to Glory" and "Pequito."

Andrew Tsao returns to Indiana to direct *Sister Carrie*. Tsao's recent directing achievements are largely in television, where he has directed episodes of *Friends*, *Home Improvement*, *Caroline in the City*, *The Single Guy*, *The Jeff Foxworthy Show*, *In the House*, and *Buddies*. Tsao served as IRT's Resident Director from 1993–1995 and is well

remembered for his direction of *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Thousand Cranes*, *God's Pictures*, *Odd Jobs*, and *Crow and Weasel*.

Sister Carrie runs from 9 January through 2 February 2002 on IRT's Mainstage, with American Sign Language Interpretation and Audio Description offered on Sunday, 27 January at 2:00 p.m. Tickets can be ordered online at <<http://www.indianarep.com>> or by calling the IRT ticket office at (317) 635-5252. The IRT accepts Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express. Ticket prices range from \$20.00–44.00, with discounts available for groups of ten or more. To book a group or a special event, call (317) 635-5277, ext. 456. The IRT is Indiana's only fully professional, not-for-profit resident theatre. For more information about IRT or its season, please visit <<http://www.indianarep.com>>.

Paul Orlov is ending his tenure as Secretary-Treasurer of the Dreiser Society, and someone is needed to fill his shoes. The Dreiser Society sincerely thanks him for his years of labor on its behalf. Please indicate your interest in this position to Tom Riggio, <tpriggio@mindspring.com>.

With this issue, **Miriam Gogol** steps down as book review editor, although she will remain on the editorial board. We are grateful for her tenure as editor. **Shawn St. Jean** will take her place. Books for review should be sent to St. Jean, care of the Department of English, SUNY Brockport, Brockport, NY 14420, <[sstjean@brockport.edu](mailto:ssstjean@brockport.edu)>.

Contributors

Shelley Fisher Fishkin, a professor of American Studies and English at the University of Texas at Austin, is completing a book on national landmarks and historic sites as windows on American literary history (to be published by Oxford UP), and is collecting some of her previously published essays into a book entitled *Taking Women Seriously : Feminist Forays into American Literature* (to be published by Palgrave/St.Martin's). She is an Affiliated Scholar at the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at Stanford University during 2001-2002.

Kathy Frederickson, a graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has been teaching in the Massachusetts Community College system, including Massachusetts Correctional Institutes, since 1982. Her research interests include late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American literature; feminist literary criticism; American women's autobiography; composition and rhetoric studies; and currently, with its myriad challenges, on-line learning.

Irene Gammel is a professor of English at the University of Prince Edward Island, Gastprofessor at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Germany, and past President of the Canadian Comparative Literature Association. She is the author of *Baroness Elsa: Gender, Dada, and Everyday Modernity* (MIT Press, 2002, in press) and *Sexualizing Power in Naturalism: Theodore Dreiser and Frederick Philip Grove* (1994) and editor of *Confessional Politics: Women's Sexual Self-Representations in Lifewriting and Popular Media* (1999) and *L. M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture* (with E. Epperly) (1999).

Lawrence Hussman, professor emeritus at Wright State University, is the author of several books, including *Dreiser and His Fiction: A Twentieth-Century Quest* (1983) and *Harbingers of a Century: The Novels of Frank Norris* (1999). He is the editor of *Love That Will Not*

Let Me Go: My Time with Theodore Dreiser, by Marguerite Tjader (1998).

Paul A. Orlov is an associate professor of English and American Studies at the Delaware County Campus of Penn State University. A longtime officer of the Dreiser Society, he has published articles on Dreiser, Whitman, Frost, Crane, and others. His book, *An American Tragedy: Perils of the Self Seeking "Success,"* appeared in 1998.

Donna Packer-Kinlaw received her MA degree in English in May 2000 from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Currently, she is a lecturer in the English Department at UNCW but plans to begin a doctoral program in Fall 2002

Donald Pizer is the Pierce Butler Professor of English at Tulane University and is co-editing (with Thomas Riggio) a new edition of the letters of Theodore Dreiser.

Thomas P. Riggio is a professor of English at the University of Connecticut and the General Editor of the Dreiser Edition at the University of Illinois. He is now at work (with Donald Pizer) on a two-volume edition of new Dreiser letters.

James L. W. West III is Sparks Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University. He is currently at work on an edition of F. Scott Fitzgerald's personal essays for the Cambridge Fitzgerald Edition.



