Notes

Introduction


2. See Edward Comentale, *Modernism, Cultural Production, and the British Avant-Garde* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 9, hereafter abbreviated as *MCP*. Comentale identifies this double bind as it appears in the journal edited by Lewis, *Blast* (1913), a “defensive aesthetic manifesto, a pre-war nationalist’s creed, and a bold economic critique” (9). He further argues that Lewis mourns the loss of a true aesthetic individualism in exchange for the vulgar and cheap one that parades in the name of individual creation. As an alternative, Comentale continues, Lewis imagines the individual as “forged” through the mass, privileging “chemists, mechanics, and hairdressers because they use their skills to order and define otherwise unruly material” (10). Similarly, for Lewis the true artist is able to mold and organize the physical excesses of the world around him.

3. I take this quotation from Lewis’s essay “The Non-Impersonality of Science” in *The Art of Being Ruled*, where Lewis critiques the “delusion of impersonality,” noting the difference between false presentations of the concept and the real thing: “A simple belief in the ‘detachment’ and ‘objectivity’ of science, the anxiety of a disillusioned person to escape from his self and merge his personality in things; verging often on the worship of things—of the non-human, feelingless, and thoughtless” (34–35). In a swift rhetorical move at the end of the essay, Lewis connects this delusion to more organized political ideologies, which he evaluates as follows: “I am not a communist; if anything, I favour some form of *fascism* rather than communism. Nevertheless, when two principles are opposed, and one of these is that of English liberalism, in most cases I should find myself on the other side, I expect” (35).


5. I will return repeatedly to Eliot’s famous assessment of impersonality in “Tradition and the Individual Talent”: “What happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality.” See *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot* (New York: Harcourt, 1975), 40, hereafter abbreviated as *Prose*.

6. In “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” Eliot immediately dismisses tradition as a purely chronological exchange, rescuing it from the charge of being
entirely repetitive or imitative, with no place for “novelty”: “Yet if only the form
of tradition, of handing down, consisted in following the ways of the immedi-
ate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its successes, ‘tradi-
tion’ should be positively be discouraged” (Prose 38).

7. See Maud Ellmann, The Poetics of Impersonality: T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound

(New York: Harvest, 1930), 15, hereafter referred to as “Prufrock.”

9. See Dean’s essay “T. S. Eliot: Famous Clairvoyante,” in Gender, Sexuality and
Desire in T. S. Eliot, ed. Cassandra Laity and Nancy K. Gish (Cambridge: Cam-

10. See Judith Brown, Glamour in Six Dimensions: Modernism and the Radiance of
Form (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2009), 8, hereafter referred to as Glamour.

11. See Daniel Albright, Personality and Impersonality: Lawrence, Woolf, and
Albright’s implicit claim in this book carries over to his reading of genre in
relation to modernist impersonality. Whereas poetry rightfully claims its role
in modernism as impersonal and objective, the logic behind Albright’s argu-
ment is that prose can never do the same, which is why this book looks beyond
poetry to the novels of Mary Butts, D. H. Lawrence, and Elizabeth Bowen in
examining the dynamics of impersonality.

12. See Michael Levenson, A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Liter-
ary Doctrine, 1908–1922 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 133, hereafter
referred to as Genealogy.

13. Aside from “The Contemporary Man ‘Expresses His Personality,’” examples of
Lewis’s explicit concern with “personality” and “impersonality” from The Art
of Being Ruled include “The Non-Impersonality of Science” and “The Piece-
mealing of the Personality” along with other essays, such as “What the Ano-
nymity of Science Covers” and “People’s Happiness Found in Type-Life.”

14. See Jameson’s A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present
(New York: Verso, 2002), 54. Jameson identifies the individual as a key feature in the
“classical celebration of modernity,” which promotes individuality as an “illicit
representation of consciousness as such” (54). Jameson’s maxim, and what
appears to be that of both Eliot and Lewis, is that “the narrative of modernity
cannot be organized” around such categories of consciousness, subjectivity,
and individualism (55). In mounting a tradition that is not organized around
subjectivity, Eliot further subverts the rhetoric of humanism by fracturing the
very ideal of modernity that grounds Jameson’s critique: one that builds sub-
jectivity around an imagined and nostalgic relation to the past.


16. See T. E. Hulme, Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art,

18. See Tim Dean, *Beyond Sexuality* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000), 155, hereafter referred to as *Beyond*. See also Gabriel Rotello’s *Sexual Ecology: AIDS and the Destiny of Gay Men* (New York: Plume, 1998). Dean appropriates Rotello’s notion of relationality as ecosystem to describe the symbolic order as composed of “different networks of signifiers that enmesh us as we move around” (154). This ecological perspective enables Dean’s critique of the ways in which the symbolic order has been understood as a “purely linguistic register” (155). Similarly, Sarah Ahmed’s *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke UP, 2006), following Merleau-Ponty’s *The Phenomenology of Perception*, links the vertical to a “straighten[ed]” form or perception that overcomes the “queer effect” of objects that appear “off center” or “slantwise” (66).


20. See Colleen Lamos, *Deviant Modernism: Sexual and Textual Errancy in T. S. Eliot, James Joyce and Marcel Proust* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 5, hereafter referred to as *Errancy*. Lamos argues in particular of Eliot’s essay on Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* that despite Eliot’s apparent “antipathy” toward “inversion,” he also embraced as “non-pathological forms of male love” where the “zeal to write originates in a yearning toward imitative identification with the elder poet, and even, in the desire for possessive appropriation, to take hold of, and overcome him” (34). The same relationship could perhaps apply to Eliot’s call for the extinction of the personality in “Tradition and the Individual Talent.”

21. This interrogation is the point of Heather Love’s *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007), which trades the idea of an expressive emotional subject from whom “feeling flows” for “structures of feeling,” defined by Raymond Williams as a “practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity” (quoted on 11).


25. According to Pound’s *A Memoir of Gaudier-Brzeska* (New York: New Directions, 1970), a vortex is something “through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing” (92). Even more famously, Pound calls the vortex a
“radiant node or cluster” (92), or “art before it has spread itself into flaccidity, into elaboration and secondary applications” (88).


Chapter 1


10. For more about Miss Beauchamp, see Morton Prince, The Dissociation of Personality (New York: Longmans, Green, 1910), hereafter referred to as Dissociation. Interestingly, Prince relates the peculiarities of Miss Beauchamp’s fragile personality to her “delicacy of sentiment,” an index of how impersonality might inscribe the sentimental. See also Prince’s Clinical and Experimental Studies in Personality (Boston: Independent Press, 1929).
11. See F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads, 2001), 47, italics in original, hereafter abbreviated as *HP*. Richard Noakes explains how “psychical research” came to be distinguished from other scientific practices as a pseudoscience, specifically because of its interest in the paranormal, mesmerism, and spiritualism, in “The Historiography of Psychical Research,” in *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 72.89 (April 2008): 65–85. Regarding Myers’s influence on modernists, Carolyn Burke has noted Mina Loy’s preoccupation with the researcher’s work in *Becoming Modern: The Life of Mina Loy* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1996). As Burke suggests, Myers’s interest in clairvoyance, the subliminal self, and its “consolation on spiritual matters” spoke to many modernists, even more so than Freud. Yeats also had been influenced by the Society of Psychical Research, of which Myers was an official. Tim Armstrong, in *Modernism, Technology and the Body* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), credits Myers with originating the automatic writing that would later become fashionable among modernist sets, both in *Human Personality* and in his earlier articles from 1885, “Automatic Writing” and “Multiple Personality.” As Armstrong observes, automism for Myers is the writing of a subliminal self that is “potentially separable from the body,” in other words, prosthetic (188). *Modernism, Technology and the Body* will be hereafter abbreviated MTB.


15. One important text, Louis Berman, *The Glands Regulating Personality: A Study of the Glands of Internal Secretion in Relation to the Types of Human Nature* (New York: Macmillan, 1922), links human personality to the functions of the internal organs. In the text, Berman identifies certain complexes of communications between glands and internal secretions as responsible for specific personality types. Dr. Berman even goes so far as to interpret obesity as a manifestation of personality, along with rigorous definitions of femininity, masculinity, and sexuality. He further links types of personality to the prominence of various internal secretions that give rise to certain physiological features. Humorously enough, Oscar Wilde plays a prominent role in Berman’s catalogue of facial types and as an example of genius. His “thymocentric” personality and face coincide with his considerable stature, his “great corpulence,” his “high complexion,” and “flesh and plump hands.” Also remarked upon are his “large breasts” and the “exceptional size of his head” (251).

16. Ed Cohen, *Talk on the Wilde Side* (New York: Routledge, 1993) also suggests that the meaning of “personality” in Britain developed in direct relation to Wilde’s notoriety. Speaking of the libel proceedings in *Wilde v. Queensberry*, he argues that “the newspapers effectively reproduced the possibility for designating Wilde a kind of sexual actor without referring to the specificity of his
sexual acts, and thereby crystallized a new constellation of sexual meanings predicated upon ‘personality’ and not practices” (131).


19. I refer to these works as they appear in *Plays, Prose Writings and Poems*.


21. Especially in novels such as *Tarr* (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1996), Lewis tends to pair a fiercely objective narrative voice with depictions of his characters as mechanized objects, where the simple act of rolling a cigarette becomes a technological redefinition of the self. Jessica Burstein’s excellent article “Waspish Segments: Lewis, Prosthesis, Fascism,” in *Modernism/Modernity* 4.2, discusses these connections, grounding Lewis’s prosthetic thinking within the novel literary displays of mutilated bodies occasioned by World War I. Like Armstrong, Burstein argues that the new “prosthetic body . . . succeeds where the previous body failed” (142). In doing so, the prosthetic body both shifts the scale of the standard-type body, as Burstein’s analysis of Lewis’s novel *Hitler* suggests, and offers a unifying, fascistic vision of a transformed, extended body that functions on another plane altogether. Aside from the evident reputation of her subject Wyndham Lewis, Burstein’s article offers little explanation of why this prosthetic logic is inherently conservative or authoritarian.

22. See Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, trans. James I. Dunnett (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), xxii, italics in original, hereafter abbreviated as *DAT*. See also Le Corbusier’s two volumes *Le Modulor I* and *II* (Basel, Switzerland: Birkhauser Architecture, 2004), published first in 1950 and 1955. Using various illustrations, the books present the system of proportion Le Corbusier devised from 1942–1948, designed both to bridge the metric system and the Anglo-Saxon foot-inch system and to develop a scale of proportion between the ideal man and his architectural environment. Le Corbusier’s famous illustration *Modular Man*, following Vitruvius and Leonardo, locates the six-foot tall man as the source of this scale.


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26. See A Memoir of Gaudier-Brzeska, 50. Pound also wrote, “A kindly journalist ‘hopes’ that it does not look like me. It does not. It is infinitely more hieratic. It has infinitely more of strength and dignity than my face will ever possess” (49).


28. It can also be said that as the stranger, Woolf’s narrative voice conforms to the conventions of slumming literature Scott Herring identifies in his important study of queer modernist urbanism, Queering the Underworld: Slumming, Literature, and the Undoing of Lesbian and Gay History (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007). “Street Haunting” questions forms of social and spatial intelligibility; the eye must leave its comfort zone to embrace the “[u]nderworld unknowing” that occurs when spatial codes are reoriented, making “rotten a will-to-knowledge” (Queering 23).

29. In Solid Objects: Modernism and the Test of Production (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998), Douglas Mao, focusing specifically on Woolf’s Between the Acts, identifies a modernism both obsessed with objects and the “violence of making” these objects (88). The novel, Mao argues, foregrounds the “aggression” that accompanies acts of human invention (86). More particularly, Woolf’s interest in airplanes exemplifies what Mao characterizes as Modernism’s concern with the troubling extensiveness of human power and with the likeness between their own operations on their materials and the apparently limitless transformations effected by technology” (italics in original; 11).


Chapter 2

1. See H.D., Notes on Thought and Vision and The Wise Sappho (San Francisco: City Lights, 1982), 59; hereafter referred to as Notes and Wise.

2. See Ezra Pound, ABC of Reading (New York: New Directions, 1960), 11, hereafter abbreviated as ABC.


5. See Walter Benjamin, “Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1968), 231. While Benjamin speaks of a different genre of film, his preoccupations with the “cult of the movie star” are similar to H.D.’s concerns about the welding of voice
and image. The difference is that H.D.’s utopian version of an impersonal cinematic apparatus dissolves the relation Benjamin sees between cinema and personality. For Benjamin, the “separable, transportable” aspects of the film image contribute to cinema’s “spell of the personality,” whereas H.D. sees these very characteristics as essential for maintaining the integrity of the unwelded image (231). See also Christina Walter, “From Image to Screen: H.D. and the Visual Origins of Modernist Impersonality,” Textual Practice 22.2 (June 2008): 291–313. Walter comments more extensively on H.D.’s film criticism, arguing that H.D. imagines an ideal spectator—distinct from the average moviegoer—who views the “filmic image” not as a “transparent mirror of reality,” but as a “mediated creation and projection.” The result is a state of hypnosis that allows the spectator access to the “unconscious mindbody systems that produced that state” (303).

6. Lawrence Rainey’s Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture (New Haven: Yale UP, 1999) has challenged feminist critics of the 1980s for their role in fabricating a version of H.D. who conforms to their ideals. While this intervention is laudable, Rainey ultimately offers little positive change for H.D. scholarship, particularly in his denouncement of her as a mere “coterie poet,” a “distinctly modernist fable,” whose dependence on her lover Bryher’s lifelong patronage of “endless bounty” contributed to the “vacuity” of her poems (148–49). Offering strictly numerical evidence concerning H.D.’s “miniscule corpus of non-fiction,” Rainey, oddly contending that one must have produced large quantities of literary criticism to rightly be considered a modernist, further claims that H.D. vigorously refrained from interactions with a wider public and showed little impetus to “engage in dialogue with contemporaries” (54).


8. To return to Maud Ellmann’s observations in The Poetics of Impersonality: T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1987), a book that established Eliot and Pound as the conservative spokesmen for the doctrine, the outcome of impersonality was always a conservative “ethics of personality” that served to reinforce the authority of the poet and forge a reactionary link to tradition.


10. See Daniel Tiffany, Radio Corpse: Imagism and the Cryptaesthetic of Ezra Pound (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995), 11, hereafter referred to as Radio. Furthermore, in A Memoir of Gaudier-Brzeska (New York: New Directions, 1970), Pound defines the image as a “radiant node or cluster . . . from which, and
through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing” (92). This vortex also corresponds to the process which is particular to the imagist poem: “In a poem of this sort one is trying to record the precise instant when a thing outward and objective transforms itself, or darts into a thing inward and subjective” (89).

11. In “From Image to Screen: H.D. and the Visual Origins of Modernist Impersonality,” Christina Walter has argued similarly that the emphasis of H.D.’s “image-driven impersonal aesthetic” is on the “material body,” particularly as it participates in early twentieth-century discourses of physiological and optical sciences (291). She credits H.D. with modeling a “broader, visually-shaped style of modernist impersonality” that does not simply dismiss personality, but rather attempts “to understand subjectivity in terms of bodily contingency” (293).


13. See Susan Stanford Friedman, Penelope’s Web: Gender, Modernity, H.D.’s Fiction (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), 34. Friedman distinguishes the impersonality of H.D.’s poetry and the personal nature of her prose. This contrast, she argues, “privileges poetry over prose, the end over the means to an end, her ‘real self’ over her ‘personal self,’ clairvoyance over sensibility, and art over therapy” (34). However correct Stanford Friedman is in identifying some of the programmatic differences between H.D.’s poetry and prose, my own reading of H. D’s poetry departs from this account, arguing that the poem itself dialectically deconstitutes and reconstitutes the personal self.

14. In The Sublime of Intense Sociability (London: Bucknell UP, 2000), Shawn Alfrey identifies this poem as describing “the site of a minority discourse, where people must navigate the burden of past and present in a geography worked over by foreign influences,” where the speaker figures herself as “part of the native resistance” such forces “would expel” (96–97).


17. Merleau-Ponty’s The Phenomenology of Perception, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 1962), hereafter referred to as Phenomenology, defines meaningful space as maintaining a sense of order “whereby the position of things becomes possible” (243). I return to this definition of space throughout the book in discussing a central modernist anxiety about impersonality as a spatial phenomenon, which surrounds the precarious dialectic it sees between the dissolution and reconstitution of space.

18. In using the phrase “mutual parasitism,” I invoke Mina Loy’s “Feminist Manifesto.” See Lost Lunar Baedeker: Poems of Mina Loy, ed. Roger Conover (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), 154. According to Loy, “[m]en & women are enemies, with the enmity of the exploited for the parasite, the parasite for the exploited—at present they are at the mercy of the advantage
that each can take of the others sexual dependence—. The only point at which the interests of the sexes merge—is the sexual embrace” (154). Interestingly, H.D.’s description of the ideal relations between “reasoning men and women” in Notes on Thought and Vision offers a more anaesthetized and arguably impersonal counterpart to Loy’s parasitism.


21. See Betsy L. Nies, Eugenic Fantasies: Racial Ideology in the Literature and Popular Culture of 1920s (New York: Routledge, 2002), 67, which explores H.D.’s “troubled, ambivalent relation to eugenics” but does little to theorize the larger socioesthetic assumptions embedded in such thought. Nies notes H.D.’s discomfort with the eugenicist embrace of the Nordic “classical body as an icon of perfection that had survived the ravages of time,” standing “above the teeming immigrant masses whose bodies were depicted in the popular press as misshapen and deformed, small and swarthy, unlike the Nordic who rose above the crowd” (77–78). Nies’s description of this particular trend in statuary underscores the ambivalence of H.D.’s poem. H.D.’s explicit politics were of course antifascist, as Georgina Taylor argues in H.D. and the Public Sphere of Modernist Women Writers, 1913–1946 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001).

22. See Phenomenology, 171.


24. In his analysis of Freud in Masochism in Sex and Society (New York: Black Cat, 1962), originally published in 1941 as Masochism in Modern Man, Theodor Reik addresses the “paradox of masochism” as a spatial fracturing of the personality arising from the simultaneous attempt to both assuage and pursue pain. For Reik, masochism actualizes a split in the personality as people “consciously desire to avoid pain and at the same time strive for it unconsciously” (4).

25. See Sigmund Freud, Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, trans. James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 35. See also “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” SE 14 (1915): 111–140, where Freud defines masochism spatially as related to the movements of the ego. In arguing that masochism is actually sadism turned around on the subject’s own ego, Freud suggests that sadism transforms into masochism when the subject returns to the narcissistic object as a means of incorporating an extraneous ego. This process does not occur outside the scopophilic process of looking, in which the subject’s own body is the object of this gaze. This essential splitting in space forms the heart of Freud’s theory of masochism.
26. In *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York: Routledge, 1992), Kaja Silverman argues that masochism has been read in particular as an “accepted—indeed a requisite—of ‘normal’ female subjectivity,” further supporting the logic that the male masochist cannot possibly identify with masculinity (189). Thus, Silverman’s reading of Freud’s *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, as well as “The Economic Problem of Masochism” and “A Child Is Being Beaten,” contends that masochism is only pathological in the male, whereas it is acceptable for the woman because it already positions her as its sufferer.

27. See Gilles Deleuze, *Coldness and Cruelty* (New York: Zone, 1991), 20, hereafter abbreviated as *CC*.


29. My point here is not to dismiss H.D.’s interest in other women or her bisexuality. Rather, a term such as “Sapphic,” as employed by Laura Doan and Jane Garrity in their introduction to *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women, and English Culture* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), better describes H.D.’s relation to sexuality. Representative of the “profound shifts—in terms of visibility, intelligibility, and accessibility—that occurred as a result of the growing public of sapphism in modern Anglophone cultures between the two World Wars,” the “multiple meanings of term,” the two assert, distance “us from more rigid contemporary categories of identity” (2, 3).


31. This discomfort stems from what Leo Bersani, in *The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York: Columbia UP, 1986), describes as psychoanalysis’s contribution to the “mythologizing of the human as a readable organization” (83). H.D.’s poetry indicates her uneasiness over the prospect of a mappable self but likewise cannot imagine a self that is completely unreadable. This is also the subject of her memoir *Tribute to Freud* (New York: Pearson, 1956). In this text, H.D. struggles with the project of subsuming her intensely personal responses to Freud’s personality and genius within the impersonal rubric of analysis.

32. H.D.’s destabilization of the hetero/homo binary characterizes an impersonal poetics that attempts to move, in Tim Dean’s words, “beyond sexuality,” much in the same way that it also moves beyond sensuality (Smirnoff). Such a movement, according to Dean in *Beyond Sexuality* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000), provides a solution to the primary challenge facing queer theory, which involves “the consequences of defining oneself and one’s politics against norms as such” (226). Dean asserts that moving “beyond sexuality” entails a nonpsychological understanding of sexuality that disarticulates it from “identity, from the self and from personhood” (272).

33. See Pound, *Gaudier-Brzeska*, 89.
34. While the poems of H.D.’s Sea Garden are not conventionally “narrative,” they do, as I will argue similarly of D. H. Lawrence’s Sons and Lovers, destabilize conventional aspects of form in ways that challenge heteronormative paradigms of literary structure designed, as Judith Roof argues in Come as You Are: Sexuality and Narrative (New York: Columbia UP, 1996), to reassure readers with a sense of meaning and stability.

Chapter 3

3. Albright argues that “personality” exists on three levels for Lawrence: “first, the ego, the public self, the fixed shell, a mask which once was a valid self-expression but which, like anything rigid, has become a deformity . . . it is a fatal condition because it is unresponsive to the urgencies of self-development. The second level of personality is the body, what Paul Morel in Sons and Lovers calls protoplasm; . . . the third level of personality, the ultimate, original self, is, as we have seen, neither shaped nor shapeless; it can be described with equal validity as diamond or electricity, embryo or the soul after death” (Personality 29).
4. See Kate Millett, Sexual Politics (Chicago: U of Illinois P, 2000), originally published in 1970. Millett argues quite famously that Lawrence’s “Lady Chatterley’s Lover is a quasi-religious tract recounting the salvation of one modern woman . . . through the offices of the author’s personal cult, ‘the mystery of the phallus’” (238). Twelve years later, Hillary Simpson, in D. H. Lawrence and Feminism (London: Croon Helm, 1982), would both revise and sustain Millett’s censure of Lawrence, arguing in particular of Sons and Lovers that its “real blow to feminism . . . lies in Lawrence’s failure to connect the personal world of individual development to the larger material forces which have a part in shaping it” (37). As I suggest alternately here, Lawrence’s “blow to feminism” lies in his critique of the “personal world of individual development” as incompatible with the larger world of “material forces.”
5. See also Terry Eagleton, Literary Theory, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), hereafter referred to as Literary. While Eagleton explicitly addresses Sons and Lovers as a “concrete literary example” of the “problem of the relation between society and the unconscious,” his analysis of the novel is dominated by its focus on class politics. Indeed, Eagleton rightly argues that a “psychoanalytic reading of the novel . . . need not be an alternative to a social interpretation of it,” adding that these questions might also lead us to considerations of form and narrative organization. Nonetheless, the argument is characterized by an overtly ideological and rather one-sided focus on class that foregrounds the text’s rejection of Morel and both Paul’s and Lawrence’s desire to “extricate” themselves from the working class (153–54).

7. See Judith Roof, *Come as You Are: Sexuality and Narrative* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996), hereafter referred to as *Come*; and Joseph Allen Boone, *Libidinal Currents* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998), hereafter referred to as *Libidinal*. Roof in particular interrogates the notion of a “chronological, linear, unidirectional time that positions the end as the cumulative notion of completed knowledge” (7). This narrative pattern, she argues, is connected to an Oedipal desire for “mastery” that is overtly heterosexual.

8. See Susan Stanford Friedman, *Penelope’s Web: Gender, Modernity, H.D.’s Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), which I also note in Chapter 2 of this book. Friedman argues that H.D.’s poetry blocks direct autobiographical referents and thus, unlike her prose, privileges “her ‘real self’ over her ‘personal self,’ clairvoyance over sensibility, and art over therapy” (34).


11. See my discussion of Wyndham Lewis in Chapter 4, who more aggressively advocates the “violence of making,” particularly as it involves the active domination of both objects and humans.


14. See in particular Jonathan Dollimore’s claim in *Death, Desire, and Loss in Western Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1998) that for Lawrence, “redemption lies . . . in a radical individualism and political authoritarianism” in which he seeks to “replace a humanist philosophy of collective social praxis with an aesthetics of energy” that might quell the “dwindling” of energies in the modern world (259).


16. See Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990), which provides an implicit gauge for measuring modernism’s argument with the “social situations of modernity” (120).

17. In Chapter 1, I attempt to distinguish impersonality from depersonalization by discussing the work of sociologist Georg Simmel. According to Simmel in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, trans. and ed. Kurt H. Woolf (New York: Free Press, 1950), depersonalization results in the “leveling down of the person by the social technological mechanism” (409). For Simmel, depersonalization is
itself a set of psychological conditions, whereby the personality falsely parades as individuality.


19. Giddens argues in The Consequences of Modernity that modernity relegates the concept of trust to relations between individuals, where the “work involved means a mutual process of self-disclosure” (italics in original; 121). This kind of trust is best exemplified in what Giddens terms the “ethos of romantic love,” which he implicitly characterizes as heterosexual. Giddens quotes Lawrence Stone, whose term “affective individualism,” describes the “notion that there is only one person in the world with whom one can unite at all levels” (121). This investment in the “personality of that person” follows a scheme of idealization that calls for the full expression of exaggerated personal emotions. This “affective individualism” resembles what I later term a hermeneutic mode of intimacy, whereby, to use Giddens’ words, personal trust develops through the exchange of one’s self-discovery and the “mutuality of self-disclosure” (italics in original; 122).


21. See Brooks’s account of the “Freudian masterplot” and its relation to narrative in Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992), 97, hereafter referred to as Reading. Joseph Allen Boone in particular questions Brooks’s privileging of a “psychological paradigm” that views “all novelistic structures as repetitions of the transhistorical masterplot” (Libidinal 34). Judith Roof also critiques Brooks’s Freudian account of narrative as participating in an “orgasmic ideology of narrative” that presumes necessary connections between “coming, death, reproduction, and the end” (Come 20). For my own purposes, Brooks’s understanding of the relation between narrative and Freudian repetition—however implicated in heterosexual ideology—is still useful as a model for comprehending the workings of narrative and can be linked, in Lawrence at least, to the unraveling of the connection between narrative and heterosexuality as much as it can to the construction of it.


23. See Sigmund Freud, The Ego and the Id (New York: Norton, 1960), 26. Here, Freud argues that the most important identification of childhood is “with the father” in the child’s “own personal prehistory,” triangulating the Oedipus complex due to “the constitutional bisexuality of each individual” (26). Aside from her breast, Freud offers no explanation for why the mother must become the boy’s sole object cathexis. Freud further claims that when the boy must give up his mother as an object-cathexis, the identification with his father may intensify. The odd variability of Freud’s thesis here presents the Oedipus complex, and the child’s attachment to his mother, as a process of socialization that results from social or domestic separation from the father. Significantly, Lawrence seems to “approve” this model in Paul’s triangulation with his mother and father.
24. I refer to Walter Morel here as “Morel,” the name by which he is most often identified in the text. As with Baxter Dawes, referred to most often as “Dawes,” Lawrence’s insistence on identifying this character only by his last name reflects his alignment with the universalized forces of sex, violence, and work.

25. Moretti argues that work in the Bildungsroman “creates a continuity between external and internal, between the ‘best and most intimate’ part of the soul and the ‘public’ aspect of existence” (Way 30). Sons and Lovers both revises and confirms this notion by repudiating certain “acceptable” forms of work in favor of others. Moretti’s basic formula works here, especially if we read Paul’s development as a search for an “aesthetic and humanizing work superior to one that is instrumental and alienated” (Way 31).

26. Freud equates “daemonic” power with a form of possession that proceeds despite the patient’s wishes, robbing her of the capacity to make informed, conscious decisions (BPP 43). “Daemonic” power corresponds, according to Freud, to what some people feel is “better left sleeping,” the emergence of the compulsion to repeat (BPP 43).

27. According to Brooks, “the improper end indeed lurks throughout narrative, frequently as the wrong choice: choice of the wrong casket, misapprehension of the magical agent, false erotic object choice.” It’s the correct or “proper” choice, he argues that generally marks narrative’s conclusion” (Reading 104).


31. See Sigmund Freud, Group Psychology and an Analysis of the Ego, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1959), 43–44. Here, Freud claims that work in common reinforces the libidinal ties between men. This work brings a change “from egoism to altruism” and enables a valid rereading to the point, originally promulgated by queer theory, that homosocial bonds between men arose over women in common.


33. See Georg Lukács, “The Ideology of Modernism,” in The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, ed. John and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1962), 17–47. Here, Lukács claims that “[d]istortion becomes the normal condition of human existence” in modernism and that modernist literature consequently “deprives literature of a sense of perspective” (33). Modernism, then, collapses objective reality and distortion into a purely subjective realm which destroys “the complex tissue of man’s relations with his environment” (28). In the context of D. H. Lawrence and modernism, I interpret this loss of perspective as a loss of meaningful space. Perspective can also apply to a novel whose structures of repetition obscure any sense of positioning or event.
Chapter 4


2. See Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit, The Arts of Impoverishment: Beckett, Rothko, Resnais (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993), 144, hereafter referred to as Arts. Here Bersani and Dutoit address the question of Rothko’s art, asking “[c]an seeing survive the erasure of difference?” (142). This sort of question underscores the conceptual problem of impersonality I elaborate in this book. As Bersani and Dutoit remark of Rothko’s work, the erasure of boundaries is also an effacement of form, of the aesthetic itself. However, Bersani and Dutoit resolve this problem by arguing that form sustains itself in the “marks” of its very “erasure” (144).


4. Regarding Lewis, these issues receive more comprehensive attention in Douglas Mao, Solid Objects: Modernism and the Test of Production (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998), hereafter referred to as Solid. Attending in detail to Lewis’s vast corpus of critical work, Mao’s chapter on the frequently disgruntled artist traces distinct phases in Lewis’s thinking about objects and their relation to the external world; he sees Lewis as having altered his priorities in 1916, where his initial critique of empiricism in Blast I shifted into an attack on the “imperialism of subjectivity” and its domination of objects (101). Arguing of Time and Western Man that Lewis’s attacks on subjectivity in “defense of the object’s integrity” could only go so far, Mao suggests that despite the similarities Lewis shares with figures such as Woolf regarding this matter, he still “maintains his allegiance to forceful subjectivity, which he views as imperiled rather than imperial under modernity” (98, 99). Regardless, Mao claims that Lewis “does align with a number of other modernists in insisting that the division between subject and object must be preserved for the sake of both, and that any putative reconciliations between the two would merely disguise some further domination” (101). This position later became “entangled” in Men Without Art (1934), when Lewis accused writers such as Virginia Woolf, Henry James, and Oscar Wilde of too closely attending in their fiction to the operations of consciousness, thereby neglecting the external world (105). Tyrus Miller argues similarly that the Great War divided Lewis’s career as he remade himself into an “aggressive polemicist-critic” whose work was increasingly tied to a “logic of publicity, ideological conflict, and struggle over canonizing authority in literary criticism.” See Tyrus Miller, Late Modernism: Politics, Fiction, and the Arts between the World Wars (Berkeley: U of California P, 1999) 69, hereafter referred to as Late.


7. Butts’s interest in homosexuality has lead critics such as Bruce Hainley to deem her “an ecologist of the queer” where the term “[f]ag-hag” denotes not only a woman but also “a style of writing” (“Quite Contrary” 21). Indeed, in her 1928 epistolary novella *Imaginary Letters* (Vancouver: Talon, 1994), illustrated by Jean Cocteau, Butts pronounced herself most interested in exploring the “sensual passions of men for men” (“Quite Contrary” 11). My own article, “A Queer Eye for the Straight Guy: Mary Butts’s ‘Fag-Hag’ and the Modernist Group,” in *Modernist Group Dynamics: The Politics and Poetics of Friendship*, ed. Fabio A. Durão and Dominic Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008), 95–118, argues that Butts’s criticism of Bloomsbury’s “personalized” cultural affiliations reflects the importance of effeminate men as consumers and audiences of modernist culture.


9. Mao writes that “Lewis differs from writers like Woolf and Williams most significantly, however, in that his opposition to the imperialism of subjectivity served not a left politics aimed . . . at liberating the colonized other, but rather commitments . . . aimed first at protecting the intellectually strong from the intellectually weak and second at protecting white Europe from the threats of other states and races” (*Solid* 101).


12. Jane Garrity, in “Mary Butts’s ‘Fanatical Pédérastie’: Queer Urban Life in 1920s London and Paris,” in *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women and English Culture* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 233–251, argues that Butts both “yokes mystical experience with homosexuality and claims the city as queer domain” (235). While Garrity observes that for Butts gay men can function “variously as signs of degeneracy, embodiments of feminine artifice and excess, symptoms of national distress, sources of poetic inspiration, and divine conduits for primitive ritual,” I would also add that, even at their most degenerate, they act as...
correctives to an overly personalized literary and aesthetic culture that Butts links to urban life and space (237).


14. Unlike Eliot, Pound, H.D., or even Lawrence, Butts does not often explicitly mention “impersonality,” though her work, as I argue here, intervenes in the discourse of impersonality I elaborate in this book, particularly as it seeks to disentangle being from personality and identity. For example, her attention to the organization of space attends her interest in classical literature as an antireflective “world” of fluid boundaries. In a 1932 journal entry, Butts wrote that “[o]nly in Homer have I found impersonal consolation—a life where I am unsexed or bisexed, or completely myself—or a mere pair of ears” (qtd. in *MBSL* 22). Here, Butts characterizes the classical world of Greek literature as a stage for impersonal escape. As with Woolf’s “Street Haunting,” which occasions the pleasure of leaving the “straight lines of personality,” the world of Homer also facilitates the “consolation” of transcending the rigid parameters of personality, especially as defined by sex. Becoming “unsexed” or “bisexed” enables Butts the freedom to access a more essential form of being. See Virginia Woolf, “Street Haunting: A London Adventure,” in *Collected Essays: Volume IV* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1967), 165, hereafter referred to as *Collected IV*.


18. Butts, for example, appears to condone the violence towards women that occurs in texts such as *Armed with Madness*, in *The Taverner Novels* (Kingston, NY: McPherson, 1992), hereafter referred to as *Armed*, where Scylla Taverner, the “sole stay” of the (mostly gay) men in the novel, captures the jealous attention of the unruly, demented Clarence, who, in a sacrificial gesture that productively restabilizes aesthetic community, “throws” her, “ties her with his lariat,” and begins shooting her (literally) with an “indifferent arrow” (7, 145).


22. Douglas Mao is correct in his assertion that modernism’s well-known “antipathy to the commodity” has too frequently driven most critical treatments of the
modernist object, especially since the publication of Andreas Huyssen’s *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986) (Solid 4). Other studies that focus on the subject of modernist literature in relation to market forces include the 1996 collection edited by Kevin Watt and Stephen Dettmar, *Marketing Modernisms: Self-Promotion, Canonization, Re-reading* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1996), hereafter referred to as *Modernisms*; along with Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995), which takes the connection Huyssen draws between fear of femininity, mass culture, and the loss of a stable ego as a point of departure for her analysis of the aesthetics and erotics of consumption. My aim here is not to fault these studies, but to develop an alternative idiom for speaking of objects that extends beyond their consumption.


25. See Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke UP, 2006), 65. Ahmed also argues that “tending towards certain objects and not others . . . produces what we would call ‘straight tendencies’—that is, a way of acting that presumes the heterosexual couple as a social gift” (91). I would argue that the impersonal perspectives I discuss in this book tend toward objects in ways that “unstraighten” space.

26. See also Wyndham Lewis, “Relativism and Picasso’s Latest Work,” in *Blast* (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1997), where Lewis connects excessive detachment to a hypermaterialization that detracts from the work’s potency as an aesthetic object. The problem for Lewis lies in Picasso’s attempt to “reproduce the surface and texture of objects . . . so directly so,” without attending to the formal demands of their real concreteness (139). These sculptures are overly bounded and consequently lack proper form. My reading of these essays from *Blast* differs somewhat from that of Douglas Mao. Arguing that Lewis’s critique of Picasso represents a particularly early phase of Lewis’s thinking about objects in which pure empiricism and detachment is “insufficiently virile,” Mao suggests that Lewis struggled with the difficulty of how to recast this “externalism” without authorizing the “domination of the object world” (Solid 93, 96, 99).

27. See Douglas Mao’s discussion of the Omega Workshops in *Solid Objects*.

28. Douglas Mao also references this quotation in *Solid Objects*, 90. Mao later claims that Lewis’s critique of Bloomsbury and the Omega Workshops was not so much motivated by his feelings about objects as it was his feelings about the group as amateurs. The “key difference between Lewis and Bloomsbury,” Mao argues, was “that between the mythologizing of a circle of talented friends regarded as amateurs and the mythologizing of a loner whose stance was insistently professional” (Solid 113).

29. For Gaudier-Brzeska’s comments, see the retrospective piece, written and edited by Quentin Bell and Stephen Chaplin, in the October, 1964, issue of the
art journal Apollo (October 1964), 287, hereafter referred to as “Ideal,” which reprints the series of letters exchanged in “The Ideal Home Rumpus.” Having secured the “Post-Impressionist” room at the 1913 Ideal Home Exhibition, Fry aroused the ire of his former compatriot, Lewis, who—in a letter additionally signed by Frederick Etchells, C Hamilton, and E. Wadsworth—classified himself as one of a group of “Dissenting Aesthetes” compelled to call in as much “modern talent” as possible “to do the rough and masculine work without which . . . their efforts would not rise above the level of a pleasant tea-party” (“Ideal” 287). Christopher Reed’s essay “‘A Room of One’s Own’: The Bloomsbury Group’s Creation of Modernist Domesticity,” in Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), offers a more detailed account of this incident than I am able to offer here. The letter, also quoted in Solid Objects, 104, appears as well in The Letters of Wyndham Lewis, ed. W. K. Rose (Norfolk: New Directions, 1963), 49.

30. See Roger Fry, “The Artist as Decorator,” Colour April 1917, 92. A “life-style” magazine, which addresses women with the money to practice the prestigious art of home decorating, Colour could hardly be considered a paean to heady modernist aesthetic theory. Despite the ultimate failure of the Omega Workshops, Fry’s appearances in periodicals help explain what Jennifer Wicke has termed “the rapturous survival of Bloomsbury as an artistic and social movement, a fashion, a deeply desirable lifestyle.” See Jennifer Wicke, “Coterie Consumption: Bloomsbury, Keynes, Modernism and Marketing,” in Marketing Modernisms: Self-Promotion, Canonization, Re-reading (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1996), 110.

31. This is not unlike the form of ownership Walter Benjamin theorizes in his famous essay “Unpacking My Library,” in Illuminations: Essays and Reflections (New York: Schocken, 1988). Here, he claims that “[o]wnership is the most intimate relationship one can have to objects” (60). “The phenomenon of collecting,” writes Benjamin, “loses its meaning as it loses its personal owner” (67). According to this perspective, the “owner” of an object, whether it is a book or a work of art, guarantees that object a place in the world through which it achieves existence. Ownership is not simply characterized by the consumption of objects but by the desire to bring objects into a “relationship” that “studies and loves them as the scene, the stage of their fate” (60).

32. See Wilhelm Worringer, Abstraction and Empathy (Chicago: Elephant, 2007), 15, hereafter referred to as Abstraction.


34. See Janet Flanner, Men and Monuments: Profiles of Picasso, Matisse, Braque and Malraux (New York: Da Capo, 1957), 96, hereafter referred to as Men.

35. Matei Calinescu devotes a chapter of his Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism (Durham: Duke UP, 1987) to defining kitsch in relation to modernity’s other aesthetic movements. According to Calinescu, the fact that the avant-garde actually employed kitsch and that, conversely, kitsch appropriates avant-garde “devices” testifies
to the complexity of kitsch as an aesthetic. Calinescu further declares that kitsch “cannot be defined from a single vantage point,” not even through a “negative definition, because it simply has no compelling, distinct counter-concept” (232).

36. This description of the Bloomsbury group appears in Butts’s essay “Bloomsbury.”


39. See Christopher Reed, “Bloomsbury Bashing: Homophobia and the Politics of Criticism in the Eighties,” Genders 11 (Fall 1991): 59–60. Reed argues that Bloomsbury’s relation to the “feminized man” leads to its critical dismissal in favor of those such as Wyndham Lewis and the Vorticists, who, for critics such as Charles Harrison in his English Art and Modernism, represented “the highroad of masculine accomplishment” (“Bloomsbury Bashing” 63).

40. Pound’s “A Few Don’ts by an Imagiste,” where Pound defines the image as “presenting an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time,” first appeared in the March 1913 issue of Poetry (Literary Essays 4).

41. Merleau-Ponty exemplifies this “motor significance” by discussing a blind man’s relationship to his stick. The stick has “ceased to be an object” for the blind man because he is no longer aware of it as distinct from himself. It is rather, “an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight.” That is, the use of the stick is now habitual, since the blind man needs not negotiate its discrete presence. The blind man only then becomes aware of it “through the position of objects” rather “than the position of objects through it” (Phenomenology 143). To disrupt habit, the stick and its relation to the body—the blind man’s very being—would have to be rearranged. Merleau-Ponty appears to use this blind man metaphorically and symbolically. The relationship between the blind man and his stick can also represent a blind, habitual mode of relating to objects, whereby the object, or “stick,” loses its discrete existence through our habitual relation to it. This relationship interestingly characterizes the Curtins’ style of ownership in “In Bloomsbury.”

42. See Peter Brooks, Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative (Cambridge: Harvard, 1992), 91, hereafter referred to as Reading.

43. Butts, like Lewis and Lawrence, links action or “doing” to an impersonal aesthetic. For Butts, having repeatedly professed her admiration of Yeats, this “doing” was also linked to her interest in the supernatural and the occult. In one particular journal entry devoted to understanding the supernatural, Butts charts out a number of goals: “I don’t only want to find my true will. I want
to do it. So I want to learn how to form a magical link between myself and the phenomena I am interested in. I want power” (qtd. in MBSL 100). She writes further of this “true will,” connecting her quest for power to the “impersonal:” “I have an intuition that, if I ever know it, I shall have to cross the threshold of some frightful impersonal suffering before I get it” (qtd. in MBSL 101).

44. Pound’s early poem “Au Salon” appears in Personae (New York: New Directions, 1990), 50.

45. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon, 1958) will become more prominent in Chapter 5. Devoting a chapter of his study to “corners,” he states that those who are “prepared to go beyond the spider, the lady-bug and the mouse,” to a point of identification with things “forgotten in a corner,” meditate on the neglected, the abandoned, the “poor little dead things” that create a past (142).


47. According to Shari Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank: Paris 1900–1940* (Austin: U of Texas P, 1986), Stein was “less restrictive” socially though equally “demanding of loyalty” as she had been before her career was established. Butts’s story, “From Altar to Chimney-Piece” registers this change, and is especially relevant to Benstock’s claim that Stein was “particularly open to the young, to those whom she might influence, to those who could carry her cause to the younger generation” (170).


49. See the memoir Robert McAlmon first published in 1938, *Being Geniuses Together: 1920–1930* (London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1984), 204, which contains supplementary chapters and an afterword by Kay Boyle. If McAlmon’s chapters tell a story of modernist “security,” Kay Boyle’s chapters, which narrate her own struggles to become “established,” reflect a much different life of constant penury and displacement.

50. In Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1984), Bourdieu writes that “personality, i.e., the quality of the person . . . is affirmed in the capacity to appropriate an object of quality.” For Bourdieu, collecting itself most evidently supports this relation, since it requires a lengthy “investment of time” that affirms the “quality of the person” (281). Furthermore, the appropriation and acquisition of objects enables a “sense of belonging to a more polished, more polite, better policed world” (77). These assertions are certainly true in specific situations, but I am arguing here that modernist texts allow us to think about objects beyond the fact of their consumption, particularly as they theorize a form of relating to objects that does not magnify the personality of the owner.
Chapter 5


2. See Elizabeth Bowen’s memoir *Pictures and Conversations: Chapters of an Autobiography* (New York: Knopf, 1975), 36–37, hereafter referred to as *Pictures*, where she writes, “Imagination of my kind is most caught, most fired, most worked upon by the unfamiliar: I have thriven, accordingly, on the changes and chances, the dislocations and . . . the contrasts which have made up much of my life” (36–37).

3. Jacqueline Rose has also noted the connection between Butts’s and Bowen’s fiction in her essay “Bizarre Objects: Mary Butts and Elizabeth Bowen,” in *On Not Being Able to Sleep: Psychoanalysis and the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003), hereafter abbreviated as ON. She argues that both writers “chart and respond to . . . a world which, in its acute presence to the sensations—its physical quality—forces itself beyond what would normally be seen as endurable or at least sane” (90). This “hallucinatory intensity” grants “objects of the phenomenal world . . . the capacity to transfer their substance into humans” in forcing the reader into a “discomforting historical identification” (93, 99).


5. This claim benefits from Sharon Cameron’s definition of the “personality” as relating to “self-ownership, the of or possessive through which individuality is identified as one’s own” (italics in the original). Here, the phrase “is identified” marks “personality” as both a public aspect of existence and an article of possession. See Sharon Cameron, *Impersonality: Seven Essays* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007), viii, hereafter referred to as *Impersonality*.

6. See Jed Esty, “Virgins of Empire: The Last September and the Anti-Development Plot,” *Modern Fiction Studies* 53.2 (Summer 2007): 271, hereafter referred to as “Virgins.” Esty’s reading of Bowen’s *The Last September* within a larger modernist and colonial frame turns on the novel’s “revision of inherited bildungsroman codes” (257). Esty, to whom I am much indebted in my thinking about the relation between the *Bildungsroman* and modernist texts, argues that *The Last September* is a “specifically Ango-Irish” example of the “antidevelopment plot, crystallized in Lois’s arrested adolescence.” This failure to develop, he argues, along with the novel’s colonial setting, are “signs of modernist fiction’s recoding of social antagonism into cultural difference” (271).

7. See Maud Ellmann, *Elizabeth Bowen: The Shadow across the Page* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2003), 16, hereafter referred to as *Shadow*. Other articles, such as Elizabeth C. Inglesby, “‘Expressive Objects’: Elizabeth Bowen’s Narrative Materializes,” *Modern Fiction Studies* 53.2 (Summer 2007), reinforce this claim that Bowen is not a modernist but a realist writer, arguing that “Bowen actively resisted abstraction by binding her own metaphysical convictions to particular places and things” (327). In this case, little is done to place Bowen’s
“literary animism” within the larger context of modernism (307). Similarly, Brook Miller’s essay from the same special collection, “The Impersonal Personal: Value, Voice, and Agency in Elizabeth Bowen’s Literary and Social Criticism,” Modern Fiction Studies 53.2 (Summer 2007), takes up the subject of Bowen’s impersonality but instead equates the impersonal with modernist detachment as it “contributes to the humanist work Bowen envisions with the tradition of the English novel” (MFS 360). Other accounts, including Raphael Ingelbien, “Gothic Genealogies: Dracula, Bowen’s Court, and Anglo-Irish Psychology,” English Literary History 70.4 (2003), hereafter referred to as “Gothic”; and Hermione Lee, Elizabeth Bowen: An Estimation (London: Vision Press, 1982), situate Bowen within “a certain kind of ascendancy biographical writing,” which, while true for texts such as Bowen’s Court, obscure other contexts of her writing (“Gothic” 1092). In Pictures and Conversations, Bowen herself claimed that she was not a “‘regional writer’ in the accredited sense” (Pictures 35–36). The faulty critical tendency to emphasize Bowen’s regionalist aspirations follows the difficulty of placing her within a larger cosmopolitan critical frame.

8. In response to these sorts of assessments, critics such as Neil Corcoran, in Elizabeth Bowen: The Enforced Return (London: Oxford UP, 2004), hereafter referred to as EB, spend considerable time demonstrating Bowen’s “worth” as an experimental writer whose works of “fraught complexity” are “as richly challenging and satisfying as anything comparable in Woolf or Joyce” (EB 87). Beyond its assessment of modernism as experimental and “challenging,” this positive judgment of Bowen’s work does not adequately gauge the ways in which Bowen’s work indeed participates in that modernism. In perhaps the best critical text to date on Bowen, however, Elizabeth Bowen and the Dissolution of the Novel: Still Lives (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), hereafter referred to as Dissolution, Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle credit Bowen’s work with transforming the notion of character by presenting “a new and culturally disruptive poetics of personality” (Dissolution xvii). Still life, they suggest, figures heavily into the literary technique that Bowen herself professed to practice.

9. See Peter Nicholls, Modernisms: A Literary Guide (Berkeley: U of California P, 1995), 3. Nicholls’s conservative assessment of modernism has a foundation in Georg Lukács, The Theory of the Novel, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996). Writing in 1914, Lukács credits the novel with being essentially “problematic,” as having “destroyed culture,” with an “imitation” which is “subjective and reflexive so far as the depicted reality is concerned” (157). The duality Lukács envisions between the subjective world of individual experience that is merely imitative and a “more adequate reality” is still a guiding assumption that underlies the current reception of Bowen’s writing.


11. Mao most succinctly identifies the modernist problematic at stake here, the “attempt to ensure the object’s extrasubjective integrity, to take part of this radical other without, as it were, resubordinating it to consciousness” (Solid 10).
Whereas Mao argues that modernists like Pound and Eliot guarded against this problem by favoring the “impermeability of the solid object,” writers such as Bowen render an object world that guards itself from human intrusion in its very ability to emotionally dissect humans, opening them to vulnerability and invasion (Solid 15).

12. See Susan Fraiman’s critique of this model in Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development (New York: Columbia UP, 1993), which includes chapters on Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, and George Eliot. Additionally, the collection of essays, The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development, ed. Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsh, and Elizabeth Langland (London: UP of New England, 1983), challenges the generic formulations of the Bildungsroman by arguing that “[e]ven the broadest definitions of the Bildungsroman presuppose a range of options only available to men” (7). Both studies respond to this frequently quoted passage from Jerome Buckley, Season of Youth: The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1974), hereafter referred to as Season, which identifies the “broad outlines of a typical Bildungsroman plot”:

A child of some sensibility grows up in the country, or in a provincial town, where he finds constraints, social and intellectual, placed upon the free imagination. His family, especially his father, proves doggedly hostile to his creative instincts or flights of fancy, antagonistic to his ambitions, and quite impervious to the new ideas he has gained from unprescribed reading. His first schooling, even if not totally inadequate, may be frustrating insofar as it may suggest options not available to him in his present setting. He therefore, sometimes at a quite early age, leaves the repressive atmosphere of home . . . to make his way independently in the city . . . There his real ‘education’ begins, not only his preparation for a career but also . . . his direct experience of urban life. The latter involves at least two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing, one exalting, and demands that in this respect and others the hero reappraise his values. By the time he has decided, after painful soul-searching, the sort of accommodation to the modern world he can honestly make, he has left his adolescence behind and entered upon his maturity (Season 17–18).


18. See George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* (New York: Penguin, 1979). In this formulation, the domestic sphere of bourgeois intimacy is emptied out into the anonymity of the public domain, so that objects, once privately owned, become subject to dispossession. However, the ultimate act of dispossession occurs at the end of the novel, where Tom, after Maggie’s “elopement,” resolutely pronounces that “You will find no home with me . . . You no longer belong to me” (612). In opposition to the traditional closure of the *Bildungsroman,* which celebrates the stability of social connections, Maggie, its inappropriate subject like the objects of the Tulliver household, is without a home, finding no comfort in “everyday life” (Way 40). Not surprisingly, she dies with her brother in a flood, nature’s revenge against the possibility of Maggie’s becoming the appropriate subject of the *Bildungsroman.*

19. See Elizabeth Bowen, *The House in Paris* (New York: Anchor, 2002), hereafter referred to as *HP,* for a characteristic exchange, in which Karen, the tale’s absent mother, addresses her own mother’s callous refusal to acknowledge the secret affair that produces Leopold, her son, in reference to her feelings about home: “It made me not feel I lived here” (*HP* 176). Max Ebhart, Leopold’s Jewish father, who dramatically commits suicide before he learns of Karen’s pregnancy, remarks similarly of their union, “we cannot live what we are” (*HP* 181). Later, regarding Leopold, Karen laments, “But I must see someway for him to live” (*HP* 187). In each of these examples, one is only able to “live” somewhere upon acquiring the stability and immobility required for legitimate existence in the world.

20. In *Pictures and Conversations,* Bowen declares that a distrust of the boundaries of self and character plays a major part of her fiction, claiming that it is “something to have character attributed to one.” Human nature is characterized by “the amorphousness of the drifting and flopping jellyfish in a cloudy tide, and secret fears . . . prey upon individuals made aware of this.” As a result, the “obsessive wish to acquire outline, to be unmistakably demarcated, to take shape” develops (italics in original; *Pictures* 58–59).


22. While the narrative of Rhys’s *Voyage in the Dark* (New York: Norton, 1994), originally published in 1934, foregrounds sexuality more explicitly, its protagonist, Anna Morgan (much like Portia Quayne) confronts the failure of her own *Bildung* primarily through the instability of her housing situation, which is both the outcome and cause of her sexual exploitation. See also Rhys’s novels *Quartet* (1929), *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* (1931), and *Good

23. I take this phrase from Neil Corcoran’s reading of the same situation in the novel in Elizabeth Bowen: The Enforced Return, 121.


25. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Anna’s usage of the word “taped” most likely means “archived” rather than what a contemporary reader is likely to assume, which is audiotaped. The first audiotape machines were not available until the late 1940s.


Conclusion


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