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Dreiser and *The Road To Buenos Ayres*

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On 23 October 1927, on board the liner *Mauretania*, en route to Europe on the first leg of a journey that would carry him through Paris, Berlin, Warsaw, and on to Soviet Russia, Theodore Dreiser noted in his travel diary that he had just finished reading a book called *The Road to Buenos Ayres*. This book, written by a French journalist named Albert Londres, was published originally as *Le Chemin de Buenos-Aires* (Paris: A. Michel, 1927). Dreiser wrote an introduction for the British edition, translated into English by Eric Sutton and published in London by Constable in 1928. Thus Dreiser must have been finishing off this reading chore during his free time on the ocean liner. He was reading the book in bound page proofs (these survive among his papers at the University of Pennsylvania); correspondence in the Penn collection tells us further that these proofs had been sent to him in New York, before he left on his voyage, by Otto Kyllmann of Constable.¹ Dreiser wrote the introduction several weeks later, in Moscow, where he was staying as a guest of the Soviet government. He had been invited to tour Soviet Russia, along with a group of other American writers and journalists, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the workers' revolution.²

Dreiser had signed on with Constable a short while before. In the wake of his success with *An American Tragedy*, Constable wanted to introduce him to British readers in a more organized way than he had been presented by his earlier English publishers. As a part of that effort, Constable had Dreiser write an introduction to Londres' book and, several years later, an introduction to Tom Kromer's *Waiting for Nothing* (1935). Constable was publishing *The Road to Buenos Ayres*

in an "Underworlds" series which eventually included Gunther Birkenfeld's *A Room in Berlin: A Novel of Slum Life*, John A. Bentley's *The Submerged Tenth: The Story of a Down-and-Out*, and Karl Bartz's *The Horrors of Cayenne: Conditions in the French Convict Settlement*. Kromer's *Waiting for Nothing*, an account of vagrancy during the American Depression, was a later title in this series.³

The Road to Buenos Ayres was certainly suitable for the "Underworlds" line. It depicted the trade in prostitutes, also known as the "White Slave Trade," between France (and other European countries) and Argentina. Albert Londres was an early investigative journalist; indeed, this narrative of the traffic in females reminds one of some of the exposé work of the New Journalists during the American 1960s and 1970s. *The Road to Buenos Ayres* is a dispassionate account, clear-eyed and unemotional, and thus an antidote to the kinds of hysterical writing that had appeared in the United States about twenty years before. Such writing had created a moral panic that led to the passage in 1910 of the Mann Act, also known as the "White Slave Act." This statute, inspired by lurid journalistic accounts of women drugged and kidnapped into prostitution, made it a federal crime to transport a woman into the United States, or from one state to another, "for immoral purposes." Ostensibly meant to bring the traffic in prostitutes under the control of federal officials, the law was in fact used to harass men whose politics or other public stances brought them into conflict with those in authority.⁴

Londres, writing with what can best be called a kind of French insouciance, describes the world of prostitution from inside the trade. He befriends the pimps and reports the particulars of their business dealings; he visits the brothels and describes the arrangements there; and he interviews the prostitutes and gives details of their pasts—and of their plans for the future, for many of them say that they will save money and return to France, where they will open cafes or dressmaking shops or other small establishments. The procurers, too, who are French, often have a favored prostitute whom they eventually take back to France and set up with in respectable bourgeois housekeep-

19. Londres, in fact, tracks down two or three such couples in the south of France and interviews them.

The Road to Buenos Ayres is almost eerily unemotional. Without moralizing, Londres places the blame for this traffic in women directly on poverty, for virtually all of the prostitutes, he learns, come from severely deprived backgrounds. They were not abducted into the trade; rather, they drifted into the life out of desperation and were often guided into brothels by the pimps, who return regularly to France on procurement trips. For these women, their bodies represent their only capital assets; they have become matter-of-fact about exchanging their virtue for money. Many of them, Londres tells us, send a large percentage of their earnings back to their families in France, where the money is used to support unemployed parents and younger brothers and sisters.

Constable made a good decision in choosing Dreiser to introduce *The Road to Buenos Ayres*. Londres' objective approach to prostitution almost surely suited Dreiser, who could himself be blunt about the subject of sex. Dreiser knew first-hand from his own life about the lurements of prostitution for young, ill-educated shopgirls and domestic workers. We know now from Theodore Nostwich's restored text of *Newspaper Days*, published in the Pennsylvania Dreiser Edition in 1991, that Dreiser met such women during his days as a cub reporter. In fact, Dreiser's own sisters played around the edges of prostitution, taking gifts and money from older men in exchange for sex.

Dreiser, though curious about prostitution, was non-judgmental about it. Like Londres he understood that it would probably always exist, that it was a fact of human life.⁵ Dreiser seems to have had considerable sympathy for prostitutes, understanding instinctively the melancholy impersonality of their work. Certainly that largeness of view is present in his writings. One thinks of Carrie Meeber and Jennie Berhardt, neither of whom is exactly a prostitute but both of whom are moved toward sexual compromises by poverty and fear. And one sees Dreiser's sympathy for working prostitutes especially well in the "Hanscha Jower" episode that was cut from the manuscript of *A Trav-*

eler at Forty. Hanscha Jower was a prostitute whom Dreiser visited in Berlin and then wrote about, quite sensitively, for his travel book. The Century Company, however, judged the material too frank for inclusion in *Traveler*. Thomas Riggio rescued the lost episode from the surviving typescript at Penn and published it in the Summer 1977 issue of *Modern Fiction Studies*; the episode will be included, along with other excised material, in the forthcoming Pennsylvania edition of *Traveler* being prepared by Renate von Bardeleben.

The writings of Albert Londres today enjoy considerable retrospective attention in France and elsewhere. His *Oeuvres complètes* were gathered and published in French by the house of Arléa in 1992; various of his works were translated during his lifetime into other languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch), and some of those editions are still in print. Londres was prolific: he wrote on Gabriel D'Annunzio, the Jews in Europe, racial oppression in colonial Africa, social experiments in Soviet Russia, penal colonies in the French territories, revolution in Portugal, warfare in China, and terrorism in the Balkans. Quite fearless (and apparently tireless), he visited many war zones and other dangerous areas; he also crusaded against various forms of corruption and oppression. He died in 1932 on one of his fact-finding trips, drowning with the rest of the passengers and crew on the paquebot *Georges Philipard* when that ship caught fire and sank in the Atlantic. It carried a human cargo of three hundred prostitutes bound for various ports in South America; Londres had been aboard to extend his investigations into the trade in women.

Dreiser took considerable care with this introduction. Surviving in Box 382 of his papers at Penn are a two-layered holograph draft, an extensively revised first typescript, and a clean final typescript, together with a set of page proofs with a few queries marked by the publisher. His library, as preserved at Penn, contains five bound copies of the book; they represent all four impressions issued by Constable between 1928 and 1933, in two different cloth and dust-jacket combinations. Clearly the book had a strong, extended sale in England.⁶

Boni & Liveright brought out an American edition of *The Road to Buenos Ayres* in 1928, but this edition does not include Dreiser's introduction. (It is impossible to say why it does not; Dreiser's correspondence with Boni & Liveright at Penn gives no clue.⁷) Dreiser's introduction has therefore never been published in this country; it is reproduced here from the Constable edition for the first time. I am grateful to Constable & Co., Ltd., London, for allowing this republication.

¹Kyllmann sent an "unrevised set of proofs" to Dreiser from London on 3 October 1927, asking for an introduction of up to 10,000 words, to be delivered by the end of the year, for a fee of one hundred guineas. Kyllmann's letter to Dreiser of 13 December acknowledges receipt of the introduction, which Dreiser had mailed to London from Moscow.

²An edition of this travel record, entitled *Dreiser's Russian Diary*, edited by Thomas P. Riggio and James L. W. West III, is in preparation by the University of Pennsylvania Press, scheduled for publication in the summer or fall of 1996.

³See Kromer, *"Waiting for Nothing" and Other Writings*, ed. Arthur D. Casciato and James L. W. West III (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986). Kromer himself contributed a preface to the Constable edition, the text of which was censored.

⁴In his letter to Dreiser of 13 December 1927, Kyllmann asks Dreiser to add the note on the Mann Act which appears in the text of the introduction reproduced in this article. Kyllmann believed that British readers would not be familiar with the statute.

⁵In the introduction Dreiser mentions, as evidence of his interest, having read the League of Nations *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Traffic in Women and Children*; this report had been published in England, in two volumes, by Constable.

⁶These books, items 49D-1120-24 in the Dreiser Collection, include the 1928 first impression in brown cloth with no jacket; the 1928 second impression in brown cloth with a creme and red dust jacket which prints an excerpt from Dreiser's introduction on its front panel; two 1930 third impressions in green cloth, one with a newly designed jacket in black and red; and a 1933 fourth impression, also in green cloth but with no jacket.

⁷The 1928 Boni & Liveright correspondence in the Dreiser Collection shows that Dreiser's relationship with the firm at this point was strained. The relationship became further troubled when the first charges of plagiarism lodged against Dreiser by Dorothy Thompson, in connection with his book *Dreiser Looks at Russia*, began to surface in mid-November 1928. This was a period of financial difficulty for Horace Liveright; eventually his problems would force him from the business and result in its bankruptcy in 1932.

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It is Norman Douglas, in that delightful "South Wind" of his, who says in substance—I forget the exact words—"the poet may be an inspired illiterate, the romance writer an uninspired hack . . . (but) . . . a man weighted with the responsibility of transcribing facts—the historian, in short) who faithfully, and of course it is assumed wisely, performs that service—is deserving of an audience more than usually select—an audience of his equals, or, in short, men widely in touch with life." And decidedly it is such an audience that this work for which I am now (quite uselessly, I think) attempting a foreword most richly merits.

For here, and for the first time, in so far as my economical, sociological and reform reading goes, is a temperate, sane, fair and illuminating examination of one of the hitherto most vexing of all sore spots in our modern economic or sociologic life—that of prostitution, or, more definitely delimited still, of White Slavery—the seduction and then selling, and of course buying, of women for immoral purposes. Does it exist? Yes, of course it exists. And here is the necessary evidence. Is it as terrible

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as it has been painted by the excited religionist, moralist and reformist generally? Decidedly it is very serious, at all times repulsive and reprehensible, an amazing commentary on the vagaries of the human temperament—its compromises, submissions, acceptances and special brutalities and weaknesses under certain economic or social stresses. And yet, as this most remarkable of books shows, not without its palliatives, its understandable if not exactly forgivable motives, its quite sound if disturbing root or base in human desires and necessities, as well as its punishments and, most interesting of all, its rather calming and to the once-acclimated temperament apparently soothing rewards. Rewards! Exactly! One of the most interesting deductions or facets of this work, and one for which I at least as a casual observer and thinker along these lines was wholly unprepared. And what are those rewards? Well, you must read and judge for yourself. The book deserves, as I said, an audience of readers widely in touch with life.

Hitherto, in America at least and among those of a moralistic but not sociological turn, it has been quite generally assumed, I am sure, that the final outcome of error in this particular direction is death. Perhaps they derive that faith from the Bible, or maybe—I am not sure—(he had an enormous influence upon America

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in his day) the Right Reverend Charles Dickens, who appears to have been of much the same opinion. At any rate, I now report as a fact that some fourteen years since in New York I encountered a student appointed by the Rockefeller Institute of New York to investigate the causes of prostitution throughout the world and its (where possible to obtain) final social and economic results to the individual. Previous to that, as he then explained to me, he had assumed, like many other Americans of my day, that "the wages of sin is death," especially in connection with this particular sin. But to his astonishment (and mine, after his telling me), after investigating the matter in New York, Chicago, London, Paris, Berlin, Constantinople, Rome, Moscow and other cities and countries, he had not been able to square his discoveries with his earlier assumption. The wages of this particular form of sin was not so much death as—and after a time—a change to other modes of earning a living. Many, it is true, during the passive practice of their profession suffered various moral qualms or material hardships; a number contracted diseases; not a few allied themselves with crime and suffered for that—but not for their profession. In the end, instead of dying early and in the gutter or the madhouse or jail, as the worthy religionist of our day would have

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us believe, the erring did no more than retire, as I say, to other and not infrequently more profitable and much more respectable lines of effort.

For instance, many (I cannot recall how many) married and lived (may we not hope at least?) happily ever afterwards. Another percentage—of ages ranging from thirty-two to forty-five—opened small and sometimes profitable shops of one kind or another—lingerie, gloves, hats, dresses, shoes. Some became owners of bars; others of houses of the same kind as those from which they had only recently graduated. All in all, some eighty-five per cent., if I recall aright, managed to escape the widely advertised biblical prediction. The others—sad to report—did die of various diseases, but usually not any arising from the sheer mechanics of their labour. Some perished of influenza, others of scarlet fever, diphtheria and what not. In the main not more than seven per cent. of all deaths could be traced to the actual risks of their profession. Being previously unaware of any such data as this, I myself was amazed, for like Mr. Dickens I was assuming that if such lives were not properly punished they should be. Hence, as you may guess, the peculiar scientific as well as literary interest of “The Road to Buenos Ayres,” with its illuminating glow over this

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field. Decidedly it seems to confirm the conclusions reached by the Rockefeller investigation of so many years ago.

And in this connection let me add, I am just now in a curiously interesting position to comment on this problem as well as the statement made by M. Londres at the end of this his work, that the problem is an economic one; that given proper economic support the victims or habitués of this world would not enter upon this public evil at all. For I am in Soviet Russia (Moscow, to be exact), where the problem of poverty for the mass, and so (if there is anything to this money cure for vice and white slavery) this same evil of prostitution and white slavery, should be in a fair way towards being solved. Well, is it solved here? Has poverty been abolished and so prostitution? As yet, as I am most definitely able to report at this time, poverty has not been completely abolished in Russia—although the sponsors for the new system can give you honest and fairly convincing reasons why there is still so much of it. And so prostitution and possibly White Slavery (I do not know that it ever existed here) have not gone either. There are street walkers in Moscow and Leningrad and Odessa and other large cities in Russia. Here in Moscow their principal haunt appears to be the main shopping street—Tverskaya. In

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Leningrad it is a part of the old Nevsky Prospect. I cannot spell the new proletarian name which that wide street now bears.

But, if there is some public prostitution, say these Russians, there is an excellent reason for it. For Russia is now an industrial proletarian country, and those who would eat must work. Also, if they would eat well they must work well, for this industrialisation programme requires principally skilled labourers—men and women. But Russia was never so very well trained industrially before this. And next, when the Great War, and after that the revolution came like two great storms, the first to blow away national savings and after that the second to take away from the individual all his private sustaining property, thousands upon thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of the wives and daughters of the well-to-do who had been brought up in comparative idleness were left to contemplate how they were to live. Many had fled the country, of course, Others had died. Others still (many) were unskilled. But now, said the revolutionists, work, if you can get work. But the most favoured class in this new world were not the former rich or educated or refined, but those who were none of those things—the proletarian workers. And these, being honest Communists, naturally secured all the best places—for the “last” in capitalistic countries are decidedly the “first”

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here. And after that, what was there? Some machines in factories, perhaps, some jobs as assistants in private stores, maybe, or in offices, positions as waitresses, servants, washing women, street cleaners, pedlars.

But to one who had been brought up differently, in comfort and with some measure of schooling!

So—for the more attractive and less commercially or industrially skilled—the streets. And there, since industrial conditions have improved but slowly in Russia as yet, they have remained—some of them, anyhow.

“And besides, you see,” says one of my Russian mentors, “there are many feminine temperaments, especially those bred of the old bourgeoisie, addicted to leisure. They cannot see labour of any kind save as a hardship. And for them, if they have a little charm, there is an easier way. But truly this situation is changing. As they get older some work is necessary—and they find it. Next, the younger generation is coming up with an entirely new psychology. It springs out of work for everybody—work for all women as well as all men—the economic independence instead of dependence of women. And they prefer that. For with it comes absolute freedom in the choice of their love-mate. They are not dependent on any man. They do not have to marry if they do not want. They can live with any man

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for whom they care. There is no Mann Act* in Russia. The public is not interested. If there are children, of course the State acts to protect the child—to feed, clothe and educate it, just as it acts to make the parents work. And neither parent can escape his or her responsibility. They must pay *pro rata* according to their respective earnings. Under the circumstances, what possible reason is there for prostitution or White Slavery—and how long can they endure? And for the life of me, as I look at it here, I cannot see how they can endure. What reason, pray? So the author of this book, M. Londres, in his shrewd summary of his findings (“The Responsibility is Ours”), is—as I see it at least—right. Abolish poverty and you abolish White Slavery, or enforced prostitution in any form. Whether Russia is destined, permanently, to abolish

* A law enacted by the Congress of the United States *circa* 1917, which makes it a crime (punishable by a variable term of years in the penitentiary according to the degree of the offence) to transport for immoral purposes either from any foreign country into America or vice versa, or from any state in the Union into any other state a woman of whatever age. The original or avowed intent of this law was to end what was pictured as a growing and obscene, and, in so far as the women themselves were concerned, unwilling traffic in white slaves usually imported from abroad into America. But once the act was upon the statute books it was immediately interpreted to include not only involuntary but voluntary immorality, and that on the part of such citizens of the United States as should, in order to escape local detection, voluntarily choose to travel together from one state into another. Needless to say this judicial interpretation of the law has been consistently denounced by American liberals as social as well as moral tyranny. But despite this, and in the face of a constant and broadening evasion, the law and its unwarranted interpretation remains in force, and sporadic and usually malicious prosecutions are on record.

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poverty, and so White Slavery or prostitution in general, I am not prepared as yet to say.

But now to return to some of the other aspects or phases of this very remarkable book. For a remarkable book it surely is. The grace, wit and colour interwoven here as style. Turn where you will among corrective or economic books relating to this very difficult subject, and where will you find a book like this? Nowhere. Like "Candide," "Tartuffe," "Typee," "The Tale of a Tub," it is *sui generis*. "Candide"! It is wonderful—a critical, sardonic, revealing and side-splitting commentary on life and its alleged meaning—but so forthrightly fictitious, whereas this particular work is so forthrightly *so*; "Tartuffe"—a true and constructive presentation of religious hypocrisy—but far afield from this particular phase of human weakness and error; "The Tale of a Tub"—too devastatingly sinister to be wholly fascinating or true; and as for Monsieur Rabelais and his rollicking giant (gloriously side-splitting both), they are too high in the air of fancy—a Gargantuan mirage of our unworthy selves.

But this book . . . And just now when South America, and particularly the Argentine Union, is definitely emerging from the mists of pioneering into the clear light of industrialism. In so far as my rather tenuous general reading goes, it is the first passing commentary on South America, and especially the Argentine, which

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has the force, value and charm of intimate regional literature. True, there are books of travel relating to South America and the Argentine, and some novels, no one of which I know save through reviews. But unless all reviewers are liars, there has not yet appeared any particular book, let alone any general body of literature, which pictures the life and manners of that steadily emerging continent.

But here now is at least something. A sidelight if you will—but what a sidelight! Read only of the passion of Argentinians for electricity, their standardised streets and houses; the sharply delimited length and breadth of Buenos Ayres between plain and water; the distances between cities and their cultural lacks (true, as measured by White Slavery)—but still lacks. One sees great advertisements these days in newspapers and trains of methods of reaching the Argentine or Brazil or Chile, but no least intimation of the nature of the life. In this book, however,—and how odd in connection with this reputedly leprous subject—one comes upon fascinating glimpses of it. “He said she would not do for Buenos Ayres, but on the other hand would do very well for Sante Fe.” And since you know what she was like you somehow sense Sante Fe. Similarly, Mendoza and Rosario—places which you know are hundreds of miles apart: “How charming it is to come across a bit of one’s own country so

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far from home! Everyone spoke French. The landlady was from Montmartre. And the landlord would have given all *Rosario* to be able to take an *apéritif* that evening at Cyrano's." So one picks up bits; the streets, the houses, the active temperaments of the Argentinas, their almost complete preoccupation with business.

Yet in New York, when this small volume came with the request from my friend Kyllmann of Constable and Company that I write a foreword to it, there was an American writer and world reader who saw it in a far different light than I do now. I was not able to read the book at once. But he, sensing the subject from a page or two, I presume, had got as far as page sixteen. There he became loud in his condemnation, "Raw stuff, I would say. I would not lend my name to it if I were you." He had glanced at the letter which was lying in it. "It can't do you any good. I would let it alone."

I questioned him and half decided that he might be right. Yet later, after reading and meditating upon it, I decided that it had "done me good," very much good indeed,—like "Typee" did me good, like "Tartuffe" did me good, like "Candide" did me good. In fact, I am now quite sure that I shall never quite get over it; so humanely illuminating is it—never quite forget its details or colour or romance even. For it cleared for me (and how

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cleverly and artistically!) a scene that hitherto had been quite dark, involved as it has been with so much human prejudice and mistaken or wholly false mental approaches.

The informed, dispassionate, critical and yet sympathetic and understanding mood and manner in which the whole matter is approached. The pains taken in France, Poland and the Argentine to ferret out the sources of and the reasons for this amazing traffic. Not Fabre himself, travelling here and there after his spiders, caterpillars and flies, has laboured more diligently, inspected more closely or reported more artfully or delightfully. Read only if you will the picture of the "Casa Francesca" (Chapter XII. pp. 84-90). Or the dinner at the home of "The Bear" (Chapter XXVI. pp. 161-4). Or the incident of the Statue of General Alvear in the Avenue Alvear (Chapter XV. p. 108). Or the business of the knife in the office of the Chief of Police of Buenos Ayres and its connection with graft. Indeed this very peculiar work—along with the glacial judgment so necessary to history and fact—possesses a rare and peculiarly Gallic type of raillery which quite takes one by storm, always delicately pointed and always, in this book at least, applied to the downright and blatant wickedness of man—rather to his unescapable weaknesses and lacks. For these, and these only, M. Londres has a warm and

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even iridescent sympathy which glows and disarms by its very warmth and its exceedingly wise and kindly understanding (see Chapter IX. entitled "Franchuchas").

Personally, I would never trouble to preface such a work as this if all these things that I have said were not true. There are already too many serious examinations of this very irritating subject and still more under way. But this book is different. It really is one of the most artful and graceful blends of travel, observation, philosophy, humour, and even romance that I have ever encountered. Romance? Yes, romance. Moreover, in this book; and how often is all this achieved in even the most brilliant pictures of the world's social doings? Furthermore, portraiture of characters and events here takes the form of conversation between one person and another. And, whatever the station or crimes of those talking, the easy tone of good society; for instance, the amazing one between the author and Vacabana, the Moor (Chapter V.). And throughout, and as curious as it may seem in connection with this particularly distasteful subject, M. Londres appears to presuppose a refined and even congenial listener—some man or woman whom he does not hesitate to take by the hand and lead into the strange circle of which he is interested to report. And so without diffidence, rather with complete and engaging

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frankness. More interesting still, nowhere will you find the slightest lapse into vulgarity. Here certainly (if one takes into consideration the general moral or puritanic approach to this matter) one is dealing with perhaps the most difficult of social subjects—but you will not feel so as you read. Rather it is my feeling that M. Londres, along with setting forth a fair, intelligent and really complete summary of White Slavery and its causes and conclusions, has given us literature—and literature which one can place among the best which one has encountered.

And now as to the author himself. I am told that he is a regular correspondent on the staff of one of the big Paris daily papers, *Le Petit Parisien*, if I am not mistaken. That his present literary duties are to write of various scandals, and that therefore in literary ranks he is not a particularly eminent person. Also that he has written four or five books of no particular import. None the less—and whatever his literary history (more particularly if what I have said is true), in this book he gives the impression of having excelled himself—maybe without quite knowing it. I do not know. But if so he is likely to find himself called upon to exercise his very delicate and resourceful literary skill upon subjects different from those which now employ his daily Paris hours. And I for one most sincerely and earnestly hope so.

THEODORE DREISER.

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Desire and Regression in Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*

John Clendenning

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In a recent study of science in the thought and work of Theodore Dreiser, Louis J. Zanine (1993) dismisses the influence of psychoanalysis. Zanine writes: "Although... [Dreiser] did employ some Freudian elements in *An American Tragedy*, his portrayal of Clyde Griffiths was not a consistent Freudian portrait and his experimentation with literary techniques like stream-of-consciousness were minimal" (93). In this essay I will challenge Zanine's argument by showing how *An American Tragedy* incorporates Dreiser's reading of psychoanalysis and how his most important novel may be illuminated when we read it through a psychoanalytic lens. I begin by examining an analogous piece of dream-work in *Crime and Punishment*.

Early in Dostoevsky's novel, tormented by his plan to murder the pawnbroker, Raskolnikov has a sadomasochistic nightmare. He dreams that he is a child again, a boy of seven walking one holiday with his father through their old village toward the cemetery where his grandmother and younger brother were buried. When they pass a tavern a crowd of peasants come out, all roaring drunk. Mikolka, a thick-necked, fleshy-faced drunkard, offers to give everyone a ride in his cart pulled by his broken-down old nag. When the mare cannot budge, Mikolka whips her; the others join him, lashing her body all over. Enraged and exasperated Mikolka tosses his whip aside and begins to beat the horse with a wooden shaft, then with an iron crowbar. She falls as if her legs have been cut away. The child rushes to defend her, kissing her eyes and mouth; sobbing he gasps, tries to cry out—panting, sweating, feeling as if *his* whole body were battered and bruised.

Awake, Raskolnikov immediately recognizes the dream's compelling, horrible wish. "God, is it possible, is it possible, that I really shall take an axe and strike her on the head, smash open her skull... No, I shall not do it, I will not do it." He prays: "Lord, show me the way, that I may renounce this accursed... fantasy of mine" (48-51).

Psychoanalysts Karen Horney and R. D. Laing have explored, but by no means exhausted, some of the multiple identifications in this richly complex dream: the links between the good father and the murderous peasant, the dead brother and the dead horse, the dead grandmother and the living mother. Just before the dream Raskolnikov has received a long, overbearing and self-pitying letter from his mother. In murdering the pawnbroker he will act out his aggression toward her. The pawnbroker and the mother are represented as the old nag in the dream. The peasant who kills the horse is the dreamer himself and also his father, that is the split-off bad parts of the father. And of course, the mare is also the dreamer. In its bare essence the dream not only portends the murder of the pawnbroker, it also retrieves Raskolnikov's primal scene in which the dreamer is simultaneously the witness, the murderer, and the victim.

We know that Dreiser bought a copy of *Crime and Punishment* and read it while visiting Savannah, Georgia, in 1916. He was depressed, writing in his diary: "Read *Crime & Punishment*. Very lonely. Feeling very bad. To bed early & didn't sleep well. Beautiful day out—warm & clear. But altogether a bad one for me." His two-year live-in relationship with Kirah Markham was breaking up. Like Roberta to Clyde, Kirah wrote bitter, passionate, contradictory letters, one day "loving," the next "roasting me" (Dreiser 1982, 128-36). Two years later, having returned to New York, Dreiser met A. A. Brill, an Austrian psychiatrist, disciple and translator of Freud, the man chiefly responsible for the dissemination of psychoanalytic ideas in America. Dreiser and Brill soon formed a fortunate and mutually satisfying friendship. Although Dreiser was never in analysis with Brill, he described their relationship almost as if he were or wished to be. He called Brill "Diogenes"—the philosopher with a lamp who searches for truth in dark places—and "Socrates"—the philosopher who ques-

tions. "I sit at your feet," wrote Dreiser; "[you are] my grand mentor." By contrast, Brill, who was actually three years younger, seemed to treat Dreiser as if he were a good-natured child. "I am always happy to see you," wrote Brill with solicitude, "and observe your genial and assured naivete."¹ Brill gave Dreiser a copy of his book, *Psychanalysis* (1912), a work written, in the earliest psychoanalytic era, to give the un-analyzed, non-professional reader a general understanding of psychoanalytic theory and practice. Soon Dreiser was reading Brill's translations of Freud: *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, and *Totem and Taboo*. Dreiser's first exposure to psychoanalysis was exciting, but it also depressed him. The Freudian drama, he said, has "the appeal of a great tragedy... Life as revealed thus is sad to me." The theory of the unconscious suggested the metaphor of a prison where the "hoary victims of injustice" are confined. This metaphor is remarkable because it parallels the figure of "a garrison in a conquered city" that Freud himself later used when describing the dynamics of the unconscious in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (71). Again and again, Dreiser would write: the analyst is "like a master with a key" or "a conqueror who has taken a city"; he unlocks the prison and the sorrows [are] dragged from the depths of the repressed.... "Every paragraph," Dreiser recalled in 1931, "came as a revelation to me—a strong, revealing light thrown on some of the darkest problems that haunted me and my work" (Dreiser, letter to Brill, 20 January, 1919; Dreiser 1920, 139; Dreiser 1977, 263).

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Dreiser certainly became acquainted with three theses fundamental to psychoanalysis: (1) that all dreams are wish-fulfillments, (2) that day-residues penetrate and may even dominate dream-content, and (3) that dreams unlock the doors to the unconscious. Quite possibly Dreiser was impressed by the passage where Freud described "typical" dreams: "dreams of passing through narrow alleys, or a whole suite of rooms; dreams of burglars, ... dreams of being chased by wild animals (bulls, horses); or of being threatened with knives, daggers, and lances" (Freud 1938, 391; *S.E.*,

5: 431).² These are the so-called anxiety dreams, dreams that disturb sleep, where the wish is obscured or superseded by terror.

Like Raskolnikov, Clyde Griffiths has such a dream when tempted to murder Roberta Alden. In Book Two, Chapter 42, Clyde receives two letters. One is a seductive baby-talk letter from Sondra demanding that he "come" to her at the Finchley summer home: "...so when Sonda says come, you come, you hear, else Sonda whip hard. You baddie, good boy." The other letter is an anguished appeal from Roberta: "I feel too upset and uncertain about everything... you are going to come to me as you said. ... But you will come for me, won't you, dear?"

Presented with these contradictory demands, Clyde reads the newspaper account of the double drowning accident at Pass Lake, and immediately sees murder as the solution to his dilemma. But like Raskolnikov he is also repelled by the thought: "He was not that kind of person, whatever else he was. He was not. He was not. He was not. ... He must never think of it again... never, never, never...." Falling asleep,

he found himself dreaming of a savage black dog that was trying to bite him. Having escaped from the fangs of the creature by waking in terror, he once more fell asleep. But now he was in some very strange and gloomy place, a wood or a cave or narrow canyon between deep hills, from which a path, fairly promising at first, seemed to lead. But soon the path, as he progressed along it, became narrower and narrower and darker, and finally disappeared entirely. And then, turning to see if he could not get back as he had come, there directly behind him were arrayed an entangled mass of snakes that at first looked more like a pile of brush. But above it waved the menacing of at least a score of reptiles, forked tongues and agate eyes. And in front now, as he turned swiftly, a horned and savage animal—huge, it was—its heavy tread crushing the brush—blocked the path in that direction.

And then, horrified and crying out in hopeless desperation, once more he awoke—not to sleep again that night.
(2: 26-27)

This dream, at first perusal, might be interpreted as an instance of Dreiser's naturalism; Clyde's path blocked by savage beasts suggests a kind of atavistic determinism. Attention to the latent sexual content of the dream and its day-residues, the demanding letters from the motherly Sondra and the pregnant Roberta, suggests that Clyde sees himself attacked by predatory, even primordial, maternal forces. The first segment in which a savage black dog is trying to bite him recalls a scene from an earlier day in which Sondra, speaking like mother to child, teases him when he hesitates before approaching the Alden farm house: "What's the matter, Clyde? Afraid of the bow-wow?" (2: 11). The same imagery seems to arise also from the helpless terror of being tormented by Roberta: "He was not unlike a harried animal, deftly pursued by hunter and hound" (1: 429). In the second segment of the dream he is "coming"—moving toward some unseen, undefined end. The vaginal imagery—the cave, the narrow canyon, deep hills, a path that narrows, becomes darker, and disappears—unmistakably expresses Clyde's deep distrust and fear of woman, as if he is being enveloped, like the letters he had just received, in the darkness of her inner space. Suddenly like a vagina dentata she attacks him. The beast that he encounters is a Medusa, a pile of brush that turns into twenty or more snakes, with forked (lying) tongues and agate eyes. Literally he has come, impregnated, and now he wants to pull out, to "get back as he had come." But now another beast blocks his path—a huge, horned, savage animal that threatens to crush him. This too may be woman, perhaps one of the crescent-horned Semitic moon goddesses, Ashtoreth, the subject of a chapter in *Hey, Rub-a-Dub-Dub!*, Ishtar, or Astarte, goddesses often associated with Venus (Dreiser 1920, 208-13)³. Sondra is described as "a seeking Aphrodite, eager to prove... the destroying power of her charm." (1:329) Dominated by Hortense, Clyde "looked cowed and frightened" (1: 137). He repeatedly sees women as witches. "The witchery of ...[Hortense's] look was too

much for him." (1: 78) Sondra enslaves him. His submissiveness is described as "that of a slave for the master" (1: 341, 376-77). The beast that treads and crushes may remind us of the women in the "stamping room" of the Griffiths factory. Women are also masculinized: Roberta becomes Bob, Bobbie, Bert; Rita's family name is Dickerman. Hortense implies "whore" and Briggs, a prison.

In terms of a Kleinian analysis the dream situates Clyde in the paranoid-schizoid position. The primitive maternal imago, which, as I maintain, is etched into each of Clyde's women, has been split, the good separated from the bad; the once loved and gratifying object is now turned into a monster, a Gorgon, an object to be hated and feared. Blocking his exit from the dark path in both directions, she is bestowed with omnipotent control, with even the capacity to annihilate. Among the prominent features of the attack are the terrible eyes and mouths of the monster. As persecutory objects the eyes have an uncanny, evil gleam, while the mouths devour and poison. The reverse side of the split may be discerned throughout the novel in Clyde's fetishistic obsession with the eyes and mouths of his lovers, bestowing upon them magical powers to enthrall and bewitch him.

"If only he could have a girl as pretty as... [Hortense], with her small, sensuous mouth and her bright hard eyes" (1: 73). "Her eyes... had a kind of dancing fire in them. She had the most entrancing way of pursing and parting her lips.... It caused him... to feel dizzy... cruelly seared in his veins with minute and wriggling flames of fire..." (1: 100-101). "[Roberta's] blue eyes were twinkling and her lips, which were most temptingly modeled, were parted in a broad smile" (1: 258). "[He] found himself weak and then feverish. Her pretty mouth, her lovely big eyes, her radiant and yet so often shy and evasive smile" (1: 261). "[Sondra] smiled bewitchingly" (1: 333). "I can't help it... I can't! I can't!... You've made me just crazy about you.... You've got such beautiful eyes, Sondra,

and such a lovely mouth and chin, and such a wonderful smile (1: 375).

Clyde's infantile dependence in each of his object choices suggest that he seems not to have matured very far beyond the oral aggressive stage. Clyde's frequent daydreams about girls and money suggest the same acquisitiveness. Insatiate with hunger, he never has enough and refuses to settle for a simple, ordinary life. Mouths not only smile and kiss, they also devour and bite. Ratterer—the name alone suggests teeth—taunts Clyde with the prospect of whores: "How about it, Clyde? Going to be initiated to-night? ... They won't do more than bite you..." (1: 61). Clyde's sexual fantasies involving Hortense suggest the scene of a nursing infant:

There was something... about the tone of her voice, unctuous, smooth, which somehow appealed to and disturbed him. ... He was full of the most tantalizing thoughts about how wonderful it would be if only he were permitted to hold her close, kiss her mouth, bite her, even. To cover her mouth with his! To smother her with kisses! (1:84)

D. W. Winnicott observes that before an infant can look into a mirror, its mother is the mirror. What she sees, typically while nursing the baby, is what she sees in the infant's face, and this is what she reflects. What the baby sees, not in the breast, but in the mother's face, is the mirrored image of itself. By getting back the self from the mother's face, the infant receives its first sense of being real (Winnicott, 111-18). Although we know nothing about Clyde's infancy, we do know that when he becomes sexually aroused, the magical gaze or gleam as well as the smiling and pursing and parting of lips that imitate kissing and sucking are generally what carries him away. In fact, so smitten is he by these features that it may be said he hardly finds much more to love in the women who enthrall him. Pursuing them he seems to be trying to recapture the image in the mirror.

For Clyde mothering and being mothered are necessary parts of loving. In addition to helpless submissiveness, he has, we are told, "a certain strain of tenderness," that occasionally makes him speak with a soft, melting voice. His manner, then, is "gentle almost as that of a mother with a baby" (1: 370). His regressive needs are best understood by Sondra, who uses them effectively in maintaining control. Her baby talk turns their relationship into a game of Mommy and Baby. Most often she is Mommy threatening to spank her baddie, good boy. But she can also be Baby demanding gratification of her infantile needs. "Sondra so glad Clydie here. Misses him so much." She smoothed his hair as she kissed him, and Clyde, bethinking him of the shadow which lay so darkly between them, crushed her feverishly, desperately. 'Oh, my darling baby girl,' he exclaimed" (2: 31-32).

As an important precondition of love, Clyde selects women whom he perceives as somehow unattainable, hard-to-get or off-limits. Women who are easy, sensuous, available have some, but not a sustaining interest for him. The prostitute he meets at the beginning of his erotic adventures knows this intuitively:

"You don't care for girls like me very much, do you?"

"Oh, yes, I do, too," he said evasively.

"Oh, no, you don't either. I can tell. But I like you just the same. I like your eyes. You're not like those other fellows. You're more refined, kinda. I can tell. You don't look like them."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Clyde. (1: 67)

His women must be chaste, unspoiled, but also strong, capable of supporting and controlling him. The relationship must also entail some risk; taking chances, getting into trouble, being punished heightens his desire. The woman who clearly embodies Clyde's ideal object choice is his mother, Elvira Griffiths, a woman of "force," "determination," "self-preservation," "conviction," "earnestness," "sweetness" (1: 4-6). She is the phallic mother wedded to the castrated father. But

if Clyde is permanently attached to his mother, he is ultimately and pathetically more like Asa Griffiths: emotional, romantic, foolish, inadequate (1: 10, 22). By splitting the father, Clyde is led on a search for the paternal phallus which he finds in his uncle, the rich Samuel Griffiths, the archetypal Uncle Sam of the novel.

The family romance that underlies the plot of *An American Tragedy* may be further amplified if we read it in the context of *Totem and Taboo*. Here Freud ventures to trace the primitive psychogenetic origins of the Oedipus complex. Following an hypothesis advanced by Darwin, Freud speculates that prehistoric human society was constituted as a "primal" or "father horde" in which an older dominant male possessed a herd of females and drove away all of the younger males. The "expelled brothers" eventually rebelled, killed the old man, ate his flesh, and took his women, but the incest taboo had already been inscribed upon their unconscious with a desire threatened by castration (Freud 1938, 915; *S.E.*, 13; 141)⁴. In modern times, Freud maintains, the dream or fantasy of being injured by wild animals substitutes for the fear of being punished by the totem father for forbidden wishes. So far I have been interpreting the dog, the snakes, and the horned beast in Clyde's dream as symbols of the phallic woman. Without denying this interpretation, I now add that the animals may also be read as symbols of patriarchal retribution, for both of the women with whom Clyde is sexually involved are associated with motherhood, and both are strictly forbidden. The horned animal lends itself especially to this reinterpretation, for when Clyde remembers the dream at the end of the novel, this animal is specified as a rhinoceros. Read this way, the armored beast with its phallic horns represents the unconscious return of the avenging father.

The Griffiths Collar and Shirt Company is organized like the modern equivalent of the primal horde. First Clyde is sent to the "shrinking room" in the basement of the factory where he labors with a crew of men. Then he is promoted upstairs to the "stamping room" where he supervises a department of women. When his cousin Gilbert, who speaks for the father, briefs him on his responsibilities, Clyde learns the fundamental rule of the Griffiths organization: no sex with the

employees. Clyde tries to resist temptation, but on hot summer days, "indifference... languor... sensuality seemed to creep over the place." The women in the room are described as a herd of animals. Three of them, a "pagan trio," are particularly forward in their attentions to Clyde. Ruza Nikoforitch is "big and blonde and animal, with swimming brown eyes, a snub flat nose and chin." Flora Brandt is "coarse," also has "swimming" eyes and a "snub nose and full and sensuous and yet pretty lips." Martha Bordialoue, whose name means chamber pot, is "plump," "ignorant and pagan," "feline and savage," her blouse left open to expose her breasts, her skirt pulled up to the knees (1: 243-44). Clyde can resist these, but not the pure, white Roberta Alden—a name that ironically recalls Priscilla Alden, the archetypal American Wife. In seducing her he fulfills his deepest desire for the forbidden woman, violates the law of the horde, and sets in motion the events which end with his execution.

Returning to the dream, we may read the threatening beasts in yet another way: as projective identifications. As such they represent Clyde's own aggression as well as aggression directed against him. Perhaps it is this that especially terrifies him, "crying out in hopeless desperation": his unconscious wish to bite, poison, crush his victim, to murder her. He awakens in the same state as Raskolnikov, with the knowledge that what he has denied is in fact the undeniable. It is most important, therefore, that Clyde's choice of the means of murder entails the least violence: he will simply let her drown. That way he will not have to bite and poison the mother's bad breast, stomp on her or dig his powerful horn into her soft flesh. Throughout his planning and performance of Roberta's death, Clyde constantly wavers in his intention; he acts as if to assure her death and simultaneously to deny his guilt, as if an act performed "accidentally" and "unconsciously" could not truly be his (2: 78). At the same time his guilty self leaves a trail of evidence that equally assures his arrest, conviction, and punishment.

This reversal or undoing of aggression is, in Kleinian terms, a move into the depressive position, the position of guilt, remorse and reparation. Here, almost without exception, Clyde remains for the

rest of his life. If, psychologically, he has never left his mother's embrace, now he returns to it, literally and fully. At first he resists her visit, fearing the force of reproach, of truth, in her eyes: "those clear, steady blue eyes of hers looking into his own. He could not stand that now" (2: 218). However, in their last minutes together, just before he walks the path to his execution, ironically Clyde circles back to a moment in ideal infancy. There his primal desire is realized. "[Mrs. Griffiths] was looking heavenward, and seemed transfixed. Yet as suddenly turning to Clyde and gathering him in her arms and holding him long and firmly to her, whispering: 'My son—my baby——'" (2: 404).

Dreiser's novel is truly an American tragedy, and like *The Great Gatsby*, it is a tragedy of the American Dream. Both novels were published in 1925, and both submit devastating critiques of the Algeresque fantasy of finding happiness by rising from rags to riches. Viewed psychoanalytically Dreiser's novel is a still more human, universal tragedy. The literal prison in which Clyde is confined at the end of the novel symbolizes the unconscious that Dreiser had described in his letters to Brill. *An American Tragedy* is an oedipal tragedy in which Clyde is tempted, then punished by the patriarchal order: his rich, powerful uncle and cousin, Samuel and Gilbert Griffiths, and the district attorney, Orville Mason. Institutionally the avenging father is manifested in capitalism and the legal system. *An American Tragedy* is also a pre-oedipal tragedy. Fixated in the archaic maternal dyad, Clyde is unable to form mature relationships with women or even to comprehend the regressive aspect of his desire. Like a helpless, hungry baby, he longs to return to mother, to possess her totally, to experience her power in himself. But he also fears that power, her primitive, bestial power, and his fear turns to murderous rage.

Far from being merely another naturalistic novel in which the protagonist is the victim of external forces, *An American Tragedy* is a complex, profound psychological study, the work of an artist whose subtle grasp of the human subject was unappreciated by previous generations. As Leonard Cassuto has observed, "the engine of desire"—

not some external force—is the driving force of Dreiser's best work (112).

¹The correspondence between Dreiser and Brill is contained in the Theodore Dreiser Papers, Department of Special Collections, University of Pennsylvania: I, 14.

²Brill's inferior translation of Freud's text has been cited in order to provide the text which Dreiser read instead of the later more authoritative translation by James Strachey. The same passage in the Strachey's *Standard Edition* is cited immediately after citation of Brill.

³Cf., Ashtoreth depicted as a sinister nature/death goddess: "But in the dark places, the back rooms, the upper floors or cellars of tenements or great houses, the hospitals, the asylums, the jails, the farms and homes for the aged—the enormous graveyards! Look and see. Here are those who but a little while since were a part of the pell-mell vigorous scene. They were her tools, as you are now, her victims. She fashioned them as one might a small machine, used them for a while for something and then threw them aside." (Dreiser 1920, 211-12)

⁴A version of Freud's "expelled brothers" may be discerned early in the novel in the bellboys' monthly "blow-out" which begins with an orgiastic feast and ends with a visit to the local brothel.

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The Marguerite Tjader Collection at the Humanities Research Center

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Dreiser scholars will be interested to learn that the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas in Austin has recently acquired a collection of approximately 100 items from Marguerite Tjader Harris, Dreiser's longtime friend and editorial assistant. The materials have only recently been catalogued, and they contain several noteworthy items. The Tjader collection augments a small but important group of Dreiser papers already at the HRC. Below I describe these two collections and point out some of the more significant materials in them.

There is a good deal of correspondence in the Tjader collection both to and from Dreiser. Most interesting are the 60 letters that Dreiser wrote to Tjader between 1929 and 1945. These are largely of a personal nature; others touch on Dreiser's stewardship of *An American Spectator*, his projected *Notes on Life*, and Tjader's work on *Direction*, a little magazine that she co-edited in the late 1930s. The majority of these letters appear not to have been published, although Tjader drew on many of them for book, *Dreiser: A New Dimension* (Norwalk, CT: Silvermine Publishers, 1965). There are also 16 letters of Helen Dreiser written to Tjader between 1935 and 1946.

Two unpublished stories are another highlight of the collection. Both date from 1945 and are mentioned briefly by Tjader in her book (pp. 203-04). Both stories concern a man leaving his wife and are probably therefore connected to the series of articles that Dreiser was then planning on that topic (Lingeman 2:462). "The Total Stranger,"

which Dreiser did not complete, concerns an unnamed man who physically abuses his wife and then leaves her. He wants to be forgiven and reconciled with her but cannot bring himself to return. He therefore wanders about the country for five years, living in rented rooms, until in one city he stays in a boarding house where he witnesses a husband assaulting his wife. He confronts the husband and tries to warn him off; when that fails, he approaches the woman, confesses his past sins to her, and proposes that they run away together, which they do at the story's end. A thematic structure of death and rebirth is implied, as are motifs of isolation and wandering. There are five prepublication documents for this story: (1) five pages of holograph notes in Tjader's hand, dictated to her by Dreiser; (2) a one-page typed outline with autograph revisions in Tjader's hand; (3) "Memorandum on mss of 'The Total Stranger,'" a one-page carbon typescript with autograph revisions by Tjader. This document explains the history of the story; (4) a nine-page incomplete carbon typescript with autograph revisions in Tjader's hand (dictated to her by Dreiser); and (5) a thirteen-page carbon typescript, incorporating the revisions in item #4.

The second tale, "Sign in the Fog," bears several thematic resemblances to "The Total Stranger." A husband wants freedom from responsibility and leaves his wife and daughter to go to sea. The female characters seem to be versions of the composite wife/mother/daughter identity that Dreiser projected onto Helen at this time. Soon thereafter, the child encounters two men in a fog and believes one to be her father, presumed dead on a sunken freighter. Years hence, it is learned that the father is alive, as he returns to his family and they are reunited. There are strong overtones of sentimentality and superstition in both tales. "Sign in the Fog" is particularly interesting as a study in the validity of dreams and omens and of Dreiser's use of death as a fog that blurs the contours of reality. This latter story survives as (1) a 16-page typescript with autograph revisions by Tjader (dictated by Dreiser); and (2) a 14-page carbon typescript, a revised copy of item #1. Also in this folder is an autograph list of possible titles for the story, among them "The Warning," "Symbol,"

"The Token," "The Omen," "Fore-Warned," "Sign," and "Notification."

There is a large sheaf of papers relating to Dreiser's projected film "Revoli" (later, "Tobacco"), based on the 1907 rebellion of impoverished tobacco farmers against the Duke tobacco trust. Dreiser initially collaborated with Hy Kraft on the project, but they veered apart and eventually broke off their friendship because Dreiser suspected Kraft of trying to "steal" his film and sell it to Hollywood on the sly. There are various notes and memoranda to and from Kraft, as well as a 23-page typescript with revisions in Dreiser's hand entitled "Tobacco and Men," which was ultimately used as the basis for Borden Deal's *The Tobacco Men* (See Kraft's foreword to Deal's 1965 novel [Pizer, Dowell, and Rusch # 1965.17].) There are several items documenting Dreiser's popularity in Russia, among them a prospectus and other materials drawn up by Dreiser supporting an American tour of the Russian ballet. There is also a 1944 prospectus prepared by Dreiser's friend Richard Duffy for a collected edition of Dreiser's works, which he tried unsuccessfully to interest Putnam's in publishing.

Finally, the collection contains two drafts of the speech that Dreiser intended to give at the ceremony inducting him into the National Institute of Arts and Letters in May 1945; (1) a two-page typescript headed, "A Secretary for the Arts," which is probably the short statement Dreiser said he had submitted to the Institute in advance; and (2) a four-page carbon typescript entitled "Art and the People," which appears to be the text of the undelivered speech. It was Dreiser's pet idea to have the government establish a cabinet-level Secretary of the Arts. The Institute apparently thought Dreiser's remarks would raise controversial issues and did not allow him to read from his prepared text.

Many of Tjader's own manuscripts are in the collection. There is a sheaf of notes concerning her association with Dreiser; all of these she appears to have drawn on in writing her book. There is a tribute to Dreiser written in the form of a letter to him and entitled "To Remember." Also included in this folder are her memoranda regarding

preparations for Dreiser's funeral as well as a poem, "To the Dead Theodore," dated 9 February 1946, a one-page holograph manuscript. A final item of interest is Tjader's sketches for the illustrations of Dreiser's *My City* (1929). Max Pollack did the actual drawings for the volume.

There are also some 300 Dreiser items at the HRC separate from the Tjader papers. Most of this collection is correspondence. Many of the letters have been published before, but most only in part. For example, there are 20 letters (1929-39 to Sulamith Ish-Kishor, a female journalist with whom Dreiser may have been romantically involved and who helped him cut his volume of poems, *Moods: Cadenced and Declaimed* (1935); seven letters to the publisher Alfred Knopf in 1917 and two to his wife and business associate Blanche Knopf from 1926 and 1933; 54 letters to Edgar Lee Masters (1930-1945), together with the originals of Masters' replies to Dreiser (1938-1943); five letters to the publisher Grant Richards (1911-1913), together with 13 letters exchanged between Richards and the Century company in 1912-1913; 19 letters to novelist Evelyn Scott (1921-1934), the bulk of them written when Dreiser was editor of the *American Spectator*; and two letters to the agent R. L. Giffen in February 1918. There is also a sheaf of correspondence, memoranda, and agreements concerning the film version of *An American Tragedy*, including letters exchanged between Arthur Hays and Dreiser's attorney Arthur Hume.

Additional documents of importance include two untitled poems written to Helen Dreiser; the manuscripts of two essays ("Intellectual Unemployment" and "Flies and Locusts" [Pizer, Dowell, and Rusch's C31-3 and C33-11, respectively]); a poem ("the Hidden God" #A35-1, 28-1, and 26-1); and what appears to be a discarded chapter from *Notes on Life* ("Equation Called Knowledge"). There is also a contract with Horace Liveright, dated 1932; a five-page carbon typescript documenting his investigation of the 1931 miner's strike in Harlan County, Kentucky, "Judge Jones, the Harlan Miner, and Myself"; and a collection of materials related to his projected "Tobacco"

film: "Notes of Remarks by H. S. Kraft" (1 page) and "Revolt or Tobacco," autograph notes (5 pages).

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Reviews

Dreiser's Scientific Influences

Mechanism and Mysticism: The Influence of Science on the Thought and Work of Theodore Dreiser, by Louis J. Zanine. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993. 264 pp.

Louis J. Zanine's *Mechanism and Mysticism: The Influence of Science on the Thought and Work of Theodore Dreiser* is a book that needed to be written. The importance of Dreiser's scientific influences has been widely agreed upon for years by his critics, but rarely studied in any depth. Moreover, these influences, which are remarkable also for their breadth, have been widely referred to and often specifically cited, but they have never been collected and discussed in one place. Some of them have been separately studied in detail—the work of Ellen Moers on the underpinnings of *Sister Carrie* and *An American Tragedy* comes to mind, as does Ronald Martin's analysis and documentation of the Spencerian roots of the Cowperwood trilogy, along with the work of Donald Pizer on the novels generally—but these studies are all centered on subjects other than Dreiser and science broadly conceived; their insights come in service of different agendas, and are necessarily limited. Zanine's study is the first to put Dreiser's interest in science front and center.

What needs to be said at the outset is that this is a good and valuable book which will benefit Dreiser specialists as well as graduate students and beginning scholars. Zanine has done his homework carefully and well, not only on Dreiser's life and work, but also on his lifelong reading, and on the scientists and movements (some quite obscure) whose work was important to him. The material is presented

in narrative form, as a kind of biography of Dreiser's mind that ultimately intertwines the scientific and the spiritual. Zanine follows Dreiser through his infatuation with evolutionary thought, the mechanistic philosophy of Jacques Loeb, Freudian psychoanalysis, the supernaturalism of Charles Fort, and his final studies in Quakerism and Hinduism, to name some of the larger landmarks. His story concludes with what Zanine describes as "the author's arrival in the realm of natural theology at the conclusion of his metaphysical journey" (212) just before he dies.

The close readings in service of this argument—for that is what this narrative of Dreiser's inner life essentially is—can be excellent, and sometimes unexpected. There are the ritual discussions of *Sister Carrie* and *An American Tragedy*, of course, but Zanine does good work with pieces that have received little attention, like "McEwen of the Shining Slave Makers" and *The Hand of the Potter*. Given Zanine's approach to his subject, one would expect that the semi-autobiographical, too little-noticed *The "Genius"* would receive attention, and it benefits from an extended discussion. It should also be noted that Zanine has written his book simply, clearly, and directly—all virtues seen all too rarely these days in academic prose.

But for all these assets, it must also be said that this book is somewhat tendentious in its overall design. Trying to fit Dreiser's creative, intellectual, and spiritual life into a teleological narrative seems to me an inherently Procrustean undertaking. Zanine's masterplot, which has Dreiser moving through various forms of modern scientific uncertainty and various religions (and mysticism) to final spiritual fulfillment, is a little too smooth and finely tuned for an author of so many contradictions. In order to keep the story oriented, for example, the Cowperwood books receive highly restricted focus, despite Dreiser's lifelong preoccupation with the way that economics influences human behavior (beginning with his interest in Spencer, which Zanine documents nicely), and the way that acquisitiveness is tied in with the search for spiritual fulfillment. The effect of such shifted emphasis is a certain artificiality to Zanine's account of Dreiser's achievement of final peace. While students of Dreiser will surely ben-

efit from Zanine's presentation of the diverse topography of his intellectual life, I find it hard to share Zanine's secure knowledge that Dreiser made it to the The Answer. Rather than making the man fit the story, Zanine sometimes goes the other way around.

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Naturalism's Seduction and a Daughter's Rebellion

Sexualizing Power in Naturalism: Theodore Dreiser and Frederick Philip Grove, by Irene Gammel. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1994. 262 pp.

Sexualizing Power in Naturalism: Theodore Dreiser and Frederick Philip Grove by Irene Gammel marks a clearly definitive point of entry into feminist criticism on naturalism as a genre while it lays the groundwork for further feminist inquiry by examining key texts in each author's corpus. In response to Shelley Fisher Fishkin's call for sorely needed "reexamination" of Dreiser's representation of women as well as other subjects) [*Theodore Dreiser: Beyond Naturalism* ed. Miriam Gogol. (New York UP, 1995: 1-30, 2], Irene Gammel has authored a major trail-blazing text in feminist (re)readings of Dreiser, one that leaps into the lacuna in feminist analysis of his work.

What she does at length is nothing short of anatomizing the ways in which literary naturalism has sexualized power, that is, how power that is (always?) already sexualized is also simultaneously the power that sexualizes (creates and projects sexualization into a discursive field). Dreiser, she writes, "firmly established sex as a discursive fact"

(84) and Grove, the "Canadian Dreiser" (8) created a "sexual picaresque" (10) in *Fanny Essler* based on the life of his German lover Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven. Thus, it is fitting that Gammel, a self-described "Foucauldian archaeologist" (30) would take sex as the linchpin of power relations. She inspects a social and literary practice that valorizes what she describes as "male complicity in the very sexualization of power that genre so ostentatiously highlights in its thematics" (2-3). Her aim to expose the mechanisms (beyond Dreiser's "chemisms" and "magnetisms," beyond, in fact, a mimetic rendering of naturalism in all its determinism) which inscribe the female body as the site of power "means revealing and critiquing the texts' (male) biases, ideologies, and self-contradictions" (2-3). Driven by a second goal to situate Dreiser and Grove in their historical contexts, Gammel traces their literary legacy from the Marquis de Sade, Restif de la Bretonne, and, specifically, Zola's *Nana* to illustrate not only the misogynistic preoccupation with ascertaining the "truth" of the female body, but also the generic shifts as the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth. Consumerism, the "New Woman," the crisis in masculinity and the advent of psychoanalysis displaced the nineteenth century paradigms of heredity/degenerescence, but did not allow for any ideological transformation. In fact, Gammel writes, the new century was hardly sympathetic to a growing feminist movement; nor did it unflex its "arm of power" (54) in sexual politics.

Studying two authors in tandem not only follows a rhetorical strategy of comparison/contrast but also allows Gammel a structure—albeit a deconstructive one, but one that does in fact *restructure* the genesis of naturalism's misogyny—and reinforces her observation that naturalism "institutionalized itself as an agency with the right (and duty) to produce sexual truths" (30). The dialogical quality she calls "so typical" of Dreiser and Grove's naturalism (233) is an apt descriptor of her own work. Consider her title with its fused denotations and the naming of the two authors of her focus; her analysis of seminal works in alternating chapters; her demonstration of each author's reliance on both essentialist *and* social constructionist views

of female sexuality; her explication of male textual authority *and* female sexual resistance; even her closing remarks:

Thus the version of male naturalism that emerges in this twentieth-century tension is one that simultaneously questions and affirms, appropriates and rewrites, deconstructs and reconstructs the nineteenth-century naturalist connection between male power and the female's sexual 'nature.' (240)

Indeed the hallmark of a post-structuralist methodology, readingolarizations held in tension, characterizes Irene's approach and Dreiser and Grove's textual strategies. Suggestive of splits, duality is driving force behind authorial (Dreiserian, Grovian and Gammelian) observations; Gammel thoroughly interrogates the double discourses Dreiser and Grove (and their narrators) create. Part One, *Naturalism and Foucault*, contains three essays that ground the interpretive work that follows. She explores the intersections of Foucault's critique of hegemonic power/knowledge, feminism's critique of social institutions which (en)gender norms and prescriptions for both males and males and naturalism as a literary dominant discourse privileging male-defined notions of female sexuality. Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (particularly Volume 1) offers Gammel a foundation for exploring what Foucault calls "normalization" of subjectivities and informs her answers to a central question of her study: "How is sexuality put to work in the social machinery of power?" (7). Gammel draws on Foucault's understanding of "bio-power," in regards to political power because it depends upon the manipulation of individual bodies; surveillance, regulation and classification are tactics of subjection, but particularly oppressive, Gammel reminds us, to women (and women characters). Sexuality in naturalism is not a "liberating" force though naturalism is concerned with "frank" sexual matters. On the contrary, sexuality is deployed as power—implying someone/some group needs to be *powerless*.

Since maleness is portrayed as always performative and femaleness as always innate and problematic, Dreiser and Grove both expose and affirm constitutive "body-molding" (normalizing and disciplining) techniques (42) including the male prerogative of *seeing*, the use of desire as a pleasurable seduction, and the docility of the body (though challenged by female "others"). Too, their male narrators often assume a bodiless construct in alignment with a master discourse, an (author)ity made invisible yet capable of dispassionate judgment and functioning as an instrument of social control. What Dreiser and Grove depict as "normal" gender relations Gammel shows as a product of Foucauldian *normalization*.

Sister Carrie, "Emanuela" (from *A Gallery of Women*), *The Titan* and *The 'Genius'* are Dreiserian texts Gammel shows as both legitimating *and* resisting the cultural constraints on gender prescriptions while *Fanny Essler*, *A Search for America*, and *The Master of the Mill* are Grovian selections she scrutinizes. Both authors' use of "'codified' and 'clean,' discourses" creates a "sublimated and sanitized pleasure that indirectly reinscribes the very sexual repression from which they propose to 'free' the literary discourse" (39-40). Gammel points out that such a tactic projects contradictory messages into the social/literary network: both authors participate in *and* question the discursive maintenance of compulsory heterosexual/kinship alliances. *Carrie*, "seduced by the city" exposes how the material body is shaped by culture in its historical moment *and* disciplined: she "is not punished for her sexual transgressions but controlled in a much more effective way: she is seduced into voluntary submission to society's norms" (55). *Any* icon of female empowerment (for Dreiser *or* Grove) is oxymoronic and thus threatening to a "homoeroticized male solidarity" (181). Because she refuses sex (with Dreiser's narrator), *Emanuela* is labeled "frigid" and her behavior is interpreted as abnormal. Grove's *Fanny Essler* is more "radical" than *Carrie* but her "new language" is squelched as she ends up not "an artist, but a prostituted work of art" (116). Similarly, Grove's Philip Brander (a direct polarization to Dreiser's Senator Brander?) is feminized/victimized as he searches for a "North American pastoral myth" (145). Frank Cowperwood

and Gene Witla, both conflating art and economics with sex, are driven by a "principle of fetishized accumulation of women as sexual and epistemological objects" (184). Grove's *Master of the Mill* spans three generations of Oedipal conflict in the Clarks' patriarchal/monarchical empire.

Gammel brings extensive scholarship to bear in her analysis of sexual politics as a reflection of naturalism's political unconscious—its (textual) maintenance of masculinist power as it has injected sex into the (re)constitution of the individual and society. She is thoroughly versed in Foucault, Dreiser, Grove, feminism, and historical and contemporary criticism on naturalism, and her text showcases their convergence in a stunning exegesis laced with passages in German and French. Gammel suggests one of the intellectual pleasures derived from reading a naturalist novel is "to plunge into the network of power relationships in order to detect the narrator's ideological bias and to unravel the sexual/textual web through which the narrative voice tries to seduce the reader into complicity with a particular version of the truth" (51). Reading Gammel reading *her* pleasure becomes ours.

Altering gender relations depends upon an understanding of their formulation and the power relations Foucault and Gammel would say are infused into every institution and their regulatory discourse. Understanding the ways in which women have been classified, identified and coded by dominant discourses helps them to resist such strategies and define themselves. Gammel's reading of these two naturalists authors helps us historicize the sexualization of the female as an effect of systemic masculinist hegemony. If we are on our way to a post-gender world, her substantive book helps us understand how we get there from here by showing us where we've been.

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News and Notes

With this issue, DS welcomes two new members to its editorial staff, whose appointments by the Editorial Board of the International Dreiser Society were announced at the Society's annual business meeting at the ALA conference in Baltimore. Professor Clare Eby of the University of Connecticut at Hartford was named Co-Editor of DS, and Professor Nancy Warner Barrineau of Pembroke State University has agreed to serve as Book Review Editor.... Readers wishing to join the International Dreiser Society can become members by writing to Paul Orlov, the Society's Secretary-Treasurer, at Penn State Delaware County Campus, 25 Yearsley Mill Road, Media, PA 19063-5596. Annual dues, which include subscriptions to both DS and *The Dreiser Society Newsletter*, are \$20 a year in North America and \$30 elsewhere.... The Dreiser Society sponsored two sessions on Dreiser at the ALA conference. One panel, focusing on Theodore Dreiser and Social, Cultural, and New Historicist Criticisms, was chaired by Yoshinobu Hakutani, and the other, featuring Gender/Feminist Readings of Dreiser's Work, was chaired by Miriam Gogol. A number of the papers read at the sessions will appear in the 1995 issues of DS.... *Theodore Dreiser: Beyond Naturalism*, a collection of essays on Dreiser, is scheduled for fall 1995 publication by the New York University Press. Among the contributors to the volume are Shelley Fisher Fishkin, Irene Gammel, Nancy Warner Barrineau, Scott Zaluda, Leonard Cassuto, Paul Orlov, Lawrence Hussman, and Miriam Gogol, who is also editor of the collection.... Recent correspondence includes a letter from John McAleer announcing the donation of his Dreiser collection to the Burns Rare Book Library, Boston College. He writes that the collection includes "a Dreiser handwritten letter, two pages of Dreiser manuscript, my correspondence with Marguerite Tjader, the manuscript of her unpublished book on Dreiser, with typescripts of their correspondence, first editions of Dreiser, galleys of my biography of Dreiser etc." He adds that "the Burns Library is one of the most modern rare book libraries in the U.S. & houses the principal Becket and Graham Greene collections among others."