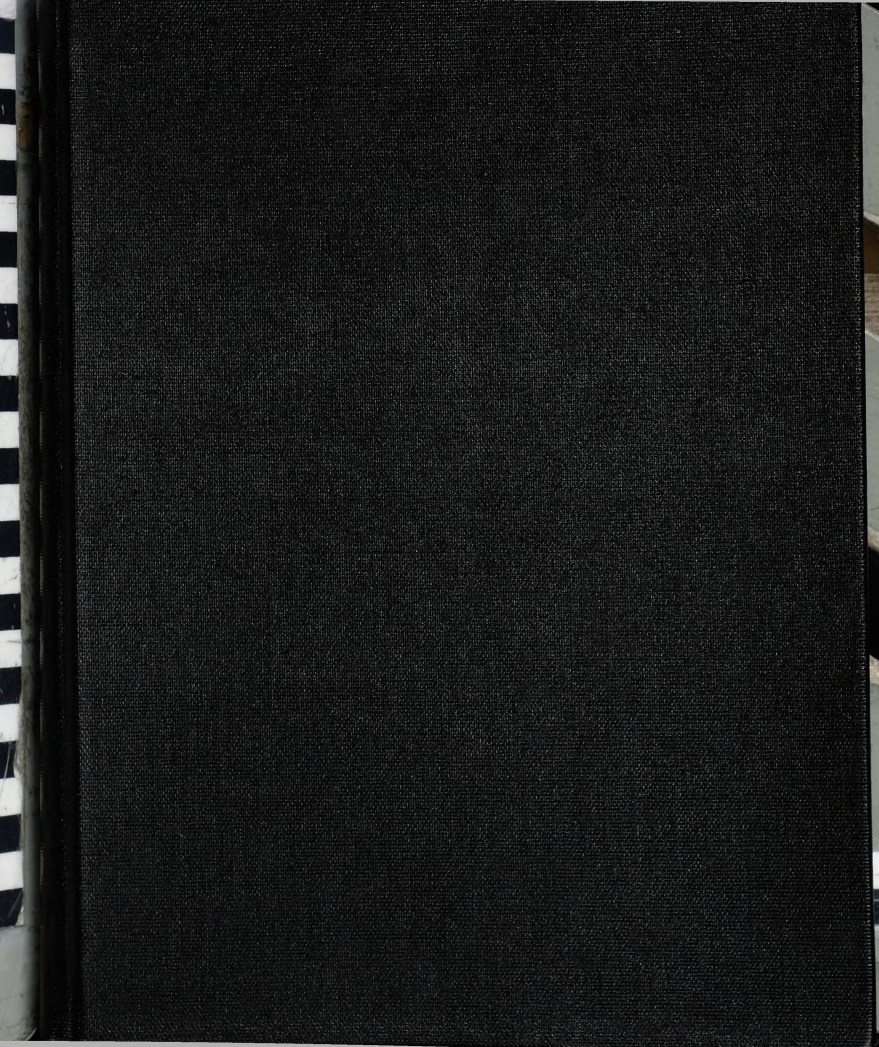






This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

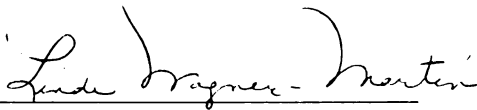
THE BOTTLE IN THE SIDEBORD:
ALCOHOLISM AS A DEFINING FORCE IN
THE SOUND AND THE FURY

presented by

Marcy Lassota Bauman

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in English


Major professor

Date August 3, 1990

LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
MAR 12 1995 1m 585405	_____	_____
DEC 07 1994 11:2050482	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

MSU Is An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

c:\clic\data\due.pm3-p.



THE BOTTLE IN THE SIDEBORD:
ALCOHOLISM AS A DEFINING FORCE IN
THE SOUND AND THE FURY

By

Marcy Lassota Bauman

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1991

Un
the lin
her wor
it appe
primari
discuss
writing

A
that no
family
furnish
and his
childr
charac
an alc
the ch

ABSTRACT

THE BOTTLE IN THE SIDEBORD:
ALCOHOLISM AS A DEFINING FORCE IN
THE SOUND AND THE FURY

By

Marcy Lassota Bauman

Until recently, literary critics have not investigated the links between an alcoholic writer's drinking and his or her work. This dissertation begins to address that link as it appears in the writing of William Faulkner, focusing primarily on The Sound and the Fury. The dissertation also discusses characters in other works, as well as Faulkner's writing style as a whole.

A close reading of The Sound and the Fury shows that that novel can be seen as a near-perfect "case study" of a family with an alcoholic member. Mr. and Mrs. Compson furnish excellent examples of a chemically-dependent husband and his co-dependent spouse. The three older Compson children--Caddy, Quentin, and Jason--all display characteristic role attributes common to children raised in an alcoholic home. Because the novel takes up the story of the children at progressively later points in their lives,

the novel

early in

adulthood

starting

character

archetype

Fin

concerns

of repet

all exam

often co

use the

children

lives.

the novel also shows the ways in which patterns learned early in life by children of alcoholics carry over into adulthood as well. Each of these children serves as the starting point for analysis of other, similar Faulknerian characters. In fact, the Compson children can be said to be archetypes for characters which appear in later works.

Finally, the dissertation takes up wider stylistic concerns. Faulkner's use of distorted chronology, his use of repetition, and of stream-of-consciousness narrative are all examined to show that, in order to make sense of these often convoluted texts, the reader of Faulkner's works must use the same meaning-making strategies that are used by children raised in alcoholic families to make sense of their lives.

To Emil

To Emil, Charlie, and Emily

I v
elevent

complet

Ab

Martin,

word.

in my i

stretch

the way

gratefu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Howard Anderson for crucial eleventh-hour help, without which I doubt I could have completed this project.

Above all, I would like to thank Dr. Linda Wagner-Martin, who has been a mentor to me in the best sense of the word. Her encouragement has sustained me and given me faith in my ideas; her professionalism has challenged me to stretch the limits of my abilities; her struggles have made the way smooth for me and many others. To her, I am deeply grateful.

Introdu

Chapter

Fa

Chapter

Th

an

Chapter

Ca

Chapter

Qu

Chapter

Ja

Cu

Chapter

Co

WORKS C

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Chapter One:	11
Faulkner as Alcoholic, Faulkner as Writer	
Chapter Two:	40
<u>The Sound and the Fury</u> as the Case History of an Alcoholic Family	
Chapter Three:	66
Caddy Compson: The Family Scapegoat	
Chapter Four:	108
Quentin Compson: The Noble Failure	
Chapter Five:	159
Jason Compson: The First Sane Compson Since Culloden	
Chapter Six:	201
Conclusion	
WORKS CONSULTED	210

Th
the str
writing
him. Bi
alcohol
which F
and the

Su
begun t
work of
Equivoc
writers
that "I
literat
or for
charact
somethi
of that
"[f]rus
explain

Introduction

The structure of William Faulkner's fiction, as well as the structure of his personal life and the structure of his writing life, all reflect the influence of alcoholism upon him. Biographers generally acknowledge that Faulkner was an alcoholic; what they have not acknowledged are the ways in which Faulkner's alcoholism defined both his writing process and the individual works themselves.

Such a gap is not unusual; critics have only recently begun to consider the effects of alcoholism on the life and work of alcoholic writers. Thomas Gilmore's 1987 book, Equivocal Spirits, provides the first such treatment of writers and alcoholism. In his introduction, Gilmore notes that "In many dozens, probably hundreds, of works of modern literature, heavy or alcoholic drinking is important in ways or for reasons almost too numerous to mention: a drunken character, a pivotal drunk scene, a theme or subject, something as elusive as mood. . . ." The critics' treatments of that drinking has been, in Gilmore's words, "[f]rustratingly peripheral or brief." (p. 3) Gilmore explains that biographers tend to dismiss the writer's

drinking a
critics, c
reports th
treatment
6) Gilmore
attitudes
several w
is not am

Two c
alcoholism
Faulkner.
thoroughly
Donald W.
A. Dardis
(1989) bo

Goodv
America du
extraordin
(p. 1) In
have come
and (c) t
from char:
the South
long-stand
never seen
"bohemian

drinking as "inert, unconnected with his writing." Literary critics, on the other hand, have done no better: Gilmore reports that "[h]ere the fault has been less in ignorant treatment than in something close to complete neglect." (p. 6) Gilmore goes on to give a fairly detailed reading of the attitudes displayed towards alcoholism in the works of several writers who were known alcoholics, although Faulkner is not among them.

Two other more recent books that deal specifically with alcoholism and writers, however, do consider William Faulkner. In so doing, they treat Faulkner's alcoholism more thoroughly than have previous biographers and critics. Donald W. Goodwin's Alcohol and the Writer (1988) and Thomas A. Dardis' The Thirsty Muse: Alcohol and American Writers (1989) both contain sections on Faulkner.

Goodwin's main premise is that "well-known writers in America during the first half of the twentieth century were extraordinary susceptible to the disease called alcoholism." (p. 1) In Faulkner's case, he believes the susceptibility to have come from a combination of "(a) tradition, (b) genes, and (c) the extraordinary tension of role playing, in moving from character to character." (p. 118) Goodwin explains that the Southern culture into which Faulkner was born had a long-standing male tradition of hard drinking which Faulkner never seemed to question. Added to that heritage was the "bohemian tradition which Faulkner, in his formative years,

discove

Orleans

drinking

being a

culture

alcohol.

that Fa

that "W

a produ

extent

suggest

M

many pe

player"

the RAF

hunter.

man, bu

Hi

Ro

ar

is

fr

st

an

Co

fr

gu

so

un

hi

discovered in Greenwich Village, the French Quarter in New Orleans, and, for a time, the Left Bank of Paris. Heavy drinking was part of life in these places. It was part of being a writer--a genius." (p. 119) Goodwin goes beyond the culture to a consideration of Faulkner's family history of alcoholism; although he refrains from stating explicitly that Faulkner inherited his alcoholism, Goodwin surmises that "Whether Faulkner's alcoholism was inherited or. . . . a product of his circumstances will never be known, but the extent of the alcoholism among the Faulkner males would suggest a force more powerful than "role modeling." (p. 120)

Most intriguing is Goodwin's discussion of Faulkner's many personas. He refers to Faulkner as a "consummate role player" whose roles included those of "the bohemian artist, the RAF pilot, the country gentleman, the farmer, the fox hunter." (p.115) Goodwin asserts that Faulkner "was not one man, but many." He explains

His inconsistencies, [Life magazine writer Robert] Coughlan noted in 1953, went beyond artistic license or mere eccentricity. "His is not a split personality but rather a fragmented one, loosely held together by some strong inner force, the pieces often askew and sometimes painfully in friction." Coughlan attributes the drinking to this friction. "It is to ease these pains, one can guess, that he escapes periodically and sometimes for periods of weeks in alcoholism, until his drinking has become legendary in his profession." (p. 120)

In this view, F
Faulkner drank
tensions that F
were simply mor

Thomas A.

view. He descri
it may be genet
become active.
in the beginnin
to drink; in hi
"good writers a
however, Dardis
cause and follo
writer's work.
was caused by e

. . . . Fa
deliberate
have descr
cycles." A
Faulkner's
response t
anguish. B
circumstan
behavior h
alcoholic.
sure what
three drin

In Dardis' view
both to his bod
undertaken it w

In this view, proposed by Coughlan and espoused by Goodwin, Faulkner drank to escape unbearable personal burdens. The tensions that Faulkner experienced in his day-to-day life were simply more than he could cope with.

Thomas A. Dardis (The Thirsty Muse) takes a contrary view. He describes alcoholism as a disease which, although it may be genetically transmitted, requires a trigger to become active. Like Goodwin, he believes that the conditions in the beginning of this century encouraged American writers to drink; in his view, they found a trigger in the idea that "good writers are drinking writers." (p. 17) Unlike Goodwin, however, Dardis asserts that the disease of alcoholism has a cause and follows a course that exists independent from a writer's work. Rejecting the idea that Faulkner's drinking was caused by emotional problems, he writes

. . . . Faulkner would never have deliberately entered what his biographers have described as self-chosen "drinking cycles." As they portray these cycles, Faulkner's drinking problems arose as a response to some inner emotional turmoil or anguish. But Faulkner drank under any and all circumstances, good, bad, or indifferent. His behavior had only one explanation: he was an alcoholic. By 1936 and 1937 he could never be sure what might happen to him after two or three drinks. (p. 28)

In Dardis' view, Faulkner's drinking was far too damaging, both to his body and to his career, for him to have undertaken it willingly. Perhaps because Dardis believes

that alcoholism
alcoholics--even
responsible for
give the horrible

Implicit

alcoholism: Dr.
Faulkner's drink-
control--his g
drinking, no m
believes that
Faulkner, in t
emotional pain
the question o
of his career,
conclusions: D
Faulkner's tal
would ever hav
been alcoholic
effect that dr
writing that F

The above
considering th
life and the s
Thomas Gilmore
he does consid
overt attitude

that alcoholism is an uncontrollable disease (and that alcoholics--even alcoholics who are great writers--are not responsible for having it), he is more able than Goodwin to give the horrible details of that disease.

Implicit in both these books is a stance toward alcoholism: Dardis believes that alcoholism in general, and Faulkner's drinking in particular, was truly out of his control--his genetic makeup fixed the results once he began drinking, no matter what he would have wished; Goodwin believes that drinking served an ongoing purpose for Faulkner, in that it enabled him to escape from the emotional pains of his everyday life. Both writers take up the question of how Faulkner's drinking affected the course of his career, but they come to somewhat different conclusions: Dardis believes that drinking destroyed Faulkner's talent, whereas Goodwin doubts that Faulkner would ever have written in the first place if he had not been alcoholic. Neither writer, however, considers the effect that drinking and alcoholism had on the actual writing that Faulkner produced.

The above books, then, have stopped short of considering the connections between an alcoholic writer's life and the substance of that writer's works. Although Thomas Gilmore does not take up the question of biography, he does consider writers' works, in that he examines their overt attitudes towards drinking and alcoholism. The

experience of
alcoholic home
person's devel
facets of life
addresses that
methodology of
Faulkner's wri
in light of wh
alcoholic fami
to people rais
into Faulkner'

Interesti
that have rece
relationship w
consciousness
style--can als
mindset that c
alcoholics. I

¹ Others before
erents in Faulkner's
The Transfiguration
which Faulkner's fi
prints in his career
as a Novelist, disc
his fiction, trea
as The Origins of
that she calls, qu
Psychological impo
tually, David Minte
the ways in which
autobiographical. A
thinking about Faul

experience of being alcoholic or of growing up in an alcoholic home, however, is known to contribute to a person's developing attitudes and actions involving many facets of life, not just drinking. This dissertation addresses that experience more fully by combining the methodology of all three previous books: I will look at Faulkner's writing, most closely at The Sound and the Fury, in light of what we know of Faulkner's family and of alcoholic families in general, to see which attitudes common to people raised in such circumstances have found their way into Faulkner's work.¹

Interestingly, many of the aspects of Faulkner's work that have received widespread attention--Quentin Compson's relationship with time, for example, or the stream-of-consciousness narrative that is a hallmark of Faulkner's style--can also be seen as exemplifying the attitudes and mindset that clinical research has shown to be typical of alcoholics. Indeed, alcoholics are so similar in their

¹ Others before me have made specific connections between events in Faulkner's life and his writing: Judith Wittenberg, in The Transfiguration of Biography, takes a close look at the ways in which Faulkner's fictional situations echo his life at various points in his career. Similarly, Martin Krieswirth, in The Making of a Novelist, discusses Faulkner's early poetry as it gives rise to his fiction, treating biography as he does so. Judith Sensibar, in The Origins of Faulkner's Art, plays particular attention to what she calls, quoting Walter Jackson Bate, "the elementary psychological import of Faulkner's poem sequences." (p. xv) Finally, David Minter's biography of Faulkner carefully treats both the ways in which and the degree to which Faulkner's works are autobiographical. All of these books have influenced and guided my thinking about Faulkner.

fundamental be
relationship t
have identifie
It is my conte
created--as se
sense of the w
the inner worl
alcoholics.

Chapter O
William Faulkne
and discusses
Faulkner's sty
The Sound and
that helped to
childhood. Chap
Sound and the
be treated as a
alcoholism. Ch
and the Fury,
of the Compson
describes chara
shows how the
This chapter c
interpretive gu
Chapters 7
effects of fami

fundamental beliefs about their drinking and their relationship to the outside world that several researchers have identified what can be called an "alcoholic persona." It is my contention that the fictional world that Faulkner created--as seen through his attitudes about love, time, his sense of the world's chaos and unpredictable evil--mirrors the inner world of the mind typical of actively drinking alcoholics.

Chapter One presents biographical information about William Faulkner and information about family alcoholism, and discusses briefly some of the major elements of Faulkner's style, all to support the assertion that writing The Sound and the Fury was for him a cathartic experience that helped to relieve him of burdens carried since childhood. Chapter One also contains background about The Sound and the Fury, to show the ways in which that novel can be treated as an example of a text which deals with family alcoholism. Chapter Two continues the reading of The Sound and the Fury, describing interaction styles between members of the Compson family in general terms. This chapter also describes characteristics of families with alcoholism, and shows how the Compson family reflects those characteristics. This chapter creates the framework which serves as an interpretive guide for the rest of the chapters.

Chapters Three, Four, and Five each consider the effects of family alcoholism on one of the Compson children.

These chapters

the children i

Chapter T

daughter in Th

the family sca

is perceived b

her precocious

become scapego

actions as an

Faulkner descr

eventual "down

his overwhelmi

also links her

Sanctuary.

Chapter F

eldest son. It

a role common

family hero. C

mired in the f

expectations f

by the too-rig

is that he con

unable to act

resolve his in

chapter also s

These chapters follow the order in which Faulkner presents the children in The Sound and the Fury.

Chapter Three takes up the story of Caddy Compson, the daughter in The Sound and the Fury. It describes her role as the family scapegoat, and delineates the ways in which she is perceived by each of her three brothers. It explains that her precocious sexual behavior is typical of children who become scapegoats in alcoholic families, and that her actions as an adult are predicted by her childhood as Faulkner describes it. Chapter Three also shows how Caddy's eventual "downfall" provides a way for Faulkner to express his overwhelming sense of the tragedy of life. The chapter also links her to another Faulkner heroine, Temple Drake in Sanctuary.

Chapter Four deals primarily with Quentin Compson, the eldest son. It shows that the role he plays in his family is a role common for eldest children in alcoholic families--family hero. Chapter Four explains the ways in which he is mired in the family's overwhelming, and unrealistic, expectations for him, and how, as an adolescent, he is bound by the too-rigid roles proscribed in his family. The result is that he consistently confuses fantasy and reality, and is unable to act on his own or anyone else's behalf. Unable to resolve his internal contradictions, he kills himself. This chapter also shows the links which connect Quentin to

several of Fau

Horace Benbow

Chapter F

third child. I

inconsistency

feelings of ra

sarcasm. Jason

possessions fo

common pattern

chapter also s

Faulkner's vil

trilogy.

After The

treatment of a

his works. Th

apparent: the

meaning from a

children in al

chaotic lives.

reading of Fau

light of what

his experience

actively drink

It is my

presented in t

greater apprec

several of Faulkner's other central characters, such as Horace Benbow in Sanctuary and Gavin Stevens in The Town.

Chapter Five deals with Jason, the Compson family's third child. It shows the ways in which the perpetual inconsistency in his childhood has made Jason bury his feelings of rage and disappointment under a thick layer of sarcasm. Jason has substituted the desire for material possessions for the desire for love; this substitution is a common pattern for children raised in alcoholic homes. This chapter also shows Jason as the archetype for several of Faulkner's villains, especially Flem Snopes in the Snopes trilogy.

After The Sound and the Fury, however, Faulkner's treatment of alcoholism, however, is never again as overt in his works. The effects of alcoholism, however, are still apparent: the ways in which we, as readers, construct meaning from a Faulkner text parallel the ways in which children in alcoholic homes construct order out of their chaotic lives. Chapter Six, the conclusion, provides a reading of Faulkner's characteristic stylistic devices in light of what we know about family alcoholism, to show how his experience of alcoholism informs his writing even when actively drinking characters are not present.

It is my hope that, by considering the issues presented in the following pages, my readers will come to a greater appreciation of Faulkner's craft and material.

Faulkner's vis

often unpredic

wonder, "Why?

landscape abou

answer to that

Faulkner's vision of the world is very often tragic, very often unpredicatble, and almost always sad, leaving us to wonder, "Why? Why did he choose such a bleak, sorrowful landscape about which to write?" This work offers a partial answer to that question.

Faul

If, inde
story, the st
of his works
endeavor of e.
happens, Faul
those who exp
the "self" re
are complemen

Those who
the ways in wh
South; on the
modernist and
ways in which
concerns which
of recorded hi
in Faulkner's
Faulkner has w
lifetime. The
relationship b

Chapter One:

Faulkner as Alcoholic, Faulkner as Writer

If, indeed, William Faulkner told and retold the same story, the story of "myself and the world", then the critics of his works can similarly be said to be engaged in the endeavor of explaining Faulkner and his world. As it happens, Faulkner's critics tend to divide into two camps: those who explain Faulkner's world, and those who explain the "self" reflected in Faulkner's writing. The two tasks are complementary.

Those who explicate Faulkner's world have focused on the ways in which his writing is unique to and shaped by the South; on the ways in which his writing is typical of the modernist and European influences which informed it; and the ways in which Faulkner's writings take up themes and concerns which have preoccupied writers since the beginning of recorded history. Those who search for the "self" hidden in Faulkner's writings look for a correlation between what Faulkner has written and what he experienced in his own lifetime. These critics have sought to explicate the relationship between William Faulkner's work and his life.

This stu
explain the "
Working from
the work of M
Minter, I int
yet another p
determine the

To date,
thinking abou
an alcoholic.
resistance ma
American lite
era have held
an ability to
modernists sha
made them pecu
Room reports t
in their prime
they produced
time in Paris,
twentieth cent
them to merge
that "they dra
wines and bran
whiskey-and-so
was seen by th

This study locates itself in the camp which seeks to explain the "self" revealed in William Faulkner's writing. Working from a theoretical style of inquiry made possible by the work of Martin Kreiswirth, Judith Wittenberg, and David Minter, I intend to look at William Faulkner's writing from yet another point of view: I will examine his writing to determine the possible influences of alcoholism on his work.

To date, there has been a great deal of resistance to thinking about Faulkner--or any writer, for that matter--as an alcoholic. Ironically for the modernists, part of the resistance may well stem from the venerated reputation in American literature that Faulkner and other writers of his era have held--a reputation which, in their case, involved an ability to hold one's liquor as well as to write. The modernists shared several lifestyle characteristics which made them peculiarly susceptible to abusing alcohol. Robin Room reports that the writers of Faulkner's generation were in their prime drinking years--the ages from 18-24--when they produced their groundbreaking work. Many of them spent time in Paris, which, Gertrude Stein said, was where the twentieth century was. Their expatriate lifestyle enabled them to merge several styles of drinking: Fitzgerald wrote that "they drank cocktails before meals like Americans, wines and brandies like Frenchmen, beer like Germans, whiskey-and-soda like the English." (Room, p. 542) Drinking was seen by these writers as "a ritualized expression of the

autonomy of or
claims of the
For these writ
artistic tempo
drinking that
reluctance to
writing seems

Nonethele

refrained from
superstars. Th
day, and certa
received. Good
benefit of la
their hero; a
Faulkner was a
control over h
People who act
reticent; Good
[Faulkner's a
found a reluct
information th
diminish his
Faulkner's al
results in a
we tend to "re

autonomy of oneself and one's social group against the claims of the state and official morality." (Room, p. 543) For these writers, drinking was simply a part of the artistic temperament. Given all the talk and writing about drinking that these writers produced, our present-day reluctance to consider the effects of that drinking on their writing seems almost Puritan.

Nonetheless, the literary community as a whole has refrained from attaching what may be a punitive label to its superstars. This protection extends to Faulkner even to this day, and certainly influences the way his works are received. Goodwin reports that Faulkner's critics extend the benefit of larger-than-life personality characteristics to their hero; although they generally acknowledge that Faulkner was an alcoholic, they believe that "he exercised a control over his drinking unknown to most alcoholics." People who actually knew the man were somewhat more reticent; Goodwin explains that "In pursuing the subject [Faulkner's alcoholism] with people who were close to him, I found a reluctance to discuss the matter, as if the information that would come to light about it would somehow diminish his reputation." (p. 7) The reluctance to deal with Faulkner's alcoholism, and what it meant for his writings, results in a kind of blindness when we consider those works; we tend to "read out" or ignore aspects which might point to

a venerated A
alcohol.

The ques
Faulkner's dr
main reasons.
about alcohol
the words: a
named. A stu
illuminate th
the way in wh
fiction--the
reader to rea
alcoholic fam

Literary
activity. In
critical persp
other, either
showing each c
one interpreta
can be said to
interpretation
light which il
cultural "zeit
simply know mu
alcoholism tha
to the final v

a venerated American author's personal experience with alcohol.

The question of the relationship between William Faulkner's drinking and his writing is important for three main reasons. First, much of the affective information about alcoholism in his works exists in the silences, not in the words: alcoholism is present, but ignored, or not named. A study such as the one I have undertaken will illuminate that element where it is not obvious. Secondly, the way in which information is presented in Faulkner's fiction--the hallmarks of Faulkner's style--require the reader to read the text much as the child growing up in an alcoholic family learns to "read" the world.

Literary criticism can be thought of as an additive activity. In this sense, different or even divergent critical perspectives can be seen to mutually enhance each other, either by extending each other's argument or by showing each other's blind spots. From this perspective, no one interpretation of a work, no matter how comprehensive, can be said to fully explicate that work. Each new interpretation of a work throws new light on that work, light which illuminates both the work itself and the cultural "zeitgeist" of the critic. In the present case, we simply know much more, and have many more ways of describing alcoholism than we had ten years previously. Thus, we come to the final value of a study such as this: it enables us

to ask, "What
show us about
How does that
readings?"

In order
that alcoholi
to examine th
Before Faulkn
and grandson,
family connec
than Faulkner
that any chil
the world tha

Alcoholi
generations.
Falkner, was
Memphis, wher
puts it, his
extreme measu
in which the
double chlori

1
"Falkner"
until William hims
to Malcolm Cowley,
of the name as, no
reading it, and wh
into it. So it s
trying to change i
as soon as I got aw
whether I wished i

to ask, "What does this new information about alcoholism show us about Faulkner's work that we did not know before? How does that information extend or reshape the old readings?"

In order to examine Faulkner's works for the impact that alcoholism may have had on them, it is first necessary to examine the effects that alcoholism had on his life. Before Faulkner himself became an alcoholic, he was the son, and grandson, and great-grandson, of alcoholics. It is this family connection which is most important (more important than Faulkner's own drinking) because it is in the family that any child learns the values and ways of dealing with the world that inform his or her adult life.

Alcoholism had been a part of the Falkner¹ family for generations. William Faulkner's grandfather, J. W. T. Falkner, was a frequent patient at the Keeley Institute in Memphis, where he was taken by his wife when, as Blotner puts it, his drinking "became more than social and required extreme measures." (Blotner, v.1, p. 56) The cure at Keeley, in which the patient would be injected with a solution of double chloride of gold, became a family tradition; Blotner

¹ "Falkner" was the accepted spelling of the family name until William himself added the "u" to his own name. In a letter to Malcolm Cowley, he explained the change: "My first recollection of the name as, no outsider seemed to be able to pronounce it from reading it, and when he did pronounce it, he always wrote the 'u' into it. So it seemed to me that the whole outside world was trying to change it, and usually did. . . It just seemed to me that as soon as I got away from Mississippi, I found the 'u' in the word whether I wished it or not." (Millgate, p. 1)

further notes

the Keeley In

wife, and tha

Memphis on th

The patt

grandfather--

of his fictic

things were.

that:

. . . liq

far as m

Few wome

and univ

This did

indulge

instruct

room, to

value to

family a

drinking

philosop

from gen

deportme

or found

his fell

Thus, Faulkne

alcohol along

life as a Sou

prerogative o

shows, a husb

to bear.

Specific

family's affl

further notes that Faulkner's father also repeatedly entered the Keeley Institute for treatment at the instigation of his wife, and that the entire family would accompany him to Memphis on those occasions. (p. 99)

The pattern of drinking espoused by both father and grandfather--and later, by Faulkner himself and a whole host of his fictional characters--was seen simply as the way things were. William's brother Murry noted in his memoir that:

. . . liquor was an accepted way of life as far as many of the menfolk were concerned. Few women would touch it on pain of certain and universal condemnation by the community. This did not mean that men were taught to indulge in it, any more than they were instructed to rise when a lady entered the room, to lie only when it would be of great value to another, or to take pride in their family and country. These things--the drinking, the code of personal conduct and philosophy of life--were simply passed on from generation to generation by manners and deportment, no succeeding one having sought or found a more agreeable way to live with his fellows. (p. 47)

Thus, Faulkner absorbed a predilection for the abuse of alcohol along with the values and beliefs that shaped his life as a Southern gentleman. Drinking to excess was the prerogative of a man, and, as Faulkner's family history shows, a husband's excessive drinking was his wife's cross to bear.

Specific information about the effects of the Falkner family's affliction is scarce. Although Blotner notes that

Faulkner's fa
gives very li
might have ma
describes Mur
terms: "In sp
an easy-going
course, it wa
offers a more
family dynami

As the d
to Oxford
widely re
also as a
failure a
more, and
hardened
times, wh
loud and
he drank
her. In a
drinking
dramatizi
guilt. (M

Even this more
speculative. L
Faulkner's chi
while his fath
stated motto,
complain--don'
rollercoaster
that pervade m
Falkners as we

Faulkner's father (also named Murry) was an alcoholic, he gives very little insight as to what difference that fact might have made on the people around him. Even when he describes Murry Falkner's temper, he does so in gentle terms: "In spite of his temper, Murry Falkner tended to be an easy-going man most of the time. When he drank, of course, it was a different matter." (p. 90) David Minter offers a more imaginative reconstruction of the Falkner family dynamics:

As the decline triggered by the family's move to Oxford deepened, Murry Falkner became widely regarded not only as a failure but also as a drinker. . . [A]s Murry's sense of failure and resentment deepened, he drank more, and as he did, Miss Maud's resistance hardened. She genuinely abhorred drinking. At times, when particularly when Murry became loud and abusive, she may well have felt that he drank not so much to get away as to punish her. In any case, as he extended his role by drinking more, she extended hers by dramatizing his failure, his weakness, his guilt. (Minter, p. 15)

Even this more detailed description is still largely speculative. Little is known about the emotional tenor of Faulkner's childhood, composed as it was of trips to Memphis while his father got sober, and life with a mother whose stated motto, hung on a plaque over the stove, was "Don't complain--don't explain". We can guess, however, that the rollercoaster ups and downs, the insecurity, and the shame that pervade most families of alcoholics characterized the Falkners as well.

We know
interaction
present, and
about William
his fiction
alcoholics an
research has
years, and th
discussion of
Deutsch, in B
current think
being conflic
their own fra
Each of these
told us about
ramifications

Alcoholi
matter what t
the alcoholic
problem, and
confronted an
the alcoholic
problematic,
lengths to de
denial is ext
can believe th

We know quite a bit about the patterns of family interaction that surface in families where alcoholism is present, and can use this information both to speculate about William Faulkner's birth family, as well as to "check" his fiction for evidence of the attitudes common to alcoholics and children of alcoholics. A great deal of research has been done on alcoholic families in the past ten years, and the researchers are surprisingly unified in their discussion of the traits common to such families. Charles Deutsch, in Broken Bottles, Broken Dreams, nicely summarizes current thinking when he describes alcoholic families as being conflict-ridden, closed, inconsistent, convinced of their own fragility, and inhibiting of direct communication. Each of these traits is evident in what biographers have told us about the Falkner family, and each had its own ramifications for William Faulkner's writing.

Alcoholic families are conflict-ridden because no matter what the parents might appear to be fighting about, the alcoholic's drinking is always the root cause of the problem, and that drinking can never be appropriately confronted and dealt with. To do so would first require that the alcoholic acknowledge that his or her drinking was problematic, and alcoholics will generally go to very great lengths to deny that truth. As Deutsch states: "[Alcoholic] denial is extremely flexible and accommodating. Alcoholics can believe their own most implausible excuses and discount

lifelong, se
is real is l
(p. 37) Even
the denial, c
the flu"; "Ye
repeatedly he
the child's d
what the prob

No one i
alcoholi
a family
they wer
what he
an alcoh
He can w
reasons.
alcoholi
She'd sa
day that
alcoholi
just whe

There are sim
John and Murry
obscure the r
their father,
might be more
Falkner simila
William's drin
Murry's v
ambivalence to
his father's

lifelong, seemingly incontrovertible evidence, because what is real is less important than what they need to believe." (p. 37) Eventually, other family members get caught up in the denial, offering excuses for the drinking ("Mommy has the flu"; "Your father's had a bad day". A child who repeatedly hears his or her parents refuting the evidence of the child's own eyes may come not even to know any longer what the problem is. Consider the following description:

No one in the family recognized the alcoholism as alcoholism. The father was from a family where everyone was an alcoholic, and they were all further gone alcoholics than what he was. You'd hear, you know, "He's not an alcoholic because he can still hold a job. He can wait until noon to drink," those reasons. The mother would see the effects of alcoholism and not recognize it as such. She'd say, "well, he hadn't been drinking the day that happened," not realizing how the alcoholism can affect their entire life, not just when they're drinking. (Deutsch, p. 38)

There are similar types of denial in the writings of both John and Murry Falkner. In Murry's writing, denial works to obscure the relationship that the Falkner boys had with their father, couching that relationship in terms which might be more socially acceptable than true to memory. John Falkner similarly obscures the depth of his brother William's drinking problem.

Murry's words describing his father reflect his ambivalence towards him. The passage where Murry describes his father's life running the family livery stable is

fraught with
statements. .
reflected th
was "an easy
apparently,
little to do
himself "to
(p. 10). No
otherwise) th
the family ad
enough money
stepped in "a
another busin
again, the cr
level of diss
makes plain.
its predecess
ascerbically
signally to m
problem to Fa
store was les
stove warmer,
ever-present
father's com

to him than t

fraught with unmade connections and ambiguous half-statements. Murry states that his father "loved horses", and reflected that his father's life running the livery stable was "an easy life and a pleasant one for him." The pleasure, apparently, came from the fact that the elder Falkner had little to do but tell tales with his cronies and apply himself "to the ever-present crock of good drinking whiskey" (p. 10). No mention is made of the effects (pleasant or otherwise) that the whiskey had, either on his father or on the family as a whole. When the livery stable no longer made enough money to support the family, Murry's grandfather stepped in "as was customary" to provide his son with another business, this time running a hardware store. Once again, the cryptic phrase "as was customary" points to a level of dissatisfaction with his father that Murry never makes plain. Murry notes that the hardware business, like its predecessor, was not particularly successful, and ascerbicly notes that "even though the business failed signally to make us rich, it presented no insurmountable problem to Father's continuation of his way of life. The store was less than a block from the old livery stable, the stove warmer, and there were more chairs to accommodate his ever-present cronies." The passage suggests that the father's comforts and easy lifestyle were far more important to him than the needs of his family--as indeed is the case

with alcohol
is everything

Murry ge
know his fat
The father w

He neve
affairs
presence
before t
at once
vice-pr
did not
could c
become
five. (p

The phrasing
by explaining
affairs in f
that he coul
to console h
Perhaps the
father's pers
absorbed the
felt himself
reflecting th
twenty-five
him.

Further
father is the

with alcoholics, to whom, says Charles Deutsch, the bottle is everything.

Murry goes on to explain that he never really got to know his father, whom he says was not an easy man to know. The father was distant from the family, and reticent:

He never discussed his personal or business affairs with others--at least, not in our presence. In his youth and early manhood, before the family sold the railroad, he was at once its station master, treasurer, and vice-president. His scale of accomplishments did not reach such heights in Oxford, but he could certainly always reflect that few men become president of a railroad at twenty-five. (p. 12)

The phrasing in the above paragraph is curious. Murry begins by explaining that his father never discussed his personal affairs in front of the children, but ends by suggesting that he could use his early accomplishments on the railroad to console himself for his lack of success in Oxford. Perhaps the children never heard the fine details of their father's personal or business affairs, but Murry, at least, absorbed their emotional tenor--in later life, his father felt himself to be a failure. It seems, also, that reflecting that he had been president of a railroad at twenty-five might have been a favorite drunken memory for him.

Further reinforcing the ambiguous impression of his father is the way Murry begins the next paragraph: "On the

other hand,
never see or
if Murry is
father, but
there seems
to elucidate.

John's m
confused, de
brother Willi

. . . Bi
credit f
do most
about it
mind. He
and aske
courtesy
and that
I h
never wa
an when
stayed a
hands. H
time on
Whe
slip off
he would
to get o
one. A w
of it. I
of sickn
I d
drink as
took too
every no
amount o
people c

other hand, his good qualities were legion." (p. 12) We never see or hear those good qualities, however. It is as if Murry is presenting a socially approved picture of his father, but the picture is not painted with much conviction; there seems to be more to the relationship than Murry cares to elucidate.

John's memoir is similarly evasive as it offers this confused, defensive, and contradictory account of his brother William's drinking habits:

. . . Bill never did do as much drinking as he got credit for. He never tried to hide it but he did do most of it at home. Whatever stories got out about it he never did deny. He simply paid them no mind. He passed on no stories about anybody else and asked only that they accord him the same courtesy. But people talk and their stories grow and that's the way it was about Bill's drinking.

I have drunk with Bill, more than once. He never was the nuisance about his drinking that I am when I get started. I drink around town. Bill stayed at home. Any writer has spare time on his hands. He finishes a story or a book and he has time on his hands. . .

When his everyday world got boring he would slip off into his land of make-believe. Sometimes he would take a drink or two and play drunk simply to get out of work. Writing is a chore, an onerous one. A writer will do almost anything to get out of it. It takes as much out of you as a bad spell of sickness. . .

I don't mean Bill never got drunk. He liked a drink as much as the next one and sometimes he took too many. You might say he went on tears every now and then. But no man could turn out the amount of work Bill did and drink as much as people claimed he did. (pp.132-134)

John gives s
rationalizat
background, a
an alcoholic
nuisance that
drank at home
might drink t
work they hav
all might be
typical of th
use to hide f
alcoholism. T
to hide his f
naturally and
to his own.)

William,
notes that wh
alcohol sudde
happening to
connection be
accelerating
rest of his l
unaware that,
metabolism an
on account of
extremely vul

John gives several explanations/excuses which sound like rationalizations for his brother's drinking. Lurking in the background, it seems, is the idea that Bill might have been an alcoholic. The statements that "Bill never was the nuisance that I was about his drinking", or that Bill mostly drank at home, or that writing is such a chore that anyone might drink to put it off, or that once writers finish a work they have time on their hands which drink might fill, all might be textbook examples of the denial--they are typical of the kinds of rationalizations that family members use to hide from themselves the truth about a loved one's alcoholism. The denial that John, as a child, learned to use to hide his father's drinking, he, as an adult, extended naturally and easily to his brother's drinking (and perhaps to his own.)

William, too, knew how denial worked. Thomas Dardis notes that when, in his mid-thirties, Faulkner's need for alcohol suddenly increased, he was confused about what was happening to him and apparently never saw nor sought a connection between his lifelong drinking habits and his accelerating addiction: "Faulkner remained baffled for the rest of his life about what had happened to his body, unaware that, in addition to normal aging, both his metabolism and the cells of his body had undergone changes on account of drinking over the years which made him extremely vulnerable to alcohol." (p. 29) Goodwin explains

that Faulkner
that he in f
when pressed
drink, becau
stronger, an

The den
families are
from others
embarrassment
seek help or
may even cut
world in orde
Falkner's tig
explain" is a
to talk about
other. The de
seriously is
brother, Will
[Maud], was s
complain abou
misfortunes.
William wishe
wishing inste
him would be

The mood
placed upon f

that Faulkner never considered himself to be an alcoholic, that he in fact reviled alcoholics (including his wife), and when pressed, said that "he drank. . .because he liked to drink, because it made him feel good, and taller, and stronger, and he liked the taste." (p. 113)

The denial of the obvious can work because alcoholic families are closed--that is, family members are cut off from others outside the family. In their shame and embarrassment over the family problem, family members rarely seek help or emotional support from objective outsiders, and may even cut off as many ties as possible with the outside world in order to cover up the shameful family secret. Maud Falkner's tight-lipped adage, "Don't complain--Don't explain" is a succinct statement of the family's policy not to talk about its troubles, either to outsiders or to each other. The degree to which Maud Falkner's sons took her seriously is evident in the memoirs they wrote of their brother, William. Murry Falkner notes, "Nothing, to her [Maud], was smaller and meaner than for an individual to complain about his own shortcomings and apparent misfortunes. . ." (p. 10). Perhaps Maud's edict explains why William wished never to have his personal life examined, wishing instead that when he died, all that would remain of him would be his books.

The mood within alcoholic families and the expectations placed upon family members are inconsistent because the

alcoholic's
withdrawn to
p. 41). Other
the alcoholic
stability, m
changes. We
and that when
(although Bl
to furniture
perpetual inc
the condition
of life, a wa
uncertainty.
vanishes and
predictable,
always expect
(p. 42) Altho
information a
in Faulkner's
preparing for
wins out: Cha
The Wild Palm
Yoknapatawpha
Mansion; and
compact to loc
discontented

alcoholic's behavior is inconsistent, swinging "from withdrawn to generous to violent within minutes" (Deutsch, p. 41). Other family members, who generally try to pacify the alcoholic in order to retain the family's precarious stability, must react to the alcoholic's erratic mood changes. We know that Mr. Falkner's drinking was erratic, and that when drinking, he was likely to be violent (although Blotner notes that his violence resulted in harm to furniture and possessions, not people.) The result of perpetual inconsistency, notes Deutsch, is insecurity: "Once the condition of insecurity is established, it becomes a way of life, a way of apprehending the universe and its uncertainty. Even when the original cause of the insecurity vanishes and the environment becomes more consistent and predictable, the children are still tentative and wary, always expecting the unexpected and prepared for the worst." (p. 42) Although there is no specific biographical information available which points to this kind of dynamic, in Faulkner's writings we see the effects of always preparing for the worst, because the worst almost invariably wins out: Charlotte Rittenmeyer dies of a failed abortion in The Wild Palms; the Snopes family manages to invade Yoknapatawpha County in The Hamlet, The Town, and The Mansion; and at the end of Sanctuary Temple Drake opens her compact to look at her face "in miniature sullen and discontented and sad" (p. 309), then looks "into the sky

lying prone
rain and dea
possible exa

Alcohol
fragility; b
fact of fami
unpredictabl
that addition
The result f
are often in
world, and in
them. A whole
trait--Quent
only a few ex

Finally,
communication
governing the
other commun
that words he
or manipulate
they are disc
replace words
within the fa
wealth of Fav
relationship
consider also

lying prone and vanquished in the embrace of the season of rain and death (P. 309), to name but a few of many, many possible examples.

Alcoholic families are convinced of their own fragility; because the alcoholic's drinking is the dominant fact of family life, and because that drinking is unpredictable and uncontrollable, alcoholic families fear that additional change or conflict might wreck the family. The result for children raised in such families is that they are often inflexible in their dealings with the outside world, and incapable of acting in ways which might benefit them. A whole host of Faulknerian "heroes" manifest this trait--Quentin Compson, Gavin Stevens, and Horace Benbow are only a few examples.

Finally, alcoholic families inhibit direct communication because, as Deutsch puts it, "The standard governing the central event, the drinking, and informing all other communication is one that undermines the very notion that words have meaning. . . Words are used chiefly to hurt or manipulate; when they are used to express real feelings, they are discounted or discouraged. Action and silence replace words as the principal medium of communication within the family." (p. 56) Consider in this context the wealth of Faulkner criticism which speaks to the relationship between words and action in Faulkner's writing; consider also a character like Addie Bundren in As I Lay

Dying, who o
useless gibb
her loneliness

Although
and inaccura
Faulkner's s
do know that
variety of "
Winter quote
so when Bill
was the truth
12) He inven
War I, when
invented war
Especially d
tried and re
the world.

It is p
Faulkner. T
enabled him
fact that he
children of
cases, have
that Faulkne
his family.
talking abou

Dying, who considers words merely "a shape to fill a lack"--useless gibberish designed to make the speaker forget his or her loneliness.

Although it is impossible (and would be reductionist and inaccurate) to pinpoint alcoholism in the family as Faulkner's sole formative experience in his early years, we do know that he reacted to his surroundings by adopting a variety of "disguises". He was a notorious liar; David Minter quotes one of William's cousins, who stated, "It got so when Billy told you something. . . you never knew if it was the truth or just something he'd made up." (Minter, p. 12) He invented stories about his participation in World War I, when in fact, he never actually saw action; and he invented war wounds to go along with the stories. Especially during his late adolescence, he seems to have tried and rejected a number of "poses" with which to greet the world.

It is possible that writing, too, acted as a mask for Faulkner. The lure of writing may have been that it both enabled him to work out his psychic traumas, and to hide the fact that he was really doing so. If what we now know about children of alcoholics is correct, those children, in most cases, have a great many traumas to work out. We also know that Faulkner, as a child, did not speak negatively about his family. Growing up, as he did, in a family where talking about problems was unthinkable, it is easy to see

how he became
interpret the
been that Faulkner's
world's; Faulkner's
to himself,
Faulkner's p
sense that h
to know for
responses li
alcoholics.
such children
do not there

It is a
Faulkner might
through writ
for effecting
meaningless.
legends cele
hero was his
the Civil War
politician.
writing that
Faulkner act
a failure.

The paradox
paradox often

how he became shy and reticent. We might, in fact, interpret that reticence in a number of ways: it may have been that Faulkner found his perceptions at odds with the world's; Faulkner might have been hesitant to draw attention to himself, for fear the attention would be harmful; or Faulkner's problems may have created in him an inviolable sense that he was "different" from others. There is no way to know for certain what made Faulkner shy, but the responses listed here are all responses seen in children of alcoholics. It must not be inferred, however, that because such children do not talk about their situations, that they do not therefore think about them.

It is also easy to see why, given his family dynamics, Faulkner might have chosen to alleviate his emotional pain through writing--in the Faulkner family, words, as a medium for effecting change in the larger world, were essentially meaningless. Words would threaten nobody. The family legends celebrated action: Faulkner's greatest childhood hero was his great-grandfather, who had been a colonel in the Civil War, a lawyer, a railroad entrepreneur, and a politician. (He was also a writer, but it was not for his writing that he was remembered in the family.) [When Faulkner actually began to write, his father considered him a failure.]

The paradox of this emphasis on action, however, is a paradox often seen in families with alcoholism, where

action--part

situation--i

"promises" t

parent "thre

Such pattern

problem is b

These c

the value of

that words a

not meant to

meaningless.

injunction--

about the fa

used to hurt

are very pow

Childre

guilty secre

leaves traum

discovered t

his secret.

family dynam

he could wri

been unthink

father's drin

not seen as a

that place),

action--particularly action that might improve the situation--is often simply not taken. An alcoholic parent "promises" to stop drinking, but does not. A nonalcoholic parent "threatens" to leave the alcoholic, but does not. Such patterns lead children to believe that the family problem is beyond help.

These children also learn contradictory messages about the value of words, and talk. On the one hand, they learn that words are not what they seem; promises and threats are not meant to be kept. In this sense, words are seen as meaningless. On the other hand, there is a strong injunction--perhaps unspoken--forbidding children to talk about the family's problem. In addition, words are often used to hurt and manipulate others. In this sense, words are very powerful, indeed.

Children of alcoholics, then, are possessors of a guilty secret, a secret which cannot be told, a secret which leaves trauma in its wake. William Faulkner may have discovered that writing was one way to come to grips with his secret. He might not have been able to change his family dynamics as a child, or escape them as an adult, but he could write about them. In his childhood, it would have been unthinkable for him to confront his parents about his father's drinking (in large part because drinking was simply not seen as a problem to be dealt with at that time and in that place), although doing so may have helped him live with

the burden i
family--and
burden, perh
pain. Since
family, writ
allowing him
serious top
being accuse
thus have be
emotional s

The th
strongly th
ineffectual
Stevens, an
especially
corollary t
villains ar
consider Ja
that contex

Other
alcoholism
furnishing
Deutsch fur
a "generali
injustice,
event, thei

the burden it placed upon him. Forbidden by the strong family--and societal--habit of denial from naming this burden, perhaps Faulkner sought writing as a way out of his pain. [Since written words carried so little weight in his family, writing had the additional (if dubious) benefit of allowing him to speak, yet be ignored.] He could address very serious topics without being taken seriously, and without being accused of "complaining" or "explaining." Words could thus have been both a substitute for action, as well as an emotional salve.

The theme of words as a substitute for action also runs strongly through Faulkner's fiction, as some of his most ineffectual character--notably, Horace Benbow, Gavin Stevens, and Quentin Compson--are very articulate, especially at moments where action might be required. As a corollary to that principle, some of Faulkner's most heinous villains are also among his most tight-lipped characters--consider Jason Compson, Joe Christmas, and Flem Snopes in that context.

Other emotional characteristics of families with alcoholism play themselves out in Faulkner's fiction, furnishing him with some of his most significant themes. Deutsch further notes that some children of alcoholics feel a "generalized and helpless rage, a sense that deprivation, injustice, and cruelty are the rules of life, or in any event, their portion, now and forever." (p. 46) Deprivation,

injustice, &
County: from
trilogy, to
Goodwin in
examples are

In addi
Paukner's v
be recognize
views of al
about what

One ha
manipulates
characteris
returns aga
many writer
favorite cha
Balzac, Dic
creating a
Yoknapataph
however, di
repeated hi
in a charac
life. Some
been periph
which was t
action of t

injustice, and cruelty certainly mark out Yoknapatawpha County: from the machinations of Flem Snopes in the Snopes trilogy, to the rape of Temple Drake and the lynching of Lee Goodwin in Sanctuary, to the river crossing in The Reivers, examples are legion.

In addition, several characteristic features of Faulkner's writing style display elements which have come to be recognized as elements common to the thinking or world views of alcoholics also. These features, too, can teach us about what the subjective experience of alcoholism is like.

One hallmark of Faulkner's style is the way he manipulates and distorts time in his works. This characteristic can be seen in two ways. First, Faulkner returns again and again to the same characters. Of course, many writers do the same, tracing out the exploits of their favorite characters from novel to novel. Some writers, Balzac, Dickens and Hardy notable among them, are adept at creating a strong sense of place similar to the sense of Yoknapatawpha County that Faulkner achieved. Faulkner, however, differs from other writers in the ways in which he repeated his characters: he often returned to earlier points in a character's life at a later time in Faulkner's own life. Sometimes he later picked up a story that had only been peripherally hinted at in an earlier work--a story which was theoretically already a *fait accompli* in the action of the novel in which the allusion was first made.

The Compson

and the Fury

children are

however, wri

the Compson

this story a

strikingly,

The Sound an

Absalom, Abs

Faulkner's 1

first mentio

events of th

Town, and Th

described as

occurs at th

Mansion; sim

middle of Th

Mansion; and

one characte

forward in a

Within

distorted th

"'Motion' an

accuses him

"uncompromis

Faulkner nov

The Compson family, for example, first appears in The Sound and the Fury, written in 1928. That novel ends when the children are grown. They later appear in "That Evening Sun", however, written in 1929. This short story takes place when the Compson children are little, and in fact, the events of this story are referred to in The Sound and the Fury. More strikingly, Quentin Compson, the son who kills himself in The Sound and the Fury, reappears as the narrator of Absalom, Absalom, written in 1934. Similarly, The Reivers, Faulkner's last novel, gives full explanation of an event first mentioned in a much earlier novel, Sartoris. The events of the Snopes trilogy, composed of The Hamlet, The Town, and The Mansion, are presented in what might be described as recursive "layers": the arrest of Mink Snopes occurs at the end of The Town, but is fully explained in The Mansion; similarly, Eula Varner's suicide occurs in the middle of The Town, but Faulkner picks it up again in The Mansion; and throughout the trilogy, events are narrated by one character, then re-narrated by another. The story moves forward in a series of eddies and backwaters.

Within novels, Faulkner's sense of chronology is so distorted that Kenzaburo Ohashi, in an essay entitled "'Motion' and the Intertextuality in Faulkner's Fiction" accuses him of destroying and disorganizing the chronology "uncompromisingly." Walter J. Slatoff writes, "Every Faulkner novel in some way provides the reader with the

problem of
many levels
from fitting
work. . . h
involves a
fit together
resolution.

In his
trying
mind,
analyt
moment
simult
interp
awarene
rhetor
divers
satura
that l
come t
consci
trying
(pp. 1

In Beck's v
the immedia
by a single

Such d
in the thin
alcoholism
alcoholic e
and tempora
and express

problem of fitting pieces together. . . in many ways and on many levels, Faulkner seems very anxious to keep the pieces from fitting together, and this is a crucial aspect of his work. . . his moment to moment presentation of experience involves a juxtaposition of elements which do not seem to fit together and which to some degree resist synthesis or resolution." (p. 156) Warren Beck observes

In his most characteristic writing Faulkner is trying to render the transcendent life of the mind, the crowded composite of associative and analytical consciousness which expands the vibrant moment into the reaches of all time, simultaneously observing, remembering, interpreting, and modifying the object of its awareness. To this end the sentence as a rhetorical unit (however strained) is made to hold diverse yet related elements in a sort of saturated solution, which is perhaps the nearest that language as the instrument of fiction can come to the instantaneous complexities of consciousness itself. Faulkner really seems to be trying to give narrative prose another dimension. (pp. 151-152)

In Beck's view, Faulkner is trying to fit all time and all the immediacy of consciousness into the boundaries imposed by a single sentence.

(Such distortions and manipulations of time are common in the thinking of alcoholics. Norman Denzin calls alcoholism a "dis-ease of time" and notes that "The alcoholic exists within a circular, conceptual, linguistic and temporal space that confounds the effects of receptive and expressive aphasia with anterograde, retrograde, and

alcoholic and
confusing l
the present
within this
alcoholic i

Althou
motivated h
got his or
observation
beginning o
autobiograp
or she drew
though, tha
behind him:
shame, unre
characters
incapable o
early in hi

If the
the charact
would seem
throughout
what that m
structure a
probable th
defusing an

alcoholic amnesia. The self is located in the center of this confusing linguistic circle. Bits and pieces of the past, the present, and the future attach themselves to one another within this circle in ways that do not make sense. The alcoholic is like a half-completed jigsaw puzzle." (p. 109)

Although Faulkner never publicly speculated on what motivated him to write, he did acknowledge that the writer got his or her material from three sources: experience, observation, and imagination. He stated that at the beginning of his or her career, a writer was mostly writing autobiography, but that as the writer's imagination grew, he or she drew more and more on that resource. It seems clear, though, that Faulkner never really left his own experiences behind him: the same themes and character types--greed, shame, unrequited love, emotionally abandoned children, characters whose love is doomed to failure, "heroes" who are incapable of heroic action-- pervade his writing, whether early in his career or late.

If the similarities in his character types, and even the characters themselves, are to provide any clue, then it would seem that Faulkner drew on the same emotional material throughout his career. Although he never publicly stated what that material was, if we are to surmise based on the structure and themes that dominate his fiction, it is probable that Faulkner was at least partly concerned with defusing and understanding a life and family dominated by

alcoholism.

Faulkner's e

first drink,

in an alcohol

by reworking

one motivation

certainly su

In fac

least in the

wrote to ach

create in hi

teller and

A
telling
word, s
ordered
becomes
mythic
of feel
think a
the me
communi
quinte
meaning
place.
world t

In this view

existence, t

from "his [t

his imaginat

part, reflect

alcoholism. It is once again important to remember that Faulkner's exposure to alcohol began long before he took his first drink; before he was a drinker, he was a child raised in an alcoholic home. Escaping the pain of that environment by reworking its horrors in various guises may have provided one motivation for Faulkner's writing, as its themes certainly suggest.

In fact, Faulkner's lack of awareness of audience, at least in the early years of his career, suggests that he wrote to achieve some sort of personal understanding--to create in himself what John Rouse calls "the community of teller and listener":

A mouth, an ear--a voice. And the voice is telling a story, making the magic of the necessary word, so that a place and person and sequence of ordered events are created within us. The story becomes our own story, whatever it tells, for the mythic force that makes it, moves by the same laws of feeling that move us. And afterwards we may think about it, hoping to know our inmost self and the meaning of our experience. Perhaps in the community of teller and listener we have the quintessential human situation, as personal meaning is imposed on haphazard existence in this place. Stories are told as spells for binding the world together. (p. 1)

In this view, Faulkner wrote to impose a meaning on his existence, to make sense of feelings and events which came from "his [the writer's] experience, his observation, and his imagination." (Gwynn, p. 147) Faulkner was, at least in part, reflecting, looking back on his own life experiences.

Rouse

experiences

refining it

repetition;

people go b

explains wh

kind:

Many o

come t

we hav

school

stick-

she sl

Larry

her, D

collap

imagin

room,

floor,

Mrs. U

and th

behind

asked

you, M

throug

connec

on jab

experi

Rouse goes

experimenta

to reconcil

experience

gesture. (p

Faulkn

arrived at

Rouse surmises that we return again and again to experiences and emotions which move us--we retell the story, refining its various parts. Rouse gives a reason for this repetition; in the following anecdote, he describes why people go back over certain emotional landscapes, and he explains what happens when they reach a catharsis of some kind:

Many of the beginnings we make in life that should come to good ends do not, unless by happy chance we have understanding company. . . In nursery school one day Larry jabbed Mrs. Upton with a stick--it was supposed to be a poisoned dart--and she slumped over, playing her part in the game. Larry got very excited and shouted, 'Let's bury her, Don!' He tried to pick her up, so she collapsed on the floor and he began shoveling imaginary sand on top of her. Sally came into the room, and seeing Mrs. Upton lying dead on the floor, knelt down beside her and began to cry. Mrs. Upton reassured her, said she was all right, and then she noticed Larry curled up on the floor behind her. 'I wonder what you are doing?' she asked him. 'I'm just lying here feeling sorry for you, Mrs. Upton.' Having been allowed to carry through the whole motion and complete the gesture, connecting action and result, he had no need to go on jabbing with his stick, repeating that first experimental move. (p. 54)

Rouse goes on to state that "the making of a poem is an experimental move" as well, and that it enables its author to reconcile opposing desires, and to shape a form to give experience a comprehensible unity. The poem is a completed gesture. (pp. 54-5)

Faulkner, it would seem, considered that he only ever arrived at half-completed gestures. He considered all of his

works failu
Virginia, "
quite good
one. . ." (
with the al
alcoholic m
her inner s

T
trappe
accept
Beclus
though
world
alcohol
the wo
Every
out th
to fai
"I" of
intera

Even The Sc
best work,
p. 51) Echo
piece of w.
p. 52)

It is
The most
of alcohol
explores t
that are f

works failures, telling his audience at the University of Virginia, "In my opinion, my work has all failed, it ain't quite good enough, which is the only reason to write another one. . ." (Gwynn, p. 143) This posture, too, is consistent with the alcoholic's mindset; Denzin asserts that the alcoholic must always fail at the task of transposing his or her inner self into the language of the outside world:

The most literate alcoholic, then, is trapped within an inner world that knows no acceptable mode of external expression. Because time is ungraspable and because his thoughts exist only in time, in the fictional world which his fictional "I" inhabits, the alcoholic experiences himself as a void in the world. He is nothingness (Sartre, 1956). Every action taken that would or could fill out the void of nothingness fails, or seems to fail. He can never succeed in bringing the "I" of his inner existence into the interactional world of others. (p. 114)

Even The Sound and the Fury, which Faulkner considered his best work, was to him "the most splendid failure." (Gwynn, p. 51) Echoing Sartre's words, he once said that for him, a piece of writing was "either good or it's nothing." (Gwynn, p. 52)

It is to this "most splendid failure" that we now turn. The most direct example in Faulkner's oeuvre of the effects of alcoholism on a family, and the only time where Faulkner explores the connection between alcohol and the other themes that are found in his writing comes in The Sound and the

Fury. The n
generally a
biographica

. . . .
moment
career
'turni
Fury l
(and s
unallo
also "
to whi
must, l
A
novel'
repres
breakt
powers
materi
the emp
discov

In Kreiswir
found his f
finished th
wrote his A
damnedest b
explaining
claimed tha
anybody wou
terms, Faul
It is
Faulkner's

Fury. The novel, written early in Faulkner's career, and generally acknowledged by critics as being at least partly biographical, represented what Martin Kreiswirth calls

. . . as Faulkner himself well knew. . . a unique moment in his imaginative life and literary career. It was, above all else, a decisive 'turning point.' . . with . . . [The Sound and the Fury] he not only enjoyed a previously unknown (and subsequently irretrievable) feeling of unalloyed creativity ("that first ecstasy"), but also "discovered that there is actually something to which the shabby term Art not only can, but must, be applied."

According to Faulkner's description of the novel's inception, The Sound and the Fury thus represents important and simultaneous breakthroughs: the realization of new imaginative powers and rewards, the recognition of art, the materialization of a beloved. It represents--as the emphasis on Caddy's role suggests--simply the discovery of his muse. (p. 130)

In Kreiswirth's understanding, then, Faulkner had finally found his fictional voice. Faulkner's excitement when he finished the novel (when he had finished writing it, he wrote his Aunt Alabama and told her that it was "the damndest book" he had ever read [Blotner, 1977, p. 41]; in explaining to Robert Linscott why he wrote the book, he claimed that he wrote it for fun, and that he "didn't think anybody would print it") suggests that, in John Rouse's terms, Faulkner had completed a gesture.

It is clear that The Sound and the Fury marked Faulkner's fictional return to his native Mississippi, and

thereby the
would come
emotional l
and careful
other destr
returned to
enacted in
subsequent
provide the

thereby the creation of the "postage stamp of soil" that would come to be known as Yoknapatawpha County. The emotional landscape of the novel, as well as the detailed and careful picture of a family contorted by alcoholism and other destructive influences, also suggests that Faulkner returned to the remembrance of the feelings and scenes enacted in a childhood dominated by parental alcoholism. As subsequent chapters will show, The Sound and the Fury could provide the stuff for a casebook on family alcoholism.

The

"When
of our
single
two fa
was to
have t
Mother
weak l
somewh
of lig
215)

Faulkn

Fury is a h

that "In w

possession

dislocation

desires." (

Faulkner's

"Like the (

Scotland--

Faulkner m

death in 1

Chapter Two:

The Sound and the Fury as the Case History of an Alcoholic Family

"When I was little there was a picture in one of our books, a dark place into which a single weak ray of light came slanting upon two faces lifted out of the shadow. . . It was torn out, jagged out, I was glad. I'd have to turn back to it until the dungeon was Mother herself she and Father upward into weak light holding hands and us lost somewhere below even them without even a ray of light. . ." (The Sound and the Fury, p. 215)

Faulkner critics generally agree that The Sound and the Fury is a highly autobiographical work. David Minter notes that "In writing The Sound and the Fury he [Faulkner] took possession of the pain and muted love of his childhood--its dislocations and vacancies, its forbidden needs and desires." (p. 104) Arthur Kinney describes two ways in which Faulkner's heritage was similar to that of the Compsons: "Like the Compsons Faulkner traced his ancestry back to Scotland--to Inverness--and like the Compson children Faulkner must have had vivid memories of his own 'Damuddy's' death in 1907. . ." (p. 13) Judith Bryant Wittenberg states,

"The Sound and the Fury"

Faulkner in

is the sense

ways by thei

world where

explain, "Th

in The Sound

every charac

(p. 77) John

of motherles

conflict in

the mother a

important pe

the Fury he

fiction with

One of

which Basset

of living in

offers a pri

Mr. Compson'

Benjy sectio

Mr. Compson'

Quentin sect

¹ According
"alcoholic famil
represents a move
to a world where
the impacting agen

"The Sound and the Fury seems to have been written by Faulkner in a mood of anger and despair. Underlying the book is the sense that all children are betrayed in fundamental ways by their parents and left to flounder helplessly in a world where they can find no succor." (p. 76) She goes on to explain, "There are . . . [many] autobiographical resonances in The Sound and the Fury, for Faulkner patterns nearly every character in the book on some figure in his own life." (p. 77) John Earl Bassett explains, "The repeated presence of motherless homes, weak or perverse parents, and family conflict in Faulkner's fiction suggests. . . that the loss of the mother and the ineffectuality of the father had important personal implications for him. In The Sound and the Fury he transforms such personal anxieties into a fiction with profound cultural implications." (p. 409)

One of those cultural implications--albeit not one to which Bassett was referring--is the portrayal of the effects of living in an alcoholic family. The Sound and the Fury offers a prime example of such a family.¹ References to Mr. Compson's drinking occur often within the text. In the Benjy section, for example, there are several references to Mr. Compson's trips to the sideboard for a toddy. In the Quentin section, Caddy tells Quentin that if their father

¹ According to Peter Steinglass (1982, p. 127), the phrase "alcoholic family" has its origins in systems theory, and represents a move away from the "dis-ease" conceits of alcoholism to a world where "alcoholism is described as both a product of and an impacting agent on the family system itself."

does not sto
Jason is par
alcoholism,
conditions c
her husband'
encourage hi
now." (p. 22

In fact
detailed des
drinking. As
progresses,
nurturing pa
times of tro
behavior, fo
Mr. Compson
between his
When the sor
father who s
gathers all
punished--in
the rain. In
listens to h
fight at sch

Father
He
"M
us. Tea

does not stop drinking, he will be dead within the year. Jason is particularly vituperative about his father's alcoholism, blaming his father's drinking for the unhappy conditions of his own life. Mrs. Compson, too, acknowledges her husband's drinking when she tells Dilsey, "Why must you encourage him to drink? That's what's the matter with him now." (p. 229*)

In fact, The Sound and the Fury provides a fairly detailed description of the progression of Mr. Compson's drinking. As the action in The Sound and the Fury progresses, so does Mr. Compson's alcoholism. Jason is the nurturing parent; it is to him that the children turn in times of trouble, for explanations of their mother's behavior, for reassurance and warmth. In the Benjy section, Mr. Compson is present as a loving father who arbitrates between his children, settling disputes and dispensing hugs. When the son Jason cuts up Benjy's paper dolls, it is his father who spansks the boy, but it is also the father who gathers all the children--even Jason, whom he has just punished--into his lap, where they listen to the fire and the rain. In the early portions of the novel, Mr. Compson listens to his children, as when Quentin tells him about the fight at school:

Father leaned forward and looked at Quentin.

Hello, he said. Who won.

"Nobody." Quentin said. "They stopped us. Teachers."

"Y
tell."
"J
was as
"T
tell wh
"J
said he
wouldn
"C
"Y
kind o
We
a snuf
"Y
Novembe
"Y
77)

Mr. Compson
Caddy predi
questions Q
right to pr
Quentin cho
best light:
with someon
honorably,
remark abou
that the fi
egged on by
Compson is

By the
place, the
longer list
in his conv

"Who was it." Father said. "Will you tell."

"It was all right." Quentin said. "He was as big as me."

"That's good." Father said. "Can you tell what it was about."

"It wasn't anything." Quentin said. "He said he would put a frog in her desk and she wouldn't dare to whip him."

"Oh." Father said. "She. And then what."

"Yes, sir." Quentin said. "And then I kind of hit him."

We could hear the roof and the fire, and a snuffling outside the door.

"Where was he going to get a frog in November." Father said.

"I dont know, sir." Quentin said. (p. 77)

Mr. Compson perceives that Quentin has been in a fight (as Caddy predicted he would) without being told. He gently questions Quentin for the particulars, respecting the boy's right to privacy about the incident. The details that Quentin chooses to tell his father cast the fight in its best light: he was defending a woman's honor, and he fought with someone his own size. Satisfied that Quentin has acted honorably, Mr. Compson drops the matter, although his final remark about the availability of frogs in November suggests that the fight was futile, or even that Quentin had been egged on by the other boy. At this point in the story, Mr. Compson is a father in whom his children can confide.

By the time the events in the Quentin section take place, the balance has shifted considerably. Mr. Compson no longer listens so attentively; he is given to pontificating in his conversations with his elder son. In the following

passage, for
wishes that
simply liste
feelings, M
Mr. Compson
to convey to

...[Qu
we did
world
other
are st
that p
natura
every
thinki
apothe
will b
aware
not gu
and i
think
like t
regard
will w
withou
wont d
a gamb
who is
breath
loaded
main w
assure
rangin
chican
until
everyt
no man
despal
only w
despal
partic

passage, for example, Quentin explains to his father how he wishes that he had committed incest with Caddy. Rather than simply listening to Quentin and allowing him to express his feelings, Mr. Compson tries to argue Quentin into accepting Mr. Compson's viewpoint. Mr. Compson uses an excess of words to convey to Quentin the idea that time heals all wounds:

...[Quentin speaking] but if i could tell you we did it it would have been so and then the world would roar away and he and now this other you are not lying now either but you are still blind to what is in yourself to that part of general truth the sequence of natural events and their causes which shadows every mans brow even benjys you are not thinking of finitude you are contemplating an apotheosis in which a temporary state of mind will become symmetrical above the flesh and aware both of itself and of the flesh it will not quite discard you will not even be dead and i temporary and he you cannot bear to think that someday it will no longer hurt like this now were getting at it you seem to regard it merely as as an experience that will whiten your hair overnight so to speak without altering your appearance at all you wont do it under these conditions it will be a gamble and the strange thing is that man who is conceived by accident and whose every breath is a fresh cast with dice already loaded against him will not face that final main which he knows beforehand he has assuredly to face without essaying expedients ranging all the way from violence to petty chicanery that would not deceive a child until soemday in very disgust he risks everything on a single blind turn of a card no man ever does that under the first fury of despair or remorse or bereavement he does it only when he has realized that that even the despair or remorse or bereavement is not particularly important to the dark diceman...

The passage

and Mr. Comp

son that he

sexual activ

to go back t

On the

above passa

alcoholics v

has shown t

language an

reported by

(1) sh

substa

drinki

disori

to und

produc

cohere

articu

omissi

ending

dissim

use of

inabi

syntac

comper

Mr. Compson

in the abo

apotheosis

despair or

ability to

with that

The passage continues with Quentin repeating, "Temporary?", and Mr. Compson discoursing further. Unable to persuade his son that he will recover from his feelings about Caddy's sexual activity and hasty wedding, he finally tells Quentin to go back to Cambridge early.

On the level of discourse, Mr. Compson's speech in the above passage shows several of the features common to alcoholics who have been drinking for many years. Research has shown that chronic alcoholics suffer from a number of language and thinking disorders, including the following reported by Norman Denzin:

(1) short and long-term memory loss; (2) a substantial dissociation of experience during drinking; (3) a clouding of consciousness, a disorientation of thinking, and an inability to understand language; (4) an inability to produce written or spoken language of a coherent form, evidenced in slow speech, poor articulation, improper sentence structure, an omission of small grammatical words and word endings; (5) a confusion over similar and dissimilar terms, including the appropriate use of metaphor and metonymy, and a general inability to follow associative and syntactical rules or understandings; and (6) compensatory confabulation. (p. 107)

Mr. Compson shows a great deal of compensatory confabulation in the above passage (using phrases like "contemplating an apotheosis", "essaying expedients" or "the first fury of despair or remorse or bereavement"). He no longer has the ability to listen to his son, and to express his opinions with that sparse economy shown in the preceding passage. The

long stream

feelings, and

has no idea

Compson mix

with "the d

attempts to

Quentin rep

ability to

dictate tha

previous sp

Not su

that his fa

watches and

bitterly in

father.

Mr. C

ways as we

finances.

(Quentin's

the time h

sell part

so, they c

When

or so mont

who is the

he complai

long stream of words shows little regard for his son's feelings, and misses their depth and passion. Mr. Compson has no idea that his son is on the verge of suicide. Mr. Compson mixes his metaphors (conflating "a turn of a card" with "the dark diceman"). The fact that he ignores his son's attempts to bring Mr. Compson back to what troubles him (as Quentin repeats, "Temporary?") shows that he has lost the ability to follow the conversational conventions which dictate that one speaker's utterances must relate to the previous speaker's utterances.

Not surprisingly, Quentin leaves the exchange feeling that his father has not understood him. His obsession with watches and with time earlier in the Quentin section are his bitterly ironic translation of this conversation with his father.

Mr. Compson's deterioration is exemplified in other ways as well. As his condition worsens, so do the family finances. Although Quentin going to Harvard "has been your [Quentin's] mothers dream since you were born" (p. 204), by the time he is actually old enough to go, the Compsons must sell part of their land to pay for his education, and even so, they can only afford to pay for a single year.

When Mr. Compson brings the baby Quentin home, some six or so months after Quentin's suicide, it is the son, Jason, who is the family's main wage earner; when he sees the baby, he complains, "Well, they brought my job home tonight." (p.

227) When s
continues,
here: if it
nurse it my
full, or Be
as a possib
ill to work
admonishes
must you en
with him no
this incide

Critic
alcoholism.
mentions Mr
quotes the
[Mr. Compso
Compson hou
180); Clear
weary man,
on his sto
p. 73) (MO

What
an analysi
family dyn
family mem
alcoholism

227) When she hears this, Caroline begins to cry. Jason continues, "it's not that I have any objection to having it here: if it's any satisfaction to you I'll quit work and nurse it myself and let you and Dilsey keep the flour barrel full, or Ben." (p. 225) Jason never even mentions his father as a possible wage-earner. At this point, Mr. Compson is too ill to work--when Dilsey offers to get him a toddy, Caroline admonishes her, "Don't you know what the doctor says? Why must you encourage him to drink? That's what's the matter with him now." (p. 229) In fact, Mr. Compson dies soon after this incident.

Critics have not failed to notice Mr. Compson's alcoholism. For example, Judith Bryant Wittenberg (p. 81) mentions Mr. Compson's drinking in passing; Patrick Samway quotes the Compson Appendix which "graphically portrays him [Mr. Compson] sitting all day under the portico of the Compson house drinking his whiskey from a decanter. . ." (p. 180); Cleanth Brooks calls Mr. Compson "a defeated, world-weary man, one who relies even more on bourbon whiskey than on his stoic philosophy to get him through his life." (1987, p. 73) [MORE]

What is missing from the above discussions, however, is an analysis of how Mr. Compson's alcoholism defines the family dynamics and the effects it has upon each of the family members. Despite the fact that Mr. Compson's alcoholism seems to play a minor role in the novel, the

Compson fam

alcoholic f

perfect cas

Most resear

Brown, alco

unpredictab

and illogic

control wit

Family

information

organized.

behavior of

of that per

families a

behavior. A

dynamics a

that "[t]he

denial. The

often deni

This secre

family org

the shared

family tog

It is

fits the C

hypochondr

Compson family fits in squarely with what we now know about alcoholic families. The Sound and the Fury provides a near-perfect casebook example of what such families are like. Most researchers agree that, in the words of Stephanie Brown, alcoholic families are generally "chaotic, unpredictable, inconsistent, with arbitrary, repetitious, and illogical thinking. . . This is a family that is out of control with no means to regain it." (p. 47)

Family systems theory has yielded a great deal of information about the ways in which these families are organized. Family systems theorists have emphasized that the behavior of one person invariably affects the other members of that person's family. In the case of alcoholics, entire families are organized around the alcoholic's drinking behavior. Although the specific details of each family's dynamics are unique, there is virtually unanimous agreement that "[t]he family is dominated by alcoholism and its denial. The alcoholism becomes a major family secret, most often denied inside the family and certainly denied outside. This secret becomes a governing principle around which the family organizes--its adaptations, coping strategies, and the shared beliefs that maintain the structure and hold the family together." (Brown, p. 27)

It is perhaps not clear at first how this description fits the Compsons. Many other factors (Mrs. Compson's hypochondria, Caddy's pregnancy and hasty marriage,

Quentin's s
the family
is precisel
obscure the
blame for t
the alcohol
rest of the
notes, "it
problem ex
does. We k
for the co
denies tha
seek a sol
their deni
needs. Eve
yet no one

The
inherent c
they are c
must deny
family me
(1985) ca
"to prese
must adap
'story' t
to allow

Quentin's suicide) seem to exert a much greater effect on the family than does Mr. Compson's drinking. This, however, is precisely the function of denial for the family: to obscure the problem of alcoholism, and perhaps to place blame for the family's troubles elsewhere. Denial enables the alcoholic to continue drinking, but its function for the rest of the family is equally harmful. As Robert Ackerman, notes, "it is ironic that family members deny a drinking problem exists because this is exactly what the alcoholic does. We know that, for the alcoholic, denial is functional for the continuation of drinking. As long as the alcoholic denies that he or she has a problem, there is no reason to seek a solution. Nonalcoholic family members also deny, but their denial is totally dysfunctional to meeting their needs. Everyone in the family denies that anything is wrong, yet no one feels right." (p. 12)

The family, essentially, is expected to live with an inherent contradiction: their day-to-day reality is that they are controlled by the alcoholic's drinking, yet they must deny that reality at the same time. To do so requires family members to adopt what Steinglass (1980) and Brown (1985) call a "thinking disorder." Brown (1988) notes that "to preserve this inherent contradicition, all family members must adapt their thinking and behavior to fit the family's 'story' that is, the explanations that have been constructed to allow the drinking behavior to be maintained and denied

at the same
view. It in
and which p
against an
(p. 34)

The C
typical of
behavior.
maintains
else that
that there
alcohol--i
alcoholic
them toget

The Sound
pregnancy
sees Caddy
Benjy mis
betrayal
over her
the bank

The
alcoholic
increasin
others wh
discomfor

at the same time. This 'story' becomes the family's point of view. It includes core beliefs which family members share and which provide a sense of unity and cohesion, often against an outside world perceived as hostile and unsafe."

(p. 34)

The Compsons have a family 'story', and its function is typical of such stories--to deny the impact of the drinking behavior. As Brown (1988) explains, "[alcoholic thinking] maintains that alcohol is a means to cope with something else that is identified as the major problem. This notion--that there is a problem and it is something other than alcohol--is central to the core belief system of the alcoholic and family. It is a problem that ties and holds them together." (p. 35) The "major problem" identified in The Sound and the Fury is Caddy's adolescence and subsequent pregnancy. Mrs. Compson dresses in black the day after she sees Caddy in the porch swing with a neighborhood boy; that Benjy misses her so acutely is presented as evidence of her betrayal of the family; Quentin ostensibly kills himself over her pregnancy; Jason never forgives her for the job in the bank that he never got.

The cost of maintaining such stories is high. As the alcoholic's disease progresses, the family often becomes increasingly isolated, refusing social engagements with others who find the alcoholic's drinking a source of discomfort, and whose discomfort threatens to force the

family to

Sound and

represents

Faulkner's

thoroughly

to one fam

society at

many of th

peripheral

place and

story of t

Gavin Ste

with the

Compsons,

from the

extensive

The Sound

The

Compsons

other, b

by the r

with the

the blac

notes, "

sudden s

just an

family to face the obvious truth. The very structure of The Sound and the Fury reiterates this principle: the novel represents a significant departure from what becomes Faulkner's usual technique because the story is so thoroughly ingrown. The conflicts in this novel are internal to one family, instead of occurring between a family and society at large. Other Faulkner novels are peopled with many of the residents of Yoknapatawpha County, even if only peripherally. Faulkner creates and amplifies his sense of place and history with this technique. Thus, we hear the story of the Snopes clan from Ratliff, Chick Mallison, and Gavin Stevens. The Sartoris family has extensive dealings with the Benbows, as Narcissa and Bayard marry. The Compsons, however, stick to themselves. We never see them from the viewpoint of outsiders, nor do we see them extensively interacting with the outside world, either in The Sound and the Fury, or in the rest of Faulkner's oeuvre.

The closest we get to an external point of view of the Compsons comes from the Gibsons' conversations with each other, but even these views are heavily biased and affected by the relationships and roles that the Gibsons maintain with the family. Even so, Quentin, at least, recognizes that the blacks have a different perspective to offer when he notes, "They come into white people's lives like that in sudden sharp black trickles that isolate white facts for just an instant in unarguable truth like under a microscope."

. ." (p. 21

from the bl

says, ". .

when you s

tears." St.

counterpoi

the young

changed fr

might have

fact, his

reflect ba

Other

and people

its contra

can also c

family me

perpetuat

people fi

face chan

"homeosta

of balanc

predeterm

necessari

regardles

forces wi

. . ." (p. 211) In the next breath, Quentin distances himself from the blacks and their divergent perspective when he says, ". . . the rest of the time just voices that laugh when you see nothing to laugh at, tears when no reason for tears." Still, Faulkner uses Dilsey and her family to form a counterpoint to the Compsons. For example, Faulkner shows the young Luster surmising that the reason Benjy's name was changed from Maury to Benjy was so that the retarded child might have better luck in life than his dissipated uncle. In fact, his name was changed so that his retardation might not reflect badly on his uncle.

Other dynamics besides isolation from external events and people operate to allow an alcoholic family to believe its contradictory story. The internal dynamics of the family can also contribute to the alcoholism. Essentially, the family members operate in a kind of informal collusion to perpetuate the lie. They do so because, to a great extent, people find it easier to live with what is familiar than to face change. Steinglass (1982) describes the concept of "homeostasis", whereby families seek to "establish a sense of balance or stability and to resist any change from this predetermined level of stability. . . This stability does not necessarily imply a healthy state of affairs. . . But regardless of the quality of stabilization, there are strong forces within families that operate according to homeostatic

principles

family lev

The s

drinking c

of the fam

terms "sta

such a way

unchecked-

encourages

way as to

termed "cc

It is

behaviors

look like

seemingly

spouse who

too much a

can be ex

drinking.

person's c

the conse

furnishes

verbal on

behaviors

the famil

to get th

principles and appear parenthetically to resist changes in family level behavior." (p. 130)

The stance taken by the spouse towards the alcoholic's drinking can be critical in determining the overall health of the family. In families which Peter Steinglass (1980) terms "stable wet"--families whose members have organized in such a way so as to allow the drinking to continue unchecked--the spouses generally adopt a role which actually encourages or permits drinking. Spouses who behave in such a way as to allow the drinking to continue unchallenged are termed "codependents" or "enablers."

It is important to note that codependency or enabling behaviors might take a variety of forms, not all of which look like behavior that permits the drinking to continue: seemingly disparate actions such as calling in sick for a spouse who is hung over or berating a spouse for drinking too much are both examples of these types of behaviors. Both can be examples of ways to reinforce an alcoholic's drinking. Calling in sick, or otherwise making excuses for a person's drinking, protect that person from having to take the consequences of drinking. Berating a drinker effectively furnishes the drinker with a reason to drink--to escape the verbal onslaught. The important determinant of codependent behaviors is that they are neither effective in organizing the family so as to minimize the effects of the drinking, or to get the drinking to stop.

Again
descriptive
clinical c
of codepen

1. St
care

2. Ps
more

3. Hy
when

4. Pc
get h

5. Se
that.

These cues
stances to
objective
traits at
fragility
of these

The

Mrs. Comp
section,
who can s
sakes I w
tells her
early for
I simply

Again, Mrs. Compson could provide a textbook description of an enabler. Charles Whitfield lists five clinical cues (suggested by Wegscheider) that are indicative of codependency:

1. Super-responsibility: "If I don't take care of things, they just won't get done."
2. Pseudo-fragility: "I don't know how much more of this I can take."
3. Hypochondria: "I hardly get over one cold when I catch another."
4. Powerlessness: "I've tried everything to get him to stop."
5. Self-blame: "I should have planned for that." (p. 51)

These cues are indicators of a codependent's attitudes and stances towards his or her situation, not statements of objective reality. Mrs. Compson manifests all of these traits at one time or another, although certainly, pseudo-fragility, hypochondria, and powerlessness are the strongest of these traits in her.

The Sound and the Fury practically reverberates with Mrs. Compson's statements of fragility. Early in the Benjy section, she tells Uncle Maury, "I am not one of those women who can stand things. I wish for Jason's and the children's sakes I was stronger." (p. 7) Later in that section, she tells her husband not to put Benjy to bed because "It's too early for him to go to bed. . . He'll wake up at daybreak and I simply cannot bear another day like today." (p. 75)

Combi

overblown

novel, she

it. . . It

them, to M

tells this

steps on h

bottle. Th

posturing,

responsibi

wife. She

Dilsey and

management

The reality

however, in

responsibl

Mrs. C

memorable t

the childre

determines

he relates,

quite bad e

play under

Dilsey woul

rain becaus

Mother was

Combined with Mrs. Compson's sense of fragility is her overblown sense of responsibility. Near the end of the novel, she tells Dilsey, "You're not the one who has to bear it. . . It's not your responsibility. You owe nothing to them, to Mr. Compson's memory. . ." (p. 339) Ironically, she tells this to Dilsey as Dilsey is painfully laboring up the steps on her rheumatic legs to get Mrs. Compson a hot water bottle. The irony points to the truth: despite her posturing, Mrs. Compson has abdicated all of the responsibilities conferred on her by her role as mother and wife. She has first left the raising of the children to Dilsey and her husband, and later, she leaves the household management and family financial dealings to her son Jason. The reality of Mrs. Compson's evasion of responsibility, however, in no way interferes with the fiction of responsibility that she has created and believes.

Mrs. Compson's hypochondria is perhaps her most memorable trait. Her "sickness" rules the family dynamics in the children's early years. Whether she is sick or well determines where the children can play, as Quenin notes when he relates, "On the rainy days when Mother wasn't feeling quite bad enough to stay away from the windows we used to play under it [the wisteria bush]. When Mother stayed in bed Dilsey would put old clothes on us and let us go out in the rain because she said rain never hurt young folks. But if Mother was up we always began by playing on the porch until

she said w
played und
quick to p
allowing h
Caddy clea
mother's c
begins to
charge of
upstairs a
Dilsey."
as well a
rectify th
often use
them to m
Mr. Comps
want to m
Comp
symptom o
researche
"life" to
child Cad
than walk
admonishe
stop tryi
prided th
like a wa

she said we were making too much noise, then we went out and played under the wistaria frame." (p. 210) The children are quick to perceive that their mother's illness is a way of allowing her to remove herself from the family. For example, Caddy clearly knows this early in the novel when, on her mother's orders, she takes away Benjy's cushion. Benjy begins to cry, and so does Mrs. Compson. Caddy tries to take charge of the situation; she tells her mother, "You go upstairs and lay down, so you can be sick. I'll go get Dilsey." (p. 78) Caddy provides her mother with an escape, as well as summoning the one person in the house who can rectify the situation. Finally, Mrs. Compson's "illness" is often used as a threat against the children in order to get them to modify their behavior. Thus, when they are fighting, Mr. Compson tells Jason and Caddy, "Stop that. . . Do you want to make Mother sick in her room." (p. 79)

Compulsive concern with outward appearances is another symptom of codependency that has been noted by many researchers (Perez). Here, too, Mrs. Compson gives fictional "life" to the clinical reports. Early in the novel, when the child Caddy tries to comfort Benjy by carrying him, rather than walking with him, over to their mother, Mrs. Compson admonishes her, "He's too big for you to carry. You must stop trying. You'll injure your back. All our women have prided themselves on their carriage. Do you want to look like a washerwoman." (p. 77) Characteristically, Mrs.

Compson va
values the
end of the
Compson's
cannot con
into trou

Per
and propr
enabling,
He charac
unable to
the famil
problem a
little or
(p. 38) T
continue
admit tha
but they
beyond th

The
who sees
too, is c
enablers
allows th
fact, a
drinking

Compson values Caddy's outward appearance more than she values the meaning of Caddy's loving act. Similarly, at the end of the novel, when the girl, Quentin, skips school, Mrs. Compson's primary worry is that people will think that she cannot control her niece, not that Quentin might be getting into trouble or might need help. (p. 226)

Perez states, "This obsessive concern for appearances and propriety is a major reason enablers persevere in their enabling, a major reason they have so many worries." (p. 39) He characterizes enablers as "worriers who are unwilling or unable to see alcoholism or the insidious effects of it in the family. Like the alcoholic they tend to see the drink problem as being all outside of themselves and they see little or no connection between themselves and the problem." (p. 38) The worry, then, becomes a way for an enabler to continue his or her denial--enablers may not be able to admit that the drinking is causing problems in the family, but they can at least find another outlet (one which is also beyond their control) for their tense and angry feelings.

The picture of Mrs. Compson that emerges is of a woman who sees herself as a victim of her circumstances. This, too, is consistent with what we know about spouses who are enablers. Enablers usually cannot see what they do that allows the drinking to continue. In some situations, in fact, a spouse can actually have a neurotic need for the drinking to continue. (Wallace) In such situations, it is

important
the family
beneficial

Many
codependent
behaviors
its onslaught
represent
the effect
Wegscheid
Compson's
alcoholic
distincti
is the ro
marriage.

Mr.
distance
novel ope
to virtua
evident i
first wor
Compson a
him to g
downstai
I'm ill
husband

important to look at the role alcohol consumption plays in the family. In certain cases the role may actually be beneficial, albeit in a very limited way.

Many theories have arisen to explain the phenomenon of codependence. Some researchers argue that codependent behaviors precede the alcoholism and actually precipitate its onslaught; others contend that codependency behaviors represent the nonalcoholic partner's attempts to cope with the effects of living with an alcoholic partner (Jackson; Wegscheider) There is no way to determine whether Mrs. Compson's neuroses existed before Mr. Compson became alcoholic, or whether the alcoholism came first. Such a distinction is not really important; what we can determine is the role that Mr. Compson's drinking plays in this marriage.

Mr. Compson's drinking enables Mrs. Compson to create a distance between herself and her husband. By the time the novel opens, that distance is very wide, indeed: it extends to virtually every area of the couple's life together and is evident in virtually every exchange between the two. In the first words that they speak to each other in the novel, Mrs. Compson accuses her husband of ignoring her needs: She tells him to get Benjy out of her room, saying, "Take him downstairs and get someone to watch him, Jason. . . You know I'm ill yet you--" (p. 50) Her words are cut off as her husband closes the bedroom door. Apparently he is used to

such state
points, sh
superiorit
I suffer,
with whisk

Mrs.

to remind
not a Comp
Compson p
problems,
for the f
ameliorate
problems
change hi
create di
issues.

Mr.

completel
pages of
(as when
for examp
with prac
his mothe
a while F
sat there
of his ni

such statements and sets no store by them. At various points, she uses her husband's drinking as a measure of her superiority over him, as when she tells Dilsey, "Look at me, I suffer, too, but I'm not so weak that I must kill myself with whiskey." (p. 248)

Mrs. Compson's most pervasive distancing technique is to remind her husband (and herself) that she is a Bascomb, not a Compson. In effect, she tries to say, "These are Compson problems, not Bascomb problems. These are your problems, not mine." In a veiled way, she blames her husband for the family troubles, but her accusations do nothing to ameliorate them, and, in fact, serve to suggest that the problems are out of everyone's control: Mr. Compson cannot change his birth family any more than she can. Her words create distance without engendering dialogue about the issues.

Mr. Compson's alcoholism permits him to withdraw completely from the family arena. Although in the early pages of the book, he attempts to intervene in situations (as when he silences the children so that Quentin can study, for example), by the latter days of his life, he interacts with practically no one. As Jason sardonically notes, when his mother prohibited Caddy's name from being spoken, "after a while Father wouldn't even come down town anymore but just sat there all day with the decanter I could see the bottom of his nightshirt and his bare legs and hear the decanter

clinking u

290) Mr. C

fight with

most. He r

The e

severe. Al

later all

alcoholics

adults who

are born i

immediate

person and

mobility.

to enter

Put more

trapped.

is intrap

result, s

standards

persons w

What they

behavior,

Chil

harmful,

to cope w

they cann

clinking until finally T.P. had to pour it for him . . . (p. 290) Mr. Compson essentially gives up. He can no longer fight with his wife. He has lost the two children he loved most. He resigns himself to a slow death by whiskey.

The effects of such a relationship on the children are severe. Although, as Joseph Perez (p. 50) notes, sooner or later all members of an alcoholic family begin to think like alcoholics, a sharp distinction must be drawn between the adults who form an alcoholic alliance and the children who are born into it. As Jael Greenleaf explains, "The most immediate differences between the spouse of an alcoholic person and the child of an alcoholic parent are volition and mobility. Children have neither the choice nor the mobility to enter into or exit from the parent-child relationship. Put more simply, the adult may feel trapped; the child is trapped. The adult is intrapsychically helpless; the child is intrapsychically and situationally helpless." (p. 7) The result, says Greenleaf, is that children learn fundamental standards for behaving and for evaluating behavior from persons whose repertoires of effective behaviors is small. What they learn "becomes the model not only for their own behavior, but for the choice of future relationships."

Children from alcoholic families learn a variety of harmful, destructive attitudes about the world and about how to cope with it. Perhaps most significantly, they learn that they cannot depend on the adults who care for them. As many

researcher
to their p
what the c
it will no
family is
skewed, wi
the parent
strong mot
the child
her; the y
his family
the burden
takes care
as "raisin
about her
wrong, it

Beca

such a fa
children'
are found
differenc
Compsons
Millgate
partially
multivale

researchers note, they learn that alcohol is more important to their parents than they are. The drinking behavior is what the children most desperately want to see changed, but it will not change. A common result of living in such a family is that the normal parent-child relationships are skewed, with the child fulfilling the role of nurturer to the parent. (Stubby, 1984) This characteristic furnishes a strong motivation for the Compson children's behavior, too: the child Caddy tries to pacify her mother when Benjy upsets her; the young boy Quentin takes it upon himself to secure his family's good name by doing well at Harvard (although the burden proves too much for him); and the adult Jason takes care of all his mother's financial dealings, as well as "raising" Quentin--inasmuch as anyone confronts Quentin about her behavior and attempts to teach her right from wrong, it is Jason who does so.

Because the most overwhelming need of the parents in such a family is to deny the drinking behavior, the children's lives are founded on a lie. Because their lives are founded on a lie, they become unclear about the difference between truth and falsehood. The story of the Compsons reverberates with this difficulty. Indeed, Michael Millgate sees The Sound and the Fury as being at least partially concerned with what he terms "the elusiveness, the multivalence of truth." (p. 87)

The (

things. Th

children

methodica

loss of v

subordina

deep-seat

isolation

(Deutsch,

The

denial; t

forced to

children

fact is c

have been

they

ther

moa

fol

Ver

38)

Caddy an

Damuddy

parents,

The Compsons lie to their children about a variety of things. The result of these lies can be devastating; children who grow up with denial as a daily habit "may methodically suppress all threatening feelings; experience a loss of values, because what they feel is right is subordinated to what is necessary and tolerable; retain deep-seated shame, the solution for which has always been isolation; and consistently confuse fantasy and reality." (Deutsch, p. 46)

The Compson children have been well taught the habit of denial; time and time again, they have been lied to and forced to disbelieve their own senses. For example, the children do not believe that Damuddy has died, although the fact is obvious to the black servants' children because they have been told so by their mother:

"T.P. dont mind nobody." Frony said. "Is they started the funeral yet."
 "What's a funeral." Jason said.
 "Didn't mammy tell you not to tell them." Versh said.
 "Where they moans." Frony said. "They moaned two days on Sis Beulah Clay." . . .
 "Oh." Caddy said. "That's niggers. White folks dont have funerals."
 "Mammy said us not to tell them, Frony." Versh said.
 "Tell them what." Caddy said. (pp. 37-38)

Caddy and the other Compson children cannot believe that Damuddy has died because, far from being told so by their parents, they have been told just the opposite: that when

she gets
her death
sent upst
explanat

Oft
inappropri
Compsons
emotiona
herself
When Mrs
promiscu
Jason ac
dont lov
you neve
.I look
beginnin
Jason an
like he

Mrs
she who
the Jasc

The
ag
wa
cor
cl
tha
de
wa

she gets well, they will all have a picnic. On the night of her death, they are shunted quickly into the kitchen, then sent upstairs to bed without ever hearing a word of explanation about why their routine has been so disrupted.

Often, too, families with alcoholism manifest inappropriate parent-child alliances. (Reference) The Compsons are no exception; in the course of creating an emotional distance from her husband, Mrs. Compson has allied herself with Jason and against the other three children. When Mrs. Compson talks to her husband about Caddy's promiscuous behavior, she tells, him, ". . . go on criticize Jason accuse me of setting him to watch her. . . I know you dont love him that you wish to believe faults against him you never have yes ridicule him as you always have Maury. . .I look at him every day dreading to see this Compson blood beginning to show in him. . .I cannot stand it let me have Jason and you keep the others they're not my flesh and blood like he is. . ." (p. 128)

Mrs. Compson, of course, does not perceive that it is she who has created these disturbed alliances. At the end of the Jason section she tells her son

They [Caddy and Quentin] were both that way. . .They would make interest with your father against me when I tried to correct them. He was always saying they didn't need controlling, that they already knew what cleanliness and honesty were, which was all that anyone could hope to be taught. . . They deliberately shut me out of their lives. It was always her and Quentin. They were always

cons
alth
They
outs
. (p

To her mi
the allia
completel
responsib
is powerl
does not
her words

The
family is
children
described
talk, Don
these ma
alcoholi
siblings
finally,
feelings
out" the
familiar
promiscu
are only
a very c

conspiring against me. Against you, too,
 although you were too young to realise it.
 They always looked on you and me as
 outsiders, like they did your Uncle Maury. .
 . (pp. 325-6)

To her mind, it is Caddy and Quentin who have forged the alliance, not her with Jason. She sees herself completely as a victim; she has abdicated her maternal responsibilities to such a degree that she believes she is powerless in her interactions with her children. She does not realize that it is they who reacted first to her words and behavior, not the other way around.

The overall effect of growing up in an alcoholic family is grim. Most researchers agree that the children are subjected to what Claudia Black has described as a three-part governing principle: Don't talk, Don't trust, Don't feel. The first effect of these maxims is to prevent communication about the alcoholism between family members, thus preventing siblings from emotionally supporting each other, and, finally, to isolate the individual from his or her own feelings and perceptions. These children often "act out" their repressed feelings in ways which are familiar to readers of The Sound and the Fury--sexual promiscuity, suicide, and a generalized, helpless rage are only a few examples. As adults, these children have a very difficult time breaking out of their old roles

and patte

them from

We s

Compson c

and Jason

the first

Fury as t

extension

a progres

sense of

shapes i

notably

novel ca

of famil

portrays

successi

(and the

might be

from one

older ch

difficu

also se

child a

skills,

the boo

of fami

and patterns even when those roles and patterns prevent them from getting their needs met.

We see these effects in the lives of all the Compson children, but most clearly in Caddy, Quentin, and Jason. Critics have variously seen the motion from the first to the last sections of The Sound and the Fury as the story of a Southern family (and, by extension, the South) in decline (Brooks, Kartiganer), a progression which is "accompanied by an increasing sense of social reality" (Millgate), or a pattern which shapes itself on the life of one of the characters, notably either Quentin (Benson), or Caddy (Baum). The novel can also be seen as the story of the progression of family alcoholism, as each successive section portrays the effects of parental abuse and neglect on successively older children. The four Compson children (and the four sections of the novel) comprise what might be considered a "chain of maturity". As we move from one sibling's story to the next, we see that the older child has managed, somehow, to overcome the difficulties and traumas faced by the younger ones; we also see the terrible price that is paid by the older child as he or she struggles, without adequate coping skills, to make a way in the world. Taken as a whole, the book offers a stark, tragic treatise on the effects of family alcoholism on the children who come under its

pervasive

chapters

pervasive influence. It is the task of the next three chapters to delineate those effects in detail.

The

Faulkner

began wi

climbing

while he

ground b

forms "a

chronolo

maturity

of the m

leaves h

what hap

to unde

Cac

shrink

beginni

book sh

nemesis

uncommo

Chapter Three:

Caddy Compson: The Family Scapegoat

The Sound and the Fury is essentially Caddy's story.

Faulkner allowed as much when he asserted that the novel began with his image of a little girl in muddy drawers climbing a tree to look in at her grandmother's funeral, while her three brothers, lacking her courage, stood on the ground below her. The novel itself, explains Catherine Baum, forms "a logical and traditional ordering based on the chronology of Caddy's life, her childhood, adolescence, and maturity." (p. 187) And, as Baum further notes, "The climax of the novel is Caddy's defeat at the hands of Jason, who leaves her stammering, helpless, and broken." Understanding what happens to Caddy and why it happens, then, is essential to understanding the novel.

Caddy is a prime example of a character who seems to shrink rather than grow as the novel unfolds. In the beginning of the book she has courage; by the end of the book she is vanquished at the hands of Jason, her lifelong nemesis. This type of shrinking rather than growing is not uncommon to female characters in fiction; Annis Pratt coined

the term

characte

The
whi
dis
cha
tow
the
sur
des
all
exe
ero
pat
ind
imm
fru
int
cle
(p.

Although

singular

certainl

restrict

Pra

Caddy. T

often co

green-wo

will sha

Pratt ca

happens

norms, a

the term "growing down" to categorize what happens to female characters in novels of development written by women:

The novel of development portrays a world in which the young woman hero is destined for disappointment. The vitality and hopefulness characterizing the adolescent hero's attitude toward her future here meet and conflict with the expectations and dictates of the surrounding society. Every element of her desired world--freedom to come and go, allegiance to nature, meaningful work, exercise of the intellect, and use of her own erotic capabilities--inevitably clashes with patriarchal norms. Attempts to develop independence are met with limitation and immurement, training in menial and frustrating tasks, restrictions of the intellect (lest she perceive her status too clearly), and limitation of erotic activity. (p. 29)

Although Faulkner was a man, Annis Pratt's archetype seems singularly appropriate when considering Caddy Compson, who certainly finds her freedom curtailed, her intellect restricted, and her erotic activity limited.

Pratt describes two archetypes which especially fit Caddy. The young heroine's quest for authentic selfhood is often couched in images of nature, which Pratt calls the green-world archetype. The heroine searches for a man who will share her life while allowing her her freedom, and Pratt calls him the green-world lover. Often, though, what happens to the heroine is that she is entrapped by society's norms, and forced into a marriage which restricts her:

"social e
women's
hero's g
enclosure
streams
spends w
green wo
epitomiz

Pra

intent o
from chi
persists
is inapp
society
(pp. 34-
central
Judith B
sort of.
[with Ca
79).

Of

novel of
himself
girl's f
suitably
states,

"Social expectations for a young woman's destiny surface in women's fiction as a division of loyalties between the hero's green-world authenticity and the social world of enclosure." (p. 25) As Caddy moves from the pastures and streams of her childhood to the distant city in which she spends what we see of her adulthood, she moves from her own green world to a world of enclosure and restriction epitomized by the Nazi who appears in the Afterword.

Pratt further notes that "In spite of the generic intent of the bildungsroman to trace a hero's progression from childhood into adulthood, the novel of development persists in mirroring a society in which such a progression is inappropriate for women. The young woman in modern society cannot 'grow up': she must remain 'one of the girls' (pp. 34-35). This drive to have Caddy remain a child is central to both the Benjy and Quentin sections, where, as Judith Bryant Wittenberg notes, both brothers make "the same sort of. . . demands for exclusiveness in their relationship [with Caddy] and for sexual purity on Caddy's part. . ." (p. 79).

Of course, Faulkner did not set out to write a "female novel of development". Nor am I suggesting that Faulkner was himself a feminist. Still, though, the story of a young girl's fall may have furnished Faulkner with a ready and suitably tragic guise for his personal myth. If, as Deutsch states, children of alcoholics are "tentative and wary,

always ex
(p. 42),
most trag
worse out
Caddy tha
even from
demeaned
childhoo
Deutsch's
of Pratt
the trag
and perha
understan

CADDY AND

The
Faulkner
which is
love, wh
child, i
theme, t
pervades
if they
desirabl

always expecting the unexpected and prepared for the worst" (p. 42), then Caddy's story might reasonably have been the most tragic story Faulkner could imagine. What could be a worse outcome for the courageous, sensuous, maternal child Caddy than to be separated from her father, brother, and even from her own child, forced into prostitution, and demeaned by the brother she hated and regularly taunted in childhood? Considering Caddy's plight in terms of both Deutsch's understanding of the alcoholic home and in terms of Pratt's analysis will show how Faulkner effectively uses the tragedy of the conditions of women's lives to express and perhaps exorcise his own personal demons without fully understanding or fully sympathizing with that tragedy.

CADDY AND BENJY

The relationship between Benjy and Caddy allowed Faulkner to express one of his most significant themes: love which is doomed to failure. In Faulkner's fiction, true love, whether between a man and a woman or a parent and child, is always transitory and is always damaged. This theme, too, grows out of the sense of hopelessness that pervades alcoholic families, where no one can believe "that if they take certain steps, certain other predicatable and desirable outcomes will ensue." (Deutsch, p. 45)

Bec
viewpoint
in her fa
brother's
than life
see Caddy
childhood
her choi
does not
these rea
common to
Family He
best hope

When
drin
hope
alco
chil
alco
his
nona
diss
chil
chil
tha

The fema
as a sub
desponder
drinking
In the Be
that; she

Because the Benjy section is told from Benjy's limited viewpoint, we get a constricted idea of what Caddy's place in her family is like. We see her only through her retarded brother's worshipful eyes, and in a sense, she is larger than life. However, to go back to Pratt's paradigm, we also see Caddy before she has "grown down"--for a woman, childhood represents the apex of freedom and possibility; her choices will only be constrained as she grows up. Caddy does not seem like a scapegoat in the Benjy section for these reasons. Rather, she is playing out another role common to the eldest children in an alcoholic home--that of Family Hero. Family Heroes are often held up as the family's best hope:

When the first child arrives, the alcoholic's drinking is already causing problems, but hope and denial obscure them. Both the alcoholic and nonalcoholic parents make the child the repository of their hope. The alcoholic will drink less and settle down to his or her responsibilities, and the nonalcoholic will be less carping and dissatisfied because of the presence of a child who is exemplary in every way. And this child will prove to the parents and outsiders that all is well. (Deutsch, p. 58)

The female Family Hero, according to Deutsch, "may function as a substitute. . . for a nonalcoholic mother whose dependency and helplessness in the face of the father's drinking leaves many necessary chores undone. . ." (p. 58) In the Benjy section, we most often see Caddy doing just that; she eagerly assumes responsibility for Benjy's care.

Benjy emb

Her other

unsuccess

the other

meets wi

children

Benjy has

much as

It

Caddy as

is conne

in a rel

She resp

better t

to her o

see Cadd

kind of

contrast

later ma

is all t

of mothe

but it i

the Quen

say, Mot

for Cadd

Benjy embodies the perfect outlet for her need to be needed. Her other attempts at playing out this role are unsuccessful; for example, she can cajole her father to make the other children "mind" her when Damuddy is sick, but she meets with stiff opposition from Jason and the black children, who have no intentions of following her orders. Benjy has no such objections to her care; he needs her as much as she needs him.

It is also primarily in the Benjy section that we see Caddy as a green-world heroine. In the Benjy section, Caddy is connected to the smells of nature (trees), and we see her in a relationship with Benjy that is loving and guilt-free. She responds to him as a mother might; in fact, she responds better than his own mother, and better than she can respond to her own child many years later. In the Benjy section, we see Caddy at the apex of her maternal potential; we see the kind of nurturing that she is capable of giving a child. The contrast between the way she loves Benjy and the choices she later makes for her daughter Quentin is stark, and the novel is all the more tragic for the discrepancy. The conjunction of mothering instincts and sexual purity is a curious one, but it is borne out both in the Benjy section and later in the Quentin section, where Quentin says, "If I could only say, Mother, Mother" when he thinks of his sexual feelings for Caddy.

The
sensual.
Faulkner
very you
out of h
others'
his rela
couch th
host of
despair
to the r
easily a

We
the Benj
him link
literal
Benjy mo
stream o
in the w

"I
I t
kno
bal
"Si
sho
tha
slo

can
sai

The love that Benjy bears Caddy is simple, direct, and sensual. By making the thirty-three-year-old Benjy retarded, Faulkner is able to have him retain the perspective of a very young child. Benjy, therefore, responds to Caddy purely out of his own narcissistic need; he is not influenced by others' opinions of her, nor is he able to feel guilty about his relationship with her. Unlike his brothers, who learn to couch their conflicting feelings about Caddy under a whole host of emotional disguises, Benjy's love and his sense of despair at being abandoned remain accessible both to him and to the reader. The feelings of the other brothers are not so easily apprehended.

We see Benjy's childlike perspective in several ways: the Benjy section's stream-of-consciousness narrative shows him linking ideas and memories on the basis of very direct, literal connections. For example, in the following passage, Benjy moves from the direct experience of playing in the stream on his thirty-third birthday to remembering playing in the water with Caddy and Quentin when they were children:

"I is done it. Hush, now." Luster said. "Aint I told you you cant go up there. they'll knock your head clean off with one of them balls. Come on, here." He pulled me back. "Sit down." I sat down and he took off my shoes and rolled up my trousers. "Now, git in that water and play and see can you stop that slobbering and moaning."

I hushed and got in the water and Roskus came and said to come to supper and Caddy said.

It's not supper time yet. I'm not going.

She
and
and

get

Cad

The phys

to shift

something

shout "C

sister; a

meaning

hears the

despite t

years.

Fau.

perspect

him. For

drunk on

not reall

relations

wasn

and

slop

P. t

the

arm

barn

came

She was wet. We were playing in the branch and Caddy squatted down and got her dress wet and Versh said,

"Your mommer going to whip you for getting your dress wet."

"She's not going to do any such thing."

Caddy said.

"How do you know." Quentin said. (p. 19)

The physical action of getting into the water causes Benjy to shift from thinking about the present to remembering something from his childhood. Similarly, hearing the golfers shout "Caddy!" causes him to look for (and cry for) his sister; as Olga Vickery notes, words can have only one meaning for Benjy, and "caddie" means his sister. When he hears that word, he immediately begins to bellow for her, despite the fact that she has not lived at home for eighteen years.

Faulkner further illustrates Benjy's childlike perspectives by the way Benjy describes the action around him. For example, Benjy's narration of his and T. P.'s being drunk on the champagne at Caddy's wedding shows that he does not really understand what has happened to him, or his relationship with the physical world around him:

I wasn't crying but I couldn't stop. I wasn't crying, but the ground wasn't still, and then I was crying. The ground kept sloping up and the cows ran up the hill. T. P. tried to get up. He fell down again and the cows ran down the hill. Quentin held my arm and we went toward the barn. Then the barn wasn't there and we had to wait until it came back. I didn't see it come back. It came

beh
tro
was
cow
doo
up
the
Que

Benjy can
falling,
up", or
dragged
how he g
to wait
understan
ground,
relation
intoxica

Bec
descript
lost tou
value to
put to b
T.P." (p
when Cade
she does
childlike
happens]
illustra

behind us and Quentin set me down in the trough where the cows ate. I held onto it. It was going away, too, and I held to it. The cows ran down the hill again, across the door. I couldn't stop. Quentin and T. P. came up the hill, fighting. T. P. was falling down the hill and Quentin dragged him up the hill. Quentin hit T. P. I couldn't stop. (p. 24)

Benjy cannot stop crying; he does not understand that he is falling, but instead thinks that "the ground kept sloping up", or that "the cows ran down the hill", or that "Quentin dragged him [T. P.] up the hill." Benjy does not understand how he got to the barn: "...the barn wasn't there...we had to wait until it came back." In short, Benjy does not understand that he is the one that is moving, not the ground, let alone understanding the cause-and-effect relationship between drinking alcohol and becoming intoxicated.

Because Benjy's perspective is so childlike, his descriptions of events are endearingly sensual. He has not lost touch with his senses, and does not impute a negative value to the impressions they furnish him. Thus, when he is put to bed by Dilsey, he remarks that "the bed smelled like T.P." (p. 33) He often notes that Caddy smells like trees; when Caddy tries on perfume Benjy cries and cries because she doesn't smell right (pp. 45-48). Benjy craves the childlike comfort of sleeping with someone else; when [xxx happens] he cries until Caddy climbs into bed with him. He illustrates a kind of innocence we all knew once, but have

lost long

to make E

need for

is so vul

Cadd

understan

mothering

thoughts

too preoc

to give E

your Cadd

differing

Christmas

maternal

Our

extends f

exuberanc

from scho

booksatch

contrast,

frail wom

tells her

and she r

who can s

sakes I w

lost long since. The net effect of Faulkner's portrayal is to make Benjy seem helpless and fragile, and to make his need for Caddy all the more powerful and poignant because he is so vulnerable.

Caddy, alone among the members of the Compson family, understands Benjy, and provides him with the kind of mothering that he needs. Caddy is able to understand his thoughts and put words to them. Unlike Mrs. Compson, who is too preoccupied with her own needs, Caddy repeatedly tries to give Benjy the stability that he requires ("You've got your Caddy. Haven't you got your Caddy." (p. 8) The differing reactions of Mrs. Compson and Caddy to Benjy at Christmastime early in the novel illustrate both what maternal love ought to be and what it is not.

Our first glimpse of Caddy in this passage, which extends for a mere five pages, shows her to be full of exuberance and health. Caddy comes into view, walking home from school, and breaks into a run when she sees Benjy, "her booksatchel swinging and jouncing behind her." (p. 6) In contrast, when we first see Caroline we get an image of a frail woman who is preoccupied with her health: Uncle Maury tells her, "Remember, you've got to keep your strength up", and she replies, "I know. . . I am not one of those women who can stand things. I wish for Jason's and the children's sakes I was stronger." (p. 8).

Whe
are cold
rubs the
notice s
whether

Cad
physical
although
for him.
linguist
or sligh
which de
child's
she corr
signifie

'Wh
try
Ver

kep
rig
gat

it
sch
is
Ber
hou

¹ For a
reactions to
him with word
W. Wagner's
Southern Lite

When Caddy first sees Benjy, she notices that his hands are cold--she asks Versh why he let them get so cold, and rubs them to warm them up. Caroline, however, does not notice such small details; when she wants to find out whether Benjy is cold or not, she asks Versh.

Caddy's perceptions about Benjy extend far beyond his physical well-being.¹ She picks up on his excitement, and although he cannot talk, she tries to verbalize his feelings for him. This verbalization is characteristic of what linguists call "caretaker speech"--speech which is aimed at or slightly above the cognitive level of the child, and which deals with concrete events or objects important to the child's life.. When Benjy excitedly meets Caddy at the gate, she correctly understands that Benjy thinks that her arrival signifies the beginning of Christmas:

'What is it.' Caddy said. 'What are you trying to tell Caddy. Did they send him out, Versh.'

' Couldn't keep him in.' Versh said. 'He kept on until they let him go and he come right straight down here, looking through the gate.'

'What is it.' Caddy said. 'Did you think it would be Christmas when I came home from school. Is that what you thought. Christmas is the day after tomorrow. Santy Claus, Benjy. Santy Claus. Come on, let's run to the house and get warm.' She took my hand and we

¹ For a more complete discussion of the ways in which Caddy's reactions to Benjy are immediate, tactile, and intended to supply him with words and meanings for his sensory experiences, see Linda W. Wagner's article, "Language and Act: Caddy Compson" in The Southern Literary Journal, 14, no. 2 (Spring, 1982), 49-61.

ra
7)

When Ca
realize
respond
what Ch
run bac
express
his con
view to

In
to Benj
they ar
sees th
"Why di
to worr
outside
When Ca
he'll c
before
express
health,
Caddy,
oversho
full of
Benjy's

ran through the bright rustling leaves. (p. 7)

When Caddy hears that Benjy has clamored to go outside, she realizes that he thinks that Christmas has come. She responds by saying, "Santy Claus", and thereby identifying what Christmas means to Benjy. She then encourages him to run back to the house with her--giving him a physical expression for his exuberance. She responds on his level, to his conceptions of the world. She allows Benjy and his world view to control the pace of their interaction.

In sharp contrast to Caddy's genuine, loving response to Benjy is Caroline's response to the two children when they arrive home. She never addresses a word to Benjy. She sees their presence only in terms of how it will affect her: "Why did you come in here. To give him [Benjy] some excuse to worry me again." Then, when Caddy asks if Benjy can go outside with her, Caroline initially refuses her request. When Caddy pleads, "Let him go, Mother. . . Please. You know he'll cry.", Caroline answers, "Then why did you mention it before him. . . " (p. 8) The only concern that Caroline expresses for Benjy in this passage extends to his physical health, and even this concern is left-handed; she asks Caddy, "Are you going to take that baby out without his overshoes. . . Do you want to make him sick, with the house full of company." (p. 9) Caroline is not concerned with Benjy's health at all; she is concerned with the possible

inconve

visitor

she hug

who is

herself

Fr

child"

her own

burgeon

pleasan

there i

to what

Caddy m

frighte

physica

Fo

feels g

driving

has pla

narciss

her beh

when Ber

solution

promise

Ca

on

da

inconvenience to her of having a sick child when there are visitors to be tended to. In light of these attitudes, when she hugs Benjy, saying, "My poor baby", we might well wonder who is the poor baby to whom she is referring--Benjy or herself.

From Caddy's perspective, the failure of the "mother-child" relationship she and Benjy have comes in the form of her own self-doubts. Benjy acts as a barometer of Caddy's burgeoning sexuality, and the readings he gives are not pleasant. Benjy reacts to change with panic and despair; there is little in his life that he can trust, so he clings to what he trusts with all the tenacity he can muster. As Caddy matures and becomes involved with boys, Benjy is frightened by the change in Caddy's behavior and in her physical presence--most notably, her smell.

For her part, Caddy is uneasy about her sexuality; she feels guilty about her sexual desires, because they are driving her out of the tightly-circumscribed role that she has played in the family. She misinterprets Benjy's narcissistic panic at the changes in her as a judgement of her behavior and of her sexual desires. So, for example, when Benjy bothers her and Charlie in the swing, Caddy's solution is to send Charlie (not Benjy) away, and guiltily promise never to see him again:

Caddy and I ran. We ran up the kitchen steps, onto the porch, and Caddy knelt down in the dark and held me. I could hear her and feel

he
an
cr
"H
I l
the
too
the
55

By wash

wrongdoi

removes

smells l

Ben

interpre

him ("Hu

Benjy is

reacting

that Cad

against

Benjy and

structur

consister

accommoda

pseudo-m

will be r

sexual av

abandonec

damaged--

Benjy's r

her chest. "I wont." she said. "I wont anymore, ever. Benjy. Benjy." Then she was crying, and I cried, and we held each other. "Hush." she said. "Hush. I wont anymore." So I hushed and Caddy got up and we went into the kitchen and turned the light on and Caddy took the kitchen soap and washed her mouth at the sink, hard. Caddy smelled like trees. (p. 55)

By washing out her mouth (a child's punishment for wrongdoing, notably "talking dirty") Caddy physically removes all traces of Charlie's kiss. When she once again smells like trees, Benjy is satisfied.

Benjy and Caddy, however, have different interpretations of what has happened. Caddy's response to him ("Hush. I wont anymore") suggests that she feels that Benjy is indicting her for being sexual, but Benjy is merely reacting to the impressions of his senses, which tell him that Caddy is somehow different. It is the unfamiliarity against which he rebels, not Caddy's behavior per se. Both Benjy and Caddy recognize the precariousness of their family structure, which requires that everyone adhere to consistent, rigidly defined roles. The family simply cannot accommodate Caddy's maturing; she is too essential as the pseudo-mother to Benjy and Quentin, and if she leaves, there will be no one to take over her role. For Benjy, Caddy's sexual awakening simply means that he is in danger of being abandoned, not that she has become somehow tainted or damaged--these are interpretations which she brings to Benjy's reactions.

Of

this si

intense

would n

matured

develop

promisi

impossi

son. An

girl wi

Caddy,

derived

find th

because

the fau

Ca

emergin

daughte

it is n

attack;

role as

family

problem

childho

the fam

Of course, from both Benjy's and Caddy's point of view, this situation is preposterous. Benjy is retarded; the intense claims for love and attention that an actual toddler would make on a real mother would lessen as the child matured, but Benjy will never mature beyond this stage of development. By telling Benjy, "I wont. I wont", Caddy is promising to devote her life to him--a promise that would be impossible for a even real mother to keep towards her real son. And Caddy is not Benjy's mother; she is an adolescent girl with her own needs and her own life. Whereas the child, Caddy, reveled in the adult sense of responsibility that she derived from caring for Benjy, the adolescent Caddy comes to find the bonds restrictive. She guiltily assumes that because she has chosen to act on her new sexual feelings, the fault is hers.

Caddy has been amply primed to feel guilt at her emerging sexuality. Caroline is roundly condemning of her daughter's actions, and, by implication, her feelings. But it is not simply Caddy's behavior that has come under attack; Caroline recognizes that Caddy has failed in her role as Hero. She has not proved to outsiders that the family is really all right. She has not made the internal problems better. In fact, by growing up and out of her childhood role, Caddy is placing new demands and stresses on the family.

Pe

lies in
before
spends
rending
golfers
caddies
carries
kitchen
passing
put, Be
for and

In

Faulkne
love th
informe
Wild Pa
childre
they li
them. S
society
the fal
other w
is doom
the par
inevita

Part of the poignant tragedy Faulkner has created here lies in the fact that Caddy must inevitably desert Benjy before he is ready to let her go. Desolate and forlorn, he spends the rest of the novel searching for her in heart-rending, yet grotesque ways: he cries when he hears the golfers on the neighboring golf course shout for their caddies, believing that they are calling for his sister; he carries her slipper with him wherever he goes, even to the kitchen table; he tries to rape the schoolgirls who, in passing by the front gate, remind him of his sister. Simply put, Benjy is inconsolable. His sorrow and loss set the tone for and color the events of the rest of the book.

In Caddy and Benjy, we get an example of one of Faulkner's classic themes: love which must inevitably fail, love that is doomed from the outset. This same notion informs the relationship between Charlotte and Henry in The Wild Palms: because she chooses to leave her marriage and children, and because he chooses to leave medical school, they live as outlaws in a society which eventually punishes them. Similarly, Lee Goodwin and Ruby are punished by a society which has no room for them. The difference between the failed love in The Sound and the Fury and in Faulkner's other works, though, lies in the fact that the relationship is doomed from inside itself, not because of the pressures the participants face from the world at large--Caddy must inevitably grow up, just as Benjy inevitably cannot.

CADDY A

Ca
the abo
get rid
family'
and abl
since a
Annis R
green-v
insist
atrophy
pregnan
conjoin
look o
Caddy
bargai
will h
Caddy
from a
altern
doing
T
howeve
alcohol
Deutsc

CADDY AND QUENTIN

Caddy succeeds in washing off the smell of Charlie in the above example, but Dalton Ames proves harder for her to get rid of. Caddy is torn between her own Eros and the family's need for her to remain ever a child, ever willing and able to assume the nurturing role that Caroline has long since abandoned. In novels of development written by women, Annis Pratt states, "The need for the green world and the green-world lover intensifies at the same rate that society insists upon proffering the rapist/villain, enclosure, and atrophy as alternatives." (p. 35) When Caddy becomes pregnant, the prospect of marriage to Sydney Herbert Head conjoins all three alternatives, but the marriage does not look on the surface like entrapment; it looks like a way for Caddy to save her entire family and herself into the bargain. Marriage to Sydney Head means that Caddy's baby will have a father, Jason will have a place in the bank, and Caddy will have "saved" the family honor by marrying a man from a higher social station. Caddy embraces the only alternative that her society and family allow her, because doing so means that she can fulfill her role as Family Hero.

The Quentin section shows Caddy failing in that role, however, and assuming another one common in families with alcoholism: that of Scapegoat. Scapegoats, according to Deutsch, "make their contribution to the family by embracing

and exp
frustra
to igno
scapego
family'
outgrow
the opt
about :
Caddy,
respec
that t
unself
opport
might
are mu

T
to Cad
focus
the cr
In the
guilt
family
censur
her f
flash

and expressing each member's anger, disappointment, and frustration." (p. 62) Scapegoats allow other family members to ignore the alcoholic's drinking, believing that it is the scapegoat, and not the alcoholic, who is responsible for the family's problems. This switching of roles seems a natural outgrowth of a daughter's "growing down"; as she matures, the options open to her decrease, and her freedom to move about in the world is severely curtailed. The adolescent Caddy, for example, would be prevented by notions of respectability and propriety from climbing that very tree that the child Caddy scaled so effortlessly and unselfconsciously. Thus, the adolescent daughter has less opportunity to "save" the alcoholic family by her deeds, and might in her frustration turn to a role whose expectations are much lower, and which she can fulfill.

The Quentin section does indeed show a different side to Caddy than the Benjy section gave. The Compson family's focus in the Quentin section becomes Caddy's promiscuity, the crisis of her pregnancy, and the need for her to marry. In the Quentin section, Faulkner gives us images of Caddy's guilt about her sexuality, combined with descriptions of her family's attempts to control and punish her. Even as they censure her, however, Caddy tries to protect and care for her family. She is seen doing so in Quentin's first flashback, which sets the tone for all the other images of

Caddy t

wedding

On

In

wh

ov

cl

he

on

ru

ro

sh

he

f

th

he

th

S

(

Once a

needs

even h

for wh

overwh

she pu

someon

T

Benjy

his se

O'er E

Caddy

the m

betwee

Caddy that follow. Quentin first remembers Caddy at her wedding, where she runs to comfort Benjy:

Only she was running already when I heard it. In the mirror she was running before I knew what it was. That quick her train caught up over her arm she ran out of the mirror like a cloud, her veil swirling in long glints her heels brittle and fast clutching her dress onto her shoulder with her other hand, running out of the mirror the smells roses roses the voice that breathed o'er Eden. Then she was across the porch I couldn't hear her heels then in the moonlight like a cloud, the floating shadow of the veil running across the grass, into the bellowing. She ran out of her dress, clutching her bridal, running into the bellowing where T. P. in the dew Whooey Sasprilluh Benjy under the box bellowing.
(pp. 92-93)

Once again, this passage shows how in tune with Benjy's needs Caddy is; she begins running to him before Quentin even hears Benjy's bellowing, let alone recognizes the sound for what it is. The scene also illustrates Caddy's overwhelming sense of responsibility: even at her wedding, she puts Benjy's needs ahead of hers, and cannot allow someone else to minister to him.

The description Faulkner gives here also evokes the Benjy section. Like Benjy, Quentin responds to Caddy through his senses ("the smells roses roses the voice that breathed o'er Eden", "I couldnt hear her running then"). Quentin sees Caddy in the mirror, and he describes her running "out of the mirror" as Benjy might. The similarity in description between this passage and the Benjy section underscores the

fact th

sister,

conside

In

unders

pregna

"Caddy

Quenti

sick t

"I've

her ou

Caddy"

to say

does n

that i

pregna

denyin

father

well.

R

other.

sent

follow

imper

that

fact that both brothers are childlike in their need of their sister, although we later see that Quentin's needs are considerably more complex and disturbed.

In fact, Quentin is so needy that he is slow to understand what is wrong with his sister when she becomes pregnant. He implores her not to marry Head, telling her, "Caddy you cant do it if you are sick. That blackguard." Quentin fails to realize that it is precisely because she is sick that Caddy must marry. Caddy tells him so, simply, "I've got to marry somebody." (p. 129) Quentin finally asks her outright what is wrong: "Why must you marry somebody Caddy" to which Caddy impatiently rejoins, "Do you want me to say it do you think that if I say it it wont be". Quentin does not understand that Caddy has morning sickness, and that it is imperative that she marry before the fact of her pregnancy becomes obvious. The training he has received in denying the evidence of his senses with respect to his father's drinking has come into play in this instance as well.

Even in her illness, Caddy's first thoughts are for the others in the family. She begs Quentin not to let Benjy be sent to the mental hospital at Jackson (p. 128), and, in the following exchange, she seems to endure Quentin's impertinent questions in the hope of getting him to promise that he will take care of the family after she has left:

Go

Be

kn

an

Quenti

Caddy'

on the

marria

cruel;

gettin

accuse

do: of

The ph

his fa

nurtur

which

option

expect

for 1

his ne

V

the f

it he

doesn

Got to marry somebody
 Have there been very many Caddy
 I dont know too many will you look after
 Benjy and Father
 You dont know whose it is then does he
 know
 Dont touch me will you look after Benjy
 and Father (p. 132)

Quentin has a voyeuristic need to know the details of Caddy's sex life; she, in her turn, tries to get him to take on the responsibilities that her illness and impending marriage force her to relinquish.

Quentin's need for her drives him to be desperately cruel; he tells her, "You needn't worry about them you're getting out in good shape" (p. 121) Quentin essentially accuses her of doing what she so desperately tries not to do: of abandoning the family for her own selfish desires. The phrase "you're getting out" suggests that Quentin sees his family as a trap to be escaped from, rather than a nurturing place. Quentin is also angry at Caddy for leaving, which he interprets as an act of abandonment. He has no such options; he must continue to live within the family and its expectations for him. Finally, Quentin is furious with Caddy for leaving him; he can find no legitimate way to express his need for her, so he resorts to insults instead.

When Caddy talks to Quentin, she correctly identifies the family's problem, but incorrectly assumes the blame for it herself: "Father will be dead in a year they say if he doesn't stop drinking and he wont stop he cant stop since I

since la

." (p. 1

changes

suggests

but she

seems to

however

drinkin

drinkin

able to

stop. C

to chil

uses ag

Qu

tells l

better

they n

thereb

should

resent

from r

be exp

hand i

membe

respo

faili

since last summer and then they'll send Benjy to Jackson. . .
." (p. 141) Caddy begins to say, "since I" but quickly changes that phrasing to "since last summer". The change suggests that she blames herself for her father's drinking, but she stops short of identifying her transgression, which seems to her too heinous to be put into words. In reality, however, Caddy is not at fault; Mr. Compson has been drinking far longer than since last summer, and he began drinking well before Caddy's pregnancy. He has never been able to stop; it is no fault of Caddy's that he will not stop. Caddy's assumption of her own guilt is a trait common to children of alcoholics, and it is a trait that Quentin uses against her.

Quentin plays on Caddy's feelings of guilt when he tells her, "The less you say about Benjy and Father the better when have you ever considered them Caddy" and "If they need any looking after its because of you" (p. 128), thereby placing blame for the family's ills squarely on her shoulders. Quentin seeks both to hurt Caddy because he resents her imminent departure, and to exonerate himself from responsibility. The shrillness of Quentin's words can be explained by Deutsch, who says that "Guilt and blame go hand in hand. . .Some of the anger directed at other family members is predicated on the assumption that we are all responsible [for the alcoholic's drinking] and we are all failing miserably [to stop it.]" (p. 49)

Th
the sec
Carolin
couches
disappe
Compson
end. Th
we unde
reflec
not Ca

w
c
e
f
d
d
o
u
w
t
s
F
m
.
e
c
t
S
S
L
e
c
S

The Quentin section delineates the most clearly of all the sections how other family members, particularly Caroline, blame Caddy for the family's downfall. Caroline couches her blaming of Caddy in terms which reflect her disappointment and disillusionment. The words that Mrs. Compson uses become a familiar, tired refrain by the novel's end. They pervade the Benjy section; by the Dilsey section, we understand what Caddy never fully grasps: that they reflect her characteristic way of dealing with the world, not Caddy's failure:

what have I been done to have been given children like these Benjamin was punishment enough and now for her to have no more regard for me her own mother I've suffered for her dreamed and planned and sacrificed I went down into the valley yet never since she opened her eyes has she given me one unselfish thought at times I look at her I wonder if she can be my child. . . I thought that Benjamin was punishment enough for any sins I have committed I thought he was my punishment for putting aside my pride and marrying a man who held himself above me. . . but I see now that I have not suffered enough. . . while your own daughter my little daughter my baby girl she is she is no better than that when I was a girl I was unfortunate I was only a Bascomb I was taught that there is no halfway ground that a woman is either a lady or not but I never dreamed when I held her in my arms that any daughter of mine could let herself don't you know I can look at her eyes and tell you may think she'd tell you but she doesn't tell things she is secretive you don't know her I know things she's done that I'd die before I'd have you know. . . (pp. 117-118)

Caroline
and tha
to the
section
marryin
are int
herself
let her
as to s
intent
reputat
and dis
certain
even he
into a
is only
how Ca
". . .
kissin
a blac
say a
dead a
C
her en
views
When C

Caroline's statements that "Benjamin was punishment enough" and that "I've suffered. . .for her" are familiar sentiments to the reader by the time they appear in the Quentin section, as are Caroline's references to being a Bascomb and marrying a man "who held himself above me." These refrains are interwoven with her disbelief that Caddy could "let herself" (presumably, let herself be promiscuous, or perhaps let herself become pregnant before marriage) in such a way as to suggest that Caddy plotted her actions with the sole intent of degrading her mother and destroying the family's reputation. It is no wonder, given this atmosphere of blame and distrust, that Caddy "doesn't tell things"; she certainly cannot count on her parents' help and support. Yet even her silence is used against her: Caroline twists it into a character fault, calling her daughter "secretive". It is only much later, in the Jason section, that we discover how Caroline reacts to her daughter's approaching womanhood: ". . .when she [Caroline] happened to see one of them kissing Caddy and all next day she went around the house in a black dress and a veil and even father couldn't get her to say a word except crying and saying her little daughter was dead and Caddy about fifteen then. . . ." (p. 264)

Caddy chiefly seems to avoid telling her mother about her encounters with boys, and with good reason. Caroline views her daughter's sexuality with mistrust and denial. When Caddy meets a boy at a field-meet, her family invites

him in

"Beca

Mothe

cast

not b

to th

never

innoc

such

havin

Caddy

distr

When

sugge

adama

spied

"How

have

reite

by Qu

done.

reaso

presu

Carol

Jason

him into the house. He will not go in; Quentin says that "Because they could not cajole him into the diningroom Mother believed he had some sort of spell he was going to cast on her when he got her alone." (p. 106) Caroline does not believe that Caddy could have sexual desires, preferring to think instead that someone will cast a spell over her. It never occurs to her that there might be some other more innocent reason for the boy's reluctance to come inside--such as shyness--or that there might be some reason not having to do with Caddy--such as the weird family dynamics.

It is also in the Quentin section that the plot to have Caddy followed is revealed. This plan, too, shows Caroline's distrust of both her daughter's sexuality and her judgement. When Caroline suspects Caddy of being sexually active, she suggests to Mr. Compson that Caddy be followed. He is adamantly opposed to the idea: "I wont have my daughter spied on." Caroline then launches into a familiar complaint: "How can I control any of them when you have taught them to have no respect for me and my wishes. . .", to which he reiterates, "I will not have my daughter spied on by you or by Quentin or by anybody no matter what you think she has done." Caroline rejoins, "At least you agree there is a reason for having her watched." (p. 103) The matter is presumably dropped until Caddy becomes pregnant, when Caroline taunts her husband, "That's it go on criticise Jason accuse me of setting him to watch her as if it were a

crime

ally

Jason

the fa

Carol

of bla

the wo

the fa

behavi

her pa

T

and hi

follow

and si

and th

Compso

is sim

agrees

really

of bot

that h

² In o
the power t
not have th
when his ow
Sun" shows c
to his wife
Mrs. Compso

crime while your own daughter. . . ." (p. 118) Having found no ally in her husband, Caroline has conscripted her favored Jason into doing her dirty work.

The conflict illustrates several important features of the family relationships. It illuminates Jason and Caroline's parenting style, which consists of hurling words of blame and outrage back and forth, with the result that the words carry little or no meaning. Faulkner never shows the family openly acknowledging Caddy's promiscuous behavior. Her behavior simply becomes a focal point on which her parents can pin their anger and frustration.

The exchange also shows the complicity between Jason and his mother. Jason, for reasons of his own, is willing to follow Caddy, and thus put himself at odds with his father and siblings. There are battle lines drawn in this family, and they are strict. Finally, the passage underscores Mr. Compson's ineffectuality. What he does in the above exchange is simply to posture; we are never sure whether he covertly agrees with Caroline's plan, or even if he knows what is really going on, but his words allow him to retain a sense of both detachment and moral superiority without requiring that he take any action whatsoever.²

² In other places, it seems as though Mr. Compson does have the power to act if he so chooses. Mrs. Compson, for example, does not have the power to make her husband act in favor of her wishes when his own are in opposition; an examination of "That Evening Sun" shows clearly that Mr. Compson does not feel obliged to listen to his wife if his wishes counter hers. He walks Nancy home despite Mrs. Compson's protests, despite the "Jason!", uttered "Like she

they l

intern

and p

64) a

adole

being

the f

howeve

effect

the f

power

rebel.

minima

she i

drink.

in me

She g

lover.

their

repres

believed th
thing she v
that after
leave me a
precious to
original p

For all the Compson's fuss over Caddy's behavior, then, they have no wish to actually stop it. For her part, Caddy internalizes her role as the family scapegoat. Her "early and promiscuous sexual activity, and pregnancy" (Deutsch, p. 64) are characteristic of this role. Once she has reached adolescence, Caddy is roundly condemned by her family for being a sexual person; her physical maturity is a sign to the family that she must soon leave them. Her choices, however, are constrained by society; prevented from effective action to save the family (and also prevented by the fact that what is wrong with the family is beyond her power to fix), Caddy turns to sexual promiscuity as both a rebellion against her family and a way of living out their minimal expectations for her.

For all her bravado as a child, Caddy, too, feels that she is a failure for being unable to stop her father's drinking. She tells Quentin, "There was something terrible in me sometimes at night I could see it grinning at me. . . ." She goes on to link this "something terrible" with her lovers: "I could see it through them grinning at me through their faces. . . ." Caddy's sexual promiscuity, then represents her efforts to come to grips with the "something

believed that all day father had been trying to think of doing the thing she wouldn't like the most, and that she knew all the time that after a while he would think of it." Even her plea, "You'll leave me alone, to take Nancy home? . . . Is her safety more precious to you than mine?" does not move her husband to change his original plan.

terri

pregn

sugge

for b

her i

idea

her a

"when

reaso

reaso

behav

guilt

omnip

CADDY

place

is a

adult

of th

despe

what

she i

first

terrible", which is finally exorcised when she becomes pregnant: "it's gone now and I'm sick" (p. 128) Her words suggest that her pregnancy seems to her to be the punishment for both her behavior and for being what she suspects is her inner, hidden terrible self. Further reinforcing this idea is the fact that Caddy continues to have sex despite her ambivalent feelings about her lovers; she tells Quentin, "when they touched me I died". (p. 185) There might be many reasons which explain why Caddy might feel guilty; those reasons are not as important as the evidence of her behavior, which demonstrates that she does indeed feel guilty, and the knowledge that feelings of guilt are omnipresent among children raised in alcoholic homes.

CADDY AND JASON

By the time the action in the Jason section takes place, some eighteen years after the Quentin section, Caddy is a vanquished, dispirited shell of her former self. The adult Caddy is far from being the bright, inquisitive child of the Benjy section; rather, her circumstances are so desperate and she herself has so completely internalized what her family has taught her to believe about herself that she is incapable of effective action. Caddy has had firsthand knowledge of learned helplessness in the person of

her m

Caddy

lette

daugh

but c

power

The l

threa

forbi

to wi

have

uses

"You'

ineff

threa

her mother; in the Jason section we come to realize that Caddy is far more like her mother than would seem possible.

The first mention of Caddy occurs when Jason opens the letter from her, which contains a check meant to cover her daughter Quentin's expenses. The letter is strident in tone, but completely ineffectual, and serves to highlight the powerless position that Caddy now occupies:

I had no answer to my letter about Quentin's Easter dress. Did it arrive all right? I've had no answer to the last two letters I've sent her, though the check in the second one was cashed with the other check. Is she sick? Let me know at once or I'll come there and see for myself. You promised you would let me know when she needed things. I will expect to hear from you before the 10th. No you'd better wire me at once. You are opening my letters to her. I know that as well as if I were looking at you. You'd better wire me at once about her at this address. (p. 218)

The letter introduces several details of Caddy's life. Her threats that she will come to see Quentin show that Caddy is forbidden from doing so, and the fact that she tells Jason to wire her "at this address" indicates that she does not have a permanent one. Although Caddy threatens Jason, and uses fairly strong language ("I'll expect to hear from you", "You'd better wire me at once"), the communication is ineffectual because Caddy has no way to make good her threats. As the Jason section unfolds, we learn how the

gutsy

adult

happen

grand

both

being

longer

husba

Mr. C

the b

and t

mothe

home.

chara

which

scape

toni

thin

kept

fami

had

marr

that

that

gutsy child has been transformed into the helpless, weak adult Caddy.

A few pages into the Jason section, we learn how it happened that the baby Quentin came to live with her grandparents. This information, too, serves to illustrate both Caddy's powerlessness and the way in which she is still being blamed for the family's problems, although she no longer lives at home. Caddy has been divorced by her husband, who has thrown her and the baby out of his home. Mr. Compson has gone to get the baby; Caroline has accepted the baby on the condition that it never hear Caddy's name, and that Caddy not be allowed to see her child. At her mother's command, Caddy herself is not permitted to return home.

Jason's reaction to the arrival of the baby Quentin is characteristically egocentric, and it illustrates the way in which the brothers have been taught to make Caddy their scapegoat: ". . .and I says, 'Well, they brought my job home tonight' because all the time we kept hoping they'd get things straightened out and he'd keep her because Mother kept saying she would at least have enough regard for the family not to jeopardise my chance after she and Quentin had had theirs." (p. 227) Jason sees the breakup of his sister's marriage as a personal tragedy; he will not get the bank job that Sydney Head had promised him. Jason further remembers that it was his mother who kept reassuring him that Caddy

would

in~the

own,

when :

knows

own g

tells

up wh

famil

would

dont

Jason

looke

has c

way s

initi

she h

is fo

and,

means

takes

Caddy

Caddy

him :

would not "jeopardise" his "chance." Apparently Caddy, even in the throes of overwhelming personal difficulties of her own, is expected to take care of the family, and is blamed when she cannot.

Just as she has in the Quentin section, Caddy here knows what she is being blamed for and readily assumes her own guilt. When she appears at her father's funeral, Jason tells her that he thought she "had more sense than" to show up when her mother has forbidden her to come near the family. He continues, "I'm not surprised though. . . I wouldn't put anything past you. You don't mind anybody. You don't give a dam about anybody." Caddy immediately knows what Jason is talking about: "'Oh', she says, 'That job.' She looked down at the grave. 'I'm sorry about that, Jason.'"

The most agonizing example of the way in which Caddy has come to believe what her family believes of her is the way she behaves with respect to her daughter Quentin. She initially sends the baby to her parents because, presumably, she has no way to support it. After her father dies, Caddy is forced to negotiate with Jason in order to see her child; and, as quickly becomes apparent, negotiating with Jason means giving him money. When the action in the Jason section takes place, her daughter Quentin is eighteen years old, and Caddy has been sending money for at least fifteen years. Caddy has struck a deal with Jason; she has promised to pay him if he will allow her to see her daughter a few times a

year,

howev

suspe

a way

to st

commu

conti

some

appar

For e

Quent

"I l

her c

diff

she

send

Jaso

daug

Jaso

clea

is n

Caro

Of t

. .I

Furt

year, as well as sending money for Quentin's support. Jason, however, has been taking all the money for himself; Caddy suspects as much, but in all that time, Caddy has not found a way to stop him from doing so. Nor has she ever threatened to stop the payments. She persists in sending money, and in communicating with the brother she hates, in order to continue to see Quentin, and in the hope of being able to do some good for her. The futility of that hope becomes apparent as the story progresses.

Caddy does try to circumvent Jason, but to no avail. For example, Caddy tries to get Dilsey to let her see Quentin. Dilsey requires little persuasion, telling Jason, "I like to know what's de hurt in lettin dat po chile see her own baby. . . If Mr. Jason was still here hit ud be different." (p. 238) Jason, furious, tells Caddy that "if she tried Dilsey again, Mother was going to fire Dilsey and send Ben to Jackson and take Quentin and go away." (p. 239) Jason, essentially, tells Caddy that if she tries to see her daughter, what she most fears will indeed come to pass. Jason plays on Caddy's fears; Caddy is too scared to think clearly about what her mother is likely to do and what she is not. In fact, it would be extremely uncharacteristic of Caroline to do any of the things that Jason has threatened. Of the black servants, Caroline says, "I have to humor them. . . I have to depend on them so completely." (p. 332) Furthermore, Caroline cares too much for the outward guise

of r

Jack

oppo

is u

or w

and

ever

cert

inse

cons

they

rati

Deut

inse

cons

sti

and

Jas

tru

nig

Jas

off

rep

of respectability to ever send Benjy to the hospital in Jackson; had she cared to do so, she would have had ample opportunity and excuse when her husband died. Similarly, it is unlikely that Caroline would ever leave Jefferson, with or without Quentin; leaving would mean parting with Jason, and would require far more verve and initiative than she has ever shown. These aspects of her mother's personality are certainly not unknown to Caddy, but her own fear and insecurity prevent her from thinking of them. The consequences with which Jason threatens her, lies though they be, are far too awful for her to be able to refute them rationally. Caddy here is true to her upbringing: as Charles Deutsch states, "Even when the cause of the original insecurity vanishes and the environment becomes more consistent and predictable, the children [of alcoholics] are still tentative and wary, always expecting the unexpected and prepared for the worst." (p. 42) Caddy believes what Jason tells her not because he is probably telling her the truth, but because he is giving words to her greatest nightmare.

Caddy has a similar reaction when she tries to persuade Jason to get her mother to give Quentin back to her. She offers Jason a thousand dollars if he will do so. He replies:

"You haven't got a thousand dollars," I says. "I know you're lying now."

Jasc

sugg

if C

hitt

spok

supp

with

woun

fin

situ

." J

for

daug

name

and

"Yes I have. I will have. I can get it."

"And I know how you'll get it," I says.

"You'll get it the same way you got her. And when she gets big enough--" Then I thought she really was going to hit at me, and then I didn't know what she was going to do. She acted for a minute like some kind of a toy that's wound up too tight and about to burst all to pieces.

"Oh, I'm crazy," she says. "I'm insane. I cant take her. Keep her. What am I thinking of. Jason," she says, grabbing my arm. Her hands were hot as fever. "You'll have to promise to take care of her, to--She's kin to you; your own flesh and blood. Promise, Jason. You have Father's name: do you think I'd have to ask him twice? once, even?" (pp. 240-241)

Jason basically calls his sister a prostitute; when he suggests that the same sort of life is in store for Quentin if Caddy takes her, Caddy capitulates. She first thinks of hitting Jason--an appropriate response, since it was he who spoke--but then she turns her anger inward. The effort of suppressing her anger, and sublimating the hope of a life with her daughter is tremendous; she acts "like a toy that's wound up too tight and about to burst all to pieces." She finally does come to accept Jason's assessment of her situation: "Oh, I'm crazy. . .I'm insane. I cant take her. . .". Jason's attack on her sexuality has proved to be too much for Caddy; she is unable to imagine a future for her daughter and herself that is better than the one Jason names. Once again, he has given voice to her greatest fears, and won the day. Once again, Caddy has been defeated by a

dist

over

inef

remi

kins

Cadd

his

exis

resp

some

the

beca

real

perh

laug

stak

rest

cons

him,

cons

thre

Unfe

the

Quer

distortion of her sexuality, a lie she has heard over and over and has come to believe about herself.

In her defeat, Caddy resorts to the same old, ineffectual pleading. She tries to appeal to Jason by reminding him that Quentin is "kin"; in a family where kinship counts so little, it is difficult to believe that Caddy expects this plea to be effective. Then she appeals to his feelings of loyalty for their father, which, if they exist at all, are buried under layers of defenses, as his response to her shows: "That's true. He did leave me something." Jason feels that his father did nothing for him; the only bequest he has received from him is his name.

Jason then tells Caddy, "I run more risk than you do, because you haven't got anything at stake." At this, Caddy realizes the futility of bargaining with her brother, and perhaps feels again the loss of her daughter. She begins to laugh hysterically. Caddy repeats, "No. I have nothing at stake." In a sense, Jason is right; Caddy is no longer restrained by notions of respectability, even while Jason is consumed by them. At this moment, as when she begins to hit him, it seems as though a window might be opening in Caddy's consciousness. She almost becomes aware that she could threaten him with many things which would alarm him greatly. Unfortunately, the window closes, and she instead returns to the same useless pattern of begging him to take care of Quentin.

nov
fal
car
she
und
the
tie
act

cour
cho
pos
Each
give
exp
sex
deve
jeal
of h
Paul
with

This episode marks the last appearance of Caddy in the novel, and in its terrible symmetry we see how far Caddy has fallen. The cornerstone of the Benjy section was Caddy's caring, attentive love for her younger brother, whose needs she could anticipate and whose mute howls she could understand. In this final episode, we see Caddy, formerly the consummate mother, now a real mother, but with her hands tied, her voice silenced, incapable of taking any effective action on behalf of her child.

* * * * *

Caddy and her mother together form the point-and-counterpoint which delineates the constrained range of choices that Faulkner saw for women; they articulate the two possible roles that women play in all of Faulkner's fiction. Each of those roles, not surprisingly, is bleak: Faulkner gives his female characters the choice between a natural expression of sexuality, which is always punished, or a sexually restricted life that leaves a woman seemingly devoid of all positive emotion, and that smacks of prudery, jealousy, and an excessive attention to the "proper" forms of behavior. We see this pattern repeated again and again in Faulkner's novels, but the example which most closely meshes with The Sound and the Fury is found in Sanctuary.

nov

Temp

sex

tra

to

to

car

cen

out

lea

Wha

onl

no

exp

alc

exp

the

wom

Tom

sho

of

met

tha

the

Sanctuary parallels The Sound and the Fury in that both novels deal with a young girl's sexual downfall, although Temple's rape is not of her own making, whereas Caddy's sexual activity is within her control. In a sense, Temple's tragedy is all the more bleak because all that she did was to leave school in the company of Gowan Stevens, who proves to be an unreliable escort. Temple's story is Caddy's story carried out into the larger world; whereas Caddy's primary censure comes from within her family, Temple's comes from outside that small circle. Temple's rape occurs when she leaves the sheltered environment which has protected her. What Sanctuary makes explicit is what The Sound and the Fury only hints at: that random, overpowering evil is everywhere; no one—male or female—is ever safe. Thus, the world view expressed in Sanctuary is one common to children of alcoholics. Faulkner has once again translated his childhood expectation of random, chaotic violence into fiction.

Significantly, especially with respect to The Sound and the Fury, the main recipient of the violence is once again a woman, although Sanctuary is filled with injustice, as Tommy's and Lee's deaths, and even Popeye's final fate, show. As in The Sound and the Fury, however, the framework of a woman's story provides Faulkner with the tragic metaphor he needs to express the helplessness and confusion that were his lot early in life. What happens to Temple, then, gives an outward gloss to what happens to Caddy.

San

Sour

fema

oth

has

pro

pro

but

are

the

att

con

exa

ove

hou

dif

beh

ari

con

and

beh

is t

(anc

Sour

Sanctuary shows how the world punishes female sexuality; The Sound and the Fury limits itself to how a family punishes female sexuality. The two worlds intersect and amplify each other.

In creating the world of Sanctuary, William Faulkner has created a society where women are dependent upon men for protection. In order to be the beneficiaries of such protection, however, women must live up to a widely-accepted but largely unarticulated cultural ideal. In a sense, women are trying to hit a moving target. And the stakes are high; the vehemence with which women in the novel judge each other attests to the importance for them of discovering what constitutes right and proper behavior. Narcissa Benbow, for example, will not allow Ruby to remain in her house overnight because she realizes the damage that such a houseguest would do to her reputation. In fact, the difficulty for the women in the novel lies in knowing which behavior is acceptable and which is not. This difficulty arises because "acceptable" behavior is defined conditionally by the men who proffer protection; their moods and whims at any given time govern the notion of right behavior for a woman as much as do the woman's actions. It is this exchange between men and women in the wider world (and not just within the confines of the family) that The Sound and the Fury lacks.

Wh one believes in the justice and power of the protection paradigm more vehemently than Temple Drake herself at the outset of the novel. Repeatedly, she mentions the fact that her father is a judge and that she has four brothers; we first receive this information from one of the town boys as he jealously watches Temple at a college dance with Gowan. Bitterly, he exclaims, "My father's a judge", in a "bitter, lilting falsetto." (Sanctuary, p. 30) When Temple talks to Ruby in the kitchen of the shack, practically the first bit of information that she gives her is that she has four brothers-- "Two are lawyers and one's a newspaper man. The other's still in school."--and that her father is "Judge Drake of Jackson" (p. 52), thereby conveying the information that not only does she have five male protectors, but they are influential ones at that. Temple displays her ultimate faith in her father's ability to rescue her from harm and redress her wrongs when she croons to Ruby's baby, "if bad mans hurts Temple, us'll tell the governor's soldiers, won't we?" (p. 54)

Given her faith in the social system at large, it is not surprising that Temple's strategies for escaping from the cabin in the woods involve mobilizing the men around her to come to her aid. When she cannot persuade Gowan to ask Lee for a car to get them back to town, she asks him herself, with no success. The thought of simply leaving on foot, by herself, does not even cross her mind; when Ruby

tells her, "Nobody asked you to come out here. I didn't ask you to stay. I told you to go while it was daylight", Temple, genuinely unaware of any other options, replies, "How could I? I asked him. Gowan wouldn't, so I had to ask him." (p. 52) In fact, her rephrasing of "I asked him" to "I had to ask him" displays her sense of the impropriety of her being forced to ask at all, and thereby assume a role that, according to her understanding of the world, should rightfully belong to Gowan. Since Gowan is abdicating his responsibility, Temple feels herself to be trapped. She simply cannot conceive of any alternative course of action. Temple's behavior here also helps to explain why Caddy relies on her father and then her brother Jason to take care of her daughter; to deny their right or ability to do so would require her to repudiate too much of what she has been raised to believe about the world.

Indeed, Temple has no clue as to how to protect herself in this circumstance. The situation reverses all the behavioral givens that Temple has lived with up until now; now, action is required of her, but previously, her safety has been contingent upon her appearing weak and defenseless. Her actions in the cabin--hiding in the back room, putting on the raincoat--are all passive attempts to evade the danger that she is in. When she finally explains to Benbow what happened during the first molestation, she gives a litany of fantasies designed to remove her mentally and

emotionally from the scene without physically removing her-- she imagines being turned into a boy: "I'd strike a match and say Look. See? Let me alone, now. And then I could go back to bed" (p. 210); she imagines being a middle-aged schoolteacher dressed in grey, and thus assuming what Noel Polk identifies as "perhaps the only position of authority . . . to which a girl of Temple's time could aspire" (p. 65); she fantasizes about wearing a chastity belt with "long sharp spikes on it and he wouldn't know it until too late and I'd jab it into him. I'd jab it all the way through him and I'd think about the blood running on me and how I'd say I guess that'll teach you!" (p. 211); she imagines being "an old man, with a long white beard" (p. 213). Finally, when Popeye actually does molest her, Temple says that she fell asleep and did not awaken until "that woman came and took me down to the crib." (p. 213) ³ Temple's only recourse in this situation is to fantasize escapes, and when they fail, to lose consciousness.

Temple Drake, then, presents a more sexualized and sensationalized version of Caddy Compson. Both women are

³ Although Temple claims to have egged Popeye on by telling "Touch me. Touch me! You're a coward if you don't" (p. 211), her words are at odds with the description Faulkner gives of her in the cabin, lying on the bed with "her hands crossed on breast and her legs straight and close and decorous, like an egg in a tomb." (p. 69) Similarly, Tommy hears nothing as he chases outside the door to the room, beyond which are Temple, a hen, sleeping Gowan, and Popeye. Given these discrepancies, it is likely that we are to read Temple's words as more fantasy; while her head she is active, but in reality she is completely passive.

victimized; both women are passive in their victimization. Faulkner allows them no way to successfully resist the overwhelming forces of evil which surround them. They and their dilemmas thus serve as another face for the alcoholic's sense of victimization and hopelessness.

Chapter 4

Quentin Compson: The Noble Failure

When Mr. Compson gives his eldest son the watch which had belonged to his grandfather, he tells the youth, "I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire. . . I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and again for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it." (p. 86) In so doing he reveals to his son the obsession with time that characterizes the life of the alcoholic. Norman Denzin notes that "The alcoholic lives a disease of time and emotion that is experienced as an uneasiness with self. This uneasiness is dealt with through alcoholic drinking. Fearful of time, the alcoholic dwells in the negative emotions of the past. Such self-feelings undercut and undermine the alcoholic's ability to confront the present and the future in a straightforward manner." (p. 19) The gift of the watch, then, is an outward sign and symbol of the bequest that Mr. Compson has already made to this son: the profusion of negative self-images and inadequate life coping skills that render the boy, too, incapable of dealing effectively with

the present or planning for the future. The Quentin section illustrates both stylistically and thematically the ways in which the alcoholic's "dis-ease" of time can cripple and eventually kill.

Quentin Compson, poised at the brink of adulthood in his section of The Sound and the Fury, provides the second link in the chronological chain of maturity that unfolds as the novel progresses. Through Benjy's eyes in the novel's first section, Faulkner has given an immediate, day-to-day picture of the chaos and emotional abandonment to which the Compson children are subject; in the Quentin section, Faulkner shows how the effects of such a childhood carry over into Quentin's life away from home. As Quentin matures and leaves his childhood home, he discovers the degree to which the character and tenor of his day-to-day life has been colored by the emotional terrain of his childhood. When he leaves for Harvard he takes with him patterns of behavior and emotion which have sheltered him and served him well in his family, but which prove to be useless in the world at large. Because he has been isolated for so long, because he has learned so thoroughly to trust the words and actions of others above the evidence of his own senses, he literally cannot tell the difference between fantasy and reality. As a consequence, Quentin fails at the first task that faces him as he tries to forge his adult identity.

Quentin faces an age-old adolescent dilemma: he tries to separate himself from his childhood and move into the adult world, which for him, in large part, means becoming sexually active. As he enters the world at Harvard, however, Quentin discovers that he is hamstrung by childhood ideas and ideals about virginity and the honor of gentlemen. Caddy's pregnancy and subsequent marriage arouse in him a cognitive dissonance that he is never able to resolve, preferring to commit suicide rather than grow up and out of the role he has played in his family since birth.

The transition from childhood to adulthood is difficult for anyone, but in alcoholic families the change is made especially complicated because family members feel that they must adhere to roles that are extremely rigid and narrow. Charles Deutsch explains

Because many alcoholic family systems are closed, conflict-ridden, inconsistent, inhibiting of direct communication, and convinced of their fragility, children have difficulty initiating new roles that reflect their own desires and physical and psychological changes. The closed systems require the children's reactions to be above all consistent and predictable. The children in most trouble from the outset are so restricted and bound into their reactive roles that they become little more than their roles. Given over to an exaggerated and rigid identification of self with role, so protected by it and at least nominally rewarded for it, children have great difficulty operating outside it. (p. 57)

The result for children who have taken on any single role to such a great extent is that they continue to respond to the world with the defense mechanisms that they learned as children. When confronted with new situations (as Quentin is when he moves to Cambridge from his home), they repeat old patterns, no matter how inappropriate and damaging those old patterns might be in the new environment. These children are unable to take new data about the world and formulate it into new schema. Trapped by old roles, they never grow up.

Thus, Quentin's story enables Faulkner to experiment with a theme that will become the linchpin for characters like Horace Benbow and Gavin Stevens: an inability to act. In The Sound and the Fury, Faulkner delineates one of many routes whereby otherwise compassionate, humane men become incapable of effectively standing up for their principles. In Horace Benbow's inability to defend Lee Goodwin from the mob in Sanctuary, in Gavin Stevens' inability to protect Eula Varner Snopes' suicide in The Town, we see echoes of Quentin Compson.

As he has done with Caddy, Faulkner makes of Quentin a symbol of thwarted growth. Caddy has been constrained by the world and the people around her; Quentin's tragedy lies in the fact that he cannot conceive of options for himself other than the constrained choices that he has learned in his family. Santayana said that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it; Quentin is caught up in

an endless cycle of repetitions as he tries to come to grips with his past and move into adulthood.

Stylistically, the Quentin section is arranged in a series of patterns, of repetitions: we see Quentin in different situations which vary only slightly (the series of fight scenes, for example), and we see him react in similar ways in these situations. It is as if Quentin formulates each new situation in terms of the old ones, without taking in any new information. No matter who he fights, for example, the battle becomes for him a test of his masculinity and power in the world, and he loses every fight in which he engages. The combined effect of this layering of situation upon situation is to create the patterns and themes of Quentin's life; as Faulkner places Quentin in these scenes, he reveals bit by bit the building blocks of Quentin's personality. Faulkner achieves a palimpsest; each new scene shows only a fragment of Quentin, but the common threads running through the whole section are reinforced and repeated into a constant refrain. The effect is to reveal what John Rouse would call the mythic quality to Quentin's existence:

The life told artlessly as to a friend, told some evening in a quiet room to reveal the truth without reserve, can be read like a dream, like a myth. For our telling, like the whole of our living, is governed by a personal myth kept hidden even from ourselves. And this myth, part of the very flesh, impelling us as by necessity, speaks

in the special language of body and soirit,
 in stance and gesture, in images, symbols,
 and rhythms, elaborating the unknown themes
 of our life. The one who offers to hear our
 dream or our story opens a source of creative
 energy that brings us to the threshold of a
 secret power and magic, that puts us in touch
 with our own mystery. (p. 12)

The first-person narrative of the Quentin section further enhances the illusion that there is a real Quentin, that he is himself telling his life-myth, and that he cannot see the patterns and repetitions that he is making. We watch Quentin as he tells his "chronicles composed by highly selective memories, stories intended to explain and justify ...[his] present condition,...[his] successes and failures." (p. 12) We watch Quentin as he tries to know himself.

There is no real Quentin, however. The question thus arises, who is the author and who is the audience in Quentin's tale? In this novel, written by Faulkner without thought for its potential readers, Faulkner might play both roles. He might, in fact, have created a myth designed to illuminate his own life choices for himself, a story that might underline and make plain to him the nature of his personal myth. In Jackson J. Benson's words, "Faulkner thus uses Quentin to expiate the emotional excesses of his own frustration and depression, creating an 'extreme Faulkner' who operates largely out of the same value system and with the same skills as the author himself. We are presented with 'a work of art within a work of art' situation: like the

artist, Quentin Compson is trying to say an ideal world into being that can liberate him from the sound and fury of the present world." (p. 223) As John Rouse notes:

The making of a poem is an experimental move, and extension of the child's use of movement and sound to explore one's potentiality in the world. The telling or writing is itself an action, and the fiction is imagined action--idea and feeling in motion, making choices, reconciling opposite desires, shaping a form to give experience a comprehensible unity. A person, like a poem, must somehow be a unity of opposites, and the act of fiction is an act of self-creation.

So now this occurs to me: The poem is a completed gesture. A gathering in the present of past experiences for a fling at the future. A pattern of choice lived to some new end, choice of words, and choice of self. A pattern that begins in delight and ends in wisdom, Frost said. Experiencing a poem we move in rhythm, come arching along its emotional curve living its choices. (pp. 54-55)

Faulkner might have created in Quentin a self for whom suicide was the only option, and thus experimented with that choice in a harmless way.

That Quentin is in some sense his creator's alter ego is an assumption generally accepted by critics, and several imaginative details of Quentin's life run fairly parallel to the life of his creator. Their emotional histories are even closer; it is not difficult to see Quentin in the shy, inarticulate child Faulkner, or in the adolescent who assumed several different personalities and felt himself to

be a consummate failure at them all. The difficulties faced by Faulkner, and later created by him in the persona of Quentin, were almost certainly derived, at least in part, by Faulkner's own experience growing up in an alcoholic family.

Quentin is a stellar example of a child who cannot operate outside the role he has played during his childhood. Once he reaches Harvard, Quentin cannot meet the challenges of growing up and defining himself in an environment which is new to him. He shrinks from those around him; Shreve's offhand comment, "Have you got too proud to attend classes, too?" (p. 93) hints at the degree to which Quentin has become withdrawn and uncommunicative at college. His lack of communication with those around him, his unwillingness and inability to participate in the life of the university, lead him to feel very much alone. Once again, this pattern is typical of alcoholics, and thus not unexpected in the children of alcoholics; as Norman Denzin notes, "By attempting to escape time the alcoholic escapes himself or herself and is free to dream, but these dreams and this alcoholic time is not time with others. It is private time that is unshareable and often unbearable." (p. 113) Quentin is often lost in his own reveries, and lost to real-world interactions continuing around him.

Indeed, feeling alone is one of the cornerstones of the role that Quentin has been groomed to play in his family. From the time he was a little boy, Quentin was set apart

from his siblings. The Compson family tries to relieve Quentin from the burden of family problems so that he might study; when he was at home, the other children were urged to be quiet so as not to disturb his concentration. (p. 71)

When the time comes for Quentin to go to Harvard, the tuition money is not readily available, and the family must sell Benjy's pasture to get it. Quentin is not insensible to the fact that a sacrifice has been made solely for him, and he knows what is expected of him. Right before he kills himself he remembers his father's words: "you will remember that for you to go to harvard has been your mothers dream since you were born and no compson has ever disappointed a lady. . ." (p. 204)

Quentin is set apart, we thus see, for a special destiny. Quentin's role, broadly classified, is to play what Deutsch calls the Family Hero: he becomes "the repository of their [the parents'] hope." The Family Hero, who is "exemplary in every way", will "prove to the parents and outsiders that all is well." (p. 58) The role is common to eldest boy children:

The eldest son of an alcoholic father is more likely to be excused from heavy burdens in the home so that he can devote all of his time and energy to excellence in the world. The family needs him to bring in from the outside the pride and success that can distract from the problems created by the alcoholic's drinking. The son's mission is to rescue and redeem the family, bring home the praise and envy of others without getting too caught up in the family morass. (p. 59)

Thus, in Quentin's case, the time and care taken by other family members that he might study, as well as the financial sacrifice which enables him to go to Harvard, come with a heavy price: he must be exemplary in every way. He must rise above his family's troubles. He must be outwardly successful, and he must be deserving of his family's pride.

Fulfilling the family's expectations for him means that Quentin must accept the family's world view. Since that view is inconsistent, Quentin can never develop a strong internal sense of self which will help him determine how to act or react in a given situation; instead, he becomes adept at picking up the cues sent out by the authority figures around him. Quentin's need to be "exemplary in every way" means that he must please everyone in authority. In a family where acceptable and approved behavior changes unpredictably, Quentin has learned to be minutely attuned to the feelings and wishes of the adults around him, so he can be sure never to fall out of favor with them. So, for example, when Caddy tells him that Jason has cut up Benjy's paper dolls, Quentin tells her, "Mother said to not call him Benjy." (p. 76)

Similarly, when the children are having their supper in the kitchen on the evening that Damuddy has died, it is Quentin who hears their mother crying, and correctly identifies the sound. (p. 29) Among the Compson children, he is the one who is most concerned with propriety, with following the rules,

and with figuring out what people actually mean, regardless of what they say.

Quentin's excessive need to please those in authority also means that he is preoccupied with authority and its machinations. He needs to believe that power operates in a logical, orderly, and above all, predictable and knowable fashion. The need to hold this belief leads Quentin to deny even the evidence of his own senses--he believes what he has been told over what he has himself experienced or seen. When faced with a discrepancy between words and actions, Quentin usually believes the words. The result is that his response to the world is highly histrionic and often quixotic.

Another problem posed for Quentin by his family's inconsistent behavior is that he is forced into the untenable position of acting out values that he has not ever seen modeled by the adults around him. For example, he hears his mother referred to as a "lady", but her behavior towards her children is anything but genteel. Mrs. Compson's words and actions are consistently accommodated to the views of outsiders, rather than to the needs of the family; for example, she admonishes Caddy not to carry Benjy for fear that she might ruin her posture, rather than considering what Benjy might want or need. Uncle Maury, supposedly a true Southern gentleman, is himself an alcoholic who is shiftless and forever borrowing money. Even Mr. Compson is no role model; although he, too, is supposed to symbolise

honor and compassion to his son, he is unable to act compassionately on Caddy's behalf when she most needs him to intercede between her and her mother. It is no wonder that Quentin, left with no role models, arrives at a moral code that is both unyieldingly severe and completely dichotomous in its conceptions of right and wrong. There are no grey areas in Quentin's mind; although this type of thinking is typical of late adolescence, for children coming from alcoholic homes, the rigidity of their moral constructs is even more severe. Their code of ethics is given the impossible task of rescuing them from a multitude of evils, of allowing them to pick a safe path through the minefield of moral failing that they see all about them. Quentin, unfortunately, can find no safe path.

The first repetition that we see Quentin making is to adopt the role of outsider at Harvard. As we have seen, Quentin has been set apart from his siblings all his life; considering himself to be different from his peers comes naturally to him, and he quite naturally continues to feel so at college. Quentin feels himself to be an outsider for a number of reasons. As a Southerner attending a university in the North, he feels isolated, and adapts by tempering his reactions to make himself appear to be what others expect him to be. Thus, at first he pretends to miss the black servants because he thinks that the northerners expect him to do so; it is only later that he discovers that he does,

in fact, miss "Dilsey and them." Quentin readily adopts the persona of an expatriate; the North is not his element. He has no history here; unlike at home, where he is reminded of the generations of his father's family on a daily basis, in the North, the fish that nobody can catch (p. 147) has more of an identity than he does. Quentin's Southern accent further isolates him; the children he comes upon think that he might be Canadian. Quentin soon learns that his speech identifies him as a member of a lower class; when the one boy says that he speaks like them "in minstrel shows" (p. 148), his friend tells him that he has accused Quentin of speaking "like a coloured man." (p. 148) Quentin also feels different from his classmates because he lacks the sexual experience that they have. Finally, he feels set apart from all the men he knows because his feelings about women are different from anyone else's; part of what Quentin cannot reconcile is the fact that he is expected to treat women solely as sex objects with the fact of his very strong, very ingenuous, love for his sister, whom he cannot accept as having any sexuality at all.

The structure of the Quentin section further emphasizes the theme of thwarted growth that Faulkner uses Quentin to express. The cornerstones of Quentin's personality--his relationship with Caddy and his inability to act effectively on his beliefs--are played and then replayed in sets of parallel incidents. These repetitions are more striking than

the recurring pattern of isolation discussed above because Faulkner draws them very clearly; they intersect and interrupt each other in the text in a way that makes their interconnectedness impossible to ignore. Two sets of recurring images are particularly important in this light: the fight scenes, and the scenes where Quentin and Caddy are in or by the river. In each case, Faulkner gives us incidents from Quentin's childhood, and then from his adolescence; the fact that Quentin's responses in all these incidents hardly vary illustrates clearly that he is at an emotional standstill. The layering of image upon image, with each scene recalling the scenes before it and foreshadowing those to come, points to the mythic nature of Quentin's battles and his search for salvation in the river. We get the sense that Quentin chooses the people and places in his life much as John Rouse suggests:

...we, too have chosen the persons with whom we are intimate...not only for the reasons we give ourselves but also for their symbolic value, for their filling a role in our mythic quest as magic familiars. I believe we must all live...withour own rituals of penance and propitiation, our escapes and returns, our pilgrimages to the sacred places of the past, our magical familiars.

...[O]ur actions embody a questioning, a searching...This searching becomes our mythic odyssey, and as we go along we try out the people we meet for major or minor roles in our myth, rejecting or accepting them, seeking the help we need in our pursuit of answers for the quest. In life as in dream we use persons and places to think with--we combine persons, objects, and places in

various ways by our actions, working out in the resulting story some kind of proposition, some resolution. (p. 35)

The fact that the details of Quentin's story change so little from childhood to adolescence underscores the idea that he cannot come to a resolution for his quest. The mythic answer is for him suicide; it is an answer which could have been plainly foretold from his childhood.

That he will prove to be a disappointment seems to Quentin to be a certainty. Quentin, like other children from alcoholic homes, is "constantly fearful of failure" (Deutsch, p. 60), and feels he cannot avoid it. He feels that he is insignificant and doomed. Thus, when he buys the flatirons that he will use to kill himself, he thinks, "Dilsey would say, what a waste." He does not consider that Dilsey might mourn him, only that she would be appalled at the waste of the flatirons. Similarly, when he goes into the jewelry store to see about getting his watch repaired, he tells the man, "Sorry to have taken your time" as if his needs were not legitimate; as if any time spent on him is wasted. He feels the futility of his family's having sold land for him to go away to school; he thinks, "A fine dead sound we will swap Benjy's pasture for a fine dead sound." (p. 200) So that the money spent on him will not prove to have been totally wasted, and because he feels guilty that his tuition money has deprived Benjy of his beloved pasture, he waits until the end of the school year to die.

The fight scenes are particularly indicative of the ways in which Quentin chooses to fail. During the course of the novel, Faulkner places Quentin in three different fights. The first, occurring during his early childhood and narrated in the Benjy section, illustrates the values with which Quentin is being raised, as well as the quixotic quality of his relationship to the world. Quentin's "Southern gentleman" role demands that he observe a code of chivalry to which lip service is paid in his family, but the behavior for which he never sees modeled. Once again, Quentin's plight is to figure out what is required of him in a situation where there are no guidelines. As a result, he becomes obsessed with the ideals of honor and chivalry. Quentin's mission in the world is to rescue his family's honor, to be a true Southern gentleman. He spends a great deal of time trying to figure out what exactly is meant by honor, by being a gentleman. Part of being a gentleman means to protect women; Quentin believes his father's words--"no compson has ever disappointed a lady". He acts on that dictum at an early age, when he fights his schoolmate for saying that he will put a frog in the teacher's desk:

I [Benjy] could hear the roof. Father leaned forward and looked at Quentin.

Hello. He said. Who won.

"Nobody." Quentin said. "They stopped us. Teachers."

"Who was it." Father said. "Will you tell."

"It was all right." Quentin said. "He was as big as me."

"That's good." Father said. "Can you tell what it was about?"

"It wasn't anything." Quentin said. "He said he would put a frog in her desk and she wouldn't dare to whip him."

"Oh." Father said. "She. And then what."

"Yes sir." Quentin said. "And then I kind of hit him."

We could hear the roof and the fire, and a snuffling outside the door.

"Where was he going to get a frog in November." Father said.

"I dont know, sir." Quentin said.

The above passage gives a great deal of information both about Quentin and about the Compson family's concept of honor. Mr. Compson's questions are probing, but he allows his son the freedom not to talk about the fight if he so chooses; Quentin does not face punishment for having fought. Quentin's first statement is to reassure his father that the boy he fought was as big as him; Compson honor demands that he not pick on someone smaller than himself. Quentin reveals that he has fought for the sake of a woman, a fact that is significant to his father.

In this passage, we also see the quixotic way in which Quentin acts on his principles. He is completely ready, even eager, to do so, but his actions are almost completely ineffective. Mr. Compson's first question is whether or not Quentin has won the fight, but Quentin has achieved no clear victory; the fight was stopped by teachers. When Quentin goes on to explain the nature of the dispute, Mr. Compson

points out the obvious fallacy in Quentin's foe's words: there are no frogs to be had in November. Quentin, however, does not stop to think about the practical aspects of the situation; he hears only that a lady's honor is at stake and that he must protect her. Running in Quentin's psyche almost as strongly and as deeply as the notion that gentlemen--Compson gentlemen in particular--protect ladies is the idea that Quentin will fail at the mission that his family has set for him.

The second fight with Caddy's fiance, Herbert Head, only reinforces the impression of Quentin that Faulkner created with the first childhood fight. Characteristically, Faulkner in this passage illuminates Quentin's beliefs about morality and gentlemanly conduct by showing us their negatives: Head affronts practically all of Quentin's most cherished ideals, leaving the reader to intuit what those ideals are. In the exchange that follows, Quentin and Head are immediately at cross purposes; Head wants to win Quentin's friendship, and Quentin wants to let Head know that he has no respect for him. Quentin hopes to gain power over Head by making an issue of the fact that, ten years earlier, Head was kicked out of his fraternity for cheating at cards. Quentin does not react, however, until Head assumes a familiar, "you-and-I-are-one-and-the-same" attitude which Quentin finds offensive. Head follows Quentin out on the porch in order to have a private word with him:

...I saw you come in here so I watched my chance and came along thought we might get acquainted have a cigar

Thanks I dont smoke

No things must have changed up there since my day mind if I light up

Help yourself

Thanks I've heard a lot I guess your mother wont mind if I put the match behind the screen will she a lot about you Candace talked about you all the time up there at the Licks I got pretty jealous I says to myself who is this Quentin anyway I must see what this animal looks like because I was hit pretty hard see soon as I saw the little girl I dont mind telling you it never occurred to me it was her brother she kept talking about she couldnt have talked about you any more if you'd been the only man in the world husband wouldn't have been in it you wont change your mind and have a smoke

I dont smoke

In that case I wont insist even though it is a pretty fair weed cost me twenty-five bucks a hundred wholesale friend of in Havana yes I guess there are lots of changes up there I keep promising myself a visit but I never get around to it been hitting the ball now for ten years I cant get away from the bank during school fellows habits change things that seem important to an undergraduate you know tell me about things up there I'm not going to tell Father and Mother if that's what you are getting at (p. 123)

Head follows Quentin in order to win his friendship, but all of his advances rest on an assumption of shared male values that Quentin does his best to refute. Quentin refuses a cigar; he does not smoke. Head takes the liberty of putting his match behind the screen; he tries to engage Quentin's complicity in this action, as if it were the prerogative of men to take actions of which women might not strictly approve. Head goes on by appealing to what he assumes is

Quentin's sense of virility; he mentions that he was jealous of him and wanted to see who "this animal" was. He then belittles Caddy by calling her a "little girl". After all these attempts to flatter Quentin and engage him in their shared masculinity, he once again asks if Quentin will smoke. Quentin's refusal to do so is more than simply a refusal based on a habit that he has not acquired; Quentin is refusing to take his part in a social ritual and is thereby refusing to share in Head's value system.

With this rebuttal, Head begins to distance himself from Quentin. When Head tells him, "things that seem important to an undergraduate you know", he tries to make himself seem more worldly and sophisticated than Quentin. In doing so, he diminishes Quentin, making him seem young and impotent. Quentin's response is to try to hold the threat of revealing Head's secret up to him. Head's response to Quentin shows that Quentin's supposed trump card has no value whatsoever; in fact, his threat only reinforces Head's impression that Quentin is young and impotent:

Not going to tell not going to oh that that's
 what you are talking about is it you
 understand that I dont give a damn whether
 you tell or not understand that a thing like
 that unfortunate but no police crime I wasn't
 the first or the last I was just unlucky you
 might have been luckier
 You lie
 Keep your shirt on I'm not trying to make you
 tell anything you dont want to meant no
 offense of course a young fellow like you

would consider a thing of that sort a lot
more serious than you will in five years
I dont know but one way to consider cheating
I dont think I'm likely to learn different at
Harvard (p. 124)

At first, Head cannot remember the incident to which Quentin refers. When he does, he attempts to diminish its importance by telling Quentin that everyone cheats; he hints that Quentin, too, might have a skeleton in his closet. Quentin, of course, adamantly denies that inference. When Head then tries to diminish the incident by telling Quentin that five years' time might bring a different perspective, Quentin's response (I dont know but one way to consider cheating...) is indicative of his completely polar black-and-white morality. Quentin cannot consider contingencies or moral uncertainties; for him, every question can be settled by referring to that gentlemanly code of honor which Head so consistently affronts. Quentin will not admit the possibility that even gentlemen can be guilty of lapses in morality; a lapse in morality is to him prima facie evidence that the man in question is no gentleman. That the whole code of gentlemanly conduct is in fact a duplicitous facade which allows men cover for a whole host of ungentlemanly activities is simply beyond his grasp. Head's appeals to him on that score ("you might have been luckier") fall on completely deaf ears.

Head recognizes both Quentin's naivete and his sense of melodrama: he tells him, "We're better than a play." Head then tries to buy Quentin's good will by flattering him for his appearance, to no avail. He appeals to Quentin not to hurt his mother unnecessarily by telling her something that she need never know, also to no avail. In fact, this ploy backfires so badly that when Head suggests that there is no need for Quentin to tell Caddy what he knows, Quentin proceeds to get ready to fight with him.

Sydney Herbert Head may in fact consider that his disgrace at cards ten years earlier is no small matter, but he is nonetheless eager to keep the incident quiet. The lengths to which he goes to prevent Quentin from revealing the incident belie his assertions that the whole affair was trivial. When Quentin turns to leave, Head tells him,

...wait dont go yet let's discuss this thing
 a young man gets these ideas and I'm all for
 them does him good while he's in school forms
 his character good for tradition the school
 but when he gets out into the world he'll
 have to get his the best way he can because
 he'll find that everybody else is doing the
 same thing and be damned to here let's shake
 hands and let bygones be bygones for your
 mother's sake..."

Head once again tries to secure Quentin's silence by appealing to what he assumes are their shared values: they have a common school background, which he brings up again, and he appeals to another element of the gentlemanly code

which he assumes Quentin shares: Quentin's sense of loyalty to his mother. To sweeten the deal, he offers Quentin money in the guise of a handshake. Essentially, though, Head has told Quentin that Quentin's sense of morality is juvenile, and that he will learn better when he grows up a bit. His words have the double effect of diminishing Quentin and denying his most cherished beliefs; it is no wonder that Quentin vehemently refuses the cash he offers, saying, "To hell with your money."

After a few more exchanges, Head gives up trying to make friends with Quentin, and disgustedly tells him, "Tell and be damned then see what it gets you if you were not a damned fool you'd have seen that I've got them too tight for any half-baked Galahad of a brother your mother's told me about your sort with your head swelled up..." Even though Head exaggerates the effects of his charms on the Compsons, he is correct in assuming that the Compsons will not call off the engagement erroneously believes that the Compsons will never be persuaded to call off the engagement because he has charmed them so thoroughly, he is right in his assumption that they will not call it off. Quentin, too, should know as much; the only information that could cause the marriage to be called off is the revelation of Caddy's pregnancy. Once again, though, Quentin clings to his obsolete belief system rather than recognize the contingency of Caddy's pregnancy; the extremity of his denial is shown

through Head's more accurate reading of the situation, even though he lacks all the knowledge of the situation to which Quentin is privy. In fact, when Quentin does try to tell Caddy that she ought not to marry Head because he was caught cheating, she replies, "Well what about it I'm not going to play cards with [him]" (p. 153). Not even Caddy is swayed by what Quentin assumes to be damning information; rather than playing a trump card, Quentin is left with an empty hand.

The third fight scene is the last to be revealed in the Quentin section, but it occurs chronologically before the fight with Head. It is placed last because it carries the greatest emotional significance for Quentin; he fights with Dalton Ames, the father of Caddy's child and the man that she loves. This fight is overlaid with imagery from the branch, a spot which carries a great deal of emotional significance from Quentin and Caddy's childhood. When the incident begins, Quentin has found Caddy lying in the branch. She is thinking about Ames, a fact which bothers Quentin a great deal. He demands to know if she loves Ames, then refuses to believe her answer, repeating, "Caddy, you hate him dont you". (p. 173) Much as a child might, Quentin tries several ploys to direct Caddy's attention away from Ames and back to him: he wants to believe (and make her admit) that Ames has forced her to have sex with him; he wants Caddy to run away with him; he pretends that he will kill her and himself. Through all these machinations, Caddy

is only half attentive. She understands that Quentin is trying to win her back; she also realizes that what might help him cope with her sexual maturity is some growing of his own. She tells him, "youve never done that have you...that what I have what I did." He answers, stridently, "yes yes lots of times with lots of girls", but he is, of course, lying. His lie is an attempt to gain credence in Caddy's eyes; it is an attempt to put himself on equal footing with her.

The attempt fails. He begins to cry, and finally, Quentin, the helpless child, wins her sympathy. Quentin reminds her of the day when Damuddy died: "Caddy do you remember how Dilsey fussed at you because your drawers were muddy." (p. 174) She tells him not to cry, then holds him to her. The images that Faulkner gives here are maternal; Caddy, her heart beating sure and strong, calms her brother much as a mother might soothe a child: "But I couldnt stop she held my head against her damp hard breast I could hear her heart going firm and slow now not hammering and the water gurgling among the willows in the dark and waves of honeysuckle coming up the air my arm and shoulder were twisted under me" (p. 175) Finally we see that what Quentin wants from Caddy is precisely what Benjy wants: he wants a mother.

The moment is fleeting, however. Quentin soon discovers that Caddy will not return to the house with him because she

is planning to meet Ames. Quentin tries physically to hold her back from going to her rendezvous, saying, "I'm stronger than you." As usual, though, it is Caddy who proves to be the stronger one; she goes off with Ames, leaving Quentin helpless behind her.

The actual fight occurs a few days later, but the concatenation of this scene in the branch with Quentin's meeting with Ames causally links Quentin's feelings of desertion with his attempt to fight. Quentin's feelings of rage at Ames prove completely ineffectual. Quentin tries to force Ames to leave town. When his words have no effect on Ames, Quentin tells him, "Ill kill you dont think that just because I look like a kid to you...." (p. 183) Ames, too, tries to get Quentin to see that his effort to keep Caddy to himself is futile: "listen no good taking it so hard its not your fault kid it would have been some other fellow." Quentin does not believe him: "did you ever have a sister did you". Ames' reply sparks Quentin to try to hit him: "No but theyre all bitches"

Even this gesture of Quentin's is futile. Ames catches his hand, blocking the blow. He then shows Quentin his gun, and displays his excellent marksmanship by shooting wood chips in the river. Quentin's efforts at protecting his family's honor are shown to be puny several times over: nobody but he is interested in protecting that honor to

begin with, and his efforts at fighting with his bare hands are completely overpowered by Ames' gun.

The fight with Dalton Ames conceals the fourth fight in the Quentin section, the fight between Quentin and Gerald Bland. Faulkner's stylistic decision to present the Ames fight as if it occurred in the present tense, then follow with the Bland fight as a *fait accompli* suggests both the degree to which Quentin is living in his mind and his memory at the time he strikes out at Bland, and also the degree to which the old patterns have not changed for Quentin. The two incidents blur in his mind; Spode tells him, "The first I knew was when you jumped up all of a sudden and said, 'Did you ever have a sister? did you?' and when he said No, you hit him. I noticed you kept on looking at him, but you didn't seem to be paying any attention to what anybody was saying until you jumped up and asked him if he had any sisters." (p. 190)

The details of the Bland fight are almost insignificant for Faulkner's narrative purpose. Enough detail is presented for us to know that Bland had been "blowing off, as usual...about his women." (p. 190) Shreve's sarcastic comment to Quentin when Quentin asks if he has hurt Bland show that the "fight" was typical of Quentin's windmill-tilting endeavors: "You may have hit him. I may have looked away just then or blinked or something. He boxed the hell out of you. He boxed you all over the place. What did you

want to fight him with your fists for? You goddam fool...." (p. 188) Quentin later reveals that his folly is deeper than his roommates at first suspect; he knew that Bland had been taking daily boxing lessons. Quentin, however, has never learned to consider his actions because premeditation to him would belie the moral code which dictates that a threat to a lady's honor must be met quickly, unflinchingly, and without considering the potential harm to the gentleman who takes up her cause. Quentin is doomed to repeat this gesture; he will never see it resolved in his lifetime.

One other set of images which illuminate Quentin's personal myth are images connected with the river. If the fight scenes show Quentin as he interacts with the outside world, the river scenes show how Quentin interacts with his inner self and with his sister. At the river, Faulkner shows Quentin being himself most fully; he is not playing a role or trying to live up to others' expectations. At the river, Faulkner shows Quentin most clearly engaged in the struggle to decide which to believe--the authority of empty words, or the authority of his own senses. As a child in an alcoholic family, Quentin has chosen to believe in words--not because they reflect his experience, but because they represent a more reasonable, logical, and desirable world than the world he perceives through his senses. As a young adult who grew up in an alcoholic family, Quentin clings to outmoded belief systems because he fears change, and because the cognitive

dissonance presented by the contradiction between his beliefs and his experience of the world is customary and familiar to him--he has lived with this dissonance all his life.

The main refutation to Quentin's obstinate refusal to believe the world of his sense comes in the form of his sister, Caddy. Caddy represents authority of another kind--of feelings, action, and sensuality. The novel's central image--Caddy and her muddy drawers--arises from her playing in the river, and for Quentin, Caddy and the river are inextricably linked. The river imagery thus becomes extremely significant; because of the conflation of the river with memories of his sister, it is not surprising or coincidental that Quentin's chosen method of suicide is to drown himself.

Ultimately, it is Caddy who indirectly forces Quentin to recognize the limitations of his world view. Throughout his life, Caddy has performed this function for him; Quentin talks and stalls, but Caddy acts. Even when they were children, she refuted the literal way he interprets reality; she acted on the evidence of her own senses, rather than trust to other people's words. Caddy learned early that words are unreliable; in her family, promises count for nothing and every new situation must be taken as it comes. For example, when Caddy got her dress muddy on the day of Damuddy's death, Quentin was the one who believed he knew

what would happen to her. Caddy did not believe him; she acted in accordance with her own wants, not his:

She was wet. We were playing in the branch and Caddy squatted down and got her dress wet and Versh said,

"Your mommer going to whip you for getting your dress wet."

"She's not going to do any such thing." Caddy said.

"How do you know." Quentin said.

"That's all right how I know." Caddy said. "How do you know."

"She said she was." Quentin said.

"Besides, I'm older than you."

"I'm seven years old." Caddy said. "I guess I know."

"I'm older than that." Quentin said. "I go to school. Don't I, Versh." (p. 20)

In this passage, Caddy and Quentin are engaged in what amounts to an authority battle. When Caddy refutes Versh's statement that her mother will whip her for getting her dress wet, Quentin challenges her knowledge, referring back to their mother's actual words for authority. For added credibility, he points out that he is older than Caddy. Caddy will hear none of this. Her reply ("I'm seven years old. I guess I know.") displays a very different formulation of the world than Quentin's; in her understanding, having reached the age of seven, there are some matters on which she is as well qualified to judge as her brother. Quentin, however, needs to hold to the notion that, as eldest, he will always know more than Caddy. His concept of authority rests on his faith in an abstract idea (in this case, the

authority conveyed by birth order); Caddy's concept of knowledge comes from her direct experience of the world. It is this conflict between actual experience and philosophical ideals which colors Quentin's and Caddy's relationship from beginning to end, and which Quentin is finally unable to resolve.

Quentin's reply to Caddy in the above exchange is to draw upon another authority: he tells her that he goes to school. As the passage continues, Caddy refuses to bow to that authority, either. They then have another fight for control: Caddy gets Versh to unbutton her dress, despite Quentin telling him not to. When Caddy takes off her dress, Quentin physically releases his frustration at having been vanquished: he slaps her. They both get wet, and Quentin presumes that they will both get punished. The entire incident foreshadows what will eventually happen between the pair; Caddy acts as she chooses, heeding no one's advice to the contrary, while Quentin, admiring her action but unable to act himself, tries to become part of her self-confident bravado by becoming a part of her deed.

This childhood incident in the branch, narrated in the Benjy section, is echoed in a later incident told in the Quentin section. In the later scene, Caddy has followed Quentin and Natalie out to the barn. She has interrupted Quentin and Natalie, who are presumably about to have sex. As in the first incident, Quentin and Caddy behave as if

they were the only two people that mattered; even as he is occupied with Natalie, Quentin worries about Caddy's whereabouts, fearing that she will catch him with Natalie. When Natalie leaves, Quentin jumps into the hogwallow, then smears mud all over Caddy, in an effort to make her care what he has done:

...I jumped hard as I could into the hogwallow the mud yellowed up to my waist stinking I kept on plunging until I fell down rolled over in it...mud was warmer than the rain it smelled awful. She had her back turned I went around in front of her the rain creeping into the mud flattening her bodice through her dress it smelled horrible. I was hugging her that's what I was doing. She turned her back I went around in front of her. I was hugging her I tell you.

I dont give a damn what you were doing
 You dont you dont I'll make you I'll
 make you give a damn. She hit my hands away I smeared mud on her with the other hand I couldn't feel the wet smacking of her hand I wiped mud from my legs smeared it on her wet hard turning body hearing her fingers going into my face but I couldn't feel it even when the rain began to taste sweet on my lips (p. 157)

Quentin fouls himself with the mud in the hogwallow as a gesture which outwardly expresses the inner uncleanness which he feels. Unable to provoke jealousy from Caddy, he once again replies as he did in his childhood--he physically makes Caddy a part of himself by soiling her, too. If he cannot make his actions have an emotional effect on her, then he is determined that they will have a physical one;



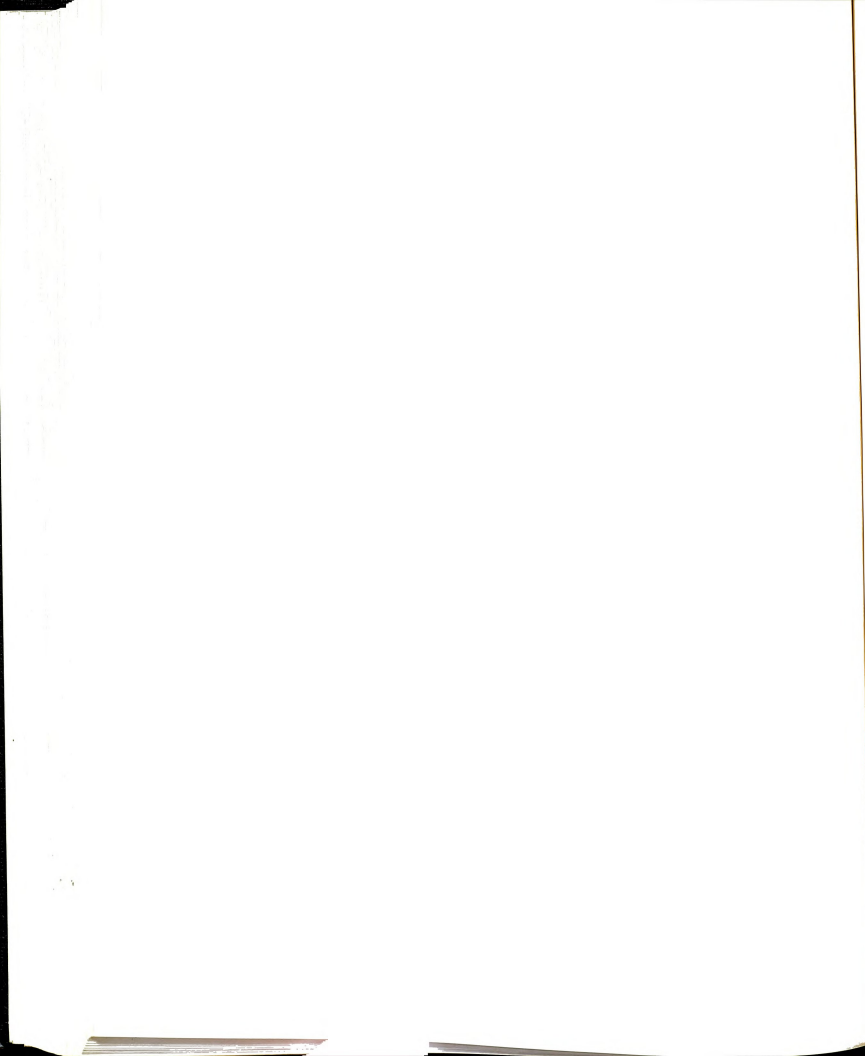
Caddy may not care what Quentin does with Natalie, but she is compelled to care about the mud that he spatters on her dress. She may not join him in incest, but she must join him in the expiatory act of cleaning off the mud and the stench of the hogwallow.

Quentin's dilemma is further heightened by the fact that what he knows about women (in the person of his sister) does not mesh with what he observes in the world around him and with what he has been told by his father. Caddy's sensual, loving world lures Quentin, but, in the eyes of the world, his father, and the abstract principles around which Quentin organizes his life, the authority of feelings is really no authority at all. Faulkner's intermeshing of Quentin's internal scenario with the action that is taking place around him in the fight scenes reiterates the way in which Quentin repeats old patterns; in the scenes having to do with Caddy, this technique serves to illustrate and reinforce the authority conflict that Quentin feels. In the fight scenes, Quentin's inner scenario and his outward reality fuse; in the Caddy scenes, there is a marked discrepancy between Quentin's inner life and his outward reality.

The parts of the Quentin section where Quentin and Caddy talk about her wedding and her love for Dalton Ames are interspersed with the passages where Quentin befriends the little girl and tries to see her to her home. Just as

Quentin's remembered fights have a real-world counterpart in his fight with Gerald Bland, Quentin's history of internal conflicts over and with Caddy have their outward counterpart in the scenes with the little girl. Quentin's association with the girl begins because with her, he can fulfill his protective role, a role Caddy never allowed him to play. He can intercede between her and the woman who runs the bake shop, the woman whom Faulkner describes as appearing "Above the counter where the ranks of crisp shapes behind the glass her neat grey face her hair tight and sparse from her neat grey skull, spectacles in neat grey rims riding approaching like something on a wire, like a cash box in a store. She looked like a librarian." (p. 154) In Quentin's mind, this woman stands for rules and law and order, as a schoolteacher might.

When the woman in the bake shop regards the little girl with suspicion, and seems to accuse Quentin of having brought her in the store with him, Quentin begins to take the girl's part, explaining that the bell did not ring when she came in because he and she came in together. He mediates the girl's purchase of the five-cent loaf, telling the woman what the girl wants, because the woman is disinclined to talk directly to the girl or to allow her to buy unspoiled goods with her money. Quentin directly aligns himself with the girl when he tells the woman, "I expect your cooking smells as good to her as it does to me." (p. 157) His words



provoke a grudging charity in the woman; she gives the girl a bit of mouldy bread for free, while advising Quentin to steer clear of foreigners. Quentin is thus far successful in being champion of the girl's cause; he has become an authority figure to her, and he has also become closely identified with her and her plight.

Having forged an alliance with her, he is reluctant to part ways immediately. He takes her for ice cream. Observing her as she eats, Quentin remembers his father's words about women, which seem ludicrous in this setting: "Because women so delicate so mysterious Father said. Delicate equilibrium of periodical filth between two moons balanced. . . Liquid putrefaction like drowned things floating like pale rubber flabbily filled getting the odour of honeysuckle all mixed up." (p. 159) While this little girl might be mysterious, she seems innocuous enough; describing her as possessed (or someday to be possessed) of a "delicate equilibrium of filth" seems to vastly overstate the case.

The discrepancy between what Quentin feels and what he has been told is further illustrated when he takes the girl past the pond where the young boys are swimming. When the boys see her, they react with horror:

They saw us from the water first, heads and shoulders. They yelled and one rose squatting and sprang among them. They looked like beavers, the water lippping about their chins, yelling.

'Take that girl away! What did you want to bring a girl here for? Go on away!'

'She wont hurt you. We just want to watch you for a while.'

They squatted in the water. Their heads drew into a clump, watching us, then they broke and rushed toward us, hurling water with their hands. We moved quick.

'Look out boys; she wont hurt you.'

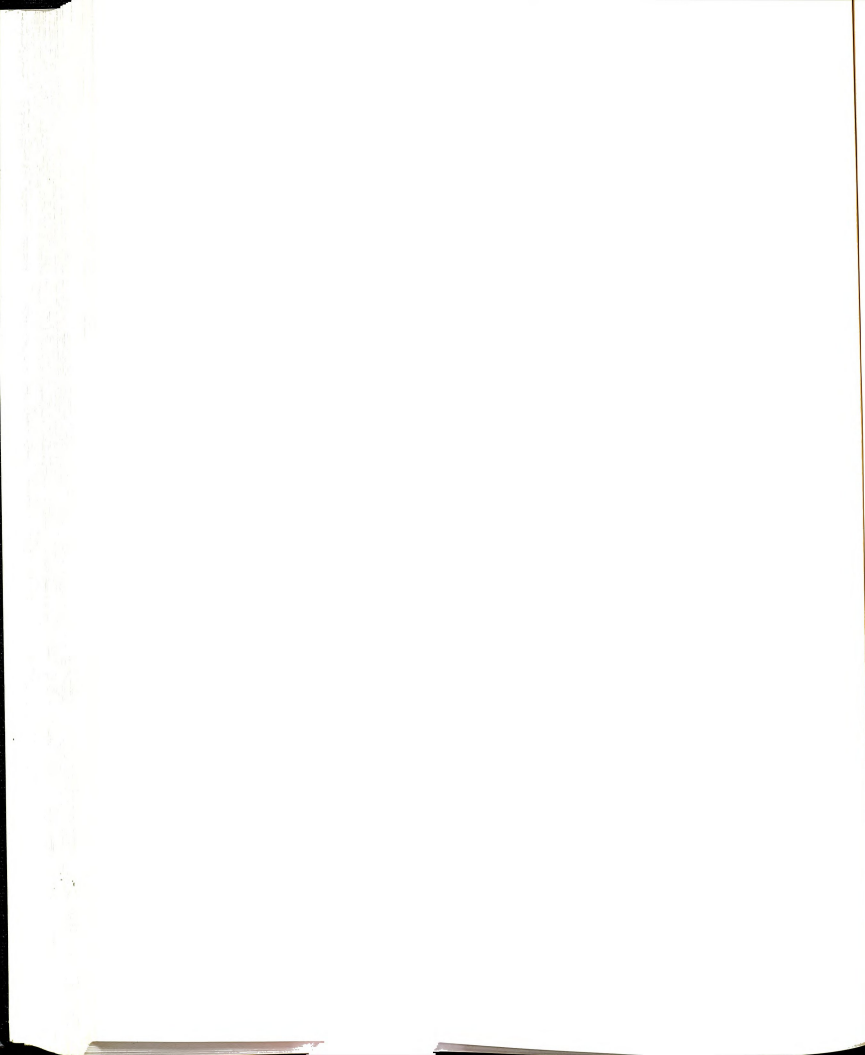
'Go on away, Harvard!' It was the second boy, the one that thought the horse and wagon back there at the bridge. 'Splash them, fellows!'

'Let's get out and throw them in,' another said. 'I ain't afraid of any girl.'

'Splash them! Splash them!' They rushed toward us, hurling water. We moved back. 'Go on away!' they yelled. 'Go on away!'

We went away. They huddled just under the bank, their slick heads in a row against the bright water. We went on. 'That's not for us, is it.' The sun slanted through to the moss here and there, leveller. 'Poor kid, you're just a girl.' Little flowers grew among the moss, littler than I had ever seen. 'You're just a girl. Poor kid.' There was a path, curving along beside the water. Then the water was still again, dark and still and swift. 'Nothing but a girl. Poor sister.' (p. 171)

The boys' reaction seems to Quentin to be too vehement to be appropriate. He tries to explain that the girl poses no threat to them, a fact which would seem obvious enough but for the one boy who wants to throw Quentin and the girl in the water. Although he says, "I aint afraid of any girl", the strength of his response belies his words. He is, in fact, afraid, and mightily so. Quentin cannot understand the source of his fear, because it is a fear that he does not share.



Quentin shows his identification with the girl when he tells her, "That's not for us, is it." His repeated refrain, 'Poor kid, you're just a girl' operates on two levels: Quentin is both saying that by being "just a girl", she is too small and powerless to do any harm (like the little flowers, smaller than any Quentin has ever seen); and saying that because of her femaleness, her fate does not matter in the course of the larger world. She is powerless even to act on her own behalf. When Quentin sees the water, "dark and still and swift", the place which echoes the branch of his childhood, and the place where he is planning to kill himself, his refrain changes to "Nothing but a girl." Because he knows that he will kill himself (in effect, will become nothing), his use of the word "nothing" here suggests that his identification with this girl, with women's powerlessness in general, and most importantly and specifically, with the plight of the sister whom he is unable to rescue, is total. More importantly, Quentin begins to glimmer that that same sister, and her sensual, elemental authority, will not be able to rescue him.

This internal drama of Quentin's is completely inaccessible to the outside world. Although his intentions towards the girl are honorable, he is mistakenly accused of trying to kidnap her. Once again, Quentin's quixotic quest is frustrated; he fails in his mission to take the girl home. When he is acquitted by his schoolmates, Mrs. Bland's

words appeal to that outward sense of law and order that Quentin denies, thus strengthening his feelings of isolation and confirming for him again the discrepancy between his experience and the dicta of the "real" world: "What would your mother say? A young man naturally gets into scrapes, but to be arrested on foot by a country policeman." (p. 181) Mrs. Bland appeals to what she assumes to be Quentin's loyalty to his mother, just as Sydney Head did. Such loyalty, however, is based for Quentin on a legacy of guilt and deception; he is impervious to attack on that score. Quentin's mother represents the authority of words, not feelings; Mrs. Bland has completely misunderstood the relationship between Quentin and his mother. Once again, Quentin's experience is thrown into contrast with the experience of the world around him.

The most poignant and most tragic way in which Quentin discovers himself to be isolated from the rest of the world occurs during his last conversation with his father, which takes place the summer before Quentin leaves for Harvard, but which Faulkner places at the end of the Quentin section. The placement of this conversation is crucial and masterful: coming at the end of the section, it represents the final and worst betrayal that Quentin has experienced. He is unable to make his father understand his pain, unable to make him understand that he will kill himself. In the exchange between Quentin and his father, Quentin's dilemma

becomes clear: he cannot accept his father's authority, because it so completely refutes his own experience; yet he cannot accept Caddy's authority, either, because her illegitimate pregnancy has made her a pariah in Quentin's world of words and honor.

Throughout The Sound and the Fury, Mr. Compson has been a solace and source of values for his eldest son. It is to his father that Quentin turns when he has gotten into a fight at school, it is his father who protects his privacy so that he may study, and it is to his father that he turns when he feels such despair over Caddy's pregnancy and impending marriage. His father, however, proves to be no solace at all to his son in this last instance. The passages in which Mr. Compson tries to explain to Quentin why it is necessary for Caddy to marry display an evenhanded misogyny that only aggravates Quentin's plight, while widening the huge gap between words and actions which already exists in this family. Mr. Compson's strategy in dealing with his son's pain and confusion is to alternate between misogynist statements designed to create a distance between Caddy and Quentin, and circular reasoning. The result of the first is to confuse Quentin even further; the result of the second is linguistic gobbledygook that is fantastically unbelievable.

The first instance in the Quentin section where Quentin and his father talk about Caddy's plight centers around a discussion of virginity. Quentin tries to puzzle out the

different meanings that virginity carries for men and women. Quentin notes that "In the South you are ashamed of being a virgin. Boys. Men. They lie about it." Mr. Compson's explanation as to why women do not lie about having lost their virginity is, "Because it means less to women." This answer, of course, flies in the face of the fact of Caddy's situation. In a sense, her lost virginity has completely altered the course of her life: her loss of virginity has led to her pregnancy, which has meant that she must find a husband to make her baby legitimate. Dalton Ames' loss of virginity has not required any such change of him--he need not even acknowledge that he is the baby's father. Given the facts before him, it is not surprising that Quentin finds his father's logic hard to swallow. It is incomprehensible how, given the punitive social consequences, virginity or its loss could mean less to women than to men.

Quentin says as much when he tells his father, "But to believe it doesn't matter." Mr. Compson wastes no effort trying to resolve the contradictions which so trouble his son; he dissipates them by means of his nihilistic world view whereby "nothing is even worth the changing of it." Rather than help his son search for answers, Mr. Compson leads him down a logical dead end.

Faulkner inserts the next words Mr. Compson speaks about Caddy during Quentin's memory of a conversation that he has had with Spode, his womanizing schoolmate. Quentin

asks Spode, "Did you ever have a sister?", to which he replies, "No, but they're all bitches." Mr. Compson's words, although certainly not as vituperative as Spode's, similarly characterize women as being all the same, and in their sameness quite different from men: "Caddy's a woman, too, remember. She must do things for women's reasons, too." That Caddy is a woman--and therefore like the "bitches" to whom Spode refers--is precisely what Quentin wishes to forget. He hopes that his father will help him understand how the sister whom he so loves could behave in a way that he has been taught to condemn. His father's answer provides no comfort and even less information--he merely tells his son that women are different.

Later in the section, Quentin remembers examples of the ways in which women are different. When his mother suggests to his father that Quentin spy on Caddy, Quentin is outraged that she would for a moment even consider that he might do such a thing. His father tells him, ". . .women have no respect for each other for themselves. . . She didn't mean that that's the way women do things its because she loves Caddy" (p. 119) It becomes clear from Mr. Compson's words that he considers women not merely different, but contemptible--they lack respect even for themselves. His defense of Mrs. Compson's hateful actions by calling them "love" ranks as perhaps the most damaging deception in the novel. Quentin, of course, knows no better; the only pure

love he has felt has come from the sister who, in his eyes, is now so unclean. If Caddy's love was not really love, then perhaps his father is right; perhaps Mrs. Compson's love for her daughter truly is love, and really did motivate her actions, no matter how fantastic this idea might at first seem.

Quentin next tries to place himself in relation to these problematic creatures who are so unlike his sister Caddy, so unlike himself: "Father and I protect women from one another from themselves our women" (p. 119) His words seem almost childlike in their parrotlike formulation. "This is what Father and I do," thinks Quentin. The childishness of the sentence underlines the fact that Quentin is desperately struggling to fit his experience to the words of the formula, although he has never been Caddy's protector. By making the construction of this formula echo the construction of Mr. Compson's earlier words, Faulkner establishes a causal link in Quentin's mind: because women have no respect for each other, for themselves, they need men to protect them from each other, from themselves. Thus is Quentin's new relationship to his sister forged.

Mr. Compson's next words to his son are instructive, rather than argumentative; for the moment, at least, Quentin has accepted his father's point of view. At this juncture, Mr. Compson's words become as damaging as Spode's, and similar in their outlook:

Women are like that they dont acquire knowledge of people we are for that they are just born with a practical fertility of suspicion that makes a crop every so often and usually right they have an affinity for evil for supplying whatever the evil lacks in itself for drawing it about them instinctively as you do bedclothing in slumber fertilising the mind for it until the evil has served its purpose whether it ever existed or no (p. 119)

Women, to Mr. Compson's mind, are irrational and suspicious. They think the worst of people and events, and usually are correct in their assumptions. Moreover, their suspicion makes others, too, believe the worst until it matters not what the facts are. Where there is no trouble to begin with, women will make trouble.

Quentin's next memory of his father's words, occurring a few pages later, counterpoints the damning ones above: "because she [Mrs. Compson] loves Caddy she loves people through their shortcomings" (p. 124) It seems hard to understand how beings with such an "affinity for evil" are capable of the love that Mr. Compson ascribes to his wife; that these words occur alone, in the middle of another unrelated memory, with no conversation to give them context, suggests that Quentin remembers them with no context--he has no memories of his mother being loving, no memories to give the words meaning. In fact, his next memories of his mother are anything but loving, and they serve to refute the idea that she could love Caddy, or anyone, through their shortcomings; he remembers her imploring her husband to let

her and Jason "go where nobody knows us so he'll have a chance to grow up and forget all this the others dont love me they never have loved anything. . ." (p. 126)

Mr. Compson also tells his son, "you are confusing sin and morality women dont do that your Mother is thinking of morality whether it be sin or not has not occurred to her" (p. 126) As Jackson J. Benson notes, "Whereas Quentin cares about the act itself and its moral implications, Caroline is concerned about the 'talk'" (p. 220) Mr. Compson once again instructs his son; he tries to explain Mrs. Compson's inexplicable conduct, and once again, he does so in terms of the differences between men wnd women.

In the next exchange between Quentin and his father, Quentin tries to challenge his father's circular reasoning when Mr. Compson tells him, "it's because you are a virgin: dont you see? Women are never virgins. Purity is a negative state and therefore contrary to nature. It's nature is hurting you not Caddy." (p. 143) Quentin replies, "That's just words." Mr. Compson one-ups his son by telling him, "So is virginity." Both Quentin and his father are correct; Mr. Compson's reasoning is circular, but Quentin, too, is trapped by the very wall of words that hems in his father. Quentin will not admit that virginity is an abstract concept, no more real than his father's ideas about nature. In this passage we see that the thinking patterns of the father have indeed shaped the son. Quentin accuses his

father of not understanding him, which prompts Mr. Compson to launch into another nihilistic epithet.

Mr. Compson's next words to his son further delineate the differences between men and women: "Because women so delicate so mysterious Father said. Delicate equilibrium of periodical filth between two moons balanced." (p. 159) In Mr. Compson's view, menstruation renders women both filthy and precariously balanced. Mr. Compson's misogyny begins with a fundamental distrust of women's bodies, a distrust which Quentin shares even as women's bodies (Caddy's in particular) fascinate him, as his next thoughts show: "Moons he said full and yellow as harvest moons her hips thighs. . . ." As his thoughts progress in this paragraph, Quentin inextricably links women's menses with his own death in the words, "Liquid putrefaction like drowned things floating like pale rubber flabbily filled getting the odour of honeysuckle all mixed up."

The Quentin section culminates with two pages of conversation between Quentin and his father. Mr. Compson dominates the conversation; in the words of Patrick Samway, ". . . Quentin goes limp before the onslaught of Mr. Compson's driving barrage of words, which, when added up, are a clarion call for suicide." (p. 189) Mr. Compson seems lost in his own reverie at this point; he cannot understand the gravity of his son's despair. As Samway notes, Mr. Compson's words "have rendered the death-experience

acceptable; the father has led the son to the brink of death and prepared a mausoleum for him to rest in with his ancestors. . . .Quentin's suicide is not an irrational act because he understood and followed the suggestions of the authoritative voice of his father." (p. 190)

Thus, what ultimately happens to Quentin is that he believes his father's words, rather than his own experience, just as he has done since childhood. As Samway explains, "His [Quentin's] father's concoction of a woman as a toxic mixture of bodily fluids which animals find attractive supplants finally Quentin's image of Caddy, one that loses human definition and unfortunately becomes a mere pronoun which father and son bandy about." (p. 189) He believes what his father tells him about women: out of Gerald Bland and Sydney Head he makes a conflation of his father's words. He ignores the models he might find in other men of his acquaintance--Shreve, for example--and allows Head and Bland to become proof positive for him that his father was right. Quentin thus becomes an ultimate outsider: believing his father rather than himself cuts him off even from his own perceptions, and, quite simply, leaves him no way to live in the world. Like so many children of alcoholics, Quentin simply cannot grow up; he lacks the tools and inner resources with which to forge a healthy adult identity.

Faulkner's later works are full of "heroes" who, like Quentin, suffer from an inability to trust their perceptions, and, as a consequence, suffer from an inability to act. Horace Benbow in Sanctuary, for example, displays the same inability to judge the character of his stepdaughter that paralyzes Quentin in his judgement of Caddy. At one point Faulkner describes Benbow, alone in his hotel room in Memphis, looking at a picture of his stepdaughter, Little Belle. As he looks at the "sweet, inscrutable face," Benbow thinks of

the grape arbor in Kinston, of summer twilight and the murmur of voices darkening into silence as he approached, who meant them, her, no harm, who meant her less than harm, good God; darkening into the pale whisper of her white dress, of the delicate and urgent mammalian whisper of that curious small flesh which he had not begot and in which appeared to be vatted delicately some seething sympathy with the blossoming grape.
(162)

Benbow thinks of Little Belle as someone whom he means no harm, and yet, he acknowledges the power of her "curious small flesh". He equates that flesh with nature, with "the blossoming grape." Little Belle's sexuality exerts a natural power over Benbow, a power of which he must perpetually be wary. Benbow fears that power, as is evidenced when a sudden movement on his part causes the photograph at which he is staring to shift:

The image blurred into the highlight, like something familiar seen beneath disturbed though clear water; he looked at the familiar image with a kind of quiet horror and despair, at a face suddenly older in sin than he would ever be, a face more blurred than sweet, at eyes more secret than soft. In reaching for it, he knocked it flat; whereupon once more the face mused tenderly behind the rigid travesty of the painted mouth, contemplating something beyond his shoulder. (163)

All at once Benbow realizes that there is more to Little Belle than the harmless caricature that he has created in his mind. She is enigmatic; he does not know what she is looking at over his shoulder, and he does not know for a moment whether her face is blurred or sweet, whether her eyes are secret or soft. Little Belle is at once appealing and very, very dangerous to Benbow. Significantly, Faulkner uses a man looking at a photo to express this duality: far from giving the reader any concrete actions or words of Little Belle's, Faulkner gives us the caprices of lighting and positioning to express Benbow's ambivalence. Little Belle is not even present in this scene; Benbow merely reacts to her image.

Another Faulknerian hero who shares Quentin's inability to act is Gavin Stevens. In The Town, when faced with the opportunity to have sex with Eula Varner Snopes, Stevens' monologue dissolves into the long, convoluted sentence structure that is the hallmark of Faulkner's procrastinators. In the following passage, Stevens waits for

Eula (who has summoned him) at night, in her husband's office:

So I should have leaped to turn them [the lights] off again, knowing that once I moved, turned loose the chair arms I would probably bolt, flee, run home to Maggie who has tried to be my mother ever since ours died and some day may succeed. So I just sat there thinking how if there were only time and means to communicate, suggest, project onto her [Eula Snopes] wherever she might be at this moment between her home and here, the rubber soles for silence and the dark enveloping night-blending cloak and scarf for invisibility; then in the next second thinking how the simple suggestion of secret shoes and concealing cloak would forever abrogate and render null all need for either since although I might still be I, she must forever be some lesser and baser other to be vulnerable to the base insult of secrecy and fearfulness and silence. (p. 89)

The passage is dense with what might almost be termed redundancy for effect. Faulkner gives Stevens a number of repetitious verbs ("moved, turned loose", "bolt, flee, run home", "communicate, suggest, project"), yet despite the large number of action words he utters, Stevens takes no action whatsoever.

The content of the passage, too, is reminiscent of Quentin Compson. Stevens is awaiting what he suspects will develop into a nighttime tryst; because Eula will need to be secretive about their meeting, he thinks she will thus become "some lesser and baser other." Gavin thinks, as does Quentin, that sexual activity will somehow taint a woman.

Like Quentin, Gavin Stevens finds himself incapable of action. Despite the fact that Eula has asked him to the office to have sex with her, and despite the fact that Gavin has been attracted to her for a number of years, he refuses her advances, telling her, "Does it mean that little to you?" (p. 94)

Eula ignores his words, telling him, "You spend too much time expecting," she said. "Dont expect. You just are, and you need, and you must, and so you do. That's all. Dont waste time expecting." (p. 94) Eula knows that Stevens is afraid to act; she essentially tells him not to think too deeply about their present situation, or about any situation.

The connection "you need, you must, and so you do" is lost on Stevens, however. He panics, screaming, "Dont touch me!" When confronted with the woman of his dreams, ready and willing to make love to him, Gavin flees.

Gavin and Quentin share the same fear of their own sexuality. This scene illustrates what Quentin fears might have happened between he and Caddy, had he proposed incest to her. When Mr. Compson asks his son if he has committed incest, Quentin tells him, "i was afraid to i was afraid she might and then it wouldnt have done any good. . ." (p. 220) Similarly, Eula tells Gavin, "Stop being afraid of things. . . Why are you afraid?" (p. 95)

The fear that Quentin expresses, and that Eula detects, runs deep. Procrastination and inactivity mask both characters' inability to grow up and into their full human potential. Whether we think of the fear as the fear of being wrong, the fear of failure, or the fear of taking a risk does not matter; each character seeks to protect himself by refusing to define himself by decisive action. Gavin Stevens and Horace Benbow are merely Quentin Compson in another guise.

Chapter Five

Jason Compson: The First Sane Compson Since Before Culloden

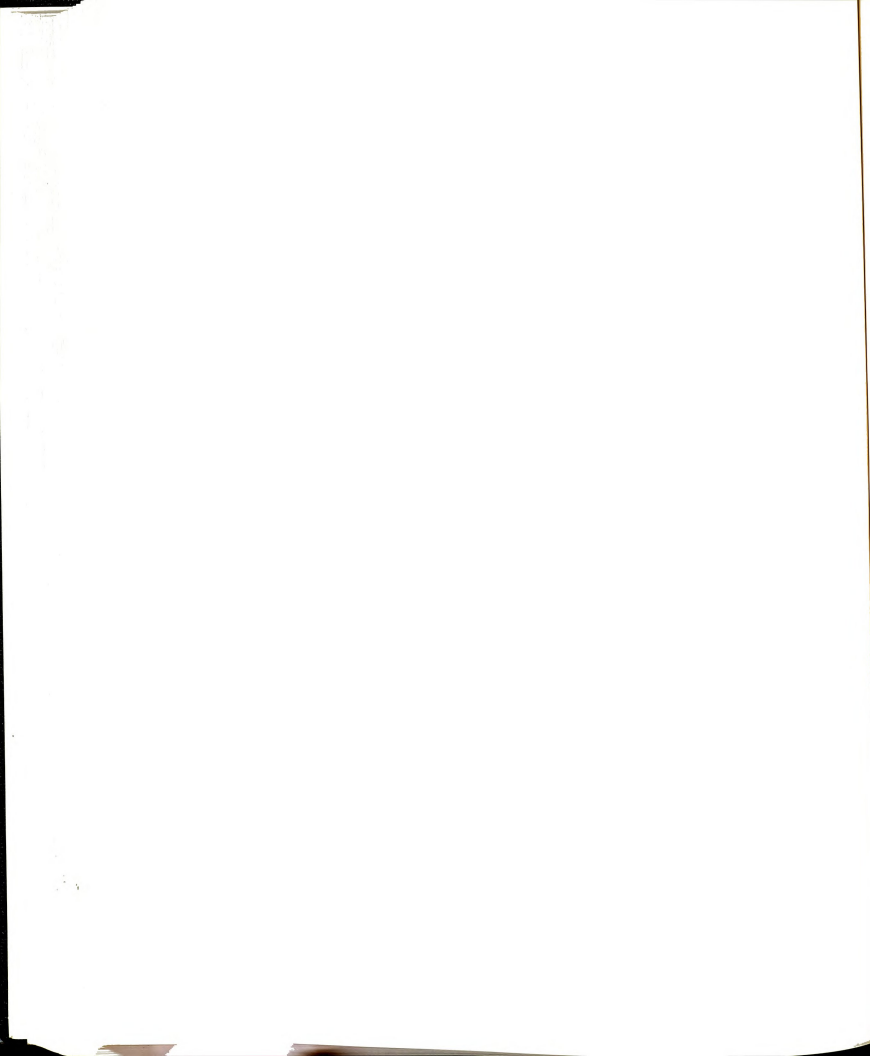
Jason Compson provides the third link in the chain of maturity that Faulkner uses to structure The Sound and the Fury. The child Benjy attempted to make sense of his chaotic world by clinging to his sister, who was the only loving person in his environment; the adolescent Quentin tried to come to grips with his approaching adulthood by resolving the internal contradictions he felt about that same sister: we pick up Jason's story when he is an adult who has passed through the naivete and raw need of childhood and the troubling complexity of adolescence, and arrived to the realm of adulthood with his defenses securely in place and his world view skewed but predictable.

In a sense, Jason has succeeded where Benjy and Quentin have failed: he has met the challenges of his peculiar family and has managed to grow up. In order to do so, however, Jason has paid a great personal price. He has had to selectively perceive those aspects of his family's world view that will enable him to survive, both physically and

psychically, and reject those that will not. Benjy, for example, knew beyond a doubt that he needed the nurturing that Caddy provides; Quentin was torn between his need for Caddy and the need to believe in the authority in his father's words, even though that authority contradicted Quentin's own sensory, empirical experience. Jason will admit no such need or contradiction. In order to secure his place in the family, Jason participates wholeheartedly in the Compson's victimization and scapegoating of Caddy. In the process, he loses completely his capacity for giving or receiving love.

Jason believes what he needs to believe, both about himself and about others, but his beliefs often hinder him from getting what he needs emotionally. He is vulnerable to manipulation by his mother, and reacts to others (especially Caddy) out of reservoirs of pain and rage that have existed as long as he has been alive. When confronted with inadequacies in himself, Jason has a ready-made excuse forged from the details of his childhood.

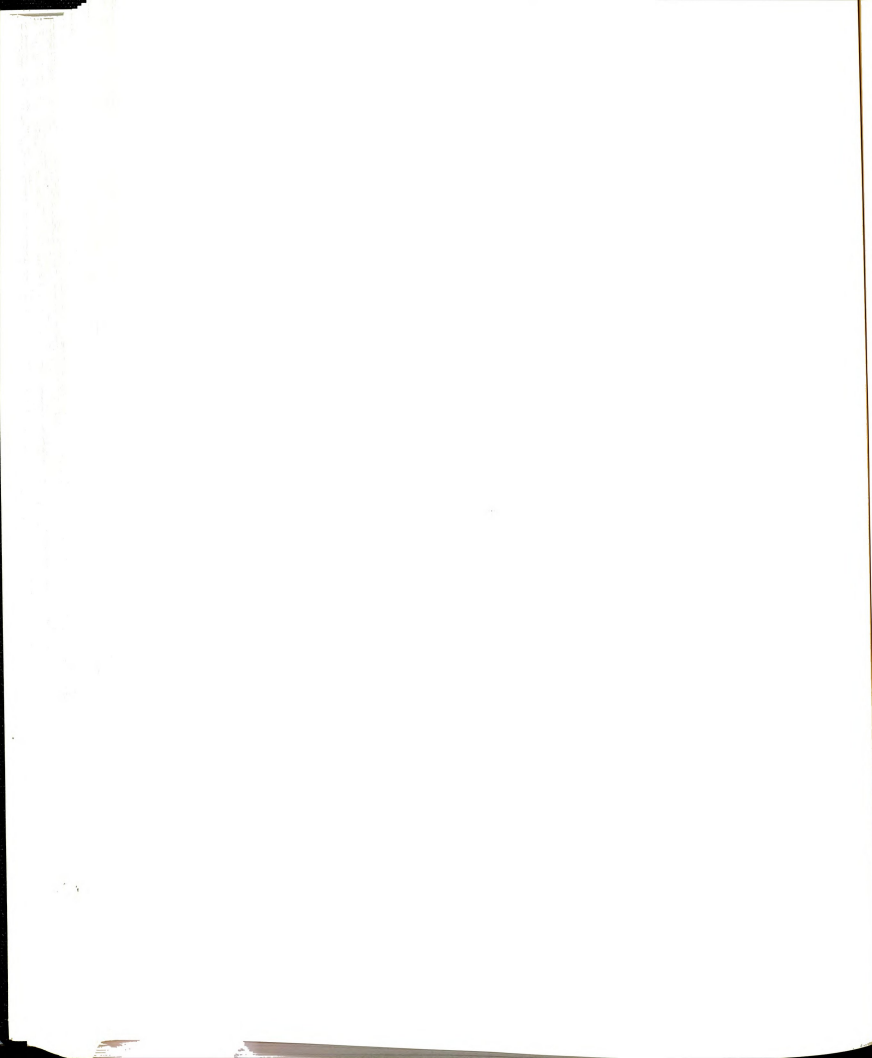
Jason, too, has grown up in a family dominated by alcoholism. Jason knows only too well that "the relationship between the alcoholic and other family members is a competitive struggle among people driven by strong dependency needs." (Nardi, p. 15) He feels himself to have been the loser in that struggle, and he, alone among the Compson children, is able to recognize the important role



that his father's drinking has played in the family, although he can only do so by using a thick mask of sarcasm to cover his pain. Thus, when Mrs. Compson tells Jason that although the rest of "her own flesh and blood rose up to curse her", Jason is the only one of them that isn't a reproach to me," (p. 224), Jason retorts, "I never had time to be. I never had time to go to Harvard like Quentin or drink myself into the ground like Father." (p. 224) Jason is bitter about the ways in which his father's drinking has robbed him of chances in life, and sees clearly the connection between the two:

Like I say, if he had to sell something to send Quentin to Harvard we'd all been a damn sight better off if he'd sold that sideboard and bought himself a one-armed straight jacket with part of the money. I reckon the reason all the Compson gave out before it got to me like Mother says, is that he drank it up. At least I never heard of him offering to sell anything to send me to Harvard. (p. 245)

Jason has seen his older siblings grow up and find opportunities to leave their family home, but no such opportunities have opened before him. In fact, just the reverse is true: Caddy's failed marriage and Quentin's suicide have left the burden of providing for his mother and brother squarely on his shoulders. Every detail of his daily life is to Jason a reminder that his family has treated him poorly, that what few resources (emotional or material) were



once available to the children have been spent on his siblings.

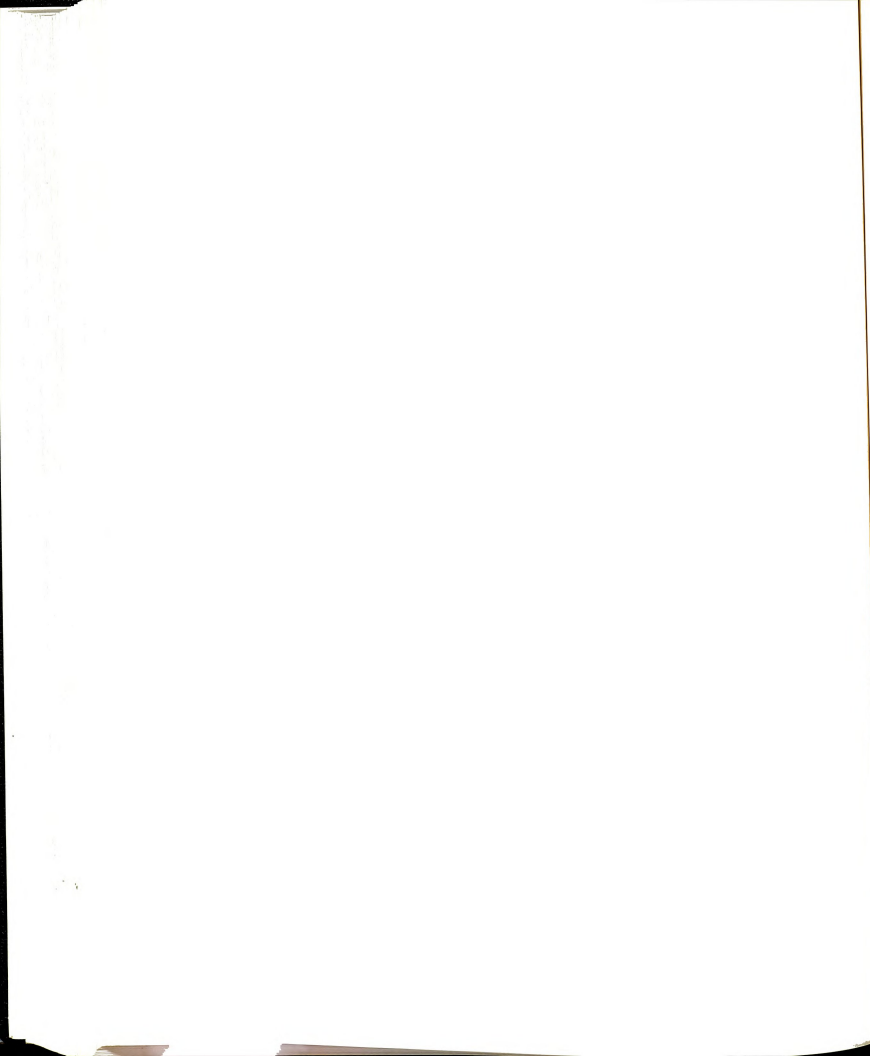
Jason's emotional life as an adult, then, is built upon a series of displacements which have their origins in his childhood. Jason is unable to vent his frustration and rage on his father, because he is dead. He cannot blame his mother, because, inadequate though her nurturing might have been, she has been his only ally since his grandmother's death. Alienating her seems to him to be too big an emotional risk. Unable to confront the people who are responsible for his pain, Jason easily and naturally assumes the habit cultivated early by the Compson family: he blames his sister for his misfortune. And, since he has felt for practically his entire lifetime that being loved by someone is more than he could ever hope for, he turns his attention to acquiring money as a measure of his self-worth. Jason's systematic torture of Caddy that furnishes much of the material of the Jason section shows both sets of displacements at work. Jason robs Caddy both of what she holds most dear--her daughter--and what he holds most dear--her money.

Faulkner's style in the Jason section represents a progression from the internal monologue technique used in the Quentin and Benjy sections; Jason's section is another link in the sequence which culminates with an external narrator in Section 4, Dilsey's section. Not only has Jason



grown older than his brothers; the psychological masking that he uses is of a more sophisticated nature. The style of this section reflects that increasing sophistication. Faulkner shows Jason living more completely in the real world than his brothers by restricting the number of times that Jason's internal monologue breaks with the events that occur around him. For the most part, Jason's mind does not wander when he is actually talking to other people (as Quentin's does when he listens to Gerald Bland, for example.) Jason's section opens with the altercation between himself and his niece Quentin, and stays in "real time" until he opens his letter from Lorraine, some 17 pages later.

Additionally, and in contrast with his brothers', Jason's memories are triggered for a specific, easily definable psychological purpose. Benjy's internal monologue was organized according to primary sensory input: the feeling of the water in the branch on his thirty-three-year-old legs prompts the memory of playing in the branch on the day of Damuddy's death, for example. Quentin manages to deal in the real world (slightly) more than Benjy; although the majority of his section is comprised of internal monologue, he is prompted to his internal rumblings by external events of which is aware and in which he plays a fairly active part. Thus, for example, when he hits Gerald Bland, he has done so because of sexist remarks that Gerald has actually

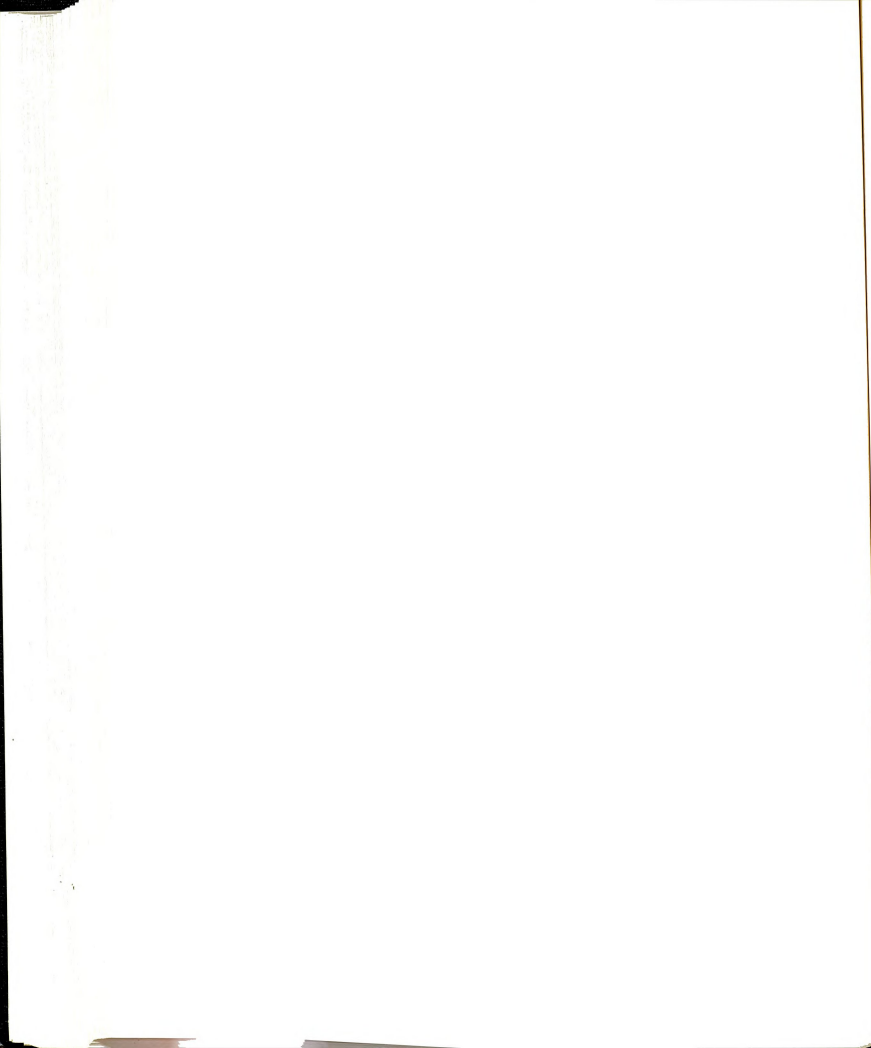


made. True, Quentin has conflated Gerald's sexism with similar remarks made by Sydney Head and, further back in his memory, by his father; and so his blow at Gerald is really a strike against all three; but nonetheless, he has correctly interpreted Gerald's remarks and their intention. (Benjy, however, mistakes the intention of the golfers who cry, "Caddy", believing that they are summoning his sister.) Jason's memories, although they are also triggered by events around him, serve to help him justify or protect himself against the machinations of the outside world, which he perceives as threatening. For example, when Jason's boss, Earl, threatens to tell Mrs. Compson that Jason has taken the money she gave him to invest in Earl's business and instead used it to buy a car, Jason lapses into the memory of his mother in a black dress the day she caught Caddy in the porch swing with one of the town boys. (p. 286) His memory shifts back from the present to a past incident; his real-time feelings of shame or guilt are thus alleviated as he remembers Caddy's transgression. If Jason feels bad, he can remember that Caddy has behaved worse, and so make himself feel better by comparison.

Similarly, when Earl tells Jason to wait on a customer, he launches into the memory of his father's funeral. Jason does not want to work; he resents being at Earl's beck and call. The funeral memory enables Jason to place blame on someone else (his dead father) for the circumstances in

which he finds himself. Both these situations display the way in which Jason uses the past to vindicate himself in the present.

Jason's major displacement is, of course, the way in which he redirects his feelings of rage at his parents and helplessness with his own situation into hatred of Caddy. In that sense, Jason, like his brothers, never really escapes his childhood. Jason's conflicts with Caddy originate in their childhood, and were it not for the family's overwhelming problems, these conflicts would not be unusual. Jason has been cut out of the siblings' circle: he cannot share the bond that ties Caddy and Quentin, and he cannot get the nurturing from Caddy that she gives to Benjy. Jason's first appearance in the Benjy section underscores his isolation from his siblings--when Quentin and Caddy splash water on each other, Jason "was by himself farther down the branch." (p. 21) The two older children do not care what Jason is doing, and make no attempt to interact with him. It is only when it becomes clear that Quentin and Caddy will get in trouble for getting so wet that Jason assumes any role or importance at all in the scene: he might tell on them. Caddy and Quentin spend a great deal of time trying to decide among themselves whether or not Jason will reveal their secret; except for Quentin's passing reference to a bow and arrow that Quentin has made him, however, the pair make no effort to actually speak to Jason. Jason at first is



not even paying attention; he is not sure whom he should tell about what, as his question "Tell on who (p. 22)" shows. Once he realizes that he might assume some importance in this interaction, however, he is quick to catch on. As this interaction shows, Jason exists for his siblings only as a potential tattletale, never an equal or even beloved inferior. Once given the chance to even the balance of power between himself and them by divulging their secret, Jason does not hesitate. Sure enough, as soon as the children are within earshot of their father, Jason does indeed tell. "Caddy and Quentin threw water on each other" are the first words out of his mouth.

Jason's power over his siblings is transitory, though. More often than not, he is the subject of derision, as when, on the way home from the branch, he falls down, and Versh picks him up, saying, "If you keep them hands out your pockets, you could stay on your feet...You cant never get them out in time to catch yourself, fat as you is." (p. 27) Had this mishap happened to Benjy or Quentin, Caddy would have undoubtedly reacted with sympathy and hugs. To Jason, however, she is indifferent. Similarly, when Jason starts crying at the dinner table that same evening, Caddy makes fun of him: "He does it every night since Damuddy was sick and he cant sleep with her...Cry baby." (p. 31)

As a child, Jason has virtually no relationship with his brothers. Jason's typical mode is reactive--he wants



what others have, not because what they have is valuable, but simply because they have it. Thus, he wants the love that Caddy gives to Quentin and Benjy. He cannot get that love through no fault of his own--the battle lines in this family are strictly drawn, and Jason has been placed on his mother's side, against his father and siblings.

Unable to get Caddy's sympathy, and so prove to himself that he has some value to her, Jason attempts to provoke fear in her, and obtain his sense of worth from her reaction. He retorts, "I'm going to tell on you", but his threat is useless: as Caddy points out, "You've already told . . . There's not anything else you can tell, now," (p. 31) Jason is powerless once again.

This dynamic plays itself out again and again in the lives of the two siblings. Many of Jason's actions display his efforts to matter to his family, and especially to Caddy. Before the novel even begins, he has given up on obtaining their love, and has decided to settle for whatever reaction he can get. For example, when Caddy asks her father if the children could mind her on the night that Damuddy dies, Jason retorts, "I wont. I'm going to mind Dilsey." (p. 28) Jason's destruction of Benjy's paper dolls are motivated by the same impulse: one way to "get" to his sister is by tormenting his younger brother. Jason's need to achieve some importance in his sister's eyes also explains the ease with



which his mother conscripts him to spy on his sister later on.

As she has for Benjy and Quentin, the child Caddy has come to represent for Jason the purest, most dependable nurturing he has seen. Unlike Benjy and Quentin, however, Jason is not the recipient of Caddy's nurturing: it is this fact which elevates their conflict from the scrapping of siblings to the cornerstone of Jason's personality. Caddy, does, after all, have her moments of conflict with Quentin, too (for example, on the night of Damuddy's funeral, she "tells" Dilsey on him when he stops eating, and she fights with him in the branch, and later, over Natalie), but there is enough affection and shared sympathy between them to overcome those troubles.

Caddy and Jason, however, are perpetually at odds. Caddy will forever be bigger and older than Jason (or so he thinks when he is a child); the power gap between them will never be closed. Jason primarily holds against his sister the fact that he feels inferior to her. In this way, he is similar to Quentin--Quentin envies the ease with which Caddy moves in the world, instinctively trusting her impulses, and Jason envies what he sees as Caddy's personal power, her ability to make others care about her. Jason defines this quality of hers as a kind of arrogance; his complaint with her is that, as he sees the situation, she "thinks she's better than anyone else." When Caddy reaches adolescence,

however, Jason finds the lever which will allow him to even the score between them--instead of hating Caddy because she is able to be loved by others, he can hate her simply because she is becoming a woman. The cultural milieu of the novel thus enables to make the personal political, as it were: Jason's hatred for his sister is a mask for other, more painful feelings, and it is therefore without cause; the dominant patriarchal Southern culture provides him with a neat rationalization for that hatred, although the rationalization, too, is irrational and without cause.

In the scene where Caddy, trying out the role of a young woman, appears before her family in a new dress and wears perfume, we first see Jason finding a cultural excuse for his irrational hatred of his sister. In this scene, Caddy is attempting to comfort Benjy, who has burst into tears upon seeing her. The scene occurs in the Benjy section, and Benjy relates that he was upset because "I couldn't smell trees anymore." (p. 48)¹ Jason imputes to Benjy his own displeasure at her appearance, and neatly summarizes his troubles with Caddy, when he tells her, "He [Benjy] dont like that prissy dress . . . You think you're

¹ The structure here is not as simple as it may at first appear; Benjy has linked the scene under discussion with the scene at Caddy's wedding, where, again, she did not smell like trees. The sensual information provides the link between the two events, but Benjy never explicitly states that Caddy's perfume causes him to be upset in the scene to which I refer. See Ch. 3 for a fuller discussion of the way in which Benjy links events based on sensual impressions.

grown up, dont you. You think you're better than anybody else, dont you. Prissy . . . Just because you are fourteen, you think you're grown up, dont you. . . You think you're something. Dont you." (p. 49) Jason links what he perceives to be Caddy's sense of superiority with his own sense that she is "prissy"; the fact that Caddy is becoming a woman threatens Jason. He moves from calling the dress prissy to calling Caddy herself prissy. During this exchange, Caddy ignores Jason. Seemingly, Jason's barbs are falling on deaf ears. As the Jason section reveals, however, Caddy comes to internalize and accept the hatred and blame that her family foists upon her.

Jason never forgives Caddy for slighting him--partly because she really does slight him when they are children and partly because his blame of her masks his feelings of anger and betrayal at his parents, feelings which are too threatening for him ever to acknowledge. Children of alcoholics learn very early to mask their feelings of disappointment and abandonment, as Claudia Black explains:

It has been my experience that by the time a child being raised in an alcoholic family reaches the age of 9, he has a well-developed denial system about both his feelings and his perceptions of what is happening in the home. The above statements say, 'No, I don't feel. And if I do, it is a feeling for someone else. I can feel scared for my father or sister, but not for myself.' As one nine-year-old said to me, 'One time, my dad got upset when he was drinking and he slapped me. I looked at my mom and she started crying. So I

cried. I wasn't crying for me, I was crying for my mom."

Children raised in alcoholic homes do whatever they possibly can to bring stability and consistency into their lives. They will behave in a manner which makes it easier for them to cope, easier for them to survive. . . Learning to focus on the environment or on other people, or learning to detach oneself from the family, assists children in not feeling.

Jason, too, has had to fight to bring stability to his life. He tries to keep his focus away from his feelings, which frequently threaten to intrude upon him. The way in which Jason has used his hatred for his sister to block other, more painful feelings of loss is most clearly seen in the exchange between him and Caddy at their father's funeral. The first point at which Caddy appears in the Jason section is at her father's funeral; that scene illustrates Jason's sense of having been betrayed by his family, his confusion over that betrayal, and his inability to focus on either his feelings or the true reasons for them. He easily and naturally slips into blaming Caddy for his problems, as he has done all of his life. The difference is that now, as the last adult male and the one who holds the responsibility for his family, Jason is finally in a position to settle the score between himself and his sister.

The structure of this scene, as well as its theme, illustrates Jason's conflict and his confusion. Jason moves back and forth from his present-day existence to selective memories of the funeral. As in the Benjy section, the

triggers which connect events are Jason's emotions. The sequence serves to confuse Jason and hide from him any insight into the reasons for his feelings.

Jason is launched into the memory of this scene when, sitting at his desk in the hardware store, he opens his and his mother's mail. One of the letters is from Uncle Maury, who is asking for money. He remembers that, at his father's funeral, Uncle Maury told his mother, "You have me to depend on, always." Jason sardonically notes, "And we have. Always. The fourth letter was from him, but there wasn't any need to open it. I could have written it myself, or recited it to her from memory, adding ten dollars just to be safe." (p. 250) Jason does not feel anger at Uncle Maury for asking for money, however; his anger is displaced onto Caddy, from whom he has also received a letter, and whom he suspects of being "up to some of her tricks again."

Jason's next thought is a funeral memory: he remembers his father's coffin being covered with dirt. The memory follows immediately on the heels of his thoughts about Caddy; Faulkner does not even bother to start a new paragraph. Jason remembers that his mother started crying, and that Uncle Maury drove her off. Jason remembers that he "thought about saying, Yes you ought to brought two bottles instead of just one only I thought about where we were, so I let them go on. Little they cared how wet I got, because then Mother could have a whale of a time being afraid I was

taking pneumonia." (p. 250) Jason understands that Uncle Maury does not want to comfort his mother nearly so much as he wants to drink. Jason further understands that Uncle Maury's alcoholism and his mother's need to play the victim have excluded him and his needs. He is directly on the mark when he states, "Little they cared how wet I got." They are too self-absorbed to have a thought for Jason. Jason knows what every child of an alcoholic knows, according to Charles Deutsch: "The bottle means more to the alcoholic than the child does." (p. 121)

Jason can intellectualize his sense of betrayal and abandonment in this scene, but he cannot connect his feelings to that sense in any meaningful way. The next paragraph begins, "Well I got to thinking about that and watching them throwing dirt into it [the grave], slapping it on anyway like they were making mortar or something or building a fence, and I began to feel sort of funny and so I decided to walk around a while." Jason does not stop to consider that this funny feeling might be grief at his father's death, that he might be feeling abandoned by his father as well as by his mother and Uncle Maury; he does not stop to think that perhaps the casual, indifferent way in which the grave diggers are covering his father's casket might have seemed callous to him. He is grieving; they are not. The casual way in which they go about their task belies the significance that the task carries for Jason.

Confronted with this feeling, about which Jason can say no more than that it was "funny," Jason's first thought is to escape. He decides to walk around, as if walking will help him physically leave the uncomfortable feeling behind. Jason removes himself from the scene of the funeral and watches the rest of it from a distance. He does not want to join the other mourners; it is as if he hopes that by isolating himself from the funeral and from his family, he will be able to exorcise himself of the unpleasant emotions that make him so uncomfortable.

As Jason walks back to the grave site, he notices Caddy, standing and looking at the flowers. The contrast between the two of them is evident almost immediately. Unlike Jason, Caddy knows the source of her grief. Caddy has come to the funeral, about which she learned by accident, having seen the notice in the paper. Unlike Jason, Caddy has not been compelled to attend her father's funeral: she was, in fact, discouraged from doing so, since no one had even informed her of his death. Jason notices her looking at the flowers, about which he notes, "There must have been fifty dollars' worth." It is the cost of the flowers which counts with Jason; to Caddy, it is the tribute they pay that matters. Jason notes that "Somebody had put one bunch on Quentin's". Since the other Compsons have left, and since no one has been at the grave since Jason left for his walk, it was presumably Caddy that moved the flowers.

Jason assumes that Caddy has returned to ask for money. He tells her almost immediately, ". . . you needn't have come back. There's not anything left. Ask Uncle Maury if you dont believe me." Caddy assures him that she does not want money, and looks down at the grave again. Jason notes

. . . We stood there, looking at the grave, and then I got to thinking about when we were little and one thing and another and I got to feeling funny again, kind of mad or something, thinking about now we'd have Uncle Maury around the house all the time, running things like the way he left me to come home in the rain by myself. (p. 252)

As Jason remembers his childhood, he once again begins to feel "funny." That this feeling might be grief or betrayal is indicated by the fact that he speculates on how his life is going to change--Uncle Maury is going to be a presence at the Compson house, and if his notion of "running" other "things" is similar to the way he has treated Jason at the funeral, Jason can and does expect to be left out in the rain many, many times. Jason acts immediately to alleviate his funny feeling. In order to make himself feel better, he attacks Caddy:

"A fine lot you care, sneaking in here soon as he's dead. But it wont do you any good. Dont think that you can take advantage of this to come sneaking back. If you cant stay on the horse you've got, you'll have to walk.," I says. "Do you know that? We dont even know you with him and Quentin," I says. "do you know that?"

First, he accuses Caddy of not caring that her father has died. His most potent barb, however, is to tell her that they "dont know" her at the house; Caddy's name is never brought up in front of the child Quentin and Benjy. Jason gives a betrayal to balance the betrayal that he feels; he tells Caddy that the two people she cares most about do not even know her name. Rather than confronting his own feelings and joining Caddy in a shared sorrow, he casts off his emotions even as he casts off his connections with her.

Caddy speaks next. She does not even bother to counter his malicious statements about her. She has been thinking practically. She, unlike Jason, wants to retain connections, specifically with her daughter. Knowing what will argue best with Jason, she offers him fifty dollars if he will let her see Quentin, even if only for a minute. Jason asks to see the money. When Caddy shows it to him he notices that there is more than he thought, whereupon he asks Caddy, "Does he still send you money? How much does he send you?" (p. 253) Caddy then offers one hundred dollars. After a few more exchanges, Jason agrees to meet her.

The way in which Jason fulfills his promise provides one of the most painful scenes in the novel, and shows how brutal he has become. Jason gets baby Quentin, wraps her in Uncle Maury's raincoat (so that Caddy will not be able to see her as they approach or when they leave), and gets a driver and hack, which he and the baby take to the arranged

meeting place. Jason interprets "a minute" very literally: as soon as they approach Caddy, Jason unwraps the baby and holds her to the window of the hack. When Caddy sees Quentin, she "sort of jump[s] forward." Jason immediately tells the driver to hit the horses. Caddy's "minute" with her child is nothing more than a fleeting glimpse. Jason has entered into a bargain with Caddy, but he is determined still not to be bested by her; his entire adult relationship with his sister consists of him attempting to make himself feel better for the slights he thinks he has received in life by victimizing her. His cruelty in this situation speaks to his overriding sense of deprivation: Jason reacts to Caddy out of a rage and malice that far exceeds whatever slight she could possibly have done to him. Caddy is only a stand-in for the real sources of slight, which Jason cannot confront. The fact that the way he treats her is so disproportionately cruel shows that Caddy is not the true cause of his bitterness.

After describing this incident, Jason recounts, "And so I counted the money again that night and put it away, and I didn't feel so bad. I says I reckon that'll show you. I reckon you'll know now that you can't beat me out of a job and get away with it." (p. 255) Jason here displays another significant way in which he makes himself feel better: he counts his money. Jason uses material wealth to compensate himself for deficiencies that he feels in other areas. To

further alleviate his guilt feelings, Jason blames Caddy for the way he has treated her, calling forth "the job" that he had been promised by Sydney Head as one might call forth a mantra. In Jason's mind, it is not he who has mistreated Caddy because Caddy's was the first injustice, an injustice which expiates Jason for whatever awful action he might see fit to take.

Jason's relationship to his mother similarly displays the posture of denial and powerlessness that he has learned to adopt for his own. It is from her, foremost and most fundamentally, that Jason learns that words have no meaning and are not to be believed. Without a doubt, Jason is his mother's favorite child. Mrs. Compson has hardly been an adequate parent to any of her children, but on the surface, Jason would seem to have gotten the best of what she had to give. From the start, Mrs. Compson allies herself with Jason and against her other children. She tells him that he is more Bascomb than Compson, and endows him with a sense of being set apart for a better fate than will visit the Compsons, but such a fate never materializes; when her troubles over Caddy seem unbearable, she tells her husband, "Let me take Jason and go where no one will know us", but they never leave, and Jason is never rescued from his awful home life; she tells him that because he is a Bascomb he deserves more than his paltry little life has given him, but she never shows him how to get it.

Instead of providing solace to Jason, however, her words have a two-edged bite: they nurture in him the seeds of discontent with his lot, teaching him to wait unhappily while waiting for his better, "well-deserved" fate rather than working to change his life; and they build a wall between him and his siblings. The children's first abandonment has been at the hands of their parents; that Jason seems so obviously favored by their mother cannot but cause bitter resentment toward him from Caddy and Quentin, and further bind those two together. At the same time that his favored status alienates Jason from his siblings, it accords him no privilege. Mrs. Compson's favoritism consists of nothing but empty words: his mother is no more loving towards him than she is to her other children.

On some level, Jason perceives that his mother is fundamentally dishonest, although he never acknowledges that she has deceived him as well as others. Jason understands her powerful defense mechanisms, although he fails to recognize his own, or to understand that they are carbon copies of hers. Together the two of them behave liked a mismatched team; they work against each other and frustrate themselves so as to prevent either of them from taking any effective action to control their lives. Theirs is a dance of learned helplessness whose steps lead nowhere.

The internal arguments which define Jason's and his mother's posture towards the world are structured very



similarly; Jason no doubt learned these defense mechanisms at his mother's knee. Both sets of defense mechanisms are typical of the kind of thinking that dominates families with alcoholism; research has shown that children with alcoholic parents are more likely than their peers to see events as being out of their control (Prewett, Spence, and Chaknis). In addition, alcoholics are prone to "self-handicapping", which, in the words of Mark Wright and Frederick Obitz

consists of embracing an impediment that enhances the opportunity to excuse failure and to accept credit for success. . . In anticipation of future events, the self-handicapping individual overestimates the influence of the handicap and underestimates the influence of personal control. This allows the anticipation of negative events without posing a threat to self-esteem. Likewise, in anticipation of future positive events, the handicap functions as a prearranged explanation of the failure of positive events to materialize. It also provides for the augmentation of personal control if and when positive events occur. (p. 369)

As we have seen, the characteristics displayed by alcoholics are often shared by the whole family. It comes as no surprise, then, that Jason and his mother both attribute a great deal of control to events outside themselves, and that they are self-handicapping individuals.

Both characters are prone to making statements of helplessness when confronted with situations for which they wish to deny responsibility. For example, when Jason's boss,

Earl, threatens to fire Jason because he is habitually late for work, Jason tells himself, "how the hell can I do anything right, with that damn family, and her [his mother] not making any effort to control them . . ." (p. 286)

Although Jason's work problems are solely the result of his own actions, he defers blame for them onto others.

Similarly, Mrs. Compson denies responsibility for Caddy's conduct by telling her husband, ". . .but who can fight against bad blood you wont let me try we are to sit back with our hands folded while she not only drags your name in the dirt but corrupts the very air your children breathe. . . ." (p. 119)

As we have also seen in Chapter 2, because the alcoholic family works so hard to deny its shameful secret, outward appearances are very important to families with alcoholism, more important than the well-being of family members themselves. Both Jason and his mother tend to give reasons based on outward appearances for the things they want to have happen. For example, when, early in the Benjy section, Caddy wants to take Benjy outdoors, Mrs. Compson tells her, "Are you going to take that baby out without his overshoes . . . Do you want to make him sick, with the house full of company." Benjy's potential illness is a problem not because he might suffer from it, but because a sick child would be an inconvenience to Mrs. Compson while she had to entertain guests. Similarly, when Jason goes off to find his

niece Quentin and the man from the fair, he expresses his desire to find them in terms of the family's reputation, not his own desire to punish Quentin: "Like I say it's not that [Quentin's sexual activity] that I object to so much; maybe she cant help that, it's because she hasn't even got enough consideration for her own family to have any discretion." (p. 276).

Similarly, both Jason and Mrs. Compson are excessively concerned with the effects that the actions of their family members will have on their own reputation with others in the community. Thus, when Quentin plays hooky from school, Mrs. Compson worries that Professor Junkin will think that she cannot control her granddaughter. When Jason takes Quentin to school, and she tries to pull off her dress in the car, his first concern is the number of people who might have seen her.

Jason's preceptions of his mother, as revealed in the opening pages of his section, seem remarkably clear sighted at first glance. Throughout the novel, Mrs. Compson has exerted her will where it has suited her to do so, amid scores of her protests that she cannot do so. Where she has either not cared to force her point, or where she has been unable to do so, she has disclaimed responsibility for events by pleading illness, or some other type of victimization (usually "judgement" from some external source.) Jason, however, recognizes that there are cause-

and-effect operations which apply in most interactions (at least, those interactions which concern other people besides himself); he will not acknowledge his mother's feigned helplessness unless it suits his purposes to do so.

In the opening pages of the Jason section, Mrs. Compson is worried because Quentin has been absent from school; the source of her anxiety stems from the idea that the school authorities will think that she cannot control her niece's behavior. Jason replies, straightforwardly, "You cant, can you? You never have tried to do anything with her...How do you expect to begin this late, when she's seventeen years old?" (p. 223) Jason points out that Mrs. Compson's inability to control Quentin is a result of her lack of effort, not because she has been somehow victimized. Mrs. Compson's defenses do not admit the possibility of lack of effort on her part. She "thought about that for a while", then replied, "But to have them think that. . .I didn't even know she had a report card. She told me last fall that they had quit using them this year. And now for Professor Junkin to call me on the telephone and tell me if she's absent one more time, she will have to leave school..." (pp. 223-224) Clearly, Jason has seen that his mother is not helpless where Quentin is concerned. Mrs. Compson's words demonstrate her effort to shift responsibility for what might be interpreted as her negligence. Jason does not buy this premise--but he has blood lust of his own in mind. He offers

to handle the problem himself. Jason's preferred solution-- which his mother's intervention makes him unable to carry out-- is to whip Quentin.

Mrs. Compson comes downstairs before Jason has the opportunity to hit Quentin. In so doing, she has interrupted an action that she herself approved only minutes before. After claiming that her lack of control over Quentin was due to no fault of her own, she once again sabotages any efforts at controlling her niece. Perhaps Mrs. Compson genuinely fears that Jason will hurt the girl; perhaps she worries about what the neighbors will think. Whatever her reason for interceding, by stopping Jason, and by failing to provide an alternative punishment, Mrs. Compson allows Quentin's behavior to go unchecked. By refusing to take effective action in this case, she reinforces her opinion that her niece is beyond her control.

For his part, Jason stops threatening his niece with a beating when his mother intervenes. Jason routinely ignores his mother, or cajoles her to his own point of view when it suits him (for example, he persuades her to burn the checks that Caddy sends). Why, then, does he listen to her in this instance? Listening to her reinforces his own world-view, which says that he cannot be blamed for not controlling his family, because his "consideration" for his mother prevents him from doing so. The dynamics set up in this opening scene illustrate the symbiotic relationship between mother and



son. They do not love each other, exactly: they need each other to reinforce their shared sense of victimization. They are co-conspirators against a world which they feel has done them wrong. It is only insofar as his mother functions for Jason in this way that she exercises any control over him, at all.

Jason's need to keep his mother on his side in this manner requires him to do a great deal of selective perceiving. Thus, when she tells him, "You are the only one of them that isn't a reproach to me," he accepts her statement, elaborating with his sense of injustice: "I never had time to be. I never had time to go to Harvard like Quentin or drink myself into the ground like father." (p. 224) However, when, in her very next statement, she tells him, "I know I'm just a trouble and a burden to you," he recognizes and rejects the time-worn useless posture of helplessness that has been her ploy for as long as he can remember: "I ought to know it...You've been telling me that for thirty years. Even Ben ought to know it now..." (pp. 224-225) Jason's internal argument, which he uses to explain his condition in life, and justify his anger about that condition, is, "Life has cheated me." Mrs. Compson's internal argument, which she uses to advance a posture of helplessness, is "I'm a trouble and a burden." Both arguments are examples of magical thinking, in that they do not serve to explain the conditions of Jason's and his

mother's lives, but rather obviate the necessity of either party taking responsibility for their dilemmas.

Although Jason clearly understands that his mother's arguments are a defense, and he is not taken in by her rhetoric, he uses the same kind of rhetoric himself, with no understanding that he is doing so. This lack of understanding, too, comes as no surprise: As Claudia Black notes,

As a result [of repressing their feelings], these persons often learn to discount, and inevitably deny these feelings entirely. The reason for denying is to convince themselves, as well as others, that their unhappy family life can be made happy, by pretending, by denying reality. People tend to deny and minimize both situations and feelings in order to hide their own pain; they don't want to be uncomfortable. It is this ability to deny which ultimately interferes in the emotional and psychological stability of children when they reach adulthood. (p. 49)

Jason's ability to ignore what he does not want to recognize has enabled him, alone among the Compson children, to arrive to adulthood living an outwardly normal life. Nonetheless, he is hindered in his dealings with the outside world. The ways in which these attitudes and defenses handicap Jason in adulthood are most clearly seen in his dealings with Earl, his boss at the hardware store. Jason responds to Earl's demands on him much as he might respond to a family member, but he is unable to see that Earl cannot be manipulated, that he does not respond as Jason's family members would.

When faced with Earl's disapproval, Jason retreats into the comfort of his childhood rationalizations, which place the blame on Earl's attitude, not his conduct.

Woven in and out of the internal monologue of the Jason section are the interactions between himself and Earl on the afternoon that the show has come to town. That morning, Earl tells Jason:

. . . "I'm going to step up to Rogers' and get a snack. We wont have time to go home to dinner, I reckon."

"What's the matter we wont have time?" I says.

"With this show in town and all," he says. "They're going to give an afternoon performance too, and they'll want to get done trading in time to go to it. So we'd better just run up to Rogers'."

"All right," I says, "It's your stomach. If you want to make a slave of yourself to your business, it's all right with me."

"I reckon you'll never be a slave to any business," he says.

"Not unless it's Jason Compson's business," I says. (pp. 261-262)

Characteristically, Jason refuses to help out by sacrificing his lunch hour because the store will be busy; to his way of thinking, he and Earl are in a minimalist economic partnership--he has agreed to work a certain number of hours for Earl, and no more. To Jason's way of thinking, any further demands or requests that Earl makes are an infringement upon his personal liberties. Jason says as much when he states:

. . . if Earl thought I was going to dash up the street and gobble up two bits worth of indigestion on his account he was bad fooled. I may not be sitting with my feet on a mahogany desk but I am being paid for what I do inside this building and if I cant manage to live a civilised life outside of it I'll go where I can. I can stand on my own two feet; I dont need any man's mahogany desk to prop me up. (pp. 262-263)

Standing up to Earl and refusing to "gobble two bits worth of indigestion" enables Jason to maintain a sense of near equality with the man with the mahogany desk. In Jason's eyes, the outward trappings of wealth are the measure of a man. Since he lacks those trappings, he feels he must assert himself in ways which are inevitably perceived by Earl as rude and uncooperative.

Later that morning, Earl once again tells Jason that there will not be time for him to go to lunch. Jason does indeed go to lunch--and goes to find a blank check with which to forge Caddy's signature; and goes home with the check, which he and his mother burn; and goes to the barbershop to find out how the stock market is doing. Jason is fully aware that he has stretched Earl's patience to the limit, but he persists in seeing the problem as a problem of Earl's attitude, not his behavior. When he returns to the store, Earl asks him

"You go home to dinner?"

"I had to go to the dentist," I says because it's not any of his business where I eat but I've got to be in the store with him all the afternoon.

And with his jaw running off after all I've stood. You take a little two by four country storekeeper like I say it takes a man with just five hundred dollars to worry about it fifty thousand dollars worth.

"You might have told me," he says. "I expected you back right away."

"I'll trade you this tooth and give you ten dollars to boot, any time," I says. "Our agreement was an hour for dinner," I says, "and if you dont like the way I do, you know what you can do about it."

"I've known that some time," he says. "If it hadn't been for your mother I'd have done it before now, too. She's a lady I've got a lot of sympathy for, Jason. Too bad some other folks I know cant say as much." (p. 283)

Jason offers a made-up excuse for the length of his absence from the store, and then pretends that his lie was prompted not out of a sense of obligation to Earl, but as a peacekeeping gesture. In other words, Jason tells himself that he lied because he wanted to keep harmony between him and Earl, not because Earl, as his employer, is rightfully entitled to an explanation for his absence, especially when Earl specifically asked him not to be gone very long. Jason knows that he cannot tell Earl the truth: the truth is that Jason, for reasons of his own, completely disregarded Earl's request. Jason cannot even admit the truth to himself; rather, he tells himself (much as his mother would tell herself) that he has deserved the break because he has been put upon: "And with his jaw running off after all I've stood."

Jason attempts to turn the problem into a problem with Earl's attitude towards him when he tells Earl, "Our agreement was an hour for dinner." He practically dares Earl to fire him. Earl responds that it is only his sympathy for Mrs. Compson that prevents him from doing so.

Because Jason reacts to other people with suspicion and distrust, he effectively cuts himself off from satisfying relationships with anyone. Words are useless and not to be trusted in a family where promises are made and not kept, threats are made and not carried out, and the words "I love you" are often accompanied by actions which belie them. Whereas Quentin's response to this dynamic has been to believe the words over the actions, Jason decides to place no trust in words but rather in actions and their material results. Jason puts his trust only in what he can see and feel--money. His need for tangible evidence of his worth is so strong that he refuses to put his money on the bank, instead keeping it in his room where he can count it at night.

Although he trusts it and what it can buy, Jason's feelings about money are confused and ambiguous. At one point, Jason says, "After all, like I say money has no value; it's just the way you spend it. It don't belong to anybody, so why try to hoard it. It just belongs to the man that can get it and keep it." (p. 241) Jason's argument that it is not money per se, but what it can buy, that matters,

is circular. Nothing can be bought without money. Money itself~and what money can buy are virtually indistinguishable. Even if this argument were cogent, Jason's behavior throughout the novel shows that he cares very much for the things that money can buy.

Similarly, Jason points out that money does not belong to anyone, yet it belongs to the person who can "get it and keep it." He says, "Why try to hoard it," yet hoard it he does, from the time he is a very young child. Early in the novel, Versh points out, "Jason going to be a rich man. . . He holding his money all the time." (p. 43) The value that Jason places on material possessions is shown early on in the novel, when, in the incident in the branch discussed above, Quentin tries to prevent Jason from telling their father that he and Caddy have splashed each other by reminding him of the bow and arrow that Quentin had made him. Quentin perhaps means to remind his brother of an action that he has taken which demonstrates affection, or perhaps he means to ask for a favor in return for a favor. Jason replies that the bow and arrow is "broke now"; characteristically, it is not the act of making the bow and arrow as a sign of Quentin's affection that is important to Jason, but the actual objects themselves. Jason does not believe, could probably not even recognize the fact, that Quentin could or would have made him the bow and arrow because he liked his younger brother. Jason has no way to

think about such a concept. In his experience, people's actions are not motivated by love but by expedience.

Admittedly, such, too, has been Quentin's experience. If, then, he was trying to make a claim on his brother in return for a favor rendered, his attempt fails for a different reason. In Jason's eyes, it is not Quentin's intentions, but his actions, which are important, and his action in making the bow and arrow has been negated because the bow is now broken, and, therefore, useless to Jason. Jason refutes Quentin's claim on him by telling him that the objects are no longer valuable, therefore Jason is no longer bound. Even as a young child, Jason placed his trust in material possessions rather than in intentions or words.

Because Mrs. Compson's alleged "love" for him means nothing in terms of action, Jason learns to be distrustful of words. Faulkner thus makes of Jason an early articulation of what Addie Bundren later comes to express: actions, not words, carry meaning.

* * * * *

Jason's overwhelming distrust of other people, his callous cruelty, and his love of money are all foreshadowings of later Faulknerian villains, most of whom are seen primarily through omniscient or other third-person narrators. Jason is unique among Faulkner's villains because

he speaks in his own words, words which help to understand the motivations of later characters.

The character in Faulkner's later works who most closely resembles Jason is Flem Snopes. Faulkner himself linked the two together when, in the Epilogue to The Sound and the Fury, he noted that Jason "not only fended off and held his own with the Compsons but competed and held his own with the Snopeses. . . ." (p. 420) Both characters, said Faulkner, were "completely inhuman." (Gwynn, p. 132)

Flem and Jason are alike in their greed. Like Jason, Flem is acutely aware of money and what it will buy. Early in the Snopes trilogy, he exhibits the same niggardly penny-pinching that enables Jason to cheat his niece out of the money her mother sends her. Flem is not above charging Will Varner, owner of the store where Flem works as a clerk, for the nickel's worth of tobacco that Will summons Flem to cut for him. In the following excerpt, which takes place days after Flem has been hired, Will has just walked into the store, and is preparing a long-winded discourse for the group of men who habitually assemble on the store's porch to pass the time of day:

. . . almost at once he [Will Varner] shouted, "You there. What's your name? Flem. Bring me a plug of my tobacco. Jody showed you where he keeps it." He came and approached the group, two of whom vacated the knife-gnawed wooden bench for him, and he sat down and took out his knife and had already begun his smoking-car story in his cheerful

drawling bishop's voice when the clerk (Ratliff had not heard his feet at all) appeared at his elbow with the tobacco. Still talking, Varner took the plug and cut off a chew and shut the knife with his thumb and straightened his leg to put the knife back in his pocket, when he stopped talking and looked sharply upward. The clerk was still standing at his elbow. "Hey?" Varner said. "What?"

"You ain't paid for it," the clerk said. For an instant Varner did not move at all, his leg still extended, the plug and the severes chew in one hand and the knife in the other just about to enter his pocket. None of them moved in fact, looking quietly and attentively at their hands or wherever their eyes had been when Varner interrupted himself. "The tobacco," the clerk said.

"Oh," Varner said. He put the knife into his pocket and drew from his hip a leather purse about the size and shape and color of an eggplant and took a nickel from it and gave it to the clerk. (The Hamlet, p. 54)

Varner is surprised that the clerk remains after he has taken the tobacco. Prior to Flem's hire, Varner considered the store and everything it contained to be his; the above incident shows Flem putting Varner's relationship with his own business on new terms, terms which must be mediated by the clerk. The men sitting on the porch wait with baited breath to see if Varner will challenge Flem's affront to Varner's authority; that he does not constitutes the first of several ominous signs of what will follow for the hamlet of Frenchman's Bend.

Several months later, Flem's infiltration into the store is complete. Faulkner explains that "customers who had traded there for years, mostly serving themselves and

putting the correct change into the cigar box inside the cheese cage, now having to deal for each trivial item with a man whose name they had not even heard two months ago, who answered Yes and No to direct questions and who apparently never looked directly or long enough at any face to remember the name which went with it, yet who never made mistakes in any matter pertaining to money." (The Hamlet, p. 56)

Not only has Flem changed the store's way of operating, he has changed the unwritten ethics behind its operation as well: a few pages later, Faulkner discloses that Flem refused to allow anyone to purchase anything from the store on credit. The shift represents a tear in the fabric of life in Frenchman's Bend. Will Varner used to "give them credit for food and plow-gear when they needed it, long credit, though they knew they would pay interest for that which on its face looked like generosity and openhandedness, whether that interest showed in the final discharge or not." (p. 56) The shift is not so much a change in the store's monetary policies--Varner would collect interest on the credited amounts, in one way or another, be it on the bill itself or in small "mistakes" in the adding up of other sums--as in the unspoken agreement between merchant and customer. Flem's refusal to grant credit is seen as a failure of the easy give-and-take between Varner's store and the people who depend on it. The store could no longer be relied upon in times of dire need.

Instead, the needy would have to deal directly with Flem, and Flem's usurious moneylending practices: ". . . It was generally known that any sum between twenty-five cents and ten dollars could be borrowed from him at any time, if the borrower agreed to pay enough for the accomodation." (p. 61) As the inhabitants of Frenchman's Bend, and later, the town of Jefferson, learn, promissory notes tendered by Flem can become due and payable at any time he happens to need something from the borrower. Once again, the affront lies not so much in the fact that Flem makes so much money off the people who borrow from him, but that the money is used to manipulate. Will Varner made money, but he also lent a helping hand; Flem's rapacity is worsened by the fact that the only hand he will help is his own.

Finally, in the second book of the trilogy (The Town), Flem, who by this time has become vice-president of Jeffereson's only bank, manipulates his stepdaughter out of her fortune--and her mother--in a move that rivals Jason Compson's cruelty to his sister Caddy. Linda Snopes wants to go away to college; but because she will inherit part of her grandfather's money, Flem is unwilling to have her leave his sphere of influence, for fear that she will marry and thus permanently remove the money from his reach. Linda, whom Faulkner characterizes as a young girl who wants "to be needed: not jest to be loved and wanted, but to be needed, too" (The Mansion, p. 143), realizes what Flem wants. Flem

has two avenues to that money: through Linda and through her mother, Eula. Linda realizes that if she leaves home, her mother, who has been having an affair with the bank president for several years (a fact which Flem knows and is waiting for the opportunity to cash in on), will run away with her lover, thus depriving Flem of any way to get the money.

Flem finally devises a plan which is coldly brilliant and savagely cruel in the way that it plays on the young girl's needs. He tells her that he will relent, that she can go away to school:

Yet here was this man [Flem] that had had sixteen or seventeen years to learn her [Linda] he didn't love nothing but money and would do anything you could suh-jest to get another dollar of it, coming to her his-self, without no pressure from nobody and not asking for nothing back, saying, You can go away to school if you still want to; only, thid first time anyhow stay at least as close to home as Oxford; saying, in effect: I was wrong. I wont no longer stand between you and your life, even though I am convinced I will be throwing away all hope of your grandpaw's money.

So what else could she do but what she done, saying in effect back at him: If you jest realized now that grandfather's money aint as important as my life, I could a told you that all the time; if you had jest told me two years ago that all you was was jest skeered, I would a eased you then--going (Lawyer his-self told me this) to a Oxford lawyer as soon as she was settled in the University and drawing up a will leaving whatever share she might ever have in her grandpaw's or her maw's estate to her father Flem Snopes. (The Mansion, p. 144)

As soon as Linda is able, she wills Flem her money. She mistakenly thinks that Flem has somehow come to his senses, that he is acting on her best interests, rather than his own. He, however, manipulates the girl for his own purposes; he uses the will to try to blackmail her grandfather to get the bank president to resign, so that he can assume that post. The president refuses to resign; Flem threatens to disclose his extramarital affair; and Eula, "having to decide right there right now, If I was a eighteen-year-old-gal, which would I rather have: my mother publicly notarised as a suicide, or publicly condemned as a whore?" (The Mansion, p. 145), goes home and kills herself.

Ultimately, however, Flem comes face to face with the reality that money cannot buy him the one thing that he lacks to fit into this small community: respectability. Here he and Jason part company; unlike the Compsons, who have lived in Yoknapatawpha for generations, and who are known to everyone around them, the Snopes clan are outsiders, interlopers. As Flem gets richer, the townspeople become less openly critical of him, but he never becomes accepted into the town.

Flem learns that he cannot buy respectability, as he has bought wealth, influence, and the fear of those around him. Indeed, Faulkner's eyes, respectability is a worthless, unattainable goal; Faulkner defined respectability as ". . . an artificial standard which comes up from here. That is,

respectability is not your concept or my concept. It's what we think is Jones' concept of respectability." (Gwynn and Blotner, p. 35) He told listeners at the University of Virginia that once Flem tried to achieve respectability, he began to disappoint his creator. (Gwynn and Blotner, p. 33) Flem's quest for respectability is like Jason's quest for a sense of personal worth: both characters try to use money to obtain something which money simply cannot buy.

The goals of both characters are similar: respectability is really only personal worth affirmed by the world at large. In this way, too, Flem provides a "re-vision" of Jason, and illustrates how Faulkner's interest in the inner workings of the Compson family translate to the portrayals of similar characters in his later works. We always see Flem from the outside; even his ego needs are represented in terms of the community in which he lives.

Nonetheless, Flem is not so very different from Jason. Although we certainly never see Flem as a child, or even interacting privately with his relatives, Jason Compson has provided a good picture of the way in which Faulkner might have portrayed Flem's childhood, had he chosen to do so. In their inability to form close relationships, in their inability to trust anything but the money they can hold in their hands, and despite the fact that Flem's background is never even alluded to, both characters display evidence of the same kinds of crippling childhoods. Both characters

illustrate the potentially dark consequences of growing up in a family where one's needs are never met, as is often the case in families where alcoholism is present.

Conclusion

In the preceding chapters I have tried to show the ways in which Faulkner's sense of himself as a child of an alcoholic pervaded The Sound and the Fury, and pervaded nearly everything that he wrote afterwards. The question remains to be asked: what difference does this influence make to the reader of Faulkner's work? The answer: an enormous difference. An examination of Faulkner's material and stylistic techniques, particularly with respect to The Sound and the Fury, will show that Faulkner forces his readers to adopt reading strategies that parallel the information-gathering strategies used by children raised in alcoholic homes. Faulkner, in fact, teaches us to learn about the world--at least, his fictional world--in the ways that children of alcoholics must do.

The Sound and the Fury begins with chaos. Benjy's section presents distorted fragmentary bits of events, some of which take place in the present, most of which occurred in the distant past. Olga Vickery notes that "The Sound and the Fury was the first of Faulkner's novels to make the question of form and technique an unavoidable critical

issue." (p. 28) Later, she explains that "[b]y fixing the structure while leaving the central situation ambiguous, Faulkner forces the reader to reconstruct the story and to apprehend its significance for himself (sic)." (p. 29) For Robert Parker, Faulkner does more than confuse the central situation; he deliberately conceals it:

Radical ignorance, be it tactical like Rosa's or epistemological like Shreve's, is the distinctive problem Faulkner imposes on his readers. Indeed, Faulkner's novels are shaped as novels, as sustained narratives, by their elaborate orchestration of that ignorance. The main thing we know reading Faulkner is that we don't know the main thing, whether it is a fact, as for Rosa, or at the last an understanding of whether facts are possible, as for Shreve.

Yet Faulkner keeps pointing our attention to the very main thing we don't know. Like Rosa and Shreve, he calls it "something," a natural word, whether consciously chosen or not, for a focus of attention identifiable but not definable, an even homely word that nonetheless grows to tantalize by the bland way it keeps labeling the key thing we do not know, without helping us come to know it. (p. 3)

Parker describes this matter of learning the unknown as "the distinctive problem" that Faulkner poses for his readers. The unknown, as Parker describes it,--that "something" which "tantalizes" us while keeping us in ignorance--is also characteristic of the way alcoholism manifests itself in families.

As I have shown, denial and secrecy are hallmarks of the alcoholic family. Kate McElligat notes that alcoholism

is often called "the secret that everyone knows" or "the elephant in the living room." She goes on to explain that most children of alcoholics, "especially up to and often during the teenage years, do not realize that their family's problem is alcoholism" (p. 55) As I have noted elsewhere, children of alcoholics often feel confused, isolated, and afraid.

Faced with this situation, children learn to understand the meaning of events not so much by the actual events themselves, but by their relationship to other events. Thus, for the child giving the following account, a fairly mundane, benign occurrence--the arrival home of a father after work--takes on different meanings depending on whether the father is sober or drunk:

I could always tell what kind of night it was going to be by how my father came in the door. I would listen for how he put the key in the lock. If he fumbled around and didn't get the key in, I would know it was going to be the kind of night that I would just make myself scarce. I could always tell. (Treadway, p. 18)

The basic event remains the same for this child night after night--father comes home. What kind of night it will be, however, is to be determined by whether the father arrives sober or drunk. The child in such situations learns to look for the telltale signs, the significant patterns, which will

indicate the unspoken, and unspeakable, truth on which the whole evening depends--the father's inebriety or sobriety.

Similarly, when encountering Faulkner's novels, readers are faced with the task of determining telltale signs and significant patterns. In the Benjy section of The Sound and the Fury, for example, caddies on the golf course, an old slipper, and firelight come to symbolize his sister for Benjy, but it is only gradually that the reader is able to make sense of Benjy's reactions to these things, and to discern what the pattern underlying his reactions is.

Another way in which Faulkner forces us to consider patterns is through the use of what Olga Vickery terms the "repeated use of juxtaposed scenes involving either a lapse of time or a change of place. . ." (1964, p. 297) Walter Slatoff remarks on this same phenomenon when he discusses Faulkner's "presentation of opposed or contradictory images." (p. 156) Slatoff lists several elements which Faulkner juxtaposes: motion and immobility; sound and silence; quiescence and turbulence. Characters, Slatoff notes, are described as being rapt and alert, active and lazy, corrupt and immaculate. Slatoff contends that Faulkner's purpose in using what he terms "oxymorons or near-oxymorons" (p. 158) is to prevent the work as a whole from presenting a unified, coherent vision; Vickery attributes Faulkner's juxtapositions to a desire to make his readers "recognize both simultaneity and progression." (1964, p. 297)

Yet another explanation for this phenomenon of juxtaposition is possible, and it has to do with the ways in which people create meaning out of chaos. Juxtapositions are useful, for they enable a person to ask, "If I change this variable, what aspects of the total picture must change?" Linguists, for example, when attempting to decipher which sounds in a language represent different meanings to its speakers, will first look for what are termed "minimal pairs": pairs of words which differ only by one sound. (An example of such a pair in English is "pan/ban".) In juxtaposing very disparate elements, Faulkner, too, can look for the "minimal pairs" of human behavior: those variables which, everything else being equal, change completely the meaning of the situation. By presenting, and not didactically interpreting, such "minimal pairs", Faulkner forces his readers to determine which variables are significant in his fictional world, and which variables are not.

As linguists use techniques to describe languages which were once completely foreign to them, so, too, do children in alcoholic homes learn to cope with events which seemingly make no sense. In functional families, children can learn how to interpret events either from their parents' reactions, or from direct teaching by the parent. Thus, for example, a child might be told, "Don't hit your sister. We don't hit people in this family." Children in alcoholic



families, on the other hand, might not ever hear that hitting is disallowed; they may only be able to infer that Father may hit whomever he chooses, and telling on Father is disallowed.

Often, too, the events which occur in the family make no sense. David Treadway asks

How does a four-year-old understand the confusing message of being dressed up in party clothes in order to spend Saturday mornings in a bar with Daddy and his friends? How does a six-year-old understand when Mom forgets to come to the school play, accuses him of never having told her about it in the first place, and punishes him for lying when he reminds her that she promised to come? How does a child integrate the experience of watching his parents have a fist fight only to be told the following morning that nothing happened and that all parents have disagreements from time to time? Clearly these kinds of experiences instill in children a profound difficulty in trusting people, or even being able to trust their own experience of reality. "Did I tell Mom about the school play? I thought I did. Maybe I didn't." (p. 19)

Such children are left continually wondering whether their understanding of events is true, or even whether the events themselves have actually occurred. They are faced with the problem of deciding whom to trust.

These preoccupations with truth and trust pervade Faulkner's writing as well. Michael Millgate identifies these issues, when, writing of Faulkner's stylistic choices when selecting narrators for his works, he notes:



The problem of point of view embraces, after all, some of the most crucial questions of literary technique: from whose angle and in whose voice is the story told? Where does authority lie in the novel, and whom, as readers, should we trust? Where does the author himself stand, and how do we know where he stands? We have to ask such questions, and answer them satisfactorily, before we can speak with any assurance of the moral patterning of a book, or even, in some instances, of what it is, in the broadest sense, about. (1973, p. 180)

The situation for Faulkner's readers, as Millgate describes it, then, differs little from the situation faced by children of alcoholics: whom to trust and which version of reality to believe, are the paramount questions.

The broadest question identified by Millgate, the problem of deciding what a book is about, is often difficult, if not impossible, in Faulkner's fiction. Sometimes critics have decided that what a book is about is immaterial or irrelevant, as has Slatoff when he writes of The Sound and the Fury, "In short, the ending seems designed not to interpret or to integrate but to leave the various elements of the story in much the same suspension in which they were offered, and to leave the reader with a high degree of emotional and intellectual tension." (1973, p. 170) Sometimes the book is not about "the facts", but what the facts mean, as Robert Parker points out with respect to Absalom:

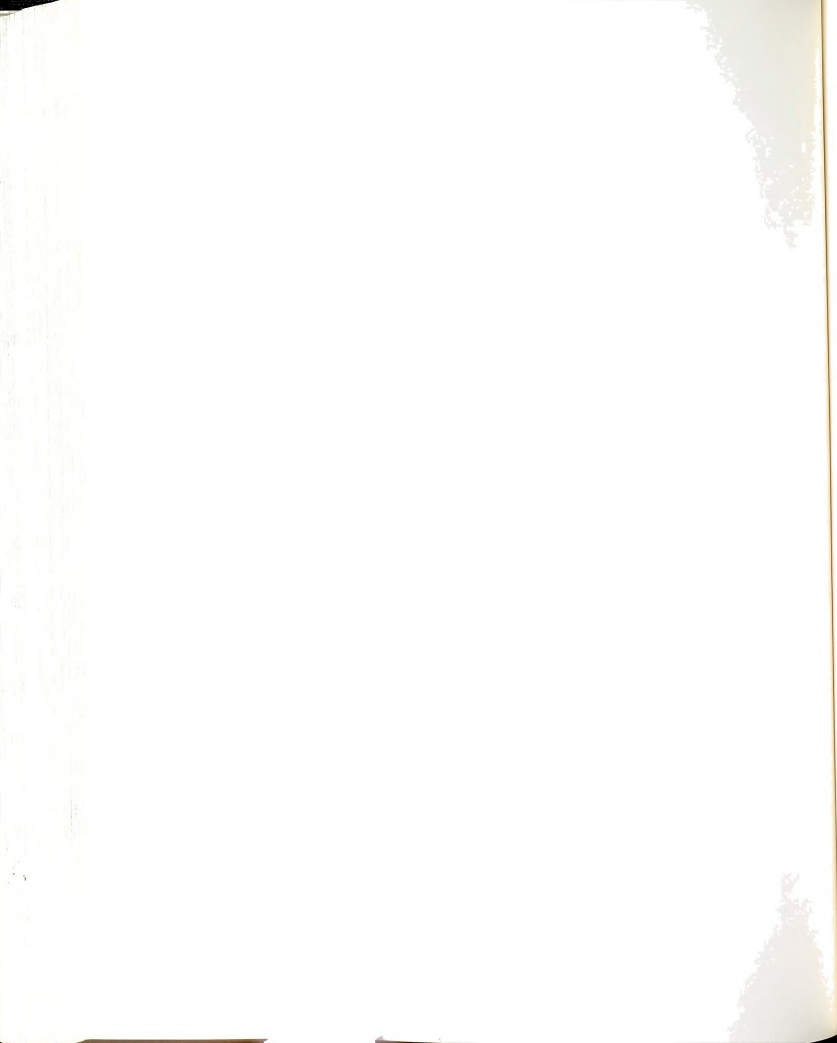
. . .we finally get the outrageous specificity of Absalom only by the violence of coerced



abstraction; that is, Henry's murder of Charles Bon because of Bon's fraction of black blood makes suddenly fatal an otherwise innocent genetic accident. As a result, by the end of Absalom we have a more peculiar sort of ineffability than I think anyone has yet suggested. Despite Shreve's playful doubting, we know all the important facts, but that very knowledge is Quentin's problem. For the only ineffability that remains is a moral one, the problem of what to do or believe on the basis of those facts. (p. 22)

The ultimate question for Faulkner's readers, then, is one of interpretation: What difference do the facts of this text make to the characters, and to me? Such a dilemma--resolving and making a meaning, a personality, from the "facts" of the "text" of a childhood in an alcoholic home--presents itself to all children of alcoholics as they grow up.

We have seen Quentin Compson become paralyzed by and fail at this task; Parker suggests that Quentin (and his creator) exhibit a similar paralysis at the end of Absalom: "At the end, as the furious momentum of narrative finally halts, it is these issues, these ultimate epistemological dilemmas, that leave Quentin, and perhaps Faulkner, as if paralyzed ethically--and perhaps therefore narratively, novelistically." (p. 22) In Parker's view, the inability to interpret the "facts" have rendered Quentin (and, by extension, his creator) immobile. Neither Quentin nor Faulkner knows the "why" of the tale.



As Quentin is paralyzed, and as children of alcoholics may be developmentally paralyzed, so, too, are we as readers of Faulkner prevented from ever finally coming to a resolution of the oppositions in Faulkner's fictional world. As Walter Slatoff explains, Faulkner himself refuses to make the interpretations which would render resolution possible, by refusing to choose between moral responsibility and irresponsibility:

. . . In both the form and content of Faulkner's works there is often the assertion or implication that man does not need to make choices. "You don't need to choose," says McCaslin. "The heart already knows." (GDM, p. 260) We do need to choose. There is, of course, also, in Faulkner the frequent implication that we do need to choose, and Ike, himself, does seem to make a terribly important choice by relinquishing his land. By suggesting, finally, that Ike both did and did not choose, Faulkner, too, has made a choice, the choice which he can rarely resist, and which, I feel, seriously limits his stature, the choice not to choose. (p 178)

Faulkner, in Slatoff's view, leaves Go Down, Moses and much of his other work unresolved.

So, then, at the end of reading Faulkner's works, we are left with many questions--What is truth? Whom can we trust? What is the secret no one will tell?--but few answers. In the process of reading we have learned, not aphorisms to be repeated, not insights to be contemplated, but patterns of response to be followed. The wondrous thing about Faulkner's writing is that, out of all those many,

varied, and beautiful words, what Faulkner teaches us has little to do with language at all.



WORKS CONSULTED

- Ackerman, Robert. Children of Alcoholics: A Guide for Educators, Therapists, and Parents, 2nd edition. Holmes Beach, Florida: Learning Publications, Inc., 1979.
- Alcohol and Alcoholism: The Royal College of Psychiatrists. New York: The Free Press 1979.
- Anderson, Harlene and Harold A. Goolishian. "Human Systems as Linguistic Systems: Preliminary and Evolving Ideas about the Implications for Clinical Theory". Family Process (27) 1988 pp. 371-393.
- Ashenberg Straussner, Shulamith L., Dava Weinstein, and Ricardo Hernandez. "Effects of Alcoholism on the Family System". Health and Social Work (4) 1979, pp.11-127.
- Bassett, John Earl. "Family Conflict in The Sound and the Fury". Studies in American Fiction (9) 1981, pp. 1-20.
- Baum, Catherine B. "'The Beautiful One': Caddy Compson as Heroine of The Sound and the Fury" in Critical Essays on William Faulkner: The Compson Family, ed. Arthur F. Kinney. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1982.
- Beck, Warren. "William Faulkner's Style", in Faulkner: 4 Decades of Criticism, ed. Linda W. Wagner. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1973.
- Bergmark, Anders, and Lars Oscarsson. "The Concept of Control and Alcoholism". British Journal of Addiction 82 (1987) pp. 1203-1212.
- Berthoff, Ann. Reclaiming the Imagination: Philosophical Perspectives for Writers and Teachers of Writing. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook, 1984.



Black, Claudia. It Will Never Happen to Me. Denver: M.A.C., 1981.

----- . "Children of Alcoholics". Alcohol Health and Research World. (4) 1979 pp. 23-27.

Blotner, Joseph. Faulkner: A Biography. Two-volume Edition. New York: Random House, 1974.

----- . Selected Letters of William Faulkner. New York: Random House, 1977.

Boozer, William. "His Best Advice for Aspiring Writers: Go Home and Write". The Faulkner Newsletter 8:4 (1988). pp. 1-2.

Britton, James. Language and Learning. New York: Pelican Books, 1971.

Brooks, Cleanth. William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

----- . On the Prejudices, Predilections, and Firm Beliefs of William Faulkner. Baton Rouge: University of Louisiana Press, 1987.

Brown, Stephanie. Treating Adult Children of Alcoholics: A Developmental Perspective. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1988.

Co-Dependency. Reprints from FOCUS on family and Chemical Dependency. Deerfield Beach, Florida: Health Communications, Inc., 1988.

Colgan, Philip. "Assessment of Boundary Inadequacy in Chemically Dependent Individuals and Families". Journal of Chemical Dependency Treatment (1) 1987, pp. 75-90.

Cowan, Michael, ed. Twentieth-Century Interpretations of The Sound and the Fury. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968.

Cutter, Fred. Art and the Wish to Die. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1983.

Dardis, Thomas. The Thirsty Muse: Alcohol and the American Writer. New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1989.

Denzin, Norman. The Alcoholic Self. Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1987.

Deutsch, Charles. Broken Bottles, Broken Dreams. New York: Teachers College Press, 1982.

Dowd, E. Thomas, Gary W. Lawson, and Richard Petosa. "Attributional Styles of Alcoholics". The International Journal of the Addictions (21) 1986, pp. 589-593.

Edwards, Griffith, and Marcus Grant. Alcoholism: New Knowledge and New Responses. Baltimore: University Park Press, 1976.

Falkner, John. My Brother Bill. New York: Pocket Books, 1963.

Falkner, Murry. The Falkners of Mississippi, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967.

Faulkner, William. The Hamlet. (New York: Vintage Books) 1931.

----- . The Mansion. (New York: Vintage Books) 1955.

----- . Sanctuary. (New York: Vintage Books) 1931.

----- . The Sound and the Fury. (New York: Vintage Books) 1929.

----- . The Town. (New York: Vintage Books) 1957.

- Fishman, Ross, and Joan M. Kuver. "Family Dysfunction: A Driving Force in Adolescent Alcohol Abuse", in Alcohol-Related Problems: Room for Manoeuvre, Neville Krasner, J. S. Madden, and Robin J. Walker, eds. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons. 1984.
- Flanzer, Jerry P. "Family Management in the Treatment of Alcoholism". British Journal on Alcohol and Alcoholism (13) 1978, pp. 45-49.
- Fox, Ruth. "Children in the Alcoholic Family", in Problems in Addiction: Alcohol and Drug Addiction William C. Bier, S.J., ed. New York: Fordham Press. 1962.
- ". "Treating the Alcoholic's Family", in Alcoholism: The Total Treatment Approach, Ronald J. Catanzaro, ed. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas 1968.
- Frances, Richard, John Franklin, and Daniel K. Flavin. "Suicide and Alcoholism". American Journal of Drugs and Alcohol Abuse. (13) 1987, pp. 327-341.
- Frankenstein, William, William M. Hay, and Peter E. Nathan. "Effects of Intoxication on Alcoholics' Marital Communication and Problem Solving". Journal of Studies on Alcohol (46) 1985, pp. 1-5.
- Galanter, Mark and E. Mansell Pattison, eds. Psychosocial Treatment of Alcoholism. Washington, D. C.: Psychiatric Press, Inc. 1984.
- Gilbert, Richard, Andrew Christensen, and Gayla Margolin. "Patterns of Alliances in Nondistressed and Multiproblem Families". Family Process (23) 1984, pp. 75-87.
- Gilmore, Thomas B. Equivocal Spirits: Alcoholism and Drinking in Twentieth-Century American Literature. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.
- Goldman, Robert S. and Mark Goldman. "Experience-Dependent

ms. 11

Cognitive Recovery in Alcoholics: A Task Component Strategy". Journal of Studies on Alcohol (49) 1988, pp. 142-148.

Goodwin, Donald W. Alcohol and the Writer. New York: Andrews and McMeel, 1988.

Greenleaf, Jael. "Co-alcoholic/Para-alcoholic: Who's Who?", in Codependency. Florida: Health Communications, Inc., 1984.

Gresset, Michel, and Noel Polk, eds. Intertextuality in Faulkner. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985.

Gresset, Michel. "Faulkner's Self-Portraits". The Faulkner Journal 2 (1986) pp. 2-13.

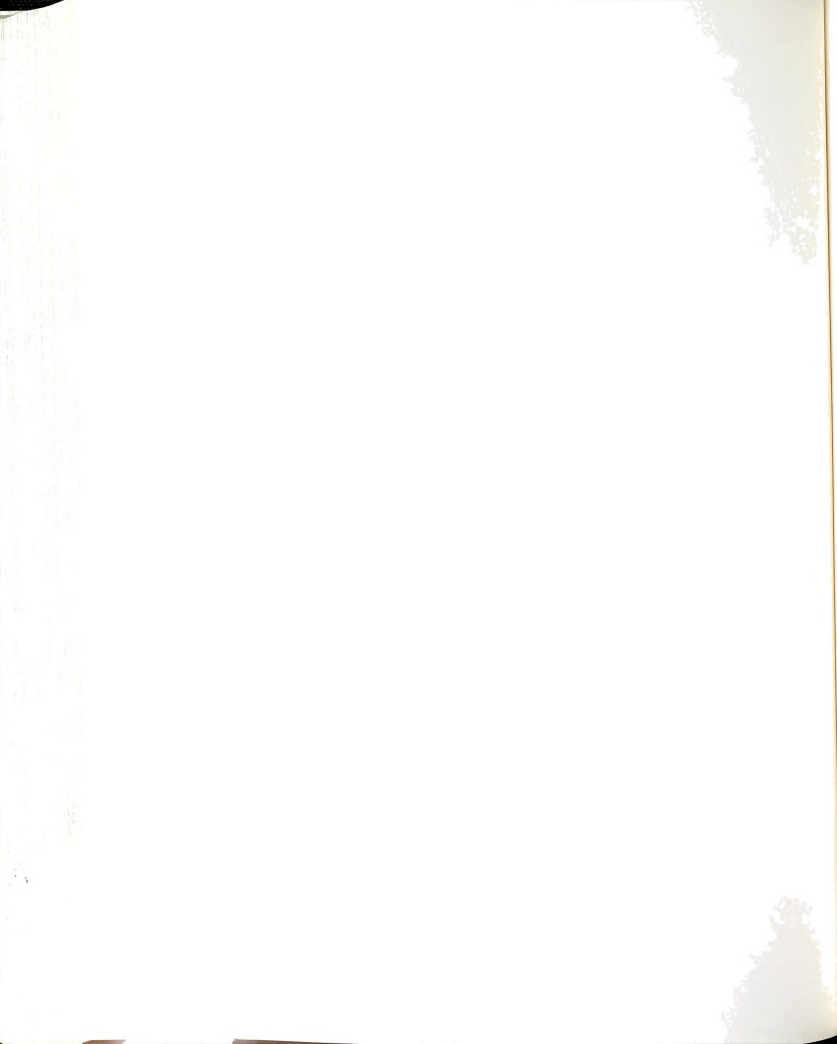
Griffith, Paul. "'Learned Helplessness' and Ego Defense Mechanisms in Alcohol Treatment". Employee Assistance Quarterly (1) 1986, pp. 87-92.

Gustafson, Roland. "Effects of Alcohol on Power in Social Interaction between Man and Woman". Journal of Studies on Alcohol (49) 1988 pp. 78-83

Gwynn, Frederick, and Joseph Blotner. Faulkner in the University. Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1959.

Harrell, L. Frank. "The Residue of Alcoholism: A Case Study of the Succeeding Generation of an Alcoholic Marriage". Family Therapy (10) 1983, pp. 239-251)

Jackson, Joan. "The Adjustment of the Family to the Crisis of Alcoholism". Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, (15) 1954, pp. 562-586.



Jacob, Theodore, Ruth Ann Seilhamer, and Regina H. Rushe.
"Alcoholism and Family Interaction: An Experimental
Paradigm". American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse
(15) 1989, pp. 73-91.

James, Jane. and Morton Goldman. "Behavior Trends of Wives
of Alcoholics". Quarterly Journal of Studies of
Alcohol. (32) 1971, pp. 373-381.

Kaufman, Edward. "Family Systems Variables in Alcoholism".
Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research (8)
1984, pp. 4-8.

-----". "The Family of the Alcoholic Patient".
Psychosomatics (27) 1986, pp.347-359.

Kartiganer, Donald M. "Quentin Compson and Faulkner's Drama
of the Generations", in Critical Essays on William
Faulkner: The Compson Family, Arthur F. Kinney, ed..
Boston: G.K. Hall, 1982.

Kinney, Arthur F., ed. Critical Essays on William Faulkner:
The Compson Family. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1982.

Kreiwirth, Martin. William Faulkner: The Making of a
Novelist. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983.

Levitt, Eugene E., Bernard Lubin, and James M. Brooks.
Depression: Concepts, Controversies, and Some New
Facts. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum
Associates, 1983.

Madden, J.S. A Guide to Alcohol and Drug Dependence.
Bristol: John Wright and Sons Ltd., 1979.

Mandell, Wallace. "Types and Phases of Alcohol Dependence
Illness", in Recent Developments in Alcoholism, vol. 1,
Marc Galanter, ed. New York: Plenum Press, 1983.

Manning, D. Thompson. "Books as Therapy for Children of
Alcoholics". Child Welfare (66) 1987, pp. 35-43)



Mapes, Bruce, Raymond A. Johnson, and Kenneth R. Sandler.
 "The Alcoholic Family: Diagnosis and Treatment".
Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly (1) 1984, pp. 67-83.

Marcus, Adrienne M. and Suzanne Tisne. "Perception of
 Maternal Behavior by Elementary School Children of
 Alcoholic Mothers". The International Journal of the
 Addictions (22) 1987, pp. 543-555.

Markowitz, Martin. "Alcohol Misuse as a Response to
 Perceived Powerlessness in the Organization". Journal
 of Studies on Alcohol (45) 1984, pp. 225-227.

McElligat, Kate. "Identifying and Treating Children of
 Alcoholic Parents". Social Work in Education (9) 1986,
 pp. 55-70.

McFadden, John. "Guilt is Soluble in Alcohol: An Ego
 Analytic View", in Visions of Addiction: Major
 Contemporary Perspectives on Addiction and Alcoholism,
 Stanton Peele, ed. Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books,
 1988

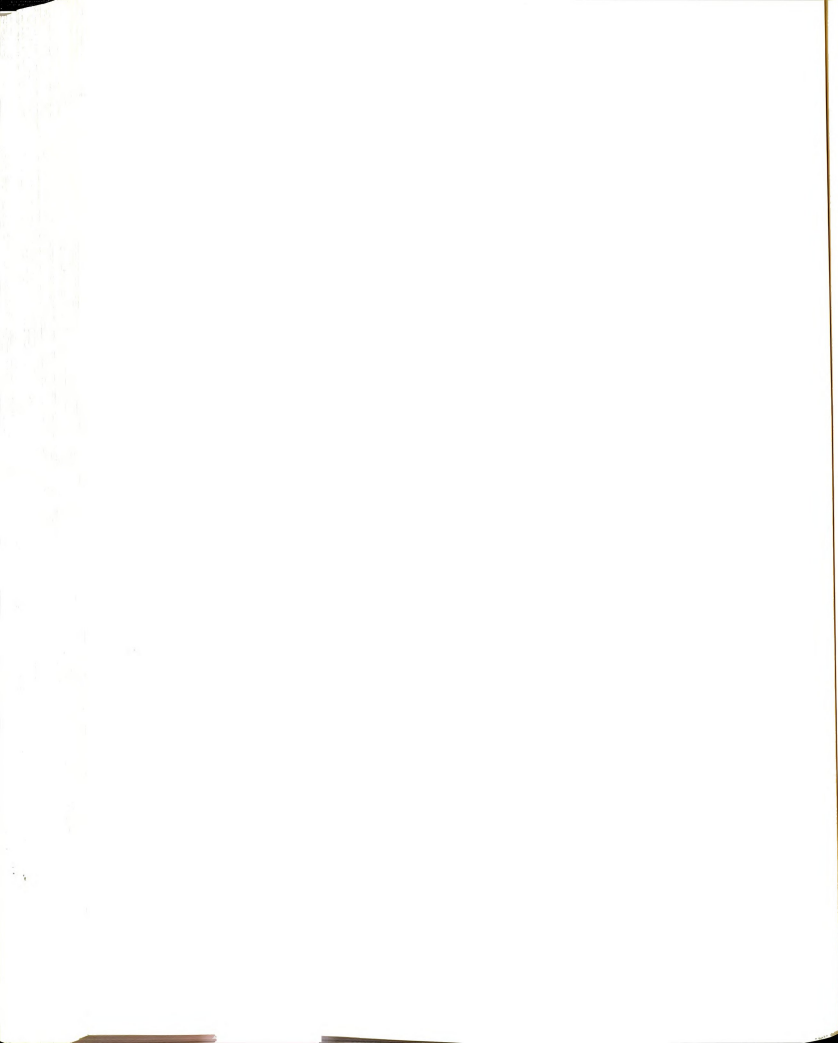
McGovern, Thomas F. "The Effects of Comprehensive Inpatient
 Alcoholism Treatment on Measures of Loss and Grief"
Alcohol (3) 1986, pp. 89-92.

------. "Hopelessness in the Alcoholic Patient". Alcohol
 (3) 1986, pp. 93-94.

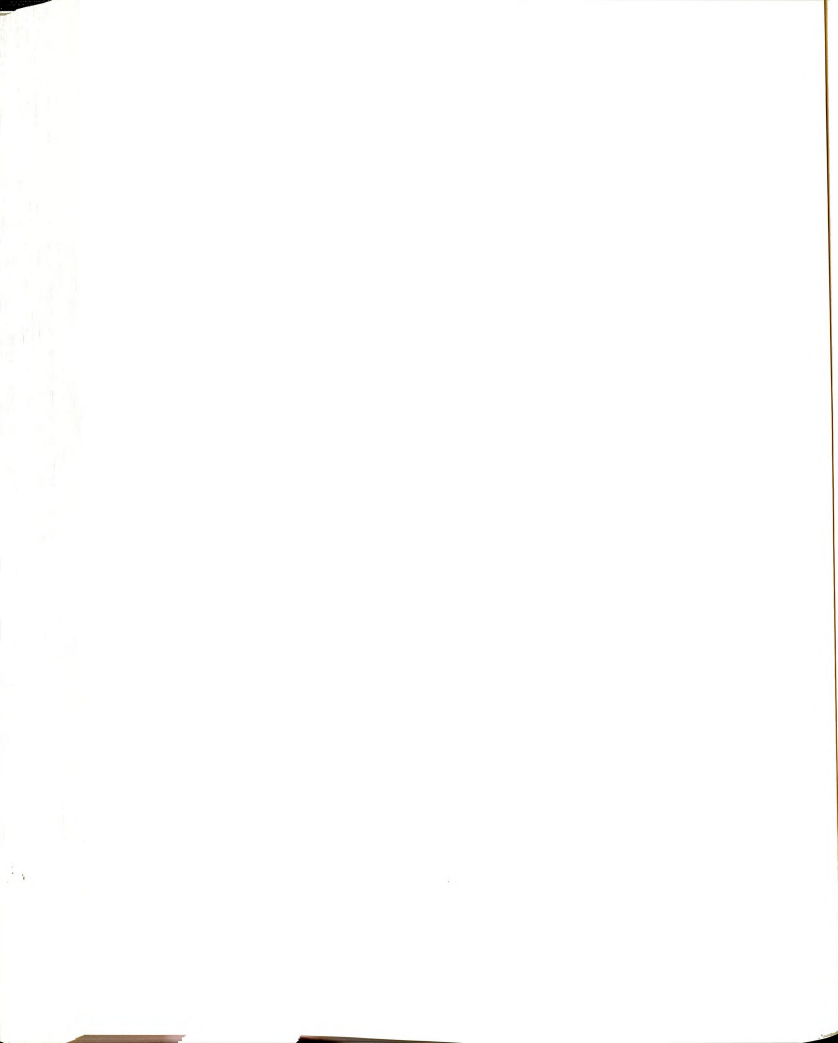
------. "Loss Identification in the Treatment of
 Alcoholism." Alcohol (3) 1986, pp. 95-96.

Millgate, Michael. The Achievement of William Faulkner.
 London: Constable, 1966.

------. "William Faulkner: The Problem of Point of View",
 in Faulkner: Four Decades of Criticism, Linda W.
 Wagner, ed. East Lansing: Michigan State
 University Press, 1973.



- Minter, David. William Faulkner: His Life and Work.
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.
- Morehouse, Ellen. "Working with Alcohol-Abusing Children of Alcoholics". Alcohol Health and Research World (8) 1984 pp. 14-19.
- Nardi, Peter. "Power and Control in Families of Alcoholics". Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education (32) 1987, pp. 14-18.
- Oates, Stephen B. William Faulkner: The Man and the Artist
New York: Harper and Row, 1987.
- Ober, Beth A., and Richard C. Stillman. "Memory in Chronic Alcoholics: The Effects of Inconsistent Versus Consistent Information". Addictive Behaviors (13) 1988, pp. 11-15.
- Ohashi, Kenzaburo. "'Motion' and the Intertextuality in Faulkner's Fiction", in Intertextuality in Faulkner, eds. Michel Gresset and Noel Polk. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985.
- Orford, Jim, and Griffith Edwards. Alcoholism. London: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Page, R. D. "Intellectual Dysfunction Among Alcoholics and Social Drinkers: An Overview", in Advances in the Biosciences: Advanced Concepts in Alcoholism Education, H. G. Tittmer, ed. (New York: Pergamon Press) 1984.
- Parker, Robert Dale. Faulkner and the Novelistic Imagination. Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Perl, Sondra. "Understanding Composing", in The Writer's Mind, Janice Hays, Phyllis A. Roth, Jon Ramsey, and Robert Foulke, eds. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1983.



Perez, Joseph. Coping with the Alcoholic Family. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development, Inc., 1986.

Pilat, Joanne M. and John W. Jones. "Identification of Children of Alcoholics: Two Empirical Studies". Alcohol Health and Research World. (9) Winter, 1984/85, pp. 27-36.

Polk, Noel. "'The Dungeon Was Mother Herself': William Faulkner: 1927-1931", in New Directions in Faulkner Studies: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha, Doreen Fowler and Ann J. Abadie, eds., Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1983.

Pratt, Annis. Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981.

Prewett, Michael J. "Attribution of Causality by Children with Alcoholic Parents". The International Journal of the Addictions (16) 1981, pp. 367-370.

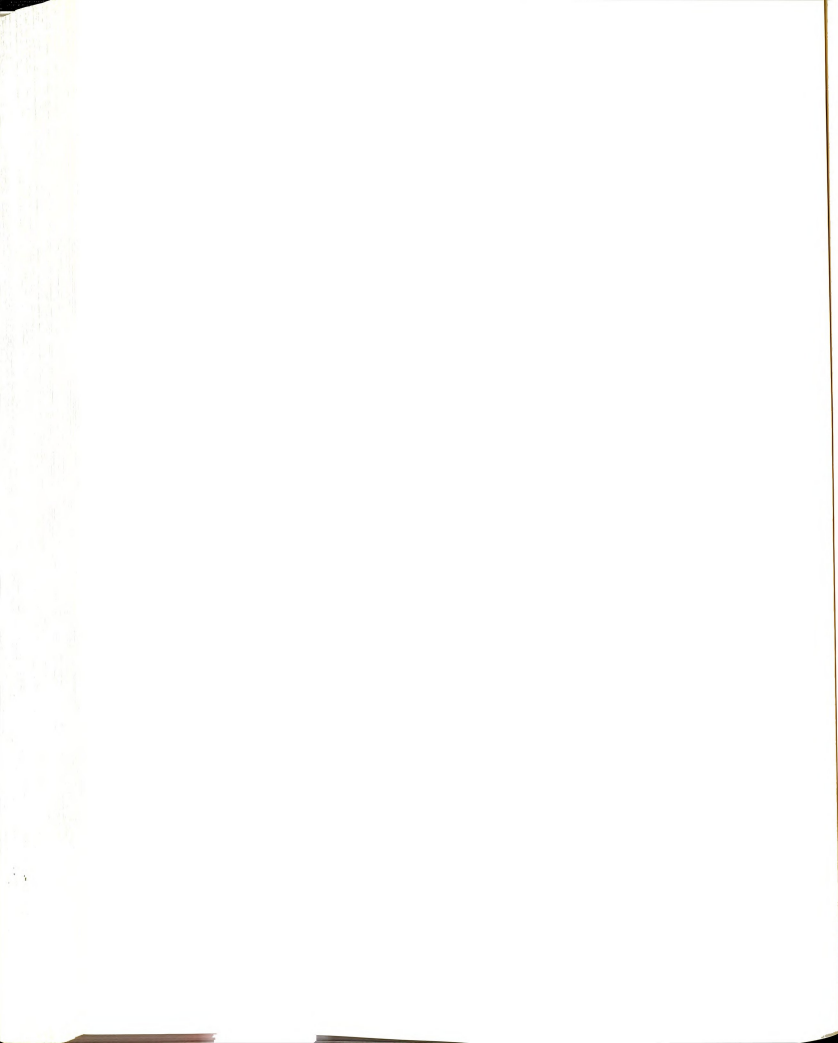
Rhodes, J. and Garth Blackham. "Differences in Character Roles between Adolescents from Alcoholic and Nonalcoholic Homes". American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse (13) 1987, pp. 145-155.

Richards, Tarpley M. "Recovery for Adult Children of Alcoholics: Education, Support, Psychotherapy". Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly (6) 1989, pp. 87-110.

Rogers, L. Edna, Frank E. Millar and Janet Beavin Bavelas. "Methods for Analyzing Marital Conflict Discourse: Implications of a Systems Approach". Family Process (24) 1985, pp. 175-187.

Room, Robin. "'A Reverence for Strong Drink': The Lost Generation and the Elevation of Alcohol in American Culture". Journal of Studies on Alcohol (45) 1984, pp. 540-546.

Rouse, John. The Completed Gesture: Myth, Character, and Education. New Jersey: Skyline Books, 1978.



Royce, James E., S.J. Alcohol Problems and Alcoholism: A Comprehensive Survey New York: The Free Press, 1981.

Samway, Patrick, S.J. "Searching for Jason Richmond Compson: A Question of Echolalia and a Problem of Palimpsest", in Intertextuality in Faulkner, eds. Michel Gresset and Noel Polk. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985.

Sensibar, Judith. The Origins of Faulkner's Art Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984.

Sjoberg, Lennart, Viktor Samsonowitz and Bengt Jannson. "Alcoholics' Beliefs about Abuse: Causes, Effects and Treatment". Drug and Alcohol Dependence (20) 1987 pp. 63-80.

Slatoff, Walter J. Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960.

------. "The Edge of Order: The Pattern of Faulkner's Rhetoric", in Faulkner: 4 Decades of Criticism, ed. Linda W. Wagner. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1973.

Smith, Frederik N. "Telepathic Diction: Verbal Repetition in As I Lay Dying". Style (19) 1985, 66-77.

Steinglass, Peter.. "A Life History Model of the Alcoholic Family" Family Process (19) 1980, pp. 211-226.

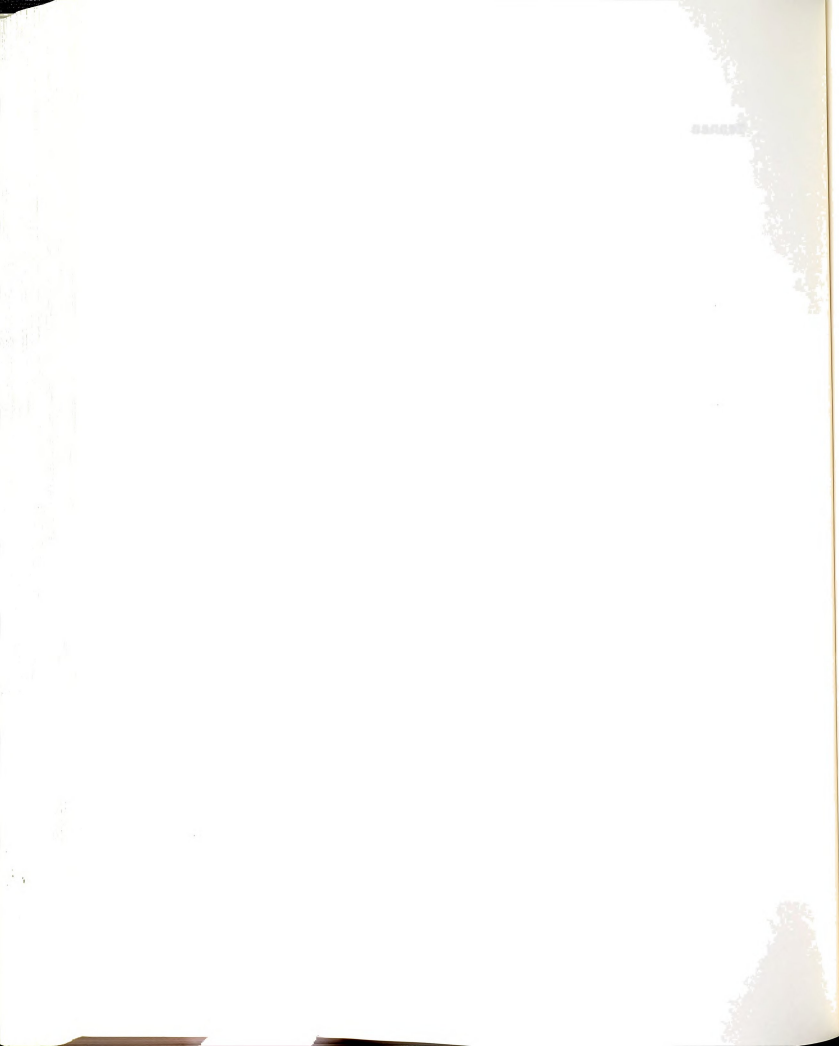
------. "The Roles of Alcohol in Family Systems", in Alcohol and the Family, Jim Orford and Judith Harwin, eds. London: Croom Helm, 1982.

------. "Family Systems Approaches to Alcoholism". Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment (2) 1985, pp. 161-167

Tarter, Ralph E., Arthur Alterman, and Kathleen Edwards. "Alcoholic Denial: A Biopsychological Interpretation". Journal of Studies on Alcohol (45) 1984 pp. 214-218)



- Tennant, Chris, and Elsa Bernardi. "Childhood Loss in Alcoholics and Narcotic Addicts". British Journal of Addiction 83 (1988), 695-703.
- Toolan, Michael. "Syntactical Styles as a Means of Characterization in Narrative". Style 19 (1985) pp. 78-93.
- Treadway, David. "The Ties that Bind: Both Alcoholics and Their Families Are Bound to the Bottle". The Family Therapy Networker (11) 1989, pp. 16-23.
- Vickery, Olga. "Worlds in Counterpoint", in Twentieth-Century Interpretations of The Sound and the Fury, Michael Cowan, ed. . Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968.
- . The Novels of William Faulkner: A Critical Interpretation. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964.
- Wagner, Linda W., ed. Faulkner: Four Decades of Criticism. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1973.
- . "Jason Compson: The Demands of Honor," Sewanee Review (79) 4, Winter, 1971, pp. 554-75.
- . Hemingway and Faulkner: Inventors/Masters Methuen, New Jersey: Scarecrow press, 1975.
- . "Language and Act: Caddy Compson". Southern Literary Journal, (14) 2, Spring, 1982, pp. 49-61.
- . The Modern American Novel, 1914-1945. Boston: Twayne, 1989.
- Weddle, Charles D. and Phillip M. Wishon. "Children of Alcoholics: What We Should Know; How We Can Help". Children Today (15) 1986, pp. 8-12.



Wilde, Meta Carpenter and Orin Borsten. A Loving Gentleman: The Love Story of William Faulkner and Meta Carpenter. New York: Simon and Schuster 1976.

Williams, Carol N. "Child Care Practices in Alcoholic Families: Findings from a Neighborhood Detoxification Program". Alcohol Health and Research World (11) 1987 pp. 74-77.

Wilson, G. Terence. "Cognitive Processes in Addiction". British Journal of Addiction 82 (1987) pp. 343-353.

Wittenberg, Judith Bryant. Faulkner: The Transfiguration of Biography. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.

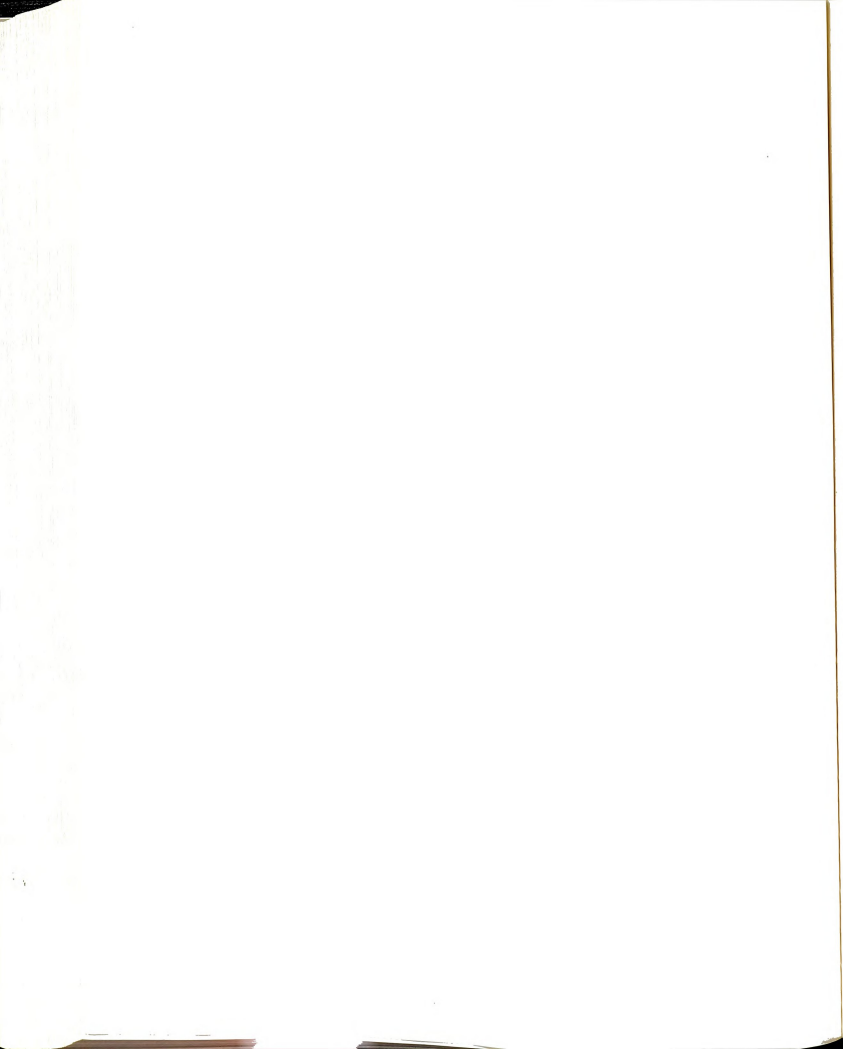
Woititz, Janet Geringer. Adult Children of Alcoholics. Pompano Beach: Health Communications, Inc., 1983.

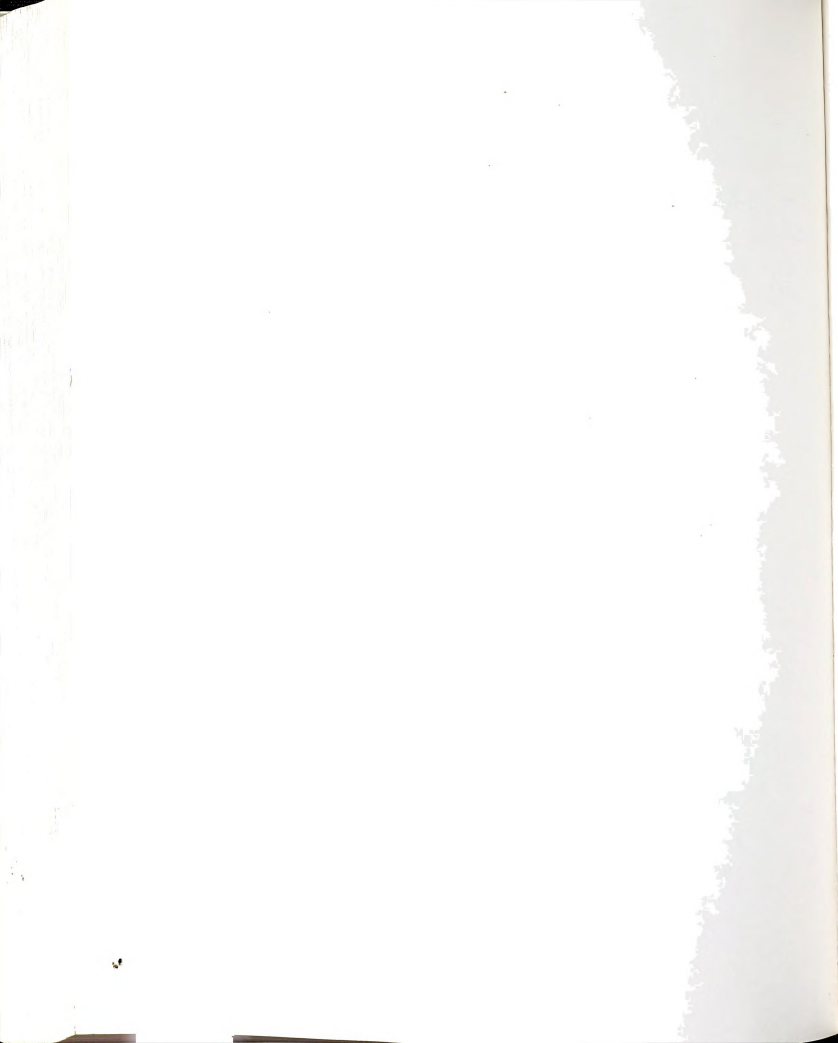
Wright, Mark, and Frederick W. Obitz. "Alcoholics' and Nonalcoholics' Attributions of Control of Future Life Events". Journal of Studies on Alcohol (45) 1984, pp. 138-143.

Wynne, Elaine. "Storytelling in Therapy and Counseling". Children Today (6) 1982, pp. 11-15.

Zelvin, Elizabeth. "Dependence and Denial in Coalcoholic Women". Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly (5) 1988, pp. 97-115.

Zinberg, Norman, and Kathleen M. Fraser. "Role of the Social Setting in the Prevention and Treatment of Alcoholism", in The Diagnosis and Treatment of Alcoholism, 2nd edition, Jack K. Mendelson and Nancy K. Mello, eds. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985.





MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293008963203