

**MODERNIST PEDAGOGIES: CONRAD, WOOLF, POUND, AND THE READING
PUBLIC**

by

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Arts and Sciences in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Ph.D. in English: Cultural and Critical Studies

University of Pittsburgh

2007

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

ARTS AND SCIENCES

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“Modernist Pedagogies: Conrad, Woolf, Pound, and the Reading Public” challenges the widely held belief that modernist writers were uninterested in reaching the emerging reading public that developed as a result of the 1870 Education Act and subsequent reforms in Britain. I contend that Conrad, Woolf, and Pound were largely optimistic that, with a particular type of guidance, the reading public was capable of engaging with difficult texts. Conrad’s prefaces, Woolf’s lectures and BBC broadcasts, and Ezra Pound’s How To Read and ABC of Reading offer varied pedagogical motivations and methods with implications for not only how we teach these major authors but also how we teach reading and writing at the university level. By challenging prevailing understandings of the modernists’ attitudes toward the reading public, this study offers a more complex rendering of the modernists’ relationships with the expanded reading public, thereby enabling a fuller understanding of the modernist project.

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PREFACE

Acknowledgments

In A Room of One's Own, Virginia Woolf writes, "Masterpieces are not single and solitary births; they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common." Dissertations are no different. I feel fortunate to have worked with so many people who committed themselves to thinking with me over the years.

I am grateful to my dissertation committee, and particularly my co-chairs, Jim Seitz and Troy Boone. Jim, you had faith in my project and encouraged me to pursue my interests in both literature and pedagogy despite challenges I was facing at the time. You restored my faith in myself and my work, and for that I am forever indebted to you. Thank you, as well, for helping me to assemble a stellar committee and for introducing me to Troy Boone, to whose expertise in modernism you were willing to defer. I admire your humility and commitment to collaboration. Troy, I appreciate your taking the risk of co-chairing the committee of a student whom you had never met. Thank you for your thorough and thoughtful comments on every draft of every chapter (and then some) I produced. I am also grateful to you for pointing me to Conrad's prefaces, and for your guidance as I wrote this most difficult chapter.

Thank you to Colin MacCabe and Phil Watts. Colin, I feel fortunate to have studied modernism and completed this dissertation under your tutelage. Phil, despite your role as my

“outside” reader, you took just as active a role as my “inside” readers. I appreciate your taking time away from your own work to read and comment on mine.

Thank you to all of my undergraduate professors at Muhlenberg College, especially Dr. James Bloom, Dr. David Rosenwasser, Dr. Jill Stephen, Dr. Barri Gold, Dr. Francesca Coppa, and Dr. Thomas Cartelli. Dr. Bloom, it means so much to me that we are still in touch. You were the first to see promise in my work, and your faith in me led me to declare a major in English rather than in Communications. The rest is history. Dr. Rosenwasser, thank you for introducing me to modernism. The energy that you brought to every course inspired me as a student and continues to inspire me as an instructor. Dr. Stephen, I will never forget your generosity. I often reflect on your willingness to meet with me as I struggled through Milton, and your encouragement and kind words along the way. While I certainly appreciated the help back then, your pedagogy has now become a model for my own. Dr. Gold, thank you for guiding me through giving my first “real” conference paper at the Tenth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf. Thank you, Dr. Cartelli, for suggesting that I look into Pitt’s graduate program in English. I’m glad that I did! Dr. Coppa, in you I saw what I could one day be. Your enthusiasm for teaching and learning was contagious.

Thank you to Margy Stahr, Kirstin Collins Hanley, and Emily Cleland. I could not have imagined that I would make such close friends at graduate school. I feel so lucky to have met you in my first semester, and to have attended graduate school with such a wonderful group of people. Margy and Kirstin, you have been remarkable colleagues and friends. I am grateful to you for the personal and professional support over the past six years. Emily, you kept me laughing for a good part of graduate school, which is no small feat.

Thank you to my parents, Beverly and Joseph Gerber. You taught me to put education first, and your emotional and financial support enabled me to do so. Thank you to my sister, Betsy. You took pride in my accomplishments as if they were your own, and your enthusiasm has been invigorating. Thanks to the rest of my family, as well. Your willingness to visit me in Pittsburgh time and time again— even in the dead of winter— has kept me going.

And to Dave, I cannot begin to acknowledge all that you have done for me. I am grateful for your unremitting interest in every project I have undertaken. My work is significantly better for your consistent guidance and thoughtful feedback. I could not have finished this dissertation without your daily support, encouragement, and understanding. You are an incredible reader, editor, collaborator, and partner, and I look forward to a lifetime of discussions about books, reading, writing, and teaching.

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Copyright Acknowledgments

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the following permissions: Thank you to Dennis O. Palmore at New Directions for granting me permission to reprint Chapters 6-8 (excerpts) from ABC of READING, by Ezra Pound, copyright © 1934 by Ezra Pound. This is reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp. Thank you to Catherine Trippett, Permissions Manager at The Random House Group Ltd., Random House Archive & Library for granting me permission to reprint the cover illustration of Virginia Woolf's Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown. Thank you to David Marshall at Duckworth Publishers for allowing me to proceed with reprinting the figures from John Dreyfus's A History of the Nonesuch Press. Thank you to

Thomas Nanzig and Marilyn Meeker at Proquest for helping in my search to locate Donna E. Rhein. All efforts were made to reach Ms. Rein for her permission to reprint the cover illustrations from The Handprinted Books of Leonard and Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press, 1917-1932.

1.0 (RE)INTRODUCING THE MODERNISTS

Modernist writers continue to be characterized as disengaged elitists who resented the expanding number of readers in the late nineteenth century in Britain and America.

Echoing the Leavises's early twentieth-century criticism that the novels of the modernists are concerned only with aesthetics— and not “the world out there”— and that their works are “especially calculated to baffle the general public of the twentieth century” (222-223), Andreas Huyssen has famously (and more recently) argued that “modernism constituted itself through a conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination by its other: an increasingly consuming and engulfing mass culture” (vii). Ultimately, Huyssen argues, modernism depended upon and thrived because of the divide between high art and mass culture that it helped to create. Steven Best and Douglas Kellner use Huyssen's description of modernist art and literature to claim that it “defined itself as ‘high art’ distinct from the ‘low art’ of the masses. Elitism became the corresponding attitude of high modernism and the modernist artist, whose genius and purity of vision was incomprehensible to the layperson” (3). Lawrence Rainey maintains that the layperson was actually a threat to the modernists since they depended on collectors and patrons. Rainey argues that in the modernist moment we see readers “giving way to an uneasy mixture of patron-investors, collectors, and speculators on the rare book market [. . .] In this dense new space of collectors and quasi-investors, large audiences were not a help but a hindrance” (40). Literary modernism, in Rainey's account, is defined precisely by its withdrawal from the public

sphere “of cultural production and debate” (75) and potentially large audiences into “a divided world of patronage, investment, and collecting” (75). Along the same lines as Rainey’s account of modernism, John Carey’s representations of the modernists could easily be interchanged with the Leavises’s, leveled almost a century ago: “Modernist literature and art can be seen as a hostile reaction to the unprecedented large reading public created by late nineteenth-century educational reforms [. . .] the purpose of modernist writing was to exclude these newly educated (or ‘semi-educated’) readers, and so to preserve the intellectual’s seclusion from the ‘mass’” (24-25). All of these positions—that of the Leavises, Huyssen, Rainey, and Carey—are problematic because they do not take into account the context within which the modernists were writing. While it is an indisputable fact that modernists intentionally wrote difficult texts, it is incorrect to assume that the difficulty of modernist texts necessarily represents a disdain for the expanded reading public.

In this study, I interrogate the assumption that the difficulty that marks modernist texts represents disdain for the reading public. Contrary to these accounts of modernism, I argue for an understanding of the literary modernists as writers who, through their pedagogical efforts, consistently and thoughtfully sought to engage the reading public. I will demonstrate that the modernists did not retreat from this public or large numbers of readers, as Rainey contends, but were invested in instructing the reading public on how to engage with difficult modernist texts and ultimately with the modernist project. I will argue that readers, and “common” readers at that—not collectors, investors, or patrons—were always at the forefront of the minds of the literary modernists. While the modernists may have alienated some members of the reading public with their texts, I point to extensive evidence that suggests their investment in reaching the expanded reading public and even teaching this public, evidence that complicates current and

widespread representations of modernists' relationships with the general reader. I consider the pedagogical motivations and methods informing some of the works of modernism's most significant writers—Joseph Conrad, Virginia Woolf, and Ezra Pound—who sought, through a variety of pedagogical efforts, to engage this newly expanded reading public. This effort, I argue, was a central part of the larger, transatlantic cultural phenomenon of modernism.

This study contributes to recent work that seeks to complicate oversimplified readings of the relationship between modernists and the reading public.¹ Michael Tratner, Melba Cuddy-Keane, and Anna Snaith valuably rewrite modernism by studying specific modernists. Tratner marks moments in the writings of Joyce, Woolf, Eliot, and Yeats that challenge widely held representations of the modernists as solipsistic, detached artists who retreated from the masses. Tratner hopes to “complicate our understanding of these works, to show political corollaries to the personal, psychological, aesthetic, or philosophical issues that previous critics have explored in such depth” (5). Challenging those who claim that the “modernist era marked a retreat from Victorian concern with social issues” Tratner argues that modernism was, in fact, the opposite—“an effort to escape the limitations of nineteenth-century individualist conventions and write about distinctively ‘collectivist’ phenomena” (3). Tratner explains his methodology: “I will often focus on an image or a phrase in a seemingly apolitical literary work that reappears in a political essay of the same author [. . .] Such repetitions do not imply a political thought was in the mind of the author when the literary work was written, but they do allow us to draw connections between the ways these authors thought about politics and the ways they thought about their personal relationships and their writing” (6). Tratner’s study, however, disallows an inquiry into other sites that demonstrate how modernism helped to reconceptualize “social issues in terms of the masses rather than individuals” (3). One of the most important social issues for

the modernists is that of educating the masses, and particularly instructing the newly expanded reading public on how to engage with modernist literature. Focusing on the teaching of reading, as does this study, enables a deeper and more comprehensive account of a specific social issue to which the modernists' were committed. Moreover, by not limiting my study to texts, I am able to consider Woolf's involvement with the Workers' Education Association and the Women's Cooperative Guild and Pound's commitment to the little magazine movement and inexpensively anthologizing literature, which speak to the modernists' commitment to reconceptualizing "social issues in terms of the masses" (3).

Anna Snaith and Melba Cuddy-Keane challenge the image of Woolf as elitist and aloof. In looking at how the terms "private" and "public" circulate in Woolf's writing, Snaith aims to remove Woolf from her position as "a fixed symbol for her detractors" (5) who represents "'difficult' Modernist writers: precious, upper-class, elitist Britain; or the ethereal ivory-tower writer" (5). Cuddy-Keane "takes Woolf outside the borders that would limit her sphere to Bloomsbury, or to high modernism" (8) in order to consider what she terms a "pedagogical Woolf" committed to "participating in public debates about books, reading, and education, and by extension, the changing construction of audiences and reading practices during her time" (8). These important studies that dislodge Woolf from a fixed position—as a symbol of the ethereal ivory-tower writer and the quintessential Bloomsburyite—are limited by their exclusive focus on Woolf and thus disallow an inquiry into how Woolf's commitment to the "common reader" is indicative of a neglected but defining feature of the modernist movement. My study, which considers Woolf alongside Conrad and Pound, enables readings of Woolf that cannot be produced by looking at Woolf in isolation. Although he is discussing the importance of measuring books against one another, Pound captures this very problem that befalls even the

most careful and comprehensive single-author study: “You can’t judge any chemical’s action merely by putting it with more of itself. To know it, you have got to know its limits, both what it is and what it is not [...] You can’t measure it merely by itself diluted with some neutral substance” (ABC of Reading 60).

Rather than focusing on specific modernists, Mark Morrison dispels the “commonplace that modernists turned their backs on mass audiences” (5) by considering “mass market journals, and the impact they had on the intellectual press, helped set the stage for modernism’s understanding of the public sphere in the twentieth century [. . .] The one aspect common to all of the magazines I examine that draws them into contact with mass market practices is the bedrock assumption that art must have a public function” (5-6). While Morrison focuses on the content of the magazines, including the literary works and the advertisements published therein, my study imagines how these little magazines are but one example of the materialization of the modernists’ belief that “art must have a public function.” In other words, several projects of the time, including Pound’s reading guides, his plans for a college of arts, and the Woolfs’s Hogarth Press, all of which I attend to, were also incited by this very belief. Extending Morrison’s work by considering the little magazines within this wider sphere enables a discussion about the extent to which this modernist belief infiltrated other projects of the time. Paradoxically, this broader context allows for a more specific inquiry into how the modernists’ belief that “art must have a public function” manifested itself in each of these projects and ultimately lays the foundation for insights about the modernist movement in general.

Perhaps the most convincing evidence of this important trend in revising commonplace accounts of modernism is the Norton Anthology of English Literature’s 2006 revision of the introduction to the twentieth century. In 1993, as Kevin J. H. Dettmar and Stephen Watt point

out, The Norton Anthology advanced “precisely the same view of modern writing’s relationship to the popular market as it did in 1962” (4). The passage to which they refer is the following:

In England, the growth of popular education as a result of the Education Act of 1870, which finally made elementary education compulsory and universal, led to the rapid emergence of a large, unsophisticated literary public at whom new kinds of journalism, in particular the cheap “yellow press,” were directed. A public that was literate but not in any real sense educated increased steadily throughout the nineteenth century, and one result of this was the splitting up of the audience for literature into “highbrows,” “lowbrows,” and “middlebrows.” Although in earlier periods there had been different kinds of audiences for different kinds of writing, the split now developed with unprecedented speed and to an unprecedented degree because of the mass production of “popular” literature for the semi-literate. The fragmentation of the reading public now merged with the artist’s war on the Philistine (and indeed was one of the causes of that war in the first place) to widen the gap between popular art and art esteemed only by the sophisticated and the expert. (1683)

Prior to the eighth edition of The Norton Anthology of English Literature, published in March 2006, students learned about these writers within this oversimplified context that relies on metaphors of war to describe the strained relationship between modernist writers and the reading public. Compare the subtle, albeit significant difference, between the passage above and that which currently introduces this period:

The growth of public education in England as a result of the Education Act of 1870, which finally made elementary schooling compulsory and universal, led to the rapid emergence of a mass literate population, at whom a new mass-produced popular literature and new cheap journalism (“the yellow press”) were directed. The audience for literature split up into “highbrows,” “middlebrows,” and “lowbrows,” and the segmentation of the reading public, developing with unprecedented speed and to an unprecedented degree, helped widen the gap between popular art and art esteemed only by the sophisticated and the expert. This breach yawned ever wider with the twentieth-century emergence of modernist iconoclasm and avant-garde experiment in literature, music, and the visual arts. (1827)

In the earlier introduction to the twentieth century, much more space is devoted to developing the significance of the gap between the artists and the public. As we move line by line, the differences between the two descriptions emerge. In the earlier introduction, the 1870 Education Act and other reforms led to the “rapid emergence of a large, unsophisticated literary public.” In the current introduction, the same led to the “rapid emergence of a mass literate population.” Moreover, the language used throughout the earlier introduction to describe the public—words like “unsophisticated,” “Philistines,” and “semi-literate”—are left out in the current description of the public. Instead, this “population” is deemed “literate” rather than “semi-literate” and the modernists are no longer waging a war on the Philistine, but rather a “breach yawned ever wider with the twentieth-century emergence of modernist iconoclasm and avant-garde experiment in literature, music, and the visual arts.” In other words, in the current introduction, the distance between the modernists and the public is not caused by an intentional and resentful attack on the

reading public by the modernists, but is rather the seemingly inevitable result of experimentation in the arts. Ultimately, it would seem that in light of recent scholarship that revises oversimplified accounts of the relationship between the modernists and the public—like that published in previous Norton Anthologies—the editors deemed it necessary to offer a less scathing account of England's reading public and a more nuanced rendering of their relationship to the modernists.

This study, like the new introduction to modernism in the Norton Anthology of English Literature enables a fuller understanding of the modernist project. By casting Conrad, Woolf, and Pound as invested in reaching and instructing the reading public I will be able to produce readings of their works that are impossible to produce if we approach them as elitists writing to exclude these new readers. Furthermore, I am examining the lesser-known works of these authors, works that have often been overlooked for their better-known, more canonical texts. By focusing on Woolf's radio broadcasts, print essays, and lectures, Pound's How To Read and ABC of Reading, and Conrad's author's notes, I am working within fertile space that has yet to be sufficiently theorized. For instance, although Virginia and Leonard Woolf have long been the focus of much scholarship, the League of Nations pamphlets that I study have been almost entirely neglected by Woolf scholarship, yet these are significant materials in that they show the convergence of the Woolfs's politics and commitment to pedagogy. All of these works and materials offer insight into how these authors imagined their readers and how they understood themselves and their work in relation to them.

It should become clear as the dissertation progresses that Conrad's, Woolf's, and Pound's pedagogies are informed by a commitment to equality among peoples. This trope manifests itself differently in each pedagogy in that equality emerges as a goal and a given, depending on the

pedagogy. Together, though, these writers call for more equitable relationships between writers and readers, experts and laymen, Westerners and Non-Westerners, and teachers and students. While I will return to this point in the most detail in the epilogue, Erich Auerbach's discussion of To the Lighthouse offers a useful frame for thinking about the modernists' investment in equality. Of Woolf's emphasis on the random occurrence, Auerbach writes: "The more it is exploited, the more the elementary things which our lives have in common come to light [. . .] It is still a long way to common life of mankind on earth, but the goal begins to be visible" (552). This recognition of that which binds us all together is just as pervasive in the modernist pedagogies I explore in the following chapters as it is in To the Lighthouse and other modern literary texts.

1.1 MODERNIST DIFFICULTY

Throughout my study I refer to "difficulty," sometimes qualifying it as "modernist difficulty." Difficulty has long been invoked as modernism's defining quality. While I admit the difficulties that modernist texts presented for their readers, this study challenges the contention that this difficulty represents contempt for the newly expanded reading public. Because this difficulty is one of the reasons that Conrad, Woolf, and Pound offered guidance to their readers, it is necessary to attend more precisely to what it is that constitutes this difficulty. When I invoke "difficulty," I refer to those textual elements that mark modernist literature— including shifting points of view, blurring of genre distinctions, non-linear and fragmented narratives, indeterminacy of meaning, stream of consciousness, reflexivity, and the fluidity of time. These characteristics indicate the modernists' investment in experimentation and innovation. Readers,

however, were left wondering how to make sense of these innovations. The difficulty of modernist texts, in other words, comes not only from the textual properties, including those listed above, but from the demands that these put on their readers. As many scholars have pointed out, the paradox of modernism is that its experimental texts “both require and frustrate a high degree of reader participation” (McDonald 19).

Difficulty was a topic of debate during what we now call the modernist period. While Eliot’s 1921 proclamation in “The Metaphysical Poets” that “it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be difficult” (emphasis in original 248) is the most quoted opinion on the issue, it is, however, simply one of the many opinions on the place of difficulty that were offered by critics, including F. R. Leavis, I. A. Richards, William Empson, and Edmund Wilson. Debates about the role of difficulty took place outside of these circles, as well. Leonard Diepeveen points to the inaugural issue of Time magazine (1923) which included an article on The Waste Land and Ulysses entitled “Shantih, Shantih, Shantih: Has the Reader Any Rights before the Bar of Literature?” and which opens with the following: “There is a new kind of literature abroad in the land, whose only obvious fault is that no one can understand it” (qtd. in Diepeveen 14). While the author of the Time magazine article is right to describe modernist literature as new, as Hazard Adams points out, literary difficulty does not belong exclusively to modernism: “As formal interpretation of Western culture begins with commentary on Homer so, no doubt, does the concept of literary difficulty. But what is deemed difficult in one age is often not what is focused on as difficult in another” (23). As difficulty is subjective, I can only hypothesize—as I do above and will throughout— the difficulties that modernist texts posed for readers. Thus, when I invoke difficulty in the following chapters, I call upon both the textual properties that would have been new to readers and— drawing on Richard Poirier’s

description of modernism as “a special kind of reading habit or reading necessity” (98)— the accompanying reading habits that these innovative texts demanded.

1.2 THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The term “public” needs to be glossed since it appears throughout my work as I describe the readers that literary modernists were attempting to engage through their pedagogical enterprises. The idea of the public sphere has been theorized by many— most notably Jürgen Habermas— who characterizes the public sphere as an exclusively bourgeois space of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. (27)

These private citizens used any number of sites—which come to define the public sphere— to engage in debates about public authority. Defining the public sphere as a set of sites including salons, coffee houses, and print media, Habermas traces both the rise and the fall of the public sphere. The public sphere is at its height of power in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century as journals and periodicals— political, informational, and literary— begin circulating. Prior to this, explains Habermas, the “traditional domain of communication in which publicity of representation held sway was not fundamentally threatened by the new domain of a public

sphere. There was as yet no publication of commercially distributed news” (16-17). Around this time, the coffee-shop and salon gained popularity:

The coachmen of a Levantine merchant opened the first coffee house. By the first decade of the eighteenth century, London already had 3,000 of them, each with a core group of regulars [. . .] As in the salons where ‘intellectuals’ met with the aristocracy, literature had to legitimate itself in these coffee houses. In this case, however, the nobility joining the upper bourgeois stratum still possessed the social functions lost by the French; it represented landed and moneyed interests.

(33)

These discussions of literature soon included “economic and political disputes” (33), and, while only men frequented coffee houses, women had the equivalent in the salons: “There was scarcely a great writer in the eighteenth century,” writes Habermas, “who would not have first submitted his essential ideas for discussion in such discourse, in lectures before the academies and especially in the salons. The salon held the monopoly of first publication: a new work, even a musical one, had to legitimate itself first in this forum” (34). Habermas attributes the disintegration of the public sphere to many factors— including the commercialization of the printing press and the influx of periodicals and magazines, changes in political parties, increased access to public spaces and public debates, the mixing of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, and ultimately its inclusion of the working class. Drawing on Hauser’s work, Habermas describes this process of integration:

A group of well paid cultural functionaries has risen from lumpenproletarian bohemia to the respectability of the managerial and bureaucratic elite. What has remained is the avant-garde as an institution.

Corresponding to it is a continuing alienation between, on the one hand, the productive and critical minorities of specialists and specializing amateurs—who keep up with the processes of high-grade abstraction in art, literature, and philosophy, with the way of becoming dated that is specific to the ambit of modernity, and, of course, with mere changes in scene and trendy humbug—and, on the other hand, the great public of the mass media. (174-75)

What may appear as a socially integrated stratum of intellectuals, Habermas argues, is actually a split public: “The sounding board of an educated stratum tutored in the public use of reason has been shattered; the public is split into minorities of specialists who put their reason to use nonpublicly and the great mass of consumers whose receptiveness is public but uncritical” (175). According to Habermas, the public sphere has completely disintegrated by the twentieth century, and has been replaced by the society described above. In this society, “the public” (or “public opinion”) is a fiction that helps legitimate state power rather than a communication process characterized by public discussion and debate like the bourgeois public sphere: “Public opinion remains the object of domination even when it forces the latter to make concessions or to reorient itself. It is not bound to rules of public discussion or forms of verbalization in general, nor need it be concerned with political problems or even be addressed to political authorities” (243).

Habermas’s conceptualization of the public sphere has been critiqued by many who suggest that nostalgia and shortsightedness infect accounts of this mythical sphere. Jon P. Klancher argues that the “‘public sphere’ was deeply compromised from the start, no sooner projected than transformed into an image to consume by readers who did not frequent it” (15). Geoff Eley points to evidence that there was never a single, static public sphere, but what he

calls “competing spheres” while Michael Warner writes of publics and what he calls counterpublics.

I will use the terms “reading public” and “common readers”² to characterize the potential readers for modernist texts. Richard Altick famously qualifies the term “reading public” with “mass” in order to indicate that he is not referring to the “relatively small, intellectually and socially superior audience for which most of the great nineteenth-century authors wrote—the readers of the quarterly reviews, the people whom writers like Maccauly, the Brontës, Meredith, George Eliot, and John Stuart Mill had in mind” (6-7); rather, he is referring to the “overwhelmingly more numerous portion of the English people who became day-by-day readers for the first time in this period as literacy spread and printed matter became cheaper” (7). Altick focuses on the period just before that which my own study examines. His study is important in ways that I will address later, but for now I want to attend to why—in light of his use of the term “mass”—I have chosen to avoid using this term. While Altick uses “masses” in a neutral sense to indicate the number of people that encompass the reading public, the term “mass” has long carried with it a negative connotation, and has often been used as a kind of shorthand to characterize the intense contempt that the literary modernists’ supposedly felt toward the increasing number of literate citizens. Since my study, unlike Altick’s, is intended to revise representations of the literary modernists, I do my best to stay away from language that might reinstate those representations I strive to complicate.

1.3 THE EXPANDED READING PUBLIC AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Jon P. Klancher and R. K. Webb have traced the rise of the English reading public as far back as the 1790s, complicating the argument that the emergence of the reading public was a direct result of the Education Act of 1870. Although I situate this Act and subsequent reforms as instrumental in the formation of the reading public upon which this study focuses, in no way do I mean to suggest that this public suddenly emerged only as a result of these reforms. Instead, since I am interested primarily in late nineteenth and early twentieth century works and writers, the Education Act of 1870 is of significance, but is not meant to serve as a point of origin for the reading public. Instead, as Klancher, Webb, and Altick have pointed out, there many earlier developments that led to the widespread literacy that characterized the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Day schools were formed by the British and Foreign School Society and the National Society for Educating the Poor. According to Webb, by 1830 there were 3,670 schools with about 346, 000 scholars, but “the schools were certainly not as effective as they should have been. A shortage of teachers and the irregular attendance of pupils combined with the defects of the system to prevent little more acquisition than a knowledge of reading, and that was often imperfect” (17). Factory schools, adventure schools (also known as dame schools) were developed, as well, for the poor and working classes. Webb writes that in 1833 the working-class population of England and Wales numbered about 12,400,000, of whom 2,604,000 were between the ages of three and twelve [. . .] An estimate of nearly 900,000 working class children in attendance at school in that year has been reached, a figure nearly doubled by 1851” (18). These figures do not “give sufficient weight to the remarkable turnover in attendance, which probably

means that a much larger proportion of children of the working classes had some experience in schools than has been thought or than can be proved statistically” (19). Neither do these figures include Sunday schools, a crucial aspect of the development of a literate working class.

The Sunday School Movement³ was founded by Robert Raikes in the late eighteenth century and led to the 1785 founding of the Sunday School Society according to whom, three “sets of ideas or feelings influenced to varying degrees the founding of Sunday schools” (4):

For some, the new institution was an instrument for the moral rescue of poor children from their corrupt parents, thereby at one stroke insuring the happiness of the little ones and the regeneration of society. Others saw in the schools primarily a means of spreading the word of God, an end valuable for its own sake. Thirdly, a new, soft, kind, more optimistic and sentimental view of children and childhood induced benevolent men and women to direct their attentions to the young. (Laqueur 4)

The overarching sentiment informing all of these motives was that Sunday schools, as agencies of instruction, were responding to “a feeling that the home, the small charity schools, and the patchwork of private pay-as-you-go day schools were proving inadequate by a number of criteria” (Laqueur 6). The hope was that “Sunday school educated children would serve as a moral advance force into the home of their parents” (Laqueur 19). Although these weekly classes focused on the topic of religion, pupils—who because they were poor had no access to education—were also taught to read and write. While Altick downplays the degree to which these weekly classes enabled these students to become literate, Webb notes that “there is considerable testimony to the effectiveness of Sunday schools” (16). As Laqueur points out, contemporaries of the movement disagreed, as well, on its capacity to provide an education for

the working classes: “The Secretary of the British and Foreign School Society told the 1834 Parliamentary Committee on Education that ‘I never yet saw a Sunday school which [I] should consider worth taking into account as a place of literary instruction’” (95) and yet a few weeks later the Secretary of the Sunday School Union told that committee that “in three years of Sunday school education a child could acquire ‘a competent knowledge of the art of reading’” (95). What is clear is the movement’s commitment to exposing students to the written word: “A working-class child in the mid-eighteenth century seldom saw the printed word. By 1850 children were inundated with textbooks, periodicals, and pamphlets produced expressly for them. The growth of Sunday schools was almost exactly contemporaneous with the growth of publications for children, and no other institution was more instrumental in bringing the printed word to the working-class child” (Laqueur 113).

As the public of the late nineteenth century became increasingly literate, the distinctions among classes became blurred. H. G. Wells describes (albeit hyperbolically) this change: “Never before had there been such reading masses [. . .] The great gulf that had divided the world hitherto into the readers and the non-reading mass became little more than a slightly perceptible difference in educational level” (qtd. in Carey 6). This sort of anxiety-ridden, hyperbolic characterization was fairly common. The interest in how these “new” readers might engage with modernist texts, and more generally how they might engage with “high-brow” culture, was a transatlantic concern as America, too, was faced with more people in need of an education.

According to Arthur N. Applebee, in part “because the Depression left them with little else to do, students who would previously have dropped out early were remaining through the high school and even into the college years. This created a new band of students for whom neither vocational nor college-preparatory training would be appropriate; for these ‘general’

students a new kind of education was needed” (139). Named the “general education” movement, it sought to educate these students on how to lead a “socially adequate and personally satisfying life in a democracy” (139). This education included an increased focus on language and communication and “emphasized the difficulties inherent in skillful use of language with a concomitant need for close, analytical study if the reader or listener were not to be misled” (140). Communication was seen as a skill necessary to keeping peace throughout the world, not only in light of the First World War but in the face of the Second World War. One way of teaching communication skills was through reading; English teachers were called to this task. Lennox Grey, second vice-president of the National Council of Teachers of English, remarked in 1943:

Communication is one of the five or six most crucial services of war. It is one with which a half-dozen major agencies in Washington are now urgently concerned, for home front and battle front alike, following the first imperative concern with military mobilization and war production. It is plainly the one in which our seventy-five thousand teachers of English can make the special war contribution we have been looking, hoping, waiting for. (qtd. in Applebee 138)

Pound also believed that communication was necessary to maintaining world peace. This focus on communication and on language, according to Applebee, “had deeper roots in academic traditions of language study, in particular in the general semantics movement and the work of the New Critics” (140).

By the early 1940s, the education system in England, too, had seen dramatic changes that began in 1870 with the Education Act that set up school districts. Local boards had the right to compel children to attend these schools and by 1899 education up to age 12 was free and

compulsory. The 1902 Balfour Act provided funding for secondary schools and in 1907 a scholarship foundation made it possible for intelligent children from poor families to attend these schools. The 1910 Board of Education Circular on Teaching in the secondary schools⁴ explains that instruction should train “the mind to appreciate English Literature” and cultivate “the power of using the English language in speech and writing [. . .] Without training in the use of language, literature cannot be fully understood or properly appreciated. Without the study of literature there can be no mastery over language” (qtd. in Rose 119). This mandate for secondary education became especially important because in 1917 the school leaving age was raised from 12 to 14. In 1921, The Teaching of English in England, more commonly referred to as the Newbolt Report, reviewed earlier mandates and considered the position of English language and literature in the entire educational system of England from grammar schools to colleges and universities. The report finds that the educational system itself is failing due to “a misunderstanding of the educational values to be found in the different regions of mental activity, and especially to an underestimate of the importance of the English language and literature. It is not required of us that we should propose in detail a complete scheme of national education,” writes the committee, “but we are compelled to indicate certain principles which must form the basis of any such scheme” (296). The writers of the report go on to declare that “whatever studies may be added to it, English, we are convinced, must form the essential basis of a liberal education for all English people, and in the earlier stages of education it should be the principal function of all schools of whatever type to provide this basis” (306). The reasoning informing this conclusion is that this education would have “important social, as well as personal, results; it would have a unifying tendency” (308). The report continues:

Two causes, both accidental and conventional rather than national, at present distinguish and divide one class from another in England. The first of these is a marked difference in their modes of speech. If the teaching of the language were properly and universally provided for, the difference between educated and uneducated speech, which at present causes so much prejudice and difficulty of intercourse on both sides, would gradually disappear [. . .] The second cause of division amongst us is the undue narrowness of the ground on which we meet for the true purposes of social life. The associations of sport and games are widely shared by all classes in England, but with mental pleasures and mental exercises the case is very different. The old education [. . .] went far to make us not one nation, but two, neither which shared the associations or tastes of the other. An education fundamentally English would, we believe, at any rate bridge, if not close, this chasm of separation. (qtd. in Bacon 308)

In other words, according to the Report, emphasizing English language and literature above all else in the curriculum has the potential to unify the country and its people. This type of education will bridge the gap that formed among classes, peoples from different regions, and more generally between the educated and semi- or uneducated. The education system of the nineteenth century, according to the Report, only exacerbated this gulf and the new education system, which the report hopes to incite, must work to rectify this. The belief that the answer to unification lies in English literature pervades Virginia Woolf's lectures. Because this Report situates the educational system as imperative to the goal of national unity, it became a common practice for various committees and educational reports to propose raising the leaving age to 16 which would

guarantee that students would be in this environment longer. It was not, however, until the 1944 Education Act that there was a nationwide system of free and compulsory education from the age of 5 to 15.⁵

As schooling became available to all in England and more people were being educated in the United States, certain anxieties concerning what it would mean to have “culture” made available not only to the few but to the many began to surface. The educational system had the potential to standardize knowledge, reading practices and so forth. With the population explosion, the education reforms, and increased access to schooling, the threat that everyone would be educated and “cultured” became a reality.

In America, this anxiety was brought to the fore by the Book-of-the-Month Club, introduced in 1926, and “educational radio” introduced in the early 1920s. Janice Radway argues that the Book-of-the-Month Club was deemed scandalous because “it threatened to obliterate the distinction between those who were cultured and those who were not” (259) by delivering “culture” to everyone’s door once a month. In fact, one of the social functions of the Club, according to Radway, was that “members could identify with and relate to others [members and fictional characters alike] in an increasingly alienating, modern, chaotic world “dominat[ed] by abstract and incomprehensible forces, and worries about standardization and massification” (283).

Educational radio, too, had the potential to be used as a standardizing instrument. Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, recognized the unifying capability of radio and its potential as an “instrument of social reconstruction” (Shelley 272), noting that “the radio seems to make it possible to turn the whole world into a single classroom” (Shelley 272). Joy Elmer Morgan, chair of the National Committee on Education by Radio, also argued for the radio’s

capacity to advance the “quality of thinking among the masses [. . .] A world language is as certain as tomorrow’s sun. It will be the language of the best radio programs” (Shelley 272).

The little magazine movement, started in the early twentieth century and pioneered in part by Ezra Pound, was a movement that, like educational radio, also sought to advance the quality of thinking among the public. The little magazine movement intended to disseminate “high culture” to those outside of the academy through hundreds of literary magazines in London and the United States. Certainly many of the readers of the little magazines were trained intellectuals, yet these magazines managed to occupy a space between the “popular” and the “academic.” Hoffman et al explain that “one of the most significant contributions of these magazines to twentieth century literature is to give an abundance of suggestions and styles which popular or academic taste scarcely could tolerate or accept” (4). Although the readership of little magazines such as The Egoist (published in London from 1914–19) and T. S. Eliot’s Criterion (published in London from 1922–39) were relatively small, the investment in disseminating experimental and difficult poetry, literature, and art to those outside of the academy as well as those beyond coteries like the Bloomsbury Group, suggest the modernists’ interest in engaging a vaster audience.

1.4 THE IMPULSE TO INSTRUCT

I do not mean to suggest that the impetus to instruct the public is a phenomenon singular to the modernists. The tradition of the “how-to” text— a category into which Pound’s How To Read and ABC of Reading certainly fall, as well as Mortimer Adler’s How to Read a Book (1940) and I. A. Richards’s How to Read a Page (1942), to which I will soon turn — dates back much

further than the early twentieth century. In his 1954 essay “Howtoism,” Dwight MacDonald traces the genre as far back as Ovid’s ‘Art of Love,’ “still in print after two thousand years [and] a more practical handbook on sex and seduction than many of its modern competitors” (371). Offering a cursory sketch of the long history of the “how to” text, MacDonald cites Benjamin Franklin’s books including The Art of Making Money Plenty, in Every Man’s Pocket; Way to Wealth and To a Young Man—on How to Choose a Mistress. Seventeenth-century bestsellers include Guide to Heaven by Samuel Hardy which contained advice on “how to close savingly with Christ” (MacDonald 372). By the eighteenth century, “how-to” books were more secularized as Lord Chesterfield’s Letters To His Son went through thirty one American editions between 1775 and 1800. The nineteenth century saw the publication of many more “how-to” texts including Samuel Smiles’s Self Help; with Illustrations of Character, Conduct and Perseverance⁶ and, in 1876, The Royal Path of Life; or, Aims and Aids to Success and Happiness by Thomas L. Haines and Levi W. Yaggy which sold almost one million copies. In the early twentieth century, Frank C. Haddock’s Power of Will sold 750,000 copies between 1907 and 1927 and others like it reached the top of the bestseller list.

What separates Conrad’s, Woolf’s, and Pound’s projects from these other “how-to” undertakings is their commitment specifically to reading pedagogies that would allow them to help readers engage with the difficulties that they would encounter in modernist literature and even in modern life. In so doing, Conrad, Woolf, and Pound offered alternatives to academically sanctioned textbooks. Another important alternative to these academically sanctioned pedagogies is Gertrude Stein’s How To Write (1931), which resembles Ezra Pound’s reading guides in its difficult, experimental style. Like Pound’s reading guides, it is not the “how-to” text its title

promises. I do not include Stein's guide in my study, however, because its focus on writing pedagogy would necessarily take away from this dissertation's focus on reading pedagogies.

Around the same time that Conrad, Woolf, Pound, and Stein reached out to the reading public through their alternatives to standardized education, professional academics who agreed with Woolf and Pound that that educational system was failing its students—were also writing reading guides. Mortimer Adler's How to Read a Book and I.A. Richards's How to Read a Page, a response to Adler's book, offer the direct, authoritative advice on reading that one might expect from a reading guide. Even though Adler's and Richards's reading guides were written around the same time as Woolf and Pound were engaged in similar projects, Adler's and Richards's authority comes from a different arena. Woolf's and Pound's respective reputations were based on their literary works while Adler and Richards garnered their authority from their affiliations with academia. They write, however, from the belief that the very educational system of which they are a part—the university of the 1930s and 1940s—is failing its students.

Like Pound, Adler's primary answer to reading instruction in How To Read a Book is the "great books": "The place to begin [...] is the great books," writes Adler. "They are so apt for the purpose, it is almost as if they were written for the sake of teaching people how to read. They stand to the problem of learning how to read almost as water does to the business of learning how to swim" (320-321). The great books are "enduring best-sellers," "always contemporary" (he abhors the characterization "classic"), "instructive and enlightening" and they "deal with the persistently unsolved problems of human life" (335). Adler's stress on the importance of the books themselves rather than on the reader separates his pedagogy from Woolf's more reader-centered pedagogy.

Unlike Adler's text-centered theories, Richards—like Woolf— focuses far more on the reader's experience, arguing that the “main source of any view, sound or silly, which we have of how we read must be our own observations of our own doings while we are reading” (26). Modeling for them word by word and line by line how he would approach various passages, Richards enables readers to observe their “doings” while reading. In fact, he offers a list of words—“key words” to use his language— that he considers the most important words to understand in the English language in order to make sense of any text. Not unlike Woolf's theories of reading, Richards also depends upon the idea that definitions are not fixed: “Words get their values from their togetherness [. . .] A sentence, in brief, being the act of an organism, is an organism. The harmful usage doctrine ignores this; where and while it rules in a mind, intelligent reading is impossible, as impossible as digestion would be if no chemistry were allowed to occur in it” (237). Openness to this understanding of language, according to Richards, is fundamental to reading intelligently.

Conrad's, Woolf's, and Pound's interest in reading practices is thus indicative of ongoing debates around this topic, both within the academy and without. The educational system was no longer the only authority on the subject of reading, and its deficiencies actually offered the impetus for developing alternative pedagogies. Moreover, because of the particular historical moment, these pedagogies also often carried with them overt implications for the significance of reading and writing in the face of the First World War, as did Adler's and Richards's for the Second World War. Both Woolf's and Pound's pedagogies imagine how particular reading and writing habits have the potential to bring about peace. Conrad's pedagogy also has implications for cross-cultural relationships, for Conrad appeals to readers on the topic of British colonization, trying to instill tolerance in his readers.

The following chapter, Chapter 2, focuses on Conrad's use of author's notes in order to instruct his readers not only on how to engage with his texts, but how to engage with modernist literature in general. I argue that Conrad uses prefaces to guide his readers in revising their value system for understanding and judging literature, which ultimately enables them to revise their means for understanding and garnering meaning from their lives. This new way of seeing relies on impressionism and prepares his readers to better understand not only what he is trying to accomplish in his novels but also what modernists after him will attempt in their novels. Conrad also uses this space to engage readers on a personal level as he demonstrates his commitment to a relationship with readers that is based on equality. In fact, the degree to which Conrad focuses on the importance of equality and understanding, especially among peoples across national and cultural boundaries, serves to complicate widespread characterizations of Conrad as a racist.

In Chapter 3, I cast Woolf's lectures, three radio broadcasts for the BBC, her commitment to the Workers' Education Movement, and her founding of the Hogarth Press as attempts to engage what Woolf termed the "common reader," a characterization that was not pejorative but rather one she used to describe a member of the reading public. Woolf's lectures and radio broadcasts, perhaps more than her print essays, suggest her commitment to reaching and instructing the public on the process of reading. I term Woolf's particular type of pedagogy "collaborative pedagogy" as it is characterized by Woolf's insistence that common readers take responsibility for and contribute to the ways in which they are instructed. By considering the political implications of this type of pedagogy that demands that writers and readers, teachers and students, and experts and laymen work together to create meaning from literature, I challenge the idea that Woolf was apolitical. Looking specifically at how and why the Hogarth

Press was founded enables me to suggest its ties to Woolf's commitment to the reading public, accessibility, and to embracing rather than alienating the common reader.

Chapter 4 considers the role that pedagogy plays in Pound's plan to revivify America through the arts. This plan includes restructuring America's and Britain's (although to a lesser degree) education systems. Pound wrote the textbooks How To Read and ABC of Reading in order to support this goal. I detail how the lack of practical advice on how to read that one might expect from texts with these titles and the deliberately difficult form in which this advice is presented is indicative of the demands that modernist works will put on their readers. If readers can make sense of Pound's guides then readers are effectively engaging with difficulty and ultimately with the modernist project. I argue that Pound's guides are primers that prepare readers for these difficulties—including fragmentation and, in some cases, a complete lack of a coherent narrative—that they will encounter in modernist texts and modern existence. Pound, therefore, instructs readers by offering them guidance in the very form and style about which he hopes to teach them. I also consider Pound's extensive contributions to the little magazine movement, which indicate both his commitment to reaching the reading public (although the magazines had low circulations) and his rejection of the idea that the university is the only space in which one might learn about literature. Pound's work as an editor of anthologies, and his use of this position to inexpensively anthologize the work of the moment (something that no other editors were doing at the time), further suggests the importance he placed on making literature accessible to all.

Conrad, Woolf, and Pound compel me to reflect on my own pedagogy, and particularly how I situate myself in the classroom in relation to my students—who, like the reading public at the turn of the twentieth century, are looking for an authority on how to approach literature. In

Chapter 5, an epilogue, I turn to a set of student evaluations from a literature class entitled “Women and Literature” in which I received low marks from some students who were skeptical of my teaching practices, and particularly my refusal to overtly exercise my authority. I argue that these comments are indicative of the ongoing struggle on the part of both students and teachers to define the role of the teacher, as well as the gap that emerges as a result of the often mismatched expectations of the teacher-student relationship. I consider this gap within the context of Conrad’s, Woolf’s, and Pound’s pedagogies, which ultimately prove more useful in thinking about the student-teacher relationship than those often oversimplified configurations of this relationship that emerge from current scholarship on pedagogy.

2.0 CONRAD'S AUTHOR'S NOTES

The most often-quoted preface written by Joseph Conrad is that which precedes The Nigger of the "Narcissus" (1897), wherein Conrad contemplates the role of art and of the artist in society. Often cast as an exception to Conrad's otherwise insignificant and unsuccessful attempts at literary theory, the author's note to The Nigger of the "Narcissus" is the only one to have received any sort of sustained, serious scholarly attention despite Conrad's extensive use of such author's notes throughout his writing career. Some of these prefaces were published initially with their accompanying texts and others were written for second editions. Others still were written both for the initial publication and revised for second editions. Between 1917 and 1920, Conrad wrote the most prefaces of his career as he prepared for the publication by J. M. Dent of the second collected English edition of his works.⁷

Although Frederick Karl has devoted more space to Conrad's author's notes in his biography of Conrad than any other Conrad biographer,⁸ Karl still focuses primarily on Conrad's preface to The Nigger of the "Narcissus" which he argues "helped [Conrad] to sort out his ideas" (397) but "did not particularly define his later writing career [. . .] The Preface, however, put him at ease in those early years when he was seeking both an aesthetic and a language" (397). The attention that Karl gives to Conrad's other author's notes is fleeting. Regarding Conrad's preface to Almayer's Folly, for example, Karl writes that it "reveals very little" (328) and Karl portrays Conrad's later notes as inconsequential: "In the author's notes he did stress the trivial details of

their [the novels'] composition" (870). Scholars who are interested in the "ideas Conrad articulates" (emphasis added, Ambrosini 3), such as Richard Ambrosini, tend to focus on Conrad's letters and his fiction itself—particularly Conrad's use of the narrative frame—as indicative of these ideas. In light of the recent publication of the six and seventh volumes in the series of the Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, it is not surprising that these letters are privileged over Conrad's author's notes, but the sheer amount of author's notes—at the very least—demands our attention. Taking these prefaces seriously, I will help to fill this gap in Conrad scholarship. Considering the full range of Conrad's author's notes⁹—those published initially with the texts and those added later—allows us to consider the purposes of these prefaces throughout Conrad's career. One of my primary interests in these notes lies in the instructional element that pervades both the earlier and later author's notes. Both types of prefaces offer some form of guidance for readers, whether specific guidance on how to read the stories that follow, more general lessons on the uses and value of art, or a combination thereof. I will thus cast these prefaces as attempts to engage and instruct the newly expanded reading public.

Conrad's investment in engaging this reading public differs from Virginia Woolf's and Ezra Pound's investments in many ways. As I will detail in the next two chapters, Woolf and Pound were interested in affecting the methods by which students learn and teachers teach, and both spoke and wrote consistently on these topics. Pound, in fact, went so far as to re-imagine the education system and had plans for how it should be reconstructed. Conrad's investment was not as elaborate. As I will discuss below, Conrad's commitment to pedagogy is far more localized and subtle, and is marked by his use of author's notes to guide his readers in revising their ways of seeing and understanding literature. A writer consistently concerned with his readership and

his own popularity, Conrad corresponded often with fellow writers and friends about his goal of writing best-selling novels. Conrad's letters indicate, however, that throughout his career he remained conflicted by his commitment to this goal of popularity and his seemingly incompatible goal of writing in new and experimental modes. Although Conrad struggled with his lack of popularity throughout his career, particularly at its beginning, this is not to say that Conrad was uninterested in making a name for himself in literary circles but rather that he was consistently torn between this goal and the goal of popularity, a tension that emerges in his prefaces. Peter McDonald explains that "as a newcomer, his need to produce more marketable work was in direct conflict with his more urgent need to establish his position in the field" (27). While some of Conrad's early letters testify to his interest in establishing himself as a serious writer, as does his "early resistance to being published in popular monthlies, like Pearson's Magazine" (McDonald 24),¹⁰ Conrad's investment in becoming popular comes through in other letters and in his early prefaces as he uses these introductory pieces to highlight the ordinariness of the stories they precede rather than stressing the "grandness or difficulty" (Karl 870) of his novels. In other words, he misleads his readers by portraying the extraordinary tales he will tell as rather ordinary. An incongruity thus emerges between the prefaces and the difficult, experimental texts they are intended to introduce. This incongruity is exacerbated by the conversational, matter-of-fact tone of the prefaces, a tone that offers no indication that the novels that follow are difficult—in terms of their methods of narration, their time shifts, and their changing points of view. A similar disjunction also emerges within Conrad's novels themselves as they draw on multiple literary traditions and narrative techniques, as many scholars have noted.¹¹ Thus Frederic Jameson argues that Conrad's

work is still unstable, undecidable, and his work unclassifiable,

spilling out of high literature into light reading and romance, reclaiming great areas of diversion and distraction by the most demanding practice of style and écriture alike, floating uncertainly somewhere in between Proust and Robert Louis Stevenson [. . .] In Conrad we can sense the emergence not merely of what will be contemporary modernism (itself now become a literary institution), but also, still intangibly juxtaposed with it, of what will variously be called popular culture or mass culture, the commercialized cultural discourse of what, in late capitalism, is often described as media society. (Jameson 206)

Jameson highlights the difficulty of classifying Conrad's works in 1981, almost one hundred years after Conrad was writing. As I will detail below, Conrad's contemporary critics also struggled with categorizing his work. And Conrad, himself, consistently challenged attempts by others to classify his writing. The point that is most important in this excerpt, however, and one upon which Jameson elaborates by looking at Lord Jim (1900), is the extent to which each novel itself is characterized by a degree of heterogeneity or disjointedness. Jameson focuses on

what most readers have felt as a tangible "break" in the narrative of Lord Jim, a qualitative shift and diminution of narrative intensity as we pass from the story of the Patna and the intricate and prototextual search for the "truth" of the scandal of the abandoned ship, to that more linear account of Jim's later career in Patusan, which, a virtual paradigm of romance as such, comes before us as the prototype of the various "degraded" subgenres into which mass culture will be articulated (adventure story, gothic, science fiction, bestseller, detective story, and the like). (207)

While Lord Jim is perhaps the most dramatic account of this “break,” we see a similar disjointedness in The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” with its changing points of views, and in Nostromo (1904), a novel with an intricately written and complicated narrative. Under Western Eyes (1911) is also characterized by this disjointedness, as Conrad moves among the Four Parts of this detective story, jumping from first person narration to third person narration.

While many scholars have remarked on this disjointedness,¹² little scholarly attention has been paid to the discontinuity between Conrad’s author’s notes and the novels they are meant to introduce. Focusing on this discontinuity will enable me to examine how these prefaces in general, and the discontinuities that emerge between them and the texts they are intended to introduce, constitute Conrad’s attempts at capturing the attention of readers. Conrad potentially engages readers through his use of realism but does so ultimately in order to guide them in revising their value system for understanding and judging literature. This method, I will argue, is pedagogical in nature. Conrad’s commitment to reaching as vast an audience as possible in order to help guide them in these ways is perhaps best captured by the final image in the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus”: “To arrest, for the space of a breath, the hands busy about the work of the earth, and compel men entranced by the sight of distant goals to glance for a moment at the surrounding vision of form and color, of sunshine and shadows; to make them pause for a look, for a sigh, for a smile—such is the aim” (52).¹³ In using art to affect the laborer—not the critic or the intellectual—Conrad suggests his investment in being a popular writer. It is with this image in mind—this image of men with their “hands busy about the work of the earth” stopping to “glance for a moment at the surrounding vision of form and color”—that I begin to consider why these readers are particularly important for Conrad.

2.1 JOSEPH CONRAD: A MODERNIST?

The inclusion of Joseph Conrad in this study of modernism and among other literary modernists suggests that he, like Pound and Woolf, fits neatly into this category. This is simply not the case. In fact, one could argue that we might attribute Conrad's lack of initial popularity to the inability of critics and readers to classify his work. While Conrad has secured a reputation as a modernist and his work is consistently anthologized alongside that of other modernists, it is imperative that this periodization of Conrad's work not be taken for granted, for it is only retrospectively that Conrad's writing has been contextualized in this way. Perhaps this contextualization accounts for why so many scholars overlook the content of his author's notes in favor of the more characteristically modernist aspects of his works including "his use of oblique narration, 'delayed decoding,' covert plotting, time-shifts, symbolic devices and paradoxical moral-thematic structures" (Watts 83).

Although scholars consistently locate Conrad's work within this modernist context, Conrad himself did not. Writing his first few works at the turn of the century and thus 10-15 years before the first major works of Woolf and Pound were published, Conrad aligned himself not with the modernist tradition, but with the adventure tradition. Well into the twentieth century, in fact, Conrad continued to imagine his writing as part of the adventure tradition, often comparing himself to Robert Louis Stevenson, whose work was still enjoying critical success prior to the rise of modernist literature after the First World War.¹⁴ Regarding his forthcoming Chance, Conrad wrote to Alfred A. Knopf on July 20, 1913: "When it comes to popularity I stand much nearer the public mind than Stevenson, who was super-literary, a conscious virtuoso of style" (Letters 5: 257-258). Conrad's adventure fiction, as Andrea White notes, comes at a noteworthy moment in the history of that genre, a point when it underwent a significant change

from “a discourse that created and confirmed stereotypes supportive of British imperial ventures abroad, to one subversive of those endeavors” (Joseph Conrad and the Adventure Tradition 82). Conrad’s writing comes after this shift, thus accounting for the subversive attitude that Conrad takes toward his subject. Rather than being attributed to this shift, however, Conrad’s subversive methods are more often understood rather narrowly as his affinity with modernism.

In addition to the adventure tradition within which Conrad categorizes his work, there were other nineteenth-century traditions in which Conrad’s writing is rooted, a point that Kenneth Graham, among others, deems noteworthy:

Conrad may be a Modernist in his capacity to tear away the surface of things and to show certain of his characters hypnotized and fatally becalmed by the falling away of physical appearances. But his partial attachment to a nineteenth-century tradition—confirmed by his admiration for Balzac, Flaubert, and Maupassant—is what allowed him to demonstrate how resistant the world is, for good as well as bad, to the dangerous play of consciousness, and to express with intensity the tension between the two [. . .] To see Conrad in a nineteenth-century context [. . .] is not just to detect traces of an older mentality or technique still operative within his twentieth-century fictions, but to query the whole idea that a clear border-line divides the two centuries. (204-206)

Including Conrad in this study allows me to foreground some of the problems that periodization presents, a point to which Graham alludes in the above excerpt with his phrasing “Conrad may be a Modernist” and that Graham addresses outright in the final sentence. As we saw earlier, Jameson also highlights the difficulty of classifying Conrad’s writing, arguing that “a case could

be made for reading Conrad not as an early modernist, but rather an anticipation of that later and quite different thing we have come to call variously textuality, écriture, post-modernism, or schizophrenic writing” (Jameson 219). While I will cast Conrad as a forerunner of Woolf and Pound, I do so in a different manner than many other scholars. Certainly an innovator and pioneer of what now are considered characteristically modernist literary techniques, Conrad was also an important forerunner to Woolf and Pound in terms of the ways in which he sought to engage the expanding reading public and help them to adjust to a different type of literature and a different way of looking at life. Conrad is an important figure precisely because his work spans both centuries and his prefaces provide insight into how he imagined the changing face of this public. He looked back to the nineteenth century and the value system that was attached to realism, yet he also looked ahead to a new type of writing that would make different demands on readers. As he prepared Victory (1915) for publication, Conrad seemed especially aware of his ties to both realism and modernism. As Karl explains:

An examination of the 1199-page manuscript of Victory and its revisions for book publication supports a view of Conrad as still very much the conscious artist. One way to view this is to recognize that in the manuscript Conrad attempted a far greater degree of realism than he felt was suitable in his final version. The manuscript fills out characters, situations, and scenes which in the book are approached more obliquely and suggestively. Throughout his revisions, after the manuscript was complete, Conrad moved toward a more symbolic presence. (765)

Perhaps Conrad thought that the readers of Munsey's Magazine,¹⁵ where Victory was first published serially, were not sophisticated enough to appreciate this “more symbolic presence.”

This would not have been unlikely, for, as I will detail later, Conrad had a complex relationship with the readers of many of the mass-circulation magazines in which he published his works. Every bit as complex as his relationship to these readers is Conrad's relationship to the literature that came before him and to the modernism that he will help to advance. The above excerpt suggests that he was very aware of his place "in-between," as were some of his reviewers. An anonymous reviewer at the Standard wrote of "The Secret Sharer" (1910): "We may acclaim him perhaps as the first king of a country—that country of story-tellers who will combine the sense of life proclaimed by the great mid-Victorians with the sense of form discovered here in England somewhere about 1890" (qtd. in Karl 722). We see this tension between his literary predecessors and potential successors exemplified in Conrad's prefaces. These author's notes demonstrate how Conrad— who, himself, was caught between the two periods— sought to prepare and guide nineteenth-century readers into the twentieth century. Conrad's prefaces are informed by his imagining that nineteenth-century readers were more interested in fact than fiction. Although he disagrees with this view, as I will detail below, he still caters to it and explains the origins of his tales, often tying his fictions to real geographic locations or real people.¹⁶

Before going any further, I must clarify my use of some terms. When I write of Conrad's readers, I mean to invoke the intended readers rather than the real readers of Conrad's texts. Since we can never know who actually read Conrad's works— especially because Conrad published them in seemingly any publication that would accept them— I am interested in the reader that the prefaces construct or imagine. Moreover, when I discuss Conrad's reading public, I am not assuming that this is a static or unitary group but rather that a series of small publics exist, and that the makeup of these publics are always changing. As I detail below, Conrad's

readership expanded throughout the course of his career. It was not until the publication of Chance that Conrad became a best-selling author and reached popular status; his readership expanded almost instantaneously and included many women.

2.2 CONRAD'S VEXED RELATIONSHIP WITH POPULARITY

"I am sufficient of a democrat to detest the idea of being a writer of any 'coterie' [. . .] I want to be read by many eyes and by all kinds of them, at that," Conrad wrote to his publisher in 1918 (Jean-Aubry 2: 214). Yet Conrad's views on the value of popularity, which turn out to be rather inconsistent, were evident as early as 1904, when he warned H. G. Wells about writing for such a small audience. Most likely commenting on Wells's A Modern Utopia, Conrad wrote:

Your first few pages proclaim an intellectual exclusiveness [. . .] But practically from the point of view of efficiency an exclusive attitude is always a disadvantage; and in social work especially, since it leads straight to cliqueism, to the formation of select circles of disciples, to a fatal limiting of influence.

Why should you say that you write only for people who think this or that? [. . .] After all, why should you preach to people already convinced? That sort of thing leads only to a sort of high priesthood in a clique and it should be left to people who seek simply the satisfaction of their vanity. (Jean-Aubry 1: 329)

Conrad's question "Why should you preach to people already convinced?" suggests his investment in "preaching" to— or teaching— the reading public, those outside of the coterie for

whom many modernists have been accused of writing exclusively. Conrad sees literature as doing “social work”—a view that Pound and Woolf will take, as well— that cannot be achieved if it is merely reaching those already committed to the cause. We are thus reminded of the laborers to whom Conrad alludes in the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” apparently the people Conrad longs to reach and also advises Wells to reach. An understanding of who Conrad imagined his readers were—and who he hoped to reach—is an integral part of determining the relationship he sought to establish in his prefaces with his readers.

Conrad often considered his ability to reach readers in light of the abilities of others who were writing similar works. While Conrad regularly compared himself to Stevenson, he took pride in his even more accessible prose. Conrad wrote in 1913:

When it comes to popularity I stand much nearer the public mind than Stevenson, who was super-literary, a conscious virtuoso of style whereas the average mind does not care much for virtuosity. My point of view, which is purely human, my subjects, which are not too specialized as to the class of people or kind of events, my style which may be clumsy here and there, but is perfectly straightforward and tending towards the colloquial, cannot possibly stand in the way of a large public. (Jean-Aubry 2: 147)

In comparing himself to Stevenson, who had just published Treasure Island in 1883, Conrad focuses, above all, on the readers he will hope to reach, the “large public.” He enumerates the aspects of his adventure fiction that both separate it from that of Stevenson and should make it more attractive to the public. This excerpt also suggests how Conrad imagines his reader, yet another point of contention in Conrad scholarship. Here, Conrad demeans the “average mind” by

arguing that it does not “care much for virtuosity”; rather the “average mind” demands that which is “perfectly straightforward” and tends “towards the colloquial.” Not exactly a glowing characterization of the reading public. In fact, Conrad’s letters are filled with negative descriptions of the reading public and comments like these have been used by scholars to argue that Conrad had no respect for the public; Conrad’s relationship to the public is more complicated, however, as his simultaneous rejection of writing only for a coterie suggests.

Conrad’s conflicted feelings about popularity permeate his letters and impact his decisions about where to publish his works. He often lamented his lack of success at becoming popular, at least early in his career—“Oh for a success, a beastly, popular success!” (Letters 2: 73)— and deliberately sought out ways to reach this status. He published his work serially in magazines of all sorts: literary types with small circulations including the New Review (The Nigger of the “Narcissus”), Blackwood’s (“Karain” [1897], “Youth” [1898], and Heart of Darkness [1899]), Savoy (“The Idiots” [1896]) and Cosmopolis (“An Outpost of Progress” [1897]), as well as popular magazines with large circulations, many advertisements and illustrations, and often less-than-stellar reputations including the Metropolitan Magazine of New York: The Liveliest Magazine in America (“Freya of the Seven Isles” [1912], “Because of the Dollars” [1914], and “The Planter of Malata” [1914]), Harper’s (“An Anarchist” [1906], “The Informer” [1906], and “The Secret Sharer” [1910]), and Pall Mall magazine (“Typhoon” [1902], “Tomorrow” [1902], “Gaspar Ruiz” [1906], “The Duel” [1908], and “The Inn of the Two Witches” [1913]).¹⁷ “I wish to reach another public than Maga’s [Blackwood’s]” (Letters 2: 321), he wrote to his editor J. B. Pinker, in 1901, having just finished Typhoon. And while Conrad evidently valued this other public that read these mass-circulation magazines, he still denigrated them, describing the mode of his magazine pieces—particularly those for the large-

circulation magazines— as “Conradesque (in the easier style)” (Letters 4: 413), again alluding to the lack of sophistication of popular-magazine readers.

The difference between the two types of magazines in which Conrad’s work appeared is perhaps best summarized by a comparison that the editors of Harper’s Magazine make in an article appearing in 1906:

Harper is not Blackwood plus suitable illustrations. Some things—for example, the best kind of fiction—may be common to both, but there would always be this difference, that Blackwood would be choice appeal to a limited class of highly cultivated readers, proposing to meet special demands of that class, while Harper would be addressed to all readers of average intelligence, having for its purpose their entertainment and illumination. (qtd. in Graver 136-7)

The description of the readers of Blackwood’s as “a limited class of highly cultivated readers” and those of Harper’s as “all readers of average intelligence” is also indicative of the difference between the two types of magazines in circulation at this time. The difference is illustrated, as well, by a letter written by Carl Hovey to Alfred Knopf at Doubleday. Of The Metropolitan: The Liveliest Magazine in America, Hovey writes:

I hope you will succeed in obtaining for us some of the work of Joseph Conrad. We have a circulation of 400,000 and are read by at least a million readers. Great as our desire is to present really fine work, still we must first make sure of holding the interest of a very large proportion of our circulation. To accomplish this, it is necessary for us to give them things which are simple and direct in which the element of suspense is

fairly obvious and is not too fine and psychological for them to grasp.

(qtd. in Graver 168)

Hovey went on to qualify the above statement by noting that “no one possesses a greater desire than its editors to present something finer and more real” and “the problem is to do this and still reach our public” (qtd. in Graver 168). Still, Conrad initially refused Hovey’s request for another short story like “The Brute,” which they thought their readers would “read without realizing how good it was. A certain few would appreciate it,” wrote Hovey, “and the rest would just enjoy it” (qtd. in Graver 169). After some unknown demands from Conrad were met by the magazine—presumably along financial lines—Conrad agreed, in his words, to “prostitut[e] his intellect to please the Metropolitan” (qtd. in Graver 169). This was one instance in which Conrad was reluctant to immediately seize an opportunity to become popular, which in this case meant the chance to be read by at least 400,000 people.

Still, these “magazineish thing[s] with some decency” (Letters 4: 464), as Conrad called these pieces, most likely account for Conrad’s ultimate success, as they disseminated both his name and his stories. He was lucky to have started writing around the time of the proliferation of the mass-circulation magazine in Britain and America for these magazines published several of his stories: “In England, the publishing houses of Alfred Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe), Sir George Newnes, and C. Arthur Pearson were flourishing by the mid-1890s with mass market papers like the Daily Mail, and magazines like the Strand, Tit-Bits, and Pearson’s Weekly” (Morrisson 3). Richard Ohmann details the rise of the American magazine: “I would say that there were no modern, mass-circulation magazines in 1885, and that by 1900 there were in the neighborhood of twenty—enough to make them a highly visible and much noted cultural phenomenon. The numbers bear out the claim: at the end of the Civil War the total circulation

of monthlies seems to have been at most 4 million. It was about 18 million in 1890, and 64 million 1905” (29). The monthly magazines, writes Ohmann, had become “the major form of repeated cultural experience for the people of the United States” (29). Part of this new experience for readers was a new relationship to advertising, as the pages of the magazines showcased an “increase in manufacturers’ national advertising of branded products” (Ohmann 83) that began with the “advertising revolution in the 1890s” (Ohmann 82). Morrison notes that in the United States and Britain, “advertising and commodity consumption became an organizing social and cultural principle, and not just a method of keeping the economic fires lit” (4) after the “depression in Britain from 1873 to around the middle of the 1890s” (4) and after the “massive corporate failures in late-nineteenth century America” including problems stemming from “overproduction and underconsumption, and the price fixing and cutthroat competition of liberal capitalisim on both sides of the ocean” (4).¹⁸ Donovan argues that Conrad, too, jumped on the advertising bandwagon and used the space in these magazines with a similar goal in mind: “As Conrad understood,” writes Donovan, “publication in well-regarded magazines could be valuable advertising, albeit advertising less to the general public than to editors and publishers to whom he wished to sell his novels and short stories” (173). Still, Donovan notes, Conrad was not always driven by this goal. Donovan challenges the contention of many scholars that Conrad was willing to “sacrifice badly-needed income in order to win the approval of literary reputation-makers such as W. E. Henley” (Donovan 174) by pointing to his interest in having some of his stories published in less-esteemed magazines such as Pall Mall, Chapman’s Magazine, Hampton’s Magazine (which had a history of muckraking and publishing “naughty pictures”), and the Pictorial Review (which “originated as an offshoot of a dress pattern business” [Peterson 166]). Conrad was not going to reach the “literary reputation-makers” through these organs, yet

he still published his work in them. While Donovan is correct that Conrad had a sincere interest in reaching a different type of public than the smaller, literary magazines allowed, we cannot ignore the financial stability that these larger magazines offered an author. That is not to say that Conrad's decisions were based solely on financial gain, as some scholars suggest, but rather that we must take his financial struggles into consideration as we examine his choice of organs in which to publish his work.¹⁹

Conrad was well aware of the potential to reach the public via advertising, as well, as a 1901 letter to J. B. Pinker, his editor, indicates. In the letter, regarding the publication of Typhoon (1902), Conrad writes: "I wish, whatever publisher you capture, could be induced to make a certain amount of fuss about the story 'Mr. J Conrad's new tale Typhoon beings in. . . etc etc' That kind of thing. The public's so used to the guidance of Advertis[e]ment! Why! Even I myself feel the spell of such emphasis" (Letters 2: 319). In this letter, Conrad admits that he, like the public, is manipulated by advertising. This instance in which Conrad portrays himself as a member of the public—and not above the public— is reminiscent of Woolf's description of herself in her lecture "The Leaning Tower" as a "commoner" and "outsider" rather than an "intellectual" or "expert." In both moments, these literary modernists are pointing to ways in which they are part of the public and not outside of or above this formation.

While Conrad's anxiety over his ability to reach a popular audience is a thread that runs throughout his letters, he seems unsure as to what it would mean if his work was considered popular. In 1907 he wrote to J. B. Pinker, "Chance itself will be altogether different in tone and treatment [from The Secret Agent] of course, but it will be salable I believe [. . .] Of course it will not be on popular lines. Nothing of mine can be, I fear. But even Meredith ended up getting his sales" (Jean Aubry 2: 54). Trying to hash out the implications of his lack of popularity,

financial and otherwise, Conrad suggests an interest in experimenting with different tones and treatments. The most notably experimental feature of Chance (1912) is its narration. Not only are there multiple narrators, but the narration approximates the form of stream of consciousness. Karl explains this approximation: “Because of his peculiar relationship to the English language, Conrad was incapable of that kind of experimentation which led to the ultimate stream; but intuitively, he was moving toward the same end that the stream was to serve: that sense of discontinuity between internal feeling and external data which characterizes human consciousness” (744). In spite of its experimental form, and contrary to Conrad’s predictions, Chance was a best-seller and the most commercially successful book of his career. Cedric Watts explains the popular success of Chance (after so many commercial failures) as the result of publicity in the New York Herald in 1912 where it was first published serially: “The magazine gave it immense advance publicity: large and prominent advertisements, and a long interview-article” (84). Most important about the publicity, argues Watts, is the female audience it targeted. The advertisements for the novel consistently mention this new audience for whom Conrad was writing. “One typical advertisement begins like this: ‘A sea story that appeals to women is Chance, by Joseph Conrad, the famous English author’” (Watts 85). “And, of course, it was in the period of 1912 to 1914, from the time of serialization to the time of the book version,” writes Watts, “that feminist matters were headline news because the campaigns by the suffragettes and suffragists had become particularly militant, with spates of window-breaking and arson attacks on buildings” (86).²⁰

With the success of Chance,²¹ Conrad continued to deliberately target a female audience. Conrad published The Rover serially in the 1923 Pictorial Review, which “dealt mainly in fashions until 1908, but then its editor, Arthur T. Vance, started attracting writers of good fiction

away from the general magazines,” explains Peterson. “Following the lead of Ladies’ Home Journal, the Pictorial Review adopted some special projects and engaged in some crusading [. . .] It was an early champion of woman’s suffrage and of women’s clubs [. . .] During the 1920’s the Pictorial Review ranked among the top women’s magazines in advertising revenue and in circulation” (167). Rather than seeing the quality of Conrad’s work as declining as his popularity increased, as does Thomas Moser in his influential study Achievement and Decline (1957), Alison Wheatley notes Conrad’s “ongoing inventive and innovative experiments in aesthetics, genres, and publication venues” (8) and ties these to his task “in his final years of fashioning his ideal reader” (8). Perhaps Conrad did have a better chance of fashioning his ideal reader later in his career once he gained popularity, yet this reader was something he longed for from the very beginning of his career. In a letter to Baroness de Brunnow, who became a ward of Conrad’s uncle after her father’s death and thus lived with Conrad as a youngster, Conrad wrote that his primary goal was “to create a public for myself” (Letters 1: 390). He acknowledged that the public would be limited since, as he put it, I “haven’t the taste for democracy—and democracy hasn’t the taste for me” (390). Complicating other statements of his commitment to writing for the masses, Conrad writes: “I have never had the ambition to write for the all-powerful masses [. . .] I do not dream of fortune; besides, one does not find it in an inkwell. But I confess to you I dream of peace, a little reputation, and the rest of my life devoted to the service of Art and free from material worries” (Letters 1: 390). While the analyses of his author’s notes, later in this chapter, will try to reconcile some of these contradictory statements that Conrad made in relation to his aspirations, the ultimate goal is not to pigeon-hole Conrad as either “anti-democratic” or “democratic.” He is seemingly both simultaneously as his goal of being read “by many eyes and by all kinds of them” (Jean-Aubry 2: 214) contradicts his above comment that he “never had the

ambition to write for the all-powerful masses.” Keeping this contradiction in play will help us to avoid oversimplifying Conrad’s complicated relationship to the reading public.

It was not only Conrad who struggled with his conflicted feelings toward popularity; reviewers, also, found themselves trying to figure out where Conrad’s writing fell along the literary/popular continuum. Many critics considered his work popular and compared him—as Conrad did himself—to Stevenson. Yet he was often considered inferior to Stevenson. In an unsigned review of An Outcast of the Islands appearing in the National Observer, the reviewer writes, “It is like one of Mr. Stevenson’s South Sea Stories, grown miraculously long and miraculously tedious” (Sherry 70). Although the Sketch printed a rather glowing review of An Outcast of the Islands, the critic agreed with the inferiority of Conrad’s prose as compared to that of Stevenson: “He lacks, though he will not lack it long, the master’s [Stevenson’s] reserve and reticence” (Sherry 71). Others, including those at The Weekly Sun, did not consider Conrad’s work popular and compared Conrad to Balzac and Turgenev: “Turgenieff has created ‘The Lear of the Steppes’; Balzac, the Lear of the Boulevards, ‘Pere Goriot.’ Almayer is the Lear of the Malay Archipelago” (Sherry 8). The reviewer for The Spectator compared Conrad, in light of his book Almayer’s Folly, to Kipling, calling him “the Kipling of the Malay Archipelago” (Sherry 61). This comparison stuck, and, sixteen years later in a rather negative review of Under Western Eyes (1911), W. H. Chesson responded to this characterization by noting that “the essence and ambition of each of these artists suffice not only to separate them, but to place them on different planes. For Mr. Conrad represents the genius of negation as surely as Mr. Kipling represents the genius of affirmation” (Sherry 9). In the same unsigned article from the National Observer mentioned above, the author was not satisfied with the initial comparison to Kipling either, noting: “We fear that this prophecy has not been fulfilled” (69). By this time, Kipling was at the

height of his critical success, having been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907 and seeing all of his early works published in both English and American Editions.²²

It was not simply the question of Conrad's popularity that stumped critics, but, as some of the reviews quoted above suggest, critics were also unsure where they might categorize Conrad's work in terms of style and genre. Many saw Conrad as a writer of tales of the sea and commented on his enigmatic descriptions while other critics saw his descriptions as too wordy. In an otherwise positive review, H. G. Wells wrote of An Outcast of the Islands: "His story is not so much told as seen intermittently through a haze of sentences. His style is like river mist" (Sherry 74). Conrad's refusal to simply "tell the story" was criticized by many. Reviewers at the Academy wrote of The Nigger of the "Narcissus": "The tale has no plot" (Sherry 95). This lack of plot led one unnamed critic at The Daily Chronicle to write: "There may be better tales of the sea than this, but we have never read anything in the least like it" (89). Conrad's prefaces, I argue, are the very space in which Conrad works toward remedying the problems that may arise when all readers, including critics like those above, encounter an unfamiliar or more impressionist type of text. Conrad uses these prefaces, particularly the early ones, to help his readers understand and value literature in new ways so that they can better understand what he is trying to accomplish in his novels or what is Conrad-esque— a term Conrad coined— about his novels. Daniel Schwarz points out that the threads that run through Conrad's writing and the form in which he tells his stories not only define his work but would become some of the defining characteristics of the modernist novel: "The fundamental intellectual problem of the late nineteenth century was the awareness that man does not share common truths [. . .] To understand modern British literature, one has to understand the pervasive feeling in the late nineteenth century that each man is enclosed in his private world and isolated by his own

perceptions from other men [. . .] A crucial theme in the period, present in Conrad and many major writers, is the attempt to discover words and values with which to cope with a meaningless cosmos” (Conrad 213). These themes, however, are addressed not only in Conrad’s novels, but in his early prefaces as he uses these prefaces to reach out to readers, to attempt to communicate with them, and to inform them of the assumptions and values upon which his artistic endeavors depend. We see Conrad’s investment in communication in what Garnett called the “personal paragraph” of Conrad’s preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” which, following Garnett’s advice, Conrad ultimately deleted: “And, after all, everyone desires to be understood; We all with mutual indulgence give way to the pressing need of explaining ourselves.”²³ This “desire to be understood” arises again in the descriptions of the sailors in The Nigger of the “Narcissus” as they are struggling to communicate to one another amid the terrible wind of the storm: “Their lips moved, their eyes started, furious and eager with the desire to be understood, but the wind tossed their words unheard upon the disturbed sea” (emphasis added 55). This interest in communication frames Conrad’s other fiction, as well:

There is no single model of narrative frame in these tales. Instead the frame in each short story or novel is the result of an attempt to balance the creating of a fictional world with the establishing of a communication with the audience. This attempt at communication is basically a translation of fictional language in order to reach an English audience. In “Karain,” the frame narrator quite literally translates a story told in Malay. In “Heart of Darkness,” Marlow tells his audience of former seamen the effect on himself of this encounter with the Other in the African wilderness. And in so doing, he relies on Kurtz’s

translation into English of the wilderness' appeal. (Schwarz, Rereading

137)

To Schwarz's account of the stories in which an attempt at communication is central to the plot, I would add "Amy Foster" (1901), a short story in which Yanko Goorall, an Eastern European and lone survivor of a shipwreck, washes ashore in England where he is unable to communicate with the community. His "strange" language and manner scares the townspeople who beat him although all he asks of them is food and shelter; he does so, however, in a language which they do not understand. Only an English woman named Amy Foster accepts him. They marry and have a child together, but "the man himself, even when he learned to speak intelligibly, could tell us very little" (195), shares Dr. Kennedy who helps to tell the story retrospectively. Yanko becomes very ill during which time he tries to communicate with Amy although she cannot understand him: "He keeps on saying something— I don't know what" (206). "She had not understood," explains the narrator, "though he may have thought he was speaking in English [. . .] I believe he spoke to her for a long time, entreating, wondering, pleading, ordering" (207). All Yanko asked for was water, but Amy could not understand him. Amy became terrified as "he tossed, moaned, and now and then muttered a complaint" (207). She left Yanko to die. While Heart of Darkness and Conrad's other more canonical texts are often invoked as addressing the difficulty of communication—cross-cultural and otherwise—the implications of this difficulty are just as pronounced in this lesser known short story in which a character dies because of his failure to communicate effectively. These fictional accounts of failed attempts at communication are indicative of Conrad's commitment to communicating with his readers as well as the anxiety surrounding his ability to do so, an anxiety that also marks Conrad's prefaces, which I discuss in more detail below.

Some read “Amy Foster” as “a fictional projection of Conrad’s sense of personal estrangement” (Graver 105) marked, in part, by his own experiences of learning multiple languages. The fact that Conrad has such a command of the English language although it was not his first (or second) language awed many critics. Others, though, accused him of verbosity. Conrad answered these critics by questioning the value in the “kind of thrift [of language] they recommend. I wanted to pay my tribute to the sea, its ships and its men [. . .] That seemed to me the only shape in which I could offer it [. . .] There could not be a question in my mind of anything else” (Conrad, Preface to SR 202). Conrad’s interest in the shape of things, we will see, is indicative of his investment in impressionism as a means for representing reality. It was this alternative to realism that he would have to help his readers and his critics find valuable; he would undertake this task in his prefaces.

Conrad followed the reviews of his works assiduously, and these reviews became a favorite topic in his letters to Garnett and others as well as in his prefaces. Conrad kept many of the reviews and refers to them and individual reviewers throughout his author’s notes. Wheatley reads his author’s notes as one of the means by which he actually participated in the debates surrounding his texts: “As he was approaching the end of his career he worked to construct a framework for his reputation that would suppress narrow evaluations and bolster acknowledgement and his aesthetic purpose. He shaped his reputation by controlling marketing situations, writing prefaces to his collected works, and responding to friends and correspondents with indignant or reinforcing remarks, as well as direct appeals for particular assessments” (7). In fact, Wheatley understands his writing of the new prefaces for the second collected edition of his writing as a “means of more accurately shaping readers’ perception of his work” (15). Wheatley’s reading is convincing, but her argument regarding the purpose of the prefaces does

not account for the first set of prefaces that Conrad wrote including those which precede Almayer's Folly (1895), The Nigger of the "Narcissus," Some Reminiscences (1908, published in 1912 as A Personal Record), and Victory. Wheatley's argument depends upon seeing Conrad as an author nearing the end of his career, looking to construct a particular reputation for himself before he dies. Yet Conrad's first novel, Almayer's Folly, was accompanied by a preface, thus suggesting that Conrad's prefaces need to be revisited in order to offer an account of the intellectual work performed by the prefaces. In the following case studies I examine Conrad's earlier and later prefaces in order to develop a reading that enables us to consider for what ends Conrad used his prefaces throughout his career.

2.3 THE EARLY AUTHOR'S NOTES: ALMAYER'S FOLLY, THE NIGGER OF THE "NARCISSUS," SOME REMINISCENCES, AND VICTORY

I should begin by saying a bit more about how I am classifying Conrad's prefaces. Although there are only a few years between Conrad's prefaces to Some Reminiscences and Victory and those prefaces I will demarcate as "later prefaces," I designate the "early prefaces" as such because they were not written between 1917 and 1920 when Conrad wrote the twenty one prefaces for the second English edition of his works. The early prefaces, in other words, are prefaces that accompanied the texts when they were initially published, whereas the later prefaces are those written years after the first editions were published. Within this category of "later prefaces," I also include those prefaces that were revised, as was the case with Some Reminiscences (published in 1912 as A Personal Record) and Victory.

I open this study with an examination of the tone of Conrad's prefaces in order to investigate how Conrad positioned himself in relation to his readers, thus enabling a fuller understanding of how Conrad imagined his readers and the relationship he sought to create with them. From there I will examine why this relationship was so important to Conrad, and how his ways of relating to his readers are reflected in his pedagogical methods. Conrad's tone is one of the most consistent aspects of his prefaces. Throughout the early and later prefaces, Conrad tries to appeal to the reader as an equal, using language that is inclusive. He refers to "us," "we," and "our" throughout, thereby placing himself and his readers on the same level. Conrad writes his prefaces in an informal, conversational tone, a choice he reflects on in a passage that he ultimately deleted from the author's note to The Nigger of the "Narcissus": "A preface—if anything—is spoken in perfect good faith, as one speaks to friends." Although many scholars detail Conrad's use of narrative frames as a means for establishing a direct connection between himself and his readers, as does Richard Ambrosini in the excerpt below, I will argue that Conrad's prefaces highlight this commitment even more overtly:

For Conrad, Kipling's case exemplified the theoretical implications of his own lack of familiarity with his audience [. . .] [Kipling] can tell a story about other Englishmen without needing to worry too much about his medium, because he can rely, unconsciously, on verbal and mental associations he shares with them. Kipling is familiar with both his subject and his audience, whereas Conrad could not depend on such a relationship. Conrad's formative experiences had been alien to those of his English readers; and so he could never really count on knowing what associations his words would have for them. He was consequently forced

to concentrate on a medium which could reach out to them. All of Conrad's efforts were directed toward establishing an intimacy based on an assumed universality of experience. (Ambrosini 50)

Although Ambrosini's argument focuses on Conrad's choice of medium, Conrad uses his prefaces to create intimacy by speaking to his readers "as one would speak to friends." We see this not just at the level of tone, but the content of Conrad's prefaces also reflects his commitment to "establishing an intimacy based on an assumed universality of experience."

In the preface to Almayer's Folly, for example, Conrad attempts to foster a relationship with the reader by reflecting on his experiences in Borneo which enables him to ultimately comment on the connections among all peoples:

I am informed that in criticizing that literature which preys on strange people and prowls in far-off countries under the shade of palms, in the unsheltered glare of sunbeaten beaches, amongst honest cannibals and the more sophisticated pioneers of our glorious virtues, a lady—distinguished in the world of letters—summed up her disapproval of it by saying that the tales it produced were decivilized. (37)

In the above excerpt, Conrad offers his opinion that "far-off countries" are not uncivilized or filled with savages, challenging the idea that a gulf exists between the "civilized" and "uncivilized." Conrad goes on to say that "the critic and the judge seem to think that in those distant lands all joy is a yell and a war dance, all pathos is a howl and a ghastly grin of filed teeth, and that the solution of all problems is found in the barrel of a revolver or on the point of an assegai" (Conrad, Preface to AF 37). He ultimately argues that all people are connected: "There is a bond between us and that humanity so far away [. . .] I am content to sympathize with

common mortals, no matter where they live; in houses or in tents, in the streets under a fog, or in the forests behind the dark line of dismal mangroves that fringe the vast solitude of the sea. For, their land—like ours—lies under the inscrutable eyes of the Most High” (Conrad, Preface to AF 38). Thus, Conrad introduces Almayer’s Folly by asking readers to consider the commonalities among all people, a move that potentially connects Conrad to his readers, and one that we will see Virginia Woolf make throughout her broadcasts and lectures. By appealing to the similarities among people from all nations and backgrounds, Conrad presumably prepares his readers to engage in a story that will contain characters from these “far-off countries,” with whom Conrad would like readers to develop sympathies, rather than reject based on something as superficial as their nationality. Almayer’s Folly, though, does not tell the story of people across nationalities and cultures recognizing and celebrating their similarities, but like most of Conrad’s novels, Almayer’s Folly is a dark story about power, deceit, class struggle, greed, and inequality. Juxtaposing the preface to Almayer’s Folly with that of The Nigger of the “Narcissus” will help us investigate how this disjunction between Conrad’s prefaces and novels represents a pedagogically driven method for attracting readers.

In the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” Conrad makes a similar appeal to the commonalities among mankind and deems the artist responsible for bringing these to light:

But the artist appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom; to that in us which is a gift not an acquisition—and, therefore, more permanently enduring. He speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives; to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain; to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation—and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that

knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts, to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity—the dead to the living and living to the unborn. (Conrad, Preface to NN 50)

Describing the artist's responsibility to bind humanity together through common experiences including dreams, joys, and sorrows, Conrad thus draws attention to himself and his status as an artist who through his novel will presumably attempt this feat. The appeal he will make as a fiction writer, argues Conrad, is an appeal not to ideas or facts like the thinker or scientist, but an appeal of "one temperament to all the other innumerable temperaments" (Conrad, Preface to NN 51). This rejection of fact, in favor of abstractions, is a thread that runs throughout Conrad's novels, as well. Many of Conrad's novels, and particularly those with courtroom scenes, invoke fact, but do so only to diminish its importance. Perhaps the most dramatic indictment of the importance of facts comes at the beginning of *Lord Jim* as the narrator describes Jim's time in the witness-box: "The light of a broad window under the ceiling fell from above on the heads and shoulders of the three men [lawyers], and they were fiercely distinct in the half-light of the big court-room where the audience seemed composed of staring shadows. They wanted facts. Facts! They demanded facts from him, as if facts could explain anything" (22). As much as Jim tries to go on to offer a detailed, vivid account of what happened on the Patna, his impressions are rejected by these three men who only want facts²⁴:

He could have reproduced like an echo the moaning of the engineer for the better information of these men who wanted facts [. . .] The facts those men were so eager to know had been visible, tangible open to the senses, occupying their place in space and time, requiring for their existence a

fourteen-hundred-ton steamer and twenty-seven minutes by the watch; they made a whole that had been features, shades of expression, a complicated aspect that could be remembered by the eye, and something else besides, something invisible, a directing spirit of perdition that dwelt within, like a malevolent soul in a detestable body. He was anxious to make this clear. (22-23)

The narrator reports, however, that Jim did not have the chance to recount the “shades of expression,” the “complicated aspect that could be remembered by the eye,” or the “spirit of perdition” because “a question to the point cut short his speech, like a pang of pain, and he felt extremely discouraged and weary” (23). In this scene, Jim wants to offer his impressions of the incident, impressions that engulfed and moved him, and that he was anxious to convey. The way in which this passage is written, the care that Conrad takes to describe Jim’s impressions, suggests that we are to sympathize with Jim rather than the three lawyers who demand that he stick to “the point” and continue to answer questions, in a mechanical way. A parallel, thus emerges, between some of the criticism that Conrad received in reviews of his novels and the criticism that is implied in the lawyers’ pressuring Jim to stick to the point, which for them, is equivalent to the facts.

Moving from Conrad’s novel to one of his prefaces, namely that written for The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” we again see Conrad privileging impressions over facts: “Fiction—if it at all aspires to be art—appeals to temperament. And in truth it must be, like painting, like music, like all other art, the appeal of one temperament to all the other innumerable temperaments [. . .] Such an appeal to be effective must be an impression conveyed through the senses; and in fact, it cannot be made in any other way” (Conrad, Preface to NN 51). For Conrad, the senses play the

most important role in the creation of a piece of art and in its reception, for the artist must find a way to connect his temperament to those of his audience through the piece of art. In his role as witness, or temporary author of the narrative of the Patna, Jim is trying to accomplish this feat, to offer his impressions in order to make the lawyers and the rest of the courtroom see and feel what he saw and felt. As readers, we are privy to his impressions, further cementing their importance. In terms of the narrative, though, Jim is forbidden to offer his impressions, and this is treated as a great loss.

Even more extreme than the silencing of Jim's impressions is the fate of Razumov, the protagonist in Under Western Eyes, another novel in which we see Conrad emphasize the importance of the senses, as he does in his author's notes. Although Razumov thinks that Nikita and the others are going to kill him, they instead render him "harmless" (240) by beating both sides of his head, above his ears, until he is stone deaf. Because of his loss of hearing, Razumov becomes isolated from all that surrounds him. After he has been beaten, he staggers down "a long, empty street" (241) in "the unearthly stillness" (241) where everything is "noiseless like the drift of mist" (241). His loss of his hearing leads to his becoming crippled as he steps in front of a moving car that he could not hear. This novel, thus, climaxes with the protagonist losing one of his senses—namely his sense of hearing. This loss renders him not only isolated and unable to communicate with those around him, but crippled. Lying on the ground, surrounded by people wanting to help him after he has been hit by a car, we are told that Razumov "tried hard to understand the reason of this dumb show" (241). As a result of his loss of his sense of hearing, Razumov is left alone in the world no longer able to communicate or understand. Judging from the emphasis in Conrad's author's notes on the importance of the senses, the fate Conrad writes for Razumov is perhaps a fate worse than death.

Moving from Under Western Eyes back to Conrad's preface to The Nigger of the "Narcissus," we see Conrad elaborate further on the importance of the senses, particularly in written work: "All art appeals primarily to the senses, and the artistic aim when expressing itself in written words must also make its appeal through the senses, if its high desire is to reach the secret spring of responsive emotions" (Conrad, Preface to NN 51). Conrad elucidates this idea of reaching the "secret spring of responsive emotions"—the goal of fiction, according to Conrad, a few sentences later in the most famous line from all of his prefaces: "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you see" (Conrad, Preface to NN 52). Like Jim, as he testifies, Conrad wants to make his audience hear, feel, and see. Jameson uses this gesture to argue that "Conrad may best be situated historically if we understand his practice of style as a literary and textual equivalent of the impressionist strategy in painting" (225). While Jameson does not even mention the author's notes like those discussed above in which Conrad addresses the importance of impressionism, and privileges it outright over other literary techniques, Jameson's characterization of Conrad's literary style is useful in thinking through the relationship between impressionism and Conrad's pedagogy. Conrad's pedagogy involves asking readers to re-imagine the hierarchies that order their lives. Conrad disrupts the hierarchy that privileges fact over fiction in that he tries to show his readers that realist fiction is no longer an adequate means of representing reality and that they, instead, should consider the value in other forms of representation including impressionism. In the preface to The Nigger of the "Narcissus" Conrad explains to his readers that the "temporary formulas of his craft" (53)— including realism, romanticism, and naturalism— will not do justice to his experiences, and "after a short period of fellowship, abandon him— even on the very threshold of the temple— to stammerings of his

conscience and to the outspoken consciousness of the difficulties of his work” (53). Conrad’s prefaces are a space in which he inquires “into the representational capability of literary language” (Ambrosini 36) and thus rejects those formulas that, in his mind, impede this capability. The intimate relationship he hopes he has established with readers enables him to guide them to a better understanding of the implications of the new forms they will find in his works and in other modern texts, although he could not predict the latter at that time. Making his readers see in this new way is a difficult feat, for it means asking that they privilege fiction over fact, an argument he makes outright in his 1905 article on Henry James: “Fiction is a history, a human history, or it is nothing. But it is also more than that; it stands on firmer ground, being based on the reality of forms and the observation of social phenomenon, whereas history is based on documents, and the reading of print and handwriting— on second-hand impression. Thus fiction is nearer truth” (Notes on Life and Letters 17). Conrad’s emphasis on the importance of one’s own impressions and observations is indicative of his commitment, in the prefaces, to helping his readers understand the assumptions upon which his philosophies and teachings are based, and ultimately what is Conrad-esque about his writing.

E. M. Forster, among others, was skeptical of the style of writing which Conrad employed in his novels and nonfiction. Forster wrote a scathing review of Conrad’s 1921 collection of essays entitled Notes on Life and Letters, in which he argues that Conrad “is always promising to make some general philosophic statement about the universe, and then refraining with a gruff disclaimer. Dealing, even in the slightest of these essays, with vast and eternal issues, he won’t say whether such issues lead or don’t lead to a goal [. . .] The secret casket of his genius contains a vapour rather than a jewel” (137-138). Forster disparaged Conrad’s philosophies because he refused to take a position. Forster maintained that Conrad had “no creed,

in fact.” “Only opinions,” continues Forster, “and the right to throw them overboard when facts make them look absurd. Opinions held under the semblance of eternity, girt with the sea, crowned with the stars, and therefore easily mistaken for a creed” (138). Forster thus argues that while Conrad’s choice of subject for his novels and even for these philosophical essays in Notes on Life and Letters—several of which deal with the sea—suggests a degree of thoughtfulness, his ideas, when examined more closely, are rather “misty” (138) and convoluted.

More recently, Jameson argues that this “mistiness” or impressionism in Conrad’s works “discards the operative fiction of some interest in the constituted objects of the natural world, and offers the exercise of perception and the perceptual recombination of sense data as an end in itself” (230). Conrad’s novels, according to Jameson, seek “to recode or rewrite the world and its own data in terms of perception as a semi-autonomous activity” (230). Jameson’s account is more fitting with what I have found in Conrad’s prefaces in that Conrad is not interested in facts—even in his nonfiction writing; rather his investment is in impressions and perception. Forster, however, judges Conrad’s writing according to his own ideas about what literature and criticism should entail whereas Jameson seems willing to judge Conrad’s writing according to Conrad’s own value system, which holds perception in the highest esteem. We must keep the importance of perception in mind as we continue to consider how Conrad’s intimate tone and his privileging of the senses in his prefaces enables a pedagogy which is based on equality between author and reader or teacher and student.

Conrad’s commitment to equality and inclusiveness is apparent not just in the tone Conrad chooses for his prefaces, but in Conrad’s direct address to working men—the “men with their hands busy about the work of the earth”—in the author’s note to The Nigger of the “Narcissus.” Conrad thus includes those readers who otherwise might not have the opportunity to

access or participate in a conversation about art. Schwarz contends that this preface “is remarkable for its emphasis on creating a community of readers. Seen in the context of [Conrad’s] own fear of loneliness and of not communicating, it reflects his decision that fiction will not only enable him to arrest the flux and turmoil within himself, but that it will relieve him of his sense of isolation” (Conrad 23). Creating this community of readers allows Conrad and his readers to feel as though they are part of a group, rather than “enclosed in a private world and isolated” by their “perceptions from other men” (Schwarz, Conrad 213). Conrad uses this space to connect himself to his potential readers and those readers to each other, and guides his audience to “read the world more closely, critically, carefully, and to become a resister of the status quo” (Mallios 291). All of the implied questions which Conrad uses the preface to answer including—What is art? What are the responsibilities of the artist? What are the purposes of fiction? What is the relationship between fiction and life? What should I gain from reading this book?—serve to encourage these readers to take time to consider the power of fiction, its capacity to intervene in their lives and compel them to notice, contemplate, and react to their world. Remember that Conrad, too, was a sailor,²⁵ who felt compelled to read and write and to engage many of the questions listed above. These prefaces seem to suggest Conrad’s commitment to affecting other men in the ways in which he was affected by the written word.

Having attempted to engage these readers through using an intimate tone and addressing them directly, Conrad uses his early prefaces to instruct these readers on what they might gain from reading. In the preface to Almayer’s Folly, for example, Conrad contemplates the importance of noticing details, such as colors and shadows:

The picture of life, there [in far-off countries] as here, is drawn with the same elaboration of detail, coloured with the same tints. Only in the cruel

serenity of the sky, under the merciless brilliance of the sun, the dazzled eye misses the delicate detail, sees only the strong outlines, while the colours, in the steady light, seem crude and without shadow. Nevertheless it is the same picture. (37)

As in the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” in the above excerpt, Conrad describes life in artistic terms, thus dissolving the boundaries between life and art. We see this especially in the phrase “the picture of life.” When the prefaces to Almayer’s Folly and The Nigger of the “Narcissus” are considered together, we begin to see the political implications of Conrad’s investment in this view of art. Conrad seems not only to be instructing his readers about impressionism, this new form of writing, but he also uses art to teach them about the importance of unity across national lines. The preface to Almayer’s Folly argues that noticing the details—rather than only the strong outlines— can actually result in a brotherhood among people from all countries and cultures. As the above excerpt emphasizes, noticing the details of a piece of art teaches one to notice also the details of “the picture of life.” If one follows Conrad’s lead, countries and cultures that are generally thought to be dissimilar actually begin to resemble one another. In these prefaces, then, readers are taught how to apply lessons about art to their lives. Conrad is effectively preparing his readers for the new form in which his works will be written.

Conrad’s prefaces are problematic, however. Although Conrad privileges abstractions—including temperament and the senses— at the expense of facts and wisdom throughout his prefaces and his novels, Conrad’s prefaces are far more aligned with the tradition of realist fiction than the stories that follow. A discontinuity thus emerges between the prefaces and the novels and so the preparatory function of the former is problematic. In a letter to Richard Curle, who was to write a review of J. M. Dent’s second edition of Conrad’s works, Conrad

complained, “You know how the public mind fastens on externals, on mere facts, such for instance as ships and voyages, without paying attention to any deeper significance they may have” (Jean-Aubry 2: 320). Although Conrad is apparently trying to persuade Curle to treat him as more than a writer of sea yarns, which would potentially expand his readership, Conrad, at least in his prefaces, gives his readers these “externals” and “mere facts.” As I discuss above, many of Conrad’s prefaces detail the origins of his story and his characters, often locating both in reality. Conrad roots his fictions in reality in the prefaces, thus giving his readers the facts he thinks they want. This strategy is reminiscent of his preparation of Victory for publication in Munsey’s Magazine, discussed above, in that in preparing the piece for the magazine “Conrad attempted a far greater degree of realism than he felt was suitable in his final version” (Karl 765). This tactic seems influenced by Conrad’s belief that the public mind does not pay attention to the “deeper significance” (Jean-Aubry 2: 320). In writing for the readers of Munsey’s Magazine, or what he thought of as a less sophisticated audience than that which would pick up his novel, Conrad intentionally appealed to what he assumed his readers wanted, namely fact. So while Conrad seems frustrated by the public mind’s “fasten[ing] on externals, on mere facts,” he appeals to the public by offering facts in his prefaces. The prefaces, thus, become a sort of bridge between nineteenth and twentieth century literary practices as he attempts to appeal to readers who want “facts.” In his 1905 essay entitled “Books,” Conrad addresses his need to offer readers some aspect with which they are already comfortable:

The creation of a world is not a small undertaking except perhaps to the divinely gifted. In truth every novelist must begin by creating for himself a world, great or little, in which he can honestly believe. This world cannot be made otherwise than in his own image; it is fated to

remain individual and a little mysterious, and yet it must resemble something already familiar to the experience, the thoughts, and the sensations of his readers. (Notes on Life and Letters 6)

While Conrad's novels proved rather different and unfamiliar to his readers, his prefaces engaged his readers by appealing to their interest in fact. Addressing Conrad's literary techniques, although not those in his prefaces, Ambrosini offers a useful way for thinking about the differences between Conrad's prefaces and novels, and even his reliance on realism in some of his novels, arguing that "starting from the limits imposed by reading conventions of the time, [Conrad] set out to manipulate his readers' expectations" (197). The difficulty of Conrad's novels, and the differences among them, derive, in part, from his actively searching "for the appropriate style and form" (Schwarz, Rereading 150) and his search for "ever more effective ways to avoid the pitfalls of Victorian novels [and] realistic representation" (Ambrosini 56). Thus, Conrad's novels differ drastically from his author's notes in tone, form, and level of difficulty. Only once readers began reading the novels would they have realized that they had been duped by Conrad's conversational, straightforward, and realistic prefaces. Of course more readers meant more money, but more readers also meant that Conrad could have greater influence over what these readers would value in art.

Conrad also wishes to influence his readers' opinions of imperialism and he uses his prefaces to teach readers about the similarities among all people.²⁶ These prefaces are one of the spaces in which we see Conrad's humanism²⁷ coming through, an aspect of his writing that has largely been neglected while "Conrad's pessimism and nihilism have been over-emphasized" (Schwarz, Conrad xvi). Conrad's humanism is highlighted by the style and content of his prefaces as well as his novels:

Conrad's novels about politics have been viewed both as nihilistic statements and dramatizations of a political vision. While the subject of these novels—Nostromo, The Secret Agent, and Under Western Eyes—is often politics, their values are not political. The novels affirm the primacy of family, the sanctity of the individual, the value of love, and the importance of sympathy and understanding in human relations. (Schwarz, Conrad 133)

The importance of sympathy and understanding in Conrad's novels, which Schwarz points out above, are evident, as well, in the sort of relationship Conrad imagines with his readers. Schwarz argues that this "humanism informs Conrad's political vision" (Conrad 133), and we can see this particularly in Conrad's views on imperialism. Addressing these views means taking into consideration the most widespread view of Conrad's politics made most famous by Chinua Achebe's 1975 essay entitled "An Image in Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness." Based on Conrad's depiction of "Africa as a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity" (12) and his "dehumanization of Africa and Africans" (12), Achebe concludes that "Joseph Conrad was a thoroughgoing racist" (11). Heart of Darkness, writes Achebe, "parades in the most vulgar fashion prejudices and insults from which a section of mankind has suffered untold agonies and atrocities in the past and continues to do so in many ways and many places today. I am talking about a story in which the very humanity of black people is called into question" (15). Achebe's characterization of Conrad and the novel, and ultimately his call for criticism that addresses Conrad's "obvious racism" (13), spurred like-minded work that investigated and perpetuated Achebe's theory that Conrad was a racist.

Edward Said, however, tempers Achebe's accusation, arguing, instead, that Conrad "was both an anti-imperialist and imperialist, progressive when it came to rendering fearlessly and pessimistically the self-confirming, self-deluding corruption of overseas domination, deeply reactionary when it came to conceding that Africa or South America could ever have had an independent history or culture, which the imperialists violently disturbed but by which they were ultimately defeated" (xviii). Said, thus, complicates Achebe's reading of Conrad and his novels, going on to note, as well, that Achebe "either says nothing about or overrides the limitations placed on Conrad by the novel as an aesthetic form" (76). In fact, many scholars, including Schwarz, have noted the levels of ironic distance in Heart of Darkness as an indicator that Conrad is doing what the form will allow in order to separate himself from these views. In addition to being limited by aesthetics, Said argues that Conrad was limited by the historical moment. Said writes that Conrad:

could only imagine the world carved up into one or another Western sphere of dominion [. . .] Conrad does not give us the sense that he could imagine a fully realized alternative to imperialism: the natives he wrote about in Africa, Asia, or America were incapable of independence, and because he seemed to imagine that European tutelage was a given, he could not foresee what would take place when it came to an end. (24-25)

The time during which Conrad was writing these early novels and their accompanying prefaces was a particularly noteworthy period in the history of European imperialism. Andrea White points out that between 1880 and 1914 "colonial conquests accelerated greatly and worldwide [. . .] The multiplication of colonial powers seeking claim in ever-dwindling space, especially in the tropics, intensified rivalry. In Africa alone, European holdings climbed from eleven percent in

1875 to ninety percent by 1902” (“Conrad and Imperialism” 182). White maintains that Conrad read Mary Kingsley’s West African Studies (1899), which “spoke of her disaffection for modern imperialism” (183). Benita Parry notes that Conrad most likely would have read the Saturday Review—a newspaper that he favored— on December 17, 1898 in which a speech by the chairman of the Royal Statistical Society was published: “Of what certain Belgians can do in the way of barbarity [while claiming to promote civilization in the Congo], Englishmen are painfully aware. Mr. Courtney mentions an instance of a Captain Rom, who ornamented his flower-beds with the heads of twenty-one natives killed in punitive expedition” (qtd. in Parry 45). In addition to this report in the Saturday Review, the Cosmopolis— a journal that Conrad read and in which he published his own work— condemned the treatment of Africans during this period. Conrad might have been informed by those outlets mentioned above, or by the coverage of Henry M. Stanley’s expedition in the Sudan under the direction of Leopold in 1889, which was covered by any number of outlets. During his writing of his early novels and prefaces, Conrad would have been exposed to these reports and stories. Conrad would also see colonialism first hand on a trip to the Malay Archipalego from 1887-1888 which served as the basis for Almayer’s Folly. Of this voyage, White writes, “As he saw the empire more closely and the brutalities that accompanied expansion, his skepticism about the claims to moral improvement of the ‘civilizing’ endeavor deepened. Similarly, the power struggles he witnessed between competing colonial powers and conflicting cultures spoke to his own youthful memories of political struggle” (“Conrad and Imperialism” 184).

It would be irresponsible to read Conrad’s early prefaces as anti-imperialist propaganda or Conrad as wholly anti-imperialist. When taken into account, though, Conrad’s prefaces certainly complicate Achebe’s argument and demand that we address the consistency with which

Conrad returns— in these early prefaces— to the importance of “fellowship,” “solidarity,” and “brotherhood” across national lines. In the preface to Almayer’s Folly, Conrad strives to paint the “strange people” in “far-off” countries as humans—not barbarians. Based on our commonalities, our humanity, we must sympathize with these people for “the picture of life, there as here, is drawn with the same elaboration of detail, coloured with the same tints [. . .] It is the same picture” (Preface to AF 37). As Conrad says in the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” it is the artist’s responsibility to draw this picture, to “appeal to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain; to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation—and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts, to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity” (50). Conrad aims to represent these “far-off” lands with “such clearness of sincerity that at least the presented vision of regret or pity, of terror or mirth, shall awaken in the hearts of the beholders that feeling of unavoidable solidarity; of the solidarity in mysterious origin, in toil, in joy, in hope, in uncertain fate, which binds men to each other and all mankind to the visible world” (Preface to NN 52).

“Give me the right word, and I will move the world” (200), Conrad writes in “A Familiar Preface,” the author’s note that accompanies Some Reminiscences. The immediate world that Conrad hopes to move, to affect, is that of the laborer, the “common man” who is too busy working to notice the connections among mankind. Conrad’s role as an artist—as he understands and elaborates it in his prefaces— is to teach his readers to expand their idea of what constitutes good art. As he pushes his readers to see beyond the boundaries of these classifications, he also informs them of the moral demands that their particular time period places on them. And while Conrad may not have been able to foresee a time without Western domination or imagine that

“India, Africa, and South America also had lives and cultures with integrities not totally controlled by the gringo imperialists” (Said xviii), Conrad uses his prefaces to address the atrocities of imperialism. These early prefaces, thus, advance Conrad’s theory of art, a theory that has the potential to illuminate the “realities” of life at the turn of the twentieth century, as well. If Conrad can help his readers to expand their idea of art so that it includes impressionism, he can also enlighten them—through his language of humanity, solidarity, and fellowship—on the abuse of colonial power. Moving the single laborer could not affect this shift in consciousness that Conrad deemed important. It was thus imperative that Conrad reach as many readers as possible. In the following chapter, I will argue that Virginia and Leonard Woolf used the Hogarth Press in a similar way, namely as a means for making literature available and accessible to a wide public.

According to Conrad, a piece of art is successful only if it can reach its audience, if it can appeal to their senses. While the aim is “difficult and evanescent and reserved only for a very few to achieve” (54), Conrad still aspires to it. Conrad describes this outcome in the final sentence of the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus”: “And when it is accomplished—behold! all the truth of life is there: a moment of vision, a sigh, a smile—and the return to an eternal rest” (Conrad, Preface to NN 54). Conrad’s description of this accomplishment as a vision is reminiscent of his emphasis on sight in his description of his aim in the most famous sentence from the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus”: “To make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you see” (Conrad, Preface to NN 52, emphasis in original). In the former description, the moment of vision applies to the artist as he has accomplished his goal. In the latter description, the metaphor of vision applies to the reader who—thanks to the writer’s mastery of the written word—has the capacity to see in new ways. This brotherhood, then,

depends not upon intelligence, but upon one of the senses, the sense of sight. Although not limited to the five senses—for Conrad includes one’s sense of beauty, among others—senses are at the core of Conrad’s theory of art, a theory that is inextricably linked to his politics. In emphasizing the senses over other characteristics, Conrad has found another way to highlight the connections among people across national boundaries. All people share these senses. Thus art—which must appeal to these senses—can bring people together. Not everyone shares knowledge of facts, ideas, wisdom, and common sense and thus Conrad rejects these forms of knowing in the prefaces to The Nigger of the “Narcissus” and Some Reminiscences in favor of abstractions like temperament, emotions, and the senses. Recall Conrad’s argument that “fiction—if it at all aspires to be art—appeals to temperament [. . .] Such an appeal to be effective must be an impression conveyed through the senses; and in fact, it cannot be made in any other way, because temperament, whether individual or collective, is not amenable to persuasion” (Preface to NN 51). Making a similar point about the importance of the senses in the preface to Some Reminiscences, Conrad writes, “The power of sound has always been greater than the power of sense” (Conrad, Preface to SR 199). The sound to which Conrad refers is the sound of words, which all readers have the ability to hear. The sound of certain words, Conrad suggests, has incredible power. “Shouted with perseverance, with ardour, with conviction, these two [words “Glory” and “Pity”] alone have set whole nations in motion and upheaved the dry, hard ground on which rests our whole social fabric [. . .] Give me the right word and the right accent and I will move the world” (Conrad, Preface to SR 200-201). In this preface, Conrad draws his readers’ attention to the power of language and its ability not only to “set whole nations in motion” but to bring nations together by “mov[ing] the world.” In this subtle critique of imperialism, it is the power of sound, one of the senses, rather than the power of sense or

wisdom that has this capacity. Conrad's teachings, then, are about the importance of senses rather than wisdom. Readers can hone their senses through impressionist art, like Conrad's novels. Doing so, however, means that they must relinquish their dependence on the values that realism embodies.

As I suggest above, we might ultimately say that Conrad aims extend far beyond the little world of each laborer he hopes to affect. Through these laborers and through the masses he might ultimately change the world on an even larger scale by helping to foster a new way of seeing art and life which involves enabling his readers to recognize that all people are connected, an argument that Conrad felt compelled to advance despite his inability to recognize that Western domination was not imperative. Conrad's emphasis on the senses and abstractions like "temperament" signifies his investment in inclusiveness. This becomes especially clear in the last sentence of the preface to Almayer's Folly: "Their hearts [of the people in far-off countries]—like ours—must endure the load of the gifts from Heaven: the curse of facts and the blessing of illusions, the bitterness of our wisdom and the deceptive consolation of our folly" (Conrad, Preface to AF 38). As Conrad denigrates facts and wisdom he also uses this space to point out that we are alike since we all "must endure the load of the gifts from Heaven," and we all must live with "the curse of facts and the blessing of illusions, the bitterness of our wisdom and the deceptive consolation of our folly" (Conrad, Preface to AF 38). Conrad takes this point even further in the preface to Some Reminiscences as he argues that "Nothing humanly great—great, I mean, as affecting a whole mass of lives—has come from reflection" (Conrad, Preface to SR 199). Conrad thus defines greatness as reaching "a whole mass of lives," a goal it would seem that he set for himself. Conrad, however, is not an idealist. While he believes in the importance of brotherhood, unity, and affecting a "whole mass of lives," his fictional accounts of

these types of attempts prove rather pessimistic. In Nostromo, for example, no one is able to unify the people of Costaguana. While Nostromo and Decoud seemingly work together toward the common goal of getting their lighter, which has been struck by an enemy steamer, safely to the Isabels and Sulaco, Conrad describes their lack of a bond:

Each of them was utterly alone with his task. It did not occur to them to speak. There was nothing in common between them but the knowledge that the damaged lighter must be slowly but surely sinking. In that knowledge, which was like the crucial test of their desires, they seemed to have become completely estranged, as if they had discovered in the very shock of the collision that the loss of the lighter would not mean the same thing to them both. This common danger brought their differences in aim, in view, in character, and in position, into absolute prominence in the private vision of each. There was no bond of conviction, of common ideas; they were merely two adventurers pursuing each his own adventure, involved in the same imminence of deadly peril. Therefore they had nothing to say to each other. (emphasis added 178-179)

In this passage, Conrad describes how alone each man is even though they ultimately share a common plight. Almost every sentence in this passage attests to the distance between the two men and, perhaps on a grander scale, the distance between all of the inhabitants of Costaguana—even between the Goulds, who married one another under false pretenses. Mrs. Gould thought Charles unsentimental, which we find out through Decoud is thoroughly incorrect ²⁸ and Charles thought that his future wife had “sound common sense” (27) although the narrator says that “even the most legitimate touch of materialism was wanting in Mrs. Gould’s character” (45).

Their marriage, in other words, is based on a misunderstanding and while the Mine was supposed to be a common endeavor, it has come between them: “The fate of the San Tomé mine was lying heavy upon [Mrs. Gould’s] heart [. . .] She had watched it with misgivings turning into a fetish, and now the fetish had grown into a monstrous and crushing weight. It was as if the inspiration of their early years had left her heart to turn into a wall of silver-bricks, erected by the silent work of evil spirits, between her and her husband” (135). The lack of communication that exists between Mr. and Mrs. Gould is not Conrad’s most extreme account of the difficulty spouses find in communicating. As I discuss above, the lack of communication between the married couple in “Amy Foster” proves fatal for Yanko. We thus see another example of the disjointedness between Conrad’s prefaces and his novels. While in his prefaces Conrad seems optimistic about the potential for communication, unity, and brotherhood among mankind, this is not achieved even at the most local level in his novels—as the relationships between spouses are marked by a lack of communication and understanding.

Before moving on to a discussion of the later prefaces, I should point out that Conrad’s preface to Victory is a sort of anomaly not only in terms of the early prefaces but also in terms of those that come later. This preface—which Conrad rewrote and expanded in 1920—is but a page and a half long and seems to serve very overt, practical purposes. Written a short time after Conrad finished the novel, but before its publication, Conrad uses the preface to two ends. First, he explores the drastic change that has occurred in the short amount of time between his writing the novel and its publication, and second he attempts to remedy potential misreadings of the novel: “The last word of this novel was written on the 29th of May 1914. And that last word was the single word of the title. Those were times of peace. Now that the moment of publication approaches I have been considering the discretion of altering the title page so as not to deceiv[e]

the public into the belief that the book had something to do with war” (Conrad, Preface to Victory 211). Conrad also uses the preface to dispel another potential misconception on the part of the reader: “The second point on which I wish to offer a remark is the existence (in the novel) of a person named Schomberg [. . .] Schomberg is an old member of my company. A very subordinate personage in Lord Jim as far back as the year 1899, he became notably active in a certain short story of mine published in 1902 [. . .] My object in mentioning him here is to bring out the fact that, far from being the incarnation of recent animosities, he is the creature of my old, deep-seated and, as it were, impartial conviction” (Conrad, Preface to Victory 212). The brevity of the preface to Victory as well as its aims, separate it from all of Conrad’s other prefaces. Perhaps more along the lines of the later prefaces, though, this preface more overtly attempts to control readers’ interpretations of the novel. Reminding readers of the lapse between the writing and the publication of the novel, as well as the history of Schomberg the character, Conrad tries to stave off potential misreadings of these two points.

I turn now to those prefaces written later, those that have been studied closely by Vivienne Rundle and Alison Wheatley. As I consider these later prefaces, I am compelled by my findings regarding Conrad early prefaces to determine whether he uses these later prefaces to similar ends. Some questions that guide my inquiry include: To what extent does Conrad continue to outline his philosophy of art? In what ways is there a continued emphasis on the importance of recognizing commonalities among “different” peoples and cultures? How does Conrad’s belief in the senses as one of the means by which art might connect all people figure into these prefaces? To what extent does Conrad continue guiding his readers to a new way of seeing? My work on Conrad’s earlier prefaces has raised a set of questions that neither Rundle nor Wheatley sought to answer because their studies were focused on those prefaces written

between 1917 and 1920. My work on these later prefaces, thus, expands theirs in that it is informed by an examination of Conrad's early prefaces.

2.4 THE LATER PREFACES: AN OUTCAST OF THE ISLANDS, TALES OF UNREST, LORD JIM, YOUTH, TYPHOON AND OTHER STORIES, NOSTROMO, THE MIRROR OF THE SEA, THE SECRET AGENT, A SET OF SIX, UNDER WESTERN EYES, A PERSONAL RECORD, TWIXT LAND AND SEA, CHANCE, WITHIN THE TIDES, VICTORY, THE SHADOW LINE, THE ARROW OF GOLD, THE RESCUE, AND NOTES ON LIFE AND LETTERS

Conrad's later prefaces differ significantly from his early prefaces in many ways. Because Conrad's later prefaces were written years after the initial publication of the texts to which they correspond, Conrad could use the space to answer critics who reviewed his work. Although we see him addressing some of his critics in his early prefaces, those critics did not actually publish their opinions of his texts. Rather, they were Conrad's mentors or friends who spoke to him regularly about his work, and thus were not potentially influencing the public's opinion of Conrad and his writing. Wheatley argues that responding to these published critics was one of the ways in which Conrad molded his legacy: "He shaped his reputation by controlling marketing situations, writing prefaces to his collected works, and responding to friends and correspondents with indignant or reinforcing remarks, as well as direct appeals for particular assessments" (7). The time between his initial publication of his works and his writing of their prefaces afforded him an opportunity to see how he was received by critics and the public. In some instances we see Conrad responding gratefully to the praise that critics have offered, and in

others he attempts to address negative reviews or “misreadings” of his works. He admits in the preface to *The Secret Agent* (1907), “I have always had a propensity to justify my action. Not to defend. To justify. Not to insist that I was right but simply to explain” (104). Rundle argues that Conrad “prove[s] the importance of re-presentation, rereading, and revision” (91) as he returns to these works in order to “simply explain” them, the characters therein, and their origins.

Most interesting, however, in light of Conrad’s early prefaces is how exactly he goes about explaining the origins of his stories, which constitutes another difference between the early and later prefaces. In these later prefaces, as Rundle points out, “Conrad strives to dissolve those distinctions “between fictional and ‘real’ worlds” (74). We see a representative example of this technique in his preface to Nostromo, in which he initially seems to be tying his fiction to actual historical events and people but ultimately blurs the boundaries between the two. Conrad writes of the origins of his fictional story, noting that Don Jose Avellanos, Minister to the Courts of England and Spain, was his “principal authority for the history of Costaguana” (88). “In justice to myself, and to allay the fears of prospective readers,” writes Conrad in the preface, “I beg to point out that the few historical allusions are never dragged in for the sake of parading my unique erudition, but that each of them is closely related to actuality” (89). In this excerpt, the reader expects to garner a better understanding of the historical origins of the story only to have Conrad claim that Don Jose Avellanos—a character in the novel, not an actual person— is responsible for the story. Conrad makes a similar move in the preface to The Mirror of the Sea (1906) as he describes Dominic, a character from that novel, in human terms: “He and I were engaged together in a rather absurd adventure, but the absurdity does not matter. It is a real satisfaction that in my very young days there must, after all, have been something in me worthy to command that man’s half-bitter fidelity” (90). In both of these instances—and throughout his

later prefaces— Conrad consistently blurs the line between his fiction and the “fact” that inspired it. In doing so, Rundle argues that “Conrad undermines the boundaries separating fiction from fact, story from history; by refusing to limit the historical referents from his novels, Conrad’s ‘Author’s Notes’ open up his oeuvre to the revitalization of interpretive pluralism” (75). The “indeterminacies” of his “originating anecdotes” (81), the “deliberately vague definitions” (82) (as opposed to authoritative readings) in addition to the authority that Conrad relinquishes (as author) and gives to his characters is indicative, Rundle claims, of the interpretive space that these prefaces open up for readers. Disagreeing with this reading, Wheatley argues that what Rundle “sees as Conrad’s ‘dispensing authorial power’ may instead be one of Conrad’s more typically controlling efforts to subtly shape reader response” (18). Wheatley complicates Rundle’s argument by noting, “It would seem that Conrad believed that if he could only establish a sincere mutual respect with his readers, they would come to an accurate reading on their own. Nevertheless, it seems clear that any ‘accurate reading’ would have to concur with his own [. . .] Conrad attempted in nearly every way he could to assist his readers in understanding him and his work” (16, 18). Rundle’s description of the prefaces is on the mark, and it is one with which Wheatley, too, concurs. As I detail above, they disagree on the implications of these techniques.

With his early prefaces in mind, I would like to suggest different implications altogether. Conrad’s blurring of the line between fact and fiction in these later prefaces is an extension of his philosophies on art that we see in his early prefaces. Conrad spends more time in these later prefaces offering the specifics regarding the genealogy of his characters and stories, their publication history, and their critical reception rather than sharing his philosophies on the value and purposes of art in general. As Conrad treats his characters as though they are real and blurs the boundaries between real and fictive events, he extends his philosophy (that characterizes his

early prefaces) that understanding art and understanding life go hand in hand. Moreover, he undermines our tendency to value truth or fact over fiction, as he does in his early prefaces, and thus continues to highlight this new way of seeing that he hopes his readers will embrace.

We also see Conrad playing with the boundaries between fact and fiction in his novel, Under Western Eyes, in which the narrator consistently reminds us that he is reporting fact and not telling a story. Introducing the second part of the novel, the narrator explains:

A man of imagination, however, inexperienced in the art of narrative, has his instinct to guide him in the choice of his words, and in the development of the action. A grain of talent excuses many mistakes. But this is not a work of imagination; I have no talent; my excuse for this undertaking lies not in its art, but in its artlessness. Aware of my limitations and strong in the sincerity of my purpose I would not try (were I able) to invent anything. I push my scruples so far that I would not even invent a transition. (67)

The narrator's repeated reminders that he is simply reporting the facts from "the document" (1) rather than "invent[ing] the mere bald facts of [Razumov's] life" (1) ask the reader to believe that this story that Conrad has written is true. In calling attention to his telling of this "factual" narrative, the narrator paradoxically reminds readers that they are in fact reading fiction. The narrator's inability to even "invent a transition" reminds readers that Conrad is, in fact, transitioning to the second part of the (fictional) story. In other words, the narrator's insistence on reminding readers that he has not composed a fictional account reminds readers that Conrad has. The effect is a complicated and layered reading experience that urges readers to consider both how the account of Razumov's life is composed and how they are to perceive it. It is the

effect that is so important for Conrad. Recall Conrad's emphasis on the reading experience: "In this matter of life and art it is not the Why that matters so much to our happiness as the How" (Conrad, Preface to SR 207). This statement is reminiscent of those from Conrad's early prefaces in which he highlights the how, or the method of perception, over the object or event that is being perceived. Conrad is, after all, invested in changing his readers' modes of perception, and not the object of their perception. In Under Western Eyes, readers are forced to become aware of the multiple ways in which they perceive the story that is being told as their attention is drawn to how the narrator is composing the narrative and how Conrad has composed the narrator. Conrad discussed the importance of perception with Francis Warrington Dawson (who took down his comments verbatim) in 1913:

There is a convention that only six or seven novel forms exist, & all writers are expected to adapt themselves to those forms.

If everybody has agreed to look at a landscape in one way, I don't see why we should not look at it in another. It does not hurt for us to stand on our head to see it, if it has grown stale to us when we look at it standing on our feet. (qtd. in Ambrosini 197)

As Ambrosini goes on to point out, we see Conrad begin experimenting with different modes of narration and multiple points of view with Lord Jim. These seem to constitute Conrad's commitment to finding new forms and ways of seeing; he takes his readers along with him on this journey in his prefaces as he tries to convince them that these new ways of seeing are necessary, both aesthetically and politically.

Rundle convincingly argues, however, that Conrad is not overbearing in his methods. She contends that his undermining of the difference between fact and fiction, for example, is a way

for him to relinquish his authority: “Do we not see Conrad [. . .] suggesting that it is the power of fiction, of the story itself, that is at the bottom responsible for literary creation” (Rundle 83). While I agree that Conrad certainly makes a space for his readers, particularly in these later prefaces, I think we can expand our understanding of this technique. If we take his early prefaces into consideration, we can read this blurring of boundaries as central to the philosophy he shares in his early prefaces marked by his belief that an understanding of art can lead to an understanding of “the picture of life” (Conrad, Preface to AF 37). In the early prefaces, Conrad demonstrates how an openness to new forms of perception and writing, including impressionism, might have real-world implications in that this openness could encompass a tolerance of “different” cultures and peoples. Conrad suggests in these earlier prefaces that art has the power to blur the boundaries between different cultures, peoples, and nations. Once these boundaries are blurred, “solidarity” and “brotherhood” across national boundaries is possible. Although Conrad does not return to those specific terms in the later prefaces, we see Conrad’s belief in the importance of blurring boundaries surface again— this time indicated by his seamless movement between fact and fiction in the genealogies he creates for his characters and stories. As Conrad attempts to undermine the distinction between fictional and historical stories and characters he is instructing his readers not to be concerned with these distinctions either. We saw this in the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus,” where Conrad tells readers that his stories cannot be confined by literary traditions: “Realism, Romanticism, Naturalism, even the unofficial sentimentalism [. . .] all these gods must, after a short period of fellowship, abandon him [the writer] [. . .] to the stammerings of his consciousness of the difficulties of his work” (53). Instead, Conrad wants readers to see beyond these limitations and develop readings that transcend them just as he encourages them in the early prefaces to see beyond national and

cultural boundaries and recognize the humanity that binds all people together. Part of this new way of seeing involves honing one's capacity to entertain new forms of art and new ways of seeing.

In addition to encouraging his readers to imagine a world with no boundaries, Conrad encourages them to seek out their own answers to questions, and in the later prefaces he often refuses to answer simple questions about the plot of a story so that readers may do so for themselves. In the preface to Typhoon and Other Stories (1903), Conrad writes, "But what is the subject of Falk? I personally do not feel so very certain about it. He who reads must find out for himself" (79). In the preface to Nostromo, Conrad makes a similar statement: "It is for the reader to say how far [the characters in Nostromo] are deserving of interest in their actions and in the secret purposes of their hearts revealed in the bitter necessities of the time" (89). These are precisely the moments upon which Rundle and Wheatley disagree. Rundle reads these as moments inviting interpretative plurality and "dispers[ing] authorial power" (71), while Wheatley sees them as moments that are controlled very closely by the "assistance" and "guidance" (18) that Conrad offers throughout his prefaces so that readers could arrive at the "correct" reading. At first, these arguments seem diametrically opposed to one another. Yet the difference in these arguments is one of degree. Rundle does not seem to be arguing that Conrad is opening up a space for any and all interpretations of his work, and yet Wheatley characterizes Rundle's argument as such, which allows her to make room for her own argument that Conrad leads his audience to certain readings of his work. While Wheatley never suggests that Conrad is engaging in teaching, instruction, or pedagogy²⁹ of any sort, the way in which she describes Conrad's aims suggest that is the case. Wheatley writes that "among the ways Conrad tried to guide an accurate reading was to resist any false classification, particularly as a sea writer or

romance writer” (emphasis added 16). She concludes that “Conrad attempted in nearly every way he could to assist his readers in understanding him and his work” and that despite his frustration with some readers, “he continued to imagine and guide readers who would come closer to understanding him” (emphasis added, 18). Wheatley’s use of “assist” and “guide” here and throughout her piece indicate her belief, I would argue, in a sort of instructional aspect of these prefaces yet she does not go so far as to name it as such. It is not hard to see why she hesitates to do so when one considers Conrad’s views on didactic literature:

I do not mean to hint that anybody had ever done me the injury (I don’t mean insult, I mean injury) of charging a single one of my pages with didactic purpose. But every subject in the region of intellect and emotion must have a morality of its own if it is treated at all sincerely; and even the most artful writers will give himself (and his morality) away in about every third sentence [. . .] I cannot say that any particular moral complexion has been put on this novel but I do not think that anybody had detected in it an evil intention. And it is only for their intentions that men can be held responsible. The ultimate effects of whatever they do are far beyond their control. (Conrad, Preface to Chance 150)

In this excerpt, Conrad openly denigrates didacticism. He creates a binary between didacticism and morality, arguing that we must not confuse the two. Yet, Conrad’s didacticism, his investment in guiding his readers, seems inextricably tied to his morality. In the early prefaces, for example, Conrad instructs readers on art. He suggests that they pay attention to detail and ignore the boundaries of literary traditions, and remain open to new traditions. Part of this openness involves his readers looking more closely and maybe even reassessing their views on

imperialism. Conrad tries to impart in his readers an appreciation for all people and nations. He writes of equality, humanity, and brotherhood across boundaries. These beliefs perhaps inform his distrust of didactic literature since this literature locates the author as the expert, and the unequal readers beneath him. In these later prefaces, as I have tried to demonstrate, Conrad consistently downplays his own authority. Although Conrad is not willing to label his writing as didactic—or anything for that matter—it might not be far off to do so if, in fact, the reader is granted the sort of authority that Conrad affords her in the relationship he hopes to establish with his readers. In effect, in these prefaces Conrad re-imagines the didactic by creating a more equitable relationship with his readers/students as he teaches them about new ways of seeing.

Conrad's views on didacticism also seem tied to his anti-elitism and commitment to the masses as just a few sentences after demeaning didacticism he prides himself on never having “sinned against the basic feelings and elementary convictions which make life possible to the mass of mankind” (Conrad, Preface to NN 50). Conrad's investment not in those “basic feelings and elementary convictions” of a coterie, but of the “mass of mankind” suggests that he views the intent to teach as an arrogant endeavor that necessarily creates inequalities. A belief in inequality—the cornerstone of imperialism—I have tried to demonstrate throughout this chapter is something that Conrad refuses to accept. And still, while Conrad highlights these inequalities in his prefaces, his novels potentially tell a different story.

Along with his belief in equality demonstrated by the relationship he strives to create with readers comes his belief in the value of accessibility. In December of 1918, Conrad wrote to F. N. Doubleday: “I pride myself that there is no sentence of my writing, either thought or image, that is not accessible. I won't say to the meanest intelligence (meanness is a matter of temperament rather) but to the simplest intelligence that is aware at all of the world in which we

live” (Jean-Aubry: 2, 214). Conrad thus proclaims his belief that all people— including those with the “simplest intelligence”— have the right to experience literature and Conrad takes pride in offering this opportunity. Conrad consistently strives to establish a rapport with his audience in these prefaces and takes his readers seriously, trying to predict their reactions to his projects. Having been asked to write the set of prefaces for the second editions of his works, Conrad not only worried about how they would be seen in light of those Henry James wrote for his 1907-1909 editions,³⁰ but he was concerned about what his public might think of them: “I don’t know that it would be wise to try. Besides I don’t feel the need somehow. And then I have formed for myself a conception of my public as the sort of people that would accept graciously a few intimate words but would not care for long disquisitions about art. And, lately, I have no ‘aims to explain’” (Letters 6: 108). This conception of his public formed most likely because Conrad’s readers did not care for the long disquisitions about art that characterize his early prefaces. Certainly the preface to The Nigger of the “Narcissus” received critical praise and scholarly attention throughout and after Conrad’s career, but the book was not a commercial success. As Conrad’s initial attempts to engage his audience failed, it would come as no surprise that he would change his method in some of the ways I have detailed above since— in his own words— his primary goal was “to create a public for myself” (Letters 1: 390). I think it important to emphasize the word “create” because, for all of the reasons I have detailed above, Conrad assumed that there was not an audience who would readily accept his work. When his work was finally accepted by the public with the publication of Chance, he used its preface to celebrate this feat:

What makes this book memorable to me apart from the natural
sentiment one has for one’s creation is the response it provoked. The

general public responded largely, more largely perhaps than to any other book of mine, in the only way the general public can respond, that is by buying a large number of copies. This gave me a considerable amount of pleasure, because what I always feared most was drifting into the position of a writer for a limited coterie, a position which would have been odious to me as throwing a doubt on the soundness of my belief in the solidarity of all mankind in simple ideas and in sincere emotions. (148-149)

Using this preface as an opportunity to celebrate what he sees as the public's acceptance of his work, Conrad also shares his persistent fear of "drifting into the position of a writer for a limited coterie."³¹ Even after his success, then, Conrad is still anxious about his ability to attract readers. These later prefaces seem influenced by the lack of commercial success of those earlier novels. Conrad seems to take this into account and tries a different method in these prefaces—which includes not dwelling on his philosophy of art. He merely addresses the issue peripherally and less consistently, focusing more often on the characters and the plot of the work to which the preface corresponds. We see this most dramatically in the preface to Youth and Other Stories (1902), where Conrad writes that "more skill would have made them more real and the whole composition more interesting. But here we are approaching the veiled region of artistic values which it would be improper and indeed dangerous for me to enter" (74). Whereas Conrad spent a great deal of space in his early prefaces addressing artistic values and instructing his readers on new ways of valuing art, he shies away from this in his later prefaces. The even more telling consistency that emerges in this excerpt is Conrad's tone. In this case, Conrad uses self-

deprecation in order to downplay his role as authority, thus blurring the line between his authority and that of the reader.

Related to this consistency is Conrad's unwavering commitment to challenging boundaries, both figuratively and literally, and his investment in guiding his readers to do the same. In the early prefaces, Conrad instructs readers on how fictional worlds might teach them about real worlds. He shows readers how attention to the "delicate detail" of art can also produce the ability to recognize the delicate details in life rather than only the "strong outlines." He imparts that art, which appeals to the senses, has the capacity to open people's minds in multiple ways not only to different types of art but to different types of people and cultures. In the later prefaces, Conrad extends this motif—often in more humorous, self-deprecating, ironic ways—by blurring the line between fact and fiction, thus offering a privileged space for readers to actively make meaning from his art. He downplays his abilities as a writer, often turning to the "readers to determine" (Conrad, Preface to Youth 74) a great deal about the texts, thus dissolving the traditional distinction between author(-ity) and reader. As Rundle maintains, in contrast to Henry James's prefaces, "Conrad's prefatory enterprise creates a persona that is less magisterial than collegial" (70). Conrad's prefaces, I would argue, expand his very own rather narrow definition of didacticism. In these short works, Conrad creates a space for authority that is characterized by humility, generosity, and a belief in equality. He can guide and assist—not proselytize—his readers in a manner that is marked by his affability, humor, and his commitment to inclusiveness. These prefaces are essentially didactic works that challenge Conrad's own prejudices about didacticism and ultimately suggest variations on the traditional student-reader/teacher-author relationship.

3.0 VIRGINIA WOOLF AND THE READING PUBLIC

In her 1940 lecture “The Leaning Tower,” delivered before the Brighton Worker’s Educational Association, Virginia Woolf concluded her talk by assuring the audience of workers that “literature is no one’s private ground; literature is common ground” (181). Encouraging a newly expanded reading public to engage with difficult modernist works, Woolf spoke on numerous occasions to members of workers’ associations, to women, and to radio listeners. Her message was remarkably consistent: Not only does everyone deserve the opportunity to read literature, but all people—no matter their gender, occupation, or social status— have the responsibility to do so.

In this chapter I will examine Woolf’s lectures and broadcasts, and the Hogarth Press’s pamphlets because these signal, perhaps even more than her print essays and novels, her investment in engaging a newly formed reading public. I will also look at Woolf’s work with the Hogarth Press in order to demonstrate how all of these commitments suggest an investment in instructing the public regarding the process of reading. I will investigate Woolf’s particular notion of pedagogy, which is founded on collaboration, and consider the greater political implications of her investment in collaborative pedagogical work.

3.1 RECASTING THE “SNOB”

Despite recent scholarship that attempts to recast Virginia Woolf in a more positive light, Woolf and her fellow modernists are often still considered elitists who wrote only for one another, intentionally alienating the reading public. Woolf especially, according to Anna Snaith, has fallen prey to this characterization because of her “pathological privacy and the protective, self-perpetuating shell of the Bloomsbury Group” (*Virginia Woolf* 113). Within the last fifteen years or so, scholars have challenged this depiction by revisiting initial readings of Woolf and her writing. Part of this reexamination has included a reinterpretation of Woolf’s relationship with her readers. Initially characterized along with other modernists as a writer who intentionally alienated readers by using disorienting literary techniques such as stream-of-consciousness narration, Woolf has more recently been recast by some scholars as committed to what she termed the “common reader,” a characterization that is not meant pejoratively but serves to describe a member of the reading public.³²

By looking at Woolf’s lectures and radio broadcasts, her commitment to the workers’ education movement, and her work with the Hogarth Press—all of which I will cast as attempts to engage the common reader—I aim to contribute to more recent studies on Woolf that complicate initial readings of Woolf and her work. To date, the most comprehensive examination of Woolf’s commitment to teaching the common reader is Melba Cuddy-Keane’s study of “‘a pedagogical Woolf’ concerned with making highbrow intellectual culture available to all” (2). Cuddy-Keane argues that “the pedagogical may be what most distinguishes Woolf’s essays from recent writing on the literary text, for Woolf’s interest lies not in articulating a theoretical model, but in modeling critical thought” (119). Cuddy-Keane’s far-reaching examination of Woolf’s work thoughtfully and convincingly challenges many prior characterizations of Woolf and her

relationship to readers. I aim to take Cuddy-Keane's work further by expanding her notion of pedagogy. Cuddy-Keane defines pedagogy as an exercise in modeling and in doing so disables an investigation into an important aspect of Woolf's particular type of pedagogy, namely her investment in collaborative pedagogy. The term "collaborate" comes from "col" meaning together and "labo" meaning to work. The term is one with which I think Woolf would be comfortable, as the OED explains that it was first used to describe when one "work[s] in conjunction with another or others [...] esp. in a literary or artistic production." I will consider several examples from Woolf's lectures and writing in which we see her valuing the importance of readers working with writers in order to make sense of a text. All of these instances hold true to the initial uses in 1871 and 1882 of the term "collaborate."

Opening up the term "pedagogy" is imperative in garnering a fuller understanding of how Woolf's investment in pedagogy intersected with her role as a writer, lecturer, and scholar. Cuddy-Keane's narrow definition of pedagogy disallows an analysis of how Woolf's role as publisher is indicative of her commitment to a newly expanded reading public. By defining pedagogy more broadly than Cuddy-Keane, I aim to offer an account of Woolf's commitment to pedagogy that takes into consideration how her work with the Hogarth Press also marks an investment in engaging common readers.

In addition to expanding Cuddy-Keane's definition of pedagogy, I aim to separate my work from that of many recent scholars who, in their attempts to recast Woolf, ultimately reinstate the very representation of Woolf that they seek to challenge.³³ Despite her careful scholarship, Cuddy-Keane seems to have fallen into this trap. Cuddy-Keane's argument that "Woolf's interest lies not in articulating a theoretical model, but in modeling critical thought" (119), implies that Woolf sets herself up as the exemplar of knowledge. This characterization of

Woolf actually rehearses the standard reading of Woolf as elitist, the reading that Cuddy-Keane seeks to challenge throughout her text. Cuddy-Keane's study is, in fact, indicative of a wider trend consisting of scholars who, despite their attempts otherwise, continue to represent Woolf as elitist.

In "A Room of One's Own as a Model of Composition Theory," Vara Neverow argues that, by "obscuring her own authorial identity ('call me Mary Beton, Mary Seton, Mary Carmichael or ... any name you please' [AROO5]), Woolf merges the creative experiences of her narrative persona with those of other women writers and thus effectively blurs the hierarchical distinction between critic and novelist, instructor and student" (58). Although a valid reading that suggests Woolf's investment in dismantling this hierarchy, Neverow's reinterpretation of A Room of One's Own, as is evident from Neverow's title, goes on to cast the text as a model. This positioning of A Room of One's Own at the top of the hierarchy conflicts with Neverow's overarching argument that Woolf seeks to downplay her own authority in order to share it with students and readers. Neverow posits that substituting the word "student" for "woman" throughout the text suggests "how persuasively Virginia Woolf's brief for writers in A Room of One's Own can be read as a student-centered approach to composition theory" (58). In this single sentence lies the contradiction that characterizes the work of even some of the most careful Woolf scholars, such as Neverow. On the one hand, Neverow characterizes A Room of One's Own as a "brief for writers," an authoritative model to which writers may refer. On the other hand, she casts A Room of One's Own as "student-centered." While the latter is the reading she hopes to sustain, the representation of A Room of One's Own as an authoritative model is ever-present, and in contradiction with the notion of a student-centered pedagogy.

Like Neverow, Anne Fernald considers how Woolf downplays her own privileged position as author. Fernald argues, that by adopting “the generic persona of Mary Beton” (176), Woolf “erases some of what separates her from all but a very few of her readers: that she was, already, in 1928, a famous, successful writer with a knowledge of literature that was unsurpassed. Through Mary Beton, Woolf creates a personal yet unspecific character” (177). Fernald understands this as a rhetorical move in that “Woolf’s use of a narrator inhibits us from being distracted by Woolf the personality and allows us to enter into a sympathetic relationship with the persona” (177). In other words, Fernald contends that Woolf intentionally downplays her celebrity and takes on a “generic persona” in order to more closely align herself with her readers. However, Fernald in turn argues that A Room of One’s Own “dramatizes Mary Beton’s difficulties as a series of interruptions and distractions (176),”³⁴ and that each of these instances “offers the reader a model for coping with, controlling, and even benefiting from the interruptions and distractions in her own life” (176). Ultimately, Fernald argues that Mary Beton, who stands in for Woolf, serves as the model for readers who must learn how to deal with the distractions that they face. Woolf, albeit through the character of Mary Beton, is again cast as the exemplar.

While Fernald contends that A Room of One’s Own provides a model to instruct readers on how to be productive despite distractions, Alice Fox presents A Room of One’s Own as a model of a different type. Fox argues that “allusion is in fact a major rhetorical strategy in the book, in spite of the fact that it has gone virtually unnoticed by the critics” (146-47). Drawing out the implications of the numerous allusions, particularly to male writers, Fox states: “All of Woolf’s allusions in A Room to literature by men—to the minor writers as well as to the great—serve a double purpose: they both advance her argument and supply a model of feminist

criticism. Much of today's criticism can be said to proceed along the lines laid out in A Room over fifty years ago" (157). At the same time that Fox establishes A Room of One's Own as a model, though, she emphasizes the authority that Woolf transfers to her readers as she avoids offering "a single, imposed point of view" (155). Fox explains that Woolf "wants the audience to weigh her argument, and the allusion to an early ballad could be expected to further that end: as Woolf would later say, the anonymity of the ballads 'allowed us to know nothing of the writer: and so to concentrate upon his song'" (156). Reminiscent of Fernald's argument regarding Woolf's use of a generic narrator to deflect her own celebrity, Fox, too, emphasizes Woolf's investment in sharing her authority with readers and engaging them not from a higher plane but as a peer. As is the case with Neverow, Fernald, and Cuddy-Keane, Fox implicitly locates Woolf as the authority by arguing that the allusions in her work offer a model of feminist criticism. Fox even goes so far as to say that, inasmuch as Woolf "herself used male literature in feminist polemic, she would also have hoped to train her audience in the art of feminist criticism" (157). Fox's use of the term "train" is especially noteworthy in that it rehearses traditional representations of Woolf as the elitist who saw those outside of her circle as uncivilized.

While Neverow, Fernald, and Fox all examine A Room of One's Own, their focuses range from the use of Woolf's texts in the undergraduate classroom to her narrative strategies to her position as the exemplar of a feminist critic. Despite this range, however, and their more complex conclusions regarding Woolf's relationship to her readers than earlier scholars, they are all ultimately unsuccessful in challenging previous depictions of Woolf. Moreover, even if we read with their arguments rather than against them, they are all reinstating the binary opposition in which Woolf is either cast as an elitist or is not. What is needed is a more complex rendering of Woolf's pedagogy, one that does not ultimately locate her on either side of the binary.

This study does not deny Woolf's ties to "elitism," aesthetic and otherwise. Nor does it intend to celebrate Woolf as the spokesperson for the common woman or man. Erich Auerbach claims that Woolf's is a democratic form since "to put the emphasis on the random occurrence" (552) in the daily lives of people "the more the elementary things which our lives have in common come to light. The more numerous, varied, and simple the people are who appear as subjects of such random moments, the more effectively must what they have in common shine forth" (552). While Auerbach claims that Woolf's aesthetic is a democratic one, he neglects to address the difficult forms in which she and other modernists wrote. In other words, there is a tension between the aesthetic itself (a democratic one) and the difficulty of the form that this aesthetic takes, a form that disallows the participation of all readers. The intent may have been democratic, but the result certainly was not. This difference here between the intent and the result necessarily complicates how we must think about Woolf's elitism. By examining Woolf's collaborative pedagogy as belonging to neither side of this binary opposition this investigation will allow me to envision a more nuanced context for studying Woolf's pedagogy. Moreover, if I refuse to cast Woolf as separate and above her readers, then I will be able to produce readings that are not simply variations, but that are different from those which continue to be produced when Woolf is positioned this way, albeit implicitly, throughout recent scholarship.

3.2 VIRGINIA WOOLF'S COLLABORATIVE PEDAGOGY

3.2.1 Virginia Woolf's Connections to Educational Enterprises

Woolf's dedication to educating the reading public—and particularly those outside the university setting— is evident in her involvement with the Worker's Education Association (WEA), which was founded in 1903 by Albert Mansbridge. The WEA introduced the University Tutorial Class as an alternative to extension lectures offered by universities since the 1870s as part of their contribution to adult education. The University Tutorial Class depended more on dialogue, thus challenging the traditional lecture format. These classes also challenged what had previously been taught in adult education courses. G. D. H. Cole, who taught for the WEA and served as its vice president until 1938, believed that “culture was to be regarded as a rightful possession of the working class and education was to be the opening of a ‘Broad Highway’ helping the workers ‘to bring their own ideas to birth’” (Cole 19). Rather than simply asking the workers to repeat the instructors' ideas, the more collaborative environment offered by the Tutorial Classes allowed the workers to develop their own ideas.

Both Virginia and Leonard supported the WEA in various ways.³⁵ Virginia spoke before members of the WEA on several occasions. She also showed her support both by writing for the WEA's journal, The Highway, and working closely with the journal. As Melba Cuddy-Keane explains, “A flyer inserted in The Highway in September 1923 advertised a special subscription to The Nation and The Athenaeum that included, free of charge, A Revision of the Treaty by J. M. Keynes and [. . .] Jacob's Room” (92), both of which were published by the Hogarth Press. About a year later, Woolf wrote a piece on the topic “What is a Good Novel?” as part of a symposium for The Highway. In addition to Woolf, ten male novelists— including Arnold

Bennett, John Galsworthy, and Hugh Walpole— contributed their ideas on the topic (Cuddy-Keane 170). In the two paragraphs she was allotted, Woolf argued that “a good novel is any novel that makes one think or feel. It must get its knife in between the joints of the hide with which most of us are covered” (109). While Woolf emphasizes the importance of a reader’s visceral and cerebral responses, she also posits that “the best way is to read the old and the new, side by side, to compare them, and to gradually make out a standard of one’s own” (110). Woolf elaborates on this latter point in “How Should One Read A Book?,” a lecture she gave before sixty students at Hayes Court School for Girls in Kent:

Let us compare each book with the greatest of its kind [. . .] with whatever is the best or seems to us to be the best in its own kind [. . .] Thus with our taste to guide us, we shall venture beyond the particular book in search of qualities that group books together; we shall give them names and thus frame a rule that brings order into our perceptions. (293)

Woolf’s emphasis on the intensity of readers’ reactions as well as the critical practice of comparison are both indicative of her idea that a book’s worth is derived not from something objectively valuable in the text itself but from the reader. Whether it is the reader’s reaction to the book or how the reader decides for herself upon the “best in its own kind,” it is the individual reader who ultimately decides what constitutes a good novel. Each reader must “make out a standard of one’s own” (110) and then hold every novel to that standard.

3.2.2 Virginia Woolf’s Lectures

Cuddy-Keane draws many comparisons between Woolf’s work and that of Louise Rosenblatt, arguing that Woolf, too, was committed to what we would now call reader-response criticism.

She posits that the two share many of the same ideas regarding the authority and importance of the reader to the process of meaning-making. What is often overlooked—perhaps because Woolf’s lectures are not written about as much as her novels—is that Woolf consistently asks her audiences to reflect with her on pedagogy and on its nature, its uses, and its variations. In other words, while her investment in active reading and meaning-making has been examined, her commitment to reflecting on pedagogy in a collaborative manner with her audiences has been noticeably ignored.

Throughout her lectures—those that remained lectures and those that were the foundation for longer works—Woolf not only assumes the role of instructor but she also consistently problematizes this role. She especially challenges the traditional lecture format. Woolf suggests that instruction itself, particularly when it comes to reading and writing, demands serious reflection. We see this especially in the openings to her works.

In “How Should One Read a Book?” she begins: “In the first place, I want to emphasize the note of interrogation at the end of my title. The only advice, indeed, that one person can give another about reading is to take no advice, to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions” (281). Woolf opens, then, by undercutting her own expertise. She makes a similar move in the famous opening to A Room of One’s Own when she declares: “I should never be able to fulfill what is, I understand, the first duty of a lecturer—to hand you after an hour’s discourse a nugget of pure truth to wrap up between the pages of your notebooks and keep on the mantel-piece [. . .] It is for you to seek out this truth and to decide whether any part of it is worth keeping” (4-5). In both instances, Woolf asks that her audiences—both of these works were lectures first—and now her readers join her in answering the questions that she, as lecturer, has been asked to answer. In this instance, pedagogy emerges as a collaborative

endeavor as both Woolf and her audience assume the responsibility of the lecturer and the instructor.

Woolf not only guides her readers through an investigation into how one should read or why one needs a room of her own in order to write, but she demands that her audiences take an active role in considering both the topic at hand and the way in which the topic is taught. She warns common readers against merely succumbing to the pedagogue or the expert. For example, in “How Should One Read a Book?” Woolf writes:

Coleridge and Dryden and Johnson, in their considered criticism, the poets and novelists themselves in their unconsidered sayings, are often surprisingly relevant; they light up and solidify the vague ideas that have been tumbling in the misty depths of our minds. But they are only able to help us if we come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading. They can do nothing for us if we herd ourselves under their authority and lie down like sheep in the shade of a hedge. (244)

Woolf emphasizes the importance of first developing one’s own questions and suggestions and only then looking to the experts. In these excerpts, and throughout Woolf’s writing, she situates pedagogues, critics, authors, and experts on one side and common or ordinary readers and students on the opposite side. She separates them in this way only to ask them that eventually work together, but only once the common readers have done some work of their own. Even when Woolf is speaking of readers what she says seems to apply to students as well. We see this in “Why?,” an essay she wrote in 1934 for the second issue of Lysistrata, a student magazine at the women’s college at Oxford, in which she poses the following questions:

Why, since life holds so many hours, waste one of them on being lectured? Why, since printing presses have been invented these many centuries, should [the professor] not have printed his lecture instead of speaking it? Then, by the fire in winter, or under an apple tree in summer, it could have been read, thought over, discussed; the difficult ideas pondered, the argument debated. It could have been thickened and stiffened. (280)

In this passage, although Woolf starts out by considering the relationship between the professor and his students, she ends by casting the relationship as one between writer and reader. In suggesting that the relationship between a professor and his students should be synonymous with that between a writer and reader, Woolf envisions a type of instruction that is characterized not by the transferring of knowledge from a professor or expert to a student but by the collaborative acts of discussion and debate by equals in a setting far more comfortable than a lecture hall.

These debates allow the argument to be “thickened and stiffened” by the reader and student. However, for Woolf this does not necessarily mean concretizing ideas or arguments. Rather, thickening and stiffening seem a result of the “debates” among the text, its author and the reader. Such collaboration makes the ideas and arguments richer because more time has been allotted to them and readers have a chance to consider their own point of view. Instead of embracing the more common notion that putting something in writing stabilizes meaning, Woolf sees the written word (as opposed to the spoken word) as a means of opening up the potential for multiple meanings.

The standards we [as readers] raise and the judgments we pass steal into the air and become part of the atmosphere which writers breathe as they

work. An influence is created which tells upon them even if it never finds its way into print [. . .] If behind the erratic gunfire of the press the author felt that there was another kind of criticism, the opinion of the people reading for the love of reading, slowly and unprofessionally, and judging with great sympathy and yet with great severity, might this not improve the quality of the work? And if by our means books were to become stronger richer, and more varied that would be an end worth reaching. (emphasis added 294)

The argument that Woolf makes here is perhaps her most forceful account of the connection between writer and reader— and I would argue also between the student and the pedagogue. Woolf places the writing of worthwhile books not only in the hands of the writer, but also in the hands of the reader. Moreover, the public is responsible for creating standards and passing judgments. The judgments must be both sympathetic and severe. By placing all of this in the hands not of the professional critic, but of the common reader, Woolf puts an enormous degree of faith in the reading public.

3.2.3 Virginia Woolf's Own Education

Perhaps Woolf's own education— marked by loneliness— accounts for her commitment to a collaborative pedagogy. Having received no formal education, Woolf's only education came from her father, Leslie Stephen, and the books she borrowed from his library. According to Woolf in "A Sketch of the Past," her father generally asked only one question once she had read a book: "What did you make of it?"(157). The little instruction he provided consisted of the following:

To read what one liked because one liked it, never to pretend to admire what one did not—that was his only lesson in the art of reading. To write in the fewest possible words, as clearly as possible exactly what one meant—that was his only lesson in the art of writing. All the rest must be learned for oneself. (“Leslie Stephen” 80)

The last sentence of this passage demonstrates the emphasis that Stephen placed on individual and experiential education and is echoed in Woolf’s own understanding of reading and writing. Stephen’s question “What did you make of it?” also elevates the authority of the reader in that he suggests that the reader, not the writer, is the “maker” or creator of the book.

Beth Rigel Daugherty argues that, although Woolf saw problems with the education her brothers received at Cambridge, she envied the community within which they received the education (12). Rigel Daugherty cites a portion of a draft of a letter Woolf wrote to Ben Nicholson on August 24, 1940 as support for this point: “Education (alone among books) was a very bad one.” In the same letter, Woolf complained about her education which required that she “delve from books, painfully and all alone” (Letters 4: 420). Rigel Daugherty uses Woolf’s letters and reminiscences to various ends: she offers an account of Virginia’s informal education while simultaneously examining how this education informed her relationship with her father. While researching, Rigel Daugherty came to know a different Leslie Stephen who, in his daughter’s terms, was “kind” and “gentle.” “I went to Pullman to learn more about the young Virginia Stephen’s education in Leslie Stephen’s library, but something else happened as well. As I handled Stephen’s books, my opinion of the man who had owned them began to change” (11), she writes.³⁶ Rigel Daugherty offers valuable readings of Woolf’s reminiscences about her father and her education. She does not examine, however, how Woolf’s early education seems to

have heavily influenced her own ideas about pedagogy. After all, there are echoes of Leslie Stephen's proclamation that "all the rest must be learned for oneself" in Woolf's opening to A Room of One's Own: "One can only give one's audience the chance of drawing their own conclusions as they observe the limitations, the prejudices, the idiosyncrasies of the speaker [. . .] It is for you to seek out this truth and to decide whether any of it is worth keeping" (4-5). "How Should One Read a Book?" also emphasizes the importance of reading and thinking independently:

The only advice, indeed, that one person can give another about reading is to take no advice, to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions. If this is agreed between us, then I feel at liberty to put forward a few ideas and suggestions because you will not allow them to fetter that independence which is the most important quality that a reader can possess. (281)

Although both Woolf and her father value the independence of their students, Woolf does not merely tell her students to learn for themselves as her father told her. While this may, in fact, be the ultimate goal, Woolf helps them along by asking her students to recognize and take an active role in the collaborative pedagogical enterprise of which they are a part. In the above passage from "How Should One Read a Book?" she states: "If this is agreed between us, then I feel at liberty to put forward a few ideas and suggestions" (281). The phrase "agreed between us" marks the collaborative nature of the endeavor in that both she and her students are agreeing to how and why she will proceed with her instruction. This move to draw her students' attention to her particular mode of teaching ultimately separates her type of pedagogy from that of her father.

Not only does she essentially ask for their consent to take a particular pedagogical approach but she puts faith in their ability to understand the necessity of this approach.

3.2.4 Woolf Reaches Working Women

Not only did Woolf put her faith in the newly formed reading public but she also attempted to reach these readers by both writing the introduction to a book that was published expressly for a portion of this demographic and by publishing it. In May of 1930, Woolf was asked by Margaret Llewelyn Davies to write an introduction to a book she was editing entitled Life as We Have Known It. The book is a collection of reflections written by Co-operative Working Women about their work, lives, families, and politics.³⁷ Although skeptical at first—“Books should stand on their own feet [and] if they need shoring up by a preface here, an introduction there, they have no more right to exist than a table that needs a wad of paper under one leg in order to stand steady” (Introduction xv) —Woolf ultimately decided to take part in the project. Once Davies gave her the materials the women had written, Woolf realized that her argument regarding books did not apply as she concluded that “this book is not a book” (Introduction xv). Woolf does not mean this in a derogatory manner. While she knows that the literary critic might say that the writing by the working women in Life As We Have Known It “lacks detachment and imaginative breadth” (Introduction xxxvii), she prefers to consider the degree to which the writing has “some quality even as literature that the literate and instructed might envy” (Introduction xxxviii). She quotes several passages noting the ways in which the women capture the moments they describe, how although the words are simple “it is difficult to see how they could say more” (Introduction xxxviii). Praising one woman’s portion she poses the following question, “Could she have said that better if Oxford had made her a Doctors of Letters?” (xxxviii).

Woolf wrote the introduction as a direct letter to Davies. Woolf's choice of format has been subject to criticism; some say that it is indicative of her investment in class distinctions and her refusal to address the working women's audience. Thus Mary M. Childers argues that, in refusing to address the working women, Woolf creates a barrier between herself and them. Woolf's real interest, argues Childers, lies not in politics or the plight of the working women, but rather in aesthetics—in the decisions she makes regarding her own work and the form it will take (66-67). While Childers's reading is problematic in part, as Anna Snaith points out, because she separates aesthetics and politics (116), her reading is also problematic because it rehearses one of the first arguments made regarding Woolf's work, namely that her aesthetic choices exclude most readers. In Fiction and the Reading Public (1932), Q. D. Leavis³⁸ argues:

The difficulty presented by To The Lighthouse is not only more formidable and complex than that of The Unfortunate Traveler or Tristram Shandy, it is especially calculated to baffle the general public of the twentieth century. [Woolf's] thoughts and perceptions inevitably flower into images, like a poet's. [. . .] Thus to a public accustomed to nothing more ambitious than the elementary prose of the journalist the style of To The Lighthouse is formidable in the extreme. [. . .] The tone is prohibitive to any one who does not share the author's cultural background [. . .] Above all, the intention is the final barrier [. . .] The novels are in fact highbrow art. [. . .] The technique and the intention are poetic, and To The Lighthouse requires that the reader should have had a training in reading poetry. (222-223)

In this passage, Leavis continually returns to Woolf's intentions. She intends, Leavis argues, to "baffle the general public" with her novel and the aesthetic choices therein. The images, the style, and the tone of the text would all represent difficulties for readers as would the difference between Woolf's cultural background and that of the "general public of the twentieth century." Leavis's description of Woolf's writing is an important reminder of one of the first analyses that concludes that Woolf sought to intentionally alienate the reading public. Childers's more current description is simply a variation on this theme as she, like Leavis, accuses Woolf of intentionally creating a barrier between herself and the working women by choosing only to address Margaret Llewelyn Davies. What emerges instead of a keen interest in the lives of these women, argues Childers, is a "crafted and crafty" (66) preface. Childers creates a binary which offers only two possible readings of Woolf's introduction: Woolf is either committed to aesthetics or to working women. If contextualized within Woolf's work as a whole, however, Woolf's decision to write the introduction in the form of a letter may be indicative of little more than her favoring of the format, as she did throughout her life. Childers, though, does not seem aware of this inclination of Woolf's. Childers tells the story of a fellow Woolf scholar who "reprimanded [her] both publicly and privately" (70) for making these claims about Woolf. "To convince me that Woolf was kind to her servants and to prove that I had not done all my homework," writes Childers, "she gave me a copy of a long term servant's testimony to the Woolfs' generosity and goodness" (70-71). Childers responds:

I do not think it erodes my argument that we should pay attention to the contradictions of Woolf's texts. Nor do I think everyone should be obliged to read everything written about Woolf to be licensed to speak about her texts. Such a requirement would guarantee that only experts and

disciples—who are significantly invested in sustaining Woolf's reputation—could speak publicly about Woolf. (71)

Childers seems to have little knowledge even of Woolf's extensive letter writing and Three Guineas, both of which testify to Woolf's attraction to the epistolary form. Moreover, this point that "everyone should [not] be obliged to read everything written about Woolf to be licensed to speak about her" (emphasis added) gets to the root of a problem that arises in Childers's piece and in so much Woolf scholarship. Often, scholars seem to have read that which is written about Woolf and about her work rather than reading the works themselves. Therefore, it becomes impossible to produce anything other than variations of the arguments already circulating. Woolf's consistent experimentation with the form of the letter—because it implies and invites conversation, dialogue, and collaboration— is perhaps best exemplified by Three Guineas, written as a response to letters, and by The Hogarth Letters, which she and Leonard published in the early 1930s. The idea for The Hogarth Letters was, in fact, Virginia's. At the end of September of 1930 Woolf wrote to John Lehmann, the assistant at the Press, that she had "'lots of 'wild ideas' for an exchange of letters about modern poetry: 'Why should poetry be dead? etc. etc.'" She thought that "the whole subject is crying out for letters—flocks, volleys, of them, from every side. Why not get Spender and Auden and Day Lewis to join in?" (Letters 4: 381). Although the collection of letters ended up being more political in nature and less literary, Woolf's goal of publishing multiple viewpoints, dialogues, and conversations by way of these letters was reached.

Because Woolf favored the letter format throughout her life, it is shortsighted to suggest that her choice of this format for the introduction to Life As We Have Known It is indicative of her being uninterested in engaging the audience of working women who helped write and who

would read this text. What Childers and others forget is that this particular letter is of a public nature—Woolf knew it was not a private correspondence between herself and Davies— and therefore it must not be understood in the same terms as the traditionally private letter. Childers’s treatment of the letter is reminiscent of somewhat outdated epistolary studies that locate the letter within the private sphere. More recent studies emphasize cultural-historical readings of epistolary texts that “revis[e] the critical fiction that equates epistolary discourse with the epistolary heroine and that keeps both firmly in the private sphere” (Gilroy and Verhoeven 15). Moreover, as Anna Snaith argues, Woolf was acutely aware of the differences and overlaps between the private and public spheres. Woolf’s affinity for the form of the letter³⁹ seems indicative of her interest in experimenting with the differences between private writing and public writing. While the epistolary form suggests a very private, personal correspondence, the writing of letters for the public—whether in Three Guineas or in Life as We Have Known It—necessarily blurs this distinction. “The epistolary as a published mode enable[s] a range of female voices other than the intimate” (Gilroy and Verhoeven 11, emphasis added), but, because Childers treats the letter as tied only to the private sphere, she is unable to see how Woolf’s decision to address the letter to Davies does not necessarily imply an intimate connection between the two of them to the exclusion of the working women. I would argue that Woolf’s writing of this introduction indicates the very opposite, namely her interest in reaching these working women, something that her being published in this text guaranteed. Given her commitment to the Workers Education Association, it comes as no surprise that Woolf would accept the offer to reach a demographic—specifically working women—that she may not have otherwise reached.

3.2.5 The Realization of Woolf's Message

Woolf's audiences, whether sitting before her in a vast lecture hall, reading her novels in private, or listening to her speak on the radio, were crucial to her writing. In "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," she claims, "A writer is never alone. There is always the public with him—if not on the same seat, at least in the compartment next door" (332). This is but one instance in which Woolf describes the writer as necessarily bound to the reading public. We see this corroborated by Woolf's comments in her 1940 lecture "The Leaning Tower," in which she reminded the members of the WEA that "literature is no one's private ground; literature is common ground":

[Literature] is not cut up into nations; there are no wars there. Let us trespass freely and fearlessly and find our own way for ourselves. It is thus that English literature will survive this war and cross the gulf—if commoners and outsiders like ourselves make that country our own country, if we teach ourselves how to read and write, how to preserve, and how to create. (181)⁴⁰

By bringing "outsiders," "commoners," and intellectuals onto the same plane, Woolf argues that all are responsible for the creation and preservation of literature. Moreover, she situates herself not as an intellectual, but as an outsider: "Let us trespass freely and fearlessly [. . .] If commoners and outsiders like ourselves make that country our own country" (181, emphasis added). With its territorial metaphors, this passage also suggests grander, political implications of collaboration in that it implies that collaboration can bring nations and the people therein together. This sentiment is indicative of much of Woolf's work on reading and writing and echoes the following question posed toward the end of another lecture she presented, this time at a women's college. She concludes the lecture "Why?" thus: "Why learn English Literature at universities when you can

read it for yourselves in books?” (281-82). By posing this question, Woolf removes learning from the University setting and suggests that English literature is available to everyone.

Woolf’s point that literature belongs to everyone is perhaps just as much a plea for readers, as Woolf was often anxious over the possibility of losing her readership. Anna Snaith argues that Woolf’s “need for a committed reading public was expressed most urgently in the late 1930s, when she felt that the onset of the Second World War was depleting her readership” (Virginia Woolf 118). This anxiety over losing her readership comes on the heels of a moment in which she became keenly aware and proud of her ability to reach the public—and a diverse readership at that. Her publication of Three Guineas in 1938 prompted at least 58 letters from her readers, readers marked by differences in class, geographical location, and employment, as they indicated in the letters they sent to her. While Woolf received more letters than she kept, 58 of these letters are currently housed in the Monk’s House Papers at the University of Sussex.⁴¹ It remains unclear if the response to Three Guineas was greater than that she received from her other texts or if Woolf simply kept more of these letters.⁴² The number of letters she received about Three Guineas— more than double what she received about The Waves, its forerunner— has been the focus of numerous studies of Woolf’s relationship to her readers. Snaith argues that “the responses obviously provide information as to the constitution of Woolf’s readership, but also comment directly on the issue. Nearly half of the respondents take up the issue of audience, nearly always in terms of dissemination and access. Three Guineas should be made available to more people, they argue; it should be published in new editions to make it cheaper” (Virginia Woolf 125). Snaith aptly notes, “The strongest praise in the letters is the repeated call for a larger reading public, tying in with Woolf’s own democratic notions of access and the common reader” (Virginia Woolf 125). I would take Snaith’s point even further in order to argue that these letters

are the realization of Woolf's message about the need for collaborative pedagogy. While many of the letters are only a few lines long and consist of praise for Three Guineas and gratefulness to Woolf for having written it, almost half of the letters ask questions of Woolf or complicate an argument that she makes in Three Guineas. Gladys Rossiter, for example, lists several issues, in the form of questions, that she feels are relevant but remain neglected by Woolf in Three Guineas:

Have you forgotten that a prodigious number of undergraduates recently voted that under no circumstances would they ever fight for King and Country and, in ignoring this fact, are you being quite fair to the other sex and to the Universities which, after all, may be producing a generation of pacifists? Much as one loathes and abhors the very thought of War, is one smilingly to turn the other cheek when Germany—enormously strong through her forcible annexation of Czechoslovakia, the Tyrol, Memel, etc. turns her greedy eyes to these islands? Is one meekly to allow oneself to be bombed, annexed, and are we and our Empire to submit without resistance to becoming a minor German State? (Rossiter 32-33).

Woolf did reply to Rossiter although the reply, according to Snaith, has not survived. Rossiter then replied thanking Woolf for corresponding with her and telling Woolf, "I marvel that you had enough faith to write such a stirring document whilst millions of tiny children (in Dictatorship countries) are being taught to Hate as their foremost creed" (Snaith, Woolf Studies 38). Rossiter understands what Woolf expects from her as a reader. She must work with Woolf by joining the dialogue that Woolf has begun. Rossiter does so by writing to Woolf directly and remarking upon issues that were not addressed by Three Guineas. Rossiter imagined that Three

Guineas was only the beginning of a larger discussion or debate she might have with Woolf. Woolf welcomed the opportunity both to teach and be taught by this reader.

Miss E.E. Leake, also, wrote to Woolf to raise questions:

In Three Guineas it is suggested that the daughters of educated men should not subscribe to papers that encourage intellectual slavery. But how can they know which encourage slavery and which do not? Is there any publication which tells them 'This paper encourages intellectual slavery. This one does not'? Will editors and proprietors tell them? They can form their own private opinion, of course, but opinion is not knowledge. (Leake 36)

Leake's letter represents the relationship Woolf wants to exist between writers and readers: "[Novelists] are only able to help us if we come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading" ("How Should One Read a Book?" 294). Leake has written to Woolf with her own questions concerning intellectual slavery and asks that Woolf elaborate on the little she has said about it in Three Guineas.

While Rossiter and Leake raised questions other readers offered suggestions.

Frances Barnes wrote:

May I venture to suggest, dear Madam, that your book doesn't go far enough? [...] I want some recognition by women that the issues of conflict are vital issues: then I think we shall find our way of pressing for the cause of what Macmurray calls Christianity—by Gandhi's non-cooperative method or something like it. But as long as men and women just ask for peace, as an unwise mother stops quarreling

children, without troubling to know what are the rights & wrongs of the quarrel and what injustices have led to the aggression, we shall live to see our generation looking vainly for peace in a world of anarchy and decay. [. . .] Writers such as Vera Brittain, Storm Jameson and yourself might exert a very great influence if you would begin to understand what the struggle is all about. (Barnes 109)

Barnes's criticism of Three Guineas—unlike other readers, including J. E. Callister, who wrote to Woolf, “You weaken your argument by over-emphasis” (Snaith, Woolf Studies 110) — is that all Woolf is doing with Three Guineas is asking for peace rather than actively seeking it. Moreover, Woolf is doing so, argues Barnes, without adequate knowledge of the complexities of the conflicts. Although a scathing piece of criticism, this letter suggests the degree to which Three Guineas was able to “get its knife in between the joints of Barnes's “hide [. . .] and elicit a strong response” (“What is a Good Novel?” 109). Artists, in general, according to Woolf, depend on this sort of reaction from the public:

Art is the first luxury to be discarded in times of stress; the artist is the first of the workers to suffer. But intellectually also he depends upon society. Society is not only his paymaster but his patron. If the patron becomes too busy or too distracted to exercise his critical faculty, the artist will work in a vacuum and his art will suffer and perhaps perish from lack of understanding. Again, if the patron is neither poor nor indifferent, but dictatorial—if he will only buy pictures that flatter his vanity or serve his politics—then again the artist is impeded and his work becomes worthless. (“The Artist and Politics” 231)

As is the case when Woolf talks specifically about writers, here too, she reflects on the importance of the critical faculty in society. Notice that she does not talk about the critical faculty of professional critics, but, rather, of the general public. Not only does she assume that all members of society possess this critical acumen,⁴³ but she sees particular value in “patrons” who engage with art that conflicts with their beliefs. Thus, despite Barnes’s attack on Three Guineas, Woolf might have found her letter rather encouraging.

The final letter I will examine is one which perhaps best exemplifies the sort of collaborative pedagogy Woolf imagined. Replying to a (lost) letter from Woolf, also about Three Guineas, Naomi Mitchison writes:

Thank you so much for your letter, which goes far, I think, to clear up what worried me. It looks as if there were going to be an interesting argument brewing in Time and Tide. I think what Renee Haynes writes is from very much my point of view (except that she is a Christian), though differently expressed. Obviously, what bothered us both was the “indifference”; perhaps it is a word which has wrong connotations and should have something else substituted for it. (Mitchison 48)

Mitchison’s allusion to “an interesting argument brewing” refers to Renee Haynes’s defense of Three Guineas in Time and Tide after an unsigned article, a week prior, had criticized the text (Snaith, Woolf Studies Annual 47). More importantly, the allusion suggests an ongoing discussion about Three Guineas involving Woolf, Mitchison, Haynes, and the anonymous author. The focus on the use of the word “indifference”—seemingly addressed by Mitchison, Haynes, and Woolf—foreshadows Woolf’s own interest in language, expressed poignantly in “Craftsmanship” in which she argues that “when words are pinned down they fold their wings

and die” (251). Mitchison’s letter, with its references to other, ongoing discussions of Three Guineas, is the sort of collaboration which Woolf sought to inspire: Many readers writing and responding to what one author had written, taking such care with their responses that they spend time focusing on the use of a particular word. These readers’ letters are not only important, then, because they offer a glimpse of the reading public but because they represent the collaboration which Woolf deems necessary if the abilities of both the reading public and authors are to flourish.

3.3 THE HOGARTH PRESS

3.3.1 The Press’s Inception

For Woolf, the invention of the printing press meant freedom from the lecture format and the opportunity for readers to actively engage with a text: “Why, since printing presses have been invented these many centuries, should [the professor] not have printed his lecture instead of speaking it? Then by the fire in winter, or under an apple tree in summer, it could have been read, thought over, discussed” (280). The Hogarth Press, the Woolfs’s private press founded in 1917, offered both Leonard and Virginia a very specific kind of freedom—freedom from publishers. In this section, I will consider how the Hogarth Press speaks to Woolf’s investment in pedagogy. I will look specifically at how and why the Hogarth Press was founded in order to suggest its ties to Woolf’s commitment to the reading public, accessibility, and to embracing rather than alienating the common reader.

Virginia, even more than Leonard, was prone to anxiety about submitting her work to publishers— even to her own half-brother Gerald Duckworth, who published her first two novels. According to Leonard Woolf, both Duckworth and his reader, Edward Garnett, “had considerable affection for Virginia” (Downhill All The Way 68) and were openly complimentary of her work, but:

Virginia suffered abnormally from the normal occupational disease of writers— indeed of artists—hypersensitiveness to criticism [. . .] The idea of having to send her next book to the mild Gerald and the enthusiastic Edward filled her with horror and misery [. . .] The idea, which came to us in 1920, that we might publish ourselves the book which she had just begun to write, Jacob’s Room, filled her with delight, for she would thus avoid the misery of submitting this highly experimental novel to the criticism of Gerald Duckworth and Edward Garnett. (Downhill All The Way 68)

As Virginia points out in a January 1941 letter to Ethel Smyth, part of the incentive for starting their own press was a means to securing their freedom as writers: “Didn’t we start the Hogarth Press 25 years ago so as to be quit of editors & publishers? Its [sic] my nightmare, being in their clutches: but a nightmare, not a sane survey” (Letters, 6: 459).

One of many in her circle who engaged in highly experimental writing, Virginia looked forward not only to publishing her own work, but that of her friends. She wrote to Lady Robert Cecil in January 1916: “We are thinking of starting a printing press, for all our friends [sic] stories” (Letters 2: 120). For Leonard, this seemed a secondary goal. In his autobiography, Leonard suggests that the incentive was the therapeutic value of this hobby for Virginia: “It

struck me that it would be a good thing if Virginia had a manual occupation of this kind which, say in the afternoons, would take her mind completely off her work” (Beginning Again 233). Leonard explains how the Press became more than a hobby: “The Hogarth Press [started out as] a hobby and the hobby consisted in printing which we did in our spare time in the afternoons. A second object, which developed from the first, was to produce and publish short works which commercial publishers could not or would not publish, like T. S. Eliot’s poems, Virginia’s Kew Gardens, and Katherine Mansfield’s Prelude” (Downhill All the Way 66). Leonard, like Virginia, was certainly excited once he realized that the Press could publish works that commercial presses did not, namely the work of little-known authors with difficult and experimental works, authors not unlike his wife:

What the author said [in the books published by the Hogarth Press] was in many cases unfamiliar and therefore reprehensible, for it must be remembered that, if you published 42 years ago poetry by T. S. Eliot, Robert Graves, and Herbert Read and a novel by Virginia Woolf, you were publishing four books which the vast majority of people, including booksellers and the literary “establishment,” condemned as unintelligible and absurd. (Downhill all the Way 76-77)

Through Leonard and Virginia’s openness to experimentation and their critical acumen, many writers— including Eliot, Mansfield, H. G. Wells, Vita Sackville-West, and Christopher Isherwood— could write without the worry that their work would be deemed absurd and unpublishable.

As the Hogarth Press turned from private press to small publishing house in 1920 with Leonard’s decision to publish S. S. Kotlianksy’s translation of Maxim Gorky’s Reminiscences

of Tolstoi (Willis 50), other publishing houses took notice. Larger publishing houses began taking the Woolfs's publishing decisions more seriously and, ultimately, the Press's effects were far-reaching in that "their titles were often 'highbrow,' and [although they] sometimes sold only in small numbers, the influence of their publishing choices would eventually filter into a wider market" (Lee 366).

3.3.2 The Expansion Begins

Although the Hogarth Press influenced commercial presses, the Woolfs were conscientious about not commercializing their Press, even as it began to expand between 1921 and 1922 as they committed to publishing full-length books. Leonard and Virginia took pride in certain aspects of their books that marked them as products of a private Press as Leonard explains:

If you compare the thirteen books which we published [between 1921 and 1922] with any thirteen similar books from other publishers, you will find that ours have something more or less unorthodox in their appearance. They are either not the orthodox size or not the orthodox shape, or their binding is not orthodox. (Downhill All the Way 76)

Although Leonard and Virginia took pride in the unorthodox appearance of their books, they wanted to do right by their commitment to several authors to publish longer texts. Still, they wanted to retain the charm of their previously published books. Because of their commitment to publish full-length books and the still rather amateurish way in which the business and machinery were organized, the Woolfs began looking for a partner who might work full-time at the Press. This would free up time for Leonard and Virginia to work on other projects. In late 1922, Leonard met with James Whittall, "a cultured American" (Downhill all the Way 79) to

discuss the prospect of his coming to work at the Hogarth Press. The Woolfs decided against hiring him because they came to the conclusion, according to Leonard, “that he was too cultured for us and for the Press” (Downhill all the Way 79). Leonard acknowledges that their stance—and particularly Virginia’s stance— against publishing perfect books and the “too cultured” Whittall may surprise many, as Leonard states:

I am, of course, aware that many people would have thought—and some would still think—it ludicrous for us, and particularly Virginia, to talk of anyone being too cultured. The myth of Virginia as queen of Bloomsbury and culture, living in an ivory drawing-room or literary and aesthetic hothouse, still persists to some extent. I think that there is no truth in this myth. (Downhill All the Way 80)

Leonard wrote this passage in 1967 and probably would not have guessed that almost forty years later Virginia Woolf would continue to be cast as the “queen of Bloomsbury and culture.” The notion that his wife must live in a “literary and aesthetic hothouse” speaks almost directly to the criticisms that the Leavises and others leveled at Woolf, namely accusing her of an investment in aesthetics at the expense of politics and “the world out there.”

Having sketched an admittedly partial history of the inception of the Press, I want to continue to challenge the notion that the Press was meant to perpetuate the sort of elitism often associated with Bloomsbury.⁴⁴ I will focus on how the Woolfs saw to it that the Hogarth Press, like Virginia Woolf herself, was committed to the reading public and to pedagogy.

3.3.3 The Press's Commitment to Accessibility and the Reading Public

While it started out as a coterie press, printing the Woolfs's own works and the works of their friends for their friends, the Hogarth Press soon became a small-scale international publisher in 1920 with the publication of its first translation, Gorky's Reminiscences of Tolstoi. With this expansion, as noted above, the Woolfs decided to consider hiring someone to help them with the Press. In addition to Whitall being "too cultured," he also represented something that might interfere with the ideas that the Woolfs had about their Press. Leonard explains, "He was too cultured for us and for the Press. We did not want the Press to become one of those (admirable in their way) 'private' or semi-private Presses the object of which is finely produced books. Books which are meant not to be read, but to be looked at" (Downhill All The Way 79-80). The presses Leonard alludes to (and will, in a later passage, refer to by name) are the Kelmscott Press—which William Morris, a decorator by profession, founded in 1891—and the Nonesuch Press—founded in the 1920s by Frances Meynell. The Kelmscott Press has been understood as having ties to Morris's involvement in the Arts and Crafts Society and the Art-Workers Guild, both of which sought to recognize Art in the "humblest object and material" (Peterson 73). Ironically, there was nothing humble about Morris's hand-printed and hand-designed books. While not all Kelmscott Press books were extensively ornamented, the Kelmscott Press is remembered because so many of their books are considered works of art. The Kelmscott Chaucer, for example, was replete with pig-skin binding and eighty-seven wood-engraved illustrations by Edward Burne-Jones (Willis 244).⁴⁵ There were four pigskin Chaucer bindings designed by Morris. The Doves Bindery bound a full pigskin and a half pigskin edition while J. and J. Leighton also bound one full pigskin and one half pigskin edition (Peterson 244). The covers of these editions are representative of Morris's designs in that they show his "passion for filling

every white space” (Peterson 145). He often filled all of the white space—or in this case the blank space—with various patterns. Morris used vines, leaves, and floral patterns as well as purely ornamental patterns or those without any discernible referent. Both types of patterns comprise the Chaucer cover. The cover designs rarely reflected the content of the texts⁴⁶—as is the case with this cover. Morris designed covers that were artistic and ornamental—like the Kelmscott Chaucer—rather than those that were illustrative. Morris, himself, in fact, praised the Kelmscott Chaucer as “‘essentially a work of art’” (qtd. in Peterson 244).

The ornately gothic scripted title-page of Chaucer—which ironically boasts a “newly imprinted” edition—blend in with the ornate designs and the page’s border.⁴⁷ The design of this title page—in its lack of boundary between language and illustrations—is representative of not only Kelmscott title pages but other illustrated pages throughout the Press’s publications. Morris believed that “‘the designer of the picture-blocks, the designer of the ornamental blocks, the wood-engraver, and the printer, all of them thoughtful, painstaking artists [must] all wor[k] in harmonious cooperation for the production of a work of art. This is the only possible way in which you can get beautiful books’” (qtd. in Peterson 134-135). The content, however, resides nowhere in this description of collaboration. The artistry of the books is considered separate from and more important than the potential for a conjunction between its content and its design. Morris’s goal of “beautiful books”—a goal which neglects to define how the content will figure into the mix—suggests his commitment to artistry above all else.

The first illustration ever to appear in a Kelmscott Press publication served as the frontispiece for Kelmscott’s A Dream of John Ball, the first of the Kelmscott publications to include a frontispiece.⁴⁸ Although the words in this illustration are blocked off a bit from the picture, they are not without ornamentation as the vines overflow from the border into the box

containing the text. The text of the frontispiece, itself, is not attributed to any source, thus expecting readers to know both its source and its relationship to A Dream of John Ball. According to Peterson, the illustration was “an adaptation of a gravure reproduction which had appeared in the first edition (1888) of the book and it is significant that at about the time of publication Robert Catterson-Smith, a young artist who later became Headmaster of the Birmingham School of Art, redrew the frontispiece on a larger scale for reproduction in the Daily Chronicle” (151). Perhaps readers were also expected to know the illustration’s history and its place in the first edition. Catterson-Smith’s redrawing of the frontispiece suggested that it was possible to trace Burne-Jones’s designs and transfer them photographically to woodblocks that could then be engraved by William Harcourt Hooper. In order to grasp the importance of this illustration to the text as a whole, a reader would need to know its history, its source, and its relationship to A Dream of John Ball. It is not difficult to see how many readers might have felt alienated by this use of illustration. In privileging the artistry of his books, Morris potentially alienated readers who looked to books’ covers and dust jackets for representations and illustrations of the content therein. These covers and illustrations prevented easy access to the Kelmscott publications. Readers could not rely on illustrations and cover designs but would actually have to read the books themselves in order to discover their content. Despite these issues, the collaborative endeavor among the three artists described above became the model for future illustrations in Kelmscott publications.

These ornate illustrations and expensive binding techniques were trademarks of the Kelmscott Press. Of his goals for his press, Morris writes:

I began printing books with the hope of producing some which would have a definite claim to beauty [. . .] And it was the essence of my

undertaking to produce books which it would be a pleasure to look upon as pieces of printing and arrangement of type. Looking at my adventure from this point of view then, I found I had to consider chiefly the following things: the paper, the form of the type, the relative spacing of the letters, the words, and the lines, and lastly the position of the printed matter on the page. It was a matter of course that I should consider it necessary that the paper should be hand-made, both for the sake of durability and appearance. (Sparling 135)

This emphasis on the trappings of the book—the paper, the type, the arrangement, the decorations—rather than on the content of the books was unappealing to the Woolfs. The Woolfs were not interested in publishing books that were meant to be admired from a distance rather than held, manipulated, and read.

Dora Carrington designed the cover for the Hogarth Press's first publication—Two Stories—comprised of Leonard's "Three Jews" and Virginia's "The Mark on the Wall." Carrington also designed the cover for Leonard's Stories of the East (Appendix A). Although the simple illustration which contains a tiger as its focal point has little to do with the content therein—not unlike the Kelmscott cover illustrations and borders—Carrington's cover art is strikingly different from that of Kelmscott publications. Carrington's cover is representational. The cover design includes a picture of a tiger, trees, pineapples, and flowers rather than the non-representational decorative illustrations and borders like those of the Kelmscott Press covers. The scene on the cover of Stories of the East presents readers with recognizable and "readable" images rather than purely decorative and potentially "unreadable" designs.

Vanessa Bell was the most well-known designer of dust jackets for Hogarth Press publications. In addition to her famous designs for Woolf's Three Guineas and Jacob's Room, Bell designed twenty jackets for the Hogarth Press. Like Carrington's covers, Bell's covers were generally not illustrative of the contents encased by the dust jacket. Willis explains that "the usual practice was to send a dummy volume to Vanessa when the page count had been determined, thus setting the book's size, and Vanessa would design the jacket without having read the text" (382). With its picture of a woman reading a book, Bell's simple dust jacket design for Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown, (Appendix B) is an exception to Bell's normally non-illustrative covers. Although more illustrative than most, this cover still maintains its "impressionistic" (Lee 364) qualities. Bell provided, explains Lee, "a kind of visual underscoring which gave the books a sympathetic atmosphere—feminine, imaginative, delicate, modern, but domestic" (364). This sort of atmosphere is captured in the simple illustration of the "large, calm, classical woman," (Lee 363) the focal point of the dust jacket.

More elaborate and ornamental than her design for Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown, Vanessa Bell's design for Clive Bell's The Legend of Monte della Sibilla or Le Paradis de la Reine Sibille (Appendix B) boasts a border and a background of clouds, flowers and a sailboat with a "heavy-bodied Sibyl looking like a recumbent nature deity" (Willis 75). The design suggests the "rollicking amorality tale of wine, women and song" therein (Willis 75) and expects readers to recognize that the figure on the cover is Sibyl. Although at times slightly more illustrative than Kelmscott Press designs, Hogarth Press cover designs were certainly not explanatory. They did not—as did most of the covers of mass market books— aim to represent the books' content. For this reason, booksellers "almost universally condemned" (Downhill All the Way 76) Bell's designs.

The Nonesuch Press publications were more along the lines of those produced by the Kelmscott Press in that they were concerned with detail, design, and craftsmanship. Frances Meynell was famous for using printers' flowers as decoration throughout Nonesuch publications. Meynell recut many designs (Appendix C) from the sixteenth century by type designers Robert Granjon and Fourier-le-jeune (Dreyfus 144). "As his familiarity with printers' flowers increased," writes Dreyfus, "he found it possible to use them not merely as decoration but as a form of illustration. The turning point came in A Plurality of Worlds (1929) [. . .] in which Meynell used type ornaments in gilt on the cover, in color on the title page, and in black on the contents and colophon pages—all with masterly freedom and imagination" (Dreyfus 144). The cover of A Plurality of Worlds (Appendix D) also contains other "ornamental units" used in numerous Nonesuch publications "to enliven page headings and folios" (Dreyfus 144). Still, the ornamentation was nowhere near as intricate as that in the Kelmscott Press's publications. Although like Kelmscott cover designs, the illustrations (i.e. the ornamental units) of A Plurality of Worlds do not reflect the book's content, the two types of designs differ in that the cover design of A Plurality of Worlds clearly marks the decoration as separate from the language. The white space—something to which Morris was opposed—does this work.

The most famous, perhaps, of the Nonesuch publications was the Nonesuch Dickens, first published in 1937 to mixed reviews. The Daily Telegraph deemed it "'one of the most glorious achievements of publishing in our time'" (Dreyfus 84) while Robert Lynd of the News Chronicle proclaimed it "'the most pleasant Dickens to read that has ever been published'" (qtd. in Dreyfus 84). The Scotsman agreed: "'No more handsome edition of Dickens has yet appeared, nor is it easy to conceive of any which might surpass this one'" (qtd. in Dreyfus 84). This praise for the Nonesuch Dickens focuses not on the content of the book but on its aesthetics. The critics of the

Nonesuch Dickens thought the volume too ostentatious particularly during the Depression. The most vocal critic was David Garnett who observed in the New Statesman and Nation: ““The publication of the first volume of the Nonesuch Dickens was greeted with a blast of icy criticism, provoked largely by the extravagant transatlantic methods adopted to push the sale of an extremely expensive book”” (qtd. in Dreyfus 243). Such methods included “dividing up the original woodblocks, which had been secured for the printing the illustrations, so that each subscriber should have one of them encased in a dummy binding, as part of his set” (Dreyfus 243). Nonesuch also promoted the book by publishing Nonesuch Dickensiana, a retrospectus and prospectus “in book form, bound in full cloth” (Dreyfus 87) in order to incite interest in the Nonesuch Dickens. “I do not know of any private press book of the 1930s that was advertised on such a massive scale” (87), writes Dreyfus. The prospectus proclaims the Nonesuch Dickens “the most complete and the most beautiful edition of the present. But it is clearly certain that the Nonesuch Dickens will remain the most complete and the most beautiful of the future” (emphasis in original 123). Advertising for the book focused primarily on the aesthetic value of it, as the prospectus goes on to explain its illustrations, its collectability, its paper with a “high rag content made upon the Fourdrinier machine” (Retrospectus 127), and the new type it contains that is “based upon a vivid but wholly unaffected letter-design originally cut by William Martin for the use of that eminent printer William Bulmer shortly before 1790” (Retrospectus 127).

Leonard objected to this focus on the trappings of the books and he wanted something different for the Hogarth Press:

We were interested primarily in the material inside of a book, what the author had to say and how he said it [. . .] We wanted our books to “look

“nice” [. . .] but neither of us was interested in fine printing and fine binding. We also disliked the refinement and preciousness which are too often a kind of fungoid growth which culture breeds upon art and literature [. . .] It was because Whittall seemed to us too cultured and might want to turn the Hogarth Press into a kind of Kelmscott Press or Nonesuch Press that we turned him down. (Downhill All The Way 80)

This passage reflects Leonard’s objections to finely produced books. It speaks both to Leonard’s and Virginia’s investment in reaching all types of readers and particularly those who might be intimidated by such refinement and perfection. Additionally, they were committed to publishing books that were more affordable than that which the Kelmscott and even Nonesuch Press published. Although the books published by the Hogarth Press may have initially been intended for those in the Bloomsbury Group, the Woolfs ultimately wanted their texts to reach a larger audience. Furthermore, they wanted to be sure that their employees did not bring with them a certain elitism that would interfere with the goals they set for the Press.

Leonard’s commitment to publishing books with which readers would be comfortable echoes, to a certain degree, Virginia’s investment in collaboration. How, one might ask, can a reader “collaborate” with a book that she is scared to hold for fear of smudging it? How might a reader ask questions of or debate a point within a book that with its perfect binding and perfect printing alienates rather than invites readers?

The Woolfs wanted to reach people outside of the Bloomsbury group and in their fifth anniversary circular they announced their future goals: “They would not reprint the classics. Rather, they would concentrate on the reading ease and decent appearance of the books, to be sold at inexpensive prices” (Willis 64). Accessibility—both in terms of availability and cost—

was especially important to Virginia who took pride in seeing those outside of the Bloomsbury Group reading books that the Hogarth Press had published. In October 1940, Woolf wrote in her diary, “I was glad to see the [Common Reader] all spotted with readers at the Free Library to wh. I think of belonging” (Diary, V, 329). Woolf’s happiness here is derived from her seeing the reading public—not members of the Bloomsbury Group—in a library engaging with a book that she had both written and published.

Leonard and Virginia⁴⁹ recognized that reaching an audience beyond the intellectually savvy Bloomsbury group meant that they would have to make certain accommodations for these readers. Willis explains, “The Hogarth Press edition of Stavrogin’s Confession provided both general and specialized readers of Dostoyevski with materials for further study” (100). The Woolfs, then, were concerned not only with being able to offer affordable books to the reading public but they were committed to readability on two different levels. First, the book had to be readable in that it should be materially inviting to readers and not so finely printed and bound that it was intimidating. Second, the book, when necessary, would contain materials to aid in every reader’s (from the general reader to specialized reader) understanding.

3.3.4 The Hogarth Press’s Brushes with Popular Books

As the Press expanded, the Woolfs were forced to confront what it meant to publish a “popular” book. This came to the fore in 1932 when Lyn D. Irvine, a young author who had written Ten Letter Writers, accused the Woolfs of not publicizing her book in an appropriate manner. According to Willis, “[Irvine] thought that her book appealed to a general public and should be advertised accordingly, for a readership different from Bloomsbury” (378). Willis uses this example to generalize about the Woolfs’s feeling toward the popular market: “With their

rejection of commercialism, their uneasiness with profit making, and their highbrow intellectualism, Leonard and Virginia Woolf were uncomfortable with publications that moved outside Bloomsbury or socialist Labor circles to appeal to a popular market” (378). The popularity of their books—both those they wrote and published—was certainly an issue. Willis, however, does not consider what exactly popularity meant to the Woolfs and therefore his statement that they were “uncomfortable with publications that moved outside Bloomsbury or socialist Labor circles to appeal to a popular market” (378) is misleading. We know from Virginia’s diaries that her attitude toward popularity was more complicated than he suggests. For example, in 1921 Virginia wrote in her diary:

Well, this question of praise and fame must be faced...How much difference does popularity make? What depresses me is the thought that I have ceased to interest people—at the very moment when by the help of the press, I thought I was becoming more myself. One does not want an established reputation, such as I think I was getting, as one of our leading female novelists [. . .] (Diary, II, 106-107)

In this entry, Woolf grapples with the freedom that the Hogarth Press has given her. She now has the freedom to become more herself, yet she thinks that this has hurt her in a way since she has “ceased to interest people.” This entry is indicative of Woolf’s complicated relationship to popularity: she craves it because it means that she is pleasing her readers, but she can’t seem to reconcile the fact that as she feels as though she is becoming more herself her popularity is diminishing.

Woolf’s complex relationship to popularity does not mean, as Willis suggests, that she was not interested in reaching a broader audience than that of the Bloomsbury group. As noted

above, the Woolfs took pride in making their books accessible to a diverse readership, and Woolf even recorded her joy at seeing the “[Common Reader] all spotted with readers at the Free Library” (Diary, V, 329)—readers who were members of neither the Bloomsbury Group nor of the socialist Labor circles. Willis’s oversimplified characterization of the Woolfs’s uncomfortable relationship to those books that reached a diverse readership harkens back to older characterizations of the Woolfs as elitists who only published for certain circles. While the Hogarth Press may have started out as a coterie press, part of the excitement of its expansion derives from its capacity to reach those outside the circles it initially sought to reach. If we take, at the very least, Virginia’s happiness in seeing common readers engage with the books she helped publish through the Hogarth Press and her investment in providing access to the books—both in terms of cost and readability—Woolf’s role as pedagogue extends beyond her position as one who instructs and contemplates instruction; Virginia Woolf also helped to provide access to difficult and “highbrow” literature through the Hogarth Press.

3.3.5 The Press Educates Through Lectures and Pamphlets

While the Hogarth Press is perhaps most well known for publishing full-length books, the Woolfs also published lectures and pamphlets. In July 1926, the Woolfs published the third and last work of J. M. Keynes, entitled *The End of Laissez-Faire*, which was delivered as the Sidney Ball Lecture at Oxford in November, 1924 (Willis 219). The booklet did very well, selling 3,761 copies within the first six months (Willis 219). Later that year, the Woolfs published Gertrude Stein’s *Composition as Explanation* in November 1926, printing 1,000 copies (Willis 127). Unlike Keynes’s published lecture, Stein’s text was not particularly popular and sold only 574

copies in its first year. A few months later, on March 15, 1927, H. G. Wells delivered an address at the Sorbonne. In February, his wife Catherine wrote to the Woolfs stating that her husband “wanted to preserve the copyright by publishing it as a booklet by that date” (Willis 225). The Hogarth Press did in fact publish the address in March under the title *Democracy under Revision*. The Hogarth Press would go on to publish two other pamphlets for Wells in 1929 and 1936, both of which were the transcripts of lectures he had given.

These lectures were educational enterprises: “Shaping attitudes, educating readers to the evils of imperialism or the needs for political and social reforms at home, Leonard Woolf’s Hogarth Press publications in the late 1930s turned increasingly to ideologies” (Willis 251). Leonard became especially aware of the educational purpose that his Press might serve when he began corresponding with Herbert Read in 1935 about the possibility of creating an author’s guild “which would publish books at a higher royalty rate than regular publishers, who were concerned not with literary merit, argued Read, but only with profits from best-sellers” (Willis 365). Although not sold on the idea of the guild, Leonard wrote to Read and “agreed that the book trade and the habits of the reading public, conditioned to best-sellers, needed revolutionary change” (Willis 365). By exposing the reading public to an array of texts including those that were experimental and overtly political, the Woolfs did their part to try to expand the interests of the reading public.

The Hogarth Press’s most outright educational enterprise, however, came in the form of pamphlets on the League of Nations produced for Kathleen Innes, Secretary of the Peace Committee of the Society of Friends (Willis 220). In 1925, the Woolfs published The Story of the League of Nations, Told for Young People which soon became part of the curriculum of many schools (Willis 221). With its place on the London Council’s requisition list in 1925, a list

of publications recommended for use in school, The Story of the League of Nations, Told for Young People had to go through a second printing of 1,500 copies because the initial printing of 1,000 copies was not sufficient for the number of schools that used the pamphlet (Willis 221). All in all, the pamphlet saw five printings and eight years after its first printing The Story of the League of Nations, Told for Young People was still selling 300 copies per year (Willis 221). Despite the potential impact of these pamphlets on such a large number of youngsters, the content of the pamphlets has been ignored both by Woolf scholars and those who focus on the Hogarth Press's publications. These pamphlets, however, are an important part of this study because they suggest how the Hogarth Press's politics found their way into the lives of the youth across England and Wales.

The Story of the League of Nations, Told for Young People consists of fifty nine-pages and is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter— "Early Efforts After Peace: How the cities of Ancient Greece made a pact against war. And how the Holy Roman Empire tried to set up the Christian Commonwealth in the Middle Ages"— situates The League of Nations historically, as one of many attempts at bringing peace through "the realization of human brotherhood and the acceptance of a common law" (Innes 12). Innes traces these attempts as far back as the Amphictyonic League of Ancient Greece. Chapters 2 and 3 document other failed attempts at peace including William Penn's Parliament of Nations, Abbe St. Pierre's A Treaty of Perpetual Peace, Immanuel Kant's Towards Perpetual Peace, and Czar Nicholas II's 1899 and subsequent Conference at the Peace Palace. Innes examines the specific reasons for the failure of each, but ultimately concludes that "it was not the idea which failed. The idea itself was a very great one" (12). Innes elaborates on the greatness of this idea in "Chapter 4: How The League Came Nearer Through The Centuries" arguing that as a result of developments in steam,

electricity, and trade “we have come to be indebted to other countries for the commonest things we use everyday” (33). These technical developments, argues Innes, resulted in a philosophical realization:

We have cut across the bounds of nationality and think of men as one race or as we learn from scripture, as children of one Father. Marconi is an Italian, but his discovery is used all over the world. Great pictures, music and great books become common possession of mankind.

So you see that trade and travel, discovery and invention, science and art, are all pointing in the direction of the civilized nations joining together and helping one another forward, instead of thinking of themselves as rivals; and all this means that the nations have, even if unknown to themselves, been long preparing gradually for the building up of a “League of Nations.” (33)

Rather than claiming that the League of Nations will change current relations among nations, Innes argues that the League of Nations only makes official a “human brotherhood” (33) that already exists. Inventions have already shortened the distance between nations as has art. Nations have already joined together and become indebted to one another. The League of Nations, argues Innes, is simply the next logical step.

Innes, however, does not simply ask students to understand the logic behind The League of Nations but she asks for action. Chapter VIII— “The Future. How You May Help The League”— informs students that The League:

can only continue, however, and become strong and succeed in its

aims, if the people in the different countries take an interest in what is done. This does not mean that we should never criticize what is done; but it does mean that we should think for ourselves what we should like such a League to do to help forward the peace and happiness of all nations, and that we should support the League in its work for these ends. (57)

In arguing that the success of The League of Nations depends upon the students' abilities to think for themselves, Innes outlines the important political work to which these students must contribute. The peace and happiness of all nations depend on the students taking an active interest in The League of Nations. In addition to thinking about what students might like The League of Nations to do, Innes suggests that "we should work hard at languages that we may be able to talk freely to members of other nations when we meet them" (58) and "we should try always to be fair to the members of other nations" (58). "Sometimes, because people differ from us in their ways," explains Innes, "we are inclined to laugh at them or make fun of them, or even dislike them. Sometimes, too, we are very touchy if 'foreigners' make fun of, or are disagreeable to us. We must try to judge fairly in every case, and not to let our judgments be prejudiced because we have to judge about a foreigner" (58). In order to "bring about a better world" (59), students must take their responsibilities as citizens seriously by learning different languages and working to overcome certain prejudices. Innes concludes by assuring potentially skeptical students that "the youngest is not too young" (59). In fact, the age of these citizens is perhaps most important for, with The Story of the League of Nations, Told for Young People, the Woolfs were able to reach one of their vastest and most impressionable audiences yet, the youth of England and Wales. Through these pamphlets the Woolfs were able to impress upon these children the importance of political awareness and action.

With the success of the first pamphlet, Innes approached the Woolfs about publishing another teaching tool— How the League of Nations Works, Told for Young People (1926).⁵⁰

Like its predecessor, this pamphlet emphasizes the importance of careful consideration and evaluation of the League by students and teachers in a collaborative endeavor:

Critical Examination of the League's tasks has not been attempted.

Those directing young people's study of League achievement will, no doubt, point out where the work has been criticized and is justly open to criticism. This is the inevitable prelude to balanced thought and useful constructive effort. Ignorant prejudice is the first enemy to progress. Indiscriminate praise is the second. The base from which alone both can be combated is a knowledge of facts. (5)

This letter to instructors who will use the pamphlet as a teaching tool emphasizes that these pamphlets should not be read as uncritical celebrations of the League but rather should be used to spawn a balanced study in which the League is also constructively criticized based on the facts that these pamphlets offer. Progress, the pamphlet maintains, is a result of this balance.

Progress, too, is dependent upon a pedagogical work that is collaborative in nature. While the above passage contends that these pamphlets will combat "indiscriminate praise" and "ignorant prejudice" by offering the "facts" of the League, the pamphlet also posits that the facts of the League must be critically examined. What this portion of the pamphlet demands is that those "directing young people's study of the League" also guide them in these analyses. Collaborative work between teachers and students ultimately allows them to combat "ignorant prejudice" and "indiscriminate praise."

The publication of these lectures, pamphlets, and teaching tools are representative of the diverse publications that came out of the Hogarth Press. More important, perhaps, than the diversity of their publications—the translations, books on Freudian psychoanalysis, and the various literary works from authors around the world—is the fact that these publications helped to educate the expanded reading public including working men and women all of whom far outnumbered the small Bloomsbury Group. Within a short amount of time, the Hogarth Press went from a private press “for all of [their] friends [sic] stories” to a serious publishing house committed, in part, to reaching and educating a vast portion of the population.

3.4 WOOLF AND THE BBC

3.4.1 The BBC’s Education Department

Since the BBC’s inception in 1922, educational programs were a mainstay.⁵¹ John Reith, the BBC’s first General Manager, wrote in Broadcast Over Britain, “I think it will be admitted by all that to have exploited so great a scientific invention for the purpose and pursuit of entertainment alone would have been a prostitution of its powers and an insult to the character and intelligence of the people” (19). Reith created the Education Department at the BBC in 1924 and appointed J. C. Stobart, a member of the Inspectorate of the Board of Education, as its Director (Briggs, Birth 201). Considered a public service,⁵² the BBC’s Education Department allowed Government agencies including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Board of Trade, and the Ministry of Education to give talks although these were less favored than the

more entertaining and interesting series “My Part of the Country” and “Music and the Ordinary Listener” (Briggs, Birth 254). The Education Department also sponsored talks given by literary critics including John Strachey, the BBC’s first, who broadcast on September 3, 1923 (Briggs, Birth 254). Desmond McCarthy took over Strachey’s position in 1925 (Briggs, Birth 256).

One of the earliest programs on the BBC was “The Children’s Hour,” a forty-five-minute program that Reith saw as “a happy alternative to the squalor of streets and backyards” (185). During “The Children’s Hour,” the BBC broadcast stories and plays written expressly for this program. Although much of “The Children’s Hour” could have been deemed educational, the BBC never wanted children to feel as though they were in the classroom even though, by the mid-1920s, the BBC was being used as an educational tool in classrooms across England and Wales: “Both Children’s Hour and school listening programs were to remain essential but distinct parts of the Corporation’s work” (Briggs, Birth 262). The latter were most successful between 1927 and 1939. By 1939, thirty-nine school programs a week were being transmitted throughout England and Wales. The wireless lessons were created for different levels and types of schools. Younger students would listen to Music and Movement for Very Young Children and older students would listen to Our Village, a dramatized series meant to attract students in both rural and urban settings. (Briggs, Birth 216)

The BBC did not ignore the Adult Education Movement and produced The Changing World, a series which ran for six months that catered to this audience. Pamphlets were produced to supplement the programs: “Five special pamphlets were published, along with a master pamphlet, Discussion Groups and How to Run Them. This pamphlet was also published in Braille. Along with a Board of Education pamphlet, Adult Wireless Listening Groups, published in 1933, the literature surrounding The Changing World transports the reader back into the

excitements of the brief hey-day of wireless adult education” (Briggs, Golden Age 221). The BBC also worked closely with R. S. Lambert, a tutor at the Workers Educational Association who in 1927 wrote to members: “The W. E. A. has long experience and knowledge of what is wanted educationally: the BBC has an instrument of unparalleled range and power for reaching the mass of the people” (Briggs, Golden Age 218). Pamphlets were also published to supplement the talks that were geared toward the workers within the Adult Education Movement: The first “aid to study” pamphlet, One Hundred Years of Working Class Progress, was published in May 1927 (Briggs, Birth 219).

Despite the BBC’s far-reaching commitment to education, many were worried that radio might have a negative effect on the public. Briggs glosses these concerns:

Broadcasting, it was claimed, would not only keep people away from the concert halls, it would stop them from reading books. It would encourage contentment with superficiality. “Instead of solitary thought,” the headmaster of Rugby complained, “people would listen in to what was said to millions of people, which could not be the best things.” Radio would make people passive. It would produce “all-alike girls.” (14)

The headmaster connects passivity—“people would listen in”—to the masses. Because the radio programs had to appeal to so many the headmaster assumes that the content would necessarily be inferior.

3.4.2 Woolf’s Broadcasts

Woolf distrusted the traditional lecture format because it could incite the very passivity discussed above. It would follow that she should also be wary of the radio talk, which forced her to talk at

listeners rather than engaging in dialogue with them. Indeed, Woolf was a bit skeptical of the medium and on April 21, 1937 wrote in her diary: “There’s a certain thrill about writing to read aloud—I expect a vicious one. And it could have been a good article. It’s the talk element that upsets it” (*Diaries* 4: 81). In this entry Woolf is most likely referring to her third and final broadcast “Craftsmanship”⁵³ for the BBC, which she delivered on April 29, 1937 as part of the series “Words Fail Me.” The other two talks she broadcast for the BBC include “Are Too Many Books Written and Published?” which she gave with Leonard in July of 1927 and her November 20, 1929 broadcast on Beau Brummel as part of the Miniature Biographies series.

As in many of her lectures, in “Craftsmanship” and “Are Too Many Books Written and Published?” Woolf considers issues of pedagogy. In “Craftsmanship” she discusses how we misunderstand and misuse words. This ultimately allows her to criticize the state of education: “We pin [words] down to one meaning, their useful meaning, the meaning which makes us catch the train, the meaning which makes us pass the examination. And when words are pinned down they fold their wings and die” (251). Rather than focusing on the “practical” meanings of words—meanings that help us catch the train or pass the exam—Woolf asks radio listeners to consider the connotative meanings of words: “This power of suggestion is one of the most mysterious properties of words. Everyone who has ever written a sentence must be conscious or half-conscious of it. Words, English words, are full of echoes, of memories, of associations—naturally” (249). While students may pass an examination because they know the denotative meaning of a word, argues Woolf, they are missing the most profound characteristic of words, namely their “power of suggestion.” Woolf points out to her listeners that the examination, the chosen format for teaching and testing students’ knowledge, is ultimately flawed. While words themselves, are partly to blame, argues Woolf, so are teaching methods:

There is, it would appear some obstacle in the way, some hinderance to the teaching of words. For though at this moment at least a hundred professors are lecturing upon the literature of the past, at least a thousand critics are reviewing the literature of the present, and hundreds upon hundreds of young men and women are passing examinations in English literature with the utmost credit, still—do we write better, do we read better than we read and wrote four hundred years ago when we were unlectured, uncriticized, untaught? (*Collected Essays* 2 249)

In this broadcast, Woolf problematizes the institutionalization of English literature—the sort of teaching that involves lecturing and examinations. She suggests, that although “hundreds upon hundreds of young men and women are passing examinations in English literature with the utmost credit,” they are no better at reading or writing than those who were not subject to lectures and teaching. Moreover, Woolf situates herself among these students by asking “do we write better, do we read better than we read and wrote four hundred years ago when we were unlectured, uncriticized, untaught?” (249, emphasis added). Woolf, therefore, not only suggests that this is a problem relegated to the formal study of English literature, but also that these teaching methods have found a place outside of the academy, in the form of literary criticism and even radio broadcasts. Recognizing her part in this, her skepticism of the format of the radio talk seeps through as she discusses the complex nature of words:

[Words] are the wildest, freest, most irresponsible, most unteachable of all things [. . .] Words hate being useful; they hate making money; they hate being lectured about in public. In short, they hate anything that stamps them with one meaning or confines them to one attitude, for it is their

nature to change [. . .] Thus they mean one thing to one person, another thing to another person; they are unintelligible to one generation, plain as a pikestaff to the next. (“Craftsmanship” 251)

In saying that words “hate being lectured about in public” Woolf essentially criticizes herself for doing so. At the same time, however, she also points out to her listeners that it is the very format of the radio talk and the lecture that demands that one make certain concrete claims about words or anything else for that matter.

As she does in “How Should One Read a Book?” and A Room of One’s Own, Woolf opens “Craftsmanship” by reflecting on the difficulties that she has encountered as she attempts to discuss the topic within the format which she has been assigned:

The title of this series is “Words Fail Me,” and this particular talk is called “Craftsmanship.” We must suppose, therefore, that the talker is meant to discuss the craft of words—the craftsmanship of the writer. But there is something incongruous, unfitting, about the term “craftsmanship” when applied to words. (245)

In this opening, Woolf separates herself in various ways from the talk she will give. Rather than saying “the particular talk I will give is called ‘Craftsmanship’” she says “this particular talk is called ‘Craftsmanship.’” She further separates herself from the topic when she refers to herself as “the talker,” whom she supposes is “meant to discuss the craft of words.” The rest of the broadcast is, in fact, about the impossibility of discussing or teaching words. Although Woolf ultimately implicates herself as one who is attempting to speak about words publicly, thus pinning them down, she opens with a sort of disclaimer that attacks the very topic she has been

designated to discuss. In criticizing the subject itself, she also criticizes the “experts” at the BBC who thought up this topic.

The discussion format of “Are Too Many Books Written and Published?” was more suited to Woolf’s own ideas about pedagogy. She and Leonard tackled the topic, each performing one side and thus creating a dialogue rather than a lecture. Virginia argues that “the increase of books is all to the good” (239) while Leonard argues that “because so many writers are so anxious to be published” and “will pay for the privilege of seeing a book with their name on the title page” that there is a resulting “overproduction and a supply much bigger than the demand” (240). “Where there are so many books on every subject,” continues Leonard, “busy people haven’t the time to find out which is the best. They take the first that comes to hand or which is the best advertised, and meanwhile the good book is probably dying unread in a corner” (241). Virginia counters Leonard’s argument: “You have drawn a gloomy picture, I admit, but I doubt that it is altogether a true one. You are describing a temporary state of things and you are assuming, that as things are now, so they shall be forever. But there, I think, you are mistaken. You must remember that the majority of readers today are reading for the first time” (242). As Cuddy-Keane points out, “we should be wary of assuming that its [the broadcast’s] arguments transparently represent each speaker’s views” (237). The Woolfs, remember, were not debating spontaneously nor was there any room for improvisation:

A producer would invite the combatants to the office (or sometimes a local
hostelry) and ask them to discuss the chosen topic. A stenographer would
be present, furiously noting down the conversation, which would then be
typed up, the improprieties excised, and the whole thing re-enacted by
those same speakers in the study [. . .] With no recording of the Woolfs in

conference one is unable to comment on the tone of the piece. (Whitehead 125).

Although Virginia and Leonard were already celebrities in certain circles and the idea of a public debate between a husband and wife team seemed promising, their talk was not well-received and the BBC soon realized that using husband and wife teams or celebrities within the Bloomsbury Group was not enough: “Discussions had to feature aspects of their private lives to attract the uninitiated, so the next four were concerned with much more accessible topics: relationships, leisure, lifestyles” (Whitehead 126). Whitehead goes on to explain that although the Bloomsbury Group was well-known by those behind the scenes at the BBC, the public or the “uninitiated,” as Whitehead calls them, needed something more to incite them to listen.

Woolf did not participate in any of these discussions. She and Leonard never publicly discussed the meaning of marriage as did Vita Sackville West and her husband Harold Nicholson. For Woolf, the radio broadcast was merely another way to reach the public⁵⁴ and share many of the same ideas she covered in her lectures. Woolf used her broadcasts to incite her audiences to question, along with her, the teaching of English, namely the use of lectures and examinations. She also asks that they question the usefulness of all experts and authorities—critics, reviewers, professors, and even the BBC itself. Her participation in the debate over the state of publishing with Leonard represents a movement away from the idea of the single expert and toward a more collaborative method of teaching as both she and Leonard were posited as experts. The fact that they offered two different opinions suggested, as Virginia herself often did, that multiple viewpoints are more valuable than a single one.

And while it would be irresponsible to read the above dialogue as an indicator of the Woolfs’s individual views on publishing, one cannot ignore Virginia’s characteristic interest in

the new population of readers to which she refers above. That is not to say that she agrees entirely with the argument she makes, but rather that the optimism that she exudes in this broadcast— “It seems to me likely that, as they [the new reading public] grow to maturity as readers, they will tire of the sweets and pastries, and will demand good beef and mutton—that is to say interesting books, difficult books, histories, biographies poetry [. . .] My point is that as people read more books they will read better books” (243)—is indicative of the optimism that characterizes her other accounts of the abilities and potential of the new population of readers.

3.5 THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF WOOLF’S COLLABORATIVE PEDAGOGY

By way of conclusion, I want to return to where I began in this chapter, namely to representations of the modernists in general, and Woolf in particular, as elitists. I do so in order to consider what this study of Woolf’s work ultimately enables us to conclude about the connection between the goals of collaborative pedagogy and Woolf’s attitude toward the newly-expanded reading public. John Carey and others continue to maintain that “modernist literature and art can be seen as a hostile reaction to the unprecedented reading public created by late nineteenth century educational reforms [. . .] the purpose of modernist writing was to exclude these newly-educated (or semi-educated) readers, and so to preserve the intellectual’s seclusion from the ‘mass’” (24-25). While it is an indisputable fact that modernists intentionally wrote difficult texts, it is incorrect to assume, as does Carey, that the difficulty of modern texts necessarily represents a disdain for the expanded reading public. Michael Tratner addresses this

oversimplified characterization of the modernists by contextualizing their work within debates during that time period surrounding the fate of the individual in the face of the masses:

The dismantling of the individual during the modernist era was not merely an intellectual, aesthetic, or psychological revelation, but a central feature of political debates, a topic of election speeches, a basis of policy, and a commonplace of newspaper and magazine articles. If we place modernism in the context of such mainstream political debates, we can see surprising relationships between literary innovations and real parties and policies. Before the war, many modernists and most politicians in government feared being drowned by the masses; after the war, they feared being left out of the mass movements transforming society [. . .] By following the [modernists'] development, we can see the connection between modernist experimentation and attitudes toward the masses. (4, 15)

Tratner's investigation is intended to enable a study of connections and relationships between politics and literary modernism as well as between the modernists themselves and the "masses." Because Tratner contextualizes modernism in this particular way, he is able to see the modernist moment as one that is characterized not by "hostility" and the impulse to "exclude" and "seclude," as does Carey, but as a moment in which because many different forces overlap there are necessarily complex connections that demand investigation. In other words, he is willing to explore rather than reject outright the idea that the modernists were drawn in some ways to the masses. I will consider the connections that Tratner points to in order to examine how these connections highlight the politics informing Woolf's collaborative pedagogical work.

Tratner argues that Woolf's early novels:

were caught in the tension between individualism and collectivism:
dissolution appears tantalizing, inevitable, and horrible [. . .] During and
after the war, the image of individuals dissolving into a mass changed
valence: it became a hopeful sign. Such dissolution did not seem to lead to
chaos, but to certain mass structures that somehow could combine the loss
of individual personality and the provision of an even better-defined self:
to surrender to certain social bodies seems to increase the individual's
sense of his or her own power and even morality. (17)

In this excerpt and throughout his book, Tratner's argument as to the transformation of the meaning of the mass depends on a pivotal event, the war. While the simple correlations Tratner draws—before the war the masses were feared and after the war the masses were a promising sign—at first seem too neatly demarcated, they are also strangely accurate in that the works I have looked at were all written after the war and all corroborate Woolf's profound faith in the abilities of the newly-expanded reading public, the masses.

Tratner examines how Woolf portrays the relationship between the individual and the masses by looking exclusively at her novels,⁵⁵ arguing that in her early novel, The Voyage Out (1915), "Woolf's prose and her main character simply dissolve and disappear [. . .] The sovereign self disappears, and we are left with no boundaries between ourselves and a world of alien masses, an undifferentiated sea of humanity" (96). Tratner understands this as representative of Woolf's early concerns about "being drowned by the masses." The Waves, however, one of her later novels, marks Woolf's departure from this fear and is indicative of her interest in the potential that masses hold, argues Tratner. He notes how the six characters become unified at the end of The Waves: "Once they stop competing with each other, they feel both

extinguished and vastly enlarged, for a moment seeing themselves as part of all that is outside their group, their class, their nation” (239). This unification, argues Tratner, is attributable, in part, to Bernard taking a less dominant role in the group:

Before Bernard takes up his lance, he sees for a moment a new kind of social order, one which all the separate, little groups join together in a dance like dust or waves, passing through each other: a vision of a constantly shifting, fluid social structure, a pluralist mass society. Woolf dreamed of the disappearance of the kind of group identity and stability provided by a silent, militaristic leader or single spokesperson; instead she imagined masses that would speak in many voices and move in many directions at once. (240)

Tratner’s is a convincing reading of how Woolf’s politics play a key role in her novels. His examination of the role of politics within Woolf’s novels challenges those who continue to criticize Woolf for her interest in aesthetics at the expense of politics. Moreover, his treatment of Woolf’s conception of the masses—they “would speak in many voices and move in many directions at once”—moves me closer to a better understanding of how and why Woolf saw promise in the masses.

Despite those who claim that Woolf was apolitical, Woolf’s collaborative pedagogy did, in fact, have political implications. Recall the conclusion to her lecture entitled “The Leaning Tower”:

Literature is no one’s private ground; literature is common ground. It is not cut up into nations; there are no wars there. Let us trespass freely and fearlessly and find our own way for ourselves. It is thus that English

literature will survive this war and cross the gulf—if commoners and outsiders like ourselves make that country our own country, if we teach ourselves how to read and write, how to preserve, and how to create.

(Collected Essays 2, 181, emphasis added)

In this excerpt, Woolf speaks of the importance of educating the masses in terms of territorial metaphors. Unlike the First World War which only promises to continue to separate nations and the people therein, reading and writing, Woolf seems to suggest, have the power to do the opposite, to bring people together. If “commoners” and “outsiders” on the one hand and critics and professors on the other work together, literature can be both created and preserved. Woolf does not place this responsibility in the hands of experts—in the professors, critics, or writers themselves—but in the general public. Although she advocates working together, her repetition of the words “our” and “us,” referring to the commoners and outsiders, suggests with whom the greatest responsibility lies. Commoners and outsiders, Woolf herself included, must teach ourselves how to read and write and only go to the experts “laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading” (“How Should One Read a Book?” 244) rather than turning to them immediately.

Woolf’s emphasis on the importance of the majority (i.e. the commoners and outsiders) as opposed to minority (i.e. critics, writers, and professors) might suggest that collaborative pedagogy is, in fact, her way of uplifting the notion of the masses, indicative, Tratner might say, of her fear of “being left out of the mass movements transforming society” (15). While I agree with this depiction to a certain extent, I would posit that it is a very particular notion of the public or the mass to which Woolf subscribes. And it is only this type of mass that can, in fact, transform society.

At this point it becomes necessary to differentiate between the term “mass” and “public” because doing so will help to untangle how Woolf envisioned the role of the masses. Throughout, I have used the terms “public” and “reading public,” in part, to avoid using “mass” which is a loaded term particularly when it is invoked to characterize people. Woolf, herself, uses the term in A Room of One’s Own, yet affords it a far more positive connotation: “Masterpieces are not single and solitary births; they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common, of thinking by the body of the people, so that the experience of the mass is behind the single voice” (65). This quote is indicative of the necessary connection that Woolf imagines between the single voice and the mass. The single voice, according to Woolf, is always necessarily inflected by the mass from which it emerges.

While it may seem as though Woolf is extolling the virtues of the masses outright, considering this excerpt alongside her other lectures and broadcasts reveals how her message of collaborative pedagogy involves a reconfiguring of the very notion of the mass, one that is particularly concerned with the individuals within the larger group. While I agree with Tratner that Woolf sees the promise for social transformation in the masses— all of her works that I have examined demonstrate her investment in educating the masses— I would argue that she does so only because she sees the individual within the mass. She sees the importance of each individual “gradually mak[ing] out a standard of one’s own” (“What is a Good Novel?” 110). She tells readers to “follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions” (“How Should One Read a Book?” 281) and to not allow her own ideas “to fetter that independence which is the most important quality a reader can possess” (“How Should One Read a Book?” 281). The mass is powerful, Woolf seems to say, because it is comprised of individuals, each with her own instincts and standards.

The masses themselves are not the problem for Woolf: rather, the critics, experts, and professors who exploit this social formation and try to sway the people in a particular way that are the problem. While many of the audiences before whom Woolf spoke—both college students and those outside the university— had all been subject to the tutelage of many experts, there was one audience who had not yet been subject to so many experts— the thousands of young children across England and Wales who learned from the League of Nations pamphlets published by the Hogarth Press. Before experts, critics, and professors could influence these malleable minds, the Woolfs saw to it that they had access to them. This is perhaps the Woolfs’s smartest, although widely ignored, tactic. While Woolf espoused the virtues of independence and challenged traditional modes of teaching in her lectures and broadcasts, she was doing so before minds that had already been filled and influenced, in many cases, with the very opposite theories that she hoped to advance. These pamphlets, however, guaranteed that the Woolfs and their politics had a presence in the lives of these individuals from a very young age. Through these pamphlets—that remain largely ignored by scholars— the Woolfs were able to impress upon these children the importance of political awareness and action. Woolf’s collaborative pedagogy is perhaps a means to this end. If common readers and young students alike understand the importance of working collaboratively with writers and instructors then perhaps this ideology could inform how they think about their relationships to other people and nations throughout the world. If literature is thought of as common ground then reading and writing have the power to unify people within their nation and from other nations (“The Leaning Tower” 181). The writing and reading of English literature— Woolf’s answer to the isolationism caused by the First World War— “will survive this war and cross the gulf” (“The Leaning Tower” 181). Ultimately, the very act of collaboration that enables “commoners” and “outsiders” on the one hand and critics

and professors on the other to work together to create and preserve literature (“The Leaning Tower” 181) also has to power to create and preserve peace.

4.0 EZRA POUND'S RENAISSANCE

As early as 1912, Ezra Pound sounded the call for a cultural Renaissance. In the fall of that year he published a series of essays entitled “Patria mia” in The New Age, A. R. Orage’s Guild Socialist Weekly. In “Patria Mia,” Pound claims that “America has a chance for Renaissance. And that certain absurdities in the manners of American action are, after all, things of the surface and not of necessity the symptoms of sterility or even of fatal disease” (24). Pound’s optimism is even more palpable as he devises a specific plan to advance this cultural Renaissance. In 1914 he published an article in Poetry entitled “The Renaissance” in which he argues for “three main lines of attack” (225) in order to create a more “vivid” civilization that “preserves and fosters all sorts of artists—painters, poets, sculptors, musicians, architects” (226), one that will replace the current “dull and anemic” (226) civilization:

First, that we should develop a criticism of poetry based on world-poetry, on the work of maximum excellence. (It does not in the least matter whether this standard be that of my own predilections, or crochets or excesses. It matters very much that it be decided by men who have made a first-hand study of world-poetry, and who “have had the tools in their hands.”)

Second, that there be definite subsidy of individual artists, writers, etc., such as will enable them to follow their highest ambitions without needing to conciliate the ignorant en route. [. . .]

Third, there should be a foundation of such centres as I have described. There should be in America the “gloire de cenacle.” Tariff laws should favor the creative author rather than the printer. (225-226)

Pound’s three-pronged solution to the current civilization, which “preserves a rabble of priests, sterile instructors, and repeaters of things second-hand” (226), emphasizes the important social role of the artist: “If I seem to lay undue stress upon the status of the arts, it is only because the arts respond to an intellectual movement more swiftly and more apparently than do institutions, and not because there is any better reason for discussing the first” (“Patria mia” 42). If offered the opportunities—some of which Pound outlines above—artists and the arts have the power to revolutionize, to revivify, and ultimately to correct society.

This chapter examines the role that pedagogy plays in Pound’s forging of this cultural Renaissance. I consider how Pound uses the overtly didactic form of the guide to help readers engage with the modernist project, thus enabling the reading public to participate in this Renaissance— or what Pound also terms a “Risorgimento,” an intellectual awakening (“Patria mia” 41). My aim is to detail how the difficulties of his guides How To Read (1931) and ABC of Reading (1934) mirror the difficulties that readers would encounter when facing modernist texts thus preparing them to read these works.

These guides, in part, constitute Pound’s reaction to the problems he recognized with the American and (although to a lesser degree) British educational systems and the pedagogical practices therein. “What modern education needs,” writes Pound “is a trace of curiosity, an

aroma of more inquisitive nature” (“When Will School Books...?” 261). Because modern education lacks this, Pound calls the University “dead” in that “it has no intention of participating in the intellectual life of its nation or continent, let alone in any larger sphere of vitality” (“Text Books” 264).

Pound’s investment in the artist as the antidote to the diseased modern education system permeates not only his literary criticism, and How To Read and ABC of Reading, but also other projects with which he was involved. Pound’s extensive contributions to the Little Magazine Movement and his work as an editor of literary anthologies are also important pedagogical enterprises to which he was committed. Pound’s work as an editor of and contributor to several little magazines, most notably the Dial, suggests an investment in disseminating current ideas—those that had a “bear[ing] on LIFE and on the most vital and immediate problems of the day” (“Teacher’s Mission” 62), rather than those that had gone stale. Of course, these magazines had a low circulation, and one had to already possess a certain sensibility to appreciate them: “To be such a reader one had to understand the aims of the particular schools of literature that the magazines represented, had to be interested in learning about dadaism, vorticism, expressionism, and surrealism” (Hoffman 3). Yet Pound’s intention— to circulate such ideas in a realm outside of the university setting— suggests both his commitment to reaching the reading public and his rejection of the idea that the university is the only space in which one might learn about literature.

Also, Pound’s commitment to anthologizing inexpensively the work of the moment, something that no other editors were doing at the time, suggests the importance he placed on making literature accessible to all. His interest in anthologies also testifies to his privileging of primary texts. Although he wrote criticism throughout most of his life, Pound always afforded

more importance to primary works: “One work of art is worth forty prefaces and as many apologia” (Literary Essays 41). His investment in primary works, as opposed to criticism and other secondary works, is an important aspect of his pedagogy—a point I will discuss in more detail later.

Having outlined Pound’s works that I will address, it seems necessary to comment upon those works that I will not. How To Read and ABC of Reading are only two of the four overtly didactic guides that Pound published. While the others—ABC of Economics (1933) and Guide to Kulchur (1937)— provide valuable insight into Pound’s pedagogical work, the focus of this chapter is on Pound’s teaching methods as they specifically relate to the process of reading. Focusing the chapter in this way enables me to offer an in-depth and complex rendering of Pound’s commitment to reading pedagogies.

Despite the important work that can be done by considering Pound’s prose alongside his poetry, this chapter does not allow the space for an adequate examination of the connections between the two. Pound’s poetry figures only once in this chapter, as I examine how Pound’s belief in precision influences his ideas on pedagogy. While relegating my study to Pound’s prose work enables me to work within a fertile space⁵⁶ in that his prose— and particularly How To Read and ABC of Reading— has been neglected in favor of his poetry, these limits pose certain problems, some of which T. S. Eliot alludes to in his introduction to Literary Essays of Ezra Pound: “And of no other poet can it be more important to say, that [Pound’s] criticism and his poetry, his precept and his practice, compose a single *oeuvre*. It is necessary to read Pound’s poetry to understand his criticism, and to read his criticism to understand his poetry” (xiii). While this study will not address Pound’s poetry alongside his prose, or what Eliot calls the intersections between Pound’s “precept and practice,” I contend that the ambiguity of the genre

of How To Read and ABC of Reading actually allows me to consider these connections. To that end, I will situate How To Read and ABC of Reading as both precept and practice (which I will later term “criticism” and “creation”), exercises in both literary criticism and the practice of literary writing. Doing so enables me to consider the ways in which Pound’s works actually challenge and potentially defy such long-held categorizations.

4.1 POUND’S CRITIQUE OF MODERN EDUCATION

Throughout his writings, Pound consistently criticizes the state of modern education. The university’s deliberate separation of its subjects from all that surrounds them inhibits learning as do the textbooks in use at the university, argues Pound: “The text which he is given is not the ‘low down’ on the subject, it is a dead book designed to keep the student from learning too much. Naturally it does not stimulate curiosity” (“When Will School Books...?” 261). The structure of the university and its texts are two of the major problems with modern education, according to Pound. A third is that students’ abilities are vastly underestimated. Pound’s solution to these problems is to require students to read his own textbook, ABC of Reading, which will instill a sense of curiosity within them as well as emphasize the importance of situating the university within “the intellectual life of its nation or continent” and other “larger sphere[s] of vitality” (“Text Books” 264). Pound admonishes those who deem his book too difficult for students, and he is haunted by a comment made by Wilbur Hatfield (editor of The English Journal) to the effect that “ABC of Reading is too advanced for the students” (“When Will School Books?” 260). Pound refers to this comment both in “When Will School Books...?” and in a 1936 letter he writes to William Langer, Governor of North Dakota regarding textbook

reform: “Among men of letters with international reputation I am possibly the only American who has worked at the problem of better textbooks. I have done an ABC of Reading and an ABC of Economics. Hatfield of the English Journal thinks the former above the intelligence of the High School pupil. I consider this an insult to 85% of Americans over 14” (“To William Langer” 273).

Pound’s primary criticism of early-twentieth-century textbooks is that they actually inhibit learning and curiosity. Pound never names the specific works to which he objects, but his criticisms of textbooks spanned both high school and college textbooks, as the above excerpt from his letter to William Langer suggests. College-level textbooks of the time include Readings From the Sources of English Literature (1929), The New World (1920), A Syllabus of English Literature (1912), The Reading Process (1922), and Outlines of English Literature with Readings (1925). High-school-level textbooks include the Literature and Life (1922-24) series and several editions of Explorations in Literature (1933-37). Unlike Pound’s unorthodox textbooks, the material in these textbooks is presented in an organized and coherent manner. In Outlines of English Literature With Readings, for example, each chapter opens with an historical outline of the period, an explanation of the effect of that particular historical moment on the literature that came out of it, a biography of key writers of the period, a description of the writers’ themes and theories, and excerpts from the writers’ work. Presumably, Pound sees this organizational method as patronizing to students in that it offers subjective and difficult information in an “objective” and uncomplicated guise. Moreover, the textbooks discourage students from considering the information outside of the contexts and boundaries within which the editors have placed it. As I will discuss below, Pound’s textbooks, which I will later call “reading guides,” are fragmented and incoherent, filled with inarticulate thoughts, personal anecdotes, and

questions not immediately recognizable as having any bearing on how to read. This organizational method—which is also Pound’s pedagogical method—actually challenges students to determine the connections among seemingly unrelated information, unlike the mainstream textbooks that Pound would argue simply supply historical and biographical facts so that students may be easily tested by their instructors. According to Pound’s logic, the fragmentary nature of the information in his textbooks would ignite students’ curiosity about the topics and incite them to imagine connections among the topics, unlike other textbooks which he thought lulled students into boredom. As I mention above, Pound’s pedagogical methods were based on his idea that art could incite social change. Other textbooks of the time, like the teachers who used them, only stood in the way of Pound’s plans for this cultural renaissance because both mediated the effect that literature could have on students. Moreover, the painstakingly coherent organization of these mainstream textbooks represented for Pound a commitment to the status quo and thus a refusal to entertain any alternatives to the traditional mode of teaching and learning, which depended upon the compartmentalization and memorization of knowledge. The goal of Pound’s pedagogy is not the acquisition of knowledge, as I will detail below, but understanding, which he hoped to inspire in students with his textbooks. Pound’s textbooks, unlike mainstream textbooks, ask that students actively participate in their education by connecting the fragments that characterize these works.

Pound’s belief in the importance of fragmentation and incoherence as a means to sparking curiosity was especially revolutionary at the time because the general education movement of the 1930s, which was revived after the Second World War, sought to “restore common beliefs and values, and the humanities were seen as central to this goal by endowing the student with the sense of a common cultural heritage” (Graff 162). The “great books” philosophy

maintained that these works had the power to “overcome disparities of time, place, and cultural circumstances” (162) by offering students common beliefs, common values, and the sense of a common cultural heritage. Although Mortimer Adler and Robert Maynard Hutchins had been teaching a version of the great books course at the University of Chicago since the early 1930s, the course was not institutionalized at the University until 1942. Many scholars thought that the great books could provide some stability after the Second World War: “The general education movement was a response to two kinds of fears: that because of increasing disciplinary specialization and emphasis on vocational training, knowledge was becoming fragmented, and that because of deepening conflicts of ideology, the unity of Western culture was disintegrating into chaotic relativism” (Graff 162). As other textbooks of the time sought to convey this sense of stability, Pound’s textbooks did the opposite, and, instead, reflected a growing fragmentation. Pound’s textbooks suggested that the same old forms—even of textbooks— were no longer adequate, and he sought not only in his poetry to develop new forms, but experimented with the genre of the textbook in order to produce textbooks that could help incite the sort of renaissance or revolution that he thought necessary to revitalize the culture. At the same time, however, Pound, like the general education movement and the textbooks it produced, rejected specialization as he draws on multiple disciplines throughout his textbooks, perhaps another attempt at sparking the varying interests of his readers.

Pound saw rote memorization as one of the activities that incited boredom among students. The editors of some textbooks such as Readings from the Sources of English Literature go so far as to encourage students to memorize the information included in the textbook: “As an aid to composition the book may be read and even memorized, in part, for the development of that indispensable sense of prose rhythm which is characteristic of the best English style [. . .] Its

narrative power will give interest and perhaps pleasure to a requirement which ought never to be entirely divorced from those motives” (iii-iv). Intolerant of rote memorization as a means of learning, Pound most likely also objected to this pedagogy in textbooks of the period. While the editors of A Syllabus of English Literature did not instruct students to memorize their prose, the book was written and organized with examinations in mind: “The book will be of service to students who are preparing for examinations, to candidates for licenses as teachers, and to those private students who desire to carry on a course in systematic reading and have not the guidance of a teacher” (iv). As I will discuss below, the composition exercises that Pound includes in ABC of Reading relish the complexities of language rather than covering them over for the sake of memorization and easy application. Several other textbooks of the period, too, present students with information that can easily be memorized and tested by their teachers. Teachers can easily determine which students are making “progress” and which are not. In these mainstream textbooks, then, not only is rote memorization valued, but that which is being memorized are potentially oversimplified renderings of complicated historical periods, literary figures, and literary works.

In addition to challenging the design of mainstream textbooks, Pound also challenged the route in which English, as a discipline, was headed. Around the same time that Pound was writing How to Read and ABC of Reading, the university was undergoing a significant change. Graff reports that as early as 1902, “PMLA had discontinued the “‘Pedagogical Section’ of the journal” (121) and by 1916 the MLA changed “its constitution describing the object of the Association as the ‘advancement of the study of the Modern Languages and their literatures’” (121, emphasis added) to “‘the advancement of research in the Modern languages and their literatures’” (121, emphasis added). In 1929, just a few years before How to Read was published,

the president of the MLA declared, “Henceforth, our domain is research” (Graff 121). In writing a textbook (and thus investing in pedagogy rather than research), and privileging the works of literature by reprinting them verbatim, Pound challenged the notion that research held the most promise for the study of literature. Instead, his commitment to the study of the texts themselves mirrors that approach of I. A. Richards, whose Practical Criticism (1929) also isolates the literary work for study. Pound, however, does not isolate the works as dramatically as Richards, although he declares in the introduction to the EXHIBITS section of ABC of Reading that he wishes he could:

The ideal way to present the next section of this booklet would be to give the quotations WITHOUT any comment whatever. I am afraid that would be too revolutionary. By long and wearing experience, I have learned that in the present imperfect state of the world, one MUST tell the reader [. . .]

In the present case I shall not tell the student everything. The most intelligent students, those who most want to LEARN, will however encompass that end, and endear themselves if they will read the EXHIBITS, and not look to my footnotes until they have at least tried to find out WHAT THE EXHIBIT is, and to guess why I have printed it. (95)

Learning occurs, argues Pound, as the student attempts to fill the gaps that his teacher has purposefully created. We will see a similar pedagogical theory in Pound’s early anthologies where he includes literary selections without the traditional apparatus (e.g. footnotes, headnotes, biographies, and historical summaries) that defines the genre of the anthology. In both instances, Pound envisions learning as an active endeavor in which the student depends upon his teacher’s knowledge (or that of any expert) only as a final recourse.

Pound's commitment to instructing in a way that differs from the mainstream does not begin and end with How to Read and ABC of Reading. This commitment can be traced as far back as The Spirit of Romance (1910), in which he lays out the mission of the book: "The aim of the present work is to instruct. Its ambition is to instruct painlessly" (8). Although the subject of The Spirit of Romance is not the reading process— but rather "a shortish account of a period" (8) and "certain forces, elements, or qualities which were potent in the medieval literature of the Latin tongues, and are [...] still potent in our own" (7)— it does suggest Pound's more general interest in the act of instruction. Moreover, The Spirit of Romance offers one of the first glimpses of Pound's solution to the modern education system, namely the artist: "It is the business of the artist to prevent ennui; in the literary art, to relieve, refresh, revive the mind of the reader—with some form of ecstasy, by some splendor of thought, some presentation of sheer beauty, some lightning turn or phrase [. . .] Good art begins with an escape from dullness" (8). As I will examine later, Pound's pedagogy replaces the teacher, who lacks curiosity and confers dullness on the process of learning—with the artist— who represents the opposite for Pound. Ironically, Pound himself was chastised by reviewer Edward Thomas of the Morning Post for trying to "prevent ennui" and "to relieve, refresh [and] revive the mind of the reader" (8) in The Spirit of Romance:

[In the Spirit of Romance] the fact is that he is too much bent on being interesting, upon being something more than a scholar. He is thus lured into digressions which could be sustained by a strong personality [. . .] At one moment he is a scholar writing in a way which is over the head of the unlearned, and at another he is the free, courageous man wearing his learning lightly like a daisy. He cannot combine the scholar and the man.

We regret to say this, because a point has been reached where men refuse to take works of learned dullness, and of this the learned are aware and they are considering their ways. (Homberger 69)

The “something more than a scholar” to which Thomas refers might be understood as Pound’s attempt at teaching. In The Spirit of Romance, he is, for the first time, a scholar-teacher who refuses the role of the boring teacher that he considers a mainstay in the modern education system. While Thomas concludes that Pound fails in his attempt to be more than a scholar, Thomas is still only considering Pound in those specific terms. In other words, by judging only Pound’s abilities as a scholar rather than taking Pound seriously in his investment in instruction—an investment he makes clear at the start of The Spirit of Romance—Thomas cannot help but think that Pound has failed as a traditional scholar. Pound might be happy with that judgment in that one of his goals is to formulate non-traditional relationships among the scholar, teacher, and student.

A few years after writing The Spirit of Romance, Pound begins more overtly and systematically to investigate the problems he notices with modern education in “The Serious Artist,” which appeared in The Egoist in 1913. In this piece, as Pound defines the “position the arts are to hold in the ideal republic” (41), we begin to see Pound take on the role of instructor, even more overtly than he does in “Patria mia,” as he outlines all that the arts can teach us⁵⁷:

From the arts we learn that man is whimsical, that one man differs from another. That men differ among themselves as leaves upon trees differ. That they do not resemble each other as do buttons cut by a machine.

From the arts we also learn in what ways man resembles and in what way he differs from certain other animals. We learn that certain men are

often more akin to certain animals than they are to other men of different composition. We learn that all men do not desire the same things and that it would therefore be inequitable to give to all men two acres and a cow.

(42)

Pound's celebration of the differences among men lays the foundation for one of his greatest criticisms of modern education— namely its refusal to acknowledge these differences and its denying these differences in the name of education: The university's "pretenses of wanting original research need careful examination" ("Textbooks" 264), Pound writes, suggesting that difference and originality are, in fact, not valued by the university. He shares an experience in which he sought to test his hypothesis:

As a test I offered a few years ago my Cavalcanti Rime (not the essays reprinted in Make it New, but the paleographic edition) to an American university in lieu of thesis for doctorate: it was rejected. This caused me no surprise but anyone interested in assessing the value of university degrees is invited to compare that volume with any batch of theses for PhD that he fancies. ("Textbooks" 264)

In this excerpt, Pound speaks to the hypocrisy of the university that simultaneously invites originality and, once presented with it, rejects it, no matter the high quality of this original enterprise. Pound sees the university as consistently offering "stale news" ("Textbooks" 261), "authors who may have told mankind something that was (past tense) pertinent at the time" ("Textbooks" 261), and "dead" textbooks that inhibit curiosity because neither instructors nor the chosen textbooks actually instruct the student but rather "suppress him" ("The Teacher's Mission" 62). "Education that does not bear on LIFE and on the most vital and immediate

problems of the day is not education but merely suffocation and sabotage” (“The Teacher’s Mission” 62), writes Pound. Pound is not advocating the neglect of history, but rather a pedagogical model that, because it is informed by “the most vital and immediate problems” (“The Teacher’s Mission” 62), incites a curiosity in students. Pound is invested in a sort of education that is characterized by vitality, curiosity, originality, and freedom— which he opposes to the “dastardliness of the American university system” (“The Teacher’s Mission” 62) and the “lack of curiosity, the lack of any desire for knowledge [sic] festers throughout the whole flaccid English and American organism” (“The Movement of Literature” 238).

4.2 POUND DEFINES LITERATURE

Before turning to how Pound instructs readers on engaging with literature, and modernist literature in particular, it is necessary to first understand how Pound defines literature. While How To Read and ABC of Reading give us an idea of what literature is and means for Pound, we must turn to some of Pound’s earlier works in order to garner an understanding of his definition of literature so as to lay a foundation for the succeeding analysis of how he instructs readers on the practice of reading literature.

Pound’s literary reviews offer a useful opening for considering how he defines literature and its value. The positive reviews, like those on Henry James’s work, shed light on how Pound defines “good art.” In August 1918, in an article for the Little Review, Pound wrote of James:

Peace comes of communication. No man of our time has so laboured to create means of communication as did the late Henry James. The whole of great art is a struggle for communication [. . .] And this communication is not a leveling, it is not an elimination of differences. It is a recognition of differences, of the right of differences to exist, of interest in finding things different. (298)

Pound's description of literature as a means to peace is reminiscent of the ultimate goal of Virginia Woolf's collaborative pedagogy. Like Woolf's collaborative pedagogy, Pound's definition of great art or literature relies on recognizing differences rather than similarities. Pound praises James's ability to write literature that celebrates the differences among men—a practice that resembles Woolf's collaborative pedagogy, which celebrates equally what the common reader and the expert have to offer one another. Neither Pound's definition of literature nor Woolf's collaborative pedagogy seeks to eradicate differences; rather, each foregrounds them as a necessary means to communication and to reaching the ultimate goal—which, in both cases, is peace. One of the assumptions underlying these theories is that engaging and potentially learning about differences among people is far more useful than pretending these differences do not exist. These differences offer people an opportunity to learn, to understand. Denying them can lead to misunderstanding and, in its most extreme incarnation, to war.

Although Pound addresses only James's work in the above excerpt, his investment in literature as communication is a thread that moves through much of his writing. In "The Teacher's Mission" (1934), for example, he calls "the whole system of intercommunication via the printed page in America" (60) a "mere matter of successive dilutions of knowledge" (60):

When some European got tired of an idea he wrote it down, it was printed after an interval, and it was reviewed in, say London, by a hurried and harassed reviewer, usually lazy, almost always indifferent. The London periodicals were rediluted by still more hurried and usually incompetent New York reviewers, and their “opinion” was dispersed and watered down via American trade distribution. Hence the 15 to 20 years’ delay with which all and every idea, and every new kind of literature, reaches the “American reader” or “teacher.” (60)

Pound takes this delay in communication very seriously because it results in the sort of staleness he sees in the education system. There can be no communication between literature and its readers because it is necessarily stale—due to the process he outlines, albeit it hyperbolically, above. Because of this process, argues Pound, literature can no longer serve its function as a communicative tool.

Pound’s vision for the little magazines, which he reflected on in 1935, also suggests his investment in communication: “Twenty years ago the little magazines served to break a monopoly, to release communication, mainly about letters, from an oppressive control” (Impact xi). The “oppressive control” to which Pound refers is most likely the modern education system that he thought was in the business of “the manufactur[ing] of robots and tame rabbits” (Impact xi). The little magazines which were defined by many— including Pound in the above quote— by their separation from the institutionalization of English Studies in the education system held promise for inciting communication about letters. While literature specifically is not cast here as a communicative tool, Pound still lays claim to the importance of communication in the study of letters.

Communication is also tied to the successful functioning of society. The “function of literature in the state,” Pound writes in How To Read, “is not the coercing or emotionally persuading or bullying or suppressing people into the acceptance of any one set or any six sets of opinions as opposed to any other one set of half-dozen sets of opinions” (17). Pound goes on to outline its function:

It has to do with the clarity and vigour of “any and every” thought and opinion [. . .] The individual cannot think and communicate his thought, the governor and legislator cannot act effectively or frame his laws, without words. And the solidity and validity of these words is in the care of the damned and despised literati. When their work goes rotten—by that I do not mean when they express indecorous thoughts— but when their very medium, the very essence of their work, the application of the word to the thing goes rotten, i.e. becomes slushy and inexact, or excessive and bloated, the whole machinery of social and individual thought and order goes to pot. (17-18)

According to Pound, literature must be judged according to its precision. The medium of communication— language itself—must not go “rotten” for the entire society: those individuals within it and the society as a whole depend upon language. “It does not matter whether the author desire the good of the race or acts merely from personal vanity” (How To Read 18), writes Pound: “The thing is mechanical in action. In proportion as his work is exact, i.e., true to human consciousness and to the nature of man, as it is exact in formulation of desire, so it is durable and so it is useful” (How To Read 18-19). As he does in the above passage, Pound again goes on to situate the precision of language as important in the greater sense: “I mean it

maintains the precision and clarity of thought, not merely for the benefit of a few dilettantes and ‘lovers of literature,’ but maintains the health of thought outside literary circles and in non-literary existence, in general individual communal life” (How To Read 19). As Pound sees the importance of language as crucial to the “health of thought outside literary circles” (How To Read 19), “in general individual communal life” (How To Read 19), and to “the whole machinery of social and individual thought and order” (How To Read 18), it comes as no surprise that he would want to reach the widest audience possible. In fact, he maintained that “the ultimate goal of scholarship is popularization” (Selected Prose 168).

With a goal of reaching a broad reading public, Pound in 1929 took How To Read to the New York Herald Tribune where it was first published in its entirety. Pound also tried to reach a large audience by using the education system as did the Woolfs with their League of Nations pamphlets. Pound proposed to Faber and Faber that How To Read be published as a textbook—yet Faber and Faber ultimately rejected the proposal. Pound explains this turn of events in How to Read:

The subject was pleasantly received and considered with amity, but the [publishing] house finally decided that it would pay neither them to print nor me to write the book, because we “weren’t in the text-book ring.” For the thing would have been a text-book, its circulation would have depended on educators, and educators have been defined as “men with no intellectual interests.” (19-20)

It remains unclear exactly who is defining “educators” in this way, although this description certainly echoes others that Pound himself advanced. Pound’s interest in Faber and Faber publishing his work as a textbook lies in his desire to reach as many readers as possible with

How To Read. Society, as Pound saw it, depends upon communication— which, in turn, depends upon the clear and precise use of language not only by the literati but by all individuals.

Although Pound was unable to convince Faber and Faber to publish How To Read as a textbook, he had more luck with ABC of Reading, defining it as a textbook from the start:

The present pages should be impersonal enough to serve as a textbook. The author hopes to follow the tradition of Gaston Paris and S. Reinach, that is, to produce a text-book that can also be read “for pleasure as well as profit” by those no longer in school; by those who have not been to school; or by those who in their college days suffered those things which most of my own generation suffered. (ABC of Reading 11)

Pound not only imagines a textbook that is not exclusively tied to the school system; he also offers a model of what this textbook might look like. Criticizing the existing textbook model, ABC of Reading is intended to provide pleasure. Moreover, it is designed to supplement the education that many “suffered” and to educate those without an education. In his attempts to redefine the textbook, Pound suggests, also, ways of redefining the very readership of the textbook. No longer is the textbook tied to a particular course and particular students. Neither is it intended to help students memorize facts or prepare students for exams, as were some of the textbooks of the time, discussed above. Rather, the textbook is intended to be read for pleasure by those outside of school.

While Pound may not have respected the textbooks that were being used in the modern education system or that system itself, his relationship to modern education was complicated.

Although he was angered and disappointed by the current state of education, he still held onto a sense of optimism evidenced in the following passage about textbook writers:

Fancy writers in England and America have been too proud to fight in the text-book field. Great men in the Middle Ages were not; Gaston Paris and S. Reinach were not. Dante wrote text-books, Aristotle wrote text-books, Leibnitz and Berkeley wrote text-books. To despise writing text-books is to proclaim the degradation of schools as such. It is a blasphemy against knowledge as such. (“When Will School Books...?” 260)

By situating Dante, Aristotle, and other thinkers as authors of textbooks, Pound attempts to redefine how we might think about textbooks. By historicizing the stigma that has more recently accompanied writing textbooks, Pound argues that textbooks have the power to transform education. If imbued with this power, those who choose to write textbooks are not only in the same company as Dante and Aristotle; they also have the responsibility to revolutionize students’ educations.

4.3 COMPLICATING POUND’S RELATIONSHIP TO MODERN EDUCATION

Although Pound wrote that “there are no words permitted in a polite educational bulletin that can describe the dastardliness of the American university system as we have known it” (“A Teacher’s Mission” 62), his relationship to the system was far more complicated than this and his other, often crass, accounts of the system suggest. Exploring the complexities that define this relationship as well as the potential that Pound saw in the system will help to enrich our understanding of Pound’s relationship to the education system.

While Pound openly criticized the state of modern education, he not only never completely severed his ties from this system but, rather consistently represented himself as a product of it. As K. K. Ruthven points out, “Pound continued to seek recognition from a university system he felt had rejected him unjustly. For several years after his dismissal as Chairman of the Department of Romance Languages at Wabash College in 1908 for having a young woman in his room, he tried to secure an academic position in the USA” (14-15), including positions at Columbia University and the College of the City of New York. Moreover, “he never lost his respect for university qualifications: his first critical book, The Spirit of Romance (1910), declared itself to be the work of ‘Ezra Pound, M.A.,’ and the printed syllabus of the London Polytechnic Lectures they were based on added in parenthesis, ‘Sometime Fellow in the University of Pennsylvania’” (Ruthven 15). Unsatisfied with the M.A. designation, Pound applied twice for a Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania and was rejected both times. He later accepted an honorary doctorate from Hamilton College, where he spent time as an undergraduate. Later, he “broadcast from Radio Rome during the Second World War as ‘Dr’ Pound” (Ruthven 16, emphasis added). Pound’s consistent flirting with the educational system and his use of his University-conferred qualifications suggest that Pound valued the system, to some degree. Although one might argue that he rejected the modern education system on personal grounds—he became most vocal and spouted the harshest of criticisms after the University of Pennsylvania refused to grant him a Ph. D.—Pound’s rejection of the system, whether personal or not, was balanced and, perhaps, tempered by ideas for reinventing and redefining it.

Pound’s commitment to securing a presence for How To Read and ABC of Reading in schools demonstrates his belief that education—and particularly university education— could be

revolutionized. Pound had much more in mind, though, than the addition of a few new textbooks to the curriculum. In 1910 he spoke to his patron, Margaret Cravens, about setting up a college of the Arts (Ruthven 28). The college would be comprised not of professors, but of artists who would teach their craft. Pound explained his mission in the November 2, 1914 issue of the Egoist in a piece entitled “Preliminary Announcement of the College of Arts.” In this article, Pound advertised that painting and sculpture would be taught by Wyndham Lewis and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska; music would be taught by American pianist Katherine Ruth Heyman, comparative poetry by himself; and other subjects including photography and dance by well-known artists in those fields (Ruthven 28-9). Pound submitted for review his vision of this school founded on apprenticeships to Oxford University, where T. S. Eliot, a postgraduate at the time, read it and asked Pound to elaborate more clearly on the function of such a college. Pound never resubmitted his proposal—which at that point consisted almost exclusively of a list of the artists who would teach the courses—but he revisited the notion of this ideal education and sought to produce it in the form of “a volume or triptych” (Ruthven 30) that he would write with Eliot and George Santayana and publish through Faber and Faber.

Pound saw this institution as a means by which students could learn directly from artists—whom he deems “the antennae of the race,” the “registering instruments, the “voltmeters and steam-gauges of that nation’s intellectual life” (“The Teacher’s Mission” 58). This change—according to Pound’s logic—would enable the student direct access to the art and the artist without it having to be mediated by another source, such as the traditional teacher: “The arts give us our best data for determining what sort of creature man is. As our treatment of man must be determined by our knowledge or conception of what man is, the arts provide data for ethics” (46), Pound writes in “The Serious Artist” (1913). Pound saw teaching as necessarily

connected to the work of the artist—the “function of the teaching profession is to maintain the HEALTH OF THE NATIONAL MIND” (59).⁵⁸ The artists, “the antennae of the race” who could best “provide data for ethics,” make the best teachers. Current traditional teachers, according to Pound, are not working for their students or society:

The shortcomings of education and of the professor are best tackled by each man for himself; his first act must be an examination of his consciousness, and his second, the direction of his will toward the light. The first symptom he finds will, in all probability, be mental LAZINESS, lack of curiosity, desire to be undisturbed [. . .] Until the teacher wants to know all the facts, and sort out the roots from the branches, the branches from the twigs, and to grasp the MAIN STRUCTURE of his subject, and the relative weights and importances of its parts, he is just a lump of dead clay in the system. (59)

In describing teachers as lumps “of dead clay in the system,” Pound emphasizes the sort of passiveness he attributes to those in the profession. These teachers are not actively pursuing, understanding, and grasping their subjects. They lack a certain precision—they are unable to separate roots from branches and branches from twigs, the overall structure from its parts, the important parts from those less important. Artists, by contrast, not only exercise precision, but their work depends on it: “The touchstone of an art is precision. This precision is of various and complicated sorts and only the specialist can determine whether works of art possess certain sorts of precision. I don’t mean to say that any intelligent person cannot have more or less sound judgment as to whether a certain work of art is good or not” (48).

This theory carries over into Pound's poetry. Pound's declaration that "the touchstone of an art is precision" is enacted in many of the poems he wrote as an Imagist. "In A Station of the Metro," "The Garden," and "Alba," for example, are able to evoke in such a short space—2 lines, 13 lines, and 3 lines, respectively— a flash of perception as two images are superimposed without any overt indication as to their connection. True to Pound's criteria for the imagist poem as stated in "A Few Don'ts By An Imagiste," "In a Station of the Metro" is not "descriptive" or "viewy" (132). Rather, through its juxtaposition of the "faces in the crowd" and the "petals on a wet, black bough" it enables an act of discovery for the reader of what these two seemingly disparate images have in common. According to Pound, in addition to concision, precision is the most important element of an imagist poem— precision of image, of language, and of rhythmic structure.

As noted above, Pound argues that precision is the touchstone of all art; therefore artists in general—not just imagist poets—must be precise. It is the artist's relationship to precision that, according to Pound, makes the artist the better teacher in that there is no mediation—and therefore imprecision—between the artist or creator and the student. To this end, we can read "In a Station at a Metro" as a poem in which Pound teaches his readers (and potentially other poets) that artists need not explain or describe certain connections but through precise images and language can facilitate a greater conceptual and perceptual understanding of these relationships.

Pound actually imagines that all artists are teachers. In July 1922 he wrote to Felix Schelling, one of his professors at the University of Pennsylvania: "I am perhaps didactic; so in a sense, or in different senses are Homer, Dante [. . .] It's all rubbish to pretend that art isn't didactic. A revelation is always didactic. Only the aesthetes since 1800 have pretended the

contrary, and they aren't a very sturdy lot" (Coyle 47). In situating Homer and Dante as both artists and teachers, Pound blurs the boundary between the two professions. Because Pound characterizes the teachers within the modern education system as lazy and uninterested in seeking out facts and enabling revelations, the artist—not the traditional teacher— emerges as the figure that has the potential to revolutionize education.

Ironically, though, Pound's seemingly liberal stance on the artist-teacher is complicated by his far more conservative ideas regarding the curriculum. His belief in the canon—or at least his version of the canon⁵⁹— becomes clear as one reads through the lists of all-too-familiar recommended authors in How To Read and ABC of Reading. About twenty years after writing those two texts, Pound was asked during an interview about the proper reading material for students, and he recollected Santayana (who was involved with Pound's proposal for a college of the arts) as saying: "It don't matter what they read so long as they all read the same thing" (Ruthven 30). Pound added, "that same thing ought to be a body of common knowledge" (Ruthven 30). Pound's investment in a curriculum based on a set of classic texts comes through, as well, in "Dr. Williams' Position" (1928), a review of A Voyage to Pagan which he composed for the Dial. Writing about literature in general, Pound argues that there are books "which, despite their ineptitudes, and lack of accomplishment, or 'form', and finish, contain something for the best minds of the time, a time, any time" (396). Pound's Arnoldian belief in timelessness as a measure of good literature—a text-centered theory of value—complicates his otherwise reader-centered pedagogical theories, to which I dedicate a large part of what follows.

4.4 QUESTIONS OF GENRE: HOW TO READ AND ABC OF READING

How To Read and ABC of Reading defy categorization. They are part anthology in that they both (the latter, especially) publish what Pound terms “exhibits,” poems and other short works in their entirety. These exhibits comprise more than half of ABC of Reading. How To Read and ABC of Reading are also part criticism and part literary history, as Pound examines the value of literature across time. Pound’s recommendation that How To Read and ABC of Reading be included in the curriculum in the North Dakota schools, discussed previously, cements their status as textbooks. Finally, How To Read and ABC of Reading are works of arts in and of themselves: they are creative, as well as critical, acts. The fact that these texts are not aligned with a specific genre enables Pound to borrow elements from all genres when he needs to do so. Moreover, the ambiguity of the genre allows Pound to question the rigidity of these classifications—particularly the separation between criticism and creation—something that his close friend and fellow critic T. S. Eliot did a few years before the publication of How To Read in “The Function of Criticism” (1923):

Matthew Arnold distinguishes far too bluntly between the two activities [of creation and criticism]. He overlooks the capital importance of criticism in the work of creation itself. Probably, indeed the larger part of the labour of an author in composing his work is critical labour; the labour of sifting, combining, constructing, expunging, correcting, testing: this frightful toil is as much critical as creative. (19)

Although Eliot goes on to complicate the relationship between creation and criticism, his above critique of Matthew Arnold’s argument is seemingly enacted in Pound’s texts. Creation and

criticism can be fused, and when they are, the result is something like Pound's How To Read and ABC of Reading as well as Woolf's A Room of One's Own.

Without denying the difficulty of defining these works, I will refer to How To Read and ABC of Reading as “reading guides.” I use the term “guide” because it suggests an instructional component but does not necessarily tie that component to any sort of institution like the education system. This distinction is important because Pound saw literary studies— as it is traditionally defined—as a series of attempts to tame language and literature: “They regard [good literature] as dangerous, chaotic, subversive. They try every idiotic and degrading wheeze to tame it down. They try to make a bog, a marasmus, a great putridity in place of a sane and active ebullience. And they do this from sheer simian and pig-like stupidity, and from their failure to understand the function of letters” (16). By equating this methodology with negative animalistic impulses, Pound suggests that language must be allowed the ambiguity, chaos, and slippage that defines it.

How To Read and ABC of Reading attempt to keep the vibrancy of letters alive. In How To Read, Pound explains that “the function of literature as a generated prize-worthy force is precisely that it does incite humanity to continue living; that is it eases the mind of strain, and feeds it, I mean definitely as nutrition of impulse” (20). Pound's guides are not attempts to tame literature. In fact, as I will examine in more depth below, both guides bring to the fore the difficulties inherent in reading literature because of the nature of language. The act of reading itself, according to these guides, must be viewed as a playful act. This brings me to the final reason why I will use the designation “reading guide” to refer to How To Read and ABC of Reading. Unlike the designation of “anthology”—and ABC of Reading could be said to be an

anthology as much as anything else— characterizing a text as a reading guide privileges the act of reading itself—one of the primary foci of this study.

4.5 PEDAGOGY AND HOW TO READ

Pound opens the section entitled “For A Method” in How To Read with the proclamation that while “people regard literature as something vastly more flabby and floating and complicated and indefinite than [. . .] mathematics [. . .] it is not, however, more complicated than biology, and no one ever supposed that it was” (12). Having diminished the complexity of literature, he continues: “We could, presumably, apply to the study of literature a little of the common sense that we currently apply to physics or biology” (12). Pound’s reference to “common sense” suggests an investment in the democratization of literature yet does not offer practical advice to the “common” reader. Although Pound goes on to clarify that “the method by which one studies literature has nothing to do with those allegedly scientific methods which approach literature as if it were something not literature, or with scientists’ attempts to subdivide the elements in literature according to some non-literary categoric division” (12), he tells us that he is against transporting a method from one discipline to another but neglects to outline the method that the title of the chapter promises.

In “Part II: Or What May be An Introduction to Method” of How To Read, Pound, for the first time, offers a definition of great literature— “language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree” (21)— a definition he elaborates in ABC of Reading. What follows this definition is a list of authors whose work one should read. This, it seems, is the method that Pound offers—a method that focuses less on how to read and more on what to read. The list is

not comprised of texts but of authors to which Pound sends his readers. These are the authors who have written, according to Pound, “the books that a man needs to know in order to ‘get his bearings,’ in order to have a sound judgment of any bit of writing that may come before him” (29). It is not so much Pound’s own how-to book that offers the guidance readers might expect, but rather the books to which How To Read directs its readers that do the real work. The method Pound offers, then, involves reading the works of particular authors in order to recognize how language can be “charged with meaning to the utmost degree” so that one is prepared to judge “any bit of writing that may come before him.” Pound’s goal, in other words, is to make judges and authorities of his readers.

In valuing the independence of the reader, Pound diminishes the social network which the reader might create in order to better understand a text. In other words, rather than encouraging readers to look to expert critics for help, Pound encourages readers to rely solely on themselves. This idea that the expert can help the reader no more than the reader can help himself seems to be one of the results of what Kenneth Gergen calls the “erosion of objectivity” in the modernist moment:

As we begin [in the modernist moment] to incorporate the dispositions of the varied others to whom we are exposed [thanks to technological advances], we become capable of taking their positions, adopting their attitudes, talking their language, playing their roles. In effect, one’s self becomes populated with others. The result is a steadily accumulating sense of doubt in the objectivity of any position one holds. For as opinions are expressed, one becomes aware of the alternative voices lurking. (85)

Even if they doubt their own ideas, readers are instructed by Pound not to consult the experts for these experts are no different from the readers themselves. Not only were experts no longer seen as objective, but with the “multiplication of competing perspectives” (Gergen 87), the following questions become relevant: “Who was to declare the ‘really real?’ Who could be trusted to rule among the [...] voices, and in whose terms was such a ruling to be justified?” (Gergen 87). We see this sentiment, this questioning of authority, throughout Pound’s guides in that he puts the onus of interpretive authority on readers.

This is not unlike Woolf who consistently demeaned her own expertise so that the common reader became the expert on his or her own reading experience. Just as Woolf was not without her own political agenda—she certainly wanted to offer readers freedom from experts but still sought to teach them a particular way of reading, her way—Pound is not without his agenda. Although Woolf is more subtle in her recommendations for reading—she names important works and authors throughout A Room of One’s Own, for example—Pound offers straightforward lists in “Part III: Conclusions, Exceptions, Curricula” of How To Read of the authors who have been most important. And still, he underscores the reader’s role in this list-making:

This list does not, obviously, contain the names of every author who has ever written a good poem or a good octave or sestet. It is the result of twenty-seven years’ thought on the subject and a resumé of conclusions. That may be a reason for giving it some consideration. It is not a reason for accepting it as a finality. Swallowed whole it is useless. For practical class work the instructor should try, and incite his students to try, to pry out some element that I have included and to substitute for it something

more valid. The intelligent lay reader will instinctively try to do this for himself. (52)

Pound asks readers to play an active role by replacing an element on his list with one that is more valid. Although he offers his list as a model, he encourages readers to compile a list that is even better than his, thus displacing his expertise. The list of authors—including Confucius, Homer, Ovid, Dante, Voltaire, Stendhal, Flaubert, Gautier, Coribere, Rimbaud—is defined by Pound as “the minimum basis for a sound liberal education in letters” (50). “After this inoculation,” writes Pound, “[the reader] could be ‘with safety exposed’ to modernity or anything else in literature. I mean he wouldn’t lose his head or ascribe ridiculous values to works of second intensity. He would have axes of reference, and would I think, find them dependable” (51). Pound’s metaphor of inoculation will come up again below as I discuss in more detail the rhetoric Pound uses to emphasize the ailing state of the education system and the culture at large. The lists of authors and works Pound includes are meant to prepare anyone—instructors, students, and laypeople—for modern literature in particular and literature in general. Taking Pound’s metaphor further, the lists are also antidotes to any previous literary training to which readers have been exposed in the ailing education system since, according to Pound, “the effect of idiot professors on the student, even the fairly intelligent student, takes ten years or more to wear off” (Sutton 122-3). Guiding readers to other texts—an important element in Pound’s pedagogy—these lists emphasize the importance of further reading. In “Past History” (1933), Pound defines reading as necessarily involving an understanding of the history of literature and the connections among texts. He explains what this process looks like:

I have simplified the concept of world literature to the best of my ability in
How To Read.

The only way for an instructor adequately to know Joyce's "position" is to know more or less the state of human knowledge with regard to writing NOVELS before 1912; to know who were the great inventors and great performers and then to locate Joyce's work in relation to these known phenomena.

Unless the words Flaubert, Ibsen, Henry James have specific meanings for the reader no essayist however patient can explain Joyce's relation to them, or anyone's relation to them, without at least reading three other essays, one on each of these writers, and probably another ten on their forebears, in fact, without doing a complete history of the novel.

(86)

As is clear from the above excerpt, Pound's recommendations for further reading are not simply suggestions, but a necessary part of the reading process. In suggesting that the public would be able to read and understand these authors—he even gets so specific as to suggest certain translations over others—Pound places a great deal of faith in the reading public. That is not to say, however, that he does not relish his role as the one who teaches or guides the public to the most important texts. We might even go so far as to say that his belief in the public's ability has much to do with his idea of himself as an exemplary teacher. Still, Pound's pedagogy does downplay his own role as teacher in order to make a space for the active and intelligent reader who he seems convinced exists within the newly expanded reading public.

Pound does not, however, expect or even encourage his readers to read everything that they can get their hands on. He insists on more in-depth reading even if that means reading fewer texts: "To tranquilize the low-brow reader, let me say at once that I do not wish to muddle him

by making him read more books, but to allow him to read fewer with greater result” (How To Read 8). It would be misguided to attach too much importance to the term “tranquilize” in order to argue that Pound is, in fact, degrading his readers. Pound seeks to assure and encourage the inexperienced reader that the task upon which he is about to embark is a manageable one. Moreover, this metaphor of tranquilization is reminiscent of his “inoculating” his readers by giving them a list of authors whose works define “the minimum basis for a sound liberal education in letters” (How To Read 50). With this inoculation, the reader “could be ‘with safety exposed’ to modernity or anything else in literature” (How To Read 51). In fact, one of the final sections of How to Read—entitled “Vaccine”—is defined by this metaphor as Pound “suggests several remedies” (49, emphasis added) for curing the educational system, including a new curriculum for literary instruction and an emphasis on learning multiple languages. In other words, Pound’s use of the term “tranquilize”—even as it applies to readers—allows him to emphasize the ailing state of the education system, and the fact that those who have been exposed to it as well as those exposed to the more general effect of a culture in crisis are also “sick.” These metaphors of tranquilization, vaccines, remedies, and inoculations are rhetorical devices that also indicate Pound’s optimism that the educational system—although not well—can be transformed and become well again. And, in turn, those who have been exposed to this system formally and informally also have hope if they are willing to learn from Pound and accept his “inoculation.” Thus, the word “tranquilize” must not be read as Pound taking an elitist position, but rather as one of many metaphors Pound uses to describe the sickly education system that with his help can become healthy.

4.6 PEDAGOGY AND ABC OF READING

Pound's approach in ABC of Reading is similar to that of How To Read, yet in the former he instructs the reader in an even more circuitous and convoluted manner, offering a series of fragments, thoughts, personal anecdotes, and questions, most of which seem to have little to do with the issue at hand—namely how to read. The following excerpts from ABC of Reading demonstrate the unorthodox format and layout of the text:

Chapter Six

For those who read only English, I have done what I can.

I have translated the TA HIO so that they can learn where to start THINKING. And I have translated the Seafarer; so that they can see more or less where English poetry starts.

I don't know how they can get an idea of Greek. There are no satisfactory English translations.

A Latin crib can do a good deal. If you read French you can get the STORY of the Iliads and of the beginning of the Odyssey from Salel and Jamyn, or rather you could if their books weren't out of print. (I know no edition more recent than 1590.) Chapman is something different. See my notes on the Elizabethan translators.

You can get Ovid, or rather Ovid's stories in Golding's *Metamorphoses*, which is the most beautiful book in the language (my opinion and I suspect it was Shakespeare's).

Marlowe translated the *Amores*.

And before that Gavin Douglas had made something of the Aeneids that I, at any rate, like better than Virgil's Latin.

From Chaucer you can learn (1) whatever came over into the earliest English that one can read without a dictionary, but for which a glossary is needed; (2) and the specifically ENGLISH quality or component. Landor's

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dialogues of Chaucer, Petrarch and Boccaccio, are the best real criticism of Chaucer we have.

There are anthologies of early English verse. Sidgwick has made the best one I half remember.

After Chaucer, come Gavin Douglas, Golding and Marlowe with their 'translations'.

Then comes Shakespeare in division: the sonnets where he is, I think, practising his craft. The lyrics where he is learning. I believe from Italian song-books in which the WORDS were printed WITH the music.

The plays, especially the series of history plays, which form the true English EPOS.

as distinct from the bastard Epic, the imitation, the constructed counterfeit.

It would be particularly against the grain of the whole ideogrammic method for me to make a series of general statements concerning Elizabethan katachrestical language.

The way to study Shakespeare's language is to study it side by side with something different and of equal extent.

The proper antagonist is Dante, who is of equal size and DIFFERENT. To study Shakespeare's language merely in comparison with the DECADENCE of the same thing doesn't give one's mind any leverage.

There is Shakespearean song. There is the language made to be SPOKEN, perhaps even to be ranted.

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Figure A

Felix Schelling has evolved or quoted the theory that Shakespeare wanted to be a poet, but that when he couldn't make a career of it, he took to writing stage plays, not altogether liking the form.

If the student can't measure Shakespeare against Dante, the next alternative is possibly to measure his language against the prose manifestation of Voltaire, Stendhal, Flaubert, or of Fielding—if you cannot read French.

You can't judge any chemical's action merely by putting it with more of itself. To know it, you have got to know its limits, both what it is and what it is not. What substances are harder or softer, what more resilient, what more compact.

You can't measure it merely by itself diluted with some neutral substance.

.

TO BREAK UP THE BOREDOM, I have suggested the great translators . . . for an anthology, shall we say, of the poems that don't put me to sleep.

There are passages of Marlowe. Donne has written the only English poem ('The Ecstasy') that can be set against Cavalcanti's Donna mi Prega. The two are not in the least alike. Their problems are utterly different.

The great lyric age lasted while Campion made his own music, while Lawes set Waller's verses, while verses, if not

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actually sung or set to music, were at least made with the intention of going to music.

Music rots when it gets *too far* from the dance. Poetry atrophies when it gets too far from music.

There are three kinds of melopoeia, that is, verse made to sing; to chant or intone; and to speak.

The older one gets the more one believes in the first.

One reads prose for the subject matter.

Glance at Burton's 'anatomy' as a curiosity, a sample of NON VERSE which has qualities of poetry but that cannot be confounded with it.

English prose is alive in Florio's Montaigne; Urquhart's Rabelais;

Fielding; Jane Austen; the novelists that everyone reads; Kipling; H. James. James' prefaces tell what 'writing a novel' means.

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Figure A (cont.)

Pound spends the first part of this chapter focusing on the topic of translation, and the importance of a good translation. Pound's opening sentence to the chapter— "For those who read only English, I have done what I can" (58) — suggests that he remains unconvinced that a translation is a proper object of study. Because the literary work itself takes primacy in Pound's pedagogy, the original text, in its original language, is that which should be studied. If one

cannot access the original text, one can look to Pound's guidance in Chapter Six for the best translations of classic texts. Pound offers no explicit instruction, then, in this portion of the chapter, and instead uses the space to direct readers to translations of the works he thinks they should read.

Later in the chapter, though, Pound does begin to instruct his readers on how they should read, albeit circuitously. Comparing the act of reading to a chemical reaction, Pound writes: "You can't judge any chemical's action merely by putting it with more of itself. To know it, you have got to know its limits, both what it is and what it is not. What substances are harder or softer, what more resilient, what more compact. You can't measure it merely by itself diluted with some neutral substance" (ABC of Reading 37). This analogy enacts the very sort of reading that Pound instructs to readers to undertake, namely one based on comparison. By reading certain texts and authors alongside each other, one can better know and better measure each. Chapter Six, thus, also suggests the best pairings of texts and authors in order to produce this reading experience.

Straying altogether from the topic of translation and comparative readings, Chapter Seven challenges readers not only to determine how the two short paragraphs that comprise the chapter are connected to each other, but how they are connected to that which comes before them and after them in ABC of Reading:

Chapter Seven

It doesn't matter which leg of your table you make first, so long as the table has four legs and will stand up solidly when you have finished it.

Mediocre poetry is in the long run the same in all countries. The decadence of Petrarchism in Italy and the 'rice powder poetry' in China arrive at about the same level of weakness despite the difference in idiom.

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Figure B

The two paragraphs that make up Chapter Seven challenge us to connect the ideas in each. We might connect the two paragraphs by focusing on the dichotomy between strength and weakness. The first paragraph argues that a table may be strong no matter the order in which it was constructed, while the second paragraph argues that mediocre poetry is weak no matter the language in which it is written. As Pound criticizes the dependence on a hierarchy or formula for constructing a table in the first paragraph, he degrades Petrarchism, poetry dependent upon a formula, in the second paragraph.

Chapter Seven, then, suggests that one may produce better poetry if not following a specific formula just as one can produce a strong a table without following a formula for doing so. In other words, Pound argues that one is better off not adhering to a formula during the process of creation. Admittedly, the connection is a strenuous one since Pound offers little to aid us in reading this short chapter. Ultimately, this interpretation is impossible without the knowledge of Pound's belief in the importance of individualism⁶⁰ and his rejection of authority, in this case, the authority of formula. Still, Chapter Seven does not offer his readers an alternative to this formulaic mode of building or writing, and we are left wondering how this chapter will help anyone to read. Chapter Eight, which departs completely from that which is discussed in Chapter Seven, opens by reviewing some points about communication made in Chapter One:

Chapter Eight

Coming round again to the starting-point.

Language is a means of communication. To charge language with meaning to the utmost possible degree, we have, as stated, the three chief means:

I throwing the object (fixed or moving) on to the visual imagination.

II inducing emotional correlations by the sound and rhythm of the speech.

III inducing both of the effects by stimulating the associations (intellectual or emotional) that have remained in the receiver's consciousness in relation to the actual words or word groups employed.

(phanopoeia, melopoeia, logopoeia)

Incompetence will show in the use of too many words.

The reader's first and simplest test of an author will be to look for words that do not function; that contribute nothing to the meaning OR that distract from the MOST important factor of the meaning to factors of minor importance.

Figure C

One definition of beauty is: aptness to purpose.

Whether it is a good definition or not, you can readily see that a good deal of BAD criticism has been written by men who assume that an author is trying to do what he is NOT trying to do.

Incredible as it now seems, the bad critics of Keats' time found his writing 'obscure', which meant that they couldn't understand WHY Keats wrote.

Most human perceptions date from a long time ago, or are derivable from perceptions that gifted men have had long before we were born. The race discovers, and rediscovers.

TESTS AND COMPOSITION EXERCISES

I

1 Let the pupils exchange composition papers and see how many and what useless words have been used—how many words that convey nothing new.

2 How many words that obscure the meaning.

3 How many words out of their usual place, and whether this alteration makes the statement in any way more interesting or more energetic.

4 Whether a sentence is ambiguous; whether it really means more than one thing or more than the writer in-

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tended; whether it can be so read as to mean something different.

5 Whether there is something clear on paper, but ambiguous if spoken aloud.

II

It is said that Flaubert taught De Maupassant to write. When De Maupassant returned from a walk Flaubert would ask him to describe someone, say a concierge whom they would both pass in their next walk, and to describe the person so that Flaubert would recognize, say, the concierge and not mistake her for some other concierge and not the one De Maupassant had described.

E

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Figure C (cont.)

Chapter Eight is a representative chapter from ABC of Reading in that it is comprised of the following: ideas about language; thoughts on beauty; a discussion of critics and authorial intention; arguments about human perception; exercises for students; and an anecdote about Flaubert and De Maupassant. None of these ideas is coherently presented or developed. Moreover, terms like “phanopoeia,” “melopoeia,” and “logopoeia” remain undefined. Although

it is difficult to imagine the connections of these fragments to reading, the topics themselves do seem to have bearing on reading in ways that the topics in other chapters will not, a point I will discuss later.

The most coherent section of the chapter is the “tests and composition exercises.” Because Pound opens the chapter by reminding readers that “language is a means of communication” (42) and goes on to discuss the importance of precision in the use of language, it follows that the exercises would instruct students to apply these “lessons.” The exercises ask students to “exchange composition papers and see how many and what useless words have been used” (64). Pound wants students to examine their peers’ work in order to determine if their language is as precise as possible or if certain words are “obscur[ing] the meaning” (64) or making it ambiguous. Although the exercise seems straightforward, it is extremely difficult, especially since Pound spends only a page “preparing” his students to complete this task, and offering no practical means for answering any of the questions he has posed. How exactly might students determine which words are necessary and which are not in a composition? How are they to judge which words “obscure the meaning”? What has Pound taught them that would enable them to decipher “how many words [are] out of their usual place”? How has Chapter Eight prepared them to tell whether a sentence “means more than one thing or more than the writer intended”? In other words, Chapter Eight does not offer students the skills or knowledge they will need in order to complete these exercises. This point separates Pound’s reading guides from mainstream composition handbooks at the time. Between 1918 and 1935, the handbook had become the most popular type of textbook used in the composition classroom. These handbooks, as Robert J. Connors explains, gave students the responsibility of teaching themselves by offering exercises that reviewed each lesson of each section of the handbook.⁶¹ While these

exercises in ABC of Reading certainly depend on students to teach themselves and each other, and aim to review the discussion of language in Chapter Eight, Pound does not give students the tools in order to complete the exercises. Moreover, the exercises are not technical, as were the exercises in the mainstream textbooks. Rather than asking students to read about the proper structure of a paragraph or the correct use of punctuation and then apply what they have learned, Pound's exercises demand that students ponder much larger, conceptual questions involving the nature of language, questions that Pound has neglected to prepare them to answer.

The most practical advice Pound offers in ABC of Reading, as in How to Read, is a list of recommended authors and works. Introducing his recommendations, Pound writes, "YOU WILL NEVER KNOW either why I chose them, or why they were worth choosing, or why you approve or disapprove my choice, until you go to the TEXTS, the originals. And the quicker you go to the texts the less need there will be for your listening to me or to any other long-winded critic" (45-6). While we again see Pound bemoaning the tendency of readers to allow critics, scholars, guides and other authorities to mediate their reading⁶², Pound's advice in ABC of Reading is presented in an odd and difficult form. Pound's advice lies somewhere among the facts pertaining to the European history of letters, the role of hieroglyphics, Chinese ideograms, and primitive languages with their mimicry and gestures, all of which are presented in fragments unconnected to any sort of overarching narrative concerning practical advice on how to read. These topics—even more so than those from Chapter Eight, excerpted above—bewilder the reader looking for guidance on reading.

The lack of practical advice on how to read and the deliberately difficult form in which this advice is presented is reminiscent of Woolf's consistent refusal to answer the questions she has been assigned as a lecturer. Woolf makes her readers work with her as does Pound. Yet,

perhaps even more forcibly than Woolf, Pound demands that his readers work hard and actively make sense of this guide—a work that in no way represents the watered-down text one might expect from the genre of a guide.

Pound's discussion of Chinese ideograms in ABC of Reading certainly contributes to the difficulty of the text.⁶³ Chinese ideograms were introduced to Pound by Ernest Fenollosa, whose essay, "The Chinese Written Character" Pound edited and had published after Fenollosa's death in 1908. Both Fenollosa and Pound were interested in the poetic nature of the Chinese written character and the Chinese language's ability to "thro[w] light upon our forgotten mental processes," thereby "furnishing a new chapter in the philosophy of language" (375). Here Fenollosa refers to the fact that the Chinese language, not bound by the designations of noun and verb, offers insights into the gaps between nature and how it is represented in language:

A true noun, an isolated thing, does not exist in nature. Things are only the terminal points, or rather the meeting points of actions, cross-sections cut through actions, snap-shots. Neither can a pure verb, an abstract motion, be possible in nature. The eye sees noun and verb as one: things in motion, motion in things, and so the Chinese conception tends to represent them. (364)

Pound is attracted to Chinese language for its capacity—through its characters—to represent reality more accurately. While writing imagist poetry, Pound became especially intrigued by the relationship between language and image.⁶⁴ For him, the Chinese character represented the merging of image and language.

Pound's discussion of Chinese ideograms in ABC of Reading helps him to advance a particular way of studying art in general, and literature and poetry specifically: "Chinese

ideogram does not try to be the picture of the sound, or to be a written sign recalling a sound, but it is still the picture of a thing [. . .] It means the thing or the action or situation, or quality germane to the several things it pictures” (21), Pound writes in ABC of Reading. Pound advances Fellonosa’s arguments, citing him by name, that a “language written in this way simply HAD TO STAY POETIC” (22). The poetic nature of the Chinese ideogram seems to stem from its position as both language and image as well as its potential accessibility. Pound likes the Chinese ideogram because one “could read a certain amount of Chinese writing without ANY STUDY” (21) simply by recognizing the image that character represents: “This is nevertheless the RIGHT WAY to study poetry, or literature, or painting [. . .] If you want to find out something about painting you go to the National Gallery, or the Salon Carre, or the Brera, or the Prado and LOOK at the picture. For every reader of books on art, 1,000 people go to LOOK at the paintings. Thank heaven!” (ABC of Reading 23). The very nature of the Chinese character which demands that one look and that one observe, rather than just read, is one of the elements that seemingly attracts Pound to these characters. Connected to that is the democraticizing⁶⁵ effect that these characters seem to have in that almost anyone could look at a character and, based upon what it looks like, determine its meaning. Ironically, though, the point of Pound’s discussion of Chinese ideograms is fairly hard to grasp within the limited, fragmented, and incoherent context of ABC of Reading—thus making this section of his reading guide yet another challenge to readers.

With the various difficulties that How To Read and, even more so, ABC of Reading present for readers, Pound’s guides are not unlike the other difficult modern texts with which the public will come into contact. If readers can make sense of his guides then readers are effectively engaging with difficulty and ultimately with the modernist project. Pound’s guide is a primer of

sorts that prepares readers for the difficulties—including fragmentation and, in some cases, a complete lack of a coherent narrative—that they will encounter in modern texts.⁶⁶ Pound, in other words, instructs readers by offering them guidance in the very form and style about which he hopes to teach them.

4.7 POUND AND THE LITTLE MAGAZINES

Little magazines provided a space in which modernist writers could publish their experimental work. Although these magazines did not boast vast readerships, they helped to define what we now call modern literature in that they were the first to publish the works of central figures within the modernist movement including Joyce, Eliot, and Pound. With their commitment to the avant-garde and the experimental, the little magazines suggested that a cultural Renaissance— of the sort that Pound had in mind— could, in fact, occur. In light of the actual failure of Pound’s college of the arts, the little magazines ended up being the space in which Pound’s college of the arts actually materialized. While he never followed through with his college, we see the ideologies that informed his blue-prints as central to the decisions he made as editor of several little magazines.

Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich explain that the readership of the little magazine was limited to a group of “intelligent readers: to be such a reader one had to understand the aims of the particular schools of literature that the magazines represented, had to be interested in learning about dadaism, vorticism, expressionism, and surrealism” (3). Its readers were looking to the little magazines to provide something unavailable in the academy. Hoffman explains that “one of the most significant contributions of these magazines to

twentieth-century literature is to give it an abundance of suggestions and styles which popular or academic taste scarcely could tolerate or accept” (4). Hoffman, then, situates the little magazine somewhere between the popular and the academic. In doing so, he suggests that an altogether different sort of taste is being cultivated, one that is not yet accepted in either circle. Still, we must be careful not to completely sever the little magazines from the university. Nancy Glazener reminds us that

perhaps the most significant fact about the little magazines was that many of them were associated with the culture of the universities: the literary aspirations and tastes of students or recent graduates or young faculty members [. . .] The link between the little magazines and universities was sufficiently widely recognized that the Critic would complain in 1897 that “any youth just out of college, or any freshman just in college” could have his own magazine if only he had enough money. Hence, what might appear to be a guerilla enterprise on the part of outsider intellectuals may really have been an outgrowth of the U.S. academy’s early ventures in teaching English and American literatures. (237)

Glazener’s call to be critical of characterizations of little magazines as “guerilla enterprise[s] on the part of outsider intellectuals” is compelling particularly in the case of Pound, whose relationship to the university was complicated—as he both accepted the credentials that American Universities afforded him, and simultaneously offered scathing criticisms of that very education system.

Pound had relationships with several little magazines as a contributor and editor. Beginning in 1911, Pound published regularly—nearly three hundred articles—in Orage’s The

New Age, the journal of Guild Socialism that contained articles on art, literature, religion, economics, psychology, politics, and philosophy written by T. E. Hulme, John Middleton Murry, and Katherine Mansfield, among others. The New Age was occasionally praised, but was mostly criticized for its heterogeneity. Orage responded by emphasizing the very importance of this heterogeneity: “‘The sooner the whole of The New Age is regarded as more important than any of its parts the better’” (qtd. in Coyle 56). Both Orage and Pound believed in the importance of this sort of eclecticism and “general” education. In “Patria mia,” Pound agrees with Orage’s argument as he discusses a hypothetical graduate student in science:

The graduate student is not taught to think of his own minute discoveries in relation to his subject as a whole. If that subject happens to be the history of an art he is scarce likely ever to have considered his work in relation to the life of that art [. . .] no minute detail of knowledge is ever dull if it be presented to us in such a way as to make us understand its bearing on the whole of science. (91)

The New Age was a space in which Orage and Pound could showcase the importance of seeing the connections among subjects. With his college of the arts, Pound also imagined that subjects would be taught within a context that would allow students to see the bearing of one subject on another. As we will see, Pound’s belief in the importance of making connections among seemingly unrelated subjects permeates his writings on vorticism in which his notion of the “primary pigment” illuminates connections among all of the arts.

In 1912, Pound was asked by Harriet Monroe to serve as the foreign correspondent for Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, based on his poetry in Personae and Exultations. Pound accepted the position and was instrumental in having the work of Yeats, Aldington, H. D., and Eliot

published there along with his own translations of Ernest Fenollosa's Chinese poems. Poetry was, in fact, the first place "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" appeared, although Monroe agreed to publish it only begrudgingly (Scott xvi). Pound served as the head of the literary department at The Egoist: An Individualist (formerly The New Freewoman: An Individualist Review) from 1913-1919 during which time he played a significant role in the magazine's serial publishing of Joyce's A Portrait of An Artist as a Young Man (1914) and Wyndham Lewis's Tarr (1916). Just a few years prior to his publishing Tarr, he and Lewis founded BLAST: A Review of the Great English Vortex, "the official vehicle of Pound and Lewis's movement that Pound coined Vorticism" (Scott xvii). The magazine was "oversized, approximately nine by twelve inches, and its cover was a shocking pink, with 'BLAST' printed diagonally across it in bold black letters" (Scott xvii). It "contained assaults on anyone and anything the editors felt smacked of the old, the sentimental, the middle class" (Scott xvii), and lasted only two issues.

From 1917-1919 and then again from 1921-1923, Pound worked with Margaret C. Anderson and The Little Review, which aimed to "produce criticism of books, music, art, drama, and life that shall be fresh and constructive, and intelligent from the artist's point of view [. . .] Criticism that is creative—that is one high goal. And criticism is never merely an interpretive function; it is creation; it gives birth!" (Scott xx).⁶⁷ With its emphasis on the artist's point of view rather than the critic's, this mission statement, which appeared in the first issue of The Little Review, is reminiscent of Pound's privileging of the artist in his plans for his college of the arts. His anthologies—which I will discuss below—also privileged the primary work rather than secondary materials. The Little Review's mission statement might also be said to describe Pound's own reading guides in that both he and Anderson value criticism that is creative, that can stand on its own merits as a work of art, criticism that, in the words of Eliot, is autotelic. At

first, Pound only contributed his writing to The Little Review, but within a short time he took a more active role and began collaborating with Anderson as editor. Pound explained what this collaboration would entail in a letter to Anderson on January 26, 1917:

I want an “official organ” (vile phrase). I mean I want a place where I and T. S. Eliot can appear once a month (or once an “issue”) and where James Joyce can appear when he likes, and where Wyndham Lewis can appear if he comes back from the war [. . .] Also copy (a certain amount of it) would have to go in “at once,” i.e. in the next number after you receive it.

I must have a steady space for my best stuff (Scott and Friedman 6).

In the same letter, Pound explained to Anderson that those were not demands, but rather “the only condition[s] on which collaboration would be of any practical use to either of us, or be enjoyable to me” (6). While under the guise of outlining their impending collaborative enterprise, Pound seems far more interested in controlling the material within The Little Review, as he asks Anderson to guarantee that his and his friends’ work will have a space in each issue. The Little Review became a sort of version of Pound’s college of the arts, in which the best artists were working alongside one another. Readers would thus benefit from this collaboration among the best artists just as students would have if Pound’s college of the arts ever materialized.

At the same time that Pound was editing The Little Review, he was also serving as the foreign correspondent for the Dial which was published in New York. Having recently applied for and been denied a Ph.D., Pound saw the Dial as a place where he might air his grievances against the state of education. In August of 1920, he wrote to Scofield Thayer:

I thought of trying to stir up the animals and possibly start for reform of my own unfortunate alma mater, by applying for Ph.D. [. . .] Strikes me various people, say half dozen best might be asked to contrib. two pages to discussion “The PH.D. worth while,” getting leaders of anti-Ph.D. to start off and letting me see the stuff before it goes in.

The effect of idiot professors on the student, even the fairly intelligent student, takes ten years or more to wear off; thus the blighted and the blighting prof. gets a tremendous chance to poison the national literary and critical sense at its source; and usually does so.

Not only the graduate school prof. but the graduate of the grad.

school who poisons the green freshman, etc. etc.— (Sutton 122-23).

Although a lack of space (Sutton 148) prevented Pound and Thayer from executing the dialogue concerning the state of the American Ph.D. specifically and the state of modern education more generally, Pound’s idea for this series of articles attests to how his commitment to changing the state of education—“stir[ring] up the animals”—seemed to infiltrate his disparate projects. Pound stayed with the Dial from 1920 to 1923 but was far happier with The Little Review, which he thought “accomplished more in six months than the Dial has in a year, en fait de literature” (Scott 265). Alan C. Golding maintains that although the Dial and The Little Review were competitors and are still often cast in only that light, they “needed each other to accomplish their cultural work” (43) in that the Dial helped to canonize what the Little Review helped to discover, and thus in some sense the Little Review exercised its influence through the Dial” (46). Still, Pound often criticized the Dial’s refusal to take risks and wrote to Marianne Moore in 1921: “I have tried for a year to get Thayer to print—i.e., at least get—an article on younger American

writers. No use” (Golding 52). Crane agreed with Pound: “The Dial seems to have abandoned all interest in publishing American things, or anything, in fact, that comes to them unheralded by years of established experience” (Golding 52). Pound’s criticisms of the Dial were not, unsurprisingly, all nationalist in nature. Because of the experimental nature of Ulysses as well as its obscenities, Pound warned Joyce, whom he asked to send him some work for publication in the Dial, that “the Dial will never print ‘Ulysses.’ The Dial will never be any real fun” (Golding 51). The Little Review ultimately published Ulysses, which contributed undoubtedly to the view that The Little Review was far bolder in its publication choices than the Dial.

Pound’s extensive work with little magazines is indicative of his commitment to social change through the arts. These publications emerge from a historical moment when aesthetics were necessarily linked to political movements. In the “Preface to Some Imagist Poets” (1915), Editor Amy Lowell outlines “the essentials of all great poetry” (Jones 135): “We do not insist upon ‘free verse’ as the only method of writing poetry. We fight for it as for a principle of liberty. We believe that the individuality of a poet may often be better expressed in free verse than in conventional forms. In poetry, a new cadence means a new idea [...] To allow absolute freedom in the choice of the subject” (qtd. in Jones 135). In this preface, imagism is cast not only as an aesthetic movement but as a movement that is invested—through its aesthetics—in individuality, freedom, and liberty.

The aesthetics particular to vorticism, too, were politically charged.⁶⁸ Named by Pound, vorticism “was conceived of as a movement across the arts” (Dasenbrock 14) and sought to “describe [Pound’s and Wyndham Lewis’s] art in contradiction to the other isms of modern art, Cubism, Futurism, Expressionism, and Imagism” (Dasenbrock 14). Vorticism attempted to connect all of the arts through Pound’s notion of the “primary pigment”: “Vorticism is the use

of, or the belief in the use of, THE PRIMARY PIGMENT, straight through all of the arts” (“Affirmations II Vorticism” 277). The primary pigment is the most intense element of any type of art and the best artist in each field relies solely on this element. Pound explains in “Affirmations II Vorticism”: “If you are a cubist or an expressionist, or an imagist, you may believe in one thing for a painting and a very different thing for poetry. You may talk about volumes, or about color that ‘moves in,’ or about a certain form of verse, without having a correlated aesthetic which carries through all of the arts” (277). Vorticism was founded, in part, to honor the differences among the arts yet simultaneously link them through a correlated aesthetic. According to its ideology, vorticism—by connecting all of the arts and artists—had the power and potential to revolutionize civilization in the ways that Pound argued the arts more generally could. Pound, like other vorticists, “combined [an] archeological perspective with his poetic imitation: he chang[ed] the shape of the past [. . .] by means of his innovative and revisionary imitation” (Dasenbrock 106) while remaining “as interested in the political and social context of the art as in the art itself” (Dasenbrock 106). The past, in other words, was used to bring to light contemporary social and political concerns. Richard Cork, in fact, argues that vorticism was “the brainchild of Lewis’s political ambitions, a collective term which he was able to bestow on the rebels’ work after the Futurist Manifesto had offended their sense of national pride” (225).

The little magazines were the outlets for these ideas and movements. Blast was founded expressly as the vehicle for vorticism, and Harriet Monroe dedicated entire issues of Poetry to the Imagist movement. Although the ideas being furthered by the imagists and vorticists were often circulating among those who already agreed with them, the sort of cultural renaissance that Pound envisioned was not necessarily dependent on the little magazines reaching wide

audiences. The commitment of artists to their art (i.e. their writing, in this case) and to each other was more crucial to Pound's vision than reaching the reading public: "It is the little magazine's function as much to generate further writing and put writers into dialogue as it is to spread the word or proselytize to some not-yet-available audience" (Golding 50). As I mention above, this function of the little magazines is especially important in that these little magazines are reminiscent of Pound's plans for a college of the arts, the germs of which are visible as early as 1912 in "Patria mia." The college of the arts was to be a space in which artists would be responsible for teaching and working collaboratively with students in apprenticeships. Like his college of arts, his plans for a cultural renaissance, also, rested on the centrality of the artist: "If you endow enough men, individuals of vivid and different personality, and make the endowment perpetual, to be handed down from artist to artist, you will have put the arts in a position to defy the subversive pressure of commercial advantage, and of the mediocre spirit which is the bane and hidden terror of democracy" ("Renaissance" 224). The arts, then, according to Pound, hold the promise for combating commercial forces. This theory explains, in part, at least, why he "should like to see the universities and the arts and the system of publication linked together for some sort of mutual benefit and stimulus" (61). Again, we see Pound calling for a system in which seemingly heterogenic parts are considered together in terms of the work that they can accomplish as a unit. The little magazines—publications that were not controlled by mass media outlets but rather by other artists—offer a model of this type of system. The arts and the artist are not controlled by the market and therefore have the power to defy its demands. Through this system, artists are leading people to an understanding of art. The college of the arts only makes official a relationship that, according to Pound, has always existed: "It's all rubbish to pretend that art isn't didactic. A revelation is always didactic" (Coyle 47).

Pound believed that “men who make literature know something that those who merely teach it do not. The longer and the more acrimonious the correspondence between us becomes,” as he put it in “Past History” (1933), “the more nearly impossible it seems to establish ANY communication between the two groups” (81). The two groups Pound alludes to are the writers of literature and the teachers of literature. Pound’s distinction could be said to describe the relationship between all practitioners of the arts and teachers of the arts. The little magazine offered a space that might foreground the artist’s inherent role as teacher.

As I mentioned above, many scholars cite the small circulation of the little magazines as an impediment to the sort of revolution that Pound and others hoped these magazines (on a small scale) and the arts (on a larger scale) might incite. Because the magazines never reached a vast audience, the artists and their art were unable to teach their potential “students.” For Pound, though, the first step—and perhaps the most important—is securing “the individuals of vivid and different personality (“Renaissance” 224) and putting “writers into Dialogue,” writers who will “generate further writing” (Golding 50). While he was unable to execute his plans for the college of the arts, the little magazines and particularly the Dial offered him the opportunity to organize what he considered the perfect curriculum. Thomas L. Scott and Melvin J. Friedman explain: “Essentially his concern was not only for the writers as individuals—as sincere as that concern no doubt was—but also for the energizing effect created by publishing each with the others” (xxvii). Scott and Friedman go on to argue that Pound was most interested in “playing one instrument off against another, the effect of the whole achieved by the interplay of the parts” (xxviii). Pound maintained that “certain elements must be combined in a book, or in a number of magazine or of a paper [. . .] The lack in May, can not be remedied in June [. . .] It is a defect, even a defect of ART not to make each number of the magazine an entity” (Scott and Friedman

67). The ensemble effect that Pound sought to create in each issue of the Dial is reminiscent of his insistence that Anderson at The Little Review allow him to publish alongside particular writers.

4.8 POUND'S ANTHOLOGIES

Throughout his career, Pound edited several anthologies: *Des Imagistes: An Anthology* (1914), *The Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson* (1915), *The Catholic Anthology* (1915), *Profile: An Anthology Collected in MCMXXXI* (1932), *Active Anthology* (1933), and *Confucius to cummings: An Anthology of Poetry* (1964). Pound's anthologies, like *How To Read and ABC of Reading*, offer insight into what sort of relationship he imagined his readers should have with literature and how he attempted to facilitate that relationship. The choices he made as editor including— which works and writers to publish, how to organize the anthologies, and how visible the editor of an anthology should be— enable us to consider what part his anthologies, particularly his earlier anthologies, played in his plan for inciting a cultural renaissance. Moreover, tracing his choices across time—from 1914 when *Des Imagistes* was published to 1964's *Confucius to cummings* enables one to track both patterns and inconsistencies in his editorial decisions.

Pound's vision for the uses of the anthologies differed. His last project, Confucius to cummings, for example, was written specifically for use in the classroom, but his overall investment in the anthology as a genre has to do with his belief in the importance of making literature available to all: "Pound constantly admonished publishers for not printing cheap anthologies because they were, he was convinced, effective, cheap and useful for reminding a

culture of great literature it had forgotten and new literature it should know” (Nadel 81). Of course, what constituted “great literature,” both old and new, was determined by Pound—who often celebrated the fact that his anthologies contained his personal preferences. In an introductory note in Profile, for example, Pound describes the anthology as “a collection of poems which have stuck in my memory and which may possibly define their epoch, or at least rectify current ideas in respect of at least one contour.” Pound’s candor in describing the means by which he chose the collected works—rather than trying to cast his opinions as “objective”—is reminiscent of his note at the beginning of ABC of Reading in which he tells the reader, “YOU WILL NEVER KNOW either why I chose [the texts herein], or why they were worth choosing, or why you approve or disapprove my choice, until you go to the TEXTS, the originals. And the quicker you go to the texts the less need there will be for your listening to me or to any other long-winded critic” (46). Although Pound does not mention his memory as a gauge in the latter quote, he does position his opinions of the texts front and center. Again, we see him degrading the critic who impedes the reader’s experience of reading, yet Pound mediates this experience by directing readers to what he deems the appropriate texts. Simultaneously, however, he also attempts to carve out a space for the reader’s individual experience of these texts.

In those anthologies published prior to Profile, however, Pound was less likely to make his editorial presence felt. There were no introductory notes that discussed or justified his selections to readers. More importantly—for my purposes—neither is there any apparatus that an editor might include to help readers make sense of the contents. These anthologies, in fact, were missing many of the defining features of the genre⁶⁹:

The anthology as a genre relies on several formal features to make its contents more accessible [. . .] These include tables of contents, headnotes,

footnotes, biographies, excerpts, paraphrases, and summaries. These features are not a matter of choice for individual editors. They are dictated by the needs of the institution (education) the anthology serves; they are all part of the hidden curriculum. A particular editor might choose to deviate from one or more of these features, but in doing so he or she always runs the risk that the form will not be recognized within the genre and the anthology will not sell. (Finke 398)

Although not necessarily intended for use in the classroom, as was Pound's Confucius to cummings, which I will discuss later, Pound consistently chose to deviate drastically from the accepted form of the anthology. Drawing on what we know of Pound's ideas about textbooks, his reasoning for challenging the existing model of the anthology seems connected to his commitment to sparking students' interests and intellect rather than lulling them into a state of boredom. Pound would have objected to many of the features listed in the above excerpt since they:

risk shutting down rather than opening up texts. And in projecting a retrospective tone and a sense of mastery, a headnote also risks taming the conflicts characteristic of cultural productions in their time. Perennializing problems has a way of dehistoricizing and tranquilizing them. By design, anthology and textbook headnotes quickly package and contain information like a memo, valuing control, speed, organization, clarity—values preeminent in today's hurried, market-oriented societies. (Leitch 378)

This description of some of the problems that anthologies pose echoes Pound's own criticisms of the education system and the textbooks therein. He objected to those attempts to tame literature and language, which is one of the effects of the form of the anthology. In editing his early anthologies, Pound chose not to privilege organization and clarity, some of the very cornerstones of the genre. John G. Nichols, who has done the most comprehensive examination of Pound's anthologies, argues that the organization of these early anthologies—"the thematic arrangements of poetry" (173) as opposed to a chronological ordering— suggests Pound's implicit directive to readers to "eschew close analysis of the poetic line, favoring instead a broadly comparative method that permits a continual analysis linking the latest poetry with past poetry" (175). When taking into account only these early anthologies—and Nichols does limit his study to those published between 1914 and 1933— his analysis is on point. However, Nichols's analysis is misleading in terms of Pound's anthologies as whole. For example, Nichols's analysis regarding the organization of Pound's anthologies is a bit off the mark precisely because he does not address Confucius to cummings, an anthology that Pound edited with Marcella Spann, which is, in fact, arranged chronologically. Nichols is thus unable to trace— on a grander scale— the differences among the anthologies. While in her prefatory note, Spann emphasizes that "this arrangement is adopted for convenience only, and need not interfere with the reader's approach to individual poems" (viii), the chronological organization seems a bit more important to Pound who in his prefatory note writes, "The matter, tone, quality of [...] pre-Chaucerian writers entered English paideuma, or our way of thinking in poetry, at various times, but it is simpler to set our specimens in the sequence of their original composition. The active student may enjoy figuring out when and how they got into the minds of later poets, if at all; and with what degree of light or muddle" (ix). The chronological ordering of the anthology, then, is meant to incite

students to discover the influences of early writing on later writing. While chronology may not have been Pound's favorite format, we must consider the important role that reading texts chronologically plays in Pound's pedagogy as it is represented in Confucius to cummings. This anthology, moreover, which was published specifically for use in classrooms— and is replete with appendices addressed to instructors— enables an analysis of the differences between an overtly pedagogical anthology and those earlier, perhaps less overtly pedagogically-driven ones.

Although Pound and Spann share the editorial responsibilities in Confucius to cummings each has signed his/her own contributions including their prefatory notes and the appendices that comprise a portion of the anthology entitled "Section for Instructors." It is in this section, particularly, that we can begin to see Pound imagining this anthology's use in the classroom. Although in his prefatory note Pound addresses the reader who might "pick up this anthology for idle pleasure" (ix), throughout the rest of the text Spann and Pound address the student and instructor suggesting that this is, in fact, the intended audience for the anthology. Unlike the difficulty he had publishing How To Write as a textbook, Pound actually makes certain concessions in Confucius to cummings so that the anthology would be considered a textbook and used in that manner. In Appendix III he writes:

The most active, not to say aggressive, of younger but experienced professors insists that this book cannot be accepted as a "textbook" for class use unless it is accompanied by questions for use in class.

To constitute a method, these questions must be the same for every assignment. I therefore suggest that the teacher start by asking himself, and then asking the pupils, the following:

Why is the poem included in the anthology?

What moved the author to write it?

What does it tell the reader?

These three lines of inquiry will, or at any rate should, keep both teacher and pupil from divagating into consideration of their own personal bellyaches. They will also fill the class period without need of variants.
(335)

This excerpt is a rare moment in which Pound teaches instructors how to teach. Although we have seen Pound instruct readers and students, we have yet to see him undertake such a multi-layered task. Interestingly, Pound does not begin by addressing how instructors should teach their students about poetry, but rather he demands that the instructor ask himself—and only then his students—the three questions he has developed. In taking this route, Pound instructs teachers—not students—on how to read by offering (albeit begrudgingly) questions for use in class. The teacher becomes the pupil in this scenario for it is only once he has addressed these questions in his own mind that Pound recommends that he present them to the class. Despite Pound's investment in the teaching of poetry—which comes through in this passage—his conception of teachers remains—as we have seen before—rather negative. He comments upon teachers' hang-up that a “book cannot be accepted as a ‘textbook’ for class use unless it is accompanied by questions for use in class” and he offers these questions assuring teachers that “they will also fill the class period without need of variants.” In both instances, Pound suggests that the teacher is lazy and in search of any means that would allow him to expend less effort. Neither does Pound believe in the teacher's ability to refrain from sharing his own opinions on the poems as Pound writes that “the questions are intended to keep both teacher and pupil from divagating into consideration of their own personal bellyaches” (emphasis added). Ironically, at

the same time that Pound warns the teacher against sharing his own opinions or “bellyaching,” Pound makes it clear—as I discuss above— that he has chosen the works in his anthologies and reading guides based on little more than his personal opinions, his “personal bellyaches.”

Pound’s significant editorial presence in Confucius to cummings— marked by his preface, his notes and comments throughout the text, and the selections he wrote for the portion entitled “Section for Instructors”— bears no resemblance to the inconspicuous editorial role he played in his earlier anthologies. In Nichols’s terms, Confucius to cummings would fall on the side of Pound’s more “mainstream anthologies” which Nichols defines as those that offer overt interpretive guidance and explicit introductory material and therefore resemble other literary anthologies available in the marketplace at that time. On the opposite side of this binary that Nichols’s maintains throughout his study are the “coterie anthologies” which differ from popular anthologies because they abjure such material and only implicitly offer guidance thus shifting the burdens of explanation and interpretation onto the reader (Nichols 177). Nichols assigns Pound’s first two anthologies Des Imagistes and Catholic Anthology to this category. Adding Confucius to cummings into the mix enables me to extend Nichols’s work by considering the range of audiences for whom these anthologies were compiled. In other words, I would argue that Nichols’s analysis of the change in Pound’s implied audience for the anthologies can only go so far because he does not take into account Confucius to cummings. While Confucius to cummings was written for use in the classroom—and students would seem to be the most obvious audience for the text—I contend that the teacher is just as an important reader as the student, as is evidenced by the degree to which Pound addresses the teacher. The “Section for Instructors,” for example, includes the following: Pound’s notes and suggestions to Instructors discussed above, his piece on Thomas Hardy and Ford Maddox Ford that outlines an approach to

reading, a selection by Spann that offers various ways instructors might use the anthology; a portion written by Professor Vincent Miller—one of Spann’s own teachers— which includes a sample syllabus that is meant for those students “who wish to extend their reading [and] [...] deepen their knowledge as well as a guide for “the younger generation of teachers” (330), and selections of Pound’s criticism which the publisher requested. The elaborate and extensive materials addressed to teachers suggest that the instructor-reader is as important as the student reader. Remember that Pound advises instructors to first undertake the reading and analytical exercises he includes for students and only once they have done so should they ask the same of the students. Confucius to cummings, then, is not simply about making poetry available to students and helping them to interpret it, but also about educating teachers. And although throughout his career Pound downplayed the importance of the type of secondary materials included in Confucius to cummings— “One work of art is worth forty prefaces and as many apologia”— he uses these materials to teach instructors his method of attending to texts so that they will, in turn, educate their students in the same manner.

4.9 THE PARADOX OF POUND’S CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

Throughout this chapter I have described the various ways in which Pound sought to incite a cultural renaissance that could help revivify what he termed a “dull and anemic civilization.” Despite Pound’s investment in reforming the educational system as a means to inciting a cultural renaissance, he did not think that culture or kulchur,⁷⁰ as he preferred to spell it, was something that could be readily taught or learned. Pound thought of culture as purely abstract—a point I will detail below— and yet despite his belief that culture did not exist in pieces of art or in

literature (at least in how these were being used in modern education), he still emphasized the importance of a revolution in education as integral to a cultural renaissance.

Pound opens Guide to Kulchur by noting that “the struggle was, and still might be, to preserve some of the values that make life worth living,” (8) but goes on to dismiss certain attempts at preserving these (cultural) values:

It does not matter a two-penny damn whether you load up your memory with the chronological sequence of what happened, or the names of protagonists, or authors of books or generals and leading political spouters, so long as you understand the process now going on, or the processes biological, social, economic now going on, enveloping you as an individual, in a social order. (Guide 51-52)

In this tirade against rote memorization, Pound argues that the past, in and of itself, has little value. The past—the preservation of certain values and knowledge—is only valuable because these values and knowledge can be used to help understand the current state of affairs. Specific facts and knowledge are meaningless unless they contribute to understanding of larger phenomena including those social and economical and one’s position in relation to these phenomena. In this excerpt in which Pound differentiates between knowledge and understanding and privileges the latter, we can begin to see how Pound will define culture. Pound goes on to further explicate how knowledge and understanding are related:

Knowledge is or may be necessary to understanding, but it weighs as nothing against understanding, and there is not the least use or need of retaining it in the form of dead catalogues once you understand process.

Yet, once the process is understood it is quite likely that the knowledge
will stay by a man, weightless, held without effort. (Guide 53)

This description of knowledge that, at its most useful, “stay[s] by a man, weightless, held without effort” moves us closer to Pound’s definition of culture. Pound envisions two different types of knowledge which may be differentiated by their relationship to memory. On the one hand, there is the type of knowledge he describes as “dead catalogues” of facts with which one loads up memory. On the other hand, there is the type of knowledge that becomes “weightless, held without effort.” The latter—which involves forgetting—is in the domain of culture. As far as Pound is concerned, culture is that knowledge or memory that comes not by will or by learning, but naturally to members of a society. The form of Guide to Kulchur emphasizes the importance of this forgetting as Pound never cites the sources for the hundreds of historical facts that he shares in this guide. With its fragments and its discussions of seemingly unrelated topics appearing on the same page, the form of Guide to Kulchur also elevates the act of discovery rather than the act of cataloguing or merely presenting ideas and facts, as is the traditional mode for guides and textbooks. This technique received mixed reviews. Philip Mariet, for example, seemed hesitant to wholly praise Pound’s style:

Mr. Pound tries to disarm us by a kind of modesty: the book is frankly
table-talk, the spelling of the title facetious, he talks mostly from
memory, seldom even troubling to get up and go to the bookshelf. Our
guide’s brain sparkles and crackles away at its usual high cerebral
voltage, and yields the usual lack of steady illumination. (Homburger
332)

Although Mariet is troubled by Pound's methods, Pound's decision to "talk mostly from memory" rather than offer references for each point he makes actually enacts his conception of culture and the role that forgetting plays in culture. Yet, his belief in the role of forgetting and his argument that culture cannot readily be taught complicates his investment in education as a means to a cultural revolution. If culture cannot be learned, but exists naturally and unconsciously, then what role might traditional education—or any sort of pedagogy for that matter—play in such a revolution? Perhaps the form of Guide to Kulchur is the materialization of what (Pound would say) culture might actually look like on a page. While there is knowledge (in the form of facts) involved, it is a particular type of knowledge—knowledge that exists only in its relation to other knowledge and knowledge for which one has forgotten its sources. This knowledge—like Pound's definition of culture—is about process, about imagining relationships among the historical facts and figures that Pound provides as well as the relationship between the past and the present. In Guide to Kulchur, Pound offers certain arguments and facts—most of which are decontextualized and in the form of fragments. It is the responsibility of the reader to make the connections, to create the contexts, to make a cohesive whole out of the fragments. History and the other topics he addresses are not presented as uncomplicated in his textbooks. Neither are the topics or information therein compartmentalized. Knowledge, in this form, like culture, is not about static facts, dates, or paintings, but about processes, like those I just described. In these processes, the individual is empowered because it is he—not an expert or authority with a particular agenda—who is in control. It is the reader who imagines where what information belongs and how he might contextualize this new information among that which he—as an individual—has read and experienced thus far.

Although Guide to Kulchur, like How to Read and ABC of Reading, has been largely ignored by scholars, it actually enacts the type of pedagogy that would contribute to Pound's ideal cultural renaissance. Emphasis is placed on processes, namely on creating relationships among historical and social facts and choosing what role that historical knowledge will play in an understanding of the current political, social, and economical state. Moreover, it means refusing to privilege sources but rather relying on one's own abilities to make connections among facts and between the past and present. This is perhaps another example of Pound's faith in the capabilities of the reading public.

Finally, if Pound's guidance or teaching is to be completely successful, according to his doctrine, then student-readers are to forget the source of their knowledge. Michael North is skeptical of this aspect of Pound's pedagogy: "Though most of us find it easy to forget something by accident, it is psychologically nearly impossible to forget something on purpose. If one attempts to do so, one is likely to find that the material to be forgotten overwhelms instead what one wants to remember" (164). Perhaps North takes Pound's arguments about "forgetting" a bit too literally. Pound's emphasis on the importance of forgetting seems as though it serves as a stark contrast to the emphasis that modern education places on rote memorization. In other words, in order to underscore his distrust of the latter, Pound looks to forgetting as an alternative. That is not to say that forgetting is not an important part of his notion of culture, but rather that we must consider his investment in forgetting as necessarily connected to and within the context of his distrust of the role of rote memorization in education. The cultural renaissance which Pound optimistically imagined never materialized. His early dreams of a revolution in education and culture were eclipsed by the realities of the First World War. Still not deterred, How To Read, ABC of Reading, and Guide To Kulchur may be said to represent Pound's unwavering

faith—even after the Great War—that the reading public—along with a community of artists—could do their part to bring about a renaissance. This faith and his commitment to the reading public is as much his legacy as The Cantos.

5.0 REIMAGINING THE STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

The preceding chapters have revisited lesser-known, pedagogically-driven works of major literary modernists in order to complicate and revise long-standing interpretations of these writers' relationships to the reading public. Although Conrad, Woolf, and Pound wrote difficult texts, they were also invested in helping readers to engage with the difficulties that would come to define modernist literature. Through a variety of pedagogical efforts, Conrad, Woolf, and Pound sought to reach the newly expanded reading public. These pedagogical efforts are representative of a central, but often overlooked, aspect of the transatlantic cultural phenomenon of modernism, and in detailing the pedagogical motivations and methods of Conrad, Woolf, and Pound, I have sought to offer a fuller account of their intellectual investments— thus enabling a fuller account of the modernist movement. While the preceding chapters aim to fill in gaps in the scholarship on each writer in particular, and on modernism in general, in this epilogue I turn my attention to one of the issues that this study raises as I contemplate its implications for teaching.

Informing Conrad's, Woolf's, and Pound's pedagogically driven works is a question that governs my own work as an instructor: How do I help readers engage with (difficult) literature? As Conrad, Woolf, and Pound were committed to supporting, helping, guiding, and enabling fulfilling reading experiences for the newly expanded reading public, I too, must find ways of helping my students—who often articulate their own feelings of underpreparedness— to engage with the difficulties literature presents for them. One of the elements that I find particularly

compelling about Conrad's, Woolf's, and Pound's work is how each of these writers imagines the relationship between teacher and student. None invokes the traditional student-teacher relationship that, years later, Paulo Freire so famously described as the "banking" concept of education wherein education "becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. In this understanding of education, writes Freire, "the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits" (71). Each of the modernists I examine offers a more complex and nuanced understanding of this relationship that is marked by a belief in and quest for equality between student and teacher. Although each has a distinct way of imagining this relationship and the place of the teacher's authority in it, Conrad, Woolf, and Pound all challenge the conventions of the traditional student-teacher relationship and see the potential for a differently configured and ultimately more equitable partnership.

Woolf's pedagogy is the pedagogy that, out of the three, places the most emphasis on collaboration between reader and writer and in turn between student and teacher. In her lectures and broadcasts, Woolf consistently downplays her own expertise in order to open up a space for shared inquiry into a given topic. As her pedagogy formulates it, the future of English literature depends upon commoners and outsiders working together to make it their own by teaching themselves "how to read, and write, how to preserve, and how to create," for "literature is no one's private ground; literature is common ground" ("The Leaning Tower" 181). Readers must not look to writers as experts but must instead "come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of [. . .] reading" ("How Should One Read a Book?" 244). Writers can do nothing for readers, claims Woolf, if we, as readers, "herd ourselves under

their authority and lie down like sheep in the shade of a hedge” (“How Should One Read a Book?” 244). Acts of reading, in other words, must be marked by collaboration and shared inquiry.

While Woolf spent some time teaching, and understood that as a lecturer before young women or workers she was often expected to teach her audience, Conrad openly denigrated didacticism. As I point out, though, Conrad’s prefaces ultimately expand his own narrow definition of didacticism wherein a humble, generous, and humorous teacher guides and assists his readers, often leaving his “readers to determine” (Preface to Youth 74) the meaning of his novels and the characters therein. Choosing not to proselytize, Conrad instead appeals to his readers as equals— speaking to them in “perfect good faith, as one speaks to friends”— therein challenging his own prejudices about didacticism. What emerges is a pedagogy defined by inclusiveness in which Conrad withholds his own interpretations in order to create a space for those belonging to his readers.

Unlike Conrad, Pound believes that all art is didactic, that “a revelation is always didactic” (qtd. in Coyle 47). Like Conrad, though, Pound’s pedagogy emphasizes the importance of communication, although the space he creates for his reader/student is a bit more complicated. For example, as Pound lists for his students the writers and texts they should read, thus marking himself as an authority on the issue, he simultaneously emphasizes the reader’s role in this list-making, noting that students should try to “pry out some element that [he has] included” and “substitute for it something more valid. The intelligent lay reader,” writes Pound, “will instinctively try to do this for himself” (ABC of Reading 52). In other words, while Pound acknowledges the active role that the reader must take in order for this activity to be successful, a role which would ultimately displace his own expertise, Pound’s own list serves as “the

minimum basis for a sound education in letters” (ABC of Reading 50). Moreover, while he tells his readers that “the quicker you go to the [primary] texts the less need there will be for your listening to me or to any other long-winded critic” (ABC of Reading 46), Pound values his own attempts to mediate, for in ABC of Reading he directs readers to what he thinks are the most important texts and authors. And while Pound’s college of the arts offers a space in which artists would collaborate with students, these artists are also granted the authority to mediate. While their mediation might be different from that of a traditional teacher, they are mediating the relationship between their students and the piece of art. Thus, while Pound’s pedagogy foregrounds the importance of collaboration, it is complicated by the authoritative role of which Pound can’t seem to quite let go. Pound (as teacher) plays a more prominent role in his pedagogy than do Conrad and Woolf in theirs, but as I will discuss in more detail later, none of these authors romanticizes students/readers to the degree that the teacher ultimately proves unnecessary. In other words, although Conrad and Woolf seem willing to play a more secondary role than Pound in their own pedagogies, their commitment to pedagogically-driven texts speaks to their own belief that the reading public was in need of instruction, and thus teachers.

The question of authority in the classroom has long been addressed in pedagogical discourse. The topic has been addressed by scholars ranging from bell hooks to Ira Shor to Gerald Graff. Power relations in the classroom remain a focus of composition studies, cultural studies, and literary studies—and particularly a focus of radical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, and critical pedagogy. But Conrad’s, Woolf’s, and Pound’s primary concern is not with the classroom of their time or the teacher-student relationships within that classroom, and in no way do I wish to appropriate their pedagogies for the classroom. Their pedagogically-driven texts were written in response to specific mainstream teaching practices and student-teacher

relationships that emerged from those. Relocating these alternative pedagogies in the classroom would remove them from this crucial context. Instead, I want to highlight a particular set of questions and issues that these pedagogies raise as I reflect on how I situate myself in the classroom in relation to my students who, like the reading public at the turn of the twentieth century, are looking for an authority on how to approach literature. Unlike most current pedagogical discourse that relies on the student-centered/teacher-centered binary—and more often than not uncritically celebrates the former—Conrad, Woolf, and Pound privilege neither the student nor the teacher. Rather, it is the encounter between student and teacher that proves central. Conrad, Woolf, and Pound thus redefine the terms of the issue of authority in the classroom by thinking outside of the binary that structures the majority of pedagogical discourse. In so doing, they offer me an alternative to thinking in more current, but confining and oversimplified terms as I reflect on my role in the classroom. In order to do so, I turn now to a set of student evaluations from a literature class entitled “Women and Literature” in which I received low marks from some students who were skeptical about my teaching practices, and particularly how I positioned myself in the classroom. I argue that these comments are indicative of the gap between what students and academics constitute as teaching, and the struggle on the part of both students and teachers to define the role of the teacher.

5.1 WOMEN AND LITERATURE

Come semester’s end I usually have a sense of what to expect from my students’ evaluations.⁷¹ There have always been a handful of comments about the difficulty of the course or the

“excessive” writing I assign. I never expected that students would say that I hadn’t actually taught; however, two students from “Women and Literature” did. At the University of Pittsburgh, instructors can request that their students partake in the school’s process of teaching evaluation. Evaluations for classes with more than six students are comprised of two sections. In the first section, students fill in a Scantron sheet that asks them to answer questions using a scale of 1-5. In the second section, students are asked to answer a set of open-ended questions regarding the instructor and the course. Both sections of the evaluation are answered anonymously. For the sake of clarity, I include the following chart which lists the questions and the students’ responses (which are reprinted verbatim) I wish to explore. I will refer to the students as A, B, and C because the evaluations are anonymous:

Table 1

Students	Evaluation Questions			
	What were the instructor's major weaknesses?	<i>What were the instructor's major strengths?</i>	<i>What aspects of this course were most beneficial for you?</i>	<i>What suggestions do you have to improve the course?</i>
<i>Student A Response</i>	Didn't really teach, but rather guided the class by asking questions.	Ability to keep the class going with new questions.	This course was stimulating and did encourage me to really think about the ideas being presented.	The title of the course is a bit misleading. Personally I thought that the class was going to be about women authors, not feminism and how the world views women.
<i>Student B Response</i>	Don't feel like I actually learned anything new. It was more discussing than actual teaching. She rarely taught us anything specific so it was hard to study. The students seemed to do most of the teaching.	She was understanding and considerate. She was very enthusiastic.	The discussion was beneficial to an extent.	More teaching and less books about book. I thought this course would be reading womens lit.
<i>Student C Response</i>	Wants to teach in a feminist way but does not grade in that way.	Examples, learnedness preparedness	Discussions.	Review sheets or some kind of summary as to what we SHOULD get out of the books in class

In addition to showing what students think of the course, this chart documents students' reactions to my teaching, and more specifically my refusal to exercise overtly my authority in the classroom. Student A cites my asking questions (rather than teaching) as my weakness, but also, strangely enough, my strength. Student B agrees with Student A, challenging my teaching practices because they are characterized by discussion rather than "actual teaching." While Student B thinks that "more teaching" would be an improvement, she goes on to report that the class discussions were the most beneficial aspect of the course. Although Student B found the

discussions useful—as did all of the students mentioned above— these discussions were not occasions of teaching. Neither was my practice of “guid[ing] the class by asking questions” understood, as Student A claims, as a teaching practice. So, teaching is not practiced through questioning or discussion, these students suggest, but rather through some other method, presumably the lecture, or outlines, or summaries. You’ll notice that Student C does, in fact, suggest that I distribute “review sheets or some kind of summary as to what we SHOULD get out of the books in class.”

Alongside this resistance to my teaching methods, I find a lack of recognition that what I was doing was teaching. Reflected in the opposition Student B creates between teaching (on the one hand) and discussion (on the other) is the suggestion that the class discussion was detached from my work as a teacher. Neither does Student A seem to recognize my hand in those discussions. Although Student A characterizes my “ability to keep discussion going with new questions” as my strength, she casts my “question-asking” as a weak teaching practice. And while Student C also saw the class discussions as the most beneficial aspect of the course, neither does she seem to recognize that what I thought they “SHOULD get out of the books in the class” was actually imbedded in the questions that incited and sustained those discussions. I would argue that the inconsistency of the answers coming from each student suggests that these students are struggling to come to terms with the role of questioning and discussion in the classroom, and further that they ultimately conclude that strong teaching does not consist of either.

In addition to their reactions to my teaching for this course, these evaluations also offer insight into students’ assumptions about and expectations of teaching. Some scholars might be tempted to ignore these incongruous evaluations altogether since the students seem undecided as

to how much authority I should have in the classroom, and how this authority should be expressed. These responses are valuable, though, because they reflect this uncertainty surrounding students' notions of what constitutes teaching and indicate students' struggle to work through the difficulty of defining teaching and learning.

Student C seems particularly interested in thinking about my teaching in terms of my grading practices. Susan Basow's work in the area of students' expectations of female professors might help illuminate her comments. Basow describes what she calls the "double set of expectations" on female faculty:

Picture two circles that overlap slightly. One circle represents social expectations of a woman (warm, nurturing, domestic, low status); the other, social expectations of a professor (competent, knowledgeable, professional, high status). The area of overlap is very small. In contrast, social expectations of a man (strong, dominant, knowledgeable, high status) overlap quite a bit with social expectations of a professor. Because we like people to fit our expectations and feel quite uncomfortable when they don't, women have a more difficult time than men in being accepted as professors. (130)

Although Student C uses the term "feminist" in her evaluation, I gather from her comments that her understanding of feminist teaching practices actually relies on stereotypical expectations of females (not feminists) in her equating feminist teaching practices and easier grading practices. As a female teacher, I am expected to be nurturing. A nurturer does not grade "harshly." The point that I wish to make is that Student C's expectations of a teacher mirror the "either/or" terms that, although problematic, continue to pervade discourse on authority in pedagogy studies:

“One can either act as an authority or nurture. Classrooms are either hierarchical or non-hierarchical. Power is either repressive or productive” (Gore, Struggle 74).

Contrary to Student C’s reading of the course, the focus of “Women and Literature,” as I saw it, was on what women have done and continue to do with literature, rather than on feminism. I imagined that the title of the course was an invitation to explore women’s interactions with literature and the multiple configurations this might take. To this end, I divided the course into three clusters: Writing and Revising Literature (which included Woolf’s A Room of One’s Own and Rich’s “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Revision,” among others), Reading Literature (which included Quindlen’s How Reading Changed My Life and Radway’s Reading the Romance, among others), and Discussing Literature (which included Long’s Book Clubs and Kaufman’s “Oprah’s Book Club and the Construction of Readership,” among others).

More unnerving than the difference in our understanding of what constitutes feminism is that my teaching practices potentially impeded my students’ learning since they did not recognize what I was doing as teaching. The signs of teaching— at least as these students understand them— were not there: I did not lecture nor did I overtly assert my authority. I gave fewer answers and asked more questions. I consistently asked for student input. I relied on students to take notes rather than telling them outright what they should record from our class discussions. I gave students the opportunity to lead discussion and to collaborate on panels. In other words, because I did not take on the authoritative role that my students expected, they rejected my teaching practices.

However, my pedagogy— which sought to engage students as equals— posed its own set of problems. Many scholars have noted that power can never truly be shared. Jennifer Gore points out, for example, that “power-sharing” necessarily and problematically situates power as

property. She thinks in terms of Foucauldian analyses of power, which emphasize power as action and “call for a greater reflexivity” (Gore, What 69). Jacqueline Foertsch also looks to Foucault in order to problematize this idea of power as property: “Democratizing job-sharing,” Foertsch argues, “ultimately reinstate[s] the old dynamic, regardless of our efforts to the contrary,” because “empowering students (remembering Foucault) always automatically empowers me” (6). If empowering students is even possible, it is not without its challenges, as hooks has noted: “Many of the students are already convinced that they cannot respond to appeals that they be engaged in the classroom, because they’ve already been trained to view themselves as not the ones in authority, not the ones with legitimacy” (144). My student evaluations speak directly to hooks’s account, for my efforts to empower students resulted in skepticism on the part of some students who read my attempt at power-sharing as a refusal of my teaching responsibilities. These students felt slighted because my teaching practices were incongruous with their expectations of teaching. hooks explains this student resistance as one of the results of a lack of consistency among classroom and teaching practices: “Even students who long for liberatory education, who appreciate it, find themselves resisting because they have to go to other classes where the class begins at a certain time, ends at a certain time, where all these regulations are in place as modes of expression of power” (hooks, Teaching 146). I agree that the contradictions inherent in the idea of a “democratic pedagogy,” some of which I have detailed above, have yet to be sufficiently theorized. That is not to say that these inconsistencies should be replaced by a unitary or static discourse on the issue of authority, but rather, by a more reflexive mode of rethinking the often simplistic and decontextualized views of power in the classroom. This type of work involves examining and interrogating the binaries and other organizing principles that dictate what we can say about authority in the classroom. Doing so

will enable us to imagine alternatives to labeling one's teaching practices as either student-centered, subject/content-centered, or teacher-centered, and compel us to consider the complex interactions among all of these.

5.2 TEACHING AFTER HAVING NOT TAUGHT

Nowhere in their evaluations did students from my "Introduction to Critical Reading" class question my ability to teach. And yet the class was still discussion-based, students were assigned presentations and group work, and were expected to lead class discussion on occasion. One of the key differences, I soon realized, in "Introduction to Critical Reading" were those "signs" of teaching that had been absent in "Women and Literature," signs suggesting that teaching was actually happening. For one thing, there was a textbook. Although I had never before used a textbook in my teaching, I came upon what seemed like a useful tool for finding our way through various critical approaches including feminism, Marxism, queer theory, and psychoanalysis. The textbook in "Introduction to Critical Reading" carried with it the sort of authority that Students A, B, and C seemed to desire in "Women and Literature." By devoting a chapter to each critical approach, the textbook made it clear what students "should" get out every class. The assignments that I developed asked students to approach the text we were reading by using a particular type of criticism, thus reinforcing the "should" that many students expected me to adopt. Students showcased their new "knowledge" of critical practices in their evaluations. In response to the question, "What aspects of this course were most beneficial to you?" I received the following answers, which represent one-third of the students in the class: Table 2

Table 2

Learning the different criticisms.
Learned about different <u>types</u> of criticism that I didn't know existed. Especially New Criticism and Queer Theory.
Reading material and discussion helped open new ways of thinking.
The instructor, class discussions, detailed handouts on specific theories of criticism.
I am an English major, so exploring different methods of analyzing a text and seeing how other people analyze different works was extremely beneficial and very interesting to me.

Almost all of these examples imply that these students valued the course because they learned something new, whereas Student B from “Women and Literature” was disappointed because she didn’t “actually learn anything new.” The “anything new” that Student B did not learn was a sort of quantifiable, easily-articulated “knowledge” on the topic of “Women and Literature.” While I am pleased that students could articulate the content of “Introduction to Critical Reading,” I maintain that I taught them more than “facts.” I like to think that I taught students critical thinking skills and the importance not only of multiple perspectives, but of reflecting on those perspectives, the assumptions that underlie them and what is enabling and disabling about each. In broader terms, I like to think that I taught students about how to use critical thinking and reflection in their daily lives. Yet I gather from their comments that they define their learning primarily in terms of their ability to summarize the content of the course. While my teaching focused more on process in both courses, students wanted and only recognized content.

My experience teaching “Introduction to Critical Reading” thus enables me to consider more deeply my students’ frustrations in “Women and Literature.” Students in “Women and Literature” could not summarize what they learned in any particular class, and very few of

them—compared to the students in “Introduction to Critical Reading”—actually commented on the course’s content in their evaluations. I tried to use the inherent ambiguity of a course like “Women and Literature” productively, sharing with students, from day one, the difficulties presented by a course with this title. To this end, I included on the syllabus the following epigraph from Woolf’s A Room of One’s Own:

When you asked me to speak about women and fiction I sat down on the banks of a river and began to wonder what the words meant. They might mean simply a few remarks about Fanny Burney; a few more about Jane Austen; a tribute to the Brontës and a sketch of Haworth Parsonage under snow; some witticisms if possible about Miss Mitford; a respectful allusion to George Eliot; a reference to Mrs. Gaskell and one would have done. But at second sight the words seemed not so simple. The title women and fiction might mean, and you may have meant it to mean, women and what they are like; or it might mean women and the fiction that they write; or it might mean women and the fiction that is written about them; or it might mean that somehow all three are inextricably mixed together and you want me to consider them in that light.

I contextualized the epigraph with the following course description:

As I began planning this course, Women and Literature, I realized that I faced the same predicament as Virginia Woolf when she was asked to speak on the topic of women and fiction at Newnham and Girton Colleges in 1928. As Woolf points out, I could have taken any number of directions. Yet, the burden is not entirely mine. While I have designed

what I think will be an exciting course, I offer this syllabus with the hope that throughout the course we, as a class, will not only return to Woolf's thoughts and reservations regarding the topic but that we will add our own by consistently interrogating the very terms that designate this course: "women" and "literature."

I have divided the course into three units: Writing and Revising Literature, Reading Literature, and Discussing Literature. It will not take long to realize, however, that as Woolf found, all are inextricably linked and we will need to consider them in that light.

This description overtly and straightforwardly locates my students, their thoughts, and their work as integral to the success of the course. In doing so, it conveys my pedagogy— a pedagogy that implicates students in the course as much as it implicates me. I claim, in writing and, from the first day, that we share the opportunity to make our semester's work fruitful. In addition, this description highlights the important conceptual work that we will do as a class as opposed to emphasizing the content-based work. Missing, however, is the self-reflexivity that Gore and Crabtree and Sapp persuasively argue must accompany discussions of the exercise of power in the classroom. First, in claiming that the "burden [of designing the course] is not only mine," I ignore the regulatory aspect of pedagogy that would necessarily complicate my characterizing of my students as my equals. Moreover, this course description falls into the trap of characterizing power as property that is unproblematically passed from teacher to student. While the syllabus may not be the place to enter into such complex accounts of authority, it may be one of the sources that could spark a conversation, early in the semester, about the role of critical thinking inside and outside the classroom, and its potential to help us complicate conceptualizations of

power. In so doing, this might help prepare students for a course that privileges process over content, that strives to help them “use learning skills that are not only associated with advancing their understanding of specific course content, but also are connected to their lived experience as they develop and use skills such as critical self-reflection, decision making, and negotiation skills” (Crabtree and Sapp 139). Preparing students for a course that privileges process over content would also mean describing how that pedagogical theory informs the practice of grading, the inevitable regulatory aspect of pedagogy. Drawing students’ attention to the ways in which assignment sequences are structured so that revisions—and by that I mean true re-envisionings—are not only privileged, but constitute the only graded writing assignments in the course, would reinforce the importance of process within the classroom, in terms of writing and the “critical self-reflection, decision making, and negotiation skills” (Crabtree and Sapp 139) that necessarily enter into the process of revision.

Focusing on critical thinking, which would involve complicating the concept of authority, necessarily raises its own set of challenges for a teacher of literature, whose students might be expecting to learn literature, and not critical thinking, as was Student A. I offer Northrop Frye’s argument for consideration of these problems:

Every organized body of knowledge can be learned progressively; and experience shows that there is also something progressive about the learning of literature. Our opening sentence has already got us into a semantic difficulty. Physics is an organized body of knowledge about nature, and a student of it says that he is learning physics, not that he is learning nature. Art, like nature, is the subject of systematic study, and has to be distinguished from the study itself, which is criticism. It is therefore

impossible to “learn literature”: one learns about it in a certain way, but what one learns, transitively, is the criticism of literature. Similarly, the difficulty often felt in “teaching literature” arises from the fact that it cannot be done: the criticism of literature is all that can be directly taught.

(422)

The expectation that one is going to be “taught” literature and thus “learn” literature must be addressed openly in the classroom. Most university sanctioned evaluations only exacerbate the expectation of “learning literature” as they ask students to rate how much (content) they learned, thus competing with some teachers’ commitment to teaching more than simply the “subject” of the course. Frye illuminates another potential reason for my divergent experiences teaching “Women and Literature” and “Introduction to Critical Reading.” Students were not expecting to “learn literature” in “Introduction to Critical Reading” as they were in “Women and Literature.” Rather, my students in “Introduction to Critical Reading” expected to learn critical approaches to reading literature. Certainly we read literature throughout, but few of them commented upon this in their evaluations. Instead, students focused on the quantifiable facts that they were able to summarize. In other words, students in “Introduction to Critical Reading” were pleased with the course because it offered something that they could learn, according to their definition of what it means to learn. If, as Frye contends, “only the criticism of literature can be learned,” what I did in “Introduction to Critical Reading” was to foreground this idea in that I taught modes of critiquing literature rather than “teaching literature.” The very title of the course suggested that I was there to teach methodologies whereas the title of the course “Women and Literature” suggests that I was there to “teach” literature. Moreover, there is a degree of familiarity that accompanies the term “women” in Women and Literature unlike the term “critical” in

“Introduction to Critical Reading.” I found that many students were unsure about what it meant to read something “critically,” while students were confident in their understanding of what it means to be a woman. Thus, when students in “Women and Literature” realized that we were not going to take this term for granted, their confidence in the very least that they could bring to the course—an understanding of what one of the title terms means— was undermined. In other words, I suspect that some of my students became resistant when they realized that even the definitions of the most familiar terms—including “women” and “literature”— were going to be challenged. It does not help that courses in our English departments imply that literature can, in fact, be taught. My students felt cheated when this expectation was not met even though many of them never considered the problematic nature of teaching (and learning) literature. In my experience, student resistance was exacerbated because of my refusal to enable the traditional student-teacher relationship.

The question remains, Where do we go from here? First, I think it important to acknowledge that students’ responses to teaching—both positive and negative— are necessarily informed by how they define teaching and the role of the teacher in the classroom. Students struggle with these questions particularly when they are faced with instructors who challenge their preconceived notions of what constitutes teaching, as did my students in “Women and Literature.” Students are not alone in their struggle, however, for the question of authority is one that continues to inflect the majority of pedagogical discourse. Considering the problematic notions of teaching and learning literature at the outset of courses, and throughout them, would be a valuable means for addressing expectations of teaching and learning in the classroom, as would directly addressing the theoretical underpinnings of the professor’s pedagogy. The latter seems as though it would be especially important for me since my pedagogy has the potential to

disorient and alienate students. The student evaluations I address here have helped me to understand better what I need to reexamine and refine about my own teaching practices as well as the crucial role that students play in that work. These evaluations point to students' own struggles with many of the same issues that those theorizing pedagogy face. Rather than struggling separately with similar questions, I imagine engaging these questions with my students in order to interrogate together the very terms that define our positions in the classroom, and those that define the particular course. A literature class thus becomes a space in which the problematic of "learning" literature is foregrounded, and alternative ways of thinking about the course are explored. The course might become one in "expos[ing] ideology and complicat[ing] the concept of authority" (Crabtree and Sapp 132) or one in which "literary conventions and critical definitions once taken for granted" (Graff 252) become the objects of interrogation and discussion. The point is that defamiliarizing terms such as "teaching" and learning" is crucial to the work of education.

What I am suggesting, then, is a version of what James Slevin has termed an "interpretive pedagogy." Slevin's concept of interpretive pedagogies depends upon defining difficulty—any difficulty including those of reading and writing, but also that of teaching— as difference, rather than lack. Slevin argues that when difficulty is interpreted as lack, as it is in most schooling, writes Slevin, "all subsequent interpretive procedures become evaluative procedures governed by a teleology of improvement and plotted within a narrative structure of improvement [. . .] This narrative of improvement takes the form either of conversion or of preservation" (17). In both forms, culture moves in only one direction— whereas interpretive pedagogies depend upon the encounter between student and teacher, as a prolonged exchange that seeks to question and even resist "taken-for-granted hierarchies that govern accessibility and

inaccessibility” (180). The goal of interpretive pedagogies, writes Slevin, “is work made possible through understanding, and understanding made possible through work; the goal is not improvement, though improvement may follow from understanding, in the course of time. One important element of this understanding has to do with the role that a pedagogy of interpretation can play in clarifying the shared intellectual activities of faculty and students” (53). Unlike pedagogies that equate difficulty with lack, and locate the teacher as the one who must remedy this lack, an interpretive pedagogy “places the agents of education (faculty and students) as mutually engaged in studying and learning from and about one another. It carefully avoids locating students as “learners” precisely to stress the interpretive nature of the work and the mutuality of the interpretive work required” (Slevin 53). In other words, both the faculty and students are positioned as agents of education, and as such the work of education is framed as an endeavor marked by shared investments and equality wherein culture is both produced in multiple ways and moves in two directions.

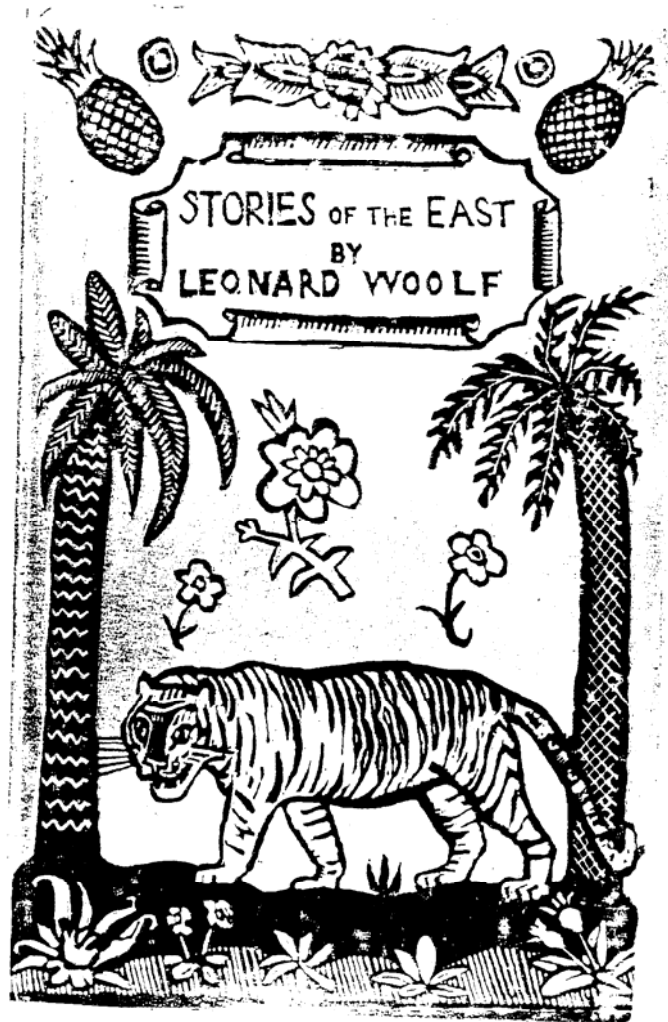
Slevin’s notion of interpretive pedagogies returns us to Conrad’s, Woolf’s, and Pound’s pedagogies, which might be characterized as such. Woolf’s collaborative pedagogy is perhaps closest to Slevin’s interpretive pedagogy because it, too, locates both faculty and students (or in Woolf’s terms, experts and laymen, writers and readers, lecturers and students) as agents in education committed to the “mutuality of the interpretive work required” (Slevin 53). Still, as all three negotiate questions of authority and shared authority, each creates a space for the “open-ended critical engagement” (Slevin 16) that defines interpretive pedagogies. None, in other words, is invested in conversion. Moreover, neither Conrad’s, Woolf’s, nor Pound’s pedagogy takes the form of preservation: Conrad stresses the importance of new ways of seeing

and valuing literature, Woolf emphasizes the importance of breaking from the Victorian forms and models, and Pound imagines new forms for the educational system and its textbooks.

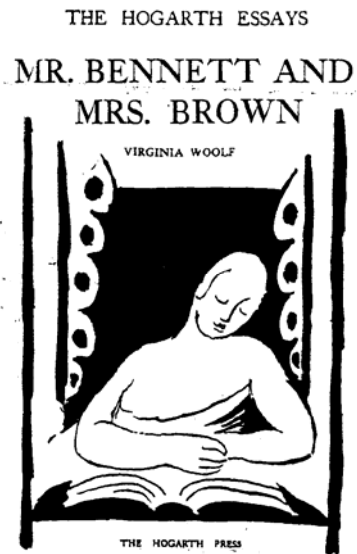
In this dissertation, I have examined Conrad's, Woolf's, and Pound's commitment to guiding and enriching the newly-expanded reading public's experience of reading literature. Their interpretive pedagogies imagine alternatives to the teacher-as-expert model, yet maintain that the teacher plays a crucial role. None of these pedagogies, in other words, call for "reading without teachers," but rather all three explore how teachers might guide students to participate in their own learning, and help them to consider what is at stake in this process. Neither teacher nor student is at the center of these pedagogies for both are equally important to the endeavor. Ultimately, the exchanges are at the center of these pedagogies, and it is the importance of exchange that these modernists wish to teach their readers. Conrad, Woolf, and Pound remind us that students do not become our equals simply because we say they are, or because we allow them to decide which essays count toward their grade, or because we sit among them in a circle. Their pedagogies, instead, explore the complexities that mark the student-teacher relationship. Conrad, Woolf, and Pound teach their readers about the importance of both actively participating in one's own education and actively engaging with one's guide, whether a book or a person. These interpretive pedagogies, which highlight what teacher and student alike bring with them, remind me of all of the different assumptions circulating in the classroom surrounding what it means to teach and to learn and related assumptions about the student-teacher relationship. Part of the interpretive work of my classroom, then, involves recognizing and engaging the differences among all of these assumptions and expectations—among those of my students' and between myself and my students. Working separately, teachers and students continue to struggle with theorizing the "proper" role of the teacher. Working together, we may not reach a

consensus, but that need not be our ultimate goal. Considering this question— and those related questions regarding what constitutes teaching and learning— means embarking together on an investigation into teaching and learning, and ways of recognizing and reflecting on these processes in all of their manifestations. And is this not the ultimate goal of education?

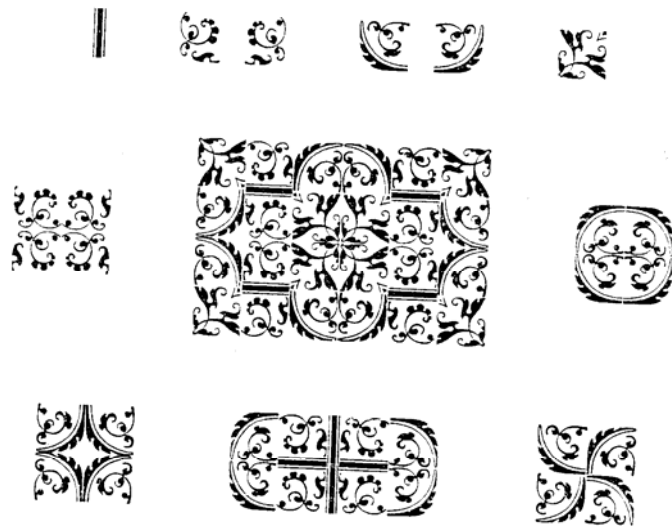
APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C



APPENDIX D

BERNARD DE FONTENELLE

A PLURALITY OF WORLDS



JOHN GLANVILL'S TRANSLATION
WITH A PROLOGUE BY DAVID GARNETT

THE NONESUCH PRESS

1929

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100-110.

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NOTES

¹ David Trotter's Cinema and Modernism is one of these works, although I do not deal with it closely because of its focus on film. Trotter reconsiders the relationship between cinema and modernism, and his "insistence that modernism has always been concerned with the real, that modernism's interruption of conventional forms of representation is at the service of more urgent realities" (xii) is an overarching theme in my own work which, in part, seeks to recontextualize modernist difficulty or "modernism's interruption of conventional forms of representation."

² Cuddy-Keane reminds us that Woolf's use of the term "common" to describe readers was not pejorative. Woolf used the term to describe the ordinary or everyday reader, a member of the reading public. According to Cuddy-Keane, irresponsible scholars have attached a derogatory connotation to the term in order to prove Woolf's elitism.

³ See Lacquer for more on the Sunday School Movement, including detailed accounts of specific Sunday schools, enrollment figures, and charts indicating the presence and growth of Sunday schools in both urban and rural areas.

⁴ See Jacqueline Rose (115-136) for an account of early twentieth-century elementary education mandates.

⁵ This information is taken from W. A. L. Blyth's English Primary Education.

⁶ See Webb (20-21) on the rise of Samuel Smiles and self-help.

⁷ See Genette (196-236) for a discussion of the multiple types and functions of prefaces, including what he calls the original authorial preface, the later authorial preface, and the delayed authorial preface.

⁸ Neither Gérard Jean-Aubry nor John Dozier Gordan discusses Conrad's author's notes.

⁹ In "Defining Frames: The Prefaces of Henry James and Joseph Conrad," Vivienne Rundle focuses only on the prefaces written for the second English edition of Conrad's works.

¹⁰ McDonald points out, however, that in 1896 Conrad "began for the first time to produce short stories for magazines [. . .] the exact reason for his change of heart in early 1896 remains obscure" (26). McDonald hypothesizes that this change may have been the result of his struggles while writing The Rescue or the "desire to experiment with other modes and materials" (26).

¹¹ Ambrosini, for example, argues that the:

critical structures regarding this lack of narrative consistency [in The Nigger of the "Narcissus"] are more concerned with a theory of the novel than the effectiveness of Conrad's shifts in point of view. The treatment of the story is far more impressive here than in Conrad's first two novels. The conflict of points of view in the sea tale does not produce a dissonant effect. On the contrary, the symphony of speeches, dialects, whispers, and secret thoughts lend a choral quality to the voices of the ship's community [. . .] It is the ironic perspective in which Conrad sets the first person narrator's account that brings order to the contrasting points of view. (68-69)

¹² Ambrosini sees these as Conrad's strategies in Lord Jim, and argues that "the first step toward recognition of a precise strategy on Conrad's part requires an understanding of how the first and third narrative segments perform their frame function [. . .] The junctures between the different segments bring forth the rationale underlying the tale's narrative structure. At the end of each segment the themes embodied in Jim's figure are synthesized with the author's discourse in theoretical problems, which the following segment's narrative form appears more appropriate

to solve” (118). Jameson has remarked on “the discontinuities objectively present in Conrad’s narratives” that Conrad uses to “projec[t] a bewildering variety of competing and incommensurable interpretive options” (208).

¹³ All citations from Conrad’s prefaces refer to Edward Garnett’s collection of those prefaces entitled Conrad’s Preface to his Works. I use the following abbreviations for the longer titles of his works:

AF, Almayer’s Folly

NN, The Nigger of the “Narcissus”

SR, Some Reminiscences

¹⁴ In 1914, biographer Frank Swinnerton declared Stevenson a “writer of the second class” (qtd. in Dury), a characterization that would run throughout scholarship on Stevenson after the First World War. In 1924, Leonard Woolf wrote that “there never has been a more headlong fall in a writer’s reputation than there was in Stevenson’s after his death” and that “a false style tells most fatally against a writer when, as with Stevenson, he has nothing original to say” (qtd. in Dury). In 1925, E. M. Forster described Stevenson as “guilty of ‘mannerisms,’” “self-consciousness,” “sentimentality” [and] “quaintness” (qtd. in Dury). For more on the break in Stevenson’s popularity, see Maixner and Dury and Ambrosini.

¹⁵ Munsey’s Magazine was a large circulation magazine that contained more advertisements than anything else. For this reason, it was not taken all that seriously. Its founder, Frank A. Munsey, was thought of not as a magazine publisher, but a magazine manufacturer since he—unlike McClure and other publishers at the time—wanted only profits and cared nothing about bringing “inexpensive reading matter to the masses” (Peterson 8).

¹⁶ We see an exception to this in some of the later prefaces including that preceding Nostromo in which Conrad plays with his readers as he claims that one of the characters of his novel, Don Jose Avellanos, Minister to the Courts of England and Spain, was his “principal authority for the history of Costaguana” (88).

¹⁷ For a detailed history of the publication of these stories see Graver (42-199).

¹⁸ For more on the rise of advertising in Britain, see Thomas Richards.

¹⁹ Frederick R. Karl offers a sustained account of Conrad's finances throughout his life. For the majority of his career, Conrad was in debt, and consistently asked his agents and publishers for advances. It was not until Conrad's popular success with Chance that he found his way out of debt. Cedric Watts offers the following account of Conrad's finances prior to his success with Chance: "Conrad's first novel, Almayer's Folly, had appeared in 1895. In February 1914, nineteen years later, Conrad's overdraft at the bank was 234 pounds (equivalent to approximately 12,000 pounds today), and he owed thousands of pounds to his agent. Conrad had been sustained partly by the British taxpayer, who since 1910 had provided him with a Civil List pension of 100 pounds per annum, and above all by the amazing faith of that literary agent, J. B. Pinker, who for year after year, advanced Conrad hundreds of pounds, paid Jessie Conrad's shopping bills, cleared innumerable household debts" (83).

²⁰ Watts notes, however, the irony of Conrad's rise to popularity among female readers with Chance, a novel with a misogynist primary narrator in Marlow.

²¹ Robert Hampson notes that while "Conrad's popular success with Chance was derived from the American marketing campaign that preceded the novel's serialization in the New York Herald, which deliberately targeted a female readership (with the multiple ironies that surround that American success), nevertheless as his relations with The Blue Peter [a nautical magazine founded in 1921 containing travel-writing, tales of exploration, and so on] show, Conrad continued to be marketed as the sailor and traveler for a very different, specialized, predominantly male readership" (101). In other words, after the success of Chance, Conrad was still committed to his male readers, and continued to be marketed to that audience. With his new female audience, Conrad was merely expanding his appeal. Conrad had a strong presence in The Blue Peter—by way of a series of essays (published between 1922 and 1927) by Curle on Conrad and his works, the publication of Conrad's own "Congo Diary" (in 1925), and the publication of several reminiscences about Conrad written by his wife Jessie (in the late 1920s-early 1930's), F. G. Cooper (in 1929), a commander in the Royal Naval Reserve, and W. M. Parker (in 1933) who was on board the Tuscania with Conrad on his voyage to America. (Hampson 95-100).

²² McDonald points out that Conrad looked to William Henley (who published The Nigger of the “Narcissus” in his New Review) to help secure the sort of reputation that Henley had secured for Kipling and Stevenson: “To Conrad, [Henley] was a ‘distinguished authority’: the ‘patron of Kipling and Stevenson’ and the man to whom Wells dedicated his novels” (33).

²³ This excerpt is from the paragraph that Conrad deleted from the author’s note to The Nigger of the “Narcissus” at Edward Garnett’s suggestion.

²⁴ David Trotter reads this scene in terms of the relationship between Jim and Marlow, emphasizing Jim’s looking at Marlow while he answers these questions. “The relationship between Marlow and Jim is a relationship begun, developed, and brought to a close in paranoia” (160), writes Trotter. Trotter describes the scene which takes place on the second day of the trial, pointing out that Jim overhears Marlow refer to a dog just outside of the courtroom as a “wretched cur,” but thinks “not only that it refers to him but that he was meant to hear it” (161). “There surely cannot be any closer parallel in literature to Freud’s account of the distress felt by the victim of paranoid delusion” (161), writes Trotter.

²⁵ Throughout his life Conrad held the following ranks: second mate, chief mate, and master mariner.

²⁶ Although Conrad was not a political activist and he certainly did not use his prefaces as propaganda, Conrad did make his opinion on the conditions in the Congo known by writing letters (1903) to Roger Casement, E. D. Morel’s ally in starting the Congo Reform Association. In one of these letters Conrad wrote: “It is an extraordinary thing that the conscience of Europe, which seventy years ago put down the slave trade on humanitarian grounds, tolerates the Congo state to-day. It is as if the moral clock had been put back many hours” (Letters 3: 96). In 1909, Morel wrote to Arthur Conan Doyle, also a member of the Congo Reform Association, that Conrad’s Heart of Darkness helped to inspire the reform since it “was the most powerful thing ever written on the subject” (qtd. in Hawkins 293). Leopold was granted control over the Congo River Basin, an area comprised of approximately one million square miles, territory that he named the “Congo Free State.” He made slaves out of the people of the Congo, treating them despicably. Although they rebelled, Leopold sent his soldiers to find the hiding rebels and as proof that

they killed them, the soldiers were to bring back the hand of each rebel. It was widely reported that in order to fill their quotas, these soldiers often cut the hands off of live men. It was not until Morel exposed Leopold in the report mentioned above—to which Conrad contributed—that Leopold was forced to step down and turn the Congo over to the Belgium government. For more on the history of the Belgian Congo, see Gondola, [The History of Congo](#) and Hochschild, [King Leopold's Ghost](#). For more on the Congo Reform Movement see William Roger Louis and Jean Stengers Louis, [E. D. Morel's History of the Congo Reform Movement](#).

²⁷ Conrad's humanism is evident, as well, in his belief that he could directly communicate with his readers (in his prefaces and in his novels) and, thus, conflicts with structuralist views. Conrad's humanism, along with his belief in universality, open him up, as well, to criticism from any number of other schools of thought in which the human is not the center of the universe. Moreover, Conrad's humanism could also potentially be used in service of corroborating his alleged racism in that it undermines the differences among peoples.

²⁸ As Decoud discusses with Mrs. Gould his idea for the "separation of the whole Occidental Province from the rest of the unquiet body" (131), he claims that he worries that he cannot discuss the same issue with Mr. Gould because Gould is a sentimentalist: "'Sentimentalist, sentimentalist,'" Decoud almost cooed, in a tone of gentle and soothing deference. "'Sentimentalist, after the amazing manner of your people'" (133).

²³ Perry Meisel does argue that reading [Heart of Darkness](#) as a piece of reflexive realism (as opposed to the classical reading) shows how the text is in fact "a pedagogy of reading" (8). Meisel writes:

Conrad's novel creates the terms of its appeal by challenging us to specify the meaning Marlow tries to find in the character of Kurtz. Those readers who write about what they discover pursue what Marlow himself says he is unable to disclose: the substance, the essence, the details of what it is that Kurtz has done, and what it is that he represents. Answers to the enigma usually reveal a common predisposition to assign highly concrete meanings to the tale, and to take the multiplicity of clues provided by the narrative as indices of a significance to be found beyond the margins of the text. (229)

³⁰ “Henry James wrote 18 prefaces for Scriber’s 24-volume New York Edition of the Novels and Tales of Henry James, published between 1907-1909,” according to Rundle. Rundle examines the differences between their prefaces in “Defining Frames: The Prefaces of Henry James and Joseph Conrad concluding that James’s goal is to “prescriptively redetermine the reader’s relationship to James’s novels” (69). She continues, “While this difference initially suggests that James’s prefaces, by articulating the process of reading, are likely to involve the reader more intensely than Conrad’s which ‘merely’ describe past events, the reverse is in fact true. Conrad’s prefaces grant the reader a place and a role, allowing the prefaces to function as living texts, while James’s prefaces are transfixed and petrified because of the exclusion of any readerly contribution from their narrative system” (69).

³¹ While Conrad was able to reach popular audiences through his publications in mass-circulation magazines across the country, it is clear that “all the major writers of the ‘New’—Joyce, Lawrence, Woolf, Forster, as well as Eliot and Pound— were reading Conrad as he appeared” (Karl 783).

³² According to Cuddy-Keane, irresponsible scholars have attached a derogatory connotation to the term in order to prove Woolf’s elitism.

³³ Gillian Beer’s 1996 collection of essays, Virginia Woolf: The Common Ground, resists this trend and succeeds in positioning Woolf alongside the “common reader” without allowing outdated ideas of Woolf to seep in: “For Woolf the common reader and the common ground are at once earth-bound and sacred, as near as she ever gets to the language of faith or patriotism” (3).

³⁴ Fernald contends that each of the first five sections of the book “closes with an interruption, passing either to a new room or to a new book” (178).

³⁵ Although Woolf did not teach any of the Tutorial Classes for the WEA, she did work as an instructor at Morley College, where she taught history, literature, and composition from 1905-1907. While it is unclear why she left Morley College, her doing so, according to Hermione Lee, had more to do with the fact that the time of her assigned class began to interfere with personal commitments (219).

³⁶ Pullman, Washington is where the New Holland Library at Washington State University is located. It houses the Library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf in its Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections area.

³⁷ The Women's Co-operative Guild, founded by Mrs. Acland and Mrs. Lawrenson in 1883, had nearly 1,400 branches and 67,000 members. In Life As We Have Known It, Davies explains that the Co-operative Society was a alternative to capitalism. Members of Co-operative Societies "own the shops where they buy, supply their own capital (on which a fixed interest is paid), and manage their business through elected committees and members' meetings" (x). Politically, they were allies with the Labour Party and sought a "peaceful revolution from autocratic Capitalism to democratic Co-operation" (x).

³⁸ F. R. Leavis was a harsh critic of Woolf, as well. In January 1942 he published "After To the Lighthouse" in Scrutiny where he examines many of the same issues as his wife. He was known for accusing Woolf of being concerned only with aesthetics and her having no "interest in the world 'out there'" (297).

³⁹ Woolf was keenly aware of and interested in Samuel Richardson's epistolary fiction (Richardson's protagonist Clarissa is said to be the namesake of Woolf's Clarissa Dalloway). In A Room of One's Own, Woolf also proclaimed Fanny Burney, author of the epistolary novel Evelina, "the mother of English fiction."

⁴⁰ Woolf's message that "literature is not cut up into nations" complicates her opening point in "Modern Fiction" that she and her contemporaries must work against the tradition that precedes them, namely the materialists who "are concerned not with the spirit but with the body" (209). "They write of unimportant things [. . .] they spend

immense skill and immense industry making the trivial and the transitory appear the true and the enduring [. . .] Life escapes; and perhaps without life nothing else is worth while” (210-211).

Woolf’s overarching argument that literature belongs to everyone is also complicated by many of her other pieces in which she consistently offers negative depictions of professional critics and their work, thus suggesting that literature is not theirs upon which to pass judgment.

⁴¹ The letters have been published in their entirety by Anna Snaith in The Woolf Studies Annual.

⁴² Snaith explains, “Anna Olivier Bell has informed me that it was she, not Woolf, who separated the letters into those from friends and those from unknown readers. It is also important to note that Woolf received more letters in response to Three Guineas than she kept. Bell could not tell what percentage of the letters she did keep, but surmised that many would have found their way into the waste-paper basket” (118).

⁴³ Woolf’s pedagogy resembles that of Joseph Jacotot, a French teacher and educational philosopher of the early nineteenth century. Jacques Rancière, who has looked at Jacotot’s placing of the “pedagogical paradigm alongside the progressivist logic generally identified with democracy” (Rancière 3), has argued that according to Jacotot’s theory, “equality is not a goal to be attained” (Rancière 3): “The progressivists who proclaim equality as the end result of a process of reducing inequalities, or educating the masses, etc., reproduce the logic of the teacher who assures his power by being in charge of the gap he claims to bridge between ignorance and knowledge. Equality must be seen as a point of departure, and not as a destination” (Rancière 3). One of Woolf’s foundational assumptions is that the public possesses the critical acumen necessary to engage with difficult literature. Woolf, in other words, does not define education as the means by which experts transfer their knowledge in order to bring about equality within a society; Woolf’s pedagogy already assumes this equality. Her collaborative pedagogy also depends upon equality among teacher and student, critic and layperson, and writer and reader.

⁴⁴ This recasting of Bloomsbury contributes to the work of Raymond Williams, who argues in “The Bloomsbury Fraction,” that we are not fully understanding the Bloomsbury Group if we see them only as an elitist coterie: “The

final nature of Bloomsbury as a group is that it was, indeed, and differentially, a group of and for the notion of free individuals. Any general position, as distinct from this special assumption, would then have disrupted it [. . .] And the irony is that both this special assumption, and the range of specialized positions, have become naturalized—though now more evidently incoherent—in all later phases of English culture. It is in this exact sense that this group of free individuals must be seen, finally, as a (civilizing) fraction of their class” (169).

⁴⁵ See Peterson (245) for an image of the full pigskin pound Chaucer. I was not granted permission to reprint it in this document.

⁴⁶One exception was the Kelmscott edition of Chaucer’s Romaunt of the Rose in which the border was, in fact, comprised of roses.

⁴⁷ See Peterson (143) for this image. I was not granted permission to reprint it in this document.

⁴⁸ See Peterson (150) for this image. I was not granted permission to reprint it in this document.

⁴⁹ I do not mean to suggest that Virginia Woolf made the publishing decisions. It is well known that Leonard not only read every manuscript that was sent to the Hogarth Press but that he had the final say as to what the Hogarth Press published. While he certainly took into account Virginia’s ideas and opinions, Leonard ultimately made the publishing decisions.

⁵⁰ The second pamphlet was not as successful as the first yet the Woolfs did agree to publish three more: The League of Nations and the World’s Workers: An Introduction to the Work of the International Labour Organization (1927), The Reign of Law: A Short and Simple Introduction to the Work of the Permanent Court of International Justice (1929), and The League of Nations: The Complete Story Told for Young People (1936).

⁵¹ Woolf was not the only member of the Bloomsbury Group to broadcast for the BBC. Leonard Woolf, Harold Nicholson, Vita Sackville-West, John Maynard Keynes, Clive Bell, Roger Fry, Desmond MacCarthy, and E. M.

Forster embraced the BBC as an outlet for their thoughts. Some broadcast book reviews, others spoke on literary, political, or economical topics, and others wrote biographies for the BBC's Miniature Biographies series. Whitehead examines Bloomsbury's ties to broadcasting.

⁵² According to Scannell and Cardiff, "The Sykes Committee was set up by the Post Office in 1923 to deal with the difficulties and confusions that had arisen in the first months of broadcasting over the collection and distribution of the license fee and royalties" (6). Asked what the future of broadcasting looked like, the Committee described broadcasting as "a public utility"(6): "The wavebands available in any country must be regarded as a valuable form of public property; and the right to use them for any purpose should be given after full and careful consideration" (6). Keith Williams explains, "Public service was a missionary concept, evolved under Matthew Arnold's influence by the Victorian middle class for the betterment of the lower orders. Consequently, Reith committed the BBC to a regime of cultural, moral and educative uplift designed 'to carry into the greatest number of homes everything that was best in every department of human knowledge, endeavor and achievement,' through music, talks, drama, and entertainment" (30).

⁵³ The BBC Archives Centre holds the script of the talk which was later rewritten for the May 5, 1937 issue of the Listener.

⁵⁴ Scannell and Cardiff explain that it is impossible to get a real sense of the radio listening audience or "the social distributions of ownership of radios before the war" (362) in part because Listener Research did not exist until 1936. "What is certain is that three-quarters of British households had a radio by 1939, and the BBC's service reached into all sections of society. Three million households had a radio set in 1930. By 1939 this figure had tripled. Even in the severest years of the depression the continuing steep rise in the purchase of radio sets showed no sign of falling off," report Scannell and Cardiff (362).

⁵⁵ While Tratner does refer to A Room of One's Own, his only sustained analyses are of Woolf's novels.

⁵⁶ The majority of scholars tend to focus their attention on Pound's Cantos, his short poetry, and (to a lesser degree) his literary criticism, thus neglecting How to Read and ABC of Reading. The elaborate thirty-two page introduction to Pound's writing in Ezra Pound: The Critical Heritage makes no mention of the texts whatsoever, and Hugh Kenner's The Pound Era mentions How To Read only in passing and ABC of Reading not at all. Kathryn V. Lindberg has gone the opposite route of most scholars—thus working toward filling in this gap in Pound scholarship—by focusing almost exclusively on Pound's prose works, including How to Read and ABC of Reading. In Pound Reading Pound: Modernism After Nietzsche, Lindberg examines how Pound uses metaphor throughout How To Read and ABC of Reading in order to “return to questions from which most literary critics have retreated: ‘What is literature, what is language, etc.’” (34). As Pound equates language with the Nietzschean terms “force,” “movement,” and “power,” Lindberg examines how these metaphors work throughout his guides, tracing their ambiguity and their interchangeability (34). Lindberg argues that, for Pound, reading “is to engage in an exchange of power, of interpretations ‘charged’ or activated by the reader and writer, but also by the language they share. For Pound, languages are transformational and plural, since every reading involves a translation, none is capable of univocity or totalization” (35). Locating Pound's work in a strictly Nietzschean context—although Lindberg admits that Pound “did not know Nietzsche well or even directly” (viii) and “got his Nietzsche or his neo-Nietzscheanism, in translated fragments mediated through the aestheticism and scientism of Wyndham Lewis, Remy de Gourmont, Leo Frobenius, Oswald Spengler, and others” (viii)—means that Lindberg necessarily ignores certain aspects of Pound's pedagogy that do not fit the comparison she makes between their philosophies. Moreover, her focus exclusively on How To Read and ABC of Reading disables a more inclusive understanding of Pound's pedagogy as it emerges in other texts like The Spirit of Romance and through his work as an editor of little magazines and anthologies. In considering Pound's pedagogy in more comprehensive terms and in locating it in a context greater than Nietzschean philosophy, I aim to challenge and expand Lindberg's close analysis of How To Read and ABC of Reading.

⁵⁷ Pound echoes Ruskin's rejection of industrialization as he compares “buttons cut from a machine” to “leaves upon trees.” Coyle argues that Ruskin's didactic work Fors Clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of

Great Britain (1871-78, 1880-84) “provided Pound with generic models” (48) for his own didactic writings. In Fors Clavigera, writes Coyle, “Ruskin gave much space to correspondence with his readers. But most important here are the premises of Ruskin’s analysis, of his conviction that an apparently random and digressive ordering could still accomplish his explicit didactic purposes” (49). Pound’s own reading guides and anthologies are founded on this idea. See Coyle (48-54) for more on Ruskin’s influence on Pound including their similar ways of thinking about culture and the importance both place on precision.

⁵⁸ Pound’s investment in the “health of the national mind” recalls his Radio Rome broadcasts, which provided one of the outlets for his politics. Pound’s impulse to continue to instruct during the First World War from enemy territory, the subjects he chose to instruct upon, and his opinions on these topics were ultimately responsible—at least in part—for his arrest, the accusations of treason, and his 13 years in St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, a mental institution for the criminally insane. Despite what they ultimately meant for Pound, the Radio Rome broadcasts—which are collected and catalogued by Leonard W. Doob in “Ezra Pound Speaking”: Radio Speeches of World War II—offer insight into what Pound’s methods of instruction look like if taken to the extreme. Although the broadcasts do not fall within the scope of this chapter on how Pound sought to prepare the newly-expanded reading public for reading modernist works, his broadcasts would enable, among other investigations, an inquiry into how the difference in medium affected his methods of instruction.

⁵⁹ Pound is still known for “discovering” and “re-introducing” previously marginalized texts and authors.

⁶⁰ Here we may also see Ruskin’s influence on Pound, as Pound ascribes to Ruskin’s belief in alternative, sometimes seemingly random and digressive ways of arriving at a goal. Pound’s example of the construction of a table is also reminiscent of Ruskin’s famous (now clichéd) saying: “the hammer that hits the nail on the head.” Both Pound and Ruskin believe in precision although neither believes in adhering to a set formula in order to achieve it. Coyle translates the title of Ruskin’s “most fiercely didactic work” (Coyle 48) to emphasize this point: “The title, as Ruskin insisted, was an attempt ‘shortly to mark my chief purpose’: ‘fors’ meant ‘chance guided by the hand of fate. Clavigera meant that chance carried a club, or nail or key.’ While Ruskin allowed that his title might have other connotations, he himself ‘interpreted’ it to mean ‘Chance, the fate that hits the nail on the head’” (49).

⁶¹ For more on the history of composition handbooks and their use of “parallel exercises” see Connors (72-101).

⁶² This is not to say that Pound thought that all mediation was wrong. He clearly mediates readers’ experiences by directing them to what he thinks are the most important texts and authors.

⁶³ Pound actually uses Chinese ideograms throughout The Cantos rather than simply discussing them as he does in ABC of Reading.

⁶⁴ For more on Pound’s role in the Imagist movement see Hughes (3-70, 197-223).

⁶⁵ Pound’s attraction to Chinese language and culture manifested itself also in an interest in Confucius who, according to Wendy Stallord Flory, represented a certain democratic ideal for Pound in his belief that “human nature is fundamentally good and hence that it is appropriate to respect the dignity and intrinsic worth of all individuals and to think of them as all educable to some degree” (177). Pound’s Cathay (1915) contains his translations of several Chinese poems. He also translated several Confucian texts including “Ta Hio” published in 1928 as Ta Hio The Great Learning: Newly rendered into the American Language by Ezra Pound; The Confucian Analects in 1951; Great Digest and The Unwobbling Pivot, in 1951; The Confucian Odes, comprised of 300 poems, published in 1954 as The Classic Anthology defined by Confucius.

⁶⁶ For more on the relationship between literary modernism and difficulty see Eliot, Diepeveen, and Poirier.

⁶⁷ This investment in creative criticism is reminiscent of Eliot’s own interest in the differences and similarities between the acts of creation and criticism as discussed in “The Function of Criticism” (1923).

⁶⁸ In addition to Dasenbrook (86-113), see Wees (56-72), Kenner (72-75), and Materer (19-34) for more on Pound’s role in vorticism.

⁶⁹ For more on the history of the anthology and the differences among anthologies, collections, readers, casebooks, and textbooks see Di Leo (pages 2-4). For scholarship on the genre of anthologies see Abbott (209-221), Di Leo (1-

27), and Graff and Di Leo (279-297). For a discussion of headnotes in anthologies see Leitch (373-383), Johnson (384-394), and Finke (395-404).

⁷⁰ Throughout his writing, Pound used two spellings of “culture”—“kultur” and “kulchur.” In “Where Memory Faileth,” Michael North explains that the German word “kultur” was “originally Poundian shorthand for the German philological tradition. Pound uses the word to encompass state education, rote learning, and academic logrolling [. . .] Kultur is the regimentation of the best” (152).

⁷¹ Portions of the following discussion appear in Feminist Teacher, 18.1.