MODERNIST MASCULINITIES IN THE WORKS OF D.H. LAWRENCE, F. SCOTT FITZGERALD, AND JAMES JOYCE

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis began with an interest in the boundaries and limitations of definitions, specifically cultural definitions of gender, and grew into an examination of how several Modernist writers engage with and question identity and gender formation in light of performances. The categories of masculine and feminine and the associated behavior and characteristics that each group exhibits have traditionally been viewed as either essential or cultural traits. This thesis originates from the position that as with all other behavior, gender behavior is learned. In each of the four books examined, the characters are performing, both for themselves and for others. In some cases, these performances are mainly based in gender, and in others, class. That these performances ultimately sustain the status quo for the environment and culture in which they are performed also is critical to an understanding of why these performances are important to each of the novels discussed. With these interests in mind, I thought the best way to begin to understand these aspects of these four novels was to read them in light of gender theory. What I found was not an incompatibility with gender theory or an indifference to contemporary concerns of identity formation. When gender theory is applied to the Modernist male canon, an interest in gender and identity construction is revealed.

I use Judith Butler as a foundational model for these readings for a number of reasons. Her vision of gender performance offers a model that both acknowledges the truncated options that a two-gendered system offers and critiques the influence cultural norms and ideals have in attempting to normalize gender ideology, while at the same time

allowing an individual some agency within these greater systems. A particularly influential and provoking aspect of her discussion of gender in *Gender Trouble* is the idea of gender as a practice: "Consider the further consequence that if gender is something that one becomes-but can never be-then gender is itself a kind of becoming or activity, and that gender ought not to be conceived as a noun or a substantial thing or a static cultural marker, but rather as an incessant and repeated action of some sort" (Butler 143). Considering gender as "something one becomes" but never is, destabilizes accepted ideas regarding how genders are produced and reproduced. In always needing repetition and ideology in order to (re)produce it, gender identity as an action problematizes and expands ideas of identity and gendered interactions. Examining gender through the lens of performativity, and human behavior in general as a performance, helps one understand literature that examines these representations. This frame of reference makes how a writer creates and documents activities that reproduce gender upon their characters an interesting and important aspect of their writing. Taking a position that gender is then not natural and inevitable, but rather reproduced through action allows for the observation that even when within the text the writer is attempting to assert "naturalness," as in the case of D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*, the rhetorical maneuvers are positioned so that stretches in logic are visible. The reproduction of gender allows for the reproduction of stratified society, and Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *This Side of Paradise*, demonstrate privileged masculinity as another system produced through performed acts. James Joyce, throughout *Ulysses*, and particularly in the "Nausicaa" episode, defamilarlizes identity and focuses on self-perception in such a way that demonstrates performance as not only for others, but also for the self.

These chapters also make use of theoretical models of several other theorists. Jacques Lacan and Laura Mulvey, although they do not specifically critique these writers in their work, also contribute to my examination of gender performance in Modernist writers. In "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I," Lacan examines how desire always is deferred and the self-image the individual perceives as existing is fictive. This understanding of the relationship of the ego to the environment allows for an examination of the pleasure associated with self creation. Laura Mulvey, in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," writes about the pleasure and spectacle of the gaze "in order to dismantle the satisfaction and reinforcement of the ego that represent the high point of film history" (440). Her assertions are useful in analyzing scopophilia and the role of the reader in making meaning in a text.

D.H. Lawrence, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and James Joyce are all held up as emblematic of the writers of their time. This canonization is largely due to their perceived insight into their time and zeitgeist, as well as their contributions to the shape of modern writing. Each of these writers discusses perception, gender, and individual identity in different ways. In D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*, he writes about four people who are struggling with maintaining their identities within romantic relationships. Both men in this book, Gerald Critch and Rupert Birkin, assert their identities with performances of masculinity. These performances, which increase in violence throughout the text, are enacted for three purposes, to assert the men's dominance over women, to reinforce the men's ideas regarding the "naturalness" of this dominance, and to reproduce the effects of this dominance in larger society. In both texts examined in Chapter Three, Fitzgerald engages with the idea of self-creation. In *This Side of*

Paradise, Amory is obsessed with social hierarchy and with finding his place within it through observations and categorizations. In *The Great Gatsby*, Gatsby's failed performance of upper-class masculinity reveals the constructedness of class itself. In the "Nausicaa" episode of Ulysses, Joyce presents two characters whose desire for an ideal and ability to recast reality (and their perceptions of reality) in order to experience these ideals demonstrates the flexibility of self-identity and desire.

One major commonality between each of the three authors lies in the fact that the success or failure of interpersonal connections in all these texts rely on levels of perception. Perception of self, coupled with how the self views society and how others view that self, all combine in each of these works as a major plot point as well as a thematic reoccurrence. In *Women in Love*, for example, each character is the utmost concerned with asserting his or her self, or personality, into interpersonal relationships. Each character is exceedingly frightened that making personal connections with others will result in a loss or a lessening of the self. A concern regarding this loss manifests in multiple instances of dances of domination and power, in which there can only be a clear winner and loser as a result of solidifying interpersonal relationships. In sharp contrast is *This Side of Paradise*, where Amory, from a young age, is convinced that he is a dominant personality. Positions of power are more fixed, and by closely examining and categorizing those who hold power, Amory is able to gain domination and power over those whom he admires and at the same time trying to discern how he could attain the status of those whom he categorizes. In *The Great Gatsby*, Jay Gatsby also attempts to bridge the gulf between the self and society, not by attempting to alter a fixed and rigid society, but rather to alter himself and how society perceives that self. The degree to

which he both succeeds and fails reveals the nuances with which Fitzgerald viewed the relationship between the self and society.

Lawrence's characters in *Women in Love* and their conflicts are exterior manifestations of interior issues. Fitzgerald's characters live exteriorized lives that allow only brief glimpses into their inner workings and motives. These motivations are perceptible only through the evidence of behavior, as the characters themselves rarely examine these interior issues. Like the narrator of *The Great Gatsby,* Nick Caraway, readers are on the outside looking in, reading into the gestures and speeches of Fitzgerald's people. This is a direct contrast with both Lawrence and Joyce, who both describe in detail the range of vacillating emotion each character is feeling at any given moment.

Joyce navigates the complexities of self and society in a way that is unlike any of the other examined authors. In the "Nausicaa" episode, Joyce plays with reality and perceptions when he positions two dreamers, Leopold Bloom and Gerty MacDowell, on the same Dublin beach. When they look at each other, they see not only what the other wishes them to see, but also what they desire to see. Their resultant scopophilia also works within this examination because the overall themes of perception and reality are similar, and the assumptions and categorizations both Bloom and Gerty make regarding each other and themselves are reliant on the negotiation between self and society with which this thesis is concerned.

These writers were selected in part because they are canonical and as such perceived by literary scholars to be representative of their age, and as such can tell us something about how Modernism as a movement examined perception. While all three

writers in this thesis are innovative in their attempts to limn the boundaries of identity and society, many more Modernist writers also engage with these ideas. Fitzgerald, Lawrence, and Joyce each think about the individual's place in society and consciousness differently, and these differences in thinking are reflected in their work. . To take this project further would entail examining other Modernist writers, such as Virginia Woolf, and Radclyffe Hall, who also engage with identity construction and gender in remarkable ways. Looking at texts by these and other writers would potentially open up other aspects and understandings of gender construction that solely examining male writers or canonical writers may overlook. *Orlando* and *The Well of Loneliness* both engage with gender identity in very different ways. Within *Orlando*, Woolf creates a character that moves through a long life with multiple gendered identities. One consciousness and multiple selves would be a fruitful place to locate both modern ideas regarding gender, identity, and gendered performances. Hall, in *The Well*, examines lesbianism from the position of a woman who is trying to understand herself as well as be accepted by society. Multiple ways of being gay and straight, male and female, are presented in this text, and how Hall attempts to reconcile the essential self and larger society's expectations makes this text an interesting one to consider in light of gender performance. Other fruitful avenues of inquiry would be to look at what the writers themselves thought about identity and gender, as evidenced by their other published writings (as was done briefly here with Lawrence's essays) as well as unpublished letters and diaries. These writings would, when researched, yield further clues to how these writers understood and wrote about gender and identity.

In examining perceptions and gender identities in Modernism, I hope to accomplish several things. Each of these writers sought to define what a man is, and why he is what he is. Examining these works as a cross section of Modernism, allows readers to tease out how each writer thought about gender, and what identity meant in his work. Examining these writers in light of later feminist scholarship related to gender will reveal how Modernist writers viewed gender and self construction in light of the individual's responsibility to society, and to see how and if responsibility to self and society are reconcilable in the modern age.

CHAPTER II

"HIS MALENESS BORES ME": THE VIOLENCE OF IDEALIZED MASCULINITY IN D.H. LAWRENCE'S *WOMEN IN LOVE*

Separating and analyzing the social construction of gender and the ideal 'man' or 'woman' from any period establishes the ideologies that are served by the construction of idealized genders. Examining the ideal 'man' as a functional construction does not eliminate the category as existing, but rather points out that this ideal exists only because society *creates* it, not because it is an eternal essentializing truth. By closely examining a text that presents idealized masculine figures, one can see how these ideals are constructed even as the individuals perform these created roles. One text that lends itself to such a reading is *Women in Love*, where D.H. Lawrence seeks to establish the natural status of masculinity as dominant through the idealization of two distinct types of masculinity. The dominant male position is endangered by female independence, and how the main male characters are threatened by this independence also foregrounds the problems of idealization. That this supposed destabilization of society concerned Lawrence is evidenced by his other writings, namely his essays that in his lifetime appeared as newspaper articles.

This reading can be positioned as part of a larger project in gender studies; one that seeks to separate cultural attributes of masculinity from what is "natural" behavior and therefore a biological inevitability. Monique Wittig outlines the necessity of this work for both genders in her essay "One is not born a Woman" when she asserts:

> Thus it is our historic task...to define what we call oppression in materialist terms, to make it evident that women are a class, which is to say that the category

> "women" as well as the category "men" are political and economic categories not eternal ones...Once the class "men" disappears, "women" as a class will disappear as well, for there are no slaves without masters. (268)

The idealization of femininity and masculinity are major components to this oppression, for if the categories were themselves understood as limiting and less attractive, individuals would more readily resist such categorization. This possibility opens up the potential then for changing categorical thinking and possibilities.

In *Women in Love* (1921), D.H. Lawrence positions male beauty and intelligence as powerful gendered ideals that stand in opposition to a balance of power in relationships. The lines of gendered behavior, performance, and perception may blur, but they ultimately cohere to trap both men and women. Lawrence uses two separate characters to explore the two main types of idealized masculinity in this text. The fact that multiple ideals exist opens up the category of masculinity to deconstruction and critique because it forces acknowledgment of the instability of the category if variation and degrees exist with it. These 'types' are both subject to an objectifying gaze that simultaneously constructs and reinforces these ideals. By exploring the idealized masculinity of the two main male characters, Rupert Birkin and Gerald Critch, this reading will note how both men use different types of violence to control women, and how this violence serves a largely performative function to make specific points to the women/audiences who witness the performances. Judith Butler's discussion of the performative in "Imitation and Gender Subordination" and *Gender Trouble* will help to elucidate not only why these roles are performed, but also why such performances are necessary. Butler notes that:

> In its efforts to naturalize itself as the original, heterosexuality must be understood as a compulsive and compulsory repetition that can only produce the

> effect of its own originality; in other words, compulsory heterosexual identities, those ontologically consolidated phantasms of "man" and "woman," are theatrically produced effects that posture as grounds, origins, the normative measure of the real. (23)

Just as surely as the masculine ideal defines the parameters within which it is acceptable to be male, so too do the rigid definitions of masculinity determine the roles of women. Both Birkin and Gerald use culturally acceptable forms of masculine violence to woo and keep the women they love. This violence is no more a part of what it is to be male than nurturing is essential to what it is to be female. These essentializing gender binaries exist in *Women in Love* as limitations that work to prevent the individual from breaking out of these prescribed roles.

Within *Women in Love*, Lawrence positions two relationships as counterpoints with which to explore idealized forms of masculinity and the complexities of relationships between men and women. Two sisters, Gudrun and Ursula, become involved with two men, Gerald Critch, a wealthy mine owner, and Rupert Birkin, a school official and amateur philosopher. How the women view these two men and the extent to which the men's behavior is determined by the viewing presence of the women is a major aspect of the text. The relationship between looking and being looked upon is complex, and causality difficult to determine. Are Gudrun and Ursula looking at Birkin and Gerald because they are performing, or are Gerald and Birkin performing because Ursula and Gudrun are looking at them? While the women look at the men, it is the men who accrue power from their looking, rather than the scopophilic gaze, which objectifies the person being viewed and empowers the watcher. In *Women in Love*, the men remain in power, rather, by holding visual attention, orchestrating performances that force the women to become an audience.

Lawrence languishes over the physical and emotional descriptions of both men, placing much of the narration close to the observing activity of the women. This watching often functions to move the plot along and much of the text is spent examining the appearance of the characters. This looking, of both the narrator and the other characters, establishes both Gerald and Birkin as loci of desire. As desirable objects, the men become feminized; as knowing performers, the men replicate masculine ideals through their actions. An examination of points in the text where Birkin and Gerald compel others to look at them demonstrates that not only is this gaze always sexual, it is also always attempting to define masculinity by obvious visual clues and violence.

The first time Gerald is physically described is also the first time Gudrun sees him, "her interest was piqued" (10). The first description is typical and serves as a good example of how he appears throughout the book, characteristically handsome and potentially violent: Gerald is "of a fair, sun-tanned type, rather above middle height, well-made, and almost exaggeratedly well-dressed" (11). This description is rather generalized, but "something northern about him ... magnetized her [Gudrun]" (11). This magnetizing effect Gerald produces in Gudrun causes her to look closer at Gerald. His 'northernness' is emphasized again, as well as several allusions to winter's cold, although the episode occurs in the spring: "In his clear northern flesh and fair hair was a glisten like sunshine refracted through crystals of ice. And he looked so new, unbroached, pure as an arctic thing...His gleaming beauty, maleness, like a young, good humoured, smiling wolf, did not blind her to the significant, sinister stillness in his bearing, the lurking danger of his unsubdued temper"(11). The repeated references to his Northern looks are significant because his 'whiteness' or Aryan looks are presented as the cultural ideal.

Gerald is presented as the ideal male physical specimen, his perfection contingent on his masculinity. This white maleness is compounded with references to his purity and take on more meaning in these passages when one considers the opposite of purity; contamination. In being 'purely male' Gerald is also entirely lacking any femininity. This passage marks the first time that Gudrun sees Gerald and in comparing this passage to how Gerald later appears to Minette upon their first meeting, striking similarities occur. As Minette watches, Gerald "sat with his arms on the table, his sun-browned, rather sinister hands, that were animal and yet very shapely and attractive, pushed forward towards her. And they fascinated her. And she knew, she watched her own fascination" (60). In both cases, Gerald is depicted as "sun-tanned," "sinister," handsome, and animalistic. 'Sinister' is repeated, although in both cases Gerald is at his ease in a pleasant social situation.

The next time that Gudrun looks at Gerald is in a more revealing situation. In "Diver" Gudrun and Ursula see a man swimming and Gudrun not only wishes she could swim naked like he does, but she also observes Gerald physically as he swims: "And she stood motionless gazing over the water at the face which washed up and down on the flood, as he swam steadily" (41). Gudrun's is not the only watching that occurs in this scene. Gerald is also very much aware of the women watching him swim: "from his separate element he saw them and he exulted to himself because of his own advantage, his possession of a world to himself. He was immune and perfect. He loved his own vigorous, thrusting motion, and the violent impulse of the very cold water against his limbs, buoying him up. He could see the girls watching him a way off, outside, and that pleased him" (41). Gerald's sense of affinity for the cold separate element recalls again

his desirable 'northernness' and his enjoyment of the violence of the cold water against his body is similar to his enjoyment of the women watching him: he knows they cannot enjoy the pleasure he is feeling of swimming publicly, and this 'advantage' is one Gerald exalts in. Earl Ingersoll notes "although Gerald's nakedness is veiled from the view of the sisters once they have identified him, he finds an autoerotic pleasure in exercising his male privilege of swimming nude" (227). This is a privilege that does not extend to women and Gerald's pleasure in being watched contrasts sharply with Gudrun's displeasure in her observation of the inequities of society: "supposing I want to swim up that water. It is impossible, it is one of the impossibilities of life, for me to take my clothes off now and jump in. But isn't it *ridiculous*, doesn't it simply prevent our living?" (42) Gerald's happiness in swimming is dependant upon the women watching, and part of this happiness is the knowledge that he is enjoying something they cannot. In taking pleasure in another's psychic or physical discomfort, Gerald establishes himself as sadistic long before he resorts to physical violence. This sadistic pleasure is an aspect of Gerald's character that will factor heavily into his relationship with Gudrun.

In describing Gerald in "Sisters" and "Diver," Lawrence mixes traditionally feminine and masculine descriptors; he is both 'beautiful' and 'hard.' However, mixed gender adjectives begin to be applied to Gerald when he and Gudrun are in the boat in "Water-Party": "And her breast was keen with passion for him, he was so beautiful in his male stillness and mystery. It was a certain pure effluence of maleness, like an aroma from his softly, firmly molded contours, a certain rich perfection of his presence, that touched her with an ecstasy a thrill of pure intoxication. She loved to look at him" (167). When Gudrun looks at him, the contrasting of softness and firmness, his "beautiful male

stillness" makes Gerald here a feminized man. His stillness, softness, and beauty, traditionally words used to describe idealized women, are here a 'pure effluence of maleness.' For Laura Mulvey, to be gazes upon is to be objectified and made into a vessel for desire. This is why she writes,"in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly" (442). In the process of being observed for Lawrence, this inevitable passive feminization is also present, but in a slightly different way. Gudrun's appreciative and evaluatory gaze acts to pacify Gerald and make him into an object of desire, rather than a subject acting on desire. This objectifying, feminizing gaze continues throughout "Water-Party": "Oh, and the beauty of the subjection of his loins, white and dimly luminous as he climbed over the side of the boat, made her want to die, to die. The beauty of his dim and luminous loins as he climbed into the boat, his back rounded and soft-ah, this was too much for her, too final a vision" (171). Gudrun's focus on Gerald's physical beauty in general and his 'luminous loins' specifically sexualizes her observations. Moreover, here Gerald has become his loins, which are all she sees. This fragmentation as a result of objectifying further feminizes Gerald, even as it focuses on his physical maleness. As Mulvey notes, "this [fragmenting the body] is a different mode of eroticism. One part of a fragmented body destroys the renaissance space, the illusion of depth demanded by the narrative" (442). Destroying depth allows for objectification and two-dimensionality, a reduction and a loss.

An idealized perception of Gerald's masculinity also occurs toward the end of his affair with Minette in London. When Minette is thinking about the end of her liaison

with Gerald, she comes to some interesting conclusions: "Gerald was what she called a man, and these others, Halliday, Libidnikov, Birkin, the whole bohemian set, they were only half men. But it was half men she could deal with. She felt sure of herself with them. The real men, like Gerald, put her in her place too much" (74). What Minette identifies as a real man is little more than a cruel and controlling phallus. Gerald and Minette were only together for a weekend, and were intimate mostly as a tool for Minette to win back her unborn child's father Halliday. The "bohemian set" (that includes Birkin) are half men to Minette because they are both intellectual and physical, while Gerald, to Minette, is purely a physical being. This reduction of "real" masculinity into a dominant sexuality is why Minette would rather be with a "half man" Halliday, with whom she has more of an equal relationship. Lawrence notes in several of his essays that he believes it impossible for men and women to see each other clearly as independent individuals and still remain in a relationship of equals, for one must always rule over the other. In "Give her a Pattern," Lawrence calls for men to present their women with a worthy ideal to embody. In making his argument that there must be a pattern, Lawrence asserts that, "Man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in skirts, as an angel, a devil, a baby-face, a machine, an instrument, a bosom, a womb, a pair of legs, a servant, an encyclopedia, an ideal or an obscenity; the one thing he won't accept her as, is a human being, a real human being of the feminine sex" (39). Acknowledging a woman as a real human being would necessitate that she be seen as irreducible to her parts (womb, pair of legs, bosom) or her functions (machine, servant, encyclopedia). This essay, which asserts that women request a pattern, an ideal to live up to, and that men, because women must have a pattern, should present women with a "decent, satisfying idea of

womanhood" (43) begs several questions. If patterns are to be decried, as they prevent women from becoming "real human beings," should not men (his audience for this essay) then attempt to stop creating/reinforcing patterns, or even more radically, allow for variations on these patterns? This feminine pattern, which is the flip side of a masculine ideal, is recognized as limiting by Lawrence to both men and women, but at the same time he presents no lasting alternative and asserts that "women must play up to man's pattern" (43).

As it was for Minette, Gerald in the end for Gudrun is too "masculine" as the word has come to mean in the novel: hypersexual and cruel. Gudrun in the end becomes tired of the very traits that attracted her to Gerald in the first place: "he tries to make every woman think how wonderful it would be to have him for a lover...he is never *unconscious of them*. He should be a cockerel, so he could strut before fifty females, all his subjects...he bores me, you know. His maleness bores me. Nothing is so boring, so inherently stupid and stupidly conceited" (Lawrence 445). Gerald's virility and sexuality, aspects of his masculine identity that she found attractive originally, have become for her boring and "inherently stupid."

One scene of violence that has attracted considerable scholarly attention is Gerald's abuse of his Arabian mare. Much of the language of this scene is couched in terms of violent domination. This scene begins much like other appearances of Gerald, with Gudrun watching him because "in spite of her ironic smile at his picturesqueness, Gudrun liked to look at him" (102). The violence that ensues is a performance when one considers that Gerald is close and knows the sisters are watching him: "He saluted the two girls, and drew up at the crossing to wait for the gate, looking down the railway for

the approaching train" (102). In saluting the sisters, Gerald both acknowledges their presence and compels them to continue looking. He has already begun his performance, as his use of a military acknowledgement, a salute, rather than a wave asserts his masculinity and potential for violence. Even before he begins abusing the horse, Gerald enjoys his position of power: "He rode well and softly, pleased with the delicate quivering of the creature between his knees" (Lawrence 102). Gerald's pleasure in his horse's 'delicate quivering' establishes this as a sexual moment, with Gerald as hyper masculine and the horse as a (forced) submissive female.

When the train begins to approach, the horse attempts to move away from the tracks in fear, "She [the horse] recoiled like a spring let go. But a glistening, half-smiling look came into Gerald's face. He brought her back, inevitably" (Lawrence 102). This half-smile denotes the pleasure Gerald takes in not only his assertion of control over the animal, but also his anticipation of further pleasure in the ability to be violent in a socially acceptable way. Andrew Howe notes "Gerald obviously feels as if there is a "natural order" in the world, with man occupying the top place on the hierarchy and the rest of nature below. He also feels it is permissible for those atop the hierarchy to treat those in lower positions violently if necessary" (433). Gerald can force the mare to remain beside the tracks, justifying his performative violence to Ursula later by noting "I consider that mare is there for my use. Not because I bought her, but because that is the natural order" (129). For Gerald, part of his pleasure derives from his control over the horse and ability to make the horse remain against her will. The other part of Gerald's pleasure comes from his forcing Gudrun and Ursula to watch his violence against their wills. "In staging this scene...Gerald is the master of the show, a kind of exhibitionist

self-consciously aware of the fixed gaze of his audience...Thus, he knows that they are witnessing the spectacle he is about to produce for their benefit" (Ingersoll 271). This exhibition provokes strong feelings in both sisters, Gudrun is fascinated and Ursula horrified, both emotions Gerald takes pleasure in eliciting. The description of how Gerald controls the horse, coupled with his pleasure in exerting that control adds up to a graphic violent passage:

> But he leaned forward, his face shining with fixed amusement, and at last he bought her down, sank her down, and was bearing her back to the mark...A sharpened look came on Gerald's face. He bit himself down on the mare like a keen edge biting home, and forced her round. She roared as she breathed, her nostrils were two wide, hot holes, her mouth was apart, her eyes frenzied. It was a repulsive sight. But he held on her unrelaxed, with an almost mechanical relentlessness, keen as a sword pressing into her. Both man and horse were sweating with violence. Yet he seemed calm as a ray of cold sunshine. (103)

Andrew Howe notes how this scene is easily read as sexualized violence "best interpreted as a sadistic rape, as it is violent and against the mare's will...He [Gerald] enjoys the encounter, as he enjoys dominating those around him, winning the battle and asserting his own masculine power in the process" (Howe 431). Howe and others are correct in reading this as a rape, but it is a **staged** rape perpetrated as much to do psychic violence against the sisters as it is to teach his Arabian mare a lesson. Gerald here subverts Mulvey's gaze, as the psychic violence occurs not as a result of the women present being objectified, but because he, in commanding their attention, is giving them a message: Implicit in this display is the unequal power balance between Gerald, as a wealthy male, and the sisters, unmarried middle class women.

Gerald becomes even more physically violent as the book progresses. This violence is linked to Gudrun, and his vision of how to eternally possess her. "A sudden

desire leapt in his heart to kill her...what a perfectly voluptuous consummation it would be to strangle her, to strangle every spark of life out of her, till she lay completely inert, soft, relaxed for ever, a soft heap lying dead between his hands, utterly dead. Then he would have had her finally and for ever; there would be such a perfectly voluptuous finality" (Lawrence 442). Gerald does not act on this deadly impulse at the time, because at that point he still has at least the semblance of control over Gudrun. After he discovers her with Loerke and Gudrun slaps him, the appearance of control vanishes and "at last he could finish his desire" (452). The pleasure Gerald takes in choking Gudrun is much like he imagined it would be, and just as he imagined days earlier, he begins to strangle her: "What Bliss! Oh what bliss, at last, what satisfaction, at last! The pure zest of satisfaction filled his soul. He was watching the unconsciousness come into her swollen face, watching the eyes roll back. How ugly she was! What a fulfillment, what a satisfaction! How good this was, oh how good it was, what a God-given gratification, at last" (Lawrence 453).

Birkin's use of philosophy as a tool of domination is another form of gendered violence in this text. By examining three scenes where Birkin uses psychological violence in the form of philosophical debates with Ursula will foreground how this act is indeed violent. The first such discussion occurs in Ursula's classroom as she is teaching her students about catkins. Birkin is her supervisor and enters the class unobserved as she is teaching. From the beginning, Birkin asserts his dominance in the situation: "She saw...near her, the face of a man. It was gleaming like fire, watching her, waiting for her to be aware" (30). After he startles her, Birkin also turns on the classroom lights making the class-room "distinct and hard, a strange place after the soft dim magic that filled it

before he came" (30). Birkin's actions are clearly a performance, staged complete even with lighting to assert his dominance. Birkin, in watching and "waiting for her to be aware" is compelling Ursula's attention and forcing an inevitable reaction. When she does react, he still wants more from situation. It is her classroom, but he alters the atmosphere she created for her student's benefit, in order to assert himself. Birkin's assertion of himself into Ursula's space continues as he interrupts her class to ask her about what she is teaching and to tell her to give the students crayons "so they can make the gynaecious flowers red, and the androgynous yellow" (31). Birkin's assumption that sexual parts of plants was what Ursula was teaching the students or what she should be teaching the students is further evidence that he is psychologically dominating. Couched in terms of instructions, Birkin not only interrupts Ursula's lessons, he undermines what she was attempting to do in the classroom. Before he turned on the light, "the last lesson was in progress, peaceful and still" (29). After Birkin takes over her classroom, Ursula is "standing aside in arrested silence, watching him move in another concentrated world" (30). This change, from a peaceful lesson in which Ursula was "absorbed in the passion of instruction" (30) to a room that has Birkin talking to Ursula and then also to Hermione, demonstrates that Birkin's primary objective in the exchange was not to further the children's learning, but rather to reassert his role of domination towards both women, Ursula as an attractive female employee and Hermione as a former lover.

One of the most significant exchanges between Birkin and Ursula occurs after Gerald subdues his horse in front of Gudrun and Ursula. While Ursula and Birkin are waiting for tea, Birkin's cat Mino, described as "kingly," "lordly," and "a slender young gentleman," asserts his dominance and ownership of the garden yard over a "crouching,"

"stealing" "outcast" female stray. The cats' behavior is important to an understanding of this scene, but of equal importance is what larger meaning the humans observing this behavior attribute. When Mino walks up to the stray "She crouched before him and pressed herself on the ground in humility" (138-139). The stray female automatically bows down before the resident male cat. Mino has no real need therefore to assert his dominance, as the female cat acknowledges it. He certainly does not need to use physical violence to assert this preexisting dominance. "Suddenly, for pure excess, he gave her a light cuff with his paw on the side of her face...she crouched unobtrusively, in submissive, wild patience" (139). This "light cuff" is followed by another "light handsome cuff," and then the female is "boxed twice, very definitely" (139). This animal behavior is meant to function paradigmatically for human behavior. Just as the male cat asserts his "natural" rights to space and dominance with violence, so too will men inevitably and justly do the same.

In his essay "Cocksure Women and Hensure Men," Lawrence also uses reported animal phenomenon as a key to human relationships. The essay reflects on the changes in society that occurred during the twentieth century as women asserted themselves more visibly into public life. His argument is that because men have become "hensure," women step forward as "cocksure," to the detriment of both: "If women today are cocksure, men are hensure. Men are timid, tremulous, rather soft and submissive, easy in their very henlike tremulousness. They only want to be spoken to gently. So the women step forth with a good loud *cock-a doodle-do*!" (74) In presenting women as active only as a result of men becoming passive, Lawrence universalizes the traditional roles of men and women into a natural and universal balance. When this balance is tipped into the

perceived favor of women, it "makes the cocksureness of women so dangerous" because "it is really out of scheme, it is not in relation to the rest of things" (75).

Andrew Howe reads the Mino's domination over the wild female cat as "representing the need to find an equilibrium, an equality between two members in a relationship" (Howe 437) and draws a parallel between the cats and Birkin and Ursula. Certainly, this parallel is the broader meaning that Birkin intends for the cats to assume. Yet Howe taking Birkin's argument for truth is problematic. How can the use of physical domination result in equality? Birkin sees this violence, 'boxing' and 'cuffing' by Mino toward the female stray, as "justified" and the cat keeping his "male dignity, and...higher understanding" (140). Ursula however sees the cat as a "bully" and relates Mino's exertion of dominance, as an "assumption of male superiority" and equates it with Gerald's earlier treatment of his horse: "'It is just like Gerald Critch with his horse-a lust for bullying-a real Wille zur Macht-so base, so petty'" (140). This "will to power" Ursula sees in Mino and Gerald's behavior is also part of Birkin's character, as he, in an earlier discussion of Gerald's abuse of his horse, says "and woman is the same as horses: two wills act in opposition inside her" (131). His quick assertion that he too "agree[s] that the Wille zur Macht [will to power] is a base and petty thing" (140) is immediately undercut by his assertion that this is not what is occurring between the cats. Birkin asserts that Mino merely wants to "bring this female cat into a pure stable equilibrium" because "without him...she is a mere stray, a fluffy sporadic bit of chaos" (140). Andrew Howe believes that "Birkin, in this passage, puts his finger on the central thesis of *Women in L*ove, in order to maintain equilibrium in a relationship; both parties need to fight to establish their own individuality and power. This struggle, if both sides retain

equal power and control, will lead to an equality with no semblance of ownership" (Howe 439). While this may be the main intention of the struggle Birkin continues with Ursula, the cuffs Mino gives the other cat can hardly be seen as a feline metaphysic desire for equity in relationships. The female stray does not maintain her individuality any more that Ursula ultimately does; we last see the cat as "she sank and slid back, unquestioning" (139). This is hardly parity. In the struggle of violence, no female in *Women in Love* can remain on equal footing. Mino's name recalls Minette, Gerald's lover for a weekend in London. When he leaves, Gerald feels frustrated and unsure of himself, not because she has cast him aside for her child's father, but because he left without giving Minette money: "It was true, he did not know if she wanted money or not. But she might have been glad of ten pounds, and he would have been *very* glad to give them to her. Now he felt in a false position" (74). This false position occurs because he has not been able to end things with money given for services rendered; he feels Minette still has some claim against him that she could use at a future moment.

Ursula does not fail to notice the short shrift such a worldview gives women. Her knowledge of the inevitability of female subjugation in Birkin's view of partnership is evident in her reaction to Birkin likening their relationship to "a star in its orbit" (141). "'Yes-yes—' cried Ursula, pointing her finger at him. 'There you are-a star in its orbit! A satellite-a satellite of Mars-that's what she is to be! There-there-you've given yourself away! You've said it-you've said it-you've dished yourself!'" (141) According to Millett, "The 'new' relationship, while posing as an affirmation of the primal unconscious sexual being, to adopt Lawrence's jargon, is in effect a denial of personality in the woman" (264). While Birkin argues (unsuccessfully) that this is not what he said,

Ursula hears 'satellite' because this is much closer to what Birkin is proposing than "equilibrium." This is similar to what Butler observes when she notes that, "language has a dual possibility: It can be used to assert a true and inclusive universality of persons, or it can institute a hierarchy in which only some persons are eligible to speak and others, by virtue of their exclusion from the universal point of view, cannot "speak" without simultaneously deauthorizing that speech" (153). In this passage within "Mino" language has become a trap for Ursula, replicating and "proving" that the hierarchy should remain in place. When she later calls him on it, he says, "I neither implied nor intended nor mentioned a satellite, not intended a satellite, never'" (141). Ursula no doubt recalls an earlier conversation with Birkin regarding Gerald's horse in which Birkin asserts that the horse wanted to put itself under Gerald's power: "It's the last, perhaps highest, love-impulse: resign your will to the higher being" (131). By linking his proposition with Gerald's abuse of his horse and Mino's subjugation of his mate, Birkin establishes a sort of philosophical justification for the very acts of violence Ursula found distasteful.

Both men in *Women in Love* are ultimately unhappy because of the ideals of masculinity to which they aspire. Gerald is viewed as sinister, strong, cruel, and cold, his performance of violence is physical and sadistic toward both women and animals. Birkin is seen as verbally manipulative, idealistic, and clever, his violent performances are psychological. Both Gerald and Birkin believe that they can control others with violence as a means toward attaining the women they desire. By perpetuating and performing these "ideal" masculinities of dominance and violence, both Birkin and Gerald cannot be satisfied or satisfy other people.

CHAPTER III

"'HAVING IT'OR 'LACKING IT'": CATAGORIZATION AND PERFORMED IDENTITIES IN *THIS SIDE OF PARDISE* AND *THE GREAT GATSBY*

Judith Butler's concept of performative identity, first articulated in *Gender Trouble*, can be profitably applied to class once the benefits of the intentionally constructed nature of both is opened for critique. To employ a model designed to explain gender performance in order to understand class performance, several important distinctions must be made. While class has been largely accepted as more or less a culturally constructed categorical system, gender has not. Class is thought of as mobile, as America is a meritocracy where one can succeed through hard work. Gender is thought of by many as synonymous with sex, fixed and biologically determined. Both gender and class however, as they are currently understood, can be validly considered to be oppressive systems grounded in ideology. And as ideology, both systems feed on and continue to function as a result of desire and attempts to regain control of desire. Both are ideologies in the sense that gender and class are systems one does not see yet understands to be true. As ideologies, gender and class shape our understanding of the world and our place in it, and make up a large part of identity and perception by the self and others.

Both gender and class, as ideological systems, succeed in keeping power and privilege consolidated in the hands of a small predetermined group of people. Modes of critical analysis that question the naturalness of such fixed systems allow for a

reinterpretation of the systems themselves and produce new avenues of seeing how these systems work together to produce arbitrary and oppressive hierarchical structures. As Butler notes, "only from a self-consciously denaturalized position can we see how the appearance of naturalness is itself constituted" (140). This analysis can then be profitably deployed in service of establishing that class, like gender, is performative. Establishing the performative nature of class, along Butler's lines, forces a focus onto the reasons why class and gender are constructed, and what purposes these constructions serve. An exploration of key passages in both *This Side of Paradise* and *The Great Gatsby* allows for an exploration of Fitzgerald's engagement with ideas regarding hierarchies and how knowledge of them shapes identities. In both, Fitzgerald touches on identity construction and class; important psychological and social issues that run through both texts and the novels pivot on the fundamentally arbitrary distinctions made between people within society.

Categorical distinctions and the attendant problem of hierarchy foregrounds the tensions between the control the ego has over the self and identity formation, as opposed to the environment in a specific sense, or society in a larger sense. How much control any individual has over his or her life is contestable within any society, but especially in twentieth-century American society. The legacy and legend of the "self-made" businessman is etched deep in the American psyche, affirming the belief that hard work and moral fortitude will make dreams come true. These ideals compete with the reality of exploited labor forces and a highly structured, if concealed, social hierarchy. These structured social hierarchies are both regulated and shored up by ideology.

Perception is key to reality for Fitzgerald's characters, both how they are perceived and how they perceive themselves. This emphasis on perspective and appearance can be read as a mere concern with appearance and a glittering superficiality, or it can be interpreted as an engagement with, and critique of, the constraints presented by social roles and personal goals. These attempts by individuals to negotiate the constrained and contested space between personal ideals and society's expectations reveal that how personal the ideals actually are is debatable. These constraints in turn offer commentary on the fluidity and rigidity of categories in American culture. These categories are fluid because in both texts characters cross categorical lines...rigid because these crossings always necessarily contain an element of falsity and deception, recasting the truth into more functional and attractive forms. Fitzgerald's Amory Blaine confirms that even those who are American aristocracy have to work for it, and appearances are cultivated to appear uncultivated. Gatsby reminds the wealthy of Long Island that they too have had to work for their images, as much as they want to believe they are innate.

Within *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald chronicles the development of Amory. The section headings of "The Romantic Egoist" and "The Education of a Personage" reveal an interest in ego formation and self knowledge. Amory believes for most of the novel that he can create himself through an understanding of the observed and external. The idea that one's consciousness and life's plan and shape are formed consciously appeals to Amory, and in his musings on how he wants his life to be occur throughout the text, "it was always the becoming he dreamed of, never the being" (12). This becoming hinges on knowledge of the self, and early on Amory "formulated his first philosophy, a code to live by, which, as near as it can be named, was a sort of aristocratic egoism" (12).

This egoism relies on comparison with others and a maneuvering of the self to the best advantage of a presentation to an audience. An examination of Amory's list of his own traits demonstrates his concern not only with audience appreciation, but also with comparison with others: "*Physically*. - Amory thought that he was exceedingly handsome. He was. He fancied himself an athlete of possibilities and a supple dancer" (12). Here the narrator agrees that Amory is handsome, but does not agree with his self-assessment of his athletic and dancing abilities, two activities that occur before others. Socially Amory sees himself as "dominating all contemporary males" and mentally he has a "complete, unquestioned superiority" (12). This list is not so much about details of Amory's traits as it is a lever with which he positions himself above all other "contemporary males". He is defining himself, not by details of what he is, but more by how he measures up to others. The location of himself as superior to others necessarily relies not so much on self knowledge as on detailed observation of how he is slightly better. In locating observations within other's behavior and placing himself atop the social heap, Amory creates a worldview in which he does not need to grow or change, but only pay careful attention to how others compare.

Amory also categorizes large groups of people, and even places, without firsthand knowledge of how he came to those opinions. A good example of this is his conversation with Monsignor Darcy regarding college. "I want to go to Princeton," said Amory. "I don't know why, but I think of all Harvard men as sissies, like I used to be, and all Yale men as wearing big blue sweaters and smoking pipes [...] I think of Princeton as being lazy and good-looking and aristocratic-you know, like a spring day" (17). In imagining Princeton as 'lazy, good looking and aristocratic,' he is listing qualities that Amory

himself to some degree possesses and more to the point desires to possess. His desire to go there solidifies those characteristics for his future self, and positions Princeton as superior to those other colleges, and thus himself as superior to those who will attend those colleges. Amory can see everyone is pretending to be something, and these pretences and performances become 'types.' Amory notices the performances, and chooses his own out from the visible choices, the kind of performance he wants and chooses to do is Princeton, because out of the available options, that is the best.

When he and Paskert go to the play "The Little Millionaire" they both leave the theatre enchanted by a brunette actress. Both boys desire a future that includes the chorus girl, or someone like her. How the boys dream about the girl is quite different, and gives a clue to the distinctiveness of Amory's plans. While Paskert desires to take her with him and further notes that he would "be proud to take her home and introduce her to my people" (21), Amory constructs for himself a future that will insert him into the situations they had just observed on the stage. "He was planning his life. He was going to live in New York, and be known at every restaurant and café, wearing a dress suit from early evening to early morning, sleeping away the dull hours of the forenoon" (22). Paskert vocalizes a desire to insert a bit of Broadway into his ordinary life, while Amory observes Broadway and plans to insert himself into it. That he can dream up a role, or take up an observed persona further confirms Amory's performance.

Amory possesses a limited self reflexivity, in that he desires to know himself, not for knowledge alone, but for maximum enjoyment of and understanding of life. While at Princeton, Amory remarks to Tom D'Invilliers that, "either your eyes were opened to the mean scrambling quality of people, or you'd have gone through blind, and you'd hate to

have done that" (62). Amory observes that further knowledge of society or the self can take a toll on happiness, yet the intentional blindness one must practice to remain oblivious to it is itself a larger price. This desire for and privileging of self-knowledge does not always result in immediate social success, as Amory's self is often in opposition to the prevalent popularity. After his first term at St. Regis, a well meaning professor tells Amory that the other boys object to his freshness, because "when a boy knows his difficulties he's better able to cope with them-to conform to what others expect of him" (20). Amory "exulted in his refusal to be helped" and argues back to the professor,"do you s'pose you have to *tell* me" (20). Of course Amory knows 'freshness' is why they do not like him, what he does not yet know is how to alter the social game to make his 'freshness' not only tolerable, but a component of popularity. Amory wants to mold himself to suit society, but in a very specific way. He has no desire for permanent self improvement, but rather desires cosmetic changes that will allow him to navigate social structures to his own private terms. Indeed, "self improvement" is not about the self at all. The ideology behind self improvement lies in the belief that by nature, one is bad, and this badness must be improved through participation in culturally acceptable and profitable acts of conformity. The improvement serves to reinforce ideology and conform the individual to what society needs of him or her in order to serve cultural agendas. If the self is made up of actions, and if these actions are enacted in order to continuously create the self, then there is no 'real' self to improve. An individual is made up of his or her actions, fictive idea of self and what others see in him or her.

Amory, in acknowledging that one is one's performance, also vocalizes an occasional dissatisfaction with how society is organized. When he arrives at Princeton,

being the only St. Regis boy allows Amory a perspective from which to better see the stratified social milieu before him: "Amory resented social barriers as artificial distinctions made by the strong to bolster up their weak retainers and keep out the almost strong" (32). This phrase rings false when compared to the conversation he has on the very next page.

> "We're the damn middle class that's what!" he complained to Kerry one day [...] "well, why not? We came to Princeton so we could feel that way toward the small colleges – have it on 'em, more self-confidence, dress better, cut a swath –" "Oh, it isn't that I mind the glittering caste system," admitted Amory. "I like having a bunch of hot cats on top, but gosh, Kerry, I've got to be one of them." "But just now, Amory, you're only a sweaty bourgeois." (33)

Amory actually relishes stratified society, as much as he pretends not to. What presents a frustrating challenge to Amory is that the social hierarchy for Princeton freshmen is in flux, and Amory cannot under the circumstances then discern the shortest path to popularity. As Amory himself notes, "I hate to get anywhere by working for it. I'll show the scars, don't you know'" (33). He does not want a revolution, which would entail a rejection of the entire concept of "big men" and "hot cats," he merely wants a set rulebook that lines out what he must do to succeed. Recognizing "social barriers as artificial distinctions," allows Amory to be more objective regarding the trapping of popularity, and indeed to believe that the outer appearance of social achievement is all it entails. This seeming subversion and negation of the systems of popularity are in actuality a calculated documentation of College society in order to conquer it, not as an example of Social Darwinism, where the strong beat out the weak, and the 'better man wins,' but as an externalization of the rules of the caste system. In seeing the rules of social hierarchy as discernable and arbitrary, Amory can achieve his goals, personal adaptation and social navigation, through the use of categorizations.

Categorization serves several functions for Amory, those of documentary, control and coded rules of behavior. The documentary effect, of noting distinctions and events in order to assert some control over them, creates for Amory the safety of an observational stance, and a distance that allows him to both critique what he sees around him and play his observations to his best advantage. These "types" of people existed before Amory drew these distinctions, but he accrues power in naming them. However, in his categorization and his locating himself as within or in the top section of his categorizations, Amory too is participating within the categories he notes, and this participation marks his actions as performance. One example of such functional categorization occurs when Amory is still at St. Regis. He and Rahill are discussing slickers, and Rahill asks, "Who is one? What makes you one?" (24) Amory, in creating the category of slicker, already knows what a slicker is, as he has categorized others and placed himself close, but not within that categorization:

> They spent two evenings getting an exact definition. The slicker was good-looking or *clean*-looking; he had brains, social brains, that is, and he used all means on the broad path of honesty to get ahead, be popular, admired, and never in trouble...Then slickers of that year had adopted tortoise-shell spectacles as badges of their slickerhood, and this made them so easy to recognize that Amory and Rahill never missed one. (24)

In grouping the popular boys under one umbrella and then going further by naming them 'slickers', Amory asserts some control over the social environment he inhabits. By making the slicker an object of ridicule, Amory positions himself above them he can see their laughable scrambling for popularity as a pattern, and as a pattern he, in observing, rejects. The fact that Amory locates himself as a bit of a slicker, "You're not one, and neither am I, though I am more than you are," is an attempt to incorporate the good aspects of slickerhood into himself while avoiding the negatives attendant with that

categorization (24). In creating categories and then using them as a maneuvering tool to place himself above observed phenomenon, Amory reveals his concept of the performative nature of identity. Butler writes that, "acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this on the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity" (173). Amory confirms and subverts this rule of the performative: his masculine identity is contingent upon revealing (to himself or at time select others) the play of these acts and gestures upon the gendered body. In revealing this organizing principle, he forms his identity. The awareness of this substitution of effect for cause, of external for internal is the basis of Amory's claim to self-awareness.

Amory hides within categorizations of others, and with this coping strategy, creates the appearance of self reflexivity. Amory's categorizations give him a rulebook with which to guide and plan his performances. From an early age, Amory is aware of the performative nature of interpersonal relations and reality itself, however, this awareness rarely extends to a self conscious change in attitude, which would have been a more true self awareness. Butler contends that "to understand identity as a practice, and as a signifying practice, is to understand culturally intelligible subjects as the resulting effects of a rule-bound discourse that inserts itself in the pervasive and mundane signifying acts of linguistic life" (184). Amory understands identity as a signifying practice, but does not locate himself within the significations. He can easily assign categories to others, but is unable or unwilling to locate himself within those categories, not because they are constructed, but because these boundaries would ultimately contain and conscribe his ego and identity. Amory constructs himself off of other people, both

their characteristics and their responses to his performance of self. At the end of the novel, he cries,"I know myself, but that is all" (212). In locating self knowledge in knowledge of others identity constructions, Amory is a successful manufacture of documentary, but perhaps not ultimately successful in attaining self knowledge. For Amory, there is little self to know. His performed self is indistinguishable from his true self.

This recasting, retelling, and reinvention of the self through performance occurs for all people and Fitzgerald points to this universality in both texts. By making the stakes higher for Gatsby, Fitzgerald extends his critique out to society in general, and specifically upper class society. With Amory and his changing dreams and self-recreations as he grows up, Fitzgerald speaks to everyone's conceits of self-creation. By making Gatsby's construction a stabilized repetition, and his goal with the performance specific, Fitzgerald is able to point out different social realities and extend his critique into larger society. Despite Amory's 'eccentricities,' he was always going to be accepted into the 'glittering caste system' he observed at some level, and thus did not by necessity create or recreate masculine identities. He merely had to observe those existing identities and adapt them to his current needs. Gatsby, on the other hand, must create and recreate masculinities in order to achieve what he desires, social mobility and Daisy Buchanan. Throughout the course of the novel, Nick recounts multiple versions of Gatsby's origins, but three are central, two from Gatsby himself and one from his father, Mr. Gatz. These stories form the functional legend of Gatsby, a legend he variously cultivates and recedes into. In this reading of the text, these conflicting stories reveal a great deal regarding

both Gatsby's drive for self-invention and how his performance of upper class masculinity disrupts perceptions of set identity.

In discussing his origins, Gatsby tells Nick about his poor upbringing, his five years with Dan Cody, and his childhood. These details seem less important to Nick and his understanding of Gatsby than the impression that:

> Jay Gatsby, of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself. He was a son of God-a phrase which, if it means anything, means just that-and he must be about His Father's business, the service of a vast, vulgar, and meretricious beauty. So he invented just the sort of Jay Gatsby that a seventeen year old boy would be likely to invent, and to this conception he was faithful to the end. (104)

His decision to discard his old identity of Jimmy Gatz in favor of Jay Gatsby, which occurs before the text begins, might better be perceived as a strategic repetition than as a deception. As Judith Butler notes, "strategy better suggests the situation of duress under which gender performance always and variously occurs. Hence, as a strategy of survival within compulsory systems, gender is a performance with clearly punitive consequences" (177-78). The compulsory systems Gatsby performs within are various: when he is compelled to make money to win Daisy, then compelled to buy a house in sight of hers, and to give parties in the hope she may attend, he is acting out a constructed self. To perform observed or imagined gendered activities; or more specifically, one imagined class of masculinity, Gatsby necessarily denies and turns away from other actions and repetitive performances that may classify him as other than how he desires to be perceived. When Mr. Gatz shows Nick the Hop-along Cassidy notebook, he reveals how early Jimmy/Jay began his self-transformation:

> He opened it at the back cover and turned it around for me to see. On the last fly-leaf was printed the word SCHEDULE, and the date September 12th, 1906. And Underneath:

Rise from bed.....6.00 A.M.
Dumbell exercise and wall-scaling...6.15-6.30 "
Study electricity. Etc.....7.15-8.15 "
Work.....8.30-4.30 P.M.
Baseball and Sports.....4.30-5.00 "
Practice elocution, poise
and how to attain it .....5.00-6.00 "
Study needed inventions.....7.00-9.00 "
GENERAL RESOLVES
No wasting time at Shafters or [a name, indecipherable]
No more smokeing [sic] or chewing
Bath every other day
Read one improving book or magazine per week
Save $5.00 [crossed out] $3.00 per week
Be better to parents (180-182)

This passage, seen by Nick after Gatsby is dead, reveals a boy so full of desire to be greater than he is that one does not doubt he kept these resolves. In altering himself, Gatz/Gastby feels he is able to alter his fate, and as the list above demonstrates, he is attempting a transformation from the inside out.

Gatsby tells Nick a version of his past on their ride into New York in his car. Nick vacillates between belief and doubt throughout Gatsby's story, and his faith is bolstered or jeopardized by the success of Gatsby's performance. Nick first begins to question Gatsby when he "began leaving his elegant sentences unfinished and slapping himself indecisively on the knee of his caramel-colored suit" (69). His doubt is heightened by how Gatsby, in recounting his past, "hurried the phrase 'educated at Oxford,' or swallowed it or choked on it as though it had bothered him before. And with this doubt his whole statement fell to pieces and I wondered if there wasn't something a little sinister about him after all" (69). These, and the fact that Gatsby's life story seems like "skimming hastily through a dozen magazines" (71) leaves Nick in great doubt of his

truthfulness. But when Gatsby produces evidence, in the form of a medal of valor from Montenegro and a photo of a younger self "loafing in an archway," Nick is willing to believe that "it was all true" (71).

Gatsby's performance extends out into his material surroundings, and at times seems to draw strength from them. At the first party Nick attends, he and Jordan go into the library and find a drunken man "staring with unsteady concentration at the shelves of books" (50). He is surprised that they are real, and interrogates Jordan regarding her expectations, reporting that he "thought they'd be a nice durable cardboard" (50). His expecting the books not to be real speaks to the fantastic quality of Gatsby's mansion, as well as the holes in his performance. The man goes on to say, "It's a bona fide piece of printed matter. It fooled me. This fella's a regular Belasco. It's a triumph. What thoroughness! What realism! Knew when to stop too-didn't cut the pages. But what do you want? What do you expect?" (50) The man is seeing the library, and captivated by it, not for its beauty or good collections, but for its verisimilitude to a "real library". It **is** a real library, but in his drunken comments, he has stumbled onto a truth. However, the painterly 'thorough' and 'realistic' aspects of the library he admires point to, not Gatsby's 'triumph' with the library, but his failure in the performance. David Belasco was a contemporary theatrical producer known for his elaborate sets, and by comparing his host to Belasco, the drunken man describes the library, and perhaps the entire house, as stage dressing for a performance.

Perhaps the most striking performance in the text is the scene in which Gatsby opens his closets to show Daisy (and Nick) his clothes. The trio had walked through the entire house and, "he [Gatsby] revalued everything in his house according to the measure

of response it drew from her well-loved eyes" (97). Literally, he is measuring himself in terms of how his possessions measure up to her expectations. When they reach his bedroom, "the simplest room of all" Gatsby "was running down like an overwound clock" (97). He retreats into a performative display. In his bedroom, Gatsby does what amounts to a reverse strip tease: he piles up clothes in order to titillate his guest:

> He took out a pile of shirts and began throwing them one by one before us, shirts of sheer linen and thick silk and fine flannel which lost their folds as they fell and covered the table in many-colored disarray. While we admired he brought more and the soft rich heap mounted higher-shirts with stripes and scrolls and plaids in coral and apple green and lavender and faint orange with monograms of Indian blue. Suddenly with a strained sound Daisy bent her head into the shirts and began to cry stormily. (97-98)

The revelation of his clothes is a revelation of the self he has become, and moreover, both Daisy and Gatsby know he has become this for her. This materialistic mating ritual is a performance that culminates his peacock-like display of his possessions. Gatsby, in revealing his finery, is effectively revealing himself as he wants to be seen by Daisy, a rich, cultured man with taste and refinement. This episode is similar to what Butler has in mind with the performative, in that as far as gender exists, it is fabricated through the performative, "in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality" (173). That Jay Gatsby exists at all he must exist in the realm of the performative, because he desires to be nothing more than the acts and gestures (and objects) that constitute his reality. Gatsby does present a continuous and repeated performance, but somehow it is never completely convincing. Rumors abound alleging his ownership of a houseboat that

moved secretly along the shoreline, and his past as a German spy in the war. Both Jordan Baker and Tom Buchanan express skepticism regarding his attendance at Oxford. Jordan, just doesn't think he went there, while Tom is more blunt, arguing "'An Oxford man! [...] Like hell he is! He wears a pink suit'" (136). Jordan and Tom are not 'Oxford men,' yet they cannot believe Gatsby was one. At the first party Nick attends, he and Jordan are talking with a group of people, and a girl tells a story about Gatsby sending her a new evening gown after hers tore at his party, remarking that, "There's something funny about a fellow that'll do a thing like that...He doesn't want trouble with anybody" (48). This sets off a conspiratorial discussion that compares the gossip regarding Gatsby's past, but also points to the extent to which he both succeeds and fails in his performance of upper class masculinity. He succeeds because these gestures, and others throughout the text, seem to demonstrate the ideals of upper class life, noblesse oblige and generosity. However, he does not see that beneath this ideal, the real people who occupy this desired space are also performing, and these performances fall far short of the life he aspires to.

Gatsby's performance is much more effective one on one, as Nick observes, "if personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him"(6). Tailored to what each individual expected Gatsby to be, his repetitious performance of upper class American masculinity speaks as strongly to West/East Egg's expectations of gender performance as it does to his ultimate failure to succeed in his proffered performance of this masculinity. When Gatsby smiles at Nick:

> It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced-or seemed to face-the whole external world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irrisistable prejudice in your favor. It understood you just so far as you wanted to be

> understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey. (52-53)

The smile is in addition to Gatsby, assuming its own character and attributes. This passage demonstrates that Gatsby gives what he wishes to get, belief in/from others, not as they believed in him, but as they desired to be believed in. This is a modern take on the golden rule, and further evidence that Gatsby is taking the ideals of East/West Egg society and going one better. Butler writes that, "The subject is not determined by the rules through which it is generated because signification is not a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition that both conceals itself and enforces its rules precisely through the production of substantializing effects" (185). In other words, Gatsby continually affirming that he is 'one of them,' and demonstrating this through thin stories and 'old sports' plays false before his audience because it is an *unregulated* process of repetition, cobbled together consciously from observed coded behaviors. Gatsby's self-construction does not conceal its origin, rather its malleability and chimeric nature foregrounds how all subjects locate themselves within coded gender and class rules. Gatsby's failed performance points to the artificiality of the entire structure, both class, in terms of upper class attributes and expectations, and gender, in terms of the binary of compulsory heterosexuality.

The visibility of Gatsby's improvement is a problem for the people in the class he wishes to remain within. He works on the assumption that through self improvement one can achieve social mobility. While he himself does not question this ideology, his actions call the veracity of the ideology into question. Rather than the distinctions between the classes, the ability of individuals to tell the differences between classes is what is

important for the ideology to continue. For this ideology to perpetuate, one must be marked by class to the degree that others, both within and more importantly above, can tell what you 'are.' It is in this demonstration of constructedness that Gatsby creates a panic for the other residents of East/West Egg. He is a source of uneasiness and speculation for the people precisely because he points to the illusion of naturalness that their world order rests upon. They do not like to think that the displays of wealth and power they are guilty of are chosen actions, stemming partly from an unconscious desire to assert themselves as valid members of their class. For someone to will himself into 'one of them' is problematic, and the reason for the resistance and cognitive dissonance Gatsby creates is because his existence points to the constructedness of class superiority. That Gatsby fails in being entirely convincing and within his performance takes great risks, fits smoothly in a text that has other characters performing 'themselves' throughout.

Up until this point, this reading has focused on how Gatsby is a construct, but all the other characters in the book are self-constructed as well. One good example is Daisy, who performs throughout the entire first dinner with Nick. When she speaks, Nick remembers hearing that "Daisy's murmur was only to make people lean toward her; an irrelevant criticism that made it no less charming" (13). Nick is not only aware of her performance, but he is entertained and charmed by it. After dinner, as Nick and Daisy walk back to the house, she talks about how terrible everything is and that "Everybody thinks so-the most advanced people. And I know. I've been everywhere and seen everything and done everything [...] Sophisticated-God, I'm sophisticated!'" (22) This statement is verified by her voice alone, and "the instant her voice broke off, ceasing to

compel my attention, my belief, I felt the basic insincerity of what she had said" (22). Daisy's performances, of indifference at her husband's infidelity, of joy that Nick is dining with them, of bored sophistication, are partly for Nick's benefit, but also for hers as well. In repeating the story of her response to the birth of her daughter, Daisy is asserting not only the confines of gender identity, but also her performance of an unhappy woman who pretends at sophisticated boredom: "'I'm glad it's a girl. And I hope she'll be a fool-that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool" (21). Both Daisy and Gatsby epitomize what Butler outlines as "the abiding gendered self will then be shown to be structured by repeated acts that seek to approximate the ideal of a substantial ground of identity, but which, in their occasional discontinuity, reveal the temporal and contingent groundlessness of this "ground" (179). The repeated acts that stand for identity are then, less important than the 'occasional discontinuity' that occurs when an audience is looking closely. Daisy's feigned breathy murmur and Gatsby's hastily added 'old sports' show how contingent identity performance is in this text by originally being conscious acts, and eventually becoming something at least partially interior, done without thinking and taken for something as part of themselves.

Repetition is necessary to the performance of gender, a system whose existence as a social structure is contingent on the internalization of the external behavior markers and acceptance and internalization by individuals of the constraints gendered categories force. Repetition of performance also structures class boundaries and expectations. What individuals do within those constraints to assert or confirm themselves within or in opposition to contemporary gender and class boundaries is the locus of control where those subject to external expectations become agents in their own identity formation. As

Butler notes, "construction is not opposed to agency; it is the necessary scene of agency, the very terms in which agency is articulated and becomes culturally intelligible" (187) With Amory and Gatsby, Fitzgerald points toward the constructed nature of identity itself, and allocates this construction in the space between an individual, his or her performance, and the audience's willingness or reticence to accept that performance. Because both men are aware of their conscious effort to adapt the constructs they adopt and reject, they have some amount of control over how they present themselves in performance.

CHAPTER IV

"PITY THEY CAN'T SEE THEMSELVES": PROBLEMATIC SCOPOPHILIA IN JAMES JOYCE'S "NAUSICAA"

Any detailed examination of voyeurism in James Joyce's "Nausicaa" episode of *Ulysses* necessarily includes ideas regarding power and submissiveness as well as connections between self-image and identity. Joyce problematizes traditional notions of power dynamics and scopophilia by locating the pleasure in both parties. Gerty enjoys being looked at as much as Bloom enjoys looking. Kimberly Devlin believes that "the distinction between the watcher and the watched has completely collapsed" in "Nausicaa" (393). Rather than a collapse, which implies no difference, watcher and watched telescope in "Nausicaa"- desire to be watched overlaps desire to watch which overlaps pleasure in being watched. Perspective in "Nausicaa" is a telescope that might more properly be described as one continually always already telescoping, with collapsible distinctions that are nonetheless still identifiable and functional. Over all the textual watched and watching is the reader, and ultimately the writer. These layers of looking and watching provide an exceptionally fecund and complex field for examinations of perception of self, and the fictive nature of self-image. In a text that both explains and complicates ideas of perception, desire, and constructions of self, "Nausicaa" invites a reading through theories concerned with these same issues. Several theoretical models inform and complicate this reading. By using theorists such as Jacques Lacan, Laura Mulvey, and Judith Butler to examine the creation of self-identity, scopophillic pleasure, and gender performance in "Nausicaa," I hope to demonstrate how

Joyce uses the text of "Nausicaa" to problematize and question traditionally held ideas regarding self, gender, and sexuality as natural and fixed. Joyce's text posits that both forms of identification (self-image and gender) are culturally determined and highly subject to the individual's environment at the same time he notes the functionality of such distinctions. The scopophilia is problematic in "Nausicaa" because Joyce has split the narrative in such a way that the reader can see from both the watched and watching perspectives. Joyce complicates this problem further by inserting knowledge of the text as text, a move that reminds the reader of his or her own voyeuristic presence at the same time that it points back to the author as supreme voyeur and creator of the machinations. By specifically examining the points in the text where Gerty and Bloom think about their sexuality and genders as well as where they look at each other in light of the above writers' thoughts on psychoanalysis and gender, I hope to develop a clearer picture of what Joyce says about scopophilia with "Nausicaa."

Jacques Lacan in "The Mirror Stage as Formative if the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" discusses the mirror stage as the point in development where the individual views his or her reflection as an object rather than the subject. This identification of self image, of the "*ideal I,*" contains what Lacan refers to as a "libidinal dynamism." This stage is pivotal to the formation of the ego. For Lacan, desire is always deferred. In explaining the mirror stage, he notes how an infant "overcomes, in a flutter of jubilant activity, the obstruction of his support and, fixing his attitude in a slightly leaning-forward position, in order to hold it in his gaze, brings back an instantaneous aspect of the image" (Lacan 2). This image is the ideal I and distinct

from the I formed out of identification with the other. Lacan explains the importance of the ideal I by pointing out:

> the important point is that this form situates the agency of the ego, before its social determination, in a fictional direction, which will always remain irreducible for the individual alone, or rather, which will only rejoin the coming-into-being (*le devenir*) of the subject asymptotically, whatever the success if the dialectical syntheses by which he must resolve as I his discordance with his own reality (2).

Put another way, while the ideal I is necessary to the formation of the ego, it is always fictional, and thus, the agency of the ego it situates is fictional. These fictions cannot be separated by the individual and cannot really rejoin (asymptotically) the formation of the ego (the "coming-into-being"). I for Lacan then is the process by which the individual reconciles his or her fictive self-image with his (or her) own reality. In her explanations of Lacan, Ellie Ragland-Sullivan notes, "the mirror stage...permanently situates the human subject in a line of fiction and alienation" (Ragland-Sullivan 17). The individual moves toward a "mental permanence of the I, at the same time as it prefigures its alienating destination" (Lacan 2). In other words, the individual is always in a sense straining toward the mirror, seeking pleasure and understanding from the fictional combination of the ideal I with the I that recognizes the other and the outside environment. What this means for desire then, is that not only are its origins in fiction, but that desire relies on the perpetual deferment of pleasure. "Lacan hypothesized adult sexual pleasure at first inscribed at the instant of lived pleasure" (Ragland-Sullivan 20).

Accepting as truth that the individual's recognition of his or her reflected identity is a fiction opens up potential richness in reexamining identity formation as a result of seeing, looking, and the pleasures associated with each within Joyce's "Nausicaa." Within this text, the ways in which both of the main characters continually think about

the pleasure of both looking and being looked at (scopophilia and reverse scopophilia) invites Lacan's "Mirror Stage" as a sturdy jumping off point to explore these concepts. In "Nausicaa," both Gerty and Bloom construct their self-image, their individualized *Ideal I*, through their interpretation and misinterpretation of the other's look. Both Gerty and Bloom see their fictive ideal other as well as self in the other's reflection. For Gerty, her desire for the ideal other helps constitute her ideal I through his desire for her projected ideal I. Put another way, Gerty's desire is circular: she desires an idealized other because he desires her projection of the ideal I, and through his desire, she too is able to desire her ideal I. As Gerty develops desire for Bloom, she idealizes him: "Here was that of which she had so often dreamed. It was he who mattered and there was joy on her face because she wanted him because she felt instinctively that was like no-one else. The very heart of the girlwoman went out to him, her dreamhusband, because she knew on the instant it was him" (*U* 13.427-431).

Laura Mulvey's critique of the nature of voyeurism in film in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" provides an interesting departure point from which to explore the pleasures of the gaze not only in cinema, but in literary works as well. In Joyce's "Nausicaa" episode, for example, the pleasure of observing and of being observed occurs for both characters and this pleasure and the problems associated with the unequal power dynamics inherent within voyeurism implicate the reader as well. Mulvey places the female image as central to her discussion of the pleasure and interpretation of cinema, just as Joyce places Gerty as the central image in "Nausicaa" in his explorations of the dynamics of scopophillic pleasure. Mulvey primarily examines the pleasure of the watcher, who, as she notes in a reinterpretation of Freud, gains "erotic pleasure in looking

at another person as object" (440). Although the fact that Mulvey is examining visual pleasure in the cinema potentially problematizes a literary reading, because all pleasure in "Nausicaa" derives from watching or being watched, her critique of the cinematic gaze is a valid place to begin an examination of scopophilia in "Nausicaa." In many ways, the pre-determined focus and literally prescribed lens through which an author allows his readers to look is just as scopophillic (and manipulative) as that of any film. Within her text, Mulvey examines the ways in which the pleasures of the gaze are split along gender and power lines. In her summary, Mulvey notes that "it is only in the film form that that they [layers of visual meaning] can reach a perfect and beautiful contradiction, thanks to the possibility in the cinema of shifting the emphasis of the look...Going far beyond highlighting a woman's to-be-looked-at-ness, cinema builds the way she is to be looked at into the spectacle itself" (447). I contend that James Joyce (through his examination of Gerty and Bloom's erotic encounter on the beach) likewise succeeds in shifting the emphasis of the gaze from the traditional fetishized and exploitive watcher/exploited watched to an examination of the nature of scopophilia itself.

An examination of Gerty's pleasure as a result of what Mulvey terms reverse formation scopophilia (the pleasure of being looked at) adds a complexity to the pleasures of the gaze: "...her breath caught as she caught the expression in his eyes. He was eyeing her as a snake eyes its prey. Her woman's instinct told her that she had raised the devil in him and at the thought a burning scarlet swept from throat to brow till the lovely colour of her face became a glorious rose" (U 13.516-250). Gerty is excited by both Bloom's lecherous gaze and her multi-level perception, which notes both his watching her, as well as her watching herself, through Bloom's desirous gaze. Gerty's

pleasure comes not only from actually being looked at and looking, but from imagining that Bloom is looking. Closely examining the language employed when Gerty reflects on the reaction Bloom must be feeling reveals her sexual excitement and self-validation depend not on his gaze alone, but more specifically on her interpretation and imagining the gaze. "She could almost see the swift answering flash of admiration in his eyes that set her tingling in every nerve...Her woman's instinct told her that she had raised the devil in him and at the thought a burning scarlet swept from throat to brow till the lovely colour of her face became a glorious rose" (U 514-520). Gerty is not looking at Bloom, (she "almost sees") so she has no way to know he is looking at her. Her pleasure stems from imagining the gaze and interpreting the imagined gaze. It is her "woman instinct," not empirical evidence, that tells her he is looking and what the look denotes. Thus, Gerty's pleasure is an actual physical result of an imagined fictional gaze and potentially distorted interpretation. At another point, "Gerty could see without looking that he never took his eyes off of her" (*U* 13.495-496). Her interpretation of the gaze and belief that it is there is more powerful to her than the actual gaze itself. When Gerty actually looks at Bloom looking at her, the effect is startling: "The eyes that were fastened upon her set her pulses tingling. She looked at him a moment, meeting his glance, and a light broke in upon her. Whitehot passion was in that face, passion silent as the grave, and it had made her his" (*U* 13.689-692). The coloration of passion has not only intensified from "rose" to "whitehot," but Gerty, by completing the scopophillic loop, becomes more entangled as she submits to desire and allows it to "make her his."

For Mulvey, successful cinematic spectacle requires a "spectator in direct scopophillic contact with the female form displayed for his enjoyment (connoting male

phantasy) and that of the spectator fascinated with the image of his like set in an illusion of natural space and through him gaining control and possession of the woman within the diegesis" (Mulvey 444). Gerty takes this pleasure one step further, as she puts herself in the role of the spectator, watching Bloom watching her. Her reverse scopophilia completes the voyeuristic circle, with Gerty as the originating point of desire (the female form displayed for enjoyment) as well as the spectator ultimately gaining possession and power over the woman within the text (herself) through her pleasure in Bloom's voyeurism. Gerty fosters desire for herself by allowing Bloom to desire her and then looking at herself through his eyes. Mulvey notes that when "a woman performs within the narrative, the gaze of the spectator and that of the male characters in the film are neatly combined without breaking narrative verisimilitude" (Mulvey 443). Gerty transcends the potentially one sided and exploitive nature of Bloom's gaze by knowingly exploiting his desire in order to sustain her feelings of self-worth. "His dark eyes fixed themselves on her again, drinking in her every contour, literally worshipping at her shrine. If ever there was undistinguished admiration in a man's passionate gaze, it was there plain to be seen on that man's face. It is for you, Gertrude MacDowell, and you know it" (*U* 13.563-567).

In a more obvious way, the spectator whose gaze combines with that of the male character is the reader. In this scenario, Gerty is still the looked-at-woman, Bloom is still the character who looks at her, but the reader is the spectator in the audience, just as Joyce is the director who sets up the scene and then compels the audience to watch. The pleasure is not wholly erotic, as a reader's mastery of a text is also pleasurable. Joyce positions the reader in a point of relative mastery; able to see everything that occurs on

the beach, even things obscured from Gerty and Bloom. One way to conceptualize this idea is to take note of the bat flying overhead. Gerty sees the bat, but does not know what it is. "Something queer was flying through the air, a soft thing, to and for, dark" (*U* 13.719). The reader learns later that Gerty's "something" is a bat, and therefore can feel mastery over the scene and over Gerty. This mastery is possible only because Joyce, as the author, has told the reader it is a bat: "there was none to know or tell save the little bat that flew so softly through the evening to and fro and little bats don't tell" (*U* 13.751-753). The reader in one way *is* the little bat, a third-person passive observer who is powerless to alter the scene and whose view is to some extent obscured by his/her removed vantage point. The little bat occurs in the point of the narration that is ambiguous in attribution to a distinct consciousness. The part preceding the bat is obviously Gerty, with the narration from her perspective and reflecting her interests. The next part, while retaining some of Gerty's language, with both "a fair unsullied soul" (*U* 13. 746) and an "utter cad" (*U* 13.747), nevertheless contains knowledge that Gerty could not have. It is in this passage that the text reveals the man's identity: "Leopold Bloom (for it is he)" (*U* 13.744). By retaining Gerty's language at the same time revealing omniscient information, with this passage Joyce seems to be commenting on the unreliability of any one perspective as well as creating a point in the text that foregrounds the position of both the reader and author as more powerful in their omniscience than the characters within the text.

Mulvey asserts "in their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*" (Mulvey 442). Gerty does indeed fit

this traditional exhibitionist role when she leans back so that Bloom "could see her other things too" (*U* 13.724). It is notable that Gerty codes her appearance for erotic impact the entire time she is on the beach. Even before she literally exhibits her underwear, Gerty figuratively exhibits her femininity by taking off her hat so Bloom can see her hair. "Gerty just took off her hat for a moment to settle her hair and a prettier, a daintier head of nutbrown tresses was never seen on a girl's shoulders...She could almost see the swift answering flash of admiration in his eyes that set her tingling" (*U* 13.509-514). Gerty rationalizes taking her hat off "to settle her hair" but, by perceiving the admiration in his eyes as answering, she betrays her true objective. Bloom later reveals that he sees behind her artifice. "Took off her hat to show her hair. Wide brim. Bought to hide her face, meeting someone who might know her, bend down or carry a bunch of flowers to smell" (*U* 13.838-840). Bloom observes that erotic visual impact depends as much upon what is hidden as what is seen. The fact that he is seeing something usually hidden from normal view in seeing both Gerty's hair and underwear exists as an erotic point for both himself and Gerty.

It is important to note that Bloom only sees so far into Gerty's motivations. The tacit understanding behind this is that the reader too only sees in the text what the writer lets him/her see. The writer alone "sees" everything occurring in the text, and this position of visual authority is also a fallacy when one considers that the literary critic attempts to trump the author by pointing out things only he or she can see within the text. Exactly where the power in a scopophillic relationship depends upon perspective. In "Nausicaa," Joyce foregrounds the problematic nature of assigning or removing power by splitting the narrative. In so doing, the pleasure and the problems associated with the

unequal power dynamics inherent within voyeurism spill over onto the reader as well. The power dynamic is acknowledged as unequal toward the reader when one notes that Joyce is manipulating the reader into identification with both watcher and watched through forcing the narration into each respective perspective. In his way, the telescope is completely inverted, with Joyce staring out from the text at the reader and controlling his or her perspective through his omniscient gaze.

Mulvey notes that the role of women in visual pleasure is traditionally that of a passive blank screen on which men can project their fantasies:

> Women then stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his phantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning. (Mulvey 439)

For Gerty in "Nausicaa," this role as signifier occurs arguably three times: once textually for Bloom, twice when we consider that Gerty is a product of James Joyce's authorial male fantasy, and three when we consider the reader as interpreter of Gerty through yet another lens, albeit only available in a further distortion through that of Joyce and Bloom. For Bloom, Gerty is silent, a woman onto whom he can thrust his ideas regarding women with relative immunity. In fact Bloom not only acknowledges his position of power that allows him to impose his own fantasy meaning onto Gerty, but he also relishes that ability and mourns the point at which his fantasy image of her is changed by the realization of her handicap as she walks away:

> Tight boots? No. She's lame! O!
> Mr. Bloom watched as she limped away. Poor girl! That's why she's left on the shelf and the others did a sprint. Thought something was wrong by the cut of her jib. Jilted Beauty. A defect is ten times worse in a woman. But makes them polite. Glad I didn't know it when she was on show. Hot

> little devil all the same. I wouldn't mind. Curiosity like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses. (*U* 13.771-777)

This passage is significant in Bloom's signification of Gerty for several reasons. He moves through several reinterpretations of her in rapid succession. Examining how each of these reconceptualizations changes how he views Gerty points out how he tries to again view her as an object of desire, despite the potentially problematic new knowledge. His original comments, "poor girl," "jilted beauty," and how "a defect ten times worse for a woman," all note how hard her impediment must be on her. This feeling of pity leads him to think how he was glad he did not know about her handicap during the time he was masturbating. Gerty at that point for Bloom was pure fantasy and the knowledge that she had a hard life and was physically imperfect would have marred her as a silent image capable of bearing his fantasy image. However, this pity soon reverts to desire once again, as Bloom is able to again place Gerty into a known signifier of desire, that of the other: "I wouldn't mind. Curiosity like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses." This list of women Bloom fantasizes about precisely because they are different from the women he had sex with in the past, is the final fantasy category he places Gerty into as another type of signifier for the male other.

Gerty's characterization in "Nausicaa" invites investigation in the areas of constructions of self and gender. Joyce, by having both Bloom and Gerty reflect on the nature of what it is to be "feminine" and "masculine," questions the naturalness of gender. Throughout the text, Gerty thinks about how she is "in very truth, as fair an example of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see" (*U* 13.80-81). By placing herself as the archetypal Irish girl, who "looked so lovely in her sweet girlish shyness that of a surety God's fair land of Ireland did not hold her equal" (*U* 13.121-122). Gerty is

able to revise her idiosyncrasies and shortcomings into what are naturally and desirably Irish. By viewing Gerty's behaviors and thoughts through the lens of gender as performance, Joyce's observances of behavior that became "Nausicaa" show an author quite aware of both the inescapably compensatory nature of gender as well as its constructedness.

Judith Butler's "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" associates any gender performance with the idea of drag; that all "genders are appropriated, theatricalized, worn and done; it implies all gendering is a kind of impersonation and approximation" (Butler 21). Gerty's physical appearance as well as her behavior can be viewed as "drag," in that both stem from Gerty's imitation of culturally conceived notions of femininity. When her friend says something that makes her angry, it is through reminding herself of "ladylike" behavior that she is able to continue acting in the ideal feminine way. "Gerty's lips parted swiftly to frame the word but she fought back the sob that rose to her throat" (*U* 13.581-582). When she thinks about her clothing, she discusses her "instinctive taste" (*U* 13.148) in the same breath that she notes wearing "a neat blouse of electric blue selftinted by dolly dyes (because it was expected in *Lady's Pictorial* that electric blue would be worn)" (*U* 13.150-151). Gerty has internalized the marketing language of femininity for 1904 Dublin, but this internalization serves to highlight the artificiality of such ideas rather than assert their naturalness.

It is not enough for Gerty to see herself as exemplarily feminine, she must be more feminine than all other women are. When she thinks about how Bloom would love her, it is because "she was a womanly woman not like other flighty girls unfeminine he had known, those cyclists showing off what they hadn't got" (*U* 13. 435-437). Gerty here

not only positions herself as the Ur-woman, the perfect feminine prototype that renders all other women unfeminine next to her super femininity. Gerty also compares herself to her friends for the purposes of seeing herself as more feminine. When Cissy chases the twins down the beach, Gerty resents Cissy's breaking Bloom's concentration. Gerty's thoughts reflect her irritation at Cissy as well as her need to render Cissy a non-threat for Bloom's affections by way of pointing out the flaws that make her less than Gerty:

> She jumped up and called them and she ran down the slope past him, tossing her hair behind her which had a good enough colour if there were more of it but with all the thingamerry she was always rubbing into it she couldn't get it to grow long because it wasn't natural...it was a wonder she didn't rip up her skirt...because there was a lot of the tomboy about Cissy Caffrey. (*U* 13. 475-481)

In pointing out that Cissy is a tomboy and has thin, unnatural hair, Gerty seeks to render her unattractive by making her unfeminine.

Butler notes that "gender is not a performance that a prior subject elects to do, but gender is performative in the sense that it constitutes as an effect the very subject it appears to express. It is a compulsory performance in the sense that acting out of line with heterosexual norms brings with it ostracism, punishment, and violence, not to mention the transgressive pleasures produced by those very prohibitions" (Butler 24). The difference between the girlfriends becomes more pronounced when reexamined in light of Butler's argument. Gerty's gender is performative in the sense that she seeks to replicate, appropriate, and perfect preexisting feminine norms and ideals. Cissy's transgressive "tomboy" behavior is pleasurable to her precisely because of the existence of the prohibitions against it. Gerty, because her feminine pleasure lies in replicating the heterosexual norm, enacts the compulsory performance and mentally censures Cissy for her transgressive pleasure.

Gerty does not realize the extent to which her femininity, like Cissy's hair, is unnatural and artificial. In the same paragraph she describes herself as a "fair specimen of Irish girlhood" (*U* 13.80) with "innate refinement" (*U* 13.97), Gerty also details the intentional work that such "innate" femininity requires:

> Why have women eyes of such witchery? Gerty's were of the bluest Irish blue, set off by lustrous lashes and dark expressive brows. Time was when those brows were not so silkily seductive. It was Madame Vera verity, directress of the Woman Beautiful page of the Princess Novelette, who had first advised her to try eyebrowleine which gave that haunting expression to the eyes, so becoming in leaders of fashion, and she had never regretted it. (*U* 13.107-113)

Her "lustrous lashes and dark expressive brows" are no different than Cissy's unnatural hair, but the difference for Gerty lies in the fact she considers eyebrowleine effective while Cissy's hair treatment is not.

The feminine ideal that Gerty tries to place herself close to stems from a literal fiction as well. As noted by Suzanne Henke in her article "Gerty MacDowell: Joyce's Sentimental Heroine," Maria Cummin's *The Lamplighter* is considered by scholars to be the text Joyce had in mind when writing "Nausicaa." Joyce explicitly names the text when Gerty notes, "she read in that book *The Lamplighter* by Miss Cummins, author of *Mabel Vaughan* and other tales" (*U* 13.633-634). By linking Gerty to a fictional character that exists in a didactic, syrupy sentimental text, Joyce points out that what Gerty sees as innate and natural characteristics of femininity, value and beauty are determined by outside ideological and cultural factors she is unaware of. Her definition of femininity is influenced by, among other things the 'Woman Beautiful page of the Princess Novelette' and *The Lamplighter*. Butler notes "*gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original*" (Butler 21). The feminine ideal that both the Princess

Novelette and Gertrude Flint of *The Lamplighter* is a false construction that gains and maintains its authority and power through the imitation and emulation of the ideal by individuals like Gerty.

In authenticating her desireable femaleness by devaluing and falsifying other women's femininity and originating her "innate" femininity in advertising and romance novel, Gerty much resembles what Butler notes as the "inevitable fabrication" of "gender" (29). Butler posits that: "Gender...is a kind of imitation that produces the very notion of the original as an *effect* and consequence of the imitation itself. In other words, the naturalistic effects of heterosexualized genders are produced through imitative strategies; what they imitate is a phantasmatic ideal of heterosexual identity, one that is produced by the imitation as its effect" (21). Gender identity is not natural, and the individual's gender performance in effect creates the idea of an original, endlessly replicating and imitating what come to be view as naturalistic behaviors and attributes. By obviously and explicitly identifying and locating where Gerty get her ideas regarding femininity (consumer culture in the form of beauty products, popular magazines, and romance novels), Joyce foregrounds the artificiality of not only Gerty's ideas of "innate" femininity but the falsity of the idea itself. Joyce, like Butler, observed the normalizing effects of the repetition of gender performance and wove this truth into the "Nausicaa" episode.

Just as Gerty cultivates her appearance to emulate cultural ideals, so too does Bloom present himself to Gerty in the most favorable light possible: "Ought to attend my appearance at my age. Didn't let her see me in profile" (*U* 13.835-836). Bloom performs what he believes to be the role of the desirable man by intentionally presenting the side of

his face he believes to be more attractive. This posturing has the intended effect, as Gerty "could see at once by his dark eyes and his pale intellectual face that he was a foreigner...He was in deep mourning, she could see that, and the story of a haunting sorrow was written on his face...Here was that of which she had so often dreamed" (*U* 13.415-428). Gerty projects her desired exotized other onto Bloom, who cultivates and nurtures this distorted and limited way of looking/knowing through consciously limiting how she perceives him.

At another point in "Nausicaa," Bloom thinks about how both men and women project a contrived illusion in order to attract the opposite sex. "And they like dressing for the sacrifice...Us too: the tie he wore, his lovely socks and turned up trousers. He wore a pair of gaiters the night that we first met...Say a woman loses a charm with every pin she takes out...Dressed up to the nines for somebody" (*U* 13.798-804). Bloom knows that the visually erotic appeal of a woman is illusionary and contrived, but this elaborate staging, which he perceives as "for somebody," may well be for him and this intentional catering to what he perceives as only his erotic pleasure is, for Bloom, part of the appeal.

Examining scopophilia in "Nausicaa" through writers such as Lacan, Mulvey and Butler both explains and complicates an understanding of what Joyce sought to do through Gerty and Bloom. He exploits the reader's preconceived ideas regarding the fixity of self-identity and sexuality as well as the consistency of perspective usually found in novels. In the end, the shape of the scopophillic telescope shifts and is dependent upon who holds it because in "Nausicaa," everyone is always both watching and being watched. The fact Joyce has assigned a degree of power to both positions and

created them in such a way that all perspectives in "Nausicaa" are both pleasurable and problematic, points not only to his skill in observing the complexities of interpersonal dynamics, but to his skill as an author as well. As Kimberly Devlin notes, by "artfully presenting his subject in this manner, Joyce was as keenly aware of his audience as Gerty is of hers. He must have realized that we too would be watching" (396).

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